



**Analysis of China-Turkey Relations
Under The Belt and Road Initiative**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

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**ANALYSIS OF CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS UNDER THE
BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE**

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ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS UNDER THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

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The interactions between China and Turkey once occupied an important position on the ancient Silk Road. Turkey is located at the junction of Asia and Europe; it has significant geopolitical advantages. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the modern Silk Road "Belt and Road" Initiative to revive and reconnect the link between Europe and Asia. This initiative covered the Silk Road's political, economic, and cultural connections. After the "Belt and Road" initiative was put forward, Turkey's strategic position became more prominent, and China-Turkish relations entered a new strategic development phase. The main objective of this research is to examine the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative in Turkey to analyze the development of political, economic, and cultural cooperation and relations between China and Turkey under the framework of the "Belt and Road" Initiative.

Keywords: Belt and road initiative; China-Turkish relations; Middle corridor; Bilateral cooperation

ÖZET

KUŞAK VE İPEKYOL GİRİŞİMİ KAPSAMINDA

ÇİN-TÜRKİYE İLİŞKİLERİNİN ANALİZİ

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Çin ve Türkiye arasındaki etkileşimler bir zamanlar eski İpek Yolu üzerinde önemli bir konuma sahipti. Türkiye, Asya ve Avrupa'nın birleştiği noktada yer almaktadır; önemli jeopolitik avantajlara sahiptir. 2013 yılında Çin Devlet Başkanı Xi Jinping, Avrupa ile Asya arasındaki bağlantıyı yeniden canlandırmak ve yeniden bağlamak için modern İpek Yolu - "Kuşak ve İpekyol" Girişimi'ni önerdi. Bu girişim ipek yolunun siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel bağlantılarını kapsamıştır. "Kuşak ve İpekyol" girişiminin ortaya atılmasının ardından Türkiye'nin stratejik konumu daha belirgin hale geldi ve Çin-Türkiye ilişkileri yeni bir stratejik gelişim aşamasına girdi. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, "Kuşak ve İpekyol" Girişimi çerçevesinde Çin ile Türkiye arasındaki siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel işbirliği ve ilişkilerin gelişimini analiz etmek için "Kuşak ve İpekyol" girişiminin Türkiye'deki uygulamasını incelemektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kuşak ve ipekyol giriřimi; Çin-Türkiye ilişkileri; Orta koridor; İkili işbirliği

PREFACE

In this study, which is a Master's thesis titled " ANALYSIS OF CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS UNDER THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE" written for Anadolu University Institute of Social Sciences International Relations Department, I thank my esteemed thesis advisor, Prof. Dr.Süleyman ÇELİK and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erhan Akdemir to support me to the end. I also want to thank my family and loved ones who have always helped me. I would also like to congratulate Anadolu University International Relations Faculty members for the valuable information they have taught me throughout my Master's education. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to the Türkiye Scholarships Institution, which enabled me to study in Turkey and supported me to get to know Turkish culture and meet valuable people.

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ÖNSÖZ

Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı için yazılmış ‘Kuşak ve Yol Girişimi Kapsamında Çin - Türkiye İlişkilerinin Analizi’ adlı Yüksek Lisans tezi olan bu çalışmada, araştırma ve tez yazma sürecinde boyunca bana her aşamada yardımcı olan değerli tez danışmanım Prof. Dr. Süleyman ÇELİK’e ve Doç. Dr. Erhan Akdemir’e ve bana her zaman destek olan aileme ve sevdiklerime en içten teşekkürlerimi sunarım. Ayrıca Yüksek Lisans eğitimin boyunca bana öğrettikleri değerli bilgileri dahilinde, Anadolu Üniversitesi Uluslararası İlişkiler Öğretim üyelerine teşekkürlerimi sunarım. İlave olarak Türkiye’de eğitim alamamı sağlayan ve Türk kültürünü tanımamı ve değerli insanlarla tanışmamı destek olan Türkiye Bursları Kurumu’na teşekkürlerimi sunarım.

Anaer LAMAZHAN

Ekim 2023

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES

I hereby truthfully declare that this thesis is an original work prepared by me; that I have behaved in accordance with the scientific ethical principles and rules throughout the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis and presentation of my work; that I have cited the sources of all the data and information that could be obtained within the scope of this study, and included these sources in the references section; and that this study has been scanned for plagiarism with “scientific plagiarism detection program” used by Anadolu University, and that “it does not have any plagiarism” whatsoever. I also declare that, if a case contrary to my declaration is detected in my work at any time, I hereby express my consent to all the ethical and legal consequences that are involved.

Anaer LAMAZHAN

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ABBREVIATION LIST

AIIB	: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	: Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	: Economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, and South Africa
EU	: European Union
IPE	: International Political Economy
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCO	: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
TURSAB	: Turkish Association of Travel Agents
UN	: United Nations

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INTRODUCTION

As an early version of economic globalization, the ancient Silk Road was an important channel for economic and cultural exchanges between the East and the West. It is known as the most crucial business artery in the world. Moreover, the Silk Road strengthened the ties between nations, cultures, and cooperation along the routes, as did the relationship between China and Turkey.

Although the relationship between China and Turkey dates back to the old times, the diplomatic relationship between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Turkey was established in 1971. From establishing diplomatic relations to the new millennium, the relations between China and Turkey were at a low capacity in many aspects. However, after the 2000s, global connectivity has shown an increase regarding international organizations, free trade, technological innovation, universal usage of the internet, and transportation development, China-Turkey relations have entered a new phase in terms of bilateral and multilateral agreements together with the various indicators such as the politic, economy, and culture, especially after the announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a global infrastructure development strategy pointed out by the Chinese government in 2013. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jin Ping visited Central and Southeast Asia and raised the initiative of jointly building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road (the Belt and Road Initiative, BRI) to improve connectivity and cooperation on a transcontinental scale. The Initiative has mainly two components: The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which refers to both a land and maritime transport network that runs through the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa, with an active East Asian economic circle on one end and a developed European economic circle on the other.

During President Xi Jinping's visit to Turkey in November 2015, China and Turkey jointly witnessed the signing of the "Memorandum of Understanding on the Mutual Connection of the "Belt and Road" Initiative and the "Middle Corridor" Initiative," which

provided policy support and helped both parties advance their cooperation in various fields within the framework of the "Belt and Road" initiative. For Example, politically, Turkey announced the "Middle Corridor" strategy to integrate with the "Belt and Road" Initiative, which has strengthened the political tie between China and Turkey. Economically, The China-Turkey Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JEC) has successfully convened 16 meetings so far, which has played an essential role in resolving the two countries' economic and trade concerns and promoting economic and trade cooperation development. Culturally, China and Turkey have deepened education, academic research, and tourism exchange, positively affecting the understanding of people-to-people connections.

This study explores BRI-based China-Turkish relations in three parts:

First, it reviews China's foreign policy development, especially after Xi announced the BRI. Understanding the BRI's strategic content and objectives to examine how Turkey plays a crucial role in achieving BRI's success in connecting continents in a contemporary international environment.

Second, investigate the political interaction between China and Turkey from 2013 to 2023; the economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and finance, transportation and telecommunication; the cultural exchange between the two countries in academic research, education exchange and tourism to explore what types of cooperation have carried out between China Turkey after the announcement of the BRI.

Finally, by analyzing the significant cooperation, this research attempts to discover what results the "Belt and Road" initiative has brought to China-Turkish relations; the potential risks, challenges and opportunities for both countries to optimize their potential and make use of each other advantage to reach a achieve a sustainable, and trustworthy relationship.

1. RESEARCH PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

1.1. Research Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to explore China-Turkish relations under the Belt and Road Initiative by focusing on political, economic, and cultural ties. With the rapid development of the "Belt and Road" initiative, more and more projects, agreements, and investments are being negotiated, implemented, and promoted in Turkey. The interaction between China and Turkey has become more frequent. To fully understand the relationship between China and Turkey in the new era, this research aims to examine and explain the relationship between China and Turkey under the "Belt and Road" to reveal the potential risks, challenges, and opportunities of China-Turkey relations and to provide insights into further cooperation and bilateral development between China and Turkey.

Looking back at China-Turkish relations before the Belt and Road Initiative announcement, it was unremarkable in many respects. Today, however, Chinese media reports more in Turkey than ever and vice versa. Politically, China and Turkey share more common interests in the "Belt and Road" security strategy, and there are more bilateral agreements. Economically, investment, cooperation, and trade between China and Turkey have grown significantly. Regarding culture, Turkey and China have held more cultural exchange activities, and the number of tourists has increased rapidly. This study covers the political, economic, and cultural relations between China and Turkey before and after the Belt and Road Initiative framework. By analyzing the changes in bilateral relations, this research discusses the existence of the "Belt and Road" initiative in Turkey and its impact on China-Turkish relations.

"Belt and Road" is China's foreign policy, while Turkey is the middle corridor between "Belt and Road" and Eurasia. Understand the new status quo of China-Turkish relations under the "Belt and Road" initiative, discover the opportunities and challenges of China-Turkey cooperation, and analyze how Turkey can make full use of the potential advantages of the "Belt and Road" construction and how China and Turkey can achieve a win-win relationship.

1.2. Research Questions

This research aims to answer what cooperation has been carried out between China and Turkey in politics, economy, and culture after the announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative. What is happening between China and Turkey under BRI? How do we understand this cooperation from a bilateral strategic docking perspective? And what can we learn about potential risks and opportunities from the recent interaction of China and Turkey under BRI?

This research will explore the evidence of the outcomes of the BRI in China-Turkey relations in terms of politics, economy, and culture to answer the questions above. Accordingly, the author believes that the BRI has provided a platform for China and Turkey to boost bilateral political interaction, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange. After 2013, political interaction between China and Turkey has increased, and bilateral political relations are steadily developing into a further strategic cooperative phase. The cooperation between the two countries has increased, especially in energy, trade, finance, investment, infrastructure, transportation, and telecommunication, which are the primary content of the BRI in development and connectivity. Culturally, both countries have better understood each other's culture and people due to the significant governmental support in cultural exchange activities and tourism. China and Turkey have common interests, which could be harmonized by optimizing each other's unique economic and geographic advantages by cooperating and connecting. The BRI is such a platform that could provide China and Turkey to a long-term strategic partnership to explore and develop potential not only between each other but also between the countries along the BRI route.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Neoliberalism

Since Xi's proposals in 2013, China's BRI has been the subject of many International Relations (IR) studies in the academia. The focal point of the "Belt and

Road" initiative revolves around the idea of international cooperation. This collaboration encompasses working together between nations, regions, and sub-regions. International institutions play a crucial role in promoting cooperation and ensuring its success. Existing international relations theories on international cooperation include several concepts, such as realism, liberalism, constructivism, functionalism, and regionalism. Realists generally consider China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) a strategy to capitalize on its economy and influence neighboring countries, thereby redefining the geopolitical landscape in Asia to challenge the US in the Asia Pacific region.¹ Liberal scholars argue that BRI is consistent with the current rule-based world order.² However, constructivists have questioned the overemphasis on materialism in these IR theories and highlighted the influence of ideas and perceptions of decision-makers on foreign policy-making. Scholars have also conducted extensive research on international cooperation, analyzing the significance of international institutions in promoting cooperation, primarily attributed to the theory of neoliberalism.³ Scholars have conducted extensive research on international cooperation, covering macro analysis at the system level as well as meso analysis at the institutional and cultural consensus level.⁴ The significance of international institutions in promoting cooperation has been primarily attributed to the theory of neoliberalism.

The concept of interdependence, introduced by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye in the late 1970s, is a key idea in the perspective of neoliberal theory.⁵ With the continuous development of globalization, relations between countries have become

¹Lucio Blanco Pitlo III, "China's 'One Belt, One Road' To Where? Why do Beijing's regional trade and transport plans worry so many people?," *The Diplomat*, February 17, 2015.

Joel Wuthnow, *Chinese Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative: Strategic Rationales, Risks, and Implications* Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press. 2017.

Theresa Fallon, "The new silk road: Xi Jinping's grand strategy for Eurasia," *American Foreign Policy Interests*, 37(3): 140–147. 2015.

²Li Xue, "The strategy of China's periphery diplomacy under the OBOR initiative," *Financial Times Chinese*, January 11 2016, <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001065641>.

Mingjiang Li, "China's 'One Belt, One Road' Initiative: New Round of Opening Up?," *RSIS Commentary*, March 11 2015, <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/co15050-chinasone-belt-one-road-initiative-new-round-of-opening-up/#.WpjvJOUzOQ>.

³John Ikenberry, "The rise of China, the United States, and the future of the liberal international order," in *Tangled Titans: The United States and China*, eds. David L. Shambaugh (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers), 53–74. 2012

⁴Oatley, T. *International political economy: Interests and institutions in the global economy*. Pearson. 2011

⁵Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Boston: Little Brown, 1976.

increasingly complex and interdependent, creating a greater need for cooperation. Compound interdependence is a fundamental feature of international politics and serves as the background for international cooperation. Cooperative institutions enable countries to form common interests and tackle shared problems. By reducing distrust in the interaction process and making cooperation outcomes more predictable, institutions help to overcome the barriers that hinder cooperation, such as information and trust, transaction costs, and environmental uncertainty.⁶ The anarchy of international relations is not the primary obstacle to collaboration; the main impediments are the intermediate links that must be resolved to facilitate collaboration through the international system.

The international system consists of international organizations, negotiated rules, systems between governments, and international practices. The remarkable feature of this cooperation model is that it does not require a central authority to maintain it. Even if the conditions that led to the creation of the international mechanism disappear or the power of the hegemonic state declines, cooperation can continue.⁷ To ensure practical regional cooperation, it is essential to have solid regional institutions that can reduce deception in the interaction process and make collaboration more predictable.⁸ In summary, the international system is a means of international coordination that combats the adverse effects of anarchy and prevents various actors from pursuing their interests without regard to universal principles, norms, regulations, and procedures.

Neoliberalism has gained significant traction in international relations theory over the past few decades. At its core, neoliberalism emphasizes the role of the market in shaping and directing economic and political behavior, with advocates arguing that free trade, privatization, and deregulation are essential ingredients for promoting economic growth and development. In international relations, neoliberalism has been used to explain various phenomena, from the diffusion of democratic norms and institutions to

⁶Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.

⁷Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, pp.1-10.

⁸Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.

the emergence of regional trade agreements and the changing nature of global economic governance.

From a neoliberalism perspective, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is seen as a way for China to expand its economic influence by promoting free trade and investment across participating countries.⁹ According to neoliberalism, the market should be the primary driver of economic growth, and the government should create an environment that encourages free trade and investment. They firmly believe that China is unlikely to challenge or overthrow the liberal rule-based global order, as it has been one of the primary beneficiaries of the existing system. The liberal rule-based order is deemed exceptionally resilient, making it highly likely that the BRI will follow the game's basic rules.¹⁰ The BRI's focus on building infrastructure and promoting economic cooperation among participating countries aligns with this neoliberal ideology. On the one hand, the BRI could be considered as China's way of further integrating itself into the liberal order. China has relied on export-oriented growth, so it has a vested interest in maintaining global trade and prosperity. Building infrastructure collaboratively under the BRI aligns with the principle of comparative advantage, which is crucial for enhancing regional economic efficiency. From this perspective, the BRI is a way for China to pursue its economic interests while promoting economic development in participating countries.¹¹ The initiative's emphasis on building infrastructure, such as railways, ports, and highways, facilitates regional trade and investment. This, in turn, is expected to lead to increased economic growth and prosperity for participating countries. On the other hand, liberal

⁹钟飞腾：“‘一带一路’、新型全球化与大国关系”，《外交评论》2017年第3期，第6页。Zhong Feiteng: “‘One Belt and One Road’, New Globalization and Major Power Relations”, "Foreign Affairs Review", Issue 3, 2017, p. 6.

李巍：“从规则到秩序——国际制度竞争的逻辑”，《世界经济与政治》2019年第4期，第30页。Li Wei: "From rules to order - the logic of international institutional competition", "World Economy and Politics", Issue 4, 2019, p. 30.

¹⁰孙吉胜、何伟：“跨学科借鉴与国际关系理论的发展和创新”，《国际关系研究》2019年第4期，第55-56页。Sun Jisheng and He Wei: "Interdisciplinary Reference and the Development and Innovation of International Relations Theory", "International Relations Research", Issue 4, 2019, pp. 55-56.

¹¹“习近平在‘一带一路’国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲全文”，一带一路网，2017年5月14日 "Full text of Xi Jinping's speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation", Belt and Road Network, May 14, 2017

internationalists and institutionalists are of the opinion that the liberal rule-based order is robust enough to accommodate the rise of China, including the BRI. According to John Ikenberry, reinforcing the rules and institutions that Western countries have established over the last century can ensure that China accepts the existing rules and exercises its economic power within the current international order. He concludes that China needs to have the ideas, capacity, or incentives to dismantle the existing international order and create a new one.¹²

However, it is essential to note that China's dependence on and benefits from the liberal order do not necessarily translate into a wholesale acceptance of Western rules and values. As a rising power, China is no longer a rule-taker. Still, somewhere between a rule-maker and a rule-breaker.¹³ The Chinese leadership intends to implement incremental reforms to current international institutions rather than overthrow the existing international order.¹⁴ Li argues that BRI is a new round of China's economic opening up, as it aims to promote infrastructural connectivity and regional cooperation.¹⁵ Building infrastructure collaboratively between China and its neighboring countries under the BRI aligns with the principle of comparative advantage, which is crucial for enhancing regional economic efficiency. The BRI is better understood as an alternative regional development or governance model provided by China rather than a rule-based initiative. BRI's priority is to adapt to the actual needs of Asian countries so that more countries at different development levels can achieve win-win cooperation. As such, China's BRI

¹²John Ikenberry (2012), "The rise of China, the United States, and the future of the liberal international order," in *Tangled Titans: The United States and China*, eds. David L. Shambaugh (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers), 53–74.

John Ikenberry (2018), "Why the liberal world order will survive," *Ethics & International Affairs*, 32(1): 17–29.

¹³Zhaohui Wang, "The Economic Rise of China: Rule-taker, Rule-maker, or Rulebreaker?" *Asian Survey*, 57(4): 595–617. 2017.

¹⁴Weidong LIU, DUNFORD Michael, Boyang GAO. Discursive construction of the Belt and Road Initiative: From neoliberal to inclusive globalization[J]. *PROGRESS IN GEOGRAPHY*, 2017, 36(11): 1321-1331.

¹⁵Li Xue (2016), "The strategy of China's periphery diplomacy under the OBOR initiative," *Financial Times Chinese*, January 11, <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001065641>.

moves away from the rule-based principle that economic integration rests on a unified institutional and regulatory framework.¹⁶

Some critics argue that the BRI's neoliberal approach may only benefit some participating countries equally, say the initiative could lead to debt traps, where participating countries take on unsustainable debt levels to finance infrastructure projects. Some critics argue that the BRI could deepen economic inequality in participating countries by favoring more significant, more developed countries over smaller, less developed ones.¹⁷ Overall, the BRI's neoliberal approach to economic development is seen as a way for China to expand its economic influence while promoting free trade and investment across participating countries. However, the initiative's potential drawbacks, such as debt traps and economic inequality, must be carefully considered and addressed to ensure that the BRI promotes sustainable economic growth and benefits all participating countries equally.

2.2. Research Method

2.2.1. Data collection technique

The study will cover the essential research components: exploration, description, and prescription. Thus, the research will use qualitative methodological approach to collect data. The data includes journals articles, research papers, books, newspapers, and official documents and reports, citing sources. Thus, this study will proceed with three different data collection methods:

- A. Document scanning (official documents, agreements, reports)
- B. Literature Reviewing (China-Turkey relations, Belt and Road Initiative)
- C. Data collecting (collect data from Turkey and China government official websites, Belt and Road Initiative website, World Bank, etc.)

¹⁶William A. Callahan (2016), "China's 'Asia Dream': The Belt Road Initiative and the new regional order," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 1(3): 226–243.

¹⁷Lucio Blanco Pitlo III (2015), "China's 'One Belt, One Road' To Where? Why do Beijing's regional trade and transport plans worry so many people?," *The Diplomat*, February 17, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/02/chinas-one-belt-one-road-to-where>.

The primary sources of data in this article are the official websites of international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Energy Agency and various reports issued by them, the websites of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce, the National Bureau of Statistics, the Civil Aviation of China, and the foreign affairs offices of various provinces and cities, Turkey Websites such as the Turkish Statistics Institute, the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and embassies and consulates in China use relatively authoritative and objective data, and the statistical caliber of each indicator is consistent.

2.2.2. Data analysis

The research approach relies primarily on document analysis. Aiming at issues such as China and Turkey's cognition of each other's strategic intentions, the research inquired in detail about the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the official website of the Turkish government, and the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Along with consulting the representative newspapers and research results published by scholars in Chinese, English, Turkish, including published books, doctoral and master theses to be comprehensive and objective in elaboration and analysis.

This research approach also relies on data triangulation, qualitative data analysis methods, and the necessary use of descriptive data analysis methods. Data triangulation encourages the research to collect data from different forms, this study analyzes the data from the literature and official government websites and increases the research's credibility. In qualitative data analysis, content analysis and narrative analysis have been applied.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Action Plan issued by China's National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce, and a 2019 report entitled 'Locating Turkey in the Belt and Road Initiative', issued by the Foreign Economic

Relations Board of Turkey's Ministry of Commerce has provided fact to understand the relationship of Turkey and China during the construction of the "Belt and Road" Initiative from three perspectives: governmental relation, economic relation, cultural relation.

Professor Çolakoglu from International Strategy Research Center (USAK) thinks that the cooperation between China and Turkey under the benefit of Belt and Road Initiative can help to improve the living standard of two countries' people comprehensively. In analysis China-Turkey Relations: Rising Partner,¹⁸ Çolakoglu pointed out that the relations between Turkey and China have been quite rapidly growing in recent years. The Turkish-Chinese relations do not only concern the two countries, but also gained a global dimension. If Ankara and Beijing can develop an appropriate policy to overcome the existing issues in a positive manner, it can be possible for Turkish-Chinese relations to achieve the level of "strategic partnership". The Silk Road Project and opportunities to improve China-Turkish relations¹⁹ from Strategic Cooperation to Strategic Partnership,²⁰ both refers that the cooperation between China and Turkey is significant in both sides interest in terms of BRI.

Altay Atlı mentioned that Belt and Road Initiative connected the countries and people, especially the land transportation has profound interests, though it should not only limited in connecting, but also should become a community.²¹ In his article "A view from Ankara: Turkey's Relation with China in a Changing Middle East"²², Atlı examines the bilateral relationship between Turkey and China, starting with the economic realm and proceeding to the political context within which economic relations are pursued. Turkey is a part geographically, culturally, and economically of a greater Middle East. The investigation of Turkey's relations with China at the bilateral level is a crucial part of broader attempts to understand China's role in the Middle East. Again in the journal, "Turkey's Policy

¹⁸Selçuk Çolakoglu, China-Turkey Relations: Rising Partner, Middle Eastern Analysis/Ortadoğu Analiz, 2013. https://orsam.org.tr/d_hbanaliz/3selcukcolakoglu.pdf

¹⁹Selçuk Çolakoglu, The Silk Road Project and opportunities to improve Sino-Turkish relations. The Journal of Turkish Weekly. 2014.

²⁰Selçuk Çolakoglu, Turkey-China Relations: From Strategic Cooperation to Strategic Partnership,

²¹At, A. ÇınveYenilpek YoluProjesi.Analist, 2014. Sayı 44, Yıl 4, ss. 74-77. Middle East Institute.2018.

²²Atlı, Altay. "A View from Ankara: Turkey's Relations with China in a Changing Middle East." Mediterranean Quarterly, vol. 26 no. 1, 2015, p. 117-136. Project MUSE muse.jhu.edu/article/579561.

Towards China, Analysis and Recommendation for Improvement”,²³ Atlı views Turkish-Chinese relations through the three paradigms of the scientific inquiry into international relations, i.e. realism, liberalism and constructivism by incorporating interactions among multiple mechanisms and logics distilled from all of these paradigms, and concludes several policy recommendations to Improve China-Turkey relations, such as, encourage Chinese direct investment to Turkey; initiate economic cooperation projects; jointly product technology; use multilateral platform such as G20; establish China-Turkish strategic dialog and design Chinese and Turkish citizen employment program.

Özdaşlı addressed the essentials of the Silk Road initiative. She defined it as the New Silk Road Project in her article "China's New Silk Road Project and Its Global Influence". She also addressed the attitude of the other two great powers, the USA and Russia, towards the New Silk Road Project and their association with the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. According to her article, the New Silk Road Project is a multi-directional global initiative that aims to bring China's cheap work power and vast market network together with Europe's capital and Central Asia's resources.²⁴

Savkar first affirmed the significance of the "five links" proposed by President Xi Jinping, believing that this initiative is conducive to the prosperity and stability of the entire Eurasian region. Secondly, he believes that Turkey has also been committed to revitalizing the ancient Silk Road, and the two sides should devote themselves to building a sea and land transportation network in West Asia and the Middle East in the next step. Ozlen Savkar believes that the strategic docking of the two parties has created many jobs, which has alleviated the energy supply shortage in the region to a certain extent and is conducive to security and stability. The strategic alignment will further increase China's infrastructure investment level, promote the development of transportation,

²³Kartav, İ. T. Analysis of Cooperation between Turkey and China under the Belt and Road Initiative, Xiamen University Master of Laws Thesis, 71-74. 2018.

²⁴Esme Özdaşlı, China's New Silk Road Project and Its Global Influence, Turkish Studies, 2015.

communication, and other industries, and greatly benefit the internationalization of China's RMB.²⁵

Turkish scholar Ezgi Canpolat believes Turkey has played an essential role in implementing the "Belt and Road" initiative.²⁶ As a critical link on the "Belt and Road" route, Turkey is one of the countries most supporting and willing to join the initiative. Through this project, Turkey can further consolidate its position as a bridge between East and West, help expand the South Asian market, and benefit from investment activities, foreign economies, and even energy. Ezgi Canpolat believes that there are four main challenges to cooperation between the two sides, including different expectations for China-Turkey relations, unstable relations between China and Turkey, trade imbalance and the impact of other factors, such as the United States and Russia.

Kartav believes that unlike the ancient Silk Road, which only took culture and economy as the starting point, the "Belt and Road" initiative will play its political function.²⁷ China will be more active in building an economic community in the "Belt and Road" initiative. Manner. At the same time, the "Belt and Road" will also provide new opportunities for the further development of education and tourism. Turkey plays a pivotal role in China's promotion of the "Belt and Road" initiative. The cooperation between the two countries will promote the interconnection of Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Europe. It will also help China, and Turkey to develop friendly relations with these countries. Idris Talha Kartav explained the political, economic, and social challenges from the perspectives of China and Turkey. From China's point of view, politically, China should pay attention to the political stability of Turkey. Turkey's military and political relations are very complicated. Economically, the Turkish

²⁵Özlen Savkar, Turkey will play an important role in the 'Belt and Road', "IMI Research Trends", No. 30, 2015, pp. 56-57.

²⁶Ezgi Canpolat: "Analysis of the Development of China-Turkey Relations under the Belt and Road Initiative", Jilin University 2016 Master of Laws Thesis, p.52.

