

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS BALKANS: THE PEOPLE`S VIEWS OF ALBANIA

Author: İsa Erbaş

The thesis submitted to the Doctoral School of European University of Tirana in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of “Doctor” in Social Sciences, profile, International Relations

Supervisor: Associate Prof. Dr. Enika Abazi

Number of words: 54616

Tirana, June 2015

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at the European University of Tirana or other institutions.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, particularly towards Albania. This thesis investigates the reasons and goals of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans. The study enlightens the misunderstood Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries and it finds answers to the Turkish foreign policy changes since 1990s.

At the beginning, the thesis starts with literature reviews and then it goes with foreign policy and the advantages of foreign policy, purpose of foreign policy. It gives historical information of the Turkish foreign policy and then this study compares the new Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, particularly towards Albania, in the 21st century to see the changes.

Secondly, the paper examines the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania and views of the Albanian people by conducting surveys and interviews.

Finally, the study analysis its findings and results and it gives further suggestions. The paper uses content analysis in this part within the framework of the qualitative and quantitative method. The respondents have quite diverse backgrounds, which is very important to have a wider perspective.

During the whole research and after the completion of the research, the researcher should abide by the ethical code of The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The SPSS 16, and the Nvivo10 were used to find and analyze the collected data.

Key Words: Foreign policy, Balkan countries, Albania, Economy, cultural and historical relations, identities and interests.

ABSTRAKT

Kjo tezë trajton politikën e jashtme turke kundrejt Ballkanit , veçanërisht në drejtim të Shqipërisë. Ky hulumtim investigon mbi arsyet dhe qëllimet e politikës së jashtme turke kundrejt rajoneve të Ballkanit .Ky studim hedhë dritë mbi keqkuptimin qe eshte krijuar per politikën e jashtme turke kundrejt rajoneve të Ballkanit , dhe përpiqet t'i japë përgjigje ndryshimeve në politikën e jashtme turke që nga vitet 90.

Fillimisht, teza fillon me pasqyrimin e literatures dhe më pas vazhdon me politikën e jashtme dhe përparësitë e saj , qëllimin e politikës së jashtme . Hulumtimi gjithashtu jep një përshkrim historik te politikës se jashtme turke dhe më pas krahason ' politikën e jashtme te re turke' kundrejt vendeve të Ballkanit, veçanërisht në drejtim të Shqipërisë, në shekullin e 21-të për të vëzhguar nëse ka ndodhur ndonje ndryshim.

Së dyti, kjo teze analizon politikën e jashtme kundrejt Shqipërisë dhe pikëpamjet e shqiptarëve me ane të anketave dhe intervistave të kryera.

Së fundi ,tema përfundon gjetjet dhe rezultatet e saj me diskutime dhe sugjerime të mëtejshme .

Ne kete pjese shqyrtohet gjithashtu analiza e përmbajtjes brenda kuadrit të metodës sasiore dhe cilësore.Të anketuarit kanë prejardhje mjaft të ndryshme, e cila është shumë e rëndësishme që të kemi një perspektivë më të gjerë.

Gjatë gjithë punës kerkimore dhe pas përfundimit të hulumtimit, studiuesit duhet të veprojnë në përputhje me kodin etik të Këshillit të Kërkimeve Ekonomike dhe Sociale (ESRC). SPSS 16, dhe Nvivo 10 janë përdorur për të gjetur dhe analizuar të dhënat e mbledhura.

Fjalët kyçe: politika e jashtme, vendet e Ballkanit, Shqipëri, ekonomi, marrëdhëniet kulturore dhe historike, identitetet dhe interesat.

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İsa Erbaş
European University of Tirana
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ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	The Justice and Development Party
BK	Balli Kombetar
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CPA	Communist Party of Albania
ESI	European Stability Initiative
EU	European Union
FEBA	Federation of Balkan American Associations
FEDA	Fairfield Economic Development Association
FTA	Free Trade Agreements
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
JEC	Joint Economic Commission
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RTA	Regional Trade Agreements
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
SEECF	Southeast European Cooperation Process
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TUSCON	Türkiye İşadamları ve Sanayiciler Konfederasyonu
WP	Welfare Party

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the political science and international relations, in order to understand the foreign policy we need to investigate and examine situations in a more appropriate and exact ways and to be able to evaluate and approach realities. In light of the many opportunities created by globalization, it is believed to find a new environment, which would maintain a lasting peace. On the other hand, security issues as well as new and evolving risks and threats such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cross-border organized crime and illegal immigration continue to overshadow people's expectation. Under these circumstances, a stable and constructive Turkish foreign policy has become very important. History shows that great civilizations have prospered in peace in the Balkan region when the correct steps are taken and the existing potential is appropriately utilized, while the cost of mistakes can be devastating for the entire world (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy).

It is important to look at the foreign policy through different perspectives, including economic, social, state identities, national interests and cultural, historical and psychological factors. Necessary tools are important in order to do right research and get right results. This study focuses on all the internal and external factors in order to analyze the issues. Apart from these, the study also focuses on ideals and material interests. In this study, I will examine and analyze the main purpose and interests of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries.

The Turkish foreign policy includes the economic, historical and cultural ties with the Balkan regions. Turkey has never had nationalist ideology. National interest has always supported the Turkish foreign policy. National interest and state identity based models of the

Turkish foreign policy lead to huge benefits based on particular accounts of state interests. Turkey and the Balkans have many advantages in order to establish good and deep relations comparing with other areas of the world. For example, culture, manner, tradition and thinking style are almost same in the Balkan area and in Turkey even among various religions. There are many relatives in both sides and they are the organic ties between Balkan people and Turkish people. There are different languages in the Balkan areas but it is a fact that Turkish and the Balkan languages have thousands of common terms, which are very vital for the good communication and understanding each other. There are 6-7 religions in the Balkan areas but these highlight tolerance, mutual respect and a mentality of living together because of the Balkan's heterogenic socio structure. Therefore, the different religions have become a mosaic and special yeast in the Balkan areas rather than becoming a reason of a conflict unlike the other regions of the world (Gjana, 2011, p. 539). According to Aras, Turkish Policies in the Region at the regional level, Turkey follows different sets of policies. The first is to develop bilateral relations to the possible highest extent. Turkey has increased its diplomacy, increasing traffic of high-level political visits, and the activities of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) for development cooperation and the Yunus Emre Foundation for promotion of Turkish language and culture are all signs of this determined will to develop relations with the Balkan countries. Turkey has signed high-level political cooperation agreements with Bulgaria and Greece and Turkey aims to sign similar agreements with other Balkan countries (Aras, 2012). Turkey's deep-rooted tradition of statehood and democracy and its advantages emanating from geography and history, its young and educated population and dynamic economy plays a key role in the success of the foreign policy. The Turkish foreign policy is pursued by mobilizing many and complementary political, economic, humanitarian and cultural means and its sphere of interest has achieved a global scale (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign

Policy).It is also stated that during the period of the Mustafa Kemal`s one-party government, rare relations were established with the Balkan regions by opening its borders for Muslims from the Balkan regions. Because, both sides Turkey and Balkan states, were trying to create their own nationalities. Almost half of the Muslims migrated to Turkey's western regions, Aegean and Tirakya, and a majority of non- Muslim minorities migrated from Turkey or bartered with Greece and Bulgaria (Gjana, 2011, p. 534).These all show that there are many things in common in order to develop the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries.

According to Bugajski:

In recent years, Greece and Turkey have adopted a constructive approach to the Balkans. Above all, they have avoided being embroiled in Balkan conflicts as protagonists although ethno-nationalists in the region have sought to enlist outside powers to promote inter-ethnic and Christian-Muslim hostilities. Athens and Ankara now have an opportunity for further confidence-building and promoting regional security (Bugajski, 2010).

The main aim of foreign policy has been seen as a pursuit of the national interest in the external relations of states. National interest mainly involves in economic well-being, political values and security (Marsh, 2001, p.1). Regarding economic situations, foreign policy first emerged in U.S. following the First World War, because of the growing importance of oil to modern industrial society and modern warfare, fear of exhaustion of U.S. domestic reserves, and the need of U.S. companies with foreign markets for additional sources of supply (Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, 2002, p.6). It is also stated that “the foreign policy designs constructed during World War II for the postwar era; and the early cold war years” (Ruggie, 1998, p.206). Domestic politics is also very important for foreign policy. Aras claims that the foreign policy of a small weak state may be shaped more directly by domestic threats or may sacrifice national interests to that of its leadership (Aras, 2012,p.134). The foreign policy implications of domestic politics provide one source of

supportive evidence, which is the deepening scholarly understanding of the structure of public opinion on foreign policy issues (Ruggie, 1998, p.219).

Hurrell claims:

The devotee of country studies may point out that the foreign policy of a country is necessarily bound up with its domestic politics. A country's interests or objectives in foreign policy are not objective and permanent, but are simply what they are perceived to be by the ruling groups at any one time. The chief preoccupation of most ruling groups is not with foreign policy, but with preserving their domestic position of power; their foreign policy line, accordingly, may be intelligible only in terms of the compromises in which they are involved and the stratagems they are pursuing in the domestic political struggle (Hurrell, 2000, p.258).

After the Cold War, it was unconsciously necessary to make a complete change in the Turkish foreign policy. In this respect, different thoughts appeared whether Turkey lost its significance about its foreign policy or not. Due to the problems that, it was Turkey had to decide and establish a new foreign policy which that would go with the new international atmosphere and environment. Since 1923, when the Republic of Turkey was established Turkey followed a pacific path, and it openly ruled out its foreign policy. The beginning of the Turkish foreign policy started during the period of Atatürk. Atatürk wanted Turkey to reach the level of modern civilization, which was only meant European civilization. Turkey had big opportunities during and after the Cold War to shape its foreign policy to increase and develop its material gains. During Atatürk's period the Turkish foreign policy united with the idea 'Peace at home, peace in the world', that was the motto of the Turkish foreign policy. Atatürk's state identity was concerned with state security which related to its security and Turkey ensured a delicate balance which was maintained between cold rational calculations of power.

It is stated that Turkish foreign policy refers neither to a rational-strategic approach nor to an identity. This type of perception does not exist in the world as well. Atatürk's reform was to abolish the former foreign policy and establish new foreign policy. He also

claimed that there would be created a new, modern society and state. Atatürk claimed about civilization existed only one civilization, and it was meant European civilization. Thus, the Turkish society was supposed to modernize and it would do so in every aspect of social, political and cultural life. It is well known that Turkey maintains particular place among various civilizations. Turkey is a country, which consists of 99 % Muslim. It has different ethnic and social groups with different religious and ethnic identities. Due to its geographical and cultural positions in the international system, it is believed that Turkey should interact and develop its relations with all countries especially with its neighbors. So in order to strengthen the relations with its neighbors, Turkey needs to develop its trade, economy and its interactions with the Balkan countries. The economic boom in Turkey was the fundamental change in economic and social features. It is claimed that the economic power had been controlled by the Kemalist bureaucracy and by the state-sponsored businessmen. Despite the fact that the Menderes and Demirel governments supported the conservative Anatolian capital, their success was limited. During the Özal's government policies, the villagers, workers and traditional religious groups entered the economy, and as a result, they strengthened their autonomy against the core, namely the bureaucracy, the military and the state-created industry (Laciner, 2013). As a result, Turkey does not only enhance its bilateral and regional relations with the Balkan countries, but it seeks to create a positive synergy on a much wider scale in order to contribute to global peace, stability and security. Turkey is aware of the need to foster the linkages between political stability, economic welfare and cultural harmony in order to maintain sustainable global peace (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy). Consequently, the debate about national identity, and national interest, and the kind of political, economic, and social systems that Turkey should adopt. During these debates, fundamental decisions related to Turkey's foreign policy united with national identity of Turkey.

After the cold war, Turkey should have followed the former foreign policy strategies. Contrary to this, Turkey tried to follow more active foreign policy and such policy should be in accordance with Turkey's size and strength since it was an important country in the region. During the international developments, the Turkish foreign policy was criticized for Neo-Ottomanism because of its passive character. The criticisms particularly appeared during international crisis and wars. Neo-Ottomanists underlined that the new international order represented Turkey's significant historical opportunities ranging from the Balkans to Central Asia. It was stated that Turkey followed unimportant and inefficient policies towards the Balkans until that time.

It is stated by Larison that there is a misunderstanding of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan regions. This study analyses the misunderstanding and supplies proofs about the aims and objectives concerning the Turkish foreign policy. The policy is called a 'Zero Problem with neighbouring countries, and other foreign policies that need to be discussed and evaluated. Thus, 'in some respects, the Turkish government, the AKP's "zero problems with neighbours" policy is much more contrary to the original foreign policy pursued by Atatürk (Larison, 2010).

Due to the some historical and economic ties with the Balkan regions, Turkey is concerned and worried about the instability in these regions. Turkey's relations with the Balkan countries show not only Turkey's approach to a geography which attributes great strategic, economic and socio-cultural importance but also the reflections of its on-going political, economic and social transformation on foreign affairs under a fairly stable regional environment (Ekinçi, 2013). That is why, it is necessary for Turkey to build closer relations with the Balkan countries in order to show its significance to the West. These countries are very important for Turkey in international arena because of the historical ties, economic and trade. Thus, Turkey should try to help these regions to preserve security, peace, and

stability. Any crisis and conflicts in these regions influence Turkey. That is why; external factors are affecting the changes in the Turkish foreign policy more than internal factors. During the Democratic Party's period between 1950 and 1960, Turkey could not get involved in the Balkan area of issues because of the two reasons. Turkey chose to side with the capitalist world and NATO; because almost all Balkan countries except Greece had chosen Communism, ideological differences were the main reason, because the countries established relations and got close or were antagonistic with each other during the Cold War, and unfortunately Turkey and the Balkan countries had already taken different sides. Secondly, the Democratic Party of Turkey was pro-American and pro-Western, because key executives of the Democratic Party thought that they owed their power to western and American pressure on Inonu government (Gjana, 2011, p. 535). In 1999, conflicts started between the Kosovo and Serbs. During those conflicts Turkey supported Kosovo. It is very obvious that foreign policy is not independent from domestic policies.

This study will shed light on the Turkish foreign policy since 1990s towards Balkans in general, particularly in Albania. The reason is that, this new foreign policy of Turkey has been discussed and debated in various platforms and newspapers. However, it is difficult to say that the same amount of weight has been lifted by the academic world.

This study will also analyse the term which has been often used in order to define the new Turkish foreign policy towards these regions which is "New Ottomans". It is very clear that the term creates confusion and problems when it is used in the international relations.

This study will concentrate more on the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkan countries, particularly Albania, with foreign policy tools. It does not mean that the study will not consider Turkey's foreign relations with other Balkan countries. The reason is that, Albania, occupies better positions in terms of democratic and economic transition with its neighbours. Furthermore, there is a large Albanian speaking ethnic community living in

Turkey. Therefore, the relationship between Albania and Turkey could be seen as an example for the other Balkan countries.

The chapter 2 covers the theoretical background of the constructivist approach, which is used in this study. In this chapter, the constructivism approach is defined and it is explained how the constructivism is used in the foreign policy analysis. In this chapter, constructivism scholars recognize the material world as existing independently, they also claim that through foreign policy state interact with each other, and then they socialize with each other. Because of this interaction, they gain their identity. In this study, special attention is given to the state identity, national identity and national interests, which is very important regarding the foreign policy. Scholars claim, constructivism in the foreign policy, emphasizes the significance of norms and ideas, which is in the nation's collective consciousness, associated with conceptions of national identity, and in the foreign policy context, norms and ideas are best thought of national identity. As a result, national identity can be conceptualized as a basic worldview, combined with ideas about the type of national image a nation aspires to, as well as a sense of the values represented by the nation. The intermediate category of ideas, general attitudes and frames connects the core values of national identity to the causal ideas that shape policy choices. The process of national identity construction cannot be detached from the socio-political setting in which it takes place. For the foreign policy as social constructivism claims the identity and interests of actors are very vital. Apart from interests, constructivists consider the mutual constitution of agents and structures, or structuration, to be part of constructivism's ontology. Activities, relations and interactions are very important between agents and structures; as a result, through these activities, states can understand each other and they can build and shape their identities. As we acknowledge that structures are not only made of material capabilities, but it is also social relationships. These social relations are shared knowledge, shared understandings, shared opinions, expectations,

relations, activities and interactions. States will have interests for each other when they know each other and when they share knowledge.

The chapter 3 analyses the bilateral relations, multilateral dialogue mechanisms and regional cooperation schemes among Turkey and the Balkan countries, the aims of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries. The importance of cultural, historical, economic past of Turkey towards the Balkan countries and the advantages of Turkey – Balkan countries relations is also discussed in this chapter. This study analyses the misunderstood Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, which is claimed that Turkey tries to create a pact-Ottoman or a neo-Ottoman' in the Balkan countries. This chapter also analyses the Turkish early foreign policy and its emergence. Since Turkey is one of the Balkan countries, it gives great attention to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries and preserves good relations with all the Balkan countries and Turkey has the belief that it only can get its own security and stability through the security and stability of the Balkan regions.