²⁷Idris Talha Kartav: "Analysis of Cooperation between Turkey and China under the Belt and Road Initiative", Xiamen University 2018 Master of Laws Thesis, p.74.

economy is highly dependent on foreign investment, and the economic environment is constrained by changes in foreign policies, which could be a better signal for Chinese investors. At the social level, an essential social factor hindering China-Turkey cooperation is the unique Islamic culture. From the perspective of Turkey, politically, the relationship between Turkey and the EU has deteriorated, and the contradictions between the two sides on foreign policy, regional affairs, and refugees have gradually become prominent. Economically, Turkey's economic vulnerability is prominent, and its financial stability is not strong. From a social perspective, one of the main challenges is the need for more communication between China and Turkey.

Guo and Fidan pointed out in the conclusion of the published article that China and Turkey will continue to actively cooperate and strengthen economic relations in the future, and to a large extent, the "Middle Corridor" plan has been widely integrated with China's "Belt and Road" initiative.²⁸ Fidan expressed great expectations for the strong momentum of China-Turkey cooperation. With China's growing influence and Turkey's unique geographical location, the potential for deepening cooperation between the two countries is enormous. He believes that the docking of cooperation between the two countries is based on rational and interest considerations, but since the two countries have not yet fully established mutual trust, the effectiveness of the docking of cooperation in the next few years remains to be seen.

Director of the G20 Research Center, Akman, mentioned in the article that Turkey regards the "One Belt, One Road" initiative as an essential step to revive the ancient Silk Road. This strategy will help promote political, economic, social, and cultural exchanges and interactions between Turkey and China, Central Asia, South Asia, and other places.²⁹

Former Turkish ambassador to China, Ali Murat Ersoy once pointed out that the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum represents the fruitful results of the "Belt and Road" strategy of docking with other countries. He believed that by using

²⁸XiaoliGuo, Giray Fidan "China's Belt and Road. Initiative (BRI) and Turkey's Middle. Corridor: 'Win-Win Cooperation'", June 26, 2018.

²⁹M.Sait.Akraan, "Turkey's.Middle.Corridor.and.Belt.and.Road.Initiative: Coherent.or Conflicting" Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey, November 28, 2019.

this platform, China and Turkey seized the business opportunities of infrastructure construction in Asia and further promoted trade and people-to-people exchanges. Ersoy believes that the "Middle Corridor" plan mainly manifests in the bilateral coordination of transportation infrastructure projects and customs procedures, and his views capture the focus of bilateral cooperation.³⁰

Regarding the development opportunities of the "Middle Corridor," Henen and Wang point that Turkey's "Middle Corridor" plan as a part of the "Belt and Road" initiative, if it can be realized, will be very beneficial to the connection between China and Europe, especially in terms of time and resources.³¹ He further pointed out that China is changing its development model that relies entirely on exports, and the new policy and growth model will also prioritize imports. This policy also provides a significant development opportunity for the "Middle Corridor" plan.

Wang and Yang hope the prospect of the "Belt and Road Initiative" is very optimistic.³² The initiative has received positive responses from all walks of life in Turkey. China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative and Turkey's "Middle Corridor" plan have a strategic fit, and Turkey is expected to become an essential link in China's implementation of the "Vision and Action" in the future. In the future, China and Turkey can explore cooperation in multilateral systems, cultural tourism, transportation, energy, and investment.

Zan interpreted the "Turkish Dream" from a historical perspective. He proposed that the "Turkish Dream" is divided into three levels - "2023 Centennial Vision", "2053 Outlook", and "2071 Millennium Goals", each with its connotations.³³ Among them, the "2023 Centenary Vision" contains detailed policy plans and goals, which can be interpreted as Turkey's short-term comprehensive national development strategy; while the "2053 Vision" and "2071 Millennium Goals" are similar to a statement or belief, and

³⁰Ali Murat Ersoy, "Ali Murat Ersoy Turkish Ambassador to China Address",

³¹Abdul-Qadir Emin Henen, Wang Xiaobo: "Development Opportunities in the Middle Corridor", China Investment, Issue 15, 2018, pp. 58-62.

³²Wang Yong, Luo Yang: "Strategic Cooperation between China and Turkey under the Belt and Road Initiative", West Asia and Africa, Issue 2015, pp. 70-86.

³³Zan Tao: "Turkish Dream from the Perspective of History—Sino-Turkish Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative", "West Asia and Africa", Issue 2, 2016, p. 65.

there is no specific one yet—policy support and evaluation criteria. Unlike Wang and others who explored Turkey's perception of the "Belt and Road" in a stratified way, Zan summarized it into several aspects in a more general way. First of all, the "Belt and Road" will bring great value to Turkey; secondly, it is an excellent economic idea; thirdly, some Turks' doubts about the "Belt and Road" will be difficult to dispel in the short term; finally, the "Belt and Road" is not only an economic plan can also be interpreted in terms of security and culture to a considerable extent.

After an in-depth research on Turkey's attitude towards the "Belt and Road" initiative, Liu believes that the proposal and response of the initiative by China and Turkey is a two-way interaction.³⁴ To creatively propose that Turkey's attitude towards this initiative can be divided into three stages: early stage (2013-2015)—cautiously optimistic, slightly doubtful, and wait-and-see; the stage of strategic docking (2015-2017); the stage of complete docking (2017-present) - Turkey has clearly defined the positioning of this strategy in its national strategy.

In the research on China-Turkish international production capacity cooperation, Wei analyzed that the key to the production capacity cooperation between the two countries is to strengthen political mutual trust and security cooperation, further expand opening up, and enhance their respective competitive advantage of the industry, enhance the complementarity of the trade structure of the two countries, and achieve mutual benefit, win-win and common development.³⁵ After data analysis, Wei Min observed that the trade volume between the two countries has increased, and the potential for economic and trade cooperation is enormous; the flow and stock of direct investment have increased significantly, and the prospects for production capacity cooperation are broad. But in the market of economic globalization. Under market conditions, Turkey's domestic security and institutional environment have become the most prominent obstacles restricting China-Turkey cooperation in production capacity.

³⁴Liu Xin: "Turkey and the 'Belt and Road' Initiative", International Research Reference, No. 7, 2018, pp. 14-19.

³⁵Wei Min: "Risks and Countermeasures of China-Turkey International Production Capacity Cooperation under the Background of the 'Belt and Road Initiative'", International Economic Cooperation, Issue 5, 2017, pp. 14-19.

Regarding the risks faced by the two countries in the "Belt and Road" cooperation, Wang and others believe that Turkey does not have enough understanding of the framework and specific content of the "Belt and Road" initiative. The two countries face a certain degree of competition in geopolitics, and the two countries' existing international trade mechanism and product standards are inconsistent.³⁶ They believe that the main reasons for the risk are that the two countries have different expectations for the "Belt and Road" initiative, geopolitical competition, poor communication between the two countries, and information asymmetry.

Wang, Zhao, and Yue researched Turkey's natural gas strategic position under the framework of the "Belt and Road Initiative" and analyzed its development challenges based on a comprehensive grasp of the status quo of Turkey's natural gas industry.³⁷ They believe that the most prominent challenges facing Turkey's natural gas development are geopolitics and regional security issues. For example, the construction of the Turkey-Iraq oil pipeline is often disturbed by the Kurdish issue on the border between the two countries.

4. SIGNIFICANCE AND LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

4.1. Significance of the Research

This research exploring the political, economic, and cultural relationship between China and Turkey under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework is significant for several reasons. The BRI is a massive infrastructure and investment project that spans several countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa. Turkey, a crucial country located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, is an essential partner for China in the BRI initiative. Understanding how China and Turkey's relationship has evolved under the BRI framework is crucial to assessing the initiative's success. The BRI aims to promote

³⁶Wang Yong, Hope, Luo Yang: "Strategic Cooperation between China and Turkey under the Belt and Road Initiative", *West Asia and Africa*, No. 6, 2015, pp. 70-86.

³⁷Wang Luxin, Zhao Xianliang, Yue Laiqun: "The Strategic Position of Turkey's Natural Gas from the Perspective of 'The Belt and Road Initiative'", *International Petroleum Economics*, 12, 2015, pp. 66-72.

economic cooperation and development among participating countries, and China and Turkey's cooperative relationship is a significant indicator of the initiative's progress. Researching this relationship can help identify the challenges and opportunities that the BRI presents for both countries.

Moreover, understanding the dynamics of China and Turkey's trade relationship under the BRI can also provide insights into the broader geopolitical implications of the initiative. The BRI has been seen as a means for China to increase its global influence. Turkey's position as a NATO member and a potential gateway to Europe makes its participation in the initiative significant. Researching China and Turkey's trade relationship under the BRI framework can help shed light on the initiative's economic, political, and strategic implications for both countries and the broader region.

4.2. Limitation of the Research

The scope of this study is limited to examining the relationship between China and Turkey, with a timeframe spanning from the inception of diplomatic relations to the present day, using the year 2013 as a pivotal point of transition due to the establishment of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The research initially provides an overview of China-Turkey economic, political, and cultural ties from 1971 to 2013, followed by an investigation into the impact of the BRI on these aspects of their relationship. It is important to acknowledge that this research does not encompass all the variables influencing the China-Turkey relationship. Consequently, there may be limitations in considering various factors. The primary focus of this thesis, however, is to analyze the perspective of the BRI as a key factor in understanding the relations between China and Turkey.

CHAPTER ONE

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS

During the early days of the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the main objective of China's diplomacy was to end imperialist control of the country and restore its independence and sovereignty. Chairman Mao Zedong proposed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which demonstrated China's willingness to form diplomatic relationships with other nations based on the principles of peace, mutual benefit, and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty. Following China's reform and opening up in 1978, Deng Xiaoping introduced the development concept of "hide one's strength, bide one's time and make a difference," which prioritized peaceful development, multilateral independent diplomacy, and advocated for de-ideologicalization of China's diplomacy, while still using Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory as the basis for analyzing international affairs and crafting foreign policy. These ideas still hold significant importance in guiding China's diplomacy today. In the late 20th century, China's diplomacy faced new challenges after the collapse of the bipolar structure and the end of the Cold War. President Jiang Zemin managed to help China survive the diplomatic crisis and pave the way for economic development. In the early 21st century, President Hu Jintao pursued peaceful development and maintained the policy of "hiding one's strength and biding time" in diplomacy. He also encouraged enterprises to "go global" to promote China's economic development. Since 2012, Xi Jinping has gradually shifted from "hiding one's strength, biding one's time" to "hiding one's strength, biding one's time, and making a difference" in line with China's development and the evolution of the international situation. As a result, China's diplomacy has become more proactive, with the concept of peaceful development transforming into the "Belt and Road" initiative.

1. FIVE DEVELOPMENT STAGE OF CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY

China's diplomacy has undergone five phases since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. In the first stage, from the founding of New China (1949) to the reform and opening (1978), Mao Zedong proposed that China's foreign policy should be independence, equality, mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence, and maintenance of world peace based on the changing international situation at that time.³⁸ The Soviet Union and the United States tried to maintain a bipolar structure. The socialist was divided, and the imperialist was of contradictions. With the rise of non-aligned movements, the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America flourished, and more and more countries declared independence. This international force has gone through a process of differentiation and reorganization. During this period, China rapidly increased diplomatic relations with developing countries, significantly impacting China's admission to the United Nations Security Council in 1971.

In the second stage, from the late 1970s to the late 1980s, Deng Xiaoping made major adjustments to China's diplomatic strategies and tactics and proposed "adhering to an independent foreign policy of peace."³⁹ Before the 1980s, China's foreign strategy had long been guided by revolutionary struggle and the establishment of an international united front. In 1987, Deng Xiaoping proposed that "peace and development are the themes of the times", and the primary goal of China's diplomacy changed from "supporting world revolution" to "creating a good international environment for domestic construction." Opening up to the outside world has become a basic national policy of China's socialist modernization drive. China's diplomatic strategy model has also changed from alliance and confrontation to independence and non-alignment. When

³⁸The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence is the national diplomatic programmatic policy proposed by the People's Republic of China in 1953. The current complete expression of the principles is "mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China.https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/wjs_674919/2159_674923/200012/t20001220_7950084.shtml

³⁹中华人民共和国中央政府，中国外交政策，外交部官方网站。Central Government of the People's Republic of China, China's foreign policy, official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. https://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2023-03/12/content_5745875.htm#

dealing with foreign relations, it takes national interests as the starting point, transcends social systems and ideologies, establishes and develops friendly relations with all countries following the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promotes Establishing a peaceful, stable, just, and reasonable new international political and economic order. Under the guidance of this idea, China and the United States formally established diplomatic relations on January 1, 1979, and simultaneously normalized relations between China and the Soviet Union in May 1989. Deng Xiaoping regarded solving "the two major issues of world peace and development" as the theme of the new era, and "hiding one's strength, biding one's strength, and making a difference" as the guiding ideology of China's diplomacy. The diplomatic thinking of Deng Xiaoping's era still has guiding significance in modern China's diplomacy.⁴⁰

In the third stage, from the late 1980s to the late 1990s, China adhered to the strategic thinking of "hide its capabilities, bide its time, and make a difference"⁴¹ and withstood the intense turmoil and great tests of the drastic changes in Eastern Europe, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the disintegration of the bipolar pattern. During Jiang Zemin's tenure as President, China adhered to an independent foreign policy of peace. "Peace and development" remained the theme of the times. China actively participated in economic globalization and promoted world multiploidization. It advocated coordinated dialogue and jointly safeguarded world peace, stability, and development. Economic cooperation with Asian countries, and negotiations with developed countries around joining the World Trade Organization (WTO), achieved a smooth transition from Sino-Soviet relations to Sino-Russian relations, and established

⁴⁰邓小平外交思想，共产党员网。Deng Xiaoping Thought on Diplomacy, Communist Party Member website, <https://news.12371.cn/2014/08/15/ART1408082493450926.shtml>

⁴¹熊光楷，中文词汇，“韬光养晦”翻译的外交战略意义。公共外交季刊，2010年2期，第55-59页。Xiong Guangkai, "Chinese Vocabulary, the Diplomatic Strategic Significance of "Hide Your Power and Bid Low Profile" Translation," Public Diplomacy Quarterly, Issue 2, 2010, pp. 55-59.

In order to conceal China's true strategic intention, Xiong Guangkai, the CCP's top military intelligence officer, made a fuss about the English translation of Deng's taoguang yanghui strategy. He alleged that the translation was wrong and completely distorted China's peaceful diplomatic strategy, and it thus had caused undue negative effects on China's normal foreign exchanges. Xiong claimed that "the core meaning of the expression is not to show one's strength, especially when one is strong and able, not to show off but to keep a low profile."

and developed friendship with the former Soviet republics and Eastern European countries. relations, overcoming the adverse effects of the Asian financial crisis, Hong Kong and Macao successfully returned to China, and the good-neighborly and friendly relations between China and neighboring countries have continued to improve and become more consolidated.⁴²

In the fourth stage, from the late 1990s to 2012, "peaceful development" and "mutual benefit and win-win" were China's external development themes.⁴³ International economic globalization is developing in-depth, the scientific and technological revolution is accelerating, and countries are increasingly interdependent. However, hegemonism and power politics still exist; terrorism spreads; economic development is unbalanced, and world peace and development face many difficulties and challenges. From China's perspective, the country's comprehensive national strength has been greatly strengthened; its international status has been increasingly improved, and its connections with the world have become closer. In the face of new situations and new problems, Hu Jintao pointed out that we should unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development, coordinate both international and domestic situations, and actively create a peaceful and stable international environment, a good-neighborly and friendly surrounding environment, a cooperative environment of equality and mutual benefit, and a system of mutual trust and collaboration. In the 21st century, China insists on "keeping a low profile" while also "making a difference", seeking a greater voice in the international community, promoting the reform of the world economic system, participating in global governance, and promoting South-South cooperation.⁴⁴

⁴²唐家璇，新中国外交的光辉历程，外交部网站，1999年。Tang Jiaxuan, The Glorious Course of New China's Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, 1999.
https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/wjs_674919/2159_674923/200012/t20001220_7950084.shtml

⁴³中国的和平发展道路，中华人民共和国国务院新闻办公室,2005年12月。China's Path of Peaceful Development, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, December 2005.
https://www.gov.cn/zwgc/2005-12/22/content_134060.htm

⁴⁴中国的和平发展道路白皮书，2005年。White Paper on China's Peaceful Development Path, 2005.

The fifth stage is from the 18th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) National Congress in 2012 to the present. In the past ten years, with the development of China's economy and the enhancement of its international influence, China's external activities have increasingly paid attention to its leading role in the world development pattern and China's relations with developing countries and regions around the world. In response to the current domestic and international situation in China, Xi Jinping proposed four new concepts for China's foreign policy in the new era: new major-country relations, major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, a community with a shared future for mankind, and a new type of international relations, marking the beginning of a new era for China's foreign policy.⁴⁵ Objectively, China has gained more conditions and space to implement its own ideas, strategies and policies. Subjectively, China has become more confident and actively integrated its ideas into diplomatic practice.

Xi Jinping proposed the "Silk Road Economic Belt" 10 years ago when he visited Kazakhstan in September 2013. In October, he presented the "Maritime Silk Road" in his speech to the Indonesian Parliament. In November, "Belt and Road" was established as China's national strategy at the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CCP National Congress and became the core pillar of China's new leader's ambitious "great power diplomacy" strategy.⁴⁶ Under Xi Jinping's leadership, China established three multilateral financial institutions: the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the Silk Road Fund, and the New Development Bank. Since 2012, China has become more proactive in diplomacy, constantly putting forward its ideas, propositions, and plans. In practice, Xi Jinping proposed the "Belt and Road" initiative, a grand and unprecedented plan to strengthen the connectivity of the Eurasian continent. China practices significant country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, and the "Belt and Road" initiative has become an important

⁴⁵王毅，全面推进中国特色大国外交。外交部官网，2022年11月8日。Wang Yi, comprehensively promote major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 8, 2022.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjzbzd/202211/t20221108_10801907.shtml

⁴⁶“一带一路”：国家战略的重大创新，中国共产党新闻网，2016年9月。“Belt and Road”：A major innovation in national strategy, Chinese Communist Party News website, September 2016. <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0907/c64387-28696571.html>

starting point for major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.⁴⁷ Ten years later, with the implementation of Xi Jinping's "great power diplomacy" strategy, people discovered that he not only displayed unparalleled influence in China, but was also ambitious and resourceful on the international stage.

China's commitment to promoting institutions and programs such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road Initiative extends the theory of peaceful development. Through these initiatives, especially through infrastructure financing and construction projects, China attempts to further promote China and its neighbors to achieve their economic development prospects and maintain peace, stability, and security in the Asia-Pacific region.⁴⁸ In fact, Xi Jinping hopes to usher in a new era of more proactive international economic diplomacy through China's high-profile development projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.⁴⁹ Xi Jinping said in a speech in 2014: "We have been working hard to promote China's foreign policy goals in both theory and practice, and continuously enriches the strategic theoretical thinking of peaceful development."⁵⁰ These measures constitute China's foreign policy with Xi Jinping's characteristics. But the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation is more than just making China strong again.⁵¹ Instead, China appears committed to reshaping the world into a community with a shared future for mankind through initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative and a new type of significant power relations.⁵² Therefore, the status of the Belt and Road Initiative in

⁴⁷王毅，全面推进中国特色大国外交。外交部官网，2022年11月8日。

Wang Yi, comprehensively promote major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 8, 2022.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjzbzd/202211/t20221108_10801907.shtml

⁴⁸Xuetong Yan, "From keeping a low profile to striving for achievement", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 7(2): 153–184. 2014.

⁴⁹Hong Yu, "Motivation behind China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiatives and establishment of the Asian infrastructure investment bank", *Journal of Contemporary China*, 26(105): 353–368. 2017.

⁵⁰“习近平希望看到更加有利于中国和平发展的国际环境”，2014年11月30日。“Xi Jinping hopes to see an international environment more conducive to China's peaceful development”，November 30, 2014.http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-11/30/c_133822694_4.htm

⁵¹Robert D. Blackwill and Kurt M. Campbell (2016), *Xi Jinping on the Global Stage: Chinese Foreign Policy Under a Powerful but Exposed Leader*, Council on Foreign Relations Special Report No. 74, <https://www.cfr.org/report/xi-jinping-global-stage>.

⁵²Jian Zhang (2015), "China's new foreign policy under Xi Jinping: Towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0'?", *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 27(1): 5–19.

China's external development, economic development and diplomatic strategy in the Xi Jinping era can be imagined. A thorough understanding of the connotation and impact of the Belt and Road Initiative will be beneficial to understanding the evolution of China's foreign policy, bilateral and multilateral relations.

2. THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

Chinese President Xi announced that "The Belt and Road Initiative " is the abbreviation of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" during official visits to Kazakhstan and Indonesia in 2013. The plan was two-pronged: the overland Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road. The two were collectively referred to first as the One Belt, One Road initiative but eventually became the Belt and Road Initiative. The "Belt and Road" initiative is committed to the interconnection of the Asian, European, and African continents and nearby oceans, establishing and strengthening connectivity partnerships among countries along the route, building an all-round, multi-level, and composite interconnection network, and realizing the diversity and independence of countries along the way, balanced and sustainable development.⁵³

Xi Jinping proposed to jointly build the "Belt and Road" from five aspects, namely strengthening policy communication, road (facilities) connectivity, unimpeded trade, currency (capital), circulation (financing), and people-to-people bonds, which are commonly referred to as the "Five Connect," which determines the main content of the "Belt and Road" construction.⁵⁴

⁵³Belt and Road Portal. <https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/>

⁵⁴习近平在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲（全文），“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛官方网站，2017年05月14日。Xi Jinping's speech at the opening ceremony of the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum (full text), website of the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum, May 14, 2017. <http://2017.beltandroadforum.org/n100/2017/0514/c24-407.html>

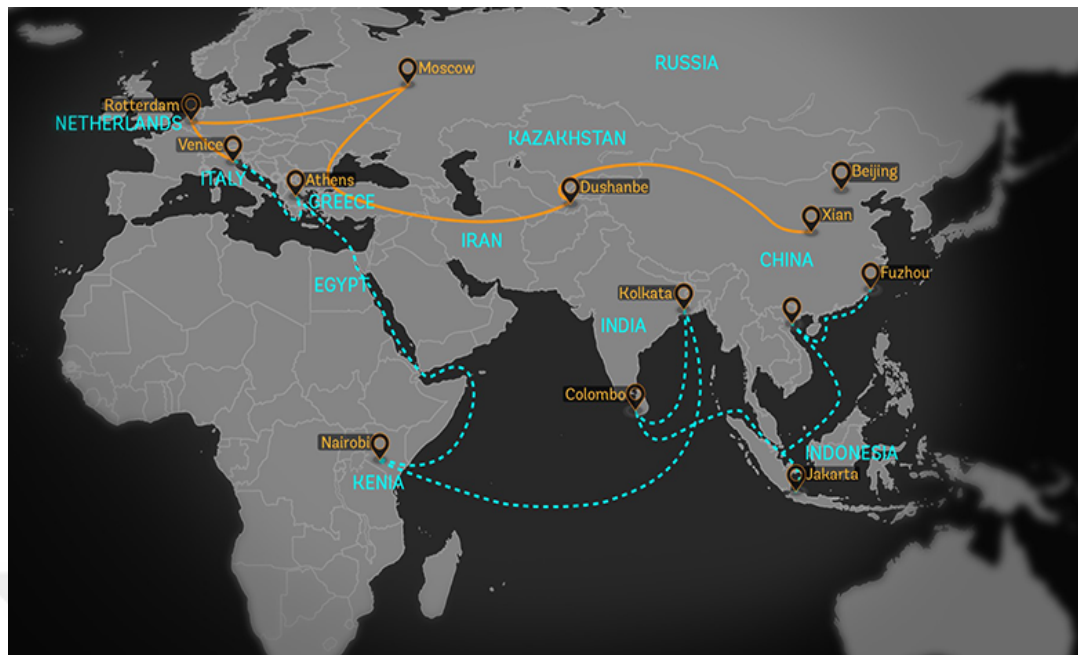


Figure 1.1 *Belt and Road Initiative Map. (Source: World Bank)⁵⁵*

The primary connotation and foremost idea is to build a more robust and better global connectivity relationship and improve the connectivity level of the entire world.⁵⁶ So far, the critical content of construction is mainly reflected in six aspects:⁵⁷

First, policy coordination and communication. This is the initial work for jointly building the “Belt and Road” and the basic guarantee. Under the basic consensus and framework of jointly building the "Belt and Road", the government departments of various relevant countries have conducted in-depth research and evaluation of their respective development strategies, worked hard to find docking points, formulated systematic docking plans, and then based on the docking development strategies, develop corresponding policies, and achieve coordination in policy formulation among different countries.

⁵⁵World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/regional-integration/brief/belt-and-road-initiative>

⁵⁶习近平在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲（全文），“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛官方网站, 2017 年 05 月 14 日。Xi Jinping’s speech at the opening ceremony of the “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum (full text), official website of the “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum, May 14, 2017.

⁵⁷张蕴岭, 袁正清, “一带一路”与中国发展战略, 中国社会科学院国际研究学部集刊, 2017 年 4 月。Zhang Yunling, Yuan Zhengqing, “The Belt and Road” and China’s Development Strategy, Journal of the Division of International Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, April 2017. https://www.ydylcn.com/skwx_ydyl/bookdetail?SiteID=1&ID=6912950

Second, economic corridor construction. This is the main content and core of the “Belt and Road” construction. So far, relevant countries' economic corridors planned and constructed under the “Belt and Road” framework include the following six.⁵⁸

- a. *New Eurasian Continental Bridge Economic Corridor*. It refers to the economic corridor formed along the Trans-Eurasian international railway trunk line from Lianyungang City, Jiangsu Province, China to Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and its surrounding areas.⁵⁹
- b. *China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor*. It refers to the economic corridor extending northward from China's Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and Northeastern regions, passing through Mongolia to Russia's central and eastern regions. The main purpose of building this economic corridor is to connect the "Silk Road Economic Belt" advocated by China with Russia's "Trans-Eurasian Railway" construction plan and Mongolia's "Steppe Road" initiative.⁶⁰ From the perspective of specific projects, there are three important construction projects: the first is the Moscow-Kazan high-speed railway project, the survey and design phase of which has been basically completed; the second is the China-Mongolia "Two Mountains" railway project, from Aershan City in Inner Mongolia to Mongolia Qiaobashan City, Guodongfang Province, will take about three years to complete; the third is the Ceke Port cross-border railway channel project, which connects China and Mongolia and promotes the

⁵⁸王瑞颖,“一带一路”上的六大经济走廊,华夏经纬网,2023年6月16日。Wang Ruiying, Six Economic Corridors on the “One Belt and One Road”, China Jingwei.com, June 16, 2023 <https://www.itaiwannews.cn/20230616/f49e3b7c-d274-805f-4547-f894a6d54e4e.html>

⁵⁹“一带一路”上的经济走廊:新亚欧大陆桥经济走廊,中国经济网,2017年04月19日。Economic corridors along the “Belt and Road”: New Eurasian Continental Bridge Economic Corridor, China Economic Network, April 19, 2017. http://intl.ce.cn/specials/zbjj/201704/19/t20170419_22127976.shtml

⁶⁰发改委网站,《建设中蒙俄经济走廊规划纲要》,2017年04月07日。National Development and Reform Commission website, "Outline of the Plan for Building the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor", April 7, 2017. <http://2017.beltandroadforum.org/n100/2017/0407/c27-21.html>

development of trade between the two countries. The project is currently under construction.⁶¹

- c. *China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor*. It refers to the economic corridor from China's Xinjiang via Central Asia to the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean and the Arabian Peninsula. The cooperation focus of countries located in this economic corridor is mainly on energy and transportation infrastructure construction. The A/B/C line of the natural gas pipeline project from Turkmenistan to China has completed the construction task and has been successfully ventilated, and the D line is still under construction; the Angren thermal power plant built by China in Uzbekistan has been completed and generates electricity; China's construction project in Tajikistan the first phase of the Dushanbe No. 2 Thermal Power Plant built by China has been connected to the grid to generate electricity and heat; the Waya (Vahdat-Yawan) Railway Project built by China in Tajikistan has been successfully completed and opened to traffic; the Anyi Railway Project built by China in Turkey The (Ankara-Istanbul) high-speed railway has also been successfully opened to traffic; the "Angren-Pap" railway tunnel built by China in Uzbekistan has also been completed and opened to traffic.⁶²
- d. *China-Pakistan Economic Corridor*. It refers to the economic corridor formed along the surrounding areas from Kashgar in Xinjiang, China to Gwadar Port in Pakistan. The construction projects of this economic corridor involve transportation infrastructure, energy infrastructure, ports, park development, marine resource development and other fields.

⁶¹发改委网站,《建设中蒙俄经济走廊规划纲要》,2017年04月07日。National Development and Reform Commission website, "Outline of the Plan for Building the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor", April 7, 2017. <http://2017.beltandroadforum.org/n100/2017/0407/c27-21.html>

⁶²丝路新观察,中国-中亚-西亚经济走廊为何重要? 2023年1月28日。A new look at the Silk Road: why is the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor important? January 28, 2023. <http://www.siluxgc.com/static/content/rcmnd/2023-01-28/1069010473116110848.html>

From the perspective of transportation infrastructure construction, the first is the second phase expansion project of the Karakoram Highway, which will further extend the current Karakoram Highway into the hinterland of Pakistan; the second is the construction of a highway connecting the Sukkur to Multan section in Pakistan. The third project is to upgrade Pakistan's No. 1 railway trunk line to associate it with China better.

From the perspective of energy construction projects, the first is the Sahiwal Power Station project in Punjab Province, Pakistan, which was put into operation on June 8, 2017, which can meet approximately 25% of Pakistan's electricity demand; the second is the Port Qasim coal-fired power station project. It is expected to be completed in June 2018, which will solve the electricity problem of more than 10 million people (China Thermal Power Grid, 2017); third, the Karot Hydropower Station project is expected to be completed in 2021, with an annual power supply of approximately 3.2 billion kilowatt hours. In addition, the Gwadar Port construction project is also a very important project, including the construction of coastal highways, breakwaters, international airports, free trade zone infrastructure, etc.⁶³

- e. *Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor*. It refers to an economic corridor from southwest China to India via Myanmar and Bangladesh. Some call it the "Southwest Asia Continental Bridge Economic Corridor". The more important China-Myanmar oil and gas pipeline project has been completed among them. The natural gas pipeline was put into operation in October 2013, and the crude oil pipeline project officially started process in April 2017.⁶⁴

⁶³光明日报，瓜达尔港——中巴经济走廊的璀璨明珠，新华社，2018年8月26日。Guangming Daily, Gwadar Port - the shining pearl of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Xinhua News Agency, August 26, 2018. http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2018-08/26/c_1123331199.htm

⁶⁴姚遥，贺先青：《孟中印缅经济走廊建设的现状及前景》，外交学院，2018年8月30日。Yao Yao, He Xianqing: "Current Status and Prospects of the Construction of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor", China Foreign Affairs University, August 30, 2018. <https://softpower.cfau.edu.cn/col2462/74506.htm>

- f. *China-Indochina Economic Corridor*. It refers to the economic corridor from Yunnan and Guangxi in southwest China to the south through Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore. The more critical construction projects include the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway construction project in Indonesia, the China-Thailand railway cooperation project, the China-Laos railway construction project, and the Mohan-Boten Economic Cooperation Zone project jointly constructed by China and Laos.⁶⁵

Back to the *third* aspect of the Belt and Road initiative, the construction of "multiple countries and multiple ports" is a key component of constructing the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which mainly focuses on strengthening the construction of key ports along the route. The key ports under construction in China include Shanghai, Tianjin, Ningbo-Zhoushan, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhanjiang, Shantou, Qingdao, Yantai, Dalian, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Quanzhou, Haikou, Sanya, etc., while giving full play to the unique features of the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions. Key ports jointly constructed with relevant countries include Gwadar Port in Pakistan, Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, Colombo Port Container Terminal, Colombo Port City, Piraeus Port in Greece, Kyaukpyu Port in Myanmar, and Israel Maritime Port. Port of France and France, Port Said, Port of Ain Sokhna, Port of Damietta in Egypt, Port of Singapore, Port of Antwerp and Zeebrugge Terminal in Belgium, Port of Naples in Italy, Port of Kuantan in Malaysia, etc.⁶⁶

Fourth, Chinese enterprises "go global". The "Belt and Road" construction mainly focuses on projects and joint projects. Since we are doing projects, the most important force still comes from the enterprise. Since in the early stages of the "Belt and Road" construction, they are mainly major projects related to infrastructure construction, which require significant capital investment, long construction time, and high technical

⁶⁵胡必亮,“一带一路”倡议实施前景,中国海洋发展研究中心,2018年7月19日。Hu Biliang, Implementation and Prospects of the “Belt and Road” Initiative, China Ocean Development Research Center, July 19, 2018. <http://aoc.ouc.edu.cn/2018/0719/c9821a207196/pagem.psp>

⁶⁶中国一带一路网,六大经济走廊,2018年7月20日。Belt and Road website, Six Major Economic Corridors, July 20, 2018. <https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/p/60644.html>

requirements. They are generally more suitable for China's central enterprises and state-owned enterprises to carry out. However, as the "Belt and Road" construction continues to develop in-depth, more new business opportunities will emerge, and it will be more suitable for various types of enterprises, especially private enterprises, to participate. Through research, we found that after the "Belt and Road" initiative was proposed, Chinese enterprises have accelerated their "going global" pace, especially the construction of industrial parks. The Thailand-China Rayong Industrial Park is a typical example.

Fifth, financial Innovation. One of the core explanations for the low economic development status in countries situated along the "Belt and Road" is their significant deficit in development funds, necessitating external financial assistance as a crucial supplement. Since it is difficult for the current global financial governance system, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, to provide sufficient funds to these countries, new financial supplies must be provided through financial innovation. Considering the increased investment demand for infrastructure connectivity proposed by the "Belt and Road" initiative, the need for funds is even more significant, so new channels must be explored.⁶⁷

Therefore, President Xi Jinping proposed establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in October 2013 to support developing countries, especially developing countries in Asia, in developing infrastructure connectivity. investing in infrastructure construction in Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia and North Africa, Resource development, industrial cooperation and financial cooperation. In addition, the BRICS New Development Bank, which opened in July 2015, has also provided some loans to countries along the "Belt and Road".

⁶⁷ 习近平在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲（全文），“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛官方网站，2017年05月14日。Xi Jinping's speech at the opening ceremony of the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum (full text), official website of the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum, May 14, 2017. <http://2017.beltandroadforum.org/n100/2017/0514/c24-407.html>

China's financial institutions have also used financial innovation to provide more loans to countries along the Belt and Road, focusing on supporting infrastructure connectivity, production capacity cooperation, energy resources, social and people's livelihood and other fields. The Export-Import Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China have also provided substantial financial support for the "Belt and Road" construction projects.

Lastly, establish full-rounded cooperation. Usually, the essence of the "Belt and Road" initiative is to jointly build a new international cooperation platform through which all countries can cooperate in various aspects, including education, science and technology, environmental protection, medical care, tourism, culture, and etc. Cooperation in multiple elements will ultimately make the world and the earth where human beings coexist better.⁶⁸

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road initiative. Over the past 10 years, the "Belt and Road" cooperation network has extended from the Eurasian continent to Africa and Latin America. On October 18, 2023, the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held in Beijing, with representatives from more than 150 countries participating. The theme of the summit forum is "high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and joint efforts to achieve common development and prosperity." Three high-level forums were held during the forum, with the agenda being: *first*, deepening interconnection and building an open world economy; *second*, jointly building a green Silk Road and promoting the harmonious coexistence of man and nature; *third*, developing the digital economy and mining new driving force for economic growth. In addition, six thematic forums were also held during the forum to discuss unimpeded trade, maritime cooperation, clean Silk Road, think tank exchanges, people-to-people connectivity, and local cooperation.⁶⁹

⁶⁸胡必亮, “一带一路”: 为什么, 做什么, 怎么做, 中国人民外交学会。Hu Biliang, “Belt and Road”: why, what to do, and how to do it. Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs. <http://www.cpifa.org/cms/book/117>

⁶⁹第三届 “一带一路” 国际合作高峰论坛, 2023 年 10 月 19 日。The Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. 19 October 2023. <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/n101/2023/1018/c132-1190.html>

According to Chinese official statistics, as of October 2023, China has signed more than 200 cooperation documents on the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" with 152 countries and 32 international organizations. The level of investment and trade continues to improve. From 2013 to 2022, the import and export volume of goods trade and the amount of non-financial direct investment between China and countries along the Belt and Road increased by an average of 8.6% and 5.8% annually respectively. The total two-way investment with countries along the Belt and Road exceeded 270 billion US dollars.⁷⁰ Based on the same report, the overseas economic and trade cooperation zones built by Chinese companies in the jointly developed countries have created 421,000 local jobs. By 2030, the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" will lift 7.6 million people in relevant countries out of extreme poverty and 32 million people out of moderate poverty, and will increase global income by 0.7% to 2.9%. The essence of the "Belt and Road" initiative is international cooperation and promoting a new round of globalization. Ten years of practice have reflected the "Belt and Road" initiative's regional impact and demonstrated its unique cooperation methods and models, and cooperation paths, providing new ideas for international cooperative research.⁷¹

China has held three Belt and Road International Cooperation Summit Forums, and has established cooperation with partners in more than 20 fields including railways, ports, finance, taxation, energy, green development, green investment, disaster reduction, anti-corruption, think tanks, media, and culture which has created a platform for multilateral dialogue and cooperation. Over the past 10 years, the "Belt and Road" initiative has focused on interconnection and promoted the construction of economic corridors as the guide, with major channels and information highways as the skeleton, and relying on railways, ports, and pipeline networks, covering land, sea, sky, and the Internet. The interconnected network promotes the circulation of goods, capital, technology and

⁷⁰National Development and Reform Commission of Peoples Republic of China, People's Daily. https://en.ndrc.gov.cn/news/mediarusources/202112/t20211201_1306613.html

⁷¹National Development and Reform Commission of Peoples Republic of China, People's Daily. https://en.ndrc.gov.cn/news/mediarusources/202112/t20211201_1306613.html

personnel in various countries. China has cooperated with multiple parties to carry out more than 3,000 practical projects, attracting nearly US\$1 trillion in investment.⁷²

Participants in the "Belt and Road" initiative believe it embodies the spirit of the Silk Road, emphasizing peace, cooperation, openness, mutual learning, and mutual benefit. It promotes policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, financial integration, and cultural exchange among nations. This initiative is seen as a driver of global economic growth, an international economic cooperation platform, and a means to foster shared global development, ultimately contributing to a common future for humanity. According to the third BRI forum, participant countries look forward to continuing to strengthen cooperation, pushing the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" into a new stage of high-quality development, making more outstanding contributions to promoting international collaboration, promoting global economic growth, accelerating the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and jointly opening up a bright future of peace, development, cooperation and win-win.

2.1. The Strategic Objectives Of The Belt and Road Initiative

In 2001, China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has successfully integrated into the world economy. Now, it is not only the final assembly base and production base of many multinational companies but also, through improving the production chain, it has become the only country in the world with all industrial categories in the United Nations Industrial Classification. However, China's economic development has now entered a bottleneck period. Although China has become the "world's factory", its advantages are concentrated in mid to low-end labor-intensive industries. As labor costs continue to rise, this advantageous position will soon disappear. After the world financial crisis in 2008, the economies of developed Western countries were in trouble. Leaders of the United States and Europe were also aware of the problems caused by

⁷²第三届“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛, 2023年10月19日。The Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. 19 October 2023. <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/n101/2023/1018/c132-1190.html>

industrial hollowing out and financial bubbles and, therefore, vigorously advocated "re-industrialization." At the same time, they are increasingly wary of emerging countries such as China, India, Brazil, and Russia. The West requires developing countries to conduct international trade following its new standards.

China's economy has been in a low-tech stage for a long time. China's past innovation method was to achieve leapfrog development by introducing a large amount of foreign investment and absorbing and digesting alien technology. However, as Chinese technology approaches the level of developed countries in many fields, original innovation methods are encountering more and more resistance. The West can not transfer the most cutting-edge technology to China, and China's channels for introducing Western technology have been tightened. In terms of market, the main export markets for Chinese products are developed countries such as Europe and the United States. However, as developed economies are in trouble, Chinese companies must develop new areas and markets to continue to make great strides towards the world.

In the face of the above domestic and international challenges, China's economic diplomacy must respond actively. China has proposed a new economic diplomacy strategy. Its work focuses on, first, establishing a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation and avoiding confrontation between significant powers; Second. Actively participating in the governance of the global economic system and Reform; Third, strengthen regional economic cooperation through the "Belt and Road" initiative.

First of all, China's foreign trade and investment cannot rely solely on the markets of developed countries. After China joined the WTO, the main sales markets for its products were developed countries such as Europe, the United States, and Japan. However, in today's world economic situation, China needs to open up new international markets in the Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, and neighboring countries. Although some regions have relatively backward economic development levels, weak purchasing power and relatively small sales, they have massive potential for future development and their markets may become emerging markets. Most countries along the Belt and Road

Initiative are developing countries, and China can further explore its vast market potential through infrastructure construction and production capacity cooperation.

Secondly, the "Belt and Road" initiative promotes cooperation and exchanges between China and countries along the route and promotes politics through the economy. It is of great value in breaking down trade barriers in developed countries and reducing the negative impact of new European and American economic rules on the Chinese economy. The economies of China and the countries along the "One Belt and One Road" are increasingly interdependent and can form a "Belt and Road" group through economics, trade, investment and other means. Developing countries united as one can create a group advantage in the game with developed countries, which is conducive to developing countries' participation in formulating new rules for world trade and economy.

Xi's vision included creating a vast network of railways, energy pipelines, highways, and streamlined border crossings, both westward—through the mountainous former Soviet republics—and southward, to Pakistan, India, and the rest of Southeast Asia.⁷³ Such a network would expand the international use of Chinese currency, the Chinese YUAN, and "break the bottleneck in Asian connectivity," according to Xi. In 2018, the Asian Development Bank estimated that the continent faces a yearly infrastructure financing shortfall of over \$900 billion. In addition to physical infrastructure, China has funded hundreds of special economic zones, or industrial areas designed to create jobs, and encouraged countries to embrace its tech offerings, such as the 5G network powered by telecommunications giant Huawei. Xi subsequently announced plans for the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road at the 2013 summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Indonesia. To accommodate expanding maritime trade traffic, China would invest in port development along the Indian Ocean, from Southeast Asia all the way to East Africa and parts of Europe. To date, 147 countries—accounting for two-thirds of the world's population and 40 percent of global GDP—have signed on to projects or indicated an interest in doing so.

⁷³王勇等,“一带一路”倡议下中国与土耳其的战略合作,西亚非洲,2015年第6期。Wang Yong et al.: "Strategic Cooperation between China and Turkey under the Belt and Road Initiative", "West Asia and Africa", Issue 6, 2015.

On January 30, 2021, China has signed 205 cooperation documents on the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" with 140 countries and 31 international organizations.⁷⁴ In 2020, China invested US\$17.79 billion in countries along the "Belt and Road," an increase of 18.3%, accounting for 16.2% of the country's foreign investment; investment in critical industries has achieved rapid growth, and investment in equipment manufacturing, information technology, scientific research and the investment in technical service industry increased by 21.9%, 9.6%, and 18.1% respectively. In 2020, China's total import and export volume with countries along the "Belt and Road" was 9,369.6 billion yuan, an increase of 1.0% over the previous year. Among them, exports were 5,426.3 billion yuan, an increase of 3.2%; imports were 3,943.3 billion yuan, a decrease of 1.8%. China-Europe trains have made breakthroughs. In 2020, 12,400 China-Europe trains have been launched, and 1.135 million TEUs will be delivered, a year-on-year increase of 50% and 56%, respectively—73% and 80%.⁷⁵ According to World Bank, the costs of BRI "corridor economics" projects in all sectors already executed, in implementation, or planned to amount to US\$575 billion.⁷⁶ If completed, BRI transport projects could reduce travel times along economic corridors by 12%, increase trade between 2.7% and 9.7%, increase income by up to 3.4%, and lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty. Moreover, BRI covers wide range of international communities, it could create several profits for global development; naturally, understanding how to succeed is the main challenge.⁷⁷

⁷⁴孙敬鑫,于米“一带一路”助力全球发展治理,今日中国. Sun Jingxin, Yu Mi "The Belt and Road Initiative" Helps Global Development and Governance China Today. 2021-03-01

⁷⁵International Cooperation.Belt and Road Portal. Office of the Leading Group for the Belt and Road Initiative. Accessed February 27, 2020. https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/info/iList.jsp?cat_id=10076.

⁷⁶World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/regional-integration/brief/belt-and-road-initiative>.

⁷⁷James McBride,Noah Berman and Andrew Chatzky China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative, February 2, 2023 <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>

3. OVERVIEW OF CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS BETWEEN 1978-2013

3.1. China and Turkey's Political Relations

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Turkey in 1971, the political relationship between the two sides has developed rapidly, with frequent high-level exchanges, multi-level contacts, and irregular consultations. At the beginning of establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries in the 1970s, the most significant common interest was to fight against the Soviet Union jointly, so there were many bilateral political exchanges and cooperation. Turkish Foreign Minister Turan Guner once visited China and signed a trade agreement with China. In 1978, the Chinese Foreign Minister led a delegation to visit Turkey. They have received a cordial meeting with Turkish Prime Minister.⁷⁸ After the 1980s, the heads of state of the two countries exchanged visits many times. The political relations between the two countries heated up, an irregular political consultation mechanism was established, and many bilateral agreements were reached on different issues. During this period, China and Turkey have successively reached an agreement on a series of international and regional issues, such as maintaining world peace and promoting nuclear disarmament, promoting the establishment of a new international political order, and supporting the restoration of all legitimate national rights and interests of the Palestinian people. In addition, China and Turkey also support each other on issues related to each other's core interests and major concerns. For example, Turkey abides by the one-China policy and only maintains economic and trade relations and non-governmental exchanges with Taiwan. China strictly maintained its neutrality on issues such as Turkey-Greece disputes in Cyprus.⁷⁹ Many Turkish presidents, prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, speakers, and the then chairman of the Justice and Development Party and the current president Egerogan have

⁷⁸Xinhua News Agency: "Turkish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Meet and Treat Foreign Minister Huang Hua respectively", "People's Daily", June 14, 1978, page 5.

⁷⁹Huang Weimin: "General History of Middle Eastern Countries", Beijing Commercial Press, 2002 edition, p. 376.

visited China successively.⁸⁰ Chairman of the National People's Congress Li Peng, State President Jiang Zemin, Premier Zhu Rongji of the State Council have also visited Turkey, and mutual visits at the ministerial level are even more frequent. During President Jiang Zemin's visit to Turkey in 2000, the two sides agreed to establish a closer partnership based on mutual respect, trust, mutual benefit, equality, and joint development. In October 2010, when Premier Wen Jiabao visited Turkey, the two sides announced establishing and developing China-Turkish strategic cooperative relations.⁸¹ They comprehensively improved the level of friendly cooperation in various fields, the consensus between China and Turkey gradually increased. They supported each other on significant issues related to the two countries, such as Turkey's accession to the European Union and China's peaceful reunification. In addition, in September 2010, the Chinese Air Force participated in the joint military exercise code-named "Anatolian Eagle" held in Turkey for the first time.⁸² Some commentators believe that the activity was mainly attended by countries belonging to NATO, like Turkey. However, the invitation of the Chinese Air Force to participate in the exercise shows Turkey's desire to expand cooperation with China in the field of security and defense, and it also marks a new level of mutual political trust between the two sides.

3.2. China and Turkey's Economic Relations

China and Turkey established diplomatic relations in 1971. However, in the 20 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, China-Turkish relations developed slowly under the shadow of the Cold War. Only at the end of the Cold War did the relations between the two sides begin to warm up. In 2000, China and Turkey established a new type of cooperative partnership. The two countries' economies immediately entered the

⁸⁰中国外交部，中国同土耳其的关系，2023 年 7 月。Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China-Turkey relations, July 2023.

https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/yz_676205/1206_676956/sbgx_676960/

⁸¹Ding Gong. Forty Years of Sino-Turkish Relations: Review and Prospect. Arab World Studies. May 15, 2011. Issue 3. P20-P28.

⁸²Gavin M. Greenwood, China's Air Force Goes Abroad. October 2010.

2010<https://www.worldbulletin.net/article-comment/why-chinas-air-force-in-turkey-h64987.html>

track of rapid development, and the trade between the two sides showed rapid development. In the seven years from 2000 to 2007, the trade volume between China and Turkey grew the fastest, and the highest value once increased by 88.54%. After 2007, due to the impact of the financial crisis, the growth rate of China-Turkey trade slowed down. In 2009, the trade volume between China and Turkey dropped by 19.81%.⁸³ In 2010, China and Turkey further announced establishing a strategic partnership, signed several agreements in infrastructure and other fields, and reached a currency swap agreement.⁸⁴ Promote trade development. The total trade volume increased by nearly 50% in the same year. In 2012, Turkey became a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the trade between China and Turkey has further developed. By 2014, the total bilateral trade in goods between China and Turkey had reached 23.009 billion US dollars, reaching the highest peak in history. Among them, China exported US\$19.306 billion to Turkey, and Turkey exported US\$3.003 billion to China. China became Turkey's largest source of imports, second only to Germany.⁸⁵ From 2000 to 2015, the trade volume between the two sides increased from 1.205 billion US dollars to 21.59 billion US dollars, nearly 18 times.

China and Turkey both pay attention to the bilateral economic and trade cooperation. The bilateral economic and trade cooperation between China and Turkey has developed rapidly in the new century. In April 2002, when Premier Zhu Rongji of the State Council of China visited Turkey, he had an in-depth conversation with Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit, signed an agreement on mutual assistance and cooperation in customs affairs between China and Turkey, and passed a memorandum of understanding on China-Turkey collaboration in agriculture and science and technology. At the same time, a preferential agreement on China's purchase of Turkish cars was formulated. Under the consensus between China and Turkey, the two sides established an economic

⁸³何景熙, 土耳其的农业及其发展. He Jingxi, Agriculture and its development in Turkey. 2010-9-10.

⁸⁴National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

⁸⁵National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

cooperation committee. Chairman Erdogan's visit to China in 2003 showed that the relationship between China and Turkey had ushered in the "honeymoon period".

In 2000, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was only 1.2 billion US dollars, but in 2005, the bilateral trade volume soared to 4.9 billion US dollars. In just five years, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey has increased by as much as four times, with an average annual growth rate of 32%.⁸⁶ By the first half of 2006, bilateral economic and trade exchanges remained at 4.5 billion US dollars. At that time, Turkish banks were strong, and a Turkish guaranteed bank agency was established in Shanghai to further promote bilateral economic and trade cooperation. This has prompted more two-way investment opportunities between Turkey and China in the financial and business fields.

Table 1.1: *Turkey's Export and Imports from China From 2000 to 2012 (Source: Turkish Institute of Statistics (TÜİK) Data in Million USD)*

Year	Exports to China	Imports from China	Total Volume	Balance
2000	96.010	1,344.731	1,440.741	-1,248.721
2001	199.373	925.620	1,124.993	-726.247
2002	268.229	1,368.317	1,636.546	-1,100.088
2003	504.626	2,610.298	3,114.924	-2,105.672
2004	391.585	4,476.077	4,867.662	-4,084.492
2005	549.764	6,885.400	7,435.164	-6,335.636
2006	693.038	9,669.110	10,362.148	-8,976.072
2007	1,039.523	13,234.092	14,273.615	-12,194.569
2008	1,437.204	15,658.210	17,095.414	-14,221.006
2009	1,600.296	12,676.537	14,276.833	-11,076.241
2010	2,269.175	17,180.806	19,449.981	-14,911.631
2011	2,466.316	21,693.336	24,159.652	-19,227.020
2012	2 833.255	21.295.242	24.128.497	-18.461.987

According to Chinese statistics, by the end of 2002, Turkey had invested in 68 projects in China. The agreement shows that Turkey invested US\$54.05 million in China

⁸⁶National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

and US\$18.12 million.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, China has more than 50 investment projects in Turkey, and the agreed investment funds reached 11.08 million US dollars. In addition, the two parties have also made some progress in labor service cooperation and project contracting. For example, in 2002, the labor cooperation project contracted by Chinese companies in Turkey had an investment fund of 161.7 million US dollars. By the end of the year, 55.38 million US dollars had been completed.⁸⁸ The Turkish market has an annual contract share of 4.5 billion US dollars, and China can still make a difference in this field. On January 14, 2003, President Erdogan of Turkey's Justice and Development Party was invited to visit China. When Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji met with visiting President Erdogan in the Great Hall of the People, he said that China was willing to work with Turkey to continue to promote the two countries' development in politics, economy, and culture. Deepen cooperation on international and regional issues, promote the social development of relations, and develop healthy and sustainable relations between the two countries. When discussing the economic and trade cooperation between China and Turkey, Premier Zhu said that the trade volume between China and Turkey has been increasing yearly, and the trade imbalance is gradually narrowing. China hopes that Turkey will continue to maintain this.⁸⁹ Premier Zhu said China will host the Olympic Games in 2008 and the Shanghai World Expo in 2010. China welcomes the Turkish business community to participate and will provide the necessary convenience. At the same time, China will also encourage Chinese enterprises to invest in Turkey. Turkmenistan hopes China can strengthen cooperation in infrastructure construction, tourism, and other fields. Turkmenistan entrepreneurs are willing to actively participate in China's Olympic and World Expo site construction projects. The leaders of China and Turkey believe that by strengthening contacts and exchanges between the two countries'

⁸⁷National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

⁸⁸National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

⁸⁹Xiao Xian, Wang Wenwen. The Evolution, Problems and Future of China-Turkey Relations. Diplomatic Review. 2007, Issue 2. P34—P40

business circles, they will further promote the development of bilateral economic and trade relations between China and Turkey.⁹⁰

The economic cooperation between the two countries has continued to expand in recent years. The partnership between China and Turkey has inherent geographical advantages. The two countries are located at the east and west ends of Asia, with different natural environments, solid economic complementarity, and great potential for economic and trade cooperation. China and Turkey have complementary advantages in capital, technology, and markets. For example, China's exports to Turkey are mainly traditional products: textiles, clothing, steel, auto parts, furniture, toys, etc.; China's imports from Turkey are mainly chrome ore, copper ore, and other raw materials.⁹¹

3.3. China and Turkey's Cultural Relations

The exchanges between China and Turkey, especially the economic, trade, and cultural exchanges, have continued from the ancient Silk Road thousands of years ago to today and have never stopped through the changes of dynasties and times. The two ancient civilizations located at the two ends of the Asian continent have made essential contributions to human civilizations' exchanges and mutual learning across different cultures and religions, transcending differences and conflicts. In November 1980, China and Turkey signed the first cultural agreement. This cultural exchange program from 1981 to 1982 further promoted cooperation between the two countries in science, education, culture, art, journalism, radio, television, and sports. In November 1993, the governments of China and Turkey signed a cultural cooperation agreement, and the exchange projects involved various fields such as culture, sports, education, and news.