The chapter 4 explores the Albanian background and its relations with the Ottoman Empire, the period after the collapse of the communist regime in Albania and it also examines the Turkey- Albanian relations since 1990. Further this chapter explores the scholars and people's ideas and thoughts of Albania about the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. Lastly, this chapter analyzes the Turkish foreign policy tools towards Albania such as economy, diplomacy, military and education.

Finally, the chapter 5 concludes and gives recommendations about the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries.

1.2. Research Method

In this study, qualitative and quantitative methods are used. Both methods are combined. It is stated that many researchers use qualitative and quantitative methods in order to have deep investigation in the research area. Usually qualitative method involves surveys, interviews, observations, life histories and analysis, in order to get more exact and accurate information (Silverman, 2004,p.36). Qualitative method includes governance, empowerment, social capital and social exclusion. This qualitative method is believed to provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena.

Berg argues:

Qualitative methods can (and should) be extremely systematic and have the ability to be reproduced by subsequent researchers. Replication and reproducibility, after all, are central to the creation and testing of theories and their acceptance by scientific communities (Berg, 2001,p.7).

Quantitative method involves examining and studying official statistics or doing a survey. Quantitative research analyses findings or results sections, which show percentages and proportions of data that includes tables, charts, and graphs (Berg, 2001,p.276). Prakash claims that “ for most researchers, case selection defines method: a few cases of a particular phenomenon make a study ‘qualitative’ but a lot of cases turns it into a ‘quantitative’ analysis. Usually a case is equated with a country, and there is often an implicit presumption that some sort of history will be traced” (Prakash, 2008,p.43).For this reason, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in this study. Qualitative and quantitative methods are also very important in the social sciences for case study, which involves data collecting. Through case studies, researchers have ability to understand and analyze specific case. Therefore, the mixed or combined methods enable researches to use data collection and analysis by implying both quantitative and qualitative approaches. For this reason, the both methods have values in social science research.

The primary purpose of this survey was to find out, the people's perceptions of Albania of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. This study was conducted upon taking into consideration the opinions of the people of Albania about the relations between Albania and Turkey. In order to reach these primary objectives, this study uses qualitative and quantitative methods based on this survey, which started in December 2012 and finished in July 2013. This survey took about 7 months. This survey covers 716 people in different Albanian cities mainly: Tirana, Shkoder, Kaveje, Kruje, Lushnije and Durres. The cities were chosen according to the random sampling. I tried to conduct this survey by asking people, particularly, who were studying in the universities or who graduated from the universities. The age group was 18 and above. The interviews were based on 20 questions. The survey questions were completed by different group of people such as teachers, doctors, academicians, politicians, lawyers, businessmen, economists, students, people who work in private sectors and also some other profession groups.

Particular attention was paid to the gender, which were 49.2 percent or 352 males and which 50.8 percent or 364 were females out of 716 respondents, age group, level of education, the people's interests such as: Foreign policy, Domestic politics, economy and celebrity programs, the opinions of the people of Albania, that how much they think that Albania has made progress since 1991, the opinions of the Albanian people that what they think about the influence that Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy, the opinions of the Albanian people of which countries are the closest allies to Albania, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries they think have the greatest influence on Albanian Economy, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries they think are friendliest towards Albania, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries they think have the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy and also the opinions of the Albanian people about the relations between Albania and Turkey regarding the foreign policy.

Overall, my expectation was here to explore how much Albanian people think that Turkey`s foreign policy influences Albania. The survey questionnaire was prepared by Isa Erbaş with the help of my supervisor, associate professor, Enika Abazi. Besides the survey, I also conducted interviews with well-known Albanian and Turkish academicians and politicians namely, Edmond Haxhinasto, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania, Lefter Maliqi, Albanian Deputy, Ilir Nikolla, former chairman of municipality of Saranda, Ilir Hebovija, Journalist, Academician, Mediterranean University of Albania, the Turkish Tirana ambassador Mr. Hasan Aşan , The former Director of Yunus Emre (Turkish Culture Center) of Tirana Dr.Bunyamin Çağlayan, the famous Albanian historian Prof.Dr. Ferit Duka, European University, the head of Philosophy Chair Prof. Dr. Gjergji Sinani, University of Tirana, the former Minister of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports, Ferdinand Xhaferraj and the Albanian former military attaché, Hajro limaj ,who worked in Ankara between 1994- 2000. Through these survey and interviews, I wanted to find out that how much the survey results and interviews results are compatible with each other. As I stated, the primary purpose of this study is to understand and explore the people`s opinions of Albania about foreign policy. In order to understand the background of the respondents I asked some general questions in this survey. The survey was conducted randomly and each survey took about 8-10 minutes. After the survey and interview was conducted, I used the SPSS 16 and Nvivo 12 in order to analyze the data. The figures represent the findings and results in the conducted survey. There are 20 questions about the survey. Each question represents three figures. For instance, figure 1.1 represents detail about the question and result, figure 1.2 represents the frequency and figure 1.3. represent the percentage.The questions ,figures and interviews are in the appendix part.

1.3. Hypothesis

Main hypothesis

The goal of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans is to improve its economy.

Sub hypothesis

The goals of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans are to preserve and improve its historical and cultural ties.

1.4. Research questions

1. What are the main goals of the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans?
2. Why is the Balkans important for the Turkish foreign policy?
3. What are the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans?
4. Why is especially Albania important for the Turkish foreign policy?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter 2 covers the theoretical background of the constructivist approach, which is used in this study. In this chapter, I will give definition to the constructivism and I will explain how the constructivism is used in the foreign policy analysis. In this chapter, constructivism scholars recognize the material world as existing independently, they also claim that through foreign policy state interact with each other, and then they socialize with each other. Because of this interaction, they gain their identity. In this study, special attention will be given to the state identity, national identity and national interests, which is very important regarding the foreign policy. Scholars claim, constructivism in the foreign policy, emphasizes the significance of norms and ideas, which is in the nation's collective consciousness, associated with conceptions of national identity, and in the foreign policy context, norms and ideas are best thought of national identity. As a result, national identity can be conceptualized as a basic worldview, combined with ideas about the type of national image a nation aspires to, as well as a sense of the values represented by the nation. The intermediate category of ideas, general attitudes and frames connects the core values of national identity to the causal ideas that shape policy choices. The process of national identity construction cannot be detached from the socio-political setting in which it takes place. For the foreign policy as social constructivism claims the identity and interests of actors are very vital. Apart from interests, constructivists consider the mutual constitution of agents and structures, or structuration, to be part of constructivism's ontology. Activities, relations and interactions are very important between agents and structures; as a result, through these activities, states can understand each other and they can build and shape their identities. As we acknowledge that structure is not only made of material capabilities, but it is also social

relationships. These social relations are shared knowledge, shared understandings, shared opinions, expectations, relations, activities and interactions. States will have interests for each other when they know each other and when they share their knowledge.

In order to analyze the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkan countries, particularly Albania, the constructivist approach will be used in this study. This constructivist approach is important for the Turkish foreign policy, because this approach deals with identity, state identity, national identity, national interests, national security, and this constructivist approach is a peaceful tool to study the Turkish foreign policy. Therefore, constructivism in the Turkish foreign policy is united with my study. As it is stated, Kemalist state identity emerges as a key concept in this attempt to explain Turkish foreign policy. As a result, constructivist elements are important in this study. Constructivism teaches that, ideational factors do not operate in a vacuum but in the real world. In order to give meaning to the Turkish foreign policy constructivism approach should be engaged (Uzer, 2011, p.16). Constructivist approach also will be used to study internal and external identities and norms. Therefore, the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries particularly towards Albania will be understood and analyzed through constructivist approach. The constructivists approach will help us find out how the Turkish foreign policy preferences and interests are formulated. In the foreign policy analysis constructivist approach is a very important tool. Scott Burchill claims that, the rise of constructivism has sparked a renewed interest in international history (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.206).

For this reason,according to Ruggie:

Constructivism concerns the issue of human consciousness: the role it plays in international relations, and the implications for the logic and methods of social inquiry of taking it seriously. Constructivists hold the view that the building blocks of international reality are ideational as well as material; that ideational factors have normative as well as instrumental dimensions; that they express not only individual but also collective intentionality; and that the meaning and significance of ideational factors are not independent of time and place (Ruggie, 1998, p.33).

Constructivism seeks to find out how the past shapes the way actors understand their present situation and by its very nature it focuses on historical process and constructivism has trouble analyzing how rational, prudent leaders deal with the pernicious problem of future uncertainty (Leander, 2006, p.19).

Ruggie claims:

Constructivists seek to push the empirical and explanatory domains of international relations theory beyond the analytical confines of neo realism and neoliberal institutionalism in all directions: by problematizing states' identities and interests; by broadening the array of ideational factors that affect international outcomes; by introducing the logically prior constitutive rules alongside regulative rules; and by including transformation as a normal feature of international politics that systemic theory should encompass even if its empirical occurrence is episodic and moves on a different time line from everyday life (Ruggie, 1998, p.27).

It is stated that the rise of constructivism has had several significant impacts on the development of international relations theory and analysis. Due to the work of constructivists, the social, historical and normative have returned to the centre stage of debate, especially within the American core of the discipline (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.205).

Every author gives various definitions to constructivism. For example, Kukla defines constructivism as an idea which arises in the course of conducting and thinking about sociological investigations of science (Kukla, 2000,p.18). Kratochwil states: "The issue is not whether somebody says or believes she or he is a constructivist, but whether or not such a (self)-identification makes sense in view of some of the tenets defining constructivism" (Kratochwil, 2011,p.166).

First, constructivism is centrally concerned with the role of ideas in constructing social life. Constructivism is not subjectivism or pure idealism. Instead, the emphasis on ideas is meant to oppose arguments about social life, which emphasize the role of brute material conditions like biology, geography and technology. Second, constructivism is concerned with showing the socially constructed nature of agents or subjects. Third, constructivism is based on a research strategy of methodological holism rather than methodological individualism (Handbook of International Relations , 2002,pp.75-76).

The study of culture and international relations is closely identified with constructivism (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.210). What is the use of constructivism? “ Constructivism may help us analyze the place of law in international politics, suggesting that it is more than simply a result of political contestation, but also has a feedback effect, shaping politics” (Thomas J. Biersteker, 2007, p.10). Constructivism constitutes an alternative research program to the study of international politics and foreign policy (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.22). Postmodernists think that, “constructivism is an epistemology as well as an ontology because theories quite literally construct the world” (Wendt, 1999,p.49). “Our belief is that constructivism enables scholars to overcome the realist-idealist divide and to contemplate the relationship between structures, defined in material and normative terms” (Barnett, 1998,p.437). “The international system is a hard case for constructivism on both the social and construction counts” (Wendt, 1999,p.2). Barnett also supports above mentioned by saying that, “constructivism's recognition that international reality is a social construction driven by collective understandings, including norms that emerge from social interaction. Constructivism, therefore, holds the view that international actors are embedded in a structure that is both normative and material, and allows for the possibility that under the proper conditions actors can generate shared identities and norms that are tied to a stable peace” (Barnett, 1998,p.10).

According to Katzenstein P. J.:

Constructivism's contribution is that it evokes the "context" effects of norms. It rejects the dichotomy of norms versus interests/material factors. Material factors by themselves are not all there is; their meaning depends on how they are interpreted (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.118).

Activities, relations and interactions are very important between agents and structures; because through these activities, states can understand each other and they can also build and shape their identities. It is also known that there is another element, which is media. States can interact, develop their relations through media. As we acknowledge that structure is not only made of material capabilities, but it is also social relationships. These social relations are shared knowledge, shared understandings, shared opinions, expectations, relations, activities and interactions. These are all united with each other. States will have interests for each other when they know each other and when they have shared knowledge. Through these activities, interactions and shared knowledge states can solve any problems or conflicts without a war. These things will all happen by following the constructivist approach. According to Leander. Even Human beings, as constructivists emphasize, are mutable they can be changed through interaction (Leander, 2006, p.19).

Zehfuss argues that the significance of constructivism is established more easily than its identity. Constructivism as a phenomenon has become inescapable. Thus, constructivism is significant not only because it is considered central but also because of the possibility of deploying it strategically to exclude more radical perspectives from consideration. This in particular makes critique necessary. Thus, constructivism is clearly significant to IR theory and its future development (Zehfuss, 2004, pp.2-6). Through constructivism, there have not been any problems between domestic and international politics. "Constructivism breaks down the wall between domestic and international politics. Unlike other IR theories, constructivism accounts for the fact of globalization" (Thomas J. Biersteker, 2007, p.252).

Adler claims that “constructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world” (Adler,2005,p.90).Contrary to Adler, “constructivism is correctly seen as defined in part by opposition to materialism” (Handbook of International Relations, 2002,p.77). “When constructivism is defined scholars make reference to recognizing the material world as existing independently of, but interacting with, the social world, the central role of inter subjectivity and the significance of occupying a middle-ground position” (Zehfuss, 2004,p.252). Constructivism is a social theory on which constructs theories of international politics. Constructivism can illuminate significant characters of international politics that were previously enigmatic and have crucial practical implications for international theory and empirical research (Adler,2005,p.90).“Social constructivism does not take the interests of actors for granted, but problematizes and relates the socialization of human rights norms them to the identities of actors” (Thomas Risse, 1999, p.8).Constructivists see the world as a project under construction, as becoming rather than being. Constructivism, which reached the shores of IR in the 1980s, describes the dynamic, contingent and culturally based condition of the social world. It provides important implications for an understanding of knowledge, including scientific knowledge, and how to achieve it. (Handbook of International Relations , 2002,p.128).

In the foreign policy, international politics is very important and at the same time, it is very sensitive. As Wendt claims that, the social structure of international politics is thinner and simpler than that of domestic politics (Wendt, Dec.1998).Once one deals with the foreign policy he or she should mind the social structure of international politics.

In addition to idealism, a key feature of constructivism is holism or structuralism, the view that social structures have effects that cannot be reduced to agents and their interactions. Among these effects is the shaping of identities and interests, which are conditioned by discursive formations by the distribution of ideas in the system as well as by material forces, and as such are not formed in a vacuum (Wendt, 1999,p.139).

We have seen above that how the constructivism approach is understood and defined. It is also essential to know the purpose of constructivists approach. According to Adler, the main purpose of constructivism as to provide both theoretical and empirical explanations of social institutions and social change, with the help of the combined effect of agents and social structures (Adler,2005,p.93). Lynch also claims that, constructivism seeks to understand mutual constitution of agents and structures (Lynch, 2007,p.26). For the foreign policy as social constructivism claims, the identity and interests of actors are very essential (Ruggie, 1998 p.4). Apart from interests, constructivists consider the mutual constitution of agents and structures, or structuration, to be part of constructivism's ontology (Adler, 2005, p.10). Adler goes further that "constructivism takes community interests and individual interests as ontologically complementary" (Adler,2005,p.12). Constructivism is generally associated with social changes, and unexpected implications for the possibility of change in international politics (Wendt, 1999,p.248). Bozdaglioglu argues that unlike domestic political systems, international systems are decentralized and hierarchic. For this reason, anarchy is the ordering principle of the system. Bozdaglioglu also states that in order to survive in this anarchic world, states should take care of themselves (Bozdaglioglu, 2003 p.13). In order to survive in world politics, foreign policy is very important for the states. "It is striking how anachronistic these characterizations seem today for foreign policy making in the industrialized parts of the world" (Ruggie, 1998 p.158).

According to Wendt academic students of international politics today as positivists think they can get closer to the truth about international politics, only if the methods are followed which have proven so successful in the natural sciences (Wendt, Dec.1998). That is why in order to get the truth we have to follow the constructivists approach. Kukla also supports Wendt saying that "constructivism about science involves the claim that social processes produce scientific facts" (Kukla, 2000, P.9).

There are various constructivistisms, such as: social constructivism, conventional constructivism, political constructivism etc. When we analyze the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan states, I will use all these constructivist approaches. Social constructivism seeks to account for what neo-utilitarianism assumes: the identity and interests of actors (Ruggie, 1998 p.4). Social constructivism more generally, is like that of game theory; it is analytically neutral with respect to conflict and cooperation (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.11). A social constructivist approach is explicitly interested in the relationships among norms, interests, and outcomes but conceives of norms very differently from the way a rationalist account does (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.105). Ruggie claims that “the distinguishing feature of social constructivism is that it concerns itself with the nature, origins, and functioning of social facts, and what if any specific methodological requirements their study may entail” (Ruggie, 1998, p.13). The tradition of social constructivism, a perspective that promised a radical conceptualization of structure and causality in the social sciences was introduced to international relations theory at the end of the 1980s under the label ‘constructivism’ (McSweeney, 2004,p.127).