The humanities and education field is also essential in the bilateral relations between China and Turkey. On September 27, 2004, the Chinese Culture, Tourism, Education and Trade Center was established in Bursa Province, western Turkey. Yu

⁹⁰Li Wenyun. Zhu Rongji Meets with Chairman of Turkey's Justice and Development Party. People's Daily. January 15, 2003.

⁹¹Sheng Rui. China-Turkey Relations under the Belt and Road Initiative, Shandong Youth University for Political Science, 2015, November.

Hongyang, Chinese Consul General in Istanbul, and Owuz Kaan Koksar, Governor of Bursa Province attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony to establish the "Chinese Culture, Tourism, Trade, and Education Center". The director of the center, Nijat Yahya, said that the center's establishment would help strengthen the cooperation between Turkey and China in many fields. In addition, the center will set up Chinese classes on weekends so that Turks who love to learn Chinese can learn Chinese.⁹²

To commemorate the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Turkey, in December 2006, China launched a 15-day "Chinese Culture Week" in Turkey. This event mainly revolves around folk songs, dances, paintings, and photography of Xinjiang's regional landscapes in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Through the activities, the modern society, harmonious, stable, prosperous, and charming Xinjiang, was shown to the Turkish people. This activity has been highly valued and welcomed by the Turkish side.

The Confucius Institute, jointly organized by Hanban, Xiamen University, and Turkey Middle East Technical University, is the first Confucius Institute in Turkey. On November 28, 2007, Jia Qinglin, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, personally unveiled the plaque. In March 2009, the Confucius Institute at the Middle East Technical University in Turkey opened three Chinese classes simultaneously at the Ankara campus and the "Northern Cyprus Campus" ending the school's history of no Chinese courses.⁹³

Cultural cooperation is one of the crucial foundations for peaceful coexistence between countries. Cultural exchanges and exchanges are an indispensable part of civilization exchanges among countries. Although the two countries are located at the east and west ends of Asia, their cultures have many similarities. They are characterized by compatibility, the basis for cultural cooperation between the two countries. People-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and Turkey are also getting closer. During

⁹²Turkey's Bursa province establishes a Chinese cultural tourism education and trade center.
<http://news.sina.com.cn/o/2004-09-28/09033787625s.shtml>. September 28, 2004

⁹³Turkey's Bursa province establishes a Chinese cultural tourism education and trade center.
<http://news.sina.com.cn/o/2004-09-28/09033787625s.shtml>. September 28, 2004

Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to Turkey in October 2010, he held friendly, candid, and pragmatic talks with President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan. He decided to make every effort to hold the "Chinese Culture Year" in Turkey in 2012 and the "Year of Chinese Culture" in China in 2013. The "Turkish Culture Year" and other activities were held.⁹⁴ In 2012, with the theme of "Origin of the Silk Road Charming China," the "Chinese Culture Year" was held in Turkey. April 23, 2012, is "National Sovereignty and Children's Day" in Turkey. The China Youth Art Troupe visited Ankara, the capital of Turkey, on April 21 and exchanged ideas with local children through calligraphy and painting to celebrate the "Turkish National Sovereignty and Children's Day" and to add luster to the "Chinese Culture Year" held in Turkey in 2012. In 2013, China held the "Year of Turkish Culture" Events span the performing arts, exhibitions of the visual arts, including fashion design and architecture, performances and co-stars in music, dance, and opera, and presentations of literature, film, and television programs. In addition, artists from China and Turkey will also communicate with each other, jointly hold various cultural activities, carry out exchanges in the field of new media, and organize non-profit promotion activities.⁹⁵ The prosperous cultural cooperation between the two countries will push the strategic partnership to a new height.

⁹⁴Ding Gang. Wen Jiabao Holds Talks with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. People's Daily. October 9, 2010.

⁹⁵解芳, 一带一路背景下的中土文化交流, 上海大学, 上海. Xie Fang, China-Turkish Cultural Exchange under the Background of The Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai University, 2012.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE AND CHINA-TURKEY RELATIONS

Since the official established diplomatic relations of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Turkey, the cooperation between the two sides in politics, economy, culture, science, and technology has developed and exchanged in various fields. After entering the 21st century, Turkey shifted the focus of its foreign policy from west to east. China has become an essential partner of Turkey, and China-Turkish relations have also entered a new stage of development. In 2010, China and Turkey established a strategic cooperative relationship. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the "Belt and Road" initiative, which connects Central Asia, West Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, and Turkey's crucial geographical location is a part that must be addressed in China's Silk Road Economic Belt. The Belt and Road received positive responses from Turkey, and the two sides signed a memorandum of cooperation in 2015.⁹⁶ In the same year, the two countries established an intergovernmental cooperation committee mechanism responsible for planning and coordinating bilateral cooperation in politics, economy, trade, security, people-to-people, and cultural exchanges. In 2016, the first meeting of the mechanism was held in Turkey.

1. CHINA AND TURKEY POLITICAL RELATIONS UNDER BRI

BRI is a massive investment project that affects the international environment in many aspects, including the global economy and development, transportation and communication, culture interaction, climate change, global governance, and international

⁹⁶一带一路数据库, 习近平会见土耳其总统签署“一带一路”谅解备忘录, 新华网。
Belt and Road Database, Xi Jinping met with the President of Turkey to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative,
Xinhuanet.<https://www.ydylcn.com/zx/zdfzzc/340354.shtml>

relations. As a hub for major international trade, energy, and shipping routes, linking energy-rich Central Asia and the Middle East to major global markets, Turkey is in an essential geostrategic position and is also a regional power with significant influence in China's "Belt and Road" initiative. Turkey generally supports China's "Belt and Road" initiative and believes that Turkey should join the New Silk Road and interlink its "Middle Corridor" with it.⁹⁷ With China and Turkey's continuous advancement of the "Belt and Road" initiative, both sides have realized the importance of each other in politics and the region. Turkey and China's unique geographical and economic advantages are the two countries' most essential assets and should be fully utilized.

1.1. China-Turkish Political Interaction Under The BRI Between 2013 to 2023

Over the past ten years, the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" has achieved some results, attracting the participation of more than 150 countries and 32 international organizations, stimulating nearly one trillion US dollars in investment, and forming more than 3,000 cooperation projects.⁹⁸ On March 22, 2023, Chinese Ambassador to Turkey Liu Shaobin published a signed article titled "China's New Development Sends More Positive Signals to the World" in the mainstream Turkish newspaper Morning Post.⁹⁹ The article said: "that China promotes high-quality joint construction of the "Belt and Road". This year marks the 10th anniversary of the "Belt and Road" initiative. China will take the opportunity of hosting the third "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum and work with all parties to promote the 'Belt and Road' to achieve more fruitful results and add more vitality to global development." He also pointed out that China and Turkey are major developing and emerging market countries, they share many common interests in defending their rights, pursuing development and revitalization, and

⁹⁷施展,世界历史视野下的“一带一路”倡议, 俄罗斯研究, 2015 年第 3 期。Shi Zhan. The Belt and Road Initiative from the Perspective of World History. Russian Studies, Issue 3, 2015.

⁹⁸一带一路数据库, <https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/news>

⁹⁹中华人民共和国驻土耳其大使馆, 驻土耳其大使刘少宾在土媒体发表署名文章《中国新发展向世界传递更多积极信号》2023 年 3 月 22 日。

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zwbd_673032/wjzs/202303/t20230323_11047924.shtml

safeguarding international fairness and justice. China is willing to work with Turkey to share China's development dividends and modernization experience, enhance political mutual trust, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, benefit the two countries and their peoples more, and jointly make essential contributions to the world and regional peace and development.”¹⁰⁰ China holds a cooperative attitude to develop relations with Turkey. In the last decade, with the development of BRI, there have been frequent high-level exchanges between the two countries:

China:

In November 2015, President Xi Jinping visited Turkey to attend the G20 Antalya Summit and met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Under the framework based on the "win-win" principle, Turkey supports the "Belt and Road" initiative. China and Turkey signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Adjusting the Belt and Road and Middle Corridor Initiative at the G20 Leaders' Summit.¹⁰¹ During a meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Turkish President Erdogan, both leaders emphasized the need for strategic communication and alignment of development strategies. The two countries are set to sign a memorandum of understanding to promote joint construction of the "Belt and Road" initiative, which will provide important policy support for cooperation in various fields. China and Turkey will use platforms such as the Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to develop innovative cooperation channels and models. They will also discuss the expansion of local currency use in bilateral trade and investment, promote trade and investment facilitation, expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and deepen security cooperation to enhance their friendship. Erdogan welcomed President Xi Jinping to Turkey to attend the G20 Summit and expressed Turkey's willingness to deepen cooperation with China in various fields such as politics, economy, energy, culture, security, and tourism. Turkey also welcomes

¹⁰⁰Foreign Ministry of Republic of China.

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zwbd_673032/wjzs/202303/t20230323_11047924.shtml. Last accessed in 18 July 2022.

¹⁰¹一带一路数据库, 习近平会见土耳其总统签署“一带一路”谅解备忘录, 新华网。Belt and Road Database, Xi Jinping met with the President of Turkey to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative, Xinhuanet.<https://www.ydylcn.com/zx/zdfzcc/340354.shtml>

Chinese companies to increase investment in its infrastructure and other sectors.¹⁰²This means that under the framework of the "Belt and Road" initiative, the "Middle Corridor"¹⁰³ has been officially launched, and it also shows that the exchanges and cooperation between China and Turkey have shifted from text exchanges to the stage of practical operation. The proposal of the "Middle Corridor" plan has far-reaching significance. It involves the security and development interests of the countries along the Caspian Sea and the great revival of the ancient Silk Road interests and provides commercial information for them.¹⁰⁴ This plan has also promoted the simplification of administrative procedures in countries along the route and formulated basic rules for fair trade, maximizing the protection of the interests of enterprises in various countries.

In November 2016, Vice Premier Wang Yang visited Turkey and held the first meeting of the China-Turkey Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee Mechanism with Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Simsek.

In April 2017, Vice Premier Liu Yandong visited Turkey, met with Turkish President Erdogan and Prime Minister Yildirim, and held talks with the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister.

In July 2018, President Xi Jinping met with Turkish President Erdogan during the tenth meeting of BRICS leaders; in November, President Xi Jinping met with Turkish President Erdogan.

In June 2019, President Xi Jinping met with Turkish President Erdogan during the CICA Dushanbe Summit.

¹⁰²一带一路数据库，习近平会见土耳其总统签署“一带一路”谅解备忘录，新华网。Belt and Road Database, Xi Jinping met with the President of Turkey to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative, Xinhuanet.<https://www.ydylcn.com/zx/zdfzcc/340354.shtml>

¹⁰³The East-West Middle Corridor across the Caspian Sea referred to as the "Middle Corridor", begins in Turkey, passes through Georgia and Azerbaijan in the Caucasus region, traverses the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, and reaches China. It is an essential part of the revival of the ancient Silk Road. Turkey launched the "Middle Corridor" initiative, which aims to develop connectivity between the East and the West and has a natural synergy with China's "Belt and Road" initiative.

¹⁰⁴邓红英,土耳其外交转型析论,现代国际关系.2010年第10期.Deng Hongying: "Analysis on the Transition of Turkey's Diplomacy", "Modern International Relations", No. 10, 2010.

In April 2020 and July 2021, President Xi Jinping had two phone calls with President Erdogan.

In August 2022, Li Zhanshu, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, held a video meeting with Sentorp, the Turkish Grand National Assembly speaker. In September 2022, President Xi Jinping met with President Erdogan while attending the 22nd Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting.¹⁰⁵

Turkey:

In July 2015, President Erdogan of Turkey visited China and exchanged views with President Xi Jinping on a wide range of political, economic, and security issues between the two countries. President Erdogan promised to fight terrorist acts against China, such as the "Eastern Turkic Movement" in Turkey. President Xi Jinping proposed, "Based on mutual respect and win-win cooperation, China-Turkey strategic cooperative relations should be promoted to achieve greater development." In November 2015, the governments of China and Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding on coordinating the "Belt and Road" initiative and Turkey's "Middle Corridor" plan, providing important policy support for advancing cooperation with Turkey in various fields.

In September 2016, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan came to China to attend the G20 Hangzhou Summit.

In May 2017, Turkish President Erdogan came to China to attend the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum. President Xi held talks with Egypt, and the two sides signed three cooperation agreements; Member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and Vice Premier of the State Council Wang Yang met with him.

In December 2018, Yildirim, Speaker of the Turkish National Assembly, visited China. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council, and Li Zhanshu, Chairman of the

¹⁰⁵ 中国外交部，中国同土耳其的关系，2023年7月。Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China-Turkey relations, July 2023. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/yz_676205/1206_676956/sbgx_676960/

Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, met and held talks with him, respectively.

In July 2019, Turkish President Erdogan visited China.¹⁰⁶

It has been over eight years since the China-Turkey "Belt and Road" cooperation memorandum was signed in 2015. Although the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has dramatically impacted countries' development worldwide and caused many obstacles to international exchanges, Chinese and Turkish officials kept dialogue to enhance relations. Analyzing the purpose and outcomes of such political interaction is essential for understanding China and Turkey relations, especially under the Belt and Road Initiative framework in the last decade.

1.2. The Strategic Integration Of The BRI And The Middle Corridor

Turkey is a regional power with geopolitical status essential in the "Belt and Road". The "Belt and Road" essentially provides infrastructure construction assistance to countries along the route and better expands international economic and cultural exchanges. Based on the original intention of benefiting the country, the people, and win-win cooperation, this initiative invites countries over the world, especially countries along the route, to connect China closely with the world based on the cooperation concept of "co-consultation, co-construction, and sharing".¹⁰⁷ In due course, the Turkish government launched the "Middle Corridor" national plan to link East Asia and Central Asia take advantage of Turkey's geographical advantages, making it a transit point for the Eurasian continent.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Belt and Road Official Website. <https://www.ydylcn.com/gjgk/289585.shtml#ydylcyqk>. Last accessed in 22 May 2022.

¹⁰⁷李乘忠,车人干政与土耳其民生政治,史林,2010年第4期。Li Chengzhong. People Intervention in Politics and Turkish People's Livelihood Politics, History, No. 4, 2010.

¹⁰⁸The East-West Middle Corridor across the Caspian Sea referred to as the "Middle Corridor", begins in Turkey, passes through Georgia and Azerbaijan in the Caucasus region, traverses the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, and reaches China. It is an essential part of the revival of the ancient Silk Road. Turkey launched the "Middle Corridor" initiative, which aims to develop connectivity between the East and the West and has a natural synergy with China's "Belt and Road" initiative.

Turkey's interpretation of the intention of the "Middle Corridor" plan also focuses on the economic field, enhancing regional connectivity and improving infrastructure.¹⁰⁹ The plan's main objectives are to attract transit and foreign trade goods, develop integrated logistics products, implement effective freight policy, establish and improve transportation process technology, and reduce customs border inspection procedures and trade barriers. On a deeper level, through this plan, Turkey aims to strengthen the trading connectivity of the regions along the route and build Turkey into a logistics transshipment hub for east-west intercommunication in the Eurasian continent. At the same time, this plan also safeguards the security and development interests of Turkey itself and the countries along the Caspian Sea, coordinates the interests of Turkey and countries along the route, promotes the simplification of administrative procedures, and formulates basic rules for fair trade, which is the most powerful guarantee interests of companies in various countries.

In addition, Turkey hopes to use the opportunity of the "Middle Corridor" plan to improve its domestic infrastructure. Although Turkey is the largest economy in the Middle East, its domestic infrastructure could be more robust. The road damage rate is high, the railway network needs improvement, and the port needs more supporting infrastructure, which has become a significant obstacle to economic development. Therefore, Turkey hopes to take advantage of the opportunity of the "Middle Corridor" of the interconnection of Eurasian countries to attract investors to invest in the country's infrastructure construction and improve the country's transportation network and other infrastructure. Implementing this plan will make Turkey the core area of the Eurasian continent, which will help promote economic and trade development and coordinate the development of various cultural exchanges in the Eurasian region, thereby forming a Eurasian community centered on Turkey. Furthermore, this strategy can achieve mutual benefits and cultural exchanges between Eurasian countries, thereby deepening

¹⁰⁹盛睿,全球治理中的中土关系,世界经济·国际政治·国际关系学科卷,上海市社会科学界联合会,华东师范大学,2012年11月13日. Sheng Rui, Sino-Scholar Relations in Global Governance, World Economy·International Politics·International Relations Discipline Volume, Shanghai Federation of Science Society, East China Normal University, November 13, 2012.

communication and highlighting Turkey's crucial geographical position as a "Eurasian bridgehead."

Turkey attaches great importance to China's participation in this field. China's economic strength is unquestionable, and it has mature technology and successful experience in high-speed rail construction. Turkey's high-level executives have shown great enthusiasm for investment in Chinese companies and are interested in local investment. Chinese enterprises have been given preferential policies. In terms of energy, Turkey also encourages countries along the route to invest in their power station construction, aiming to build Turkey into an energy center in West Asia. Turkey's official, academic, and business circles' understanding of China's national intentions for the "Belt and Road" initiative is more about economic performance. It is believed that the "Belt and Road" initiative is an essential measure for the two countries to seek joint economic development. However, it is still necessary to examine China's actual intentions and actions of the "Belt and Road" initiative. Turkey has fully realized the economic development opportunities that the "Belt and Road" initiative may bring to Turkey. It believes that the "Belt and Road" is a plan to revitalize the ancient Silk Road and is expected to provide "wealth creation" development opportunities for countries along the route. Turkey actively participated in establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, applied to become a founding member, and contributed 2.6 billion U.S. dollars, ranking 11th in capital contribution. At the same time, the Turkish government supports China's establishment of the Silk Road Fund, appreciates China's "Silk Road Economic Belt" construction, and emphasizes that China's increasing investment in Central Asian countries to develop regional economies is consistent with Turkey's purpose. During the G20 meeting in November 2015, China and Turkey signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the governments to jointly promote the construction of the "Belt and Road," which will provide necessary policy support for the two sides to promote cooperation in various fields within the framework of the "Belt and Road." President Erdogan said that China is Turkey's third largest trading partner, and the trade and economic cooperation between the two sides is very effective.

The perfect fit of the "Belt and Road" initiative and the "Middle Corridor" initiative has provided China and Turkey, two emerging economies globally, with broader space and more significant potential. The seamless docking of the two initiatives brings new vitality to the "Belt and Road" and effectively integrates the Eurasian continent but also brings new opportunities for establishing friendly investment relations between China and Turkey and strengthening bilateral trade. This provides a good platform for diplomatic relations, further deepening cooperation between the two countries and an impetus for promoting the sustainable development of their respective regions and the world.¹¹⁰

At present, there is a severe trade deficit between Turkey and China. At the same time, Turkey's domestic economic development has slowed significantly, the unemployment rate has continued rising, and inflation has intensified. Turkey, facing internal and external troubles, urgently needs new ideas for economic development. China's "Belt and Road" initiative is an international cooperation development strategy, and Turkey's Eurasianist diplomatic strategy can be fully utilized, providing a significant opportunity to implement its "Middle Corridor" initiative.¹¹¹ The vast development potential of China-Turkey bilateral cooperation still needs to be fully tapped, and the strategic connection between the "Belt and Road" initiative and the "Middle Corridor" will open up a broader space for developing bilateral relations. It is hoped that through the "Belt and Road" plan, the investment cooperation between Turkey and China will be promoted, and the economic and trade development between the two countries will be balanced. The Turkish side stated that it would raise its cooperation with China to a strategic position and integrate it along the "Belt and Road" to promote exchanges with China in critical projects in the fields of communication base stations, energy, and high-speed rail, to enhance cooperation potential and promote the healthy development of political and economic relations.

¹¹⁰邓红英,土耳其外交转型析论,现代国际关系,2010年第10期。Deng Hongying. Analysis on the Transition of Turkey's Diplomacy. Modern International Relations. No. 10, 2010.

¹¹¹丁工,土耳其中等强国外交的现实性和可能性,阿拉伯世界研究,2012年第5期。Ding Gong. The Reality and Possibility of Turkey's Middle Power Diplomacy. Arab World Studies. Issue 5, 2012.

The two governments reached a consensus on the interests of each other. They respected the political and economic demands to realize the docking of the two plans of the "Belt and Road" and the "Middle Corridor." Therefore, the success of the strategic convergence of the "Belt and Road" and "Middle Corridor" between China and Turkey depends on the coordination and cooperation between the two countries on the convergence points of the initiative and the negotiation and resolution of the differences.

2. CHINA AND TURKEY ECONOMIC COOPERATION UNDER BRI

In 2015, China and Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding on connecting the "Belt and Road" initiative and Turkey's "Middle Corridor", injecting new impetus into deepening mutually beneficial cooperation and sharing the results of cooperation between the two countries. In the past few years, high-level visits between China and Turkey have increased economic cooperation and investment in various fields. The partnership has deepened, and trade and investment have been growing steadily. Transportation infrastructure and telecommunication are some areas where collaboration between the two countries has become increasingly tighter. Turkey has a strategic location that connects Eurasia, and it has become a hub for entrepreneurs worldwide due to its preferential policies and solid economic complementarity. The Belt and Road Initiative has significantly fueled the growth in the bilateral trade volume between Turkey and China. The two nations have signed multiple agreements for infrastructure and energy cooperation construction, and over a thousand Chinese companies are currently operating in Turkey, indicating strong business ties between the two countries.

China is currently Turkey's second-largest trading partner, most extensive source of imports, and 15th-largest export market. The two countries have successfully cooperated on various projects, including the second phase of the Ankara-Istanbul high-speed railway, the Salt Lake underground natural gas storage, the Kazan trona comprehensive development, the rail system vehicle project, and the Hunutlu coal-fired power station. Chinese companies have invested heavily in Turkey's energy, transportation, and telecommunications sectors, making China one of the largest investors

in Turkey. At the same time, China and Turkey launched the 1,500-kilometer optical fiber Silk Road construction project from China to the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, and Turkey; Huawei and the Ministry of Industrial Technology of Turkey Cooperated to carry out innovative city projects, ZTE and Alibaba respectively carried out e-commerce cooperation projects with Turkish companies; China Power Photovoltaic built 50MW and 300MW photovoltaic power station projects in Turkey. In addition, a group of high-tech enterprises such as China Railway Construction Corporation, China Machinery Engineering Corporation, Harbin Electric International, Shanghai Electric Power, and Chery Automobile has actively cooperated with Turkish enterprises to jointly build factories and make contributions to promoting technological innovation and development of China and Turkey along the "Belt and Road Initiative." contribute.¹¹²

However, the imbalanced trade deficit and the COVID-19 pandemic have negatively impacted the trade volume between the two countries. To address this, the two countries signed a Free Trade Agreement in July 2020, which is expected to boost their trade volume in the coming years.

2.1. Energy Cooperation Between China And Turkey

Turkey is situated at the intersection of Asia, Europe, and Africa, surrounded with the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea. The oil-rich Caucasus region faces the Black Sea and shares its borders with Middle Eastern countries such as Iran and Iraq. As it is adjacent to the energy-intensive area in the east and the world's largest energy consumption market in the west, it is a strategic hub and a crucial channel for the international energy market. According to statistics, about 73% of the world's proven oil reserves and 72% of the world's proven natural gas reserves are distributed around Turkey.¹¹³ With its unique location in the geopolitical center, Turkey has become an essential regional oil and gas transit and distribution center (Turkey Hub) as early as the

¹¹²Li Xiaomeng, Take the Express Train of the Digital Economy Together, Guangming Daily, April 27, 2019, No. 09.

¹¹³Mert Bilgin, Turkey's Energy Strategy: What Difference Does It Make to Become an Energy Transit Corridor, Hub or Center [J] . UNISCI Discussion Papers, 2010, (5): 113—128.

1990s, transporting oil and gas resources from Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, and the Middle East to the European market.¹¹⁴ In the EU's "Southern Natural Gas Corridor" strategy, Turkey is an important hub in its energy transportation chain, guarding the EU's energy lifeline to a certain extent. Take the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline as an example. As the first cross-border pipeline that bypasses Russia and transports oil from the Caspian Sea, its daily oil transportation capacity reaches one million barrels, meeting the global 1.2 % of the daily average oil demand.¹¹⁵ As another example, in April 2015, the construction of the Turkish section of the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline started, and gas flow began in the second half of 2017. The project's first phase will provide 16 billion m³ of natural gas to European countries such as Italy, Greece, and Albania every year, increasing to 20 billion m³ in the second stage. Therefore, Turkey's geographical location and geopolitical significance are crucial in the world energy map.

Although Turkey's geographical location is very superior and its surrounding areas are affluent in oil and gas resources, its domestic oil and gas exploration activity is low, and the exploration results have not been satisfactory, especially in the offshore waters, which have not fully demonstrated the potential of oil and gas exploration. In 2018, Turkey's oil reserves were only 4659×10⁴ t, and natural gas was 51×10⁸ m³. With the development of the economy, Turkey's energy consumption has shown a rapid upward trend in recent years. According to statistics from Turkey's Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MENR), in the past ten years, Turkey's energy demand has grown at an average annual rate of 6%, ranking second in the world after China.¹¹⁶ In 2019, Turkey's oil consumption was 4830×10⁴ t and natural gas consumption was 432×10⁸ m³, while oil and gas production were only 290×10⁴ t and 4.9×10⁸ m³ respectively, and the dependence

¹¹⁴Su Chunyu. Turkey's Central Asia Strategy and the Construction of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" Across Asia and Africa, 2015, (1): 72—83.

¹¹⁵Mert Bilgin, Turkey's Energy Strategy: What Difference Does It Make to Become an Energy Transit Corridor, Hub or Center [J]. UNISCI Discussion Papers, 2010, (5): 113—128.

¹¹⁶MENR. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanl Stratejik Plan(2010—2014) [EB/OL]. (2010-09-15) [2020-05-10]. <http://www.sp.gov.tr/upload/xSPStratejikPlan/files/mDCwi>. Last accessed in 22 August 2022.

on foreign oil and natural gas was as high as 92% and 99% respectively.¹¹⁷ Therefore, how to obtain safe and stable sources of oil and gas has become the primary goal of the Turkish government's energy policy.

At present, many international oil and gas pipelines are passing through Turkey. In addition to the above two, they also include the Trans-Adriatic Natural Gas Pipeline, the Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnection Pipeline, and the Iraq-Turkey Oil Pipeline.¹¹⁸ The position in the transportation market is increasing day by day. As a vital fulcrum of the "Belt and Road" strategy, Turkey strengthens cooperation with Turkey's energy industry, which is conducive to China's use of its unique geographical advantages to promote energy export to the international market.

As early as 2012, President Xi Jinping paid an official visit to Turkey and expressed his willingness to deepen bilateral energy cooperation. Subsequently, to promote bilateral nuclear power cooperation, the Chinese and Turkish governments, and the Energy Bureau signed the "Agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy" and the "Letter of Intent on Nuclear Energy Cooperation".¹¹⁹¹²⁰ In 2014, Turkey's Deniz Financial Leasing Company, Mars Energy Company, Sol Energy Company, and China Electric Photovoltaic Company signed a cooperation agreement on photovoltaic modules, which significantly improved China Electric Photovoltaic Company's presence in the Turkish market.¹²¹ In 2015, leaders of China and Turkey met twice again, and energy cooperation was designated as an important area of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries. At that time, Turkey's Aker Bank signed a document with China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation to provide credit support for Chinese companies investing in energy projects in Turkey, and the leaders of the two countries

¹¹⁷MENR. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlğı Stratejik Plan(2015-2019). <https://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Sayfalar.2010>.

¹¹⁸MENR. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlğı Stratejik Plan(2015-2019). <https://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Sayfalar.2010>.

¹¹⁹Trend News Agency, "Turkey to build third nuclear power plant together with China, August 8, 2018.

¹²⁰Wang Bing, Challenges and Promotion Strategies for China-Turkey Energy Industry Cooperation

¹²¹Zou Zhiqiang: "International Production Capacity Cooperation between China and Turkey under the Background of the 'Belt and Road Initiative'", Journal of Northwest University for Nationalities, Issue 6, 2017, pp. 131-139

decided to upgrade the energy cooperation between the two countries to a crucial area of strategic cooperation between the two countries. Turkish Minister Albayrak said that Chinese companies are welcome to actively participate in constructing lignite and natural gas power plant projects in the country and gradually promote cooperation in new projects to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results. At the release ceremony of the World Energy Issues Monitoring Report held in March 2016, Murat Mercan, the Turkish National Committee chairman, said that he expected more Chinese investment in Turkey's energy industry to help meet the country's huge energy needs. Moreover, Mercan also invited Chinese companies to participate in the 23rd World Energy Conference held in Istanbul. From this, the Chinese and Turkish governments are strongly willing to cooperate in the energy field, providing adequate support for promoting bilateral energy industry cooperation. In 2016, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) acquired a 51% stake in the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) project, which is being developed to transport natural gas from Azerbaijan to Turkey and Europe. The TANAP project is essential to the Southern Gas Corridor, which aims to diversify Europe's energy supply and reduce dependence on Russian gas. In July 2018, the AIIB provided Turkey with a US\$600 million loan to ensure the security of Turkey's natural gas supply. In the same month, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China issued a \$3.6 billion loan to increase the capacity of the Srivili and Tuzglu natural gas storage facilities. These facilities' natural gas storage capacity is expected to reach one-fifth of the entire Turkey.¹²²

To achieve energy transformation, Turkey has actively carried out energy cooperation with neighboring countries. At the same time, energy cooperation is important to the "Belt and Road" initiative, the Chinese government also pays more attention to Turkey's important role in the "Belt and Road" and has stepped up cooperation with Turkey's energy industry. Although fossil energy still occupies the leading position, countries worldwide have successively proposed energy strategies for the development of new energy, refers to new forms of energy other than traditional fossil energy. All

¹²²Selguk Çolakollu. China's Belt and Road Initiative and Turkey's Middle Corridor: A question of Compatibility. Middle East Institute, January 29, 2019.

countries have valued the development of new energy, and new energy has become an essential part of the world's energy system. At the same time, there is a phenomenon of polarization in the development of new energy technologies globally. European and American countries lead the world and, at the same time, set up technology export barriers. At present, there are mainly solar energy, battery energy, geothermal energy, wind energy, ocean energy, biomass energy, water energy, and nuclear energy. Most countries along the "Belt and Road" are developing countries with energy supply shortages and relatively backward development of new energy technologies, which have hindered economic and social development. Grasping the new opportunities of the "Belt and Road" and strengthening cooperation in the field of new energy are in the interests of countries along the route and have broad prospects.

China and Turkey have been cooperating closely on energy projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework in recent years. The BRI has provided a platform for both countries to deepen their energy cooperation and address their respective energy needs. After the Hangzhou Summit in September 2016, Xi Jinping and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed new documents on cooperation in energy and other fields, further demonstrating the broad prospects for promoting bilateral energy cooperation. One of the most significant energy projects between China and Turkey is the construction of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant in Turkey. The project is being developed by Rosatom, a Russian state-owned nuclear company, and financed by Chinese banks, with China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) holding a 49% stake in the project. The Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant is expected to have a total capacity of 4,800 MW and is set to become one of the largest nuclear power plants in the world. The project is expected to be completed in 2023 and will provide Turkey with a significant source of clean energy. In addition to the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, China and Turkey have also been cooperating on renewable energy projects. In 2019, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on renewable energy cooperation. Under the MoU, the two countries agreed to cooperate on Turkey's wind, solar, and hydropower projects. Chinese companies have expressed interest in investing in Turkey's renewable energy sector,

which has significant potential for growth. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China in May 2020, China has participated in the construction of dozens of energy projects in Turkey, including the EREN supercritical thermal power station contracted by CMEC (China Machinery Engineering Corporate), the salt lake underground natural gas storage project contracted by Tianchen Company, The photovoltaic module manufacturing plant established by CLP Photovoltaic in Turkey.¹²³ In addition to a good foundation for economic and trade cooperation, the strong willingness of the Chinese and Turkish governments to cooperate is also an essential advantage of bilateral energy industry cooperation.

Overall, the energy cooperation between China and Turkey under the BRI has been significant, with both countries benefiting from the projects. The collaboration on nuclear, renewable, and natural gas projects has strengthened the energy security of both countries and promoted sustainable development. The partnership is expected to continue, with both countries committed to further deepening their energy cooperation.

2.2. Finance and Trade Cooperation Between China And Turkey

Under the "Silk Road Economic Belt framework," China-Turkey cooperation focuses on traditional trade, infrastructure construction, direct investment, and other fields. investment and collaboration are increasingly diversified, including energy, transportation, telecommunications, equipment manufacturing, and finance. Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Turkey, Liu Shaobin said that in today's context of weak economic recovery and high global inflation, China will remain the main source of global economic growth. While achieving medium-to-high-speed growth, China strives to promote high-quality development and continues to expand opening-up, playing an important role in stabilizing the global economy.¹²⁴ Chinese-style modernization and

¹²³Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey. <http://tr.mofcom.gov.cn/article/zxhz/>

¹²⁴刘少宾大使接受伊赫拉斯通讯社专访，中华人民共和国驻土耳其共和国大使馆，2023年5月19日。Ambassador Liu Shaobin was interviewed by Ikhlas News Agency, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey, May 19, 2023. http://tr.china-embassy.gov.cn/sgxw/202305/t20230519_11079996.htm#:~:text=

high-quality development will provide new opportunities and broad space for global economic development and China-Turkmenistan economic and trade cooperation. In 2022, China's total economic output will reach US\$18 trillion, accounting for 18% of the global economy from 11.4% in 2012. In the first quarter of 2023, China's GDP was US\$4.1 trillion, a year-on-year increase of 4.5%, achieving a good start in economic operation.¹²⁵ At the same time, in the first quarter, China's overseas non-financial direct investment was US\$31.54 billion, a year-on-year increase of 17.2%. Direct investment in countries along the "Belt and Road" was US\$5.76 billion, a year-on-year increase of 9.5%.¹²⁶ Investment from China will bring more development impetus to relevant countries.

Currently, there are more than 1,000 Chinese-funded companies in Turkey. Infrastructure projects such as the Hunutlu Power Station, Salt Lake Natural Gas Storage, and the second phase of the Anyi High-speed Railway have been completed and put into operation; Chinese investment projects such as the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Kunport Terminal, ZTE, and Huawei deeply exploring the Turkish market; China-Turkish joint ventures NASTAS, TRENDYOL and SIRO all play an important role in Turkey's telecommunications, e-commerce and new energy vehicle industries. On April 24, 2023, the foundation stone of the Siro Battery R&D and Production Park in Bursa was officially laid. Siro is a battery joint venture established in 2021 by Turkish electric vehicle manufacturer Togg and Chinese battery manufacturer Funeng Technology, each investing 50%. It is Togg's primary battery supplier. Turkey expects Siro to contribute more than 10 billion euros to Turkey's national income in the next 10 years, help reduce the current account deficit by 30 billion euros, and provide 7,000 jobs. This investment from China will make Turkey a vital participant in the field of battery technology and make outstanding contributions to the development of new energy vehicles in Turkey.¹²⁷

¹²⁵National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

¹²⁶National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/yearbook/>

¹²⁷刘少宾大使接受伊赫拉斯通讯社专访，中华人民共和国驻土耳其共和国大使馆，2023年5月19日。http://tr.china-embassy.gov.cn/sgxw/202305/t20230519_11079996.htm#:~:text=

Table 2.1: Largest Acquisitions by Chinese Capital in Turkey During 2015-2020

Asset	Year	Acquirer Company	Target	Industry	Share %	Transaction Value (mio USD)
1 Fina & Kumport Ports	2015	Cosco Pasific, China Merchants, CIC	Fina Holding	Ports	65	940,1
2 Trendyol.com	2018	Alibaba Group Holdings	Various Investors, EBRD, Tiger Global	E-commerce	75	728,0
3 Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge	2019	Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Sichuan, Anhui, China Merchants Expressways	ICA	Transportation, Infrastructure	51	688,5
4 Netaş Telecom	2016	ZTE Corp	One Equity Partners LLC, Rhea Equity	Technology	48	101,3
5 TekstilBank	2015	Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC)	Public Shares	Banking	24,5	76,9
6 Demirer Cable	2018	Jiangsu Zhongtian Technology	Saudi Cable Company	Industrial Production	100	66,7
7 Boyracı Construction	2017	Evershine Group Holdings	Osman Boyracı	Construction	30	6,6

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce of China, as of the beginning of 2017, China's cumulative investment in Turkey has exceeded 1.2 billion US dollars, mainly involving telecommunications, transportation, energy, equipment manufacturing and finance, and other industries.¹²⁸ For example 2015, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) acquired Turkey's TEKSİT Bank for US\$325 million, holding 78% of the shares. It also led to a cooperation agreement between Turkey and the People's Bank of China to replace the US dollar and the euro with the Turkish lira and the Chinese yuan as the settlement currency. The acquisition of the ICBC is by far the largest acquisition by a Chinese company in the financial sector. After this merger and acquisition, ICBC controls all businesses and upstream and downstream supply chains of Turkish Textile Bank, including more than 50 Turkish outlets and thousands of Turkish employees. Turkish Textile Bank was established in Istanbul in 1977. It has more than 50 branches under its jurisdiction. Its main business is commercial loans and international import and export capital flow. One year after the Turkish Textile Bank was acquired, the total capital of ICBC (Turkey) Co., Ltd. increased by 120% year-on-year to US\$2.519 billion; the external turnover increased by 80% year-on-year, and the profit margin increased significantly.¹²⁹ As China's first financial enterprise in Turkey, ICBC Turkey Branch is a successful case in the financial fields of China and Turkey. ICBC's transnational investment is not limited to Turkey, and it has established nearly 100 branches in more

¹²⁸Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey, <http://tr.mofcom.gov.cn/>

¹²⁹中国人民銀行. People's Bank of China: <http://www.pbc.gov.cn/>

than 30 countries and regions along the "Silk Road Economic Belt." The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China has built more than 200 projects along the Silk Road Economic Belt, investing 200 billion US dollars in various countries' infrastructure and financial fields. Industrial and Commercial Bank of China's direct investment in Turkey can demonstrate financial cooperation between Chinese and Turkish enterprises, thereby enhancing the depth of cooperation between enterprises of the two countries in the financial field.¹³⁰

In the same year, China Investment Co., Ltd., China Merchants International Co., Ltd., and COSCO Pacific Co., Ltd. formed a Chinese consortium to acquire 65% of the equity of Kumport Terminal in Istanbul for US\$940 million and obtained operational autonomy.¹³¹ In May 2016, Turkey formally approved the Bank of China to invest and set up a subsidiary in Istanbul. In January 2017, the Bank of China was approved to open a savings bank in Lira with an investment of US\$300 million. The same year, BDDK, the Turkish banking regulator, granted the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and Bank of China the right to operate in Turkey. In December, ZiraatBank, a Turkish state-owned bank, signed a \$600 million credit agreement with China Development Bank. In addition, Turkish banks such as AkBank, İşBank, and Garanti Bank have established branches and agencies in China.¹³² Based on the above good momentum, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan further proposed that China can work with Turkey to establish an economic and trade cooperation zone in Turkey, and both sides will benefit from it. The excellent cooperation between the two countries in investment and trade has also laid a solid foundation for cooperation in other fields.¹³³

In order to promote the further development of practical cooperation between China and Turkey, China is negotiating with Turkey to sign a memorandum of understanding on digital economy investment, green economy investment and e-commerce cooperation;

¹³⁰Han, Research on Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Turkey under the Belt and Road Initiative, Heilongjiang University, July 2017ç

¹³¹COSCO, <https://world.lines.coscoshipping.com/turkey/en/news/companynews/1/2>

¹³²Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey, <http://tr.mofcom.gov.cn/>

¹³³Selpuk Çolakoğlu, "China Belt and Road Initiative and Turkey's Middle Corridor: A Question of Compatibility " January 29, 2019

promoting the convening of the 17th meeting of the Joint Economic and Trade Committee this year. China and Turkey continue to deepen the connection between the "Belt and Road" initiative and the "Middle Corridor" plan, further strengthen cooperation in new technologies and new fields, and promote the in-depth connection of industrial and supply chains and the in-depth integration of emerging economies.

Since the Belt and Road Initiative was proposed, bilateral trade between China and Turkey has escalated. According to statistics from the Ministry of Commerce of China, in 2013, the bilateral import and export volume of goods between China and Turkey was US\$28.32 billion, an increase of 17.4% compared with 2012.¹³⁴ Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$3.61 billion, an increase of 27.5%, accounting for 2.4% of Turkey's total exports, an increase of 0.5 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$24.71 billion, an increase of 16.0%, accounting for 9.8% of Turkey's total imports, an increase of 0.8 percentage points. Turkey's trade deficit with China was US\$21.10 billion, an increase of 14.3%, accounting for 21.2% of Turkey's total deficit during the same period. As of December 2013, China was Turkey's eleventh-largest export market and second-largest import source.¹³⁵

Table 2.2: *China-Turkey Bilateral Trade During 2013-2022 (Source: Ministry of Commerce of China and Turkish Statistic Institute (Billion USD))*

Year	Exports to China	Imports from China	Total Volume	Trade Deficit
2013	3,61	24,71	28,32	-21,1
2014	2,86	24,88	27,74	-22,02
2015	2,41	24,86	27,27	-22,45
2016	2,32	25,44	27,76	-23,12
2017	2,93	23,37	26,3	-20,43
2018	2,91	20,71	23,63	-17,8
2019	2,58	18,49	21,08	-15,9
2020	2,86	23,02	25,88	-20,15
2021	5,04	29,19	34,23	-24,15
2022	4,52	34,03	37,55	-29,51

¹³⁴中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

¹³⁵Turkish Statistic Institute. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=dis-ticaret-104&dil=2>

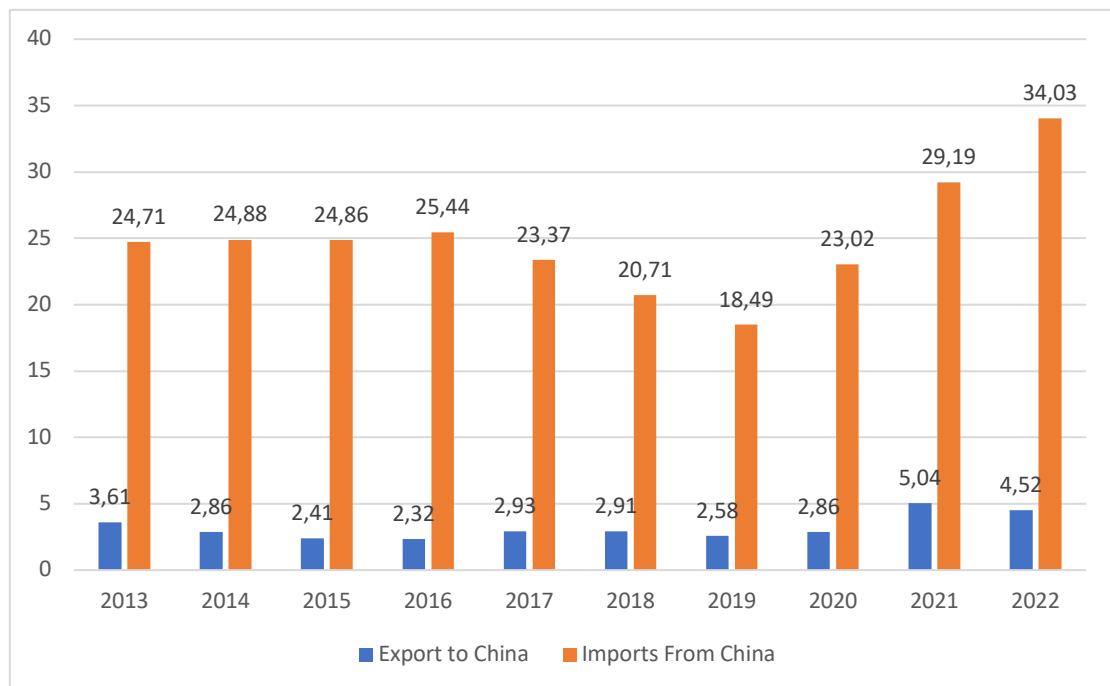


Figure 2.1: Turkey's Import and Export with China From 2013 to 2022 (Billion USD)
(Source: Ministry of Commerce of China and Turkish Statistic Institute)

In 2014, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$27.74 billion, a decrease of 2.1%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.86 billion, a reduction of 20.8%, accounting for 1.8% of Turkey's total exports, a reduction of 0.6 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$24.88 billion, an increase of 0.7%, accounting for 10.3% of Turkey's total imports, an increase of 0.5 percentage points. The earthwork deficit was US\$22.02 billion, an increase of 4.4%. China is Turkey's 19th-largest export market and second-largest source of imports.¹³⁶

In 2015, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$27.27 billion, a decrease of 1.8%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.41 billion, a decrease of 15.6%, accounting for 1.7% of Turkey's total exports, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$24.86 billion, a decrease of 0.2%, accounting for 12.0% of Turkey's total imports, an increase of 1.7 percentage points.

¹³⁶中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey.
<https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>
Turkish Statistic Institutw. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=dis-ticaret-104&dil=2>

percentage point. Turkey's trade deficit with China was US\$22.45 billion, an increase of 1.8%. China is Turkey's 18th largest export market and largest source of imports.¹³⁷

In 2016, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$27.76 billion, an increase of 1.9%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.32 billion, a decrease of 3.5%, accounting for 1.6% of Turkey's total exports, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$25.44 billion, an increase of 2.4%, accounting for 12.8% of Turkey's total imports, an increase of 0.8 percentage points. Turkey's trade deficit with China was US\$23.12 billion, an increase of 3.1%. China is Turkey's 19th-largest export market and largest source of imports.¹³⁸¹³⁹

In 2017, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$26.3 billion, a decrease of 5.1%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.93 billion, an increase of 26.3%, accounting for 1.9% of Turkey's total exports, a rise of 0.3 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$23.37 billion, a decrease of 8.0%, accounting for 10.0% of Turkey's total imports, a decrease of 2.8 percentage points. Turkey's trade deficit with China was US\$20.43 billion, a decrease of 11.4%. China is Turkey's fifteenth largest export market and largest source of imports.¹⁴⁰

According to statistics from the Ministry of Commerce of China, from 2013 to 2017, the total trade volume between China and Turkey exceeded US\$108 billion, the value of China's newly signed project contracting contracts in Turkey exceeded US\$7.3 billion, and China's financial investment in Turkey was nearly US\$650 million.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

¹³⁸Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-commercial-and-economic-relations-with-china.en.mfa

¹³⁹中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

¹⁴⁰Turkish Statistical Institute. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=dis-ticaret-104&dil=2>

¹⁴¹中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

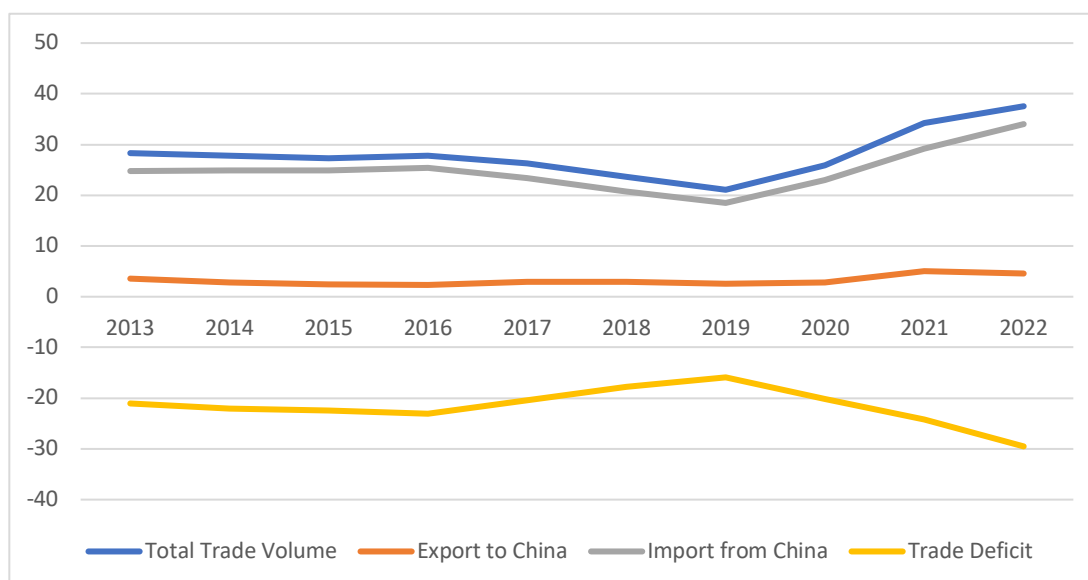


Figure 2.3: Turkey's Total Trade Volume and Trade Deficit with China (Billion USD)
(Source: Ministry of Commerce of China and Turkish Statistic Institute)

In 2018, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$23.63 billion, a decrease of 10.3%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.91 billion, a decrease of 0.8%, accounting for 1.7% of Turkey's total exports, a reduction of 0.1 percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$20.71 billion, a decrease of 11.5%, accounting for 9.3% of Turkey's total imports, a reduction of 0.7 percentage points. Turkey's trade deficit with China was US\$17.79 billion, a decrease of 13.1%. China is Turkey's 16th-largest export market and second-largest source of imports. From January to November 2018, China's newly signed engineering contract value in Turkey was approximately US\$1.1 billion, a year-on-year increase of 83%. China has become Turkey's second largest trading partner and largest source of imports in the world. The optimization of product structure and innovation in trade forms have injected new vitality into bilateral trade.¹⁴²

In 2019, the bilateral trade volume between China and Turkey was US\$21.08 billion, a decrease of 10.8%. Among them, Turkey's exports to China were US\$2.58 billion, a decrease of 11.2%, accounting for 1.5% of Turkey's total exports, a decrease of 0.2

¹⁴²中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey.
<https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

percentage points; Turkey's imports from China were US\$18.49 billion, a decrease of 10.7%, accounting for 9.1% of Turkey's total imports, a reduction of 0.2 percentage points. percentage point. The trade deficit between Turkey and China was US\$15.90 billion, a decrease of 10.6%. China is Turkey's 17th-largest export market and second-largest source of imports. Turkey is one of China's important engineering contracting markets in the Middle East. As of the end of 2019, China had signed a total of US\$21.35 billion in project contracting contracts in Turkey, and achieved a turnover of US\$15.16 billion. From January to December 2019, the value of newly signed project contracting contracts between China and Turkey was US\$1.34 billion, a year-on-year increase of 16.1%, and the completed turnover was US\$690 million, a year-on-year increase of 0.2%. As of the end of December 2019, China's direct investment in Turkey was US\$1.75 billion.¹⁴³

In 2020, the total import and export volume of bilateral trade between China and Turkey was US\$24.08 billion, a year-on-year increase of 15.6%. Among them, China's exports to Turkey were US\$20.36 billion, a year-on-year increase of 17.5%; China's imports from Turkey were US\$3.72 billion, a year-on-year increase of 6.3%. From January to December 2020, the value of China's newly signed engineering contracting contracts in Turkey was US\$4.599 billion, a year-on-year increase of 242.7%, and the completed turnover was US\$922 million, a year-on-year increase of 37.9%. From January to December 2020, China's non-financial direct investment in Turkey was US\$25.27 million, a year-on-year increase of 98%; industry-wide direct investment was US\$55.93 million, a year-on-year increase of 338.3%.¹⁴⁴

In 2021, the total import and export volume of bilateral trade between China and Turkey was US\$34.23 billion, a year-on-year increase of 42.2%. Among them, China's exports to Turkey were US\$29.19 billion, a year-on-year increase of 43.5%; China's imports from Turkey were US\$5.04 billion, a year-on-year increase of 45.1%. In 2021, the value of China's newly signed engineering contracting contracts in Turkey was

¹⁴³Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey, <http://tr.mofcom.gov.cn/article/zxhz/>

¹⁴⁴中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

US\$2.535 billion, a year-on-year decrease of 44.9%, and the completed turnover was US\$1.161 billion, a year-on-year increase of 26%. China's direct investment in Turkey's entire industry was US\$242 million.¹⁴⁵

In 2022, the total import and export volume of bilateral trade between China and Turkey will be US\$38.55 billion, a year-on-year increase of 12.8%. Among them, China's exports to Turkey were US\$34.03 billion, a year-on-year increase of 16.9%; China's imports from Turkey were US\$4.52 billion, a year-on-year decrease of 10.5%. In 2022, the value of China's newly signed engineering contracting contracts in Turkey was US\$1.31 billion, a year-on-year decrease of 48.2%, and the completed turnover was US\$1.14 billion, a year-on-year decrease of 1.7%. China invested US\$120 million in Turkey, a year-on-year decline of 42.4%.¹⁴⁶

China has become the largest trading partner of Turkey, According to the Turkish Statistic Institute, in August 2023, China is the largest import partner to Turkey, occupying 11.9% of its total import volume. However, China is not the in the top list of Turkish export partners.

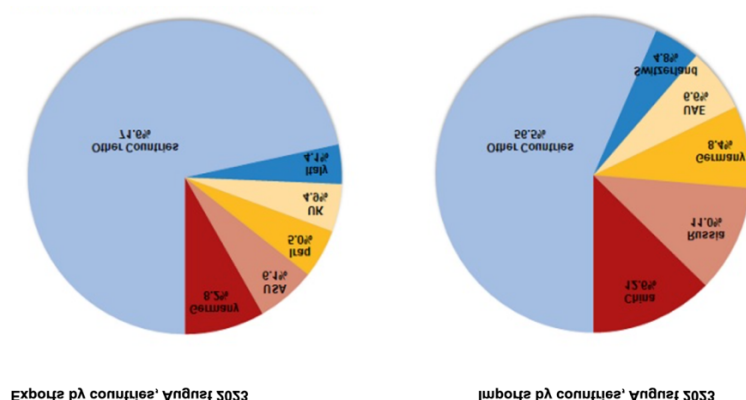


Figure 2.4: Turkey's import and export partners in August 2023 (Source: TÜİK)

¹⁴⁵Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey, <http://tr.mofcom.gov.cn/article/zxhz/>

¹⁴⁶中华人民共和国商务部，国别数据网。Ministry of Commerce of China, Country Report, Turkey. <https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/index.asp>

Despite the growing trade volume between Turkey and China, the trade deficit remains a major concern for Turkey. In 2020, China accounted for 41.5% of Turkey's trade deficit. Turkey mainly exports agricultural products, raw materials, minerals, and labor-intensive goods to China, while largely importing capital-intensive and high-tech products from China. The export goods from Turkey are low-cost and labor-intensive compared to the Chinese ones, which are based on advanced technology and innovative manufacturing.