Conventional constructivism, which is the school dominant in the US, examines the role of norms and, in fewer cases, identity in shaping international political outcomes (Checkel, April 2004). Political constructivism is a theory that has developed comparatively which is centered on a set of ideas primarily about the justification of principles of political justice, and so about justifying political actions and institutions (Roberts, 2007, p. 1-4). Roberts goes further that , political constructivism is the argument that a political conception can be constructed which does not rely on, or assume the truth or falsity of, any particular comprehensive doctrine. He further claims that, political constructivism`s subject has always been political, the basic structure of society, and constructivism was always conceived of as a response to the pluralism of foundational claims (Roberts, 2007, p.82).

Constructivism also underlines collective identity and the variability of the constraints of anarchy as a consequence (McSweeney, 2004,p.122). It is known that constructivists deal extensively with metaphysics and social theories less for their own sake than because constructivism provides a firm basis for building better IR theories (Handbook of International Relations , 2002,p.127).

According to Adler:

Constructivism broadens our understanding of the relationship between scientific knowledge and International Relations outcomes with the argument that International Relations in general, whether cooperative or conflict, are framed and socially constructed by all classes of knowledge, scientific and other (Adler,2005,p.108).

Constructivism is trendy and it brings fresh theoretical and disciplinary air to IR (Checkel, April 2004). Weber claims that the first point about constructivism is, it is a theory. It explains the ideas how they are constructed. In this concept, constructivism is a sort of historicism, a way of thinking that takes the origins and contexts of ideas as essential (Weber, 2010,p. 88). Weber goes further that,constructivism is a position about the reality that can be understood either metaphysically or epistemologically, since it is believed that the objects we come to know are themselves formed through a process of inquiry or deliberation (Weber, 2010,p. 37). Bozdaglioglu argues that, despite the presence of various approaches within the constructivist research program, constructivists, in general, share the idea that international politics is not fully driven by material factors. Without denying the importance of material factors in the formulation of states' foreign policies, constructivists argue that, in the process, states' interests, and consequently their behaviors, are influenced by social and inter subjective factors such as norms, culture, ideas, and identity (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,p.22).

McKinnon compares constructivism with perfectionism and pragmatism. He states that the preferable alternative to perfectionism is constructivism. Because of its justificatory

values constructivism is different from perfectionism, because it is indicated without reference to a true moral theory or faith, but rather through consideration of what has to be assumed about persons if they are to act at all: the values of constructivist political justification are ideas of practical reason. Constructivism is also different from pragmatism because the claim is not that justificatory values are vindicated in virtue of being shared by actual persons (McKinnon, 2002,p.26).

Wendt insists that for the success in international politics constructivist thinking is very important in IR, in order to shed interesting light on concrete problems of world politics must ultimately be the test of a method's worth (Wendt, 1999,p.4). Contrary to Wendt, Zehfuss claims that although constructivism investigates how we construct our world, it stops short of scrutinizing what is an inextricable part of it (Zehfuss, 2004,p.248).

In the foreign policy analysis constructivist approach focuses on identity such as: collective identity, political identity, national identity and state identity. Constructivism focuses especially on the relationship between interests and identities encompasses several competing approaches (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.26). Bozdaglioglu states that,mutual construction is very important for identities and in order to hold and maintain for states a social identity requires acceptance and approval from others because identities are mutual constructions (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,pp.86-87). As it is stated by Leander that “Wendt’s constructivism needs identity as a central concept but that this very concept threatens to undermine the possibility of his constructivism” (Leander, 2006, p.92). “Identity is not a fact of society; it is a process of negotiation among people and interest groups. Identity describes the society and society is constituted by identity” (McSweeney, 2004,pp.73-74). The role of identity in negotiating the new international order would be fully justified (Kupchan, 2001,p.39). Identity and nationl interests can not be seperated. Wheeler claims that identity leads to particular conceptions of the national interest (Wheeler, 2008,p.17). It is also

claimed that identity theory, especially, is deeply contested, because it deals for scholars of national security directly and unavoidably pressing moral issues (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.4). According to Aşano: “the concept of identity, whether it is of an ethnic or a religious community, on the other hand, loaded with emotion and spoken of in terms of material objects and manners of life” (Aşano, 2005,p.34). In every country decision-makers’ special sense of their own national history, identity and interests set the tone for the various patterns that are to characterize the aid discourses of countries during the ensuing decades (Veen, 2011,p.78). “The advent of the constructivist school has helped remedy this shortcoming by putting ideas and identity at the center of scholarly inquiry. The most fruitful line of inquiry entails examining how power, institutions, and ideas and identity together shape outcomes” (Kupchan, 2001,p.8).

Barnett argues:

Most definitions of identity, as they say, begin with the understanding of oneself in relation to others .A political identity is an actor's experience of a shared social relation in which at least one of the parties including third parties is an individual or organization others (Barnett, 1998,p.400).

Wendt argues that,the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces.The identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature (Wendt, 1999,p.1). IR constructivism deals with the role of identities, norms and causal understandings in the constitution of national interests (Handbook of International Relations , 2002,p.129). According to Wendt, constructivists are interested in macro-level structures on identity and interests. In IR, constructivists analyze the causal effects of structure on identity and interests, which is neglected by individualists (Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics, 1999,p.212). There are several ways that are important for identities. One of them is culture. “Each organization’s culture shapes their identity conceptions that in turn shape their foreign

policy preferences and understanding of the national interest. States, depending on the allocation of power among different groups or organizations, may represent one of the social identities in the system” (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,p.158). Cultures are also important for identity because cultures shape individual identity (Smits, 2005,p.12). Smits goes further saying that identity was shaped by “national character” as well as class and social position (Smits, 2005,p.5). Notions of identity is related to belonging to a social group (Alistair Scott May, 2004,p.8). Identity politics have given a sharper and often destructive twist to struggles for cultural recognition (Loescher, 2011,p.99). The significance of identity will provide principles fit to preserve cultural contexts, which are necessary for the preservation of identity (McKinnon, 2002,p.11). According to Katzenstein identity is that people often come to identify with a group of others because people share common interests. An identity acts as a cultural frame that tells us who we are and how we ought to act (Katzenstein, 2009,p.138). For example, “social group requires being able to distinguish itself from others in ways that give it a relatively positive social identity” (Alistair Scott May, 2004,p.26). Yurdusev argues that, identity, comes from its being with others, not just from others (Yurdusev, 2003,p.50). Another author describes identity as a central need of individuals but a need that can be met without conflict. That identity often seems a source of conflict is misleading. He continues saying that it is a use of state power to buttress an identity that creates conflict (Hilkermeier, 2004,p.65).

Barnett argues:

Identities, in short, are not only personal or psychological, but are social, defined by the actor's interaction with and relationship to others; therefore, all political identities are contingent, dependent on the actor's interaction with others and place within an institutional context. It is mainly a social identity that generates a positive identification between peoples of member states (Barnett, 1998,p.47).

Internal and external factors play very significant roles in shaping identity. Thus, identity-based explanations require a better understanding of a state's preferences and interests, and consequently its foreign policy priorities. That is why implementing a certain foreign policy would require consent and consensus among various groups which are involved in identity and interest construction and which have different role identities (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,pp.23-24).“What constructivism has to say on identity and national and transnational interests, and what it signifies for the rearrangement and mitigation of the sense of “we” and “they” in the context of security communities and human rights discourse. In the process, changing interests and values, as part of an evolving identity, transform the notion of national interest” (Wheeler, 2008,p.11). As it is mentioned above, “the relation between identity and interests is probably best conceptualized as recursive, following the logic of structure and agency. Identity theory can be defined as the grounding of analysis in the causal potential of collective identity to the exclusion of material factors” (McSweeney, 2004,pp.127-128).Identity is created through interaction between groups. That is why social identity theory is concerned both with the psychological and sociological aspects of group behavior (Alistair Scott May, 2004,pp.22-23). States' identity and interests is relevant to their security and security policy (McSweeney, 2004,p.168). “Where the process is successful, the new identity and interests are not perceived as the sacrifice of self in favor of others, but as the realization of a different and superior conception of the national self and the national interest” (McSweeney, 2004,p.170). Therefore, identity shapes Turkey's foreign policy preferences, interests and behavior. “In order to see the effects of identity on the formulation of the Turkey's foreign policy preferences during this time frame, the analysis should be supported by a historical analysis of how that identity was constructed in the first place and how it defined Turkey's preferences and interests” (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,pp.8-9). So, identity is very important for a person and for a state. For

the foreign policy firstly, a state needs identity. Without identity a state cannot have sovereignty. State identity provides sovereignty for itself.

Collective Identity is also one of the most important identities in the foreign policy analysis. Constructivists put much more stress on the significance of collective identity. Bozdaglioglu describes collective identity as a systemic process, which is another factor that plays a significant role in the emergence. Bozdaglioglu goes further saying strategic practice is the last factor that affects the emergence of collective identity (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,p.21). In the process of reproducing collective identity lies the key to the production and reproduction of security and security policy (McSweeney, 2004,p.12). Collective identity involves shared features, it is argued that not all type of identities are collective because not all involve identification (Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics, 1999,p.229). According to McSweeney the collective identity is a process of state interaction with other states in the international arena that provides the school of learning by which collective identity, relevant to foreign policy (McSweeney, 2004,p.128). As Leander argues that ccollective identity begins to succeed in the interactions of states within a system, a tipping point will again be reached, and friendship will come to be seen as the attribute of the system itself (Leander, 2006, p.59). For these reasons, collective identity is very important for state relations. Wendt goes further that “the constructivist model is saying that the boundaries of the Self are at stake in and therefore may change in interaction, so that in cooperating states can form a collective identity” (Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics, 1999,p.317). According to Aşano collective identity is still one-step further from understanding. The process of this type of identification is found both in the core of communal culture, particular collectivity and in the aggregated society in which the group is located (Aşano, 2005,p.37).According to constructivists perspective, “collective identity that gives actors an interest in the preservation of their culture.Collective interests mean that actors make the

welfare of the group an end in itself, which will in turn help them overcome the collective action problems that beset egoists” (Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1999,p.337). As we have seen that collective identity is very essential in states interactions and relations.

Political identity is another type of identity in the foreign policy analysis. Political identity is also very important in foreign policy. For example, construction of identity suggests an engineering view of politics one that focuses on purposeful actors and their political choices (Katzenstein, 2009,p.3). “Deliberative democracy builds upon the claims of identity politics that groups be heard in the political process; as a democratic paradigm, it owes its appeal to the fact that it attempts to reconcile the speech claims of identity politics with a communitarian-inspired commitment to democratic community” (Smits, 2005,p.8). Katzenstein argues that, political identity is a social and at the same time, it is a historical construct. As a social construct, it reflects the institutional nature of the political community and as a historical construct, its emergence and consolidation is bound up with historical contingencies. He continues saying that, there is a significant functional element to political identity, and it plays an important role in sustaining citizens’ allegiance and loyalty to their political community (Katzenstein, 2009,pp.29-30).

National identity is another factor in the foreign policy analysis. Katzenstein describes national identity “as one form of collective identity. National identity could be a source of conflict for groups in a society who did not think of themselves as belonging to the nation and, if the patterns of interaction became conflict, could result in some groups deciding to form a new or alternative nation” (Katzenstein, 2009,pp.135-136). The importance of national identity in the foreign policy cannot be denied. According to Veen, constructivism emphasizes the significance of norms and ideas which is in the nation’s collective consciousness, associated with conceptions of national identity and he also states that in the

foreign policy context, norms and ideas are best thought of in terms of national identity (Veen, 2011, p.26). Veen goes further: “national identity can be conceptualized as a basic worldview, combined with ideas about the type of national image a nation aspires to, as well as a sense of the values represented by the nation. The intermediate category of ideas, general attitudes and frames connects the core values of national identity to the causal ideas that shape policy choices”(Veen, 2011,p.28). Geppert also claims that, the process of national identity construction cannot be detached from the socio-political setting in which it takes place (Geppert, 2011,p.347). The importance of national identity is never decreasing in foreign policy (Barnett, 1998,p.91). The process of national identity construction is closely linked to Power (Geppert, 2011,p.350). McSweeney states that, identity can also be an instrument or weapon in the security policies of others as, for instance, in the stimulation of ethnic unrest for destabilizing a foreign government, or in the instrumentality of national identity in the interests of the state (McSweeney, 2004,p.88). For this reason, national identity is a significant and essential element of the organizational actors’ sense making processes (Geppert, 2011,p.371). According to Yurdusev, national identity has become the major social identification (Yurdusev, 2003,p.140). It is very important to understand national identity in a right way. National identity and national interests affect foreign policy in a positive way. Dawisha claims that if national identity emerges because of purposeful narrative, then it is necessary to comprehend properly when the narrative began, for its later development and contemporary impact has to have something to do with the intellectual, ideological, and political influence under which it emerged (Dawisha, 2003,p.16).

Veen argues that:

Foreign policy is about national identity itself. National identity can be conceptualized as a basic worldview, combined with ideas about the type of national image a nation aspires to, as well as a sense of the values represented by the nation (Veen, 2011,pp.27-28).

Wheeler underlines the importance of identity. According to him, identity leads to special conceptions of the national interest; what the country cares about and what aspects of its “collective self” as a result of national interests, the polity attempts to achieve through global politics (Wheeler, 2008,p.153). National identity is a context-bound resource and some contexts are more fertile in providing various discourses around national identity than others (Geppert, 2011,p.375). Finally, the argument revolved around national identity, the definition of national interest, and the kind of political, economic, and social systems that Turkey should adopt. In the course of these arguments, basic decisions regarding Turkey’s foreign policy (defense and national security) became inextricably intertwined with the national identity of Turkey (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,p.7). So as a result national interests emerge from the national identity. National identity is a main factor in the international relations and foreign policy.

State identity is another identity in the Foreign policy analysis. Coskun argues that one of the essential ways for states is to get a new identity or protect the previous one through foreign policy. Interactions with other states help a way for states get them accepted as a part of a certain international community and gain respect. Particularly during the process of identity formulation or reformulation, foreign policy is a key instrument decision makers use in order to realize their goals (Coskun, 2008). State identity affects domestic political developments and foreign policy identity. According to Leander, states do not form a conception of themselves only through interaction with other states, socialization processes internal to a state can change and shape state’s identity and interests independently of such interactions (Leander, 2006, p.13). As Bozdaglioglu claims that “ any changes in the corporate identity of the state as a result of domestic political developments will eventually affect the identity formation at the systemic level where states will try to reorient their foreign policy preferences in accordance with the new identity” (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,pp.30-

31). Wendt claims that “much of the construction is at the domestic level, as Liberals have emphasized, and a complete theory of state identity needs to have a large domestic component” (Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1999,p.24). Contrary to Wendt, Mc Sweeney claims that when it is focused only on the domestic arena, and if malleability of state identity is ignored through international negotiation then state identity is fixed and unproblematic (McSweeney, 2004,p.161). International organizations are also very important concerning state identity. They are related to power, they support identity and interest formation .Sometimes states and individuals and other social actors can draw on their material and symbolic resources (Adler, 2005,p.102). While building of the European Community, the purpose has always been to reconstruct the identity of the state (McSweeney, 2004,p.132). The community also becomes an essential source of state identity (Barnett, 1998,p.428).“ The state's interests, and the identity of its people, can be exchangeable with those of the community, and the foreign policy of the state takes on a whole new meaning and purpose” (Barnett, 1998,p.48). State build their identities before interacting with each other. Coskun claims, “Constructivism assumes that as states interact with each other and then they gain an identity for themselves and also attach an identity to the others. However, the international aspect of state identity is only one part of the whole picture: there are also domestic factors defining what kind of entity a state may become” (Coskun, 2008).

With the development of constructivism in IR, the idea that interests are given and unchanging has been challenged by the claim that state identities and interests are constituted by norms, and that as these change in international society, new possibilities open up for action that were previously excluded (Thomas J. Biersteker, 2007, p.114).

According to Thomas J. Biersteker, it is argued that, once created, institutions develop an identity and power of their own, constraining state behavior even where states

may wish to deviate from agreed rules (Thomas J. Biersteker, 2007, p.5). State identity is also essential for national security interests or policies of states.

According to the following authors :

Variation in state identity, or changes in state identity, affect the national security interests or policies of states. Identities both generate and shape interests. Some interests, such as mere survival and minimal physical well-being, exist outside of specific social identities; they are relatively generic. But many national security interests depend on a particular construction of self-identity in relation to the conceived identity of others (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.21).

The discourse on the state's identity and its foreign policy can be dominated by entirely new actors with different role identities. Identity crisis can affect the course of states' foreign policies in several ways: First, states may try to change the identity and consequently their foreign policy preferences and Interests (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,p.32).

As we have stated above that states gain identity when they interact with each other. States are very important factors in building identities through state society relations. Katzenstein claims that “conceiving of the state in relational terms and investigating the domestic sources of foreign policy focuses attention on the degree to which the identities of actors are constructed by state-society relations” (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.16). Through interaction and activities as it is claimed by Katzenstein states can develop interests in enacting, sustaining, or developing a particular identity (Katzenstein P. J., 1996, p.22). Bozdaglioglu goes further that for constructivists, states do not have any identity or interest prior to systemic interaction. After they begin their interaction with others in the system, they define and redefine their identities and interests. Bozdaglioglu goes on that according to constructivism, by looking at the nature of their interaction states will or will not acquire egoistic or collective identities and interests (Bozdaglioglu, 2003,pp.160-161). Nuclear decisions serve significant symbolic functions; they shape and reflect a state's identity (Utgoff, 2000, p.37). State identity is very important for security,peace and stability.State identity and the mutual attribution are critical in understanding the formation of the stable

zone of peace that today exists among the Atlantic democracies (Kupchan, 2001,p.29). State identity enables other people to know each other. When peaceful change is being tried to explain, identity factor allows people from different states to know each other (Adler, 2005,p.189). As a result, state identity is very important in foreign policy. If states do not interact with each other they cannot gain state identity and state interests.

I will use this constructivist approach in my study including all identities and interests such as collective identity, political identity, national identity and state identity. It is claimed that this constructivist approach is significant in the foreign policy analysis. As I have mentioned above that identities emerge from the state interactions and activities. For this reason this constructivist approach will help me analyse the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans and particularly towards Albania.

CHAPTER 3

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS BALKANS

What are the main factors behind foreign policy? Some authors claim the purpose is economy. Some claim national interest and some claim stability and peace. Even some claim, the leaders, who are in power, make sure to strengthen their power. Drezner explains so clearly the purpose of foreign policy. He states “foreign policy leaders conceive of a national interest defined as maximizing their welfare and the security of that welfare. To further their interests, states will usually act to increase their own income and wealth” (Drezner, 1999, pp. 28-29). Foreign policy is also believed that, through commercials, a state’s international position might be strengthened or it might serve to strengthen its export industries (Veen, 2011,p.37). Andrew Linklater underlines the importance of foreign policy against terrorist organization. He argues that “the analysis of good international citizenship reflects the fact that foreign policy has to deal with such diversity which now includes the threats that a new distinct breed of terrorist organization poses to national and personal security” (Andrew Linklater, 2006,p. 231). So to live in this world peacefully, foreign policy is very important for us. Barnett argues that external security goals are always given priority in the foreign policy calculations of states and state officials follow foreign policy goals, such as security, and domestic goals, such as economic development and political stability (Barnett, 1992, p.7). There are some factors for reliability of foreign policy which are necessary in order to reach its purpose. Foreign policy depends on force, lower level coercion, flexible negotiations so that to achieve its goals (Marsh, 2001, p.14). The purpose of foreign policy varies from state to state. “Many moral foreign policy objectives pose no risk to national survival. And other national interests simply do not have the ethical priority of survival” (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.51).

According to Kratochwil:

While the public interest, or more often the common weal, fortified or defended a policy against internal challenges, the notion of the national interest was used in advancing the goals of foreign policy (Kratochwil, 2011, p.40).

Some states have various conceptions of their national goals and interests, and that these varieties form policy choices (Veen, 2011,p.23). Some states “which cede economic sovereignty to these global players in the name of free trade and commerce therefore run the risk of elevating private commercial gain to the primary foreign policy objective of the state” (Scott Burchill, 2005,p.77). Apart from national interests and identities for some states, human rights were considered a peripheral and even inappropriate topic for foreign policy. Today, in many countries, their foreign policy involve in human rights. Many questions still remain unanswered about to what degree human rights concerns affect foreign policy decisions, and whether such human rights policies actually improve domestic conditions in the target country or not (Handbook of International Relations,2002, p.702).

Bull argues:

To say that a state's foreign policy should be based on pursuit of the national interest is to insist that whatever steps are taken should be part of some rational plan of action; an approach to foreign policy based on the national interest may thus be contrasted with one consisting simply of the uncritical pursuit of some established policy, or one consisting simply of unconsidered reactions to events (Bull, 2002, p.64).

It can be argued that foreign policy decisions are often influenced by the state’s economic interests (DeRouen, 2010, p.130).We can come into conclusion that national interests and economic intersets of states are very significant for the states` foreign policy.We will see in this chapter the aim of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan states.

This chapter analyzes the bilateral relations, multilateral dialogue mechanisms and regional cooperation schemes among Turkey and the Balkan countries, the aims of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries. The importance of cultural, historical,

economic past of Turkey towards the Balkan countries and the advantages of Turkey – Balkan countries relations will be also discussed in this chapter. It is argued that foreign policy decisions are very important for nations, their allies, and rival countries. The decisions can also affect the survivability of leaders in power. The decisions of the leaders can affect their future power in their states and governments. The leaders can change world order by making a proper foreign policy. How much NGOs, MNCs, academics, political leaders, interventions of several foreign governments, affect foreign policy.

This chapter looks forward to finding an answer whether Turkish foreign policy is based on pursuit of national interests, national identity, state identity, economy, stability, peace or not. This chapter finds out the factors behind the foreign policy such as: international, domestic, cultural, and social changes (DeRouen, 2010, p.10). This study also analyzes the misunderstood Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, which is claimed that Turkey tries to create a pact-Ottoman or a neo-Ottoman' in the Balkan countries. This chapter also analyzes the Turkish early foreign policy and its emergence.

3.1. Turkish Foreign Policy towards Balkans

Foreign policy is very vital in our time than in the past. Every obstacle can be overcome by proper foreign policy conduction. It has been claimed that as a result globalization threat, foreign policy began facing challenges of constantly redefining its spaces of accountability. When states recognize each other's sovereignty as Wendt claims they cannot conquer each other, because recognition implies a willingness to live and let live (Wendt, 1999,p.209).

Since Turkey is one of the Balkan countries, it gives great attention to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries and preserves good relations with all the Balkan countries and Turkey has the belief that it only can get its own security and stability through

the security and stability of the Balkan regions. It is claimed that the Balkan states is not easy for the Turkish foreign policy and there are challenges obstacles, which should be carefully dealt. The obstacles are claimed long-lasting problems among and within the Balkan countries, and they are major challenges towards the Turkish foreign policy in the Balkan regions (Aras, 2012). It is also claimed that, Turkey's new activism in the Balkan countries is as a product of Turkey's own determination of its role as a regional power, which emerges from its history, and political struggles. It is argued that apart from its economic perspective, Turkey follows a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, to expand the sphere of peace and prosperity and to generate stability and security in its region. Turkey's proper foreign policy can play important role in the Balkan region. After the socialist system ended in the region, there were many conflicts and problems among the Balkan countries. During the conflicts, Turkey played important roles especially in Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo. Turkey started its political and diplomatic relations with the Balkan countries. Turkey developed its economic cooperation in the economic sector, which has shown the major factors that constantly develop the relations between Turkey and the Balkans countries.

It is claimed that the features of the Turkish foreign policy was established during the period of Atatürk. "Peace at Home, Peace in the World" was Atatürk's principle in Turkish foreign policy (Uzer, 2011, p.3). Turkish foreign policy's aim was to create and assist peace within Turkey and its neighbouring countries. It is also claimed that the external threats influenced the Turkish foreign policy's strategies, From the beginning of the cold war in 1946 until 1963 (Uzer, 2011, p.3). The Turkish foreign policy was improved towards its neighbours during the Prime Minister and then President Turgut Özal and new markets opened by the close relations with the Balkan countries (Tolay, 2012). It is argued that the

Turkish foreign policy pays great attention to the improvement of bilateral relations, strengthening the mechanisms of political and economic cooperation, and creating a regional sense of ownership and problem solving in the Balkans. Turkey follows an ambitious policy to find solution to the chronic problems, plays a mediator role between conflicting parties, stabilize the region, and pave the way for a regional order in the Balkans. Whenever there is a conflict in the Balkan countries Turkey involves in the issues and tries to find solutions.

The Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries is not new. It has a long history. Professor Aras states that Turkey's interest in the Balkans is not a new phenomenon, but its latest orientation towards the regions is more sophisticated and better coordinated. Turkey has many aims towards these regions such as: to develop bilateral relations, create multilateral dialogue mechanisms, and energize regional cooperation schemes in this corner of the world. Aras claims that the Balkan geography is not easy for Turkish policy and there are important obstacles on its way, which should be carefully dealt. The obstacles are believed the long-lasting problems among and within the Balkan countries, bitter history, and clashing regional perspectives constitute the major challenges towards the Turkish foreign policy in the Balkan regions (Aras, 2012). Linden also claims that there are many objectives regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan states. The Turkey's new activism in its neighbourhood and elsewhere as a product of Turkey's own determination of its role as a regional power, one derived from its own perceptions, history, and political struggles. Firstly, Turkey is redefining its identity and place, in its own neighbourhood, and since Turkey is acting as a regional power, it is gaining self-confidence. As part of this dynamic, some Turkish actions, such as its recognition of Kosovo, will be compatible with the desires of the Western powers, the United States and the EU (Linden, 2012).

Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, to expand the sphere of peace and prosperity and to

generate stability and security in its region and beyond. With this perspective, attaching particular importance to its 'transatlantic' ties Turkey is strengthening its relations with the countries in the Balkans, a priority for Turkey not only from the political, economic and geographical perspectives, but also due to its historical, cultural and human ties with the region (Aşan, 2013). The Turkey's foreign policy is very important towards Balkans. When the socialist system was over after 1990, there were many conflicts and problems in the Balkans including Romania and Bulgaria. Firstly those years, the Turkey's foreign policy influenced especially Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo. Turkey played an important role in solving conflicts in those countries. In those years there were ethnic problems in Bulgaria, there were problems between multi parties in Albania, conflicts and problems were too big in Kosovo, Yugoslavia was breaking up. Turkey was very active in those countries regarding to its foreign policy. The USA was not much effective in Balkan countries those years. Turkey was always with Balkan countries. Turkey had a great image and the image increased more in Balkan countries. Turkey also started its political and diplomatic relations with Slovenia and Croatia. It is also known by the Balkan countries that how much Turkey pursued peaceful politics during Bosnian conflicts. For this reason, Mr. Suleyman Demirel wrote a letter to the world and to the president of the USA stating: We cannot let the problem continue like in Bosnia. We are facing the same problems in Kosovo (Limaj, 2013). It is claimed that, unusual point in Turkey's Balkan policy was the imbalance between political and economic relations. Despite the fact that socio- cultural and relations has increased in the last two decades, economical relations were very low. Despite the last decades, particularly last five years the trade between Turkey and the Balkan countries has dramatically increased (Gjana, 2011, p. 546). Knezović Sandro states that the cooperation in the economic sector has shown that the main factors that continually develop the relations between Turkey and the Balkans countries. Turkey's trade volume with the Balkan countries

was around 2.9 billion dollars in 2000, while by 2011 it gradually increased and grew by a factor of 6.3, meaning that today Turkey's trade volume with the Balkans is around 18.4 billion dollars (Knezović Sandro, 2013). We have seen that the economic cooperation is so important for Turkey. Turkey has so much developed its economy because of this economic cooperation with the Balkan countries. Jelavich argues that the economic situation has greatly influenced the foreign policy of each state (Jelavich, 1983, p.217). Therefore foreign policy is very significant on behalf of a country's economy. The Balkan countries were so important even during Atatürk period, external and internal negative results of nationalism did not permit Turkey to establish good relations with the Balkan area (Gjana, 2011, p. 533).

According to Gjana:

Ignoring the Balkan area was very unintelligible or enigmatic thing for Turkey to do because if one faces toward the West, the Balkan countries are seen in the foreground before one sees the Europe. Turkey's vision was hyperopic, it used to see distant regions far better than adjacent regions. By the Özal era, Turkey had started to see close regions including Balkans, and in the last decade it started to catch sight of proximate regions clearly, deeply and explicitly (Gjana, 2011, p. 546).

Being itself a Balkan country, Turkey attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries, maintains good relations with all of them, and has the belief that its own security and stability can only be achieved through the security and stability of the region. Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, in a region where the impact of global changes is greatest. In this context, Turkey's multi-dimensional, constructive, proactive, realistic and responsible foreign policy is one of the most important assets in realizing its national and international goals (Aşan, 2013).

3.2. Turkish Foreign Policy and Its Background

The era in which we live is an age of rapid changes. Accordingly, foreign policy issues have also gained a more complex and complicated character. Today, taking the necessary steps in keeping with the speed of these changes and developments is the most significant assignment laid before decision makers. In such an environment, developments show that international legitimacy, economic interdependence, respect for human rights, pursuing a sustainable environmental policy and harmony between people belonging to different religious and ethnic origins stand as the most important tools to build lasting peace, stability and prosperity. The realities of our time also force us to analyze international dynamics with a global perspective of peace. Located in one of the important intersections of different foreign policy dynamics, this extraordinary process also shapes Turkey's basic foreign policy issues (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy). After the end of the Cold War, the stable externalities that had governed the Turkish foreign policy since 1945 a firm attachment to the western alliance, with the assumptions that its main security threat came from the USSR, and that the lines dividing eastern and Western Europe were there to stay. With the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the previous existential threat was eliminated. For the first time, Turkey's immediate neighbors had become weaker, both militarily and economically. The above-mentioned issues had created the possibility of flexible and independent policies, which had previously been constrained by cold war realities. Apart from that, the collapse of communist power created a host of new conflicts, notably in the former Yugoslavia and Transcaucasia, which Turkey could not ignore (Özbudun, 2010, p.119). There have several factors in order to explain the changes in the Turkish foreign policy. Ankara has made important domestic changes in the past decade; especially Ankara has made changes in the economic power. Since 1990, Turkey's gross domestic product has quadrupled; exports have been grown by

foreign direct investments. Turkish exports are looking for new markets, and the Turkish businessmen regularly accompany Turkish leaders on their numerous visits to Middle Eastern states. Given the close ties between politics and business in the region, closer political ties provide Turkish businessmen with preferential treatment (Cornell, 2012).

According to Uzer, during the period of Atatürk and İnönü, only a few elite involved in the foreign policy in order to formulate and shape Turkish foreign policy, but with democratization, identity-based politics became more prevalent (Uzer, 2011, p.147). Dicle also supports Uzer claiming that until the transition to multi-party democracy in 1960, an elite group (Dicle, 2008, p.71) carefully formulated Turkish foreign policy. Turkish tradition of government responsibility is particularly notable in the moderation and continuity of Turkey's foreign policy (Evin, 1988, p.247). Due to the elite leaders, the Turkish foreign policy has lately made significant progress comparing with the previous years. Every leader has had different ways regarding the Turkish foreign policy. For example, after establishing the Republic of Turkey, like the other former regions of the Ottoman State, Turkey focused on its own internal integrity and domestic issues. In general, Turkey started to pursue a kind of isolationist policy in relation to both the Middle East and the Balkans. During the one-party era, and Turkey did not interfere in the Balkan issue during the Balkan turmoil until World War (Gjani, 2011, p. 532). Understanding Özal's foreign policy was difficult in most of the 1980s because, due to the effect of the military coup, Turkey was isolated from the democratic world, and the internal economic and political transformation prevented it from opening to the world. For this reason, Özal's first work in the Turkish foreign policy was to restore Turkey's external relations. During the early years of the Özal government, Turkey was under heavy European and American pressure on human rights and democratization issues. Even though, Özal continued to see integration with the West as a prime foreign policy purpose due to its isolation from the West, he had to make efforts to develop relations

with the region. The growing Turkish exports forced Turkish policy makers to look at the neglected regions such as the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Middle East. Despite the crisis with Bulgaria, Greece in the 1980s, Turkey's relations with these regions were improved, especially in the economic sphere (Laciner, 2013).

Ciller's government mainly focused on national will and supremacy of the parliament which became the bases of an anti-militarist posture , the new democratization program which focused on the political ideology of the state, and the last one which Ciller government focused on was a free-market economy. Ciller's government efforts concentrated on retaining power by whatever means were available (Barry Rubin, 2002, p.52). Erbakan's foreign policy adventures very much affected his view of the world and his personality (Aras, 2012, p. 36). The AKP leaders devoted relatively little attention to defining their foreign policy before November 2002, but for their determination to press ahead with their bid for EU membership. This was normal, given that the Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey party's overriding goal was to win majority of people's support, and the domestic issues, particularly the economy, were the primary determinants of most voters' choices, with foreign policy way down the list of priorities. Behind the scenes, however, the foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who was to become an important foreign policy advisor to both Abdullah Gül and Tayyip Erdogan, was producing a foreign policy doctrine (Özbudun, 2010, p.119-120). It is argued that the domestic political quarrels as well as economic crises throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s prevented Turkey to actualize its political, economic and social potential in reaching its foreign political ambitions. The stability under the AK Party government, economic growth, as well as structural and democratic reforms have provided Turkey with better resources and higher confidence in foreign policy (Ekinci, 2013). Since the AKP came into power, the government focused more on the Turkish foreign policy issues. Adam claims that "Ankara

is conducting a twofold foreign policy. First, Turkey is increasingly relying on multilateralism in order to pursue key national and international interests, thereby taking a more active role in international relations. Second, Turkey is opening up to new areas where Turkish contacts have been rather limited in the past” (Adam, 2012).