Table 2.3: Category and Volume of China's Export to Turkey from 2014 to 2020 (Source: World Bank)

Indicator Bilateral imports by MTN product category (US\$)									
Reporting	Product/Sector	Partner Ec	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
China	MT2 - 22 - Manufactures n.e.s.	Türkiye	76384872	57198561	26369138	27530524	14333580	19133766	19665831
China	MT2 - 21 - Transport equipment	Türkiye	49600915	42571589	52932554	43093142	43914480	34064975	29057285
China	MT2 - 20 - Electrical machinery	Türkiye	48373060	51075674	55262508	53733841	49204935	78011653	98691574
China	MT2 - 19 - Non-electrical machin	Türkiye	376276435	373773937	370879350	318813614	237242161	208342238	208803900
China	MT2 - 18 - Leather, footwear, etc	Türkiye	83645821	90411065	95644642	94484330	95710900	105137035	127591177
China	MT2 - 17 - Clothing	Türkiye	449100452	472015672	361246766	301126219	269611554	245617492	245887756
China	MT2 - 16 - Textiles	Türkiye	173119325	158787466	168939592	157466967	154620142	178283501	188126153
China	MT2 - 15 - Wood, paper, etc	Türkiye	100045708	38997528	25387452	48166625	10999479	7223119	7990460
China	MT2 - 14 - Chemicals	Türkiye	410147107	469621702	453281078	372650747	229026413	315848404	424122775
China	MT2 - 13 - Petroleum	Türkiye	47876913	8069064	673191	1001812	656430	697217	1632048
China	MT2 - 12 - Minerals and metals	Türkiye	2218560373	2017479593	1939507730	2142481514	1534122808	1608264008	2223489116
China	MT2 - 11 - Fish and fish product	Türkiye	13785963	24741149	12633877	8268585	4646748	4612434	4030905
China	MT2 - 10 - Other agricultural pr	Türkiye	9374043	14228635	52787340	40192737	13509947	33441344	36290684
China	MT2 - 09 - Cotton	Türkiye	7877888	12148876	3316951	11070041	11640384	12909531	11912615
China	MT2 - 08 - Beverages and tobacc	Türkiye	12175317	7608310	5316195	5336425	3095307	3106122	2717247
China	MT2 - 07 - Sugars and confection	Türkiye	6843896	2927457	2014572	3289889	2699927	5335737	3206143
China	MT2 - 06 - Oilseeds, fats and oils	Türkiye	21239173	19910235	25095843	39902800	16122643	16650208	16951468
China	MT2 - 05 - Cereals and preparati	Türkiye	19058048	15460354	9320957	14177715	14468650	14561676	13038005
China	MT2 - 04 - Coffee, tea	Türkiye	12443127	6300399	4941498	5595273	5669408	7096062	7895934
China	MT2 - 03 - Fruits, vegetables, pla	Türkiye	143067696	181486286	86921768	89010355	72380466	45074973	29794611
China	MT2 - 02 - Dairy products	Türkiye	8020411	49			748		
China	MT2 - 01 - Animal products	Türkiye	653200					226200	

Table 2.4: *Categories and Volume of Turkey's Export to China from 2014 to 2020*
(Source: World Bank)

Indicator	Bilateral imports by MTN product category (US\$)								
Reporting Eco	Product/Sector	Partner Eco	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Türkiye	MT2 - 22 - Manufactures n.e.s.	China	1368221787	1275672562				2045295655	
Türkiye	MT2 - 21 - Transport equipment	China	614468435	450154213				693430232	
Türkiye	MT2 - 20 - Electrical machinery	China	6571762745	5118439432				6868423134	
Türkiye	MT2 - 19 - Non-electrical machinery	China	6031415860	3954411433				5221848461	
Türkiye	MT2 - 18 - Leather, footwear, etc	China	251639689	250783530				538545365	
Türkiye	MT2 - 17 - Clothing	China	233905396	296029579				759860979	
Türkiye	MT2 - 16 - Textiles	China	1497903244	1956197030				2150108303	
Türkiye	MT2 - 15 - Wood, paper, etc	China	334343546	366656510				595905123	
Türkiye	MT2 - 14 - Chemicals	China	2800807000	2606713808				2261755715	
Türkiye	MT2 - 13 - Petroleum	China	27763642	757996				333082	
Türkiye	MT2 - 12 - Minerals and metals	China	1916820655	1931159637				3540163383	
Türkiye	MT2 - 11 - Fish and fish products	China	10763702	15215481				12009860	
Türkiye	MT2 - 10 - Other agricultural product	China	58278790	56624860				47794048	
Türkiye	MT2 - 09 - Cotton	China		220				53656	
Türkiye	MT2 - 08 - Beverages and tobacco	China	55340077	16795004				14966593	
Türkiye	MT2 - 07 - Sugars and confectionery	China	5414362	5784874				7656648	
Türkiye	MT2 - 06 - Oilseeds, fats and oils	China	113613924	103381378				44184498	
Türkiye	MT2 - 05 - Cereals and preparations	China	31742202	29025848				24926526	
Türkiye	MT2 - 04 - Coffee, tea	China	3205529	1673132				1940361	
Türkiye	MT2 - 03 - Fruits, vegetables, plants	China	58074166	35637105				40121156	
Türkiye	MT2 - 02 - Dairy products	China						2907	

2.3. Transportation and Communication Cooperation Between China and Turkey

Since ancient times, with its geographical advantages, Turkey has always been a bridge between the East and the West. It is considered the only way to Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa and has a hub position in global transportation. As an essential stop on the ancient Silk Road, to expand its influence, Turkey proposed the "Middle Corridor" plan, which is to connect East and West Asia from Turkey to Georgia and Azerbaijan via railway in the West and then to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan via the

Caspian Sea by ferry Stan, the Central Corridor goes through other Central Asian countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and finally reaches China. In constructing the "Belt and Road", China focuses on constructing various interconnection facilities such as shipping, land, and pipeline. Highway facilities develop the connectivity between the East and the West, so the smooth docking and coordinated development of the two make the facilities connectivity cooperation between China and Turkey under the background of the "Belt and Road" very impressive. In 2015, Turkey and China signed a memorandum of understanding to connect the "Belt and Road" initiative with Turkey's "Central Corridor" plan. The message concerns transport, logistics, and connectivity in several fields, including communications. One of China and Turkey's most significant infrastructure projects under the BRI is constructing the Istanbul New Airport. The airport, completed in 2018, was built by a consortium of Turkish and Chinese companies, including China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC). The project is one of the largest infrastructure projects in Turkey's history and is expected to boost Turkey's economy by increasing the country's capacity for air travel.

In addition, the two countries also signed the "Turkey-China Land Transport Agreement", which has comprehensively promoted the development of transportation facilities and communication facilities on both sides and along the route.

Infrastructure connectivity is a priority area of cooperation between China and Turkey. On the one hand, Turkey has a strong demand for capital and technology in domestic infrastructure construction, and the country's infrastructure market has great potential in the eyes of relevant Chinese companies. On the other hand, Turkey is a crucial node at the junction of Eurasia and a critical transportation and energy hub in the Middle East:

Road connectivity is the primary condition for China-Turkey cooperation under the "Belt and Road Initiative." Turkey is a famous "country on the bus," and the European "E80" and "E90" highways connected to Turkey can directly lead to London. Turkey's road construction is in good condition. However, due to insufficient funds and relatively backward railway facilities, it can no longer meet the needs of trade cooperation under

the "Belt and Road" and "Middle Corridor." China's high-speed rail technology is advanced, and Turkish leaders have repeatedly expressed their desire to cooperate with China on railways. The two countries jointly look forward to the early realization of the merger of the "East and West Railways" so that the New Silk Road will extend from the East to the West, thereby expanding the scope of trade and promoting the shared prosperity of all countries. In 2014, the second phase of the Ankara-Istanbul high-speed rail project, China's first overseas high-speed rail project contracted by China Railway Group, was announced to be completed. The high-speed rail linking the city of Kars in southeastern Turkey and Edirne in the West, invested in and built by China, will also be part of the New Silk Road. For China, this is an opportunity for China's national high-speed rail technology to go global, and it also helps Turkey improve its domestic transportation infrastructure. The construction project will significantly promote the land connection of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and strengthen exchanges between China, Turkey, and other countries along the Silk Road.

High-speed railway construction:

Chinese companies have invested in many fields in Turkey, among which infrastructure contracting accounts for a large proportion. Turkey's engineering contracting companies have attracted worldwide attention. Among the 200 largest engineering contracting companies in the world, Turkey occupies 23 seats, of which six companies enter the top 100 companies. High project quality, advanced technology, standardized management, and high service quality are the core competencies for Turkish enterprises to survive. China is rich in labor resources and has many high-tech construction personnel. It complements the management experience and core technology of Turkish companies. The cooperation between the two parties can impact the international market more competitively.

In August 2012, the second summit of the Turkic-speaking Countries Cooperation Council was held in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. The four-member states of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkey, and Azerbaijan all sent heads of state or government to attend the meeting. All parties at the meeting agreed that a meeting of the transport

ministers of the member states would be held to discuss the launch of the railway artery connecting Turkey and China, passing through Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. On July 5, 2014, the Istanbul-Ankara line of the Turkish high-speed rail was officially opened to traffic. This project connects Ankara, the capital of Turkey, and Istanbul, the largest city.¹⁴⁷

As for Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement, On May 25-26, 2015, Mustafa, Director of the Highways Bureau of the Ministry of Transport of Turkey, led a delegation to visit China and signed the "Draft International Road Transport Agreement" with the Ministry of Transport of China in Beijing. In November 2015, during President Xi Jinping's visit to Turkey, China and Turkey signed the "Agreement on Cooperation in the Railway Field" regarding economic and trade consultation mechanisms.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Minister of Communications Erwan, Chinese Ambassador to Turkey Yu Hongyang, Director of the General Administration of Railways Suleiman, and other officials attended the inaugural ceremony and jointly launched the high-speed rail. The Istanbul-Ankara line has a total length of 529 kilometers, and all adopt China's most advanced high-speed rail technology. The planned passenger flow of the project is six times higher than that of the original railway passenger traffic, from 4,000 people per day to 25,000 passengers per day, and the opening time is one-third of the original time, from the original 10 hours to 3 hours. Turkey and China have joined forces to build a high-speed railway linking the southeastern city of Kars with the western city of Edirne, which will be operational in 2023. The project has a total investment of 45 billion US dollars, more than half of which comes from Chinese loans to Turkey.¹⁴⁸

A group of high-tech enterprises such as China Railway Construction, China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC), Harbin Electric International, Shanghai Electric Power, Chery Automobile, and Turkish enterprises has actively jointly

¹⁴⁷张骥、齐雄伸, 中间走廊”框架下中土关系的意义与前景, 公关世界, 2020 年第 12 期. Zhang Ji, Qi Xiongshen. The Significance and Prospects of China-Turkish Relations under the Framework of the Middle Corridor. Public Relations World. Issue 12, 2020.

¹⁴⁸NTV News. <https://www.ntv.com.tr/ekonomi/edirne-kars-8-saat,aUAzFs8sbkeEiKkviewS4YQ>.

established factories and carried out scientific and technological innovation cooperation. The position in the international transportation network; has extensively promoted the road connectivity of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and will also promote smooth trade between China and Central Asia, West Asia, and Europe.



Figure 2.5 Belt and Road Participant. (Source: Silk Capital) ¹⁴⁹

Undersea tunnel construction:

Regarding subsea tunnel construction, the first phase of the Marmaray Submarine Railway Tunnel, which China and Turkey jointly built, has been completed. The tunnel can cross the Bosphorus Strait and connect with the Istanbul Metro and Anyi High-Speed Railway, further improving the quality of Istanbul. And the rail network in the surrounding area. China participated in the Eurasian Highway Tunnel Project, completed in December 2016. This project greatly expanded the traffic capacity between Asia and Europe and considerably shortened the time required to pass through the Strait. The corridor strategy has important implications. The world's first three-story subsea tunnel, the Istanbul three-story subsea tunnel, began exploration in July 2017. Like the Eurasian Highway Tunnel Project, the tunnel reduces the traffic load of the Bosphorus Strait Bridge; it also dramatically saves the crossing time.

Aviation facilities construction:

¹⁴⁹Silk Capital. <https://www.silkcapital.net/en/global-frontier-markets/one-belt-one-road/>

In terms of aviation facilities construction, the world-renowned Istanbul Third Airport has been put into use one after another, and this airport has become one of the most important and busiest transportation hubs in the world. This project is by far the largest project in Turkey's "Middle Corridor" plan, and its annual throughput will reach 200 million passengers after it is fully implemented. Compared with 2014, the number of civil air and freight railway routes between China and Turkey has increased significantly. The number of direct routes between the two parties has more than doubled from 6 in 2014 to 13; simultaneously, the six routes in operation in 2014 only involved the four Chinese cities of Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Urumqi, the scope of cities covered by direct air routes between the two sides has been dramatically increased. Shenzhen in the eastern region of China, Chongqing, Wuhan, Chengdu in the central region and Xi'an in the western region have all been included, forming a comprehensive route to the east, middle, and west of China—broad coverage. Compared with Pakistan in the same period, the construction of direct air routes between China and Turkey is also in a leading position, and the Chinese cities covered are more diverse and representative. However, the Turkish city it connects is only Istanbul, which is very important for the two sides to connect multiple places. There are certain limitations in the development of interconnection. In terms of port and container terminal construction, the under-construction Felyos Port, Chandar Port and Mersin Container Terminal 2 Port will increase Turkey's container handling capacity by two to three times.

China and Turkey jointly promote the construction of communication backbone networks, such as cross-border optical cables to improve the level of communication interconnection between the two countries. The two countries have promoted the construction of bilateral cross-border optical cables, planned and constructed an intercontinental submarine optical cable project, and jointly improved the air (satellite) information channel, promoting information exchanges and cooperation between the two sides.

Huawei is located in Shenzhen. The company's main business is communication equipment. After over 30 years of development, Huawei has occupied an important

position in the world market. With the help of 5G technology, it has rapidly developed into a benchmark enterprise in the industry. In 2018, Huawei's global revenue was 110.4 billion US dollars, and its mobile phone share ranked among the top three in the world, making it one of the largest international companies. By 2017, Huawei's global market turnover exceeded China's domestic market for the first time, accounting for 61%. As the connecting belt of Eurasia, Turkey is a vast market, and Huawei attaches great importance to it.

In 2002, Huawei's branch in Turkey was established. In 2015, Huawei built Huawei's second-largest R&D base in the world in Turkey. The total investment exceeds USD 53.1 million, and the total number of employees exceeds 1,000, of which 87% are native Chinese. A total of 7,300 jobs have been provided. By 2023, Huawei's products will have a more than 45% market share in Turkey. Huawei has cooperated with local mainstream telecom operators in Turkey, including Vodafone, Turkcell, and Turk Telekom. Telekom) and Avea (AVEA).

Huawei's business in Turkey has multiplied. Among them, the two most successful cases are the 3G research and development project in Vodafone and the TCDD railway monitoring project in Turkey. As one of the world's largest mobile communication network companies, Vodafone has a global telecom market, and Huawei is constructing Vodafone's 3G base station business in Turkey.

In 2009, Huawei's 64-channel POTS user board UA5000 was successfully selected for the network rectification plan launched by the Turkish government. This alone will save Turk Telekom 600 billion dollars in costs.

In 2012, Huawei's WDM system became Turkey's primary national WDM network, with a total network length of 35,200 kilometers, making it one of the most advanced WDM networks in Europe.

In 2013, Huawei's GSM-R was applied to the EKB high-speed rail system in Turkey, which cut the running time of the Iran-Ankara line (from Istanbul to Ankara) in half and significantly improved railway efficiency. In addition, the winning bids for various projects made Huawei the number one supplier of the TCDD project.

In 2015, Huawei and the Turkish government signed a 3G network base station agreement, and Huawei started to build the I-City project, making the 3G network cover all users. Huawei's overall railway monitoring system won Turkey's TCDD railway monitoring project bid. The inspection system is to solve sudden railway problems through railway network video and environmental monitoring, improve the efficiency of relevant departments in solving problems, and ensure the regular operation of the railway system.

3. CHINA AND TURKEY CULTURAL EXCHANGE UNDER BRI

Since the establishment of the strategic partnership between China and Turkey in 2010, the cooperation and exchanges between the two sides in the field of people-to-people and cultural exchanges have reached a new level, and activities such as the exchange of students, twinning of sister cities, and mutual visits of religious delegations have increased significantly. Since implementing the "Belt and Road" initiative in 2013, the two sides have stepped up the pace of strategic docking in the humanities field and shown good momentum. Science and education exchanges, people-to-people exchanges, and tourism have continuously increased in recent years. Both China and Turkey have a long history and splendid civilizations. The opening of the ancient Silk Road connected the two old and glorious civilizations, and constructing the "Belt and Road" promoted the exchange of two heterogeneous cultures in modern society.

3.1. Academic and Science Exchange

The ancient Silk Road historically connected China and Turkey at both ends of the Asian continent. Although the purpose of its opening was the silk trade, in ancient Asia, where commercial trade was not very developed, the most crucial significance of the Silk Road was to become a means of communication—a bridge between Eastern and Western cultures. After the conclusion of the "Belt and Road" cooperation, the relationship between China and Turkey has become closer in terms of scientific and technological, and academic exchanges. The signing of the 2017-2020 Implementation Plan of the

Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the People's Republic of China provides more opportunities for deepening exchanges and cooperation in the fields of culture, science and technology, and education between the two countries. In the 2017 second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, President Xi Jinping proposed to launch the Belt and Road Science and Technology Innovation Action Plan, which aims to strengthen scientific and technological innovation cooperation with countries along the Silk Road and integrate the Belt and Road create a path to innovation. China and Turkey signed the "Agreement on the Mutual Establishment of Cultural Centers between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Turkey", and the development of cultural exchanges between China and Turkey has taken another step forward.¹⁵⁰

Under the Belt and Road Initiative framework, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on the connection between the "Belt and Road" initiative and the "Middle Corridor" initiative, which further released the development potential of China-Turkey scientific and technological innovation cooperation. The number of China-Turkey scientific and technical innovation cooperation under the "Belt and Road" initiative has increased rapidly, focusing on bilateral fields and radiating and driving surrounding areas along the route, expanding the scope of cooperation.

The scientific research cooperation between Turkey and China has been further expanded. The top 10 fields of scientific research cooperation between the two countries are physics (42.42%), astronomy and astrophysics (15.13%), engineering (7.88%), mathematics (5.67%), chemistry (4.37%), material science (3.98%), eco-environmental science (2.55%), optics (2.5%), instrumentation (2.27%). There are as many as 104 research directions in Turkey-China scientific research cooperation.¹⁵¹

From 2013 to 2019, the top 5 joint hotspot papers of Turkey and China, the field is concentrated in medicine, and the journals are focused on Journal of extracellular vesicles,

¹⁵⁰China Belt and Road Network. List of Achievements of the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum (full text) [EB/OL].<https://www.yidaiy-ilu.gov.cn/xwzx/gnxw/13690.htm>, 2018-12-21.

¹⁵¹母心仪 “一带一路”框架下中土合作效果分析.2022. Mu Xinyi Analysis of the Effects of Sino-Turkish Cooperation under the Framework of the "Belt and Road" Initiative. 2022

New England Journal of Medicine, and Lancet. Among them, the top 10 disciplines in hot areas are internal medicine (11 articles, accounting for 35.48%), physics (6 articles, accounting for 19.36%), neuroscience neurology (3 articles, accounting for 9.68%), cardiovascular system Cardiology (2, 6.45%), Gastroenterology, Hepatology (2, 6.45%), Mathematics (2, 6.45%), Mechanics (2, 6.45%), Allergy (1 article, accounting for 3.23%), astronomy and astrophysics (1 article, accounting for 3.23%), cytology (1 article, accounting for 3.23%), chemistry (1 article, accounting for 3.23%).

With the successive proposals of the “Belt and Road” initiative and the “Middle Corridor” plan, academic and artistic exchanges between China and Turkey have become increasingly frequent. The two countries have exchanged students, held cultural and artistic activities, and established Confucius Institutes—the primary form of teaching and scholarly communication.

Regarding foreign language teaching, the number of universities with Turkish majors in China and universities with Confucius Institutes in Turkey has increased. The Confucius Institute is essential to China-Turkish higher education exchanges and cooperation. As of 2023, China has established four Confucius Institutes in Turkish universities, namely the Confucius Institute at the Middle East Technical University (the cooperative institution is Xiamen University), the Confucius Institute at Strait University (cooperative institution), the Confucius Institute at Okan University (the cooperative institution is Beijing Language and Culture University), the Confucius Institute at Yedi University (the cooperative institution is Nankai University), and Confucius Classrooms have been opened in two primary and secondary schools.¹⁵² Turkey currently has the most Confucius Institutes in the Middle East. In 2013, the 3rd Training Conference for Local Chinese Teachers in Turkey was held at the Confucius Institute at Middle East Technical University in Turkey to discuss the current and future of Chinese language teaching in Turkey.¹⁵³ In the Middle East Technical University, Chinese teaching has

¹⁵²Hanban, China. About Confucius Institutes/Classrooms.

http://www.hanban.edu.cn/confuciousinstitutes/node_10961.htm, 2018-12-14.

¹⁵³Sina News. Turkey has set off a "Chinese fever", and Chinese teaching has a long way to go [EB/OL].<http://news.sina.com.cn/o/p/2013-12-01/160428860877.shtml>, 2018-12-15.

been included in the elective course system of the school, and the cumulative number of teachers has reached 2,000.¹⁵⁴ In 2015, the "Chinese Culture Experience Summer Camp" was held at the Confucius Institute at Middle East Technical University in Turkey.¹⁵⁵ The Prime Minister of Turkey carried out Chinese learning exchanges and held cultural activities such as the "Dragon Boat Festival" at the Confucius Institute, and invited Chinese language enthusiasts from various Turkish institutions, primary and secondary schools, and representatives of Chinese-funded enterprises to conduct cultural exchanges between China and Turkey; in 2016, the Chinese Ambassador to Turkey The museum cooperated with the Ministry of Education of Turkey to hold the "I imagine China" painting competition, and took the opportunity to carry out a series of mutual visits, witnessing the progress of cultural and artistic exchanges between the two countries; in April 2017, China and Turkey jointly built the "China Pavilion", China donated a large number of books and electronic products;¹⁵⁶ In 2018, the 17th "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students was held at Yedi University¹⁵⁷ and the 7th All-Turkish Chinese Teachers Forum was held in Ankara.¹⁵⁸ In October of the same year, Mustafa Versan Kok, president of the Middle East Technical University, affirmed the role of the Confucius Institute as a bridge in China-Turkey people-to-people and cultural exchanges when he visited the headquarters of the Confucius Institute in China.¹⁵⁹ Since 2018, all middle schools in Turkey have set up Chinese courses as elective courses. Similarly, the number of language classes offered by Turkey in China

¹⁵⁴China Central People's Broadcasting and Television Station. A closer look at Turkey's 'Chinese fever': from word of mouth to 'heart-to-heart'

[EB/OL].http://news.cnr.cn/native/gd/20171221/t20171221_524070706.shtml,2018-12-15.

¹⁵⁵Phoenix.com. 'Chinese Culture Experience Summer Camp' was successfully held at the Confucius Institute at Middle East Technical University in Turkey

[EB/OL].http://news.ifeng.com/a/20150907/44597369_0.shtml, 2018-12-14.

¹⁵⁶Ding Jun, Chen Jin. A Review of Humanities Exchanges between China and Middle Eastern Countries since the Reform and Opening Up[J]. Arab World Studies, 2018(5):29-45.

¹⁵⁷Hanban. The 17th "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students in Turkey Division Qualifiers Held at Yedi University [EB/OL].http://www.hanban.org/article/2018-05/15/content_731636.htm,2018-12-15.

¹⁵⁸Hanban of China. The 7th All-Turkish Chinese Language Teachers Forum Held in Ankara [EB/OL].http://www.hanban.org/article/2018-12/06/content_754854.htm, 2018-12-15.

¹⁵⁹Hanban of China. President of Middle East Technical University of Turkey visits Confucius Institute Headquarters [EB/OL].http://www.hanban.org/article/2018-10/30/content_752108.htm,2018-12-14.

has also increased, and college courses are no longer concentrated in megacities such as Beijing and Shanghai, but have also expanded to Tianjin, Shaanxi, Zhejiang, Guangdong and other cities.¹⁶⁰ At the same time, China has published Chinese books for teaching Turkish such as "Turkish", "Turkish Reading Course", "Turkish Grammar" and "Turkish Spoken Course".

In terms of academic exchanges, Shanghai University, Beijing Language and Culture University, Peking University, Shaanxi Normal University, and Zhejiang Foreign Studies University have all established Turkish research centers, introduced Turkish scholars, established academic journals, held conferences and lectures, and made outstanding contributions to research on Turkish historical and current issues. China and Turkey also jointly hold the China-Turkey Forum to deepen the understanding of the two countries and their cultures. In 2015, at the Forum on the Development of Local Chinese Teachers in Turkey held in Ankara, the Chinese Ambassador to Turkey held special lectures and academic exchanges with relevant experts and Chinese teachers; 22 scholars from Turkish think tanks and universities and four experts, including Li Mianxiu from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences delivered speeches on their respective research fields.¹⁶¹ The Forum mainly includes "Turkey and China's the common cultural heritage and cultural interaction," "The Research and Role of Chinese Classics and historical materials in the Study of Turkish History," "Opportunities and Challenges of Sino-Turkish cultural cooperation under the Framework of the 'Belt and Road'" and "China-Turkish political, economic and trade cooperation under the new situation" four sections; the conference was held Promoted the development of Sinology studies in Turkey; in May of the same year, the Chinese Embassy in Turkey and local well-known think tanks jointly held a "Belt and Road" seminar. The deputy minister of the Turkish Ministry of Economy and Chinese-funded institutions in Turkey discussed the theme of "Belt and Road" To

¹⁶⁰Metu.Middle East Technical University MainPage [EB/OL].<http://ci.metu.edu.tr/zh-hans/>,2018-12-14.