There are also other reasons for the good Turkish foreign policy issues. The issues are : migration, domestic politics and security. Tolay argues that, in the case of Turkey, foreign policy concerns have always played a central role in the decision making over migration policies. Those concerns would often be intermixed with domestic policy concerns or considered to be at the margins of domestic politics (Tolay, 2012).The security issue is also important with Turkey`s neighbours regarding the foreign policy. Turkey, has had desire to become an important actor in the world and in its region. Due to the reasons, Turkey has lately made changes in its foreign policy and security perceptions (Bulent Aras, 2010 p. 113). When Turkey make changes in its external environment, changes in the domestic political, economic, and societal spheres also explain changes in Turkey`s behavior towards its neighbors. At the political level, the rise of the AKP and the strong political support the government has had significant developments since 2002, which has had more accustomed to unstable coalition governments. Particularly, Turkey has entered a period one party dominance. The majority position of the AKP in parliament, the absence of an effective public or parliamentary opposition, the AKP has also controlled the presidency and a weakening of the military institutionally and politically give the government main power to transform the country (Linden, 2012). The rise of Turkey to such a prominent position is also a consequence of Turkey`s solid stance that vividly pursues legitimacy and the belief that its own security and stability can only be achieved through the security and stability of the region. Behind this scene, there lies intensive efforts and major initiatives intended for the creation of an environment of sustainable and long peace, security and

tranquility in the region and beyond. Due to its to its foreign policy vision, Turkey is today considered to be as a country that not only safeguards but also disseminates human rights, democracy, rule of law and social equity (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy). On the other hand, the great significance of the national interests related to the country's image and common perception of its international role which makes the political elites highly touchy about the international opinion of the country. This uneasiness produces an important risk of radicalization of the policy and also a serious risk for the Turkish cooperation with the countries in the region, as well as with the international actors (Knezović Sandro, 2013).

According to Knezović Sandro:

The principle of balancing freedom and security emphasizes that any democratic regime must ensure freedom within its country and that security should not be maintained at the expense of not adhering to civil rights. The “zero conflict with the neighbors” concept has been a pillar of new Turkish foreign and security policy and has assisted in significant economic growth (Knezović Sandro, 2013).

It is obvious that individuals and domestic politics have high influence on foreign policy, but ignoring systemic structures assumes that states are autistic, which is usually not the case. This first response makes changes about the subject rather than to deal with the problem (Wendt, 1999,pp.18-19). It is also stated, “A Western orientation has dominated Turkey's foreign policy since the inception of the republic in 1923” (Metin Heper, 2009, p.111). “From the early republican era until 1950, the central role of the leaders first Atatürk and then Inonu on foreign policy making is clearly discernable. Both presidents were personally interested in foreign affairs and they often involved in diplomatic negotiations, as witnessed, in the case of the former, in the Franco Turkish talks in 1921” (Uzer, 2011, p.77).

The direction of Turkish foreign policy was drawn during the period of Atatürk. Atatürk's main purpose was in Turkish foreign policy to enable Turkey to reach the level of

contemporary civilization, which he meant to be like European civilization (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.8). Domestic politics was more important for Atatürk . “Peace at Home, Peace in the World” was Atatürk’s principle in Turkish foreign policy. He meant if there is no peace at home , there is no peace in the world (Uzer, 2011, p.3). Turkey conducts a foreign policy guided by the principle of “Peace at Home, Peace in the World” as set out by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. It has a broad and constructive vision and it is committed to make use of all its means and capabilities. Turkey will definitely continue its efforts in the direction, which will not only guarantee its national interests but will also help achieve the common goals of humanity (Affairs R. O., Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy). Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, this new state adopted a new foreign policy. It was not quite clear what the nature of that policy was. The reason is that, after World War I, not only Turkey; many countries changed their old, traditional foreign policies. It seems that their new policies were not able to prevent them from going into war. Then World War II took place in 1938. During this period, the Turkish foreign policy’s aim was to create and assist peace within Turkey and its neighboring countries. The chief political architecture during this period was Atatürk as stated ‘Turkish foreign policy between the two world wars was influenced by Atatürk’s vision and his personality’ (Gol, 2012, p. 57). When the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923, the nation-state was taken as the model and Turkey’s leaders tried to assert a common Turkish identity over all the existing different ethnic groups. Thus the millet (nation) system of the Ottoman Empire, in which religion was the distinguishing factor, was replaced by that of the nation-state (Coskun, 2008).

Since 1938, Turkish foreign policy slightly changed because Atatürk passed away and Inonu, the second chief, ran the country until he lost the post in a general election in 1950 to Menderes. During his term, any considerable changes in Turkish foreign policy had not been recognized apart from Turkey becoming a member of the United Nations (UN) and the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1948. Menderes' foreign policy was very much American orientated and against the communist bloc. Menderes did not have any independent foreign policy due to those aforementioned memberships as well as huge amount of American foreign aid to Turkey.

The external threats also caused to change Turkish foreign policy's strategies, From the beginning of the cold war in 1946 until 1963, the date when Turkey began to see its interests diverge with those of the United States and Europe, international considerations, in particular the Soviet threat, could account for Turkish foreign policy (Uzer, 2011, pp.3-4). Domestic factors have gradually gained importance in the formulation of Turkish foreign policy since 1960 (Dicle, 2008,p.72). After the first military coup d'état in 1960, once again Turkish foreign policy slightly changed, but the main pillar of this policy remained the same which was to keep a close link with the USA and the NATO. This is also considered as 'Turkey started to reevaluate its Western oriented foreign policy from 1960 onward because of external and domestic factors' (Göktolga, 2012). After 1970, there were some attempts to change the roots of the Turkish foreign policy, but the Turkish government could not manage to do so until 1980. Those changes have compelled Turkey to incorporate migration issues and policies into a broader new foreign Migration and Changes in the Turkish Foreign Policy vision. After the end of the Cold War, the foreign policy environment of Turkey was practically reset. The rationality behind the long Turkish isolation and non-engagement in the region disappeared, and under the initial leadership of Prime Minister and then President Turgut Özal, a new foreign policy of opening toward the country's immediate neighborhood was put into place. Within Özal's foreign policy vision, migration policies played an important role in improving relations with neighbors by encouraging political stability and by opening up to new markets (Tolay, 2012). Moreover, from the early 1980s onward, Turkey slowly developed from a marginal state to a regional power. The Turkey's

military has had less influence in formulating the foreign policy between countries and began to display a liberal engagement. It has established bilateral economic, social, and cultural relations, and the civil societal entities have been playing an active role in those relations. These relations have begun to develop between Turkey and such countries as Bulgaria and Greece (Metin Heper, 2009, p.113). We have also observed that one of the most important innovations is to set up a kind of common market between Turkey and Balkan countries. For example, today, the Balkan countries except EU members can easily enter without visas. As a result, this policy has brought up rapprochement of cultural, social and economical aspects between almost all Balkan countries and Turkey (Gjana, 2011, p. 545).

Bozdaglioglu claims:

Despite the apparent advantages of this kind of foreign policy, Turkey, throughout its modern history, fully identified itself with the West, especially with Europe, and established close relations with the United States, while she maintained a very low profile in her relations with the Muslim Middle East, from which she derived much of her cultural heritage (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.4).

The second military coup d'état in 1980 and Özal's governments in 1983, 1987 and 1990s, are sufficient to evidence that Turkish foreign policy had a new root in terms of policy priorities and practices. Economic growth and new political stability of Turkey since 1983, led the government to set up new foreign policies, which enabled Turkey to improve its relations with neighbours and states in the region alike. For this reason, "Ankara is highly interested in the Balkans and it has been so since 1989" (Rüma, 2010). "After 1983, Turkish foreign policy finally became more dynamic and interested in the Balkan area under the Özal Government" (Gjana, 2011, p. 536). So shortly, there was a radical change in the Turkish foreign policy regarding the way foreign policy should be conducted. This occurred only as a result of a new state of mind and openings undertaken by Turgut Özal in the early 1990s and by other personalities such as Ismail Cem at the turn of the millennium.

These key personalities started a process of producing a more open foreign policy. Finally, the victory of the AKP in 2002 opened the possibility to apply more consistently and directly such a liberal and outward-looking foreign policy. For example, the idea of opening toward and having interdependence with other countries, developed initially by Özal, and the idea that Turkey's strength in the region would need to be followed through engagement, trade, and peaceful relations with all neighbors, are now applied by the AKP through a liberal visa policy (Tolay, 2012). Dicle argues that with the increased level of democracy and domestic factors have become the predominant force in Turkish foreign policy making, and Turkey started to evaluate its long-established alliances in favor of possible alternatives, especially with its neighbors (Dicle, 2008,p.76).

According to Bilgin:

During the Cold War period four main factors affected the course of Turkey's foreign policy. The first and foremost one was Turkey's geopolitical position at the intersection of three continents where the interest of the Great Powers clashed which impelled Turkey to change her neutral stance. The second was the legacy of Kemalist ideology which sought to make Turkey a part of western civilisation. By 1952 Turkey had become a full member of the Western political and military systems: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Bilgin, 2007, p.4).

After the end of Cold War, it was a new period in both Turkey's foreign and domestic policies. Regarding foreign policy, it became clear that the Europeans were not willing to accept Turkey as one of their own (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.157). The first sign of this new foreign policy orientation came in 1989 when the EU rejected Turkey's application for full membership. The foreign policy behavior of Turkey during the period between 1989–1993 suggests that Turkish governments at the time were heavily influenced by the idea that Turkey can play a major role in Central Asia (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.96). The most important implication of 1997-2002 Turkey's foreign minister Ismail Cem's new foreign policy aim was to place Turkey in the center of the Caucasus and the Middle East by taking

advantage of Turkey's geographical position (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.105). When the communist bloc fell down, new independent states in Central Asia became the focus of Turkey in 1990s. During this term, another important development in Turkish foreign policy was noticed, namely Turkey's aims to join the European Union. Various agreements were signed between Turkey and the EU in order to bring Turkey's legal and economic conditions to the level of EU standards. Since then Turkey is still struggling to continue doing its jobs, which have been given by the EU. An active Turkish foreign policy approach in Turkey is discerned throughout the post-Cold War era which started with Turgut Özal's presidency in the early part of the 1990s (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1). Turgut Özal's foreign perception was different than other leaders' perception. His government was the first Turkish government that applied for full membership in the European Union and made great progress in integrating Turkey with the Western economic and political system. During the Gulf Crisis, Turkey, under the leadership of Turgut Özal, abandoned its neutrality in the Middle East, which had been the guiding principle of Turkish foreign policy in the region (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.129).

It was not easy to change the perception of Turkish foreign policy that was during the Second World War (Tercuman 2004), but in 2002, an important change took place in Turkey, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came into power. Since that date, this party has been in power. According to experts and academicians, Turkey has a completely new foreign policy, which is worth to study and analyze. Therefore, this study will to some extent, evaluate the AKP government's foreign policies towards Balkans in general, particularly towards Albania. There is new perception of Turkish foreign policy what is called "zero problem policy" but in fact, it is not new, and has actually been one of the main pillars of the Turkish foreign policy since the declaration of the Republic (Ruma, 2010, p.137). The AKP's foreign policy approach has changed the public opinion. Therefore,

foreign policy has emerged as a major instrument in order to gain a competitive edge in domestic politics (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1).

Ziya Onis argues:

Turkish foreign policy activism during the last decade has attracted widespread international attention. Turkey's declared "zero-problems "with-neighbors" policy and rising influence as a "regional power" in Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries under the auspices of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi, here in after, the AK Party) has turned out to be one of the most hotly debated issues among students of Turkish foreign policy (Ziya Onis, 2011, p.67).

The Turkish foreign policy has been more assertive and independent in the first decade of the 21st century. Accordingly, many studies have made great efforts to understand the logic and aim of the new Turkish foreign policy activism. The first approach is to explain the new Turkish foreign policy within the context of new security conceptions. The second approach sees Turkey's rising influence in the neighboring region in terms of the changing identity perceptions under the AK Party era (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1).

It is obvious that the Turkish foreign policy has become more complex and active. For this reason, the perception of understanding the dynamics of Turkish policymaking has also become more difficult (Shahram Chubin, 2001). On the contrary Turkey has seen many important developments in domestic and foreign policy areas in recent years (Dağı, 2010). It is obvious that "Ankara's new foreign policy makers are offering a vision, which puts Turkey at the center of the international system, while refusing to be a pawn for others' strategic goals" (Turbedar, 2011). Adam claims that, even though there have been many changes in Turkish foreign policy, Turkey still possess the two main principles of the Turkish foreign policy which have remained intact since the founding of the modern Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923. The two principles originated from Atatürk continue to lead the Turkish foreign policy today. The first principle is the consecution and maintenance of peace in its region and in the world that was illustrated by

Atatürk's celebrated statement; "Peace at home, peace in the world" and the second principle is, the Westernization as an ideal of Kemalist modernization. These two principles continue to be valid today (Adam, 2012). The president of Turkey Abdullah Gül has also played significant role in the Turkish foreign policy.

It is argued:

In addition, one needs to take into account that Abdullah Gül, as the new president, has also played a critical role in Turkey's pro-active foreign policy initiatives, of which the opening up of negotiations with Armenia constitutes a striking example. In a way, Abdullah Gül has contributed to Davutoglu's initiatives by acting as a complementary de facto foreign secretary (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1).

It is claimed that the Turkish foreign policy has undergone an important transformation in the past decade. Considered merely reactionary in the 20th century and the Turkish foreign policy has become more influential in recent years (Adam, 2012). In 2002, the general election was a breaking point and main keystone of Turkey's domestic and foreign policies. The coalition led by Ecevit collapsed, and the election was won by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the party produced a crushing majority by taking support of one third of national votes. The 2000 election produced Turkey's first single party government after the Özal government, which was very important to run powerful foreign policies. The AK party had big advantages in domestic policies because the confused policies of coalitions were a big advantage since people compare the governments with the preceding period(s). Turkey's image abroad has been formed by its reactionary or passive foreign policy. Launching active and dynamic foreign policies were going to cause some pains and breaking points, with powerful global actors. In the 2007 election, the Erdogan government strengthened its position, and this empowered Turkish foreign policies need integrity and continuity which Turkey lacked for so long (Gjana, 2011, p. 538). The Turkey's new foreign policy with the AKP reflects the equally fluid nature of the "multi-centric" world, defined by rapid power transitions. The aim of Turkey's new foreign policy

is to make Turkey have a good position on the national, regional, and global levels in the first decade of the 21st century by manifesting itself in the rise of the AKP and domestic economy, regional shifts, and global power transitions. There are some questions. How Turkey can become liable to its partners and how Turkey can become a global actor? Therefore, to become a global actor depends on the national, regional, and global environment. Domestically, Turkey's economy and evolving identity will determine the long-term of Turkey's foreign policy. The changes, integration, disintegration, security and power will all affect Turkey's future in these regions (Muzalevsky, 2012).

3.3. The Aim of the Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkan Countries

Politicians and academicians in the Balkan regions discuss the Turkish foreign policy. Some academicians claim that Turkey builds backbone of its foreign policy regarding its past. This discussion emphasizes the significance of cultural, historical, economic and religious past of Turkey. The politicians and academicians argue that Turkey ought to increase its influence in the Balkan regions. Turkey is believed to use the chance to become global power by developing its relations with these Balkan regions. Kirisci states that, scholars argue that Turkey should not have any ideological orientations in these regions. The last decade, the Turkish foreign policy and Turkey's engagement and relations with its neighborhood has been attracting considerably the academic and as well as public attention. Kirisci goes further claiming that, there are three channels that Turkey follows. The first channel is Turkey's economic and trade relations. Ekinici claims that "the stability in the region has enabled the Balkan governments to concentrate on domestic reform, economic liberalization and institutional consolidation. All this created new opportunities for Turkey to further involve in the region and deepen its economic and commercial relations with the Balkan countries" (Ekinici, 2013). The second channel is the broader movement of people

between Turkey and its neighborhood. There are the reasons that Turkey develops its relations as well as the links through which Turkey has become so much more integrated to its neighborhood. The last channel is the civil society contacts, which are making a modest but significant help to reinforce the integration process by assisting the diffusion of values associated with democracy, conflict resolution and cooperation as well as liberal market economics. So Turkey's engagement and relations with its neighboring countries have a positive influence on the transformation of its neighborhood. Turkey's foreign policy highlights the Turkey's transnational relations to offer a more parsimonious understanding of Turkey's engagement of its neighborhood and ability to contribute to regional transformation (Kirisci, 2012). There are many factors and advantages regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries.

Gjana claims:

The people of Turkey and the Balkan area have learned to live together in a multicultural context starting from the 1360s: this treat has been revived today, especially after 2000s. Another important advantage for both sides is the existence of around 10-12 million people of Balkan origin in Turkey. After 1991, these people have started to communicate with their formerly forgotten relatives. They have been pressing their government on establishing good relations with other states as pressure and civil society groups (Gjana, 2011, p. 539).

“Economic and military cooperation with the West has remained the basis of Turkey's foreign policy and an essential pillar of Western defenses ever since” (Stanford J. Shaw, 1977, p.400). It is claimed that from the early 1990s onwards, the Turkish government has signed a number of bilateral agreements with Balkan governments to promote cooperation and to foster trade and investments. Turkey also sought to accelerate the political stability and economic development of the Balkans through integrating the region with other nearby geographies (Ekinci, 2013). Turkey's increasing regional initiatives were not launched as an opposition to the Western world; on the contrary, they were seen as furthering Turkey's prestige and value in the eyes of the Western political elite (Coskun, 2008). It might

be right to state that, during the Turgut Özal period, the Cold War circumstances continued to shape Turkey-Balkan relations. Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Yugoslavia were the socialist countries while Turkey and Greece were in the capitalist bloc. Turkey's relations with Greece regarding the Cyprus and Aegean issues were worse than its relations with the other Balkan countries, although Turkey and Greece were allies in the NATO defense.

According to Gjana:

Between two military coups in Turkey in 1960 and 1980, Turkey coped with internal, economic, ideological and deep-state issues. Coalitions, like in every country in the world were also main obstacles in front of a successful foreign and Balkan policy. Turkish public opinions also focused on ideological orientations on domestic and international policies including Balkan relations (Gjana, 2011, pp. 535-536).

Regarding the international level and economic globalization, the Balkan countries is an opening of the economy to the external world and greater economic interdependence. Turkey is the seventeenth-largest economy in the world, and together its imports and exports exceed half of its GDP. Now more integrated with the global economy, the country should secure financial and investment flows and reliable sources of both goods and markets (Linden, 2012).

During the post-Cold war era, Turkey has been rediscovering its neighbors and trying to capitalize on its geo-political position in three distinct, yet interlocking regions. This process of re-discovery has been proceeding at an increasingly faster pace during the AKP era. Furthermore, there are solid economic reasons for a pro-active foreign policy strategy. Turkey has dearly been responding to the changing global context which involves a diversification of economic relations and the opening of new markets, especially at a time when Europe is faced with deep stagnation and the global economic axis has dearly been shifting in the eastern direction with the global financial crisis (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1).

The Balkan countries were very important area during the Özal's government, because there have been former Ottoman territories millions of Muslim and Turkish minorities lived there. Besides Turkey, there were four Muslim countries, which are Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia and Albania. That is also true to say those historical and cultural similarities provided a suitable ground for co-operation. This co-operation and

relations is considered as an opportunity for Turkey not to be alone in Europe. Apart from this, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the great Slavic block, which destroyed Ottoman predominance in the 19th century, now was over. Consequently, the Muslim people and the states, which had problems with Serbia and Greece, such as Macedonia and Albania, turned their faces to Ankara. Turkey, because of its foreign policy, firstly, started to develop economic and cultural relations with these states instead of the military or political groupings. Özal's first priority was to unite these countries with Turkey by using telecommunication and transportation systems. As a result, the Balkan Highway Project of Albania-Bulgaria-Turkey was very important (Laciner, 2013). The professor Aras claims that, Turkey has a multi-level strategy directed towards the Balkans, which is justified by ideational and material prerogatives at the domestic and international level. The Turkish foreign policy makers consider regional cooperation and integration in the Balkans as an important issue of Turkey's new regional policy as well as its own stability at home. The regional policy is aimed to minimize the problems in the region and to develop economic and political relations with the neighboring countries to the highest level of integration. The Turkish politicians have always believed that the people of Balkan origin within Turkey as an important link and solid bridge between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Turkey tries to formulate its policies because it needs to be responsive to the developments in the Balkans and play a constructive role in the solution of the problems in the region (Aras, 2012).

The key objective of Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, according to the foreign minister Davutoglu is:

The key objective of Turkish foreign policy has been to contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the world. By the same token, we spare no effort to develop our relations with our neighborhood and beyond. As demonstrated by the recent increase in the initiatives Turkish foreign policy has embarked upon, especially in the adjacent regions and beyond, we are deploying every possible effort to encourage the consolidation of democracy as well as the settlement of disputes, which directly or indirectly concern Turkey. Two fundamental tenets constitute the rationale behind this effort (Davutoglu, 2010).

Turkey has always been part of international peacekeeping missions, and any military action outside of this international framework is inconceivable (Ruma, 2010). Abazi claims that Turkey is a successor of the Ottoman Empire. As the former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit of Turkey stated that Kosovo is very important for Turkey. He stated that Kosovo “as a debt it owes to its own history” and for this reason, the Balkan regions are as an inseparable part of its history and culture. Abazi goes further claiming that many Albanians converted to Islam during the Ottoman Empire. The people had a quick integration into the imperial structures. The Albanians became part of the Ottoman society without any discrimination. There are millions of Turks live in the Balkan regions that have Albanian ancestry and relatives. Apart from that, a Turkish minority live in the Balkan regions particularly in Kosovo. For these reasons, Turkey wants to strengthen its influence on the domestic affairs of the regions (Abazi, April 2008, No.11).

One of the principles is to develop relations with the neighboring regions and beyond. So Turkey’s regional influence extends to the Balkans. Turkey played an active role in the Balkans, especially, when there were crises in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Davutoglu, Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision:An Assessment of 2007, 2008, Vol. 10 / No. 1). Turkey has started to play a mediating role between the disputing countries in the Balkan region. The disputes were between Serbia and Kosovo, Serbia and Bosnia- Herzegovina and Slovenia and Croatia, but these countries have very good relations with Turkey. Turkey pursues a

transparent foreign policy. As a result of this transparency, Turkey takes a role as a conciliator and mediator between the disputing countries in the Balkan region. For instance, the Macedonian Ohrid agreement was supported to reach a compromise between the Muslim minorities and the Macedonia government. Another example is, in 1989 and 1990s the disputes between Turkish minority and Bulgarian was solved by the Turkish government (Gjani, 2011, p. 545). It is very obvious that, Turkey's foreign policy's agenda is not to find conflicts with its neighbors, but its agenda is to promote interstate cooperation (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1). Turkey tries to cooperate with all its neighboring countries. In 2007, Davutoglu emphasized the importance of maintaining stability and peace in the Balkan regions and he went further: "we have to provide every opportunity in order to help our brothers in these regions; TIKA takes the responsibility to help the people in need" (Çelebi, 2007).

The president Abdullah Gül visited Serbia with many politicians and deputies. It showed that the Turkish foreign policy is very important for the Balkan regions. During this visit, the president of Serbia claimed that during his 7 years presidency he had not hosted so many guests and he had never been with so many deputations before. During the meeting the president of Serbia Tadić: "We have been friends with dear Mr. Abdullah Gül. Because of this long friendship, Turkey and Serbia have become a strategic partner in the Balkan regions. We cannot think the Balkan regions without Turkey. As long as Turkey considers Serbia as an important partner in the Balkan, we can maintain stability and peace in the Balkan regions" (Bal, 2009). Abdullah Gül responds to the president Tadić: "We suggest the ethnic and religious groups, as residents of these countries. Belong to the country and you need to work for the stability and peace of the country where you live. As a result, you can be like a bridge between two countries where you live and which one you have historical and religious tie of" (Bal, 2009). Apart from Turkey as, Davutoglu claims that European

Union is also very important for Balkan countries. The Balkan countries, which had conflicts among them stopped and ran after the imagination of becoming a member of the European Union. If there appears any break-up of the European Union, the frozen conflicts can appear again among the Balkan countries (Altayli, 2011).

FEBA (Federation of Balkan American Associations) cooperates with TUSCON in order to enable to work with the entrepreneurs from Turkey and the entrepreneurs who are originally from the Balkan countries. With the cooperation of FEDA (Fairfield Economic Development Association) and TUSCON associations, the entrepreneurs of Turkey, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bulgaria gathered in New York. The president of Turkey Apdullah Gül was also present in that meeting. Mr. Gül underlined the memberships of these countries of the EU and NATO. He claimed that the membership would bring stability and peace to the regions (Basyurt, 2010). Even in 1939, Germany was receiving half of all Turkish exports. In purely economic terms Germany was Turkey's natural market and trading partner (Gökay, 2006, p.53). Turkey uses the highways of these countries such as: Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, and Romania. If there are any problems regarding to security and stability Turkey can have difficulties in importing and exporting. Therefore, peace and stability in Balkan regions is very important for Turkey in order to have commerce and trade with the European countries. Bugajski claims, "An enhanced Turkish role in the security, democratic development, and economic progress of the Balkan neighborhood will reverberate positively on Ankara's efforts to be accepted as a genuine contender for future EU membership" (Bugajski, 2010).

The former president of Montenegro Milo Djukanovic claims that Turkey's Enterprise in the Balkans helps maintain stability and peace. The experienced former president considers Turkey as a friendly ally, and he invites the entrepreneurs to Montenegro. He considers the Turkey's associations as an opportunity for the development

of the Balkan countries. He states that the Turkey-Montenegro social cooperation is very valuable and the leaders of both countries often come together (Yanatma, 2012).

Turbedar claims that, various attempts have been made to explain the new dimensions of the Turkish foreign policy approach in the Balkans. The mainstream account argues that Turkey is eager to strengthen its position in the Balkans; as a result, Turkey can improve its status on the global scene (Turbedar, 2011). As it has been mentioned above there is no ideology in the Turkish foreign policy, the aim is only to increase the relations and economic situations among these regions.

Turkey has played a very important role in preserving stability and peace in Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia. Turkey is like an insurance of Balkan regions. In 1995, Turkey signed an agreement with Albania, which was under Serbian threat. The agreement was about providing training for the Albanian army. For this, training 100 million dollars were spent. In addition, The Pasha Liman base, which was spent 10 billion dollars, was reconstructed by 250 Turkish military engineers and signed a bilateral agreement by Turkey under the Turkish Navy, has the right to use it. As a result, the Adriatic Sea has become a sea base for the NATO and its allies (İste Gucumuz, 2003). Ankara is highly interested in the Balkan countries and it has been so since 1989 (Ruma, 2010). We can ask such a question. Why Balkan countries are important for Turkey? We can discuss the importance for different reasons. These countries are very important for trade, culture and politics. Firstly, the countries are very important for the geographic positions. That is not a coincidence that the two world wars emerged in these regions. It is also very important for Turkey, because these countries serve as a bridge between EU and Turkey, and beyond these reasons, the Balkan countries are neighbors of Turkey. Secondly, there is the same culture that was for 600 years. More importantly, 25 million Balkan people live in Turkey. There are also 1.5million Turkish people that live in the Balkan countries.

Even our relatives live in the Balkan countries. For example, there are 60 thousand Turkish people live in Kosovo and 80 thousand Turkish people live in Macedonia (Basyurt, 2001). Thirdly, there is a big advantage for the trade. There are about 70 million people live in the Balkan countries. That means it is a new market area for Turkey. There are about hundreds of Balkan associations in Turkey. These associations serve as a bridge between Balkan countries (Sait, 2006). As it is argued that, the changing economic structure affects power relations in the country, and definitely, it affects foreign policy (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1). Apart from the history of poor political relations and the gravitational pull of external markets, low levels of integration had economic roots too. Excluding Greece and Turkey, Balkan economies were characterized by similar product structures with agriculture, textiles and raw materials heavily represented on the export side (Bechev, 2011, p.26).

Ruma claims:

What seems new in Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans is the increasing importance of economic relations in Turkish foreign policy. In this sense, Turkish foreign policy is becoming more tied to the liberal understanding of international politics, which prioritizes the role of enhanced economic relations, and departs from its conventional roots in the realist/conservative school, which exclusively emphasizes political-security relations (Ruma, 2010).

We have seen the most important reasons why Balkan countries are important for Turkey. I have also mentioned above that if there is any conflict appears in these countries, Turkey is also influenced at once because of the mentioned reasons. As it is known that, there were summit meetings in order to cooperate with the Balkan countries and to find solutions to the problems. The first summit meeting was in Bulgaria in 1997. The second summit meeting was in Turkey in 1998. The third summit meeting was in Romania in 1999 (Sarıkaya, 2001). Davutoglu claims that “ there is a clear need to pursue a proactive diplomacy with the aim of strengthening prosperity, stability and security in a neighborhood which spans the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Caspian basin, the Black Sea, the Eastern

Mediterranean, the Middle East, from the Gulf to North Africa, not void of tension but also abundant with unfulfilled potential. With stronger political will on the part of the countries of the region and coordinated encouragement by the international community, I am convinced that poverty and conflict can be replaced in time with prosperity and cooperation” (Davutoglu, 2010). “Any instability that emerges in the region may have political, economic and cultural ramifications on Turkey. For this reason, to have peace and stability in the Balkans is among Turkish foreign policy’s top priorities” (Turbedar, 2011). Turkey has always supported the Balkan countries. Turkey has always been a part of the larger international presence in the Balkans (Ruma, 2010).

Davutoglu argues:

Turkey enjoys multiple regional identities and thus has the capability as well as the responsibility to follow an integrated and multidimensional foreign policy. The unique combination of our history and geography brings with it a sense of responsibility. To contribute actively towards conflict resolution and international peace and security in all these areas is a call of duty arising from the depths of a multidimensional history for Turkey (Davutoglu, 2010).

The Turkish foreign minister Davutoğlu was interviewed regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries. He stated that due to its geographical, historical and cultural heritage, Turkey is a Balkan country itself. Therefore, the Balkan countries are neither a bridge with the EU nor a Turkish ‘backyard’. Turkey has very strong historical, social, cultural and human ties with all the countries in the region. There are millions of Turkish citizens that have their origins in the Balkans. Turkey aims at lasting peace and stability in the Balkans. Turkey actively supports the Euro-Atlantic vision of the Balkan countries. It is believed that all the Balkan countries should be sheltered under the umbrella of EU and NATO, which is not too distant future. Turkey’s Balkan policy is shaped by the defining principles of regional ownership and all-inclusiveness. It is based on four main pillars which can best be summarised as security for all, high-level political dialogue,

further economic integration and the preservation of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious social structures in the region. Turkey's perspective on the Balkans envisages a zone of prosperity and welfare, instead of a region beset by conflicts and tension. Turkey wants the Balkans not to be considered as at the periphery of Europe, but as an integral part of it. Transport corridors and energy pipelines must go through the Balkans and trade, financial transactions and cultural interaction should grow. Historical centres like Sarajevo, Belgrade, Skopje, Plovdiv, Mostar and Dubrovnik must prosper along with Thessaloniki and Istanbul. He concluded his interview by stating that the people of the Balkans should make best use of the energy created by the common cultural and historical heritage they share, and convey it as a valuable asset for a common future to their next generations (Raxhimi, 2011). Turbedar supports Davutoglu claiming: "Turkey's twin goals are: first to make peace with its neighbors through policies of conciliation, and second to act as an agent of mediation between its clashing neighbouring countries" (Turbedar, 2011). Sulku underlines the importance of relations between Turkey and the other Balkan countries based on common policy goals to maintain peace and security in the Balkan regions. He claims that Turkey has developed its bilateral political connections in same line with this goal (Sulku, 2010, p.65).

As we have seen that, all politicians and scholars give positive messages towards the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. For example, the prime minister of Montenegro Igor Luksić, "Turkey is the only country, which understands the Balkan countries well" said when he visited Turkey. Various ethnicity and religious groups live in the Balkan countries. The prime minister also added that, it is important for both countries to give such a message to peoples that live together in harmony and that is important for stability and peace for the Balkan countries. The Prime Minister Luksić went further that they were happy that Turkey helped and supported Montenegro during NATO and EU

process and he invited the Turkish businessmen to Montenegro for the investment (Zaman Gazetesi, 2012). It is claimed that Turkey has become an active and visible player in world politics today. The key of Turkey's success in foreign policy lies in its ability to take full advantage of unique opportunities and deal with specific threats posed by its strategic location at the intersection of Europe, Asia and Africa, and its historic and cultural ties with the Balkan countries, the Middle East, and the Caucasus (Adam, 2012).