¹⁶¹The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey. The "Belt and Road" China-Turkey Cooperation Forum and the Second China Studies Conference Held in Ankara [EB/OL].<https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ceturchn/A/t1457717.htm>,2018-12-15.

further tap the potential of cooperation between the two countries and improve cooperation in various fields.¹⁶²

the Universities Provide Turkish Language Major in China before 2014		the Universities Provide Turkish Language Major in China During 2014-2019	
1985	Beijing foreign language university	2015	Beijing Language and Culture University
2011	Shanghai International Studies University	2017	East University of Foreign Studies
2012	Xi'an International Studies University	2017	Beijing Duguo University of Foreign Languages
		2018	Zhejiang foreign language university
		2019	Tianjin Foreign Studies University
		2019	Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages
(Data source: China Education Online)			
Turkish Universities that Established Confucius Institutes before 2014		Turkish Universities that Established Confucius Institutes During 2014 - 2019	
2008	Middle East Technologists	2017	Yetitepe Anthropology
2009	Channel Anthropology		
2012	Istanbul Okan University		
(Data source: Confucius Institute)			

Figure 2.6 *The status of Chinese and Turkish language majors in universities (Source: Confucius Institute and China Education Online)*

3.2. People-to-People Cultural Exchanges

As the core country of the Silk Road, Turkey plays a vital role in the "Belt and Road". During the ancient Silk Road period, Turkey was the leading country on the Silk Road, and the economy and trade in the east and west of Asia were transferred through Turkey, promoting the economy's prosperity and development. China and Turkey are the starting point and the endpoint of the Silk Road, respectively. Both are ancient

¹⁶²The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey. The Embassy in Turkey and a well-known local think tank jointly hold a "Belt and Road" seminar [EB/OL].<https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cetur/chn/A/t1460116.htm>, 2018-12-16.

civilizations with rich histories and cultures. The cooperation between China and Turkey must be connected to cultural exchanges and cooperation. Turkey has an important strategic and economic position, maintains very close ties with many countries in Europe and Central Asia, and is also one of the critical nodes connecting the two continents of Europe and Asia. One of the goals of the "Belt and Road" initiative is to connect the two economies at both ends of the Eurasian continent with global influence and ultimately promote the prosperity of the entire Eurasian continent. China is the initiator of the "Belt and Road" initiative. The exchange of Chinese culture and Turkish culture will help to enhance mutual trust between the two countries, minimize conflicts and barriers, establish friendly and cooperative relations, and promote implementing the "Belt and Road" initiative—developing political and economic ties between the two countries.¹⁶³

In terms of cultural exchanges, the field of exchanges between China and Turkey has been further expanded. 2014 there were eight exchanges between the two countries, and in 2019, it rose 17 times. Since 2014, the concentration in film, media, museums, and other art fields has expanded to ethnic culture, anti-terrorism, human rights and other areas; the forms of communication are more diverse, no longer limited to a single multilateral event, exchanges between expositions, and cultural exchanges between cities, mutual exposition and other forms.

In 2012, China and Turkey initiated mutual cultural year activities for the first time. China led in hosting the "Chinese Culture Year" event in Turkey. In 2013, the "Turkish Culture Year" was held in China. The 32nd Istanbul International Book Fair was held the same year, and China was the guest country. In response, Turkey also served as the guest country of the 21st Beijing International Book Fair the following year. In 2015, children in social welfare institutions in Turkey experienced Chinese culture. The children learned Chinese, calligraphy, painting, paper-cutting, and handicrafts. They experienced traditional Chinese culture and art, such as Chinese chess, tea ceremony, Chinese food, musical instruments, singing, and dancing. In 2016, Ambassador Yu Hongyang attended

¹⁶³丁士仁，伊斯兰的宗旨——兼及与儒家文明的对话.[J]回族研究.2001(6). Ding Shiren, The Purpose of Islam——and the Dialogue with Confucian Civilization. [J] Hui Nationality Studies. 2001(6)

the New Year's Dinner held by the Turkish-Chinese Women's Cultural Friendship Association. The Turkish-Chinese Women's Friendship Association has contributed to the cooperation and cultural exchanges between Chinese and Turkish women. The association aims to enhance mutual understanding and mutual help between women of the two countries through Mutual assistance, give full play to the bridge role of China-Turkey women exchanges and friendly people-to-people exchanges, and further promote China-Turkey people-to-people and cultural exchanges and cooperation.¹⁶⁴

The exchanges and cooperation between the policy research institutions of the two countries are also more frequent, and the exchanges and cooperation between Chinese think tanks and Turkey's international strategic research organization, strategic exchange center, and Ankara policy center are getting closer. The two countries have shown a positive image to the people of the two countries through various forms, such as holding promotional meetings and dialogues with media personnel, which has enhanced mutual understanding and mutual trust and further enhanced the mutual recognition of the two countries.

The religious groups of the two countries have frequent exchanges. In 2013, the religious departments of China and Turkey jointly organized a China-Turkey Islamic cultural performance in Yinchuan, China. The event's theme was "Inheriting History and Creating the Future Together", which attracted widespread attention. Similar activities were held in 2011 and 2012. Through a series of activities, the Turkish people gradually realized that Islamic culture is an inseparable part of Chinese culture and that Chinese Islam spreads the concepts of peace, justice, and kindness. , to have a more rational new understanding of China's ethnic and religious policies. In recent years, the direct exchanges between the religious circles of the two countries have become increasingly close, and various religious activities and visits by religious figures have become more frequent. This kind of docking of religious exchanges will help the two countries to

¹⁶⁴中华人民共和国驻土耳其共和国大使馆.郁红阳大使夫妇出席土中妇女友好文化协会新春宴会. The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey. Ambassador Yu Hongyang and his wife attended the Chinese New Year Banquet of the Turkish-Chinese Women Friendship Cultural Association. [EB/OL].<https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cetur/chn/A/t1339460.htm>,2018-12-16.

enhance understanding, learn from each other, and explore different ethnic groups and different social systems.

NGOs are also involved in educational and exchange activities in Chinese and Turkish. China Cultural Center attaches great importance to high-quality cultural dissemination and business and serves overseas cultural exchanges. The development of cultural exchange activities has dramatically promoted the exchanges and cooperation between China and Turkey. In 2010, China International Publishing Group donated books to Turkey International Strategic Research Organization (USAK), hoping to help USAK scholars understand and study China comprehensively and then put forward more constructive opinions and suggestions for developing bilateral relations. In December 2017, the Chinese Cultural Center settled in the Izmir University of Economics in Turkey. The Chinese side donated more than 800 Chinese books and multiple sets of audio-visual equipment to promote Chinese language teaching and cultural development. Liu Zengxian, Chinese Consul General in Izmir, said that due to the economic and trade development and personnel exchanges between China and Turkey, more and more people are learning Chinese. The Chinese Cultural Center of the Izmir University of Economics will further deepen the friendly exchanges between the two countries.¹⁶⁵ The Yunus Emre Academy, which belongs to the Yunus Emre Foundation, also establishes cultural centers abroad to carry out Turkish language teaching activities and also organizes cultural and artistic activities to promote Turkey's development and support scientific research. On May 20, 2021, the opening ceremony of Beijing Turkish Cultural Center-Yunus Emre Academy was held in Beijing. Both China and Turkey positively affirmed this, believing that establishing the cultural center has sublimated the relationship between the two countries.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵China.net. Chinese Cultural Center Settled in Izmir University of Economics, Turkey. [DB/OL].http://www.china.com.cn/news/2017-12/12/content_41982777.htm. [2017-12-12].

¹⁶⁶International Online. To celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations, Türkiye opens a cultural center in Beijing [DB/OL].<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1700334021342627434&wfr=spider&for=p>. [2021-5-21].

Table 2.5. *2014 China-Turkey Cultural Exchange Activities (Source: Anadolu Agency, People's Daily)*

2014 China-Turkey Cultural Exchange Activities	
2014.1	People from Turkish art circles participated in the first Silk Road International Film Festival (hosted by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television)
2014.2	Turkey Topkapi Old Palace Museum, Turkish and Islamic Art Museum, Istanbul Archaeological Museum come to China for exhibition
2014.5	Turkish representatives participated in the 18th China East-West Cooperation and Investment and Trade Fair and Silk Road International Expo
2014.6	Turkish Scholars Participate in the International Symposium on the Silk Road Economic Belt
2014.7	Turkish Representatives Participate in the Silk Road Economic Belt Media Cooperation Forum
2014.8	Turkey Participates in 21st Beijing International Book Fair as Guest of Honor
2014.9	Turkish Artists Participate in the First Silk Road International Art Festival
2014.11	At the invitation of the Marmara Foundation for Strategic and Social Research in Turkey, Ma Biao, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, attended the "Silk Road: Exchanges, Cooperation, and Win-Win" Seminar

Table 2.6 2019 China-Turkey Cultural Exchange Activities (Source: Anadolu Agency, People's Daily)

2019 China-Turkey Cultural Exchange Activities	
2019.1	Turkish representatives participated in the 26th China Yangling Agricultural High-tech Achievements Expo
2019.1	Turkish Artists Participate in the 6th Silk Road International Film Festival
2019.1	Turkish merchants settled in the "Chengdu Wuhou Temple Museum' Belt and Road Creative Bazaar"
2019. 1	Well-known Turkish media personnel participated in the seventh season of "Silk Road Celebrities' China Tour"
2019.2	Turkish photographers participated in the "All the way with you" photo collection activity hosted by China Central Radio and Television
2019.2	The Chairman of the Turkish Patriotic Party participated in the "China's Ethnic Policy and Ethnic Unity-Practice of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region" special presentation held by the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the Communist Party of China
2019.4	Turkish Government Returns China's Lost Cultural Relics to Chinese Government
2019.4	The National Art Museum of China, together with 21 art museums and key art institutions in 18 countries including Turkey, jointly established the Silk Road International Art Museum Alliance:
2019.5	The 6th China (Turkey) Trade Fair opens in Istanbul
2019.5	Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism Attends Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations

Table 2.6 (Continued) *2019 China-Turkey Cultural Exchange Activities* (Source: Anadolu Agency, People's Daily)

2019.6	People in the field of Turkish science and technology participated in the 5th China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Achievements Fair
2019.6	Turkish director participated in the 22nd Shanghai International Film Festival as the main judge
2019.6	Turkey participates in the International Development Conference of Chinese Cuisine
2019.7	"Hometown of Confucius Great Beautiful Shandong" Video Art Exhibition Opens in Ankara
2019.8	Turkey's Anadolu Agency participated in the Ninth Seminar for Media Leaders from Countries Related to the "Silk Road Economic Belt" hosted by the Information Office of the State Council of China
2019.9	Turkish experts and scholars participated in the International Symposium on "Counter-Terrorism, Deradicalization and Human Rights Protection" hosted by the China Society for Human Rights Studies
2019.11	Turkish Representatives Participate in China Import Expo

Since Shanghai and Istanbul officially concluded as "sister cities" in 1989, China and Turkey have formed 24 pairs of sister cities. This kind of city relationship is also called "sister city" or "brother city" in Turkey. City".¹⁶⁷ In the year when the "Belt and Road" initiative was proposed, the two sides formed four pairs of sister cities; Yangzhou and Konya, Urumqi and Gaziantep, and Chongqing and Istanbul formed friendships in 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively. In recent years, the number and types of sister cities

¹⁶⁷China International Friendship Cities Federation: "Which Sister Cities or Sister Cities Are There Between China and Turkey?", <http://www.goturkey.cn/i/1740.html>, last accessed: April 18, 2020

established by the two sides have also increased, not limited to Beijing, Shanghai, Istanbul, Ankara, and other famous cities. However, various types of cities interact with each other according to their corresponding characteristics and needs. The people-to-people bond between the soil plays a promoting role.

Table 2.7 *Establishment of China-Turkey Friendship Cities (Source: Websites of foreign affairs offices of the people's governments of various provinces and cities)*

Establishment of China-Turkey Friendship Cities	
1989	Shanghai-Istanbul
1990	Beijing-Ankara
1991	Tianjin-Izmir
1991	Liaoning Anshan-Bursa
1991	Shandong Rizhao Trabzonspor
1993	Liaoning Panjin-Yalova
1996	Xi'an-Konya
1996	Jiangsu Zhenjiang-Izmit
2002	Jilin Province-Sakarya
2004	Guangdong Shantou·Tekirda
2005	Anqing-Kutasia
2009	Jiangsu Changzhou-Eskisehir
2010	Heilongjiang Harbin-Erzurum
2011	Shandong Jinan-Marmaris
2011	Ningxia Yinchuan-Ilkadin
2012	Fujian Quanzhou-Mersinyini Race
2012	Jiangsu Province-Izmir
2012	Guangdong Guangzhou-Istanbul
2012	Sichuan Suining-Kerklareli
2013	Yunnan Kunming-Antalya
2013	Hubei Wuhan-Izmir

Table 2.7 (Continued) *Establishment of China-Turkey Friendship Cities (Source: Websites of foreign affairs offices of the people's governments of various provinces and cities)*

2013	Fujian Zhangzhou-Istanbul Pandik
2013	Guilin-Murat Pasha
2015	Qinghai Xining-Edirne
2017	Chongqing-Istanbul
2018	Fujian Xiamen-Izmir

In addition to sister cities, China and Turkey have formed three pairs of sister provinces, namely Guangdong Province and Istanbul Province, Jilin Province and Sakarya Province, Jiangsu Province, and Izmir Province. The sister cities and provinces of the two countries interact very frequently, mainly in the form of economic and trade exchanges, cultural activities, mutual visits of international students, and folk tourism. Through these measures, China and Turkey have expanded their cultural exchanges and contributed to the two countries development. Strategic docking provides a variety of ideas and forms.

In addition to the above achievements, non-governmental organizations such as the Turkey-China Friendship Association also play an essential role in the cultural connection between the two countries. These organizations have maintained close contact for a long time, and the frequency of interaction has become higher and higher exchange of visits. In addition, in recent years, institutions such as the Turkey-China Silk Road Friendship Association have been invited to visit China many times, making outstanding contributions to docking the "Middle Corridor" plan and the "Belt and Road" initiative.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸Zou Zhiqiang: "Progress and Challenges of People-to-People Exchange between China and Turkey in the New Era", "Turkish Studies", Issue 1, 2018, pp. 78-96.

3.3. Tourism

In recent years, with the continuous deepening of cultural exchanges between the two countries, the two governments have promoted more in-depth and comprehensive cooperation in tourism by increasing the promotion of the tourism industry and formulating various policies. Relying on its rich cultural heritage and beautiful natural environment, Turkey's tourism industry has developed rapidly and has become the second-largest industry in Turkey's economic development. Tourism income is a crucial part of Turkey's national economic income. With the increase in the income of ordinary people in China and the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative, Turkey is paying more and more attention to China, a huge tourist market. After the "Middle Corridor" plan was put forward, the number of Turkish citizens traveling to China increased significantly. The number of citizens of the two countries residing in each other's country is also increasing, which plays an essential role in promoting friendly exchanges between the two peoples and promoting cultural exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

Both China and Turkey are countries with vast territories, long histories, and rich cultural resources, and they have always been favored by tourists from all over the world. In recent years, the tourism industries of China and Turkey have flourished, and China's unique cultural landscape and magnificent natural scenery have attracted more and more Turkish tourists.

At the same time, the Turkish government has increased the promotion of its tourism, Ephesus in Turkey (currently the best-preserved and largest Greek-Roman monument in the world), the Blue Mosque (the essential landmark in Istanbul, surrounded by The surrounding six minarets, which can be called a unique design in the world), Sophia Cathedral (a famous Byzantine building with a history of nearly 1,500 years) and other places of interest have attracted many Chinese tourists. In addition, Turkey is also further developing world cultural heritages such as the Divrij Grand Mosque, the hospital (Sivas), and the archaeological "Holy City" Pamukkale. With the further deepening

cultural exchanges between China and Turkey, many Chinese began to choose Turkey as their tourist destination. According to data records, from 2011 to 2013, the number of Chinese tourists traveling to Turkey increased rapidly, with an average annual rate of more than 20%. Turkey officially implemented electronic visas for Chinese tourists in 2013, significantly improving the convenience of traveling to Turkey. Chinese tourists traveling to Turkey have shown a blowout development, and Turkey has become a popular destination for Chinese outbound travel. Especially after China and Turkey held cultural years of each other, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Turkey hit a record high. 2018 coincides with the China-Turkey Tourism Year. Turkey attaches great importance to this and especially launched a series of activities for Chinese tourists, including large-scale epic performances such as "Troy", which attracted many Chinese tourists. Back then, they went to Turkey. More than 400,000 Chinese tourists traveled.¹⁶⁹ According to statistics from the Turkish Statistical Agency in 2018, after Turkey became an outbound travel destination for Chinese citizens, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Turkey nearly doubled between 2011 and 2017. At the same time, the number of Turkish tourists visiting China increased by 102%. In 2018, the number of tourists from Turkey to China reached a new high of 170,000. In the first half of the year, 191,000 Chinese tourists visited Turkey, a year-on-year increase of 91%. According to statistics from Global Blue, the consumption of Chinese tourists in Turkey increased by 166% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2018. In 2019, 426,000 Chinese tourists visited Turkey, a year-on-year increase of 8.18%. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center of the United States, the Turkish public's favorable opinion of China has risen to 37 in 2019, nearly double the 21 in 2014. In 2020, due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, 37,900 Chinese tourists visited Turkey.

Tourism development will inevitably promote mutual understanding between the two peoples, and understanding and communication are the best means to eliminate barriers and misunderstandings. Compared with the realization of complex indicators

¹⁶⁹Antalya Homes: "The number of Chinese tourists to Turkey reached 400,000, an increase of 70%", https://www.sohu.com/a/321595731_114872, last accessed April 18, 2020.

such as policies, facilities, funds, and trade, tourism development depends on policy changes and financial support from both governments and on the people's will. The process of improving this indicator takes work and long. China and Turkey are geographically far apart, belong to two completely different civilizations, and use two different languages. These have brought obstacles to the exchange and communication between the two sides to a certain extent; History and reality are inextricably linked. The intersection of the ancient Silk Road in history provides a specific basis for mutual understanding between the two sides; under the influence of the "Belt and Road" and "Middle Corridor" policies, the two mutual understanding between the people of Turkey has also strengthened the cultural and artistic ties between Turkey and China. With rich tourism resources, China and Turkey have attracted more and more tourists. The development of the tourism industry of the two countries has increased the external publicity of the cultures of the two countries and promoted the consumption and export of cultural products.

First, tourism development has strengthened the external promotion of the cultures of the two countries. Tourism is a particular way of cultural transmission. Tourists can personally contact and appreciate the different styles of architecture, cultural relics, religious culture, ethnic customs, myths, and legends in the tourist destination. They can fully and sincerely appreciate the local customs, history, and culture and better satisfy their cultural and psychological need.¹⁷⁰

Secondly, inbound tourism also drives the consumption and export of cultural products. Tourism is an essential carrier of cultural inheritance and a necessary support for cultural prosperity, and it is also an essential channel for expanding the consumption and export of cultural products. Regarding consumption levels, TURSAB (Turkish Association of Travel Agents) stated that Chinese tourists are one of the largest consumer groups and thus generate more income. British tourists came in second after China. For example, Chinese tourists generated 21% of global tourism receipts 2016. In the first

¹⁷⁰Zhang Xiping. Research on "Going Global" of Chinese Cultural Industry. Peking University Press. 2016. p.248.

quarter of 2018, the consumption level of Chinese tourists in Turkey increased by 83% year-on-year, and the per capita consumption reached US\$1,959.¹⁷¹



¹⁷¹China Tourism Academy. Annual Report on the Development of China's Outbound Tourism. China Tourism Press. 2020 edition, p. 139.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROSPECT OF CHINA-TURKEY RELATION AND BRI

China and Turkey are essential developing countries located at the east and west ends of the Asian continent. The cooperation between the two sides under the "Belt and Road" initiative substantially affects the relationship between the two countries and their respective development. Looking at the bilateral relations since the "Belt and Road" initiative was proposed in 2013, we can draw the following conclusions: China-Turkish ties have withstood the test of international vicissitudes and achieved considerable development. Politically, the frequency of high-level communication between China and Turkey has increased. The areas of communication are also reasonably extensive and multifaceted, and the two sides maintain relatively stable and smooth relations. Turkey announced the "Middle Corridor" strategy to integrate with the "Belt and Road" Initiative, strengthening the political tie between China and Turkey. Economically, the Belt and Road Initiative has provided an essential platform for resolving the two countries' economic and trade concerns and increasing cooperation in infrastructure, energy, telecommunication, and finance to promote economic development. Culturally, China and Turkey have deepened education, academic research, and tourism exchange, positively affecting the understanding of people-to-people connections. However, there is still a need to analyze the potential challenges and opportunities that China and Turkey face to fully optimize the BRI for both country's future development in politics, economy, and culture.

1. PROSPECT OF CHINA-TURKEY POLITICAL RELATIONS

1.1. Analysis of China-Turkey Political Relations Under BRI

From the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Turkey in 1971 to the freezing point in 2009 due to the "July 5th Incident" and the formal establishment of a strategic partnership in 2010, the bilateral relations between China and Turkey have experienced ups and downs. The docking with the "Middle Corridor" program has created new opportunities for developing bilateral ties between the two countries. In 2015, 2016, and 2017, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited China for three consecutive years, unique in bilateral relations. To ensure the stable development of bilateral relations, the two countries have established mechanisms such as the vice-premier-level government cooperation committee and foreign minister consultations to deal with significant issues that may be faced in the strategic alignment process between the two sides. In 2016, the two countries held the first meeting of the foreign ministers' consultation mechanism, conducted in-depth discussions on international hotspot issues of common concern, and exchanged views. The two countries also held the first meeting of the vice-premier-level cooperation mechanism and the first high-level strategic dialogue meeting in the same year. China and Turkey both expressed their hope to promote the docking of the "Middle Corridor" and the "Belt and Road" with the potential of cooperation in political, economic, cultural, and other fields and to promote bilateral relations.

The proper strategic alignment between China and Turkey begins with mutual political and both sides recognize and respect each other's core interests. China has always regarded Turkey as an essential cooperative partner in the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" and hoped to strengthen further the "Belt and Road" and Turkey's "Middle Corridor". Turkey supports and hopes that China's "Belt and Road" construction will strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the countries along the route. Therefore, strategic docking, high-level dialogue, and talks between the two sides have been frequent in the last decade, which shows a trend of institutionalized and normalized dialogue. In

addition, regarding the docking of the "Belt and Road" and the "Middle Corridor", China and Turkey have gained more opportunities for cooperation within the international mechanism. For example, in the financial investment field in 2015, Turkey was approved to join the AIIB and became an intended founding member. Turkey holds about 2.7% of the shares in the AIIB, ranking seventh among members in the region, and has a seat on the board of directors, which shows how much Turkey attaches importance to it. In addition, from a global perspective, institutions such as the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund, the two countries have also adopted a mutually supportive position on some significant issues. As a result, the level of political mutual trust between China and Turkey is also steadily increasing.

Another typical example is the cooperation between the two sides within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. As a trans-regional multilateral comprehensive organization with the largest population, the most expansive area, and great potential, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) plays a pivotal role in Central and South Asia. Turkey is a dialogue partner of the SCO and maintains a close relationship with the SCO in regional affairs. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization mainly focuses on areas such as regional security, economy, and energy cooperation, which are also topics that Turkey has been concerned about for a long time. Since Turkey officially became a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2013, the two sides have begun to cooperate in non-traditional security within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Jointly address non-traditional security issues, including arms smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal trafficking of psychotropic substances and narcotics. Among them, the proliferation of drugs has long threatened the security of Central Asia and West Asia. Turkey has long been a drug and narcotics smuggling distribution center because it is located between the Central Asian drug production area and the European consumer market. In addition to the drug trade issue, the two countries have a broad basis for cooperation on non-traditional security issues, such as combating illegal immigration and arms smuggling. In 2017, China and Turkey signed a security cooperation agreement, which included cooperation on counterterrorism,

intelligence sharing, and joint operations. At present, in a series of action cases targeting non-traditional security, the two sides have achieved a series of results in information sharing and coordinated actions, setting a good precedent for docking.

However, the political relationship between China and Turkey has faced some challenges in recent years. One of the main challenges has been over the issue of the Uighurs, a Muslim ethnic group in China's Xinjiang region. Turkey has been critical of China's treatment of the Uighurs and has called on China to respect their human rights. Conversely, China has accused Turkey of supporting Uighur separatists. However, despite these challenges, both countries are willing to deepen their political cooperation under the BRI. Out of consideration for common interest and national security, Turkey and China have agreed on the fundamental direction of jointly combating "East Turkistan." In 2015, Erdogan emphasized that Turkey fully respects China's territorial integrity and opposes terrorist actions against China, including the "East Turkistan" activities. While responding to China's concerns, Turkey included the "East Turkestan Islamic Movement" in its official list of terrorism. This shows that Turkey has made substantive progress in aligning its security strategy with China. Turkey's transformation aligns with the security and development interests of both China and Turkey. Furthermore, in 2019, China and Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on political consultation to enhance political dialogue and cooperation between the two countries. The MoU covers a range of issues, including regional security, counterterrorism, and cultural exchanges.

In conclusion, the political relationship between China and Turkey under the BRI has been complex, with both countries facing challenges and opportunities. While the issues of the Uighurs have strained the political relationship, both countries have expressed a willingness to deepen their cooperation in other areas. The BRI has provided a platform for both countries to address their respective political challenges and work towards a more stable and prosperous future.

1.2. Challenges of China-Turkey Political Relations Under The BRI

While the two countries are deepening cooperation, due to different national interests and the influence of regional and international situations, the strategic cooperative relationship between the two countries will also face some challenges and uncertainties.

First, the two have different perceptions of the officials and the people. Historically, the ancient Silk Road was not only a road of economic exchange and cultural transmission but also a road of competition in many cases. Some small countries along the route today, such as Central Asian countries, did not enjoy equal status during the ancient Silk Road period. Therefore, each other will have different perceptions of the ancient Silk Road. The other party may regard the proposal of the “One Belt, One Road” strategy as a manifestation of China’s expansion, and some critics could believe that this strategy has harmed Turkey’s national interests.

Second, the Turkish domestic political situation is still being determined. Economic development was sluggish, especially after the attempted coup in July 2016 and the 2019 Covid pandemic. Faced with this series of problems, Turkey has strengthened social control, causing public dissatisfaction and protests. The consequences will indirectly weaken the international attractiveness of the domestic market, which is not conducive to external investment and foreign exchanges. After the Turkish election in May 2023, although the domestic authoritarian policy keeps the AKP in power, its opposition forces are increasing daily, which is not conducive to the long-term smooth progress of the "Middle Corridor" initiative. At the same time, facing the economic sanctions imposed by the United States, Turkey's economic and social development has fallen into a difficult period. In May 2023, the lira trend faced a predicament of collapse, which caused the domestic pass inflation rate to rise to a historical high of 39.2%. This not only delays the national economic reform dividend but also severely hits the endogenous growth of the national policy and damages its material foundation. Accompanied by the downturn in the global economy, the impact of this consequence on the Turkish state and society is

lasting and far-reaching. This is also the most direct factor affecting China and Turkey, and also the main obstacle to further deepening exchanges between the two countries.¹⁷²

Third, anti-globalization. The "Middle Corridor" and the "Belt and Road" initiative conform to the trend of globalization and are essential manifestations of multilateral negotiation methods. The current lack of structural globalization will also cause multi-polar forces to hinder the international community's development, resulting in a deformed development of the globalization trend. At the same time, the Middle East has been a strategic location in geopolitics since ancient times, and it is the hub of competition among major powers. The content of the "Middle Corridor" initiative is carried out in a place where significant powers compete. How to maintain relations with competing major powers to maintain harmonious development with the initiative is a crucial consideration for all participating countries. This is also a matter of whether the "Middle Corridor" initiative will operate long-term, whether it is feasible to connect with the "Belt and Road," and whether it can effectively integrate the Eurasian continent to promote prosperity and development. Finally, the China-US relationship is also an essential factor affecting the "Middle Corridor" and the "Belt and Road" initiatives. China is the initiator of the "Belt and Road" initiative. Changes in the balance of power between China and the United States will affect the development of the international political landscape and the smooth progress of the "Middle Corridor" and the "Belt and Road" initiative. How China and the United States maintain peaceful co-existence and how the two countries maintain a harmonious bilateral relationship in coordination with the above two initiatives is also a significant factor affecting its process.¹⁷³

¹⁷²Abdulkadir Emin Önen. Development Opportunities in the Middle Corridor, INTERNATIONAL. 2018 August 15.