The Balkans is a priority for Turkey not only from the political, economic and geographical perspectives, but also due to its historical, cultural and human ties with the region. The Balkans, being the geographical connection of Turkey with the rest of Europe, bears great importance with the special place it had in the historical process that shaped the Turkish nation and the potential it carries within the context of regional integration and the EU accession objective, which we share, with all the countries of the region. With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, all the balances in the Balkans were altered and the instability that arose from this process reached a level that threatened international peace. In the 1990's the Balkans had to live through destructive wars and ethnic cleansing, today's environment of peace and stability could have been attained only after international intervention. Following the declarations of independence by Montenegro in 2006 and by Kosovo in 2008, the borders of the newly independent states in the region have become definite. High level political dialogue, security for all, utmost economic integration and the preservation of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious social structures in the region constitute four main axes of Turkey's Balkan policy, which is shaped by the principles of "regional ownership" and "inclusiveness". Our leading objectives are the acceleration of the existing cooperation through the creation of "areas of joint interest" among the countries of the region and the attainment of an extensive regional integration. Being itself a Balkan country, Turkey attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries and

maintains good relations with all of them. Our bilateral relations with these countries are based on the principles of respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-intervention into internal affairs and further developed based on our historical ties and the principle of good neighborliness. The historical ties between the peoples of Turkey and countries of the region have extended until today. There are Turkish minorities and communities as well as kin communities in the Balkan countries on the one hand; whereas there are citizens of Balkan-origin in Turkey on the other. Thus, any crisis in the Balkans affects Turkey closely and thus, the preservation of peace and stability in the Balkans bears vital importance for Turkey in that respect. Turkey believes that the international presence, especially in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, is important and necessary both for the strengthening of the state structures in these countries and regional stability. Turkey, therefore, contributes to all international presences and initiatives in the region. Turkey, believes that it is the Balkan countries themselves who can make the essential contribution to their own future and intensively deliberates on the development of authentic cooperation mechanisms in the Balkans. In that respect, the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP) bears importance as the only homegrown initiative in the region. Turkey is a founding member of the SEECP, which has 12 members now upon the accession of Slovenia. Turkey successfully conducted its term of Chairmanship-in-Office between June 2009 and June 2010. Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the operational arm of the SEECP, has the main task of developing regional cooperation in Southeast Europe and promoting the integration of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Being among the founding members of the RCC, Turkey contributes substantially to its budget and plays an effective role in the joint regional projects. The most concrete examples of Turkey's contribution to good neighborly relations and regional cooperation are the trilateral consultation mechanisms founded upon our initiative between Turkey-Bosnia and

Herzegovina-Serbia and Turkey-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia. These cooperation mechanisms, which were accepted in short time in the region as outstanding confidence building measures, aim at enhancing peace, stability and prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the one hand and transforming the whole Balkans to a more stable place, on the other. Until today, Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia have met six times and Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia have met four times within the framework of these trilateral mechanisms. On 24 April 2010, Trilateral Balkan Summit was held in İstanbul with the participation of the Heads of State of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The İstanbul Declaration that was adopted after this Summit brought together the Presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia for the first time since the war. The Second Meeting of the Trilateral Balkan Summit was held in Serbia on 26 April 2011. Turkey considers the integration of all the countries of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions necessary and continues to support their efforts in this direction. Turkey provides support and assistance to the countries of the region in areas other than political relations. The said assistance is conducted in various areas such as economy, culture, common historical heritage, education, military and security by our relevant public institutions in accordance with the bilateral agreements and in a spirit of solidarity (Affairs M. O.).

There are many factors for the Turkish foreign policy. The main factors are of course economy and trade which are practical hand of Turkish foreign policy (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.57). Like all states' foreign policy's aim, the national interest of Turkey prompted Turkish foreign policy (Uzer, 2011, p.3). Besides the national interest, another aim of the Turkish foreign policy can be considered as security-based explanations (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.69). There is another factor behind the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, which is argued that the European Stability Initiative (ESI), a think tank set up in

1999 which has enjoyed increasing influence in European policy in the Balkans in recent years, and they produced a number of wide-reaching analyses of the failure of Western policy to address the economic and social dislocation which has permeated societies in South Eastern Europe (Hodge, 2006, p.179). For this reason, Turkey tries to improve more its relations with the Balkan countries.

The Turkish foreign policy also plays an important role in domestic issues. It is an important tool for the government, which is in power. The government can gain a big advantage over its rivals in domestic issues. In order to consolidate its place in the politics the AKP government focuses more on the foreign policy (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.62). Ziya Onis goes further that the new-style foreign policy has increased the popularity of the AKP in domestic politics (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.49). It is believed that in order to become successful in foreign policy a state must be successful in its domestic issues. According to Davidson:

The real world of competition for power may be primarily domestic. Foreign policy then becomes the competition of the victorious domestic factions of one country against those of another. Moreover, because competing domestic groups have discovered that it is easier to shape foreign policy if they wrap their efforts in the national flag, the eventual end product will be presented as a policy serving the national interest (Davidson, 2009, p.140).

It is stated that domestic issues can shape foreign policy. Foreign policy also shapes leaders positions in power. Therefore, desires of leaders to stay in power can drive foreign policy (DeRouen, 2010, p.6). DeRouen goes on claiming that “domestic politics, economic conditions, and public opinion are among the most important domestic factors that shape foreign policy decision making” (DeRouen, 2010, p.129). The long-term national interests have maintained Turkey to play a stabilizing role as a regional power. Žarko Petrovic argues, “The success of Turkey’s Balkan vector is beneficial also for the internal dynamics in Turkey and the everlasting struggle between the Kemalists and the AKP. Foreign policy is important for Turkish voters” (Žarko Petrovic, 2011).

According to Muzalevsky :

Turkey boasts the world's fifteenth largest economy, a population of 75 million, and the second largest military in NATO, making it a major rising regional power with global aspirations. But it has only recently emerged as a pro-active player on the world stage. Wars and conflicts around Turkey have long impeded its ambitions. The disintegration of Yugoslavia unleashed chaos in the Balkans. The conflicts in Chechnya and Nagorno-Karabakh ravaged the Caucasus in the 1990s. The war in Iraq in 2003, the Russian-Georgian War in 2008, and the Cyprus issues have also constrained Turkey, encouraging it to resolve crises in the country's own neighborhoods to unleash its potential as a rising power (Muzalevsky, 2012).

It is claimed that Turkey's proximity to the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Balkans both illustrates its geopolitical importance and contributes to the diversity of Turkish foreign policy (Dicle, 2008, p. 4). Concerning the Balkans, it is claimed that 'Atatürk decided that a Balkan federation was the ultimate aim of the Turkish foreign policy. Turkey had signed treaties with all the Balkan States separately' (Gol, 2012, p. 65). It is important to keep in mind that Atatürk concluded how Turkish foreign policy should be during his time as following: Firstly, the Republic of Turkey was accepted as a part of the European state system, Secondly, Turkey had good relationships with its neighbors and preserved the peace both in the Balkans and the Middle East, Thirdly, it was not in the revisionist camp; it chose to protect the status quo between the two world wars and lastly, it was a faithful adherent of international law (Gol, 2012, p. 70). According to Turbeder, one of the main reasons of Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans is to secure allies among these countries to support Turkey's EU bid in the future. During the 1990s, the United States helped Turkey enhance its political and military influence in the Western Balkans. Since the beginning of the 1990s, when the United States took an active part in the Balkans, Turkey also increased its influence in that region. Turkey was alone in the Balkans, because the US left Turkey alone after 9/11. Since that time, as a part of a larger international presence in the region, Turkey has been working hard to increase its relations with the Western Balkan

countries (Turbedar, 2011). There is also another factor for the Turkish foreign policy business community emerged as an actor in Turkey's foreign policy at a time when greater economic liberalism coexisted with strong political authoritarianism (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.113). "What seems new in Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans is the increasing importance of economic relations in Turkish foreign policy" (Ruma, 2010,p.134).Turkey is also increasing its relations with all its neighbors and consolidating its foreign policy based on its historical and geographical realities (Dağı, 2010). According to Turbedar Turkey is keen on strengthening its position in the Balkans, in order to improve and develop its status on the global scene (Turbedar, 2011).

The new construction of domestic business and the emergence of a new competitive capitalist class caused to enhance Turkish foreign policy (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.71). The internal character of the state will determine the foreign policy of the state (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.28). During the involvement in foreign policy the Turkish foreign policy has always followed a peaceful relations with states (Uzer, 2011, p.2). Turkey's basic goals are: "first to make peace with its neighbors through policies of conciliation and second to act as an agent of mediation between its clashing neighboring countries" (Turbedar, 2011). It is very essential to have peaceful and friendly relations with all states particularly with neighbouring states. In the course of these debates, basic decisions regarding Turkey's foreign policy (defense and national security) became inextricably intertwined with the national identity of Turkey (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.7).

Ruma argues:

In regards to Turkish society, there is no real push towards a much larger Balkan role however tempting the discourse can be in its role in swelling Turkish pride, most of the Turkish citizenry is mainly concerned with questions of "tomorrow's bread", i.e. employment and social security (Ruma, 2010,p.140).

On the other hand, Turkey has a connection with the Balkan countries that comes from the past. Today about 9.5 million people are originally from the Balkan countries. These people affect Turkish domestic policy especially they affect foreign policy. Still these people have connections in the Balkan countries. For this reason, Balkan countries are very important for Turkey and Turkey cannot make any mistakes (Cumhuriyet, 2011).

The Balkan region is the geographic bridge to the West. That is why the developments are taking place in the Balkans. Turkey is so much interested in the Balkan countries which has been a permanent throughout the history of the Republic (Turbedar, 2011). Turbedar explains the reasons why Turkey wants to improve its foreign policy in Balkan countries. The first reason is the longstanding common history of Turks with the peoples in the western Balkans. The populations and cultures of the region are familiar with each other. Despite the similarity, we cannot say that there has not been any conflict between Turkey and Balkan countries. The second reason is that there are more than one million Turkish minorities that live in the Balkan countries. Furthermore, there are Muslim communities in the Balkan countries. This is another factor of the interests. The third reason for Turkey's involvement in the Balkans is related to the geography. If there are any conflicts or instabilities that emerge in those countries may have political, economic and cultural influence on Turkey. That is why, to have peace and stability in the Balkan countries are very important for the Turkish foreign policy's priorities. The fourth reason of Turkish foreign policy's engagement in the Balkan countries is to improve its economic and foreign trade situations (Turbedar, 2011). The above mentioned factors are main reasons of the Turkish foreign policy.

Davutoglu claims that there are four pillars that Turkish foreign policy rests on. The first pillar is consists of indivisibility of security. Davutoglu argues that A Security is not a zero-sum game whereby the safety of "country A" can develop at the expense of the well-

being of “country B”. The second pillar is dialogue. He explains this second pillar: “all issues and problems should and can be resolved through diplomacy and political interaction”. Third pillar is the economic interdependence. He claims that the economic interdependence is important in order to achieve and ensure sustainable peace. The last pillar is cultural harmony and mutual respect. Davutoglu goes further by claiming that Turkey’s goal is to achieve utmost integration and full cooperation with all of its neighbors based on these pillars. Davutoglu states that Turkey’s aim is to eliminate the existing disputes and tension and to increase stability in the region by seeking innovative mechanisms and channels to resolve conflicts, by encouraging positive deeds and by building cross-cultural bridges of dialogue and understanding (Davutoglu, 2010). The above mentioned principles are very important for the foreign policy. If there is no interaction, no dialogue, there will not be any peace, security and cooperation with countries.

Muzalevsky claims:

In the Balkans, Turkey has improved ties with Greece and Bulgaria but the Aegean Sea and Cyprus issues still complicate the relationship. Yet Turkey has boosted its presence in the states of the former Yugoslavia, where predominantly Muslim Bosnia now serves as a focal point of its activism. Ankara has also contributed to peacekeeping missions and mediation in disputes involving Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. By integrating itself with the Balkans, it has sought to expand its influence and affirm its importance for the EU. Yet, doing business in the region, once dominated by the Ottoman Empire, remains a challenge for Ankara (Muzalevsky, 2012).

Turkey's revolutionary initiatives in the regions and internationally have been driven to a large extent by the growing number of actors that are now offering their unique input into policy-making processes. There are also different nongovernmental actors that represent Turkey's flourishing civil society, including such diverse institutions as economic interest groups and humanitarian-aid organizations, have advocated for a proactive foreign policy and as such precipitated Turkey's new worldwide openings. Currently Turkish foreign-policy makers have to respond to a wider array of demands as they conduct the

country's international relations. This diversity, moreover, suggests that they also have a larger set of instruments to draw on as they launch new policies to advance the country's regional and global agenda. In addition to the previous claims, Turkey's soft power now comprises, among other things, cultural diplomacy, development assistance and mediation services (Fidan, 2013).

Generally, Turkey's power transitions away from the West to the "Rest," increased in the first decade of the 21st century, have too urged Turkey's new policy towards the Balkan countries, where shifting dynamics have been both the driving and resulting force of the changing paradigm of global affairs. Apart from the mentioned reasons, the slow progress on the way toward EU membership and the power decline of the West have encouraged Turkey to pursue relations with the slow EU, accession process, the decline of the West's influence in global politics, and the regional crises have forced Turkey to follow active relations with neighbors and emerging powers. Turkey's new foreign policy towards the Balkans has sought a strategic depth. The aim of "zero problems with neighbors" policy and mediation efforts have been to resolve regional security issues preventing Turkey's ambitions. Therefore, for the reason Turkey has relied on "soft power" tools of trade, economic integration, conflict mediation, and appeal of its development model have been main principles of the Turkish foreign policy (Muzalevsky, 2012).

Fidan claims:

In line with Turkey's new perception of its role in the world, Turkey has increasingly asserted itself as a rising actor that is determined to make a unique contribution to regional and global affairs. In the process, Turkish foreign policy has been transformed, not only in its content, but also in the instruments and mechanisms for formulating and conducting a proactive foreign-policy agenda. Most attention has been focused on the various regions and issue areas in which Turkey's activism has been demonstrated, and less on Turkey's major restructuring of the institutional architecture to support its new regional and global agenda. Increasingly, Turkish foreign policy has gained a liberal character, in both its formulation and execution, as various actors have become influential in the policy-making processes and a wide array of new liberal instruments has been added to the toolkit of Turkish diplomats (Fidan, 2013).

3.4. The Advantages of Turkey -Balkan Countries Relations

In general, the Balkans, being the geographical connection of Turkey with the rest of Europe, bears great importance with the special place it had in the historical context that shaped the Turkish nation and the potential. It carries within the framework of regional integration and the EU accession objective, which we share, with all the countries of the region. Our leading objectives are the acceleration of the existing cooperation through the creation of “areas of joint interest” among the countries of the region and the attainment of an extensive regional integration (Aşan, 2013). Turkey’s main purpose towards the Balkan countries is to initiate a psychological breakthrough in the Balkans in order to undo the negative memories of the past. Since the past century represents war, destruction, ethnic cleansing, and ethnic enmity in this region, Turkey suggests a forward-looking vision that will facilitate a break with the past. Turkish foreign policies focused on the improvement of bilateral relations, strengthening the mechanisms of political and economic cooperation, and creating a regional sense of ownership and problem solving in the Balkans. Turkey pursues an ambitious policy to find solution to the chronic problems, play a mediator role between conflicting parties, stabilize the region, and pave the way for a regional order in the Balkans. Turkey also suggests a new Balkan regional order based on stable co-existence and Aras goes further claiming that the cooperative perspective suggests the best option for the future of the peoples of the Balkans as well as those outside actors that develop constructive engagement policies toward the region (Aras, 2012). The 1992- 1995 Bosnia War and the 1998-1999 Kosovo War showed that the Balkan countries needed an active regional power. The government of Turkey did not have such adequate power because of domestic issues and the powerless position of clumsy coalitions. Despite everything, it is not true to claim that Turkey was passive actor in the Balkan regions. It involved in Balkan issues especially indirectly or unofficially. The people and public opinion had pressure on the Turkish

governments to assist Balkan people and be actively involved in the Balkan issues instead of the Turkish governments. During the Bosnia and Kosovo wars non-governmental organizations of Balkan origin and foundations in Turkey did more in order to support Balkan people than did Turkish governments (Gjana, 2011, pp. 537-538). We can say that there are many advantages of these relations. For example, Greece and Turkey support the consolidation of democracy in Serbia so that Belgrade can reach a compromise with Montenegro and Kosovo irrespective of the future of the Yugoslav state. It is stated that the officials in Athens and Ankara should be realists in order to understand that the Albanians cannot be forced back into Serbia after the attempted genocide and expulsion of the population of Kosovo in 1999. It is also claimed that, if Podgorica comes to decision on holding a referendum on independence, all regional players should recognize that Montenegro has as much right to statehood as all the former Yugoslav republics (Bugajski, 2010).

The following countries create trilateral mechanisms. The aim of the creation of trilateral mechanisms, such as between Turkey, Serbia, and Bosnia; and Turkey, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina was to increase dialogues and cooperation at the regional level. The trilateral mechanism also developed the Balkan countries, the United States, EU, and Russia - Turkey's long-term perspective in the Balkan countries. The recent problems Turkey has faced in its own EU membership process have not had a negative impact on Turkey's evaluation of the EU's importance to the Balkan countries. Moreover, Turkey has had a principled position on the EU involvement in the Balkans, and Turkey sees the future of the Balkan countries in Euro-Atlantic structures. Despite the arguments from some officials that Turkey shapes its Balkan policy in direct opposition to the Western aims in the region, Turkey sees its involvement in the Balkans in complementary terms with the EU and Turkey has also played a regional stabilizer role, and supported both the consolidation of Kosovo

independence and political stability in the post-Dayton Bosnia (Aras, 2012). Bugajski claims that the prerequisite for sustained domestic development and international integration is very important for all Balkan states and it is the consolidation of pluralistic and democratic political systems. The development of strong institutions is important in order to anchor public participation in the evolving system of political pluralism. Greece and Turkey can play a positive and constructive role in institution-building and political party development in neighboring countries, particularly in multi-ethnic and multi-confessional states such as Bosnia and Macedonia. In fact, joint democracy-building ventures will establish an example of trans-ethnic and supra-historic cooperation (Bugajski, 2010).

As I have mentioned before the geographical position is also important for the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Approximately 70 percent of the Balkan is covered by mountains. Historically, the Balkans were pictured as including the Ottoman European territories of Eastern Rumeli, Macedonia, Kosovo, autonomous Bulgaria and Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was de facto under the occupation of Austria-Hungary, together with the independent states of the region: Greece, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro. Thus, the Ottoman territories were alienated from the Ottoman Empire itself and, at least at the level of discourse, gained a distinct identity through becoming a part of a non-Ottoman whole, which is the Balkans (Boyar, 2007, p.34). The Turkey- Balkan relations comes from the Ottoman Empire. As I have also mentioned before the Balkan region was not such a place without clashes and disputes.

According to Brodeur:

The Balkans is a place where the interests and the power struggles of three big empires intersected and often clashed over many centuries. Therefore, the healing of the divided memories which often go far back in the history WWII, the centuries of imperial legacies (Austro-Hungarian, Russian, Ottoman, etc.) and even the medieval crusades is crucial (Brodeur, 2009, p.79).

The geography of Balkans plays important roles in shaping people's characters. For example, Hupchick claims:

The Balkans' harsh and divisive geography played an important role in shaping the lives of its inhabitants. Mountainous terrain generally fragmented human settlement among the scattered lowlands and highland plateaus, contributing to the rise of strong ethnic group identities. In a rugged land where natural resources often were limited, group cohesiveness was crucial for survival. Competitive conditions bred ethnic cultures frequently typified by extremes in expression communal generosity and stubborn territoriality; overt hospitality and brutal atrocity; bouts of fun-loving enjoyment and irrational violence. All Balkan peoples traditionally have exhibited one common characteristic: A sense of passionate, tenacious group pride (Hupchick, 2002, p.7).

Because of a rugged land, the economic weakness and the huge expenditures forced the independent regimes to face immediately the problem of the involvement of the state in the economic life of the country. Decisions had to be made regarding the role to be assumed by the central government in national development and the direction in which the chief efforts had to be made as well (Jelavich, 1983, pp.14-15).

None of the Balkan states had the economic base for the accomplishment of their aims. First, there was little domestic capital to invest in new enterprises. The entire peninsula was extremely poor. In the past, wealthy men had preferred to place their earnings in land or in the purchase of state offices, such as the position of tax farmer. More prestige was attached to landholding and official posts than to commercial ventures. In this situation, only two other sources of funds were available: taxation and foreign loans. With an impoverished peasant majority, most governments faced extreme limitations on the amount of taxes that could be collected. The fate of states that relied on outside loans was to be illustrated by the Ottoman and Greek economic disasters (Jelavich, 1983, p.14).

After 1943, Axis power gradually collapsed and the Balkan countries found themselves divided between the 'spheres of influence' of the Soviets, British and Americans in 1945. Since the Soviet sphere was deemed to be almost the entire region except Greece, where there was a bitter Civil War until 1948, which had some ethnic dimensions, the Stalinist model of the 'national question' became the dominant paradigm for the postwar Communist regimes (Carmichael, 2002, P.17). The governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia had to be involved in foreign affairs after 1945. Firstly, these

countries started to have their relations with those countries who were outside the Soviet system, including the NATO allies and the new states of Asia and Africa. Secondly, the countries started to have relations with other Communist states, especially with their East European neighbors and the Soviet Union (Jelavich, 1983, p.353). On the other hand, Turkey`s foreign policy towards Balkan countries was set up on enmity and militarist reflexes instead of civil politics before 1991 (Gjana, 2011, p. 537). The migration link between Turkey, its neighborhood, and beyond the movement of people who come in and go out of Turkey has become an important factor and a significant aspect for the Turkish foreign policy. Not only has it created a multitude of actors engaged in Turkish foreign relations, it has also created significant actors at home influencing decision making on migration and foreign policy, and it has diversified the number of issues on which the Turkish government can act. Now, like before, Turkey uses migration both instrumentally and symbolically in order to further foreign policy objectives. Migration policies are also used as a bargaining chip with the EU to pressure accession negotiations but also to signal to the EU its commitment to the EU project and to its neighborhood the sincerity of new friendly relations. However, beyond that, migration and foreign policy concerns have become closely entangled with one another so that it is often difficult to distinguish them (Tolay, 2012).

Balkan or the Balkan countries are Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia (The U.S. State Department, 2012).

Albania is a small country with a population about 3.2 million and a land area of 28,748 square kilometers. The mainly rugged and inhospitable terrain has been aptly described as the rock garden of South – Eastern Europe. Approximately 70 percent of Albanian`s land area consists of hills and mountains. Its coastal plains and river basins,

which are mainly located in the south and west, are warm and rather fertile. Albania has had to import most of its food requirements recently. Albania is well endowed with minerals and energy resources particularly chrome, copper, iron manganese, oil, gas, and coal (Jeffries, 2007, p.22). If we go to the history back, the relations between Ottoman Empire and Albania was very good. There were 28 Albanian (sadrazam) Prime ministers (Simsir, 2001, p.433).I have given in the appendix the names of the prime ministers who were originally from Albania. The Albanian people was called “ Arnavut” only by the Ottoman empire, which means “brave” does not withdraw, is not afraid of anything or anybody. It is also claimed that the Albanians overall seemed quite satisfied with their position in the empire, with many serving in the Ottoman Ruling Class, while in Albania the Catholic and Muslim mountain tribes of the north and the Greek Orthodox of the Suli and Hamari regions of the south enjoyed almost complete autonomy (Stanford J. Shaw, 1977, p.199). After the Ottoman Empire , the diplomatic relations between Albania and Turkey was established during Atatürk period two countries signed an agreement to open embassies in both countries on July, 1927. On 1st September 1928 Zog declared himself as a king of Albania. After declaring Zog himself the king of Albania, disputes started between Albania and Turkey. After 3 years in 1931, again the good relations started between two countries. The withdrawing ambassador could not appoint for two years (Simsir, 2001,pp.16-23). Ahmet Zogu stated that “500 hundred years, Turkey maintained and saved the togetherness of Albanian people. If Turkey had not been, Albania could not have escaped from the Slavs invasions. We owe our survival to Turkey” (Simsir, 2001,p.15). Italy and Albania signed an agreement in Rome on June 1939. According to the agreement Italian`s and Albanian`s foreign policy would be controlled by the Italian foreign minister. For this reason, in 1939 Turkey`s embassy was closed in Tirana and it was not opened for 20 years. It opened again in 1959. When Albania was invaded by Italy, the king Zogu had to leave Albania. The king Zogu, May, 1939 with 78

people were accepted by Turkey. The king Zogu went to Paris from Turkey (Simsir, 2001,pp.27-28). In terms of important issues between Albania and Turkey, my conducted survey shows that 298 out of 716 or 41.6 percent, the respondents think the most important issue between Albania and Turkey is economy. Cultural and historical ties are ranked by 251 out of 716 or 35.1 percent respondents which means cultural and historical ties are also important issue between Albania and Turkey (Erbaş, 2013). Considering Turkey – Albania future relations, the professor Gjergi Sinani states that he is optimistic because if it is taken into consideration the collaboration after 1990s. In addition, Turkey - Albania relations are in the good way, even now the top project creates economically strong relations between Albania and Turkey. He states that the relation between Albania and Turkey gradually can be grown up on a common perspective and on a common way to build democratic institution and how to create condition to organize freedom. The main idea is the two countries have to build the life based on dignity of human being and as a result the relations between the two countries can be very fruitful not only economical, but also cultural, academic and scientific way of collaborations (Sinani, 2013).

Bosnia-Herzegovina, with its capital at Sarajevo, was home, before the war of 1992to 1995, to an ethnically and religiously mixed population of 4.6 million people inhabiting 19,776 square miles (51,233 square kilometers) in the peninsula's northwest. The state lies almost completely within the folds of the Dinaric Alps, some peaks of which are over 6,550 feet (2,000 meters) high. (Hupchick, 2002, p.4).

Bulgaria is a small country with a land area of 110, 550 square kilometers. Bulgaria has a population of 7.8 million (Jeffries, 2007, p.73). Eighty-five percent of its people are of Bulgarian ethnicity. Nine and a half percent are Turks, and 4.5 percent are Roma. The remaining 2 percent include a great variety of other ethnicities, the most important of which historically have been Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. The population of the Pirin region of

Bulgaria (historically part of Macedonia) is officially Bulgarian (Chary, 2011, p.23). Despite that fact that Bulgaria was a Soviet ally in the Balkan Turkey has had Bulgarian friendship since 1964. The reason behind the relations was partially was economy and politics. Turkey considered Bulgaria as a significant balancing power against the Greece in the Balkan region. Bulgaria was also a strategic country for Turkey, because Bulgaria and Greece is one of the two territorial border gates to other European countries. However, the assimilation and discrimination of the Bulgarian Turks caused serious problems (Laciner, 2013). Turkish-Bulgarian relations have further enhanced with the 1997 election of President Peter Stoyanov in Bulgaria. The two countries started to cooperate closely on the security and stability issues in the Balkan countries (Metin Heper, 2009, p.45).

Croatia is populated by 4.7 million people residing on 21,824 square miles (56,538 square kilometers) of territory in the northwest of the peninsula. Its crescent-shape physical configuration consists of three regions: Croatia Proper, with the state's capital of Zagreb, serves as the central core, from which stretch the two horns, composed of Slavonia, the northern lowlands lying between the Sava and Drava rivers, and Dalmatia in the south, which comprises the Adriatic coastline and the adjoining Dinaric highlands. Mediterranean-type cultivation and scrub evergreens proliferate along the Dalmatian coast. In the lowlands of Slavonia, cereal and fruit crops predominate (Hupchick, 2002, pp.4-5).

Greece includes its Aegean island holdings and Crete, encompasses 50,962 square miles (131,990 square kilometers) and 10 million people. Its capital at Athens was built around the remains of the famous ancient acropolis. Mountains cover 80 percent of the train Gülar-shape mainland, which forms the southern tip of the Balkan Peninsula, making less than a third of the land suitable for cultivation (Hupchick, 2002, p.5). The Turkish population that live in Greece plays an important role in framing Turkish foreign policy towards Greece (Bulent Aras, 2010 pp. 157). On the other hand, in 1996, Turkey came to the brink of war

with Greece. Regular military incursions were launched into Northern Iraq; in the Aegean, continual tactical provocations between the Greek and Turkish air forces took place. There was not much effort towards the resolution of the Cyprus issue, and at one point Turkey even threatened to annex the northern part of the island, but the relations with Greece have improved gradually since the beginning of 1999 (Linden, 2012).

According to Bugajski :

As the two most strategically important Balkan countries, Greece and Turkey have important roles to play in promoting security, reconstruction, and international integration throughout Southeastern Europe. While Athens and Ankara maintain serious, long-term disputes over Cyprus and the Aegean, the "Central Balkan" region provides a valuable opportunity for cooperation and complementarity that can increase the influence and prestige of both states while enhancing their bilateral relations (Bugajski, 2010).

Özbudun claims, “The AKP urged that Turkey should reach out to its neighbors, in particular to Greece and the Balkan countries, to Russia and the former Soviet republics, and the main Middle Eastern states. It should also attempt to play an active role in resolving regional disputes” (Özbudun, 2010, p.121).

Kosovo has been for a long time a fiercely contested borderland between Albania and Serbia. Kosovo had a population approximately 2.4 million people in 2004. The land area of Kosovo is 10,908 square kilometers. From 1918 till Kosovo war of 1999, the international community upheld Serbia's historic territorial claims to Kosovo (Jeffries, 2007, p.512). Turkey pursues a very important balance policy between Kosovo and Serbia. For example Turkey was one of the first countries that recognized Kosovo's independence, on the other hand, Turkey has never stopped its diplomatic relations with Serbia (Gjana, 2011, p. 546).

Macedonia is a small country with a land area of 25,733 square kilometers with a population 2 million in 2005. It is a mountainous and forested country, with 24 mountains 2000 meters above the sea level. The people of Macedonia engage in agricultures,

particularly dairy farming. Macedonia has important deposits of zinc, lead, copper, chrome and nickel ores and considerable hydroelectric power potential. Officially, 38 percent of the workforce was unemployed in 2004 (Jeffries, 2007, p.405). Turkey was the unique country that recognized Macedonia with its declared name, on the other hand, Turkey has never stopped its relations with Greece which is the main opposite actor towards Macedonia's name (Gjana, 2011, pp. 546-547).

Montenegro is a small, multi-ethnic country in the southeast Europe with a population of approximately 672,000. It shares international borders with Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo. The largest ethnic groups are Montenegrins, followed by Serbs, Bosniaks, Albanians, Muslims and smaller numbers of Croats and Roma. The predominant religion is Orthodox Christianity, followed by Islam and Catholicism (Morrison, 2009, p.10).

Romania with a territory in the peninsula's northeast covering 91,699 square miles (237,499 square kilometers) and containing 23.1 million inhabitants is the largest Balkan state. It is divided topographically into two basic arable zones the plains and tablelands of the Danube and Prut rivers in the south and east and the rolling, forested Transylvanian Plateau by the boomerang-shape and territorially extensive Carpathian Mountains (Hupchick, 2002, p.6). "Romania In the years before World War I Romania was the most advanced of the Balkan states. Although still essentially agrarian, it took important steps toward a modern industrial economy. The political situation was also stable" (Jelavich, 1983, p.23).

The Serbia – Turkey's relations is very important for the other Balkan countries. Aras claims, "Turkey's relationship with Serbia is strengthening regional peace dynamics and helps neutralize Russia without leading to a feeling of isolation on its part". It is very significant for the Kremlin to stable Balkans. Therefore, the Kremlin would prefer a stable

Balkans and would like to have a balanced relationship with Turkey. Due to its support for a European vision for the Balkans, Turkey also maintains a principled criticism of the EU's involvement in the region. The Turkish-U.S. cooperation is likely to continue in the Balkans considering the overlap of their medium- to long-term perspectives and interests in the region. The continuation of regional stability is very essential. Ensuring the continuation of regional stability is an aim that binds Turkey, the EU, and United States together. Similarly, when it comes to the issue of energy security and the European priorities in securing alternative routes of energy through the construction of new pipelines traversing the Balkans. Turkish policies are helpful for the EU without any doubt. However, it will be up to the EU to cooperate and coordinate its Balkan policies with those of Turkey (Aras, 2012). Serbia between 1875 and 1878 had been characterized by hesitation, internal division, and military defeat. The conflicts and disputes in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875 had caused much excitement within the country. Bosnia was such a land that most Serbs considered as a part of their national heritage. "Although the Russian government officially advised against intervention, a contrary influence came from the representatives of the Slavic Benevolent Society, whose membership was drawn from among the most influential sections of Russian society" (Jelavich, 1983, p.28).

Kavalkski argues:

Foreign Policy Approaches to the Balkans: the EU adopts a passive approach of providing humanitarian assistance and demanding peaceful interstate relations without the application of a socialization project. In this period the EU mainly has encouraged the development of regional cooperation but without (or rather in lieu of) a tangible prospect of membership (Kavalkski, 2007, p.121).

Slovenia with a territory of 7,834 square miles (20,296 square kilometers) and a population of 1.9 million people, edges out Macedonia as the smallest state in the peninsula. Governed from the capital at Ljubljana, it lies in the extreme northwest within the terminal

ranges of the Julian Alps, among which the highest peak reaches 9,400 feet (2,863 meters) (Hupchick, 2002, p.4). As we have seen above, all the Balkans countries are small regarding land areas and the populations are not so many.

It is argued that Balkan region constitutes a historical reality composed of rich and complex experiences of religious and ethnic diversity, and centuries of peaceful coexistence among Christians, Muslims, and Jews (Amila Buturovic, 2007, p.1). Even though Balkan countries have diverse ethnic people, the people of the Balkan countries easily interact with other nations. As a result, Balkan political cultures are perfectly able to interact with Western European political cultures, so that the future of Balkan democratization will mainly depend on these interactions. If Western policy-makers and analysts are aware of it and act consistently, Balkan democratization