¹⁷³张骥,齐雄伸,“中间走廊”框架下中土关系的意义与前景,理论前沿. Zhang Ji Qi Xiongshen. The Significance and Prospects of Sino-Turkish Relations under the Framework of the Middle Corridor. Frontiers of Theory.

1.3. Opportunities Of China-Turkey Political Relations Under The BRI

On mutual respect, China and Turkey have strengthened political mutual trust. The mutual trust between the two countries means that they are in step with each other regarding politics, economy, military, culture, and society, and they are mutually beneficial and win-win. Therefore, promoting strategic mutual trust and establishing cooperation mechanisms between China and Turkey will bring about a qualitative leap in the relationship between the two countries.

The differences between China and Turkey have challenged the normal development of political and economic relations between the two countries. Policy communication is essential for strengthening the construction of the "Middle Corridor" and the "Belt and Road" initiative. Strengthen intergovernmental cooperation, actively build a multi-level intergovernmental macro policy communication and exchange mechanism, deepen the integration of interests, promote political mutual trust, and reach a new consensus on cooperation. Countries along the route can fully communicate and connect economic development strategies and countermeasures, jointly formulate plans and measures to promote regional cooperation, negotiate and solve problems in cooperation, and jointly provide policy support for practical cooperation and large-scale project implementation. Adhering to the guidance of the memorandum on the connection between the "Belt and Road" initiative and the "Middle Corridor" initiative signed by the two countries, based on the excellent reputation of cooperation, we will continue to innovate cooperation models, expand the scale of cooperation, and improve the level of cooperation.

Second, China and Turkey can benefit from deepening regional and international cooperation. For the long-term interests of the two countries, deepening cooperation at the regional and international political levels will enable the two countries to move in step and form a community of interests on global issues, thus safeguarding the national interests, sovereignty, independence, and national development of the two countries. Turkey's geographical advantages determine its strategic value: it is located at the junction of the Eurasian continent. It is adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea, which is vital to China's

"Belt and Road" initiative. Therefore, taking advantage of each other's superior geographical location, actively deepening regional cooperation, and resolving international issues is the direction of cooperation between China and Turkey. With the start of the Belt and Road Initiative and Turkey's "Middle Corridor" strategy, regarding regional and international cooperation issues, China and Turkey could cooperatively ensure that they are in step at the political level to ensure the two countries' national interests and then guide the development of the economic and cultural fields of the two countries.

2. PROSPECT OF CHINA-TURKEY ECONOMIC RELATIONS

2.1. Analysis of China-Turkey Economic Relations Under BRI

The development of political relations between China and Turkey is significant to the economic cooperation. As a bridge connecting Europe and Asia, Turkey is significant in constructing China's Belt and Road Initiative. Economic cooperation is an integral part of the China-Turkey strategic cooperative partnership and an essential basis for developing bilateral relations and improving the well-being of the two peoples. Besides, Turkey plays a leading role in the economy of the Eurasian connecting region and is also an essential part of the future European economy. Establishing the China-Turkey strategic cooperative partnership has laid the foundation for large-scale cooperation between the two countries and proposed vigorously increasing the total economic and trade volume. As an emerging economy, Turkey has an absolute advantage in attracting investment compared to other countries in the Middle East: Turkey's strategic location connecting Eurasia and various national preferential policies have become essential factors attracting entrepreneurs from all over the world to develop in Turkey. In recent years, the political situation in Turkey is relatively stable, the economy and investment environment is improving, and there are abundant labor resources. Turkey has a large population and has a strong consumption capacity, and the domestic market demand is enormous. The above factors lead to more and more Chinese people going to Turkey to do business. Given

Turkey's superior geographical location and the government's policy requirements for eastward development, Turkey has undoubtedly become an essential participant in the "Belt and Road" initiative.

China and Turkey share a strong economic relationship that has grown over the past ten years. The two countries have strengthened their economic ties in various fields, including energy, trade and finance, infrastructure, and telecommunication. In the area of energy, China has been investing in Turkey's energy infrastructure, particularly in the oil and gas sector. This has helped Turkey to improve its energy security and reduce its dependence on Russia for energy supplies. Additionally, China has invested in Turkey's renewable energy sector, particularly in wind and solar, battery, and wind power, which has helped Turkey to diversify its energy mix and reduce carbon emissions.

Regarding trade and finance, China has become Turkey's largest trading partner. The "Belt and Road" initiative has been implemented for ten years, and the trade volume between China and Turkey has exceeded 100 billion US dollars. The total investment of Chinese enterprises in Turkey has increased by 120%. Nearly a thousand Chinese enterprises have branches in Turkey, providing Turkey with many jobs.

Despite the growing trade volume between Turkey and China, the trade deficit remains a primary concern for Turkey. In 2020, China accounted for 41.5% of Turkey's trade deficit. Turkey mainly exports agricultural products, raw materials, minerals, and labor-intensive goods to China, while mainly importing capital-intensive and high-tech products from China. The export goods from Turkey are low-cost and labor-intensive compared to the Chinese ones, which are based on advanced technology and innovative manufacturing. However, the two countries have been working to address this issue, with Turkey looking to increase its exports to China, particularly in high-tech and value-added products.

The swap agreements between China and the Central Bank of Turkey (CBT) have also strengthened economic ties between the two countries. Chinese investors have shown a keen interest in investing in Turkey's public and private sectors, especially in the telecommunication, infrastructure, and financial sectors. There has been a significant

growth in capital goods, with Chinese capital owners investing heavily in Turkey. The share of capital goods in export products increased from 30% to 44% in 2015 and 53% in 2020. FDI has strengthened the relationship between the two countries, and economic ties have improved since then. As of the end of 2022, more than 1,000 companies have invested in Turkey, with a total investment of nearly US\$4 billion, of which 70% are direct investments made after 2014.

In terms of infrastructure, China has been investing in Turkey's transportation infrastructure, particularly in the construction of railways and highways. This has improved Turkey's connectivity with other countries, mainly Europe and Asia, and has helped boost trade between the two regions. Additionally, China has been investing in Turkey's telecommunication sector, particularly in constructing 5G networks and data centers, which has helped improve Turkey's digital infrastructure.

In conclusion, China and Turkey's economic relations have been growing over the years, with the two countries working to strengthen their ties in various fields. While there are still some challenges, particularly in the trade deficit, the two countries are taking steps to address these issues and build a solid economic partnership for the future.

2.2. Challenges of China-Turkey Economic Relations Under The BRI

Although the economic cooperation and the total trade volume have strengthened between China and Turkey, the imbalanced trade deficit is the first concern of bilateral trade relations. According to the data from the Turkish Statistic Institute and National Statistic of China, Turkey has consistently run a trade deficit with China over the past decade. In 2013, Turkey's imports from China were valued at approximately \$24,71 billion, while its exports to China were valued at only \$3,61 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of \$21,1 billion. Over the next few years, Turkey's imports from China rose, reaching a peak of \$34,03 billion in 2022. Meanwhile, its exports to China remained relatively stagnant, hovering around \$3 billion per year, imports from China have continued to rise, as a result, Turkey's trade deficit with China grew to a new peak of \$29,51 billion in 2022.

Over the past decade, Turkey has consistently run a trade deficit with China, with the gap between imports and exports growing more extensive over time. While Turkey has attempted to increase its exports to China, it has yet to be able to keep pace with the growth in imports, resulting in a significant trade deficit.

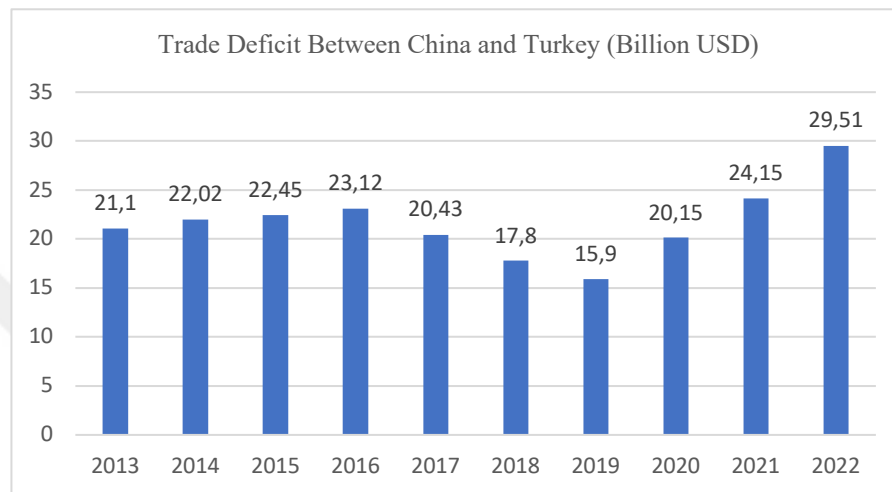


Figure 3.1 *Trade Deficit Between China and Turkey* (Source: Turkish Statistic Institute and Ministry of Commerce of China)

China is a significant trading partner country and Turkey's largest deficit source. China's export volume to Turkey is about five times that of Turkey's export volume to China, accounting for around 87 percent of the import and export volume of both sides in 2022. From another perspective, the trade integration index between the two countries shows that the degree of closeness of import and export between China and Turkey is low. Although the trade integration index between the two countries has continued to grow since the Belt and Road, the trade integration index is relatively low whether China is with Turkey or Turkey is with China. The data shows that although the trade between the two countries is connected, it is not the leading exporter of the two countries. China's main markets are still the United States and the European Union, and Turkey also regards the Middle East and the European Union as its first choice for exporting goods. From the perspective of trade data, China's dependence on the Turkish market is much greater than Turkey's dependence on the Chinese market. Moreover, the massive deficit between the

two countries will inevitably lead to dissatisfaction from the Turkish side. If a response is not made quickly, it may affect the expected economic and trade relations between the two countries.¹⁷⁴

Another challenge that China and Turkey face during the economic construction of the Belt and Road is the uncertainty of the situation in the areas along the route. The BRI runs through areas with severe security situations, and the instability in the surrounding areas of Turkey is a significant external hidden danger of it. In addition to political and geopolitical risks, most of the countries along the route have low economic development levels. The harsh business environment of the domestic economy has led to backward infrastructure construction and poor attraction of foreign investment. The countries along the route could not meet the standard infrastructure requirements of the BRI and "Middle Corridor" in the early stage, which significantly delayed the launch schedule of later projects, resulting in insufficient endogenous growth of the project. The people in the countries along the route first face the problem of low living standards and a need for more understanding of the BRI. These factors restrict the country's ability to invest heavily in infrastructure construction. Even public opinion affects national policy preferences, hindering the initiative's sustainable and healthy development.

The third challenge is that the turbulent inflation economic in Turkey has increased the unstable financial investment environment. In recent years, Turkey's economy has shown a rapid development trend. However, at the same time, social and economic problems such as profound inequality in social income distribution, colossal trade deficit, high inflation rate, and unemployment rate have gradually become prominent, which is not conducive to bilateral financial cooperation. According to Turkish statistic Institute, in March 2023, the country's inflation rate hit 39%¹⁷⁵, which might be higher in the coming years. In addition, unemployment in Turkey is also high. According to statistics, the number of unemployed people in the country is about 10%, and the youth

¹⁷⁴资料来源：中国商务部。

Source: Ministry of Commerce of China. <http://www.mofcom.gov.cn/article/tongjiziliao/>

¹⁷⁵TÜİK. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Tuketici-Fiyat-Endeksi-Mayis-2023-49654&dil=1>

unemployment rate is even higher. The high inflation and unemployment rates have greatly affected Turkey's economy's growth rate. Turkey's social and economic problems have brought substantial economic risks to bilateral trade cooperation, thus restricting China's investment in local industries.

2.3. Opportunities of China-Turkey Economic Relations Under The BRI

Economically, promoting the "Belt and Road" construction will also bring tangible benefits to the two countries. Both China and Turkey are emerging economies with substantial complementarity and great potential for cooperation. China's economy has developed rapidly in the past 20 to 30 years, and Turkey's economy has also achieved medium-to-high growth. Although trade between two has increased, the imbalanced trade is still a fact to face. To a long term sustainable trade relations, China and Turkey could:

First, Promote unimpeded trade between and reduce trade deficit. Unimpeded trade is the fundamental goal of China-Turkey cooperation under the "Belt and Road Initiative". Implementing the "Belt and Road" initiative can create more opportunities for trade cooperation between China and Turkey. It can improve the trade deficit between the two countries and open up broader areas of trade cooperation for both parties. Land transportation is a meaningful way to carry out trade activities. The construction of road infrastructure such as railways and highways is the basis for trade cooperation. Strengthening cooperation between the two parties in constructing high-speed railways will increase trade and transportation channels, which will help realize the smooth flow of the "Belt and Road" trade road. In addition, Turkey and China need to simplify customs review procedures for each other and improve the efficiency of customs clearance for bilateral trade. In this regard, Turkey has cooperated with its neighboring countries to implement the "Silk Road Initiative and Station Project gradually." If China can join this international cooperation project, the trade between the two sides will be smoother and smoother.

Second, establish a sustainable high-tech and technological cooperation model, encourage and support powerful enterprises to take the lead in implementing the "dual-

output" cooperation model of products and technical services, encourage influential universities and scientific research institutions to implement the "dual-goal" cooperation model of talent training and achievement transformation, and select a batch of cooperation projects. The joint implementation of laboratories and engineering centers to form a mutually beneficial, win-win situation and sustainable cooperative development. The current cooperation between China and Turkey is mainly concentrated in trade. However, to achieve sound development, it should include more than trade but also have in-depth cooperation in finance, investment, and culture. In the financial field, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank under the Silk Road Fund is a successful case. The AIIB connects all the "Belt and Road" infrastructure projects, provides financial support for countries along the route, and provides a platform for developing Chinese enterprises. In China-Turkey cooperation, the AIIB model can also be adopted to set up a centralized investment bank to guide the development of projects in Turkey and achieve shared prosperity. The "Belt and Road" initiative has created opportunities for Turkey to upgrade its infrastructure.

Third, strengthen scientific and technological innovation cooperation. Accurately grasp and adapt to the characteristics of Turkey's technological management and innovation systems. Given Turkey's technological innovation shortcomings, China has certain technical advantages that can improve the fit with Turkey's specialized needs and deepen the construction of high-tech, aerospace, and high-speed rail infrastructure. Communication upgrades, trade finance, and other aspects of practical cooperation expand cooperation space and enhance scientific and technological collaboration to promote the complementarity of China and Turkey's economic and social development. Expand trade fields, optimize trade structure, tap new trade growth points, and promote trade balance. Innovate trade methods and develop new business formats such as cross-border e-commerce. Establish a sound service trade promotion system, consolidate and expand traditional trade, and vigorously develop modern service trade. Organically combine investment and trade, and drive trade development through investment. Accelerate the process of investment facilitation and eliminate investment barriers.

Strengthen negotiations on bilateral investment protection agreements and double taxation avoidance agreements to protect investors' legitimate rights and interests.

3. PROSPECT OF CHINA-TURKEY CULTURAL RELATIONS

3.1. Analysis of China-Turkey Cultural Relations Under BRI

With the strengthening of bilateral political mutual trust and frequent economic, trade, and personnel exchanges, China-Turkey people-to-people and cultural exchanges have developed rapidly, tourism, education, art, news, cities, and other discussions have become more frequent, and the forms of businesses have become more and more diversified. The "people-to-people bond" is the social foundation and support of public opinion for constructing the "Belt and Road" initiative. The rich and diverse historical cultures of China and Turkey should play a role in promoting the people-to-people bond and the construction of the "Belt and Road."

People-to-people bonds are the social cornerstone of China-Turkey cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. The exchanges between China and Turkey have more than 2,000 years of history. The cultural exchanges under the "Belt and Road" provide more opportunities for the people of the two countries to deepen mutual understanding. Turkey is one of the top ten tourist destinations in the world, and the number of Chinese tourists visiting Turkey has increased significantly in recent years. The academic research cooperation between China and Turkey has also made significant progress. The Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Turkish Strategic Research Center have established an academic exchange mechanism. The friendship between the two countries lies in the friendship between the people. The "Belt and Road" initiative provides a platform for the integration of the heterogeneous cultures of China and Turkey. Of course, China and Turkey need to carry out more prosperous cultural exchange activities further to reduce the differences in the minds of the two peoples. The sense of distance generated by the distance of 6,400 kilometers in space increases the cooperative development of helpful resources such as tourism. It uses information media such as television, radio, and the

Internet to correctly guide the country's people to recognize the other country. The cultural exchanges between China and Turkey are constantly expanding, not limited to film, media, museums, and other art fields, but gradually expanding to national culture, anti-terrorism, and human rights. At the same time, the exchanges also include multilateral activities, inter-city cultural exchanges, and mutual expositions. In terms of language and cultural exchanges, the number of colleges and universities offering Turkish majors in China and the number of colleges and universities offering Chinese majors in Turkey have risen rapidly; in the field of tourism, the two sides set up cultural years and tourism years for each other, and implement visa facilitation and other measures have made the tourism cooperation between the two sides the most eye-catching item in the construction of people-to-people bonds.

3.2. Challenges of China-Turkey Cultural Relations Under The BRI

In recent years, the favorability of Turks towards the Chinese has gradually increased with the increasing frequency of exchanges between China and Turkey, but it is still at a low level. There have been few cultural exchanges between China and Turkey. The two countries' languages are not mainstream, and there are few professional research scholars, so the culture cannot be transmitted. the cultivation of foreign language talents between China and Turkey is still in its infancy, and there is a massive gap in the demand for relevant talents.

With the development of tourism in China and Turkey, the number of tourists from China to Turkey is increasing, but Turkey The number of tourists arriving in China is still small, there is a severe imbalance in the development of tourism between the two countries, resulting in a long-term cultural exchange deficit. It will affect bilateral mutual trust and relations. China and Turkey non-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations need to strengthen ties. Through non-governmental exchanges, they can enhance feelings and deepen understanding, and actively promote policy communication and people-to-people bonds to eliminate misunderstandings.

Political bias is another challenge that hinder mutual understanding of the Chinese and Turkish people. According to US opinion polls, the Chinese people have a relatively unfavorable impression of Turkey. According to a public opinion survey conducted by China Global Network in July 2015, more than half of Chinese netizens have a negative attitude towards Turkey after the anti-China incident in Turkey. The general public in Turkey does not know much about the "Belt and Road" initiative. Most of their eyes are focused on the "Uyghur issue," and they are also hostile towards China's political system.

3.3. Opportunities of China-Turkey Cultural Relations Under The BRI

In the field of people-to-people and cultural exchanges, China and Turkey should expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges and consolidate non-governmental friendly relations. China and Turkey have a profound cultural background. For the citizens of the two countries, there is a lack of spiritual life other than earthly life. How to bridge this gap is a complex problem for the government. Currently, China and Turkey hold cultural years with each other and open cultural colleges, all promoting the cultural field. To deepen mutual understanding of the government and the people, China and Turkey's governmental support will be enhanced. For example, first, enhancing people-to-people exchanges. People of the two countries still have a vague impression of each other. It is necessary to strengthen non-governmental exchanges.

Second, Expand tourism publicity and enhance public understanding. The two countries have sufficient cultural resources, and there is still potential to be tapped. As the income of the two people increases, they will inevitably pursue enjoyment other than earthly life. Traveling abroad can stimulate economic growth through tourism and enable both countries' citizens to understand the other country's customs, creating long-term economic and trade development for both sides.

Third, increase professional personnel exchange and training, Integrate existing resources, and actively explore and promote practical cooperation with countries in fields of common concern such as youth employment, entrepreneurship training, vocational skills development, social security management services, and public administration.

According to the Chinese-foreign cooperative education supervision platform of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, China and Turkey still need to establish foreign cooperative education institutions, and there are still shortcomings in training international students. Strengthen scientific and technological cooperation, jointly build joint laboratories (research centers), global technology transfer centers, and maritime cooperation centers, promote scientific and technical personnel exchanges, cooperate in major scientific and technological breakthroughs, and jointly enhance scientific and technological innovation capabilities. China and Turkey should comply with the "Belt and Road" initiative, seize the opportunities of the new era, strengthen cultural exchanges on this basis, expand the scale of exchange students, give more support to scholarship policies, and strive to promote study in Turkey and China process, develop friendly and cooperative relations with each other, and provide talent support for the construction of the "Belt and Road."

CONCLUSION

China and Turkey's engagement within the Belt and Road Initiative has witnessed significant growth, encompassing political collaboration, economic integration, and cultural exchange. By linking the "Belt and Road" initiative with Turkey's "Middle Corridor," they have injected fresh momentum into deepening their mutually advantageous collaboration and sharing the fruits of their cooperative efforts. This comprehensive approach underscores the extensive nature of their partnership. As both nations continue their interaction within the BRI framework, they are poised to effectively navigate the complexities of the global landscape and further enhance their multifaceted relationship for the benefit of both parties. Within the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework, their relationship has evolved across various dimensions, including political, economic, and cultural. This research reveals the following critical observations regarding China-Turkey relations under the BRI:

First, in the realm of politics, China and Turkey have nurtured diplomatic ties within the Belt and Road Initiative. Given Turkey's pivotal position as a connecting link between Europe and Asia, it has emerged as a vital ally in China's BRI endeavors. Consequently, this partnership has paved the way for heightened collaboration in tackling regional and global challenges, focusing on BRI initiatives that span the region. The key findings regarding their political relations within the BRI are as below:

1. China and Turkey have engaged in frequent high-level visits and exchanges in the past ten years, signaling a growing political relationship. China and Turkey have established vital mechanisms to ensure stable bilateral development. These mechanisms include the vice-premier-level government cooperation committee and foreign minister consultations, designed to address essential issues in their strategic alignment.
2. There is a trend of institutionalized and normalized dialogue. there has been a notable increase in strategic alignment, high-level discussions, and negotiations regarding docking the "Belt and Road" and the "Middle Corridor". China and

Turkey have gained more opportunities for cooperation within the international mechanism, such as the platform provided by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization, indicating a trend toward more institutionalized and normalized communication.

3. The security alignment has increased mutual trust. Although the issue of the Uighurs has hindered the political relations between China and Turkey, both have agreed on the fundamental direction of jointly combating "East Turkistan". Besides, signing the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on political consultation in 2019, which covers a range of regional security and counterterrorism issues, enhanced the political trust and security cooperation between the two countries.

Secondly, in the realm of economics, the economic dimension of China-Turkey relations within the BRI has taken center stage. Over the past decade, China and Turkey have nurtured a robust economic partnership, which has expanded across diverse sectors such as energy, trade, finance, infrastructure, and telecommunications. The key findings regarding their economic relations within the BRI are as below:

1. The Belt and Road Initiative has significantly fueled the growth in the bilateral trade volume between Turkey and China. The total trade volume has exceeded US\$280 billion in the last ten years. In 2022, the bilateral trade volume between the two countries grew to US\$37.55 billion, increasing 32% compared to 2013. China is currently Turkey's second-largest trading partner, most extensive source of imports, and 15th-largest export market.
2. High-level visits and agreements between China and Turkey have increased economic cooperation and investment in various fields. Energy, transportation infrastructure, and telecommunication are some areas where collaboration between the two countries has become increasingly tighter. Over a thousand Chinese companies operate in Turkey, indicating strong business ties between the two countries.
3. Investment from China to Turkey has increased and diversified. Chinese companies have invested heavily in Turkey's energy, transportation, and telecommunications

sectors, making China one of the largest investors in Turkey. The two countries have successfully cooperated on various projects, including the second phase of the Ankara-Istanbul high-speed railway, the Salt Lake underground natural gas storage, the Kazan trona comprehensive development, the rail system vehicle project, and the Hunutlu coal-fired power station.

4. The trade deficit remains a primary concern in bilateral trade, China accounted for most of Turkey's trade deficit. In the last ten years, China's total exports to Turkey have been \$248.69 billion, while Turkey's exports to China have been \$32.04 billion, occupying only 10 percent of the total trade volume. Meanwhile, Turkey mainly exports agricultural products, raw materials, minerals, and low-cost and labor-intensive goods to China while especially importing capital-intensive and high-tech products from China, which are based on advanced technology and innovative manufacturing.

Third, in the realm of culture, the cultural ties between China and Turkey within the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) have witnessed noteworthy advancements and partnerships. These have bolstered connectivity and opened doors for cultural exchanges between the two nations. The key findings regarding their cultural relations within the BRI are as below:

1. Governments play a significant role in promoting cultural relations. Bilateral agreements and policies provided support and structure for cultural exchange programs, making collaborating easier for artists, scholars, and cultural institutions.
2. The BRI has facilitated increased cultural exchanges between China and Turkey. These exchanges include art exhibitions, music performances, film festivals, and academic conferences. These events help promote mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's cultural heritage.
3. The BRI has encouraged language and educational initiatives. Chinese language courses have gained popularity in Turkey, reflecting the growing interest in understanding Chinese culture and fostering better communication. Similarly,

Chinese educational institutions have collaborated with Turkish universities, fostering academic exchanges and research partnerships.

4. The BRI has led to an increase in tourism between the two countries. As transportation infrastructure improves, more Chinese tourists visit Turkey, and vice versa. This cultural exchange provides opportunities for people-to-people interactions and the sharing of cultural experiences.

In conclusion, the Belt and Road Initiative has strengthened political trust, facilitated economic and infrastructure development and fostered cultural ties between China and Turkey. To further improve their relationship under the Belt and Road Initiative, China and Turkey can maintain regular high-level diplomatic dialogues and exchanges to resolve any political disputes or conflicts that may arise, foster understanding and mutual trust, and collaborate on regional issues and within international organizations like the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to enhance regional stability and cooperation, develop joint policy initiatives on issues of mutual interest, such as counterterrorism, climate change, and international trade, to bolster their global influence. Economically, explore opportunities for diversifying their trade relationship by identifying new sectors for collaboration to continue and expand their cooperation in infrastructure development projects, including transportation and energy, to promote economic integration and enhance trade. Strengthen financial cooperation, including currency swap agreements, to reduce exchange rate risks and facilitate trade and investment. Encourage investment by both countries in each other's markets, particularly in emerging industries and technology sectors. Focus on sustainable development projects within the BRI framework to address environmental and ecological concerns, aligning economic growth with ecological sustainability. Culturally, Promote more cultural exchanges, including art exhibitions, language courses, and academic partnerships, to deepen mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures. Collaborate on tourism initiatives, including marketing campaigns and facilitating visa processes to boost tourism and people-to-people contacts. Expand educational

partnerships, such as scholarships and research collaborations, to enhance academic and cultural ties. Invest in cultural diplomacy efforts, including sponsoring cultural events and festivals in each other's countries to improve global perception and promote cultural understanding. Collaborate on cultural preservation and heritage protection projects to safeguard and promote historical sites and traditions. By implementing these recommendations, China and Turkey can deepen their political, economic, and cultural relationship within the Belt and Road Initiative, contributing to a more prosperous and mutually beneficial partnership.



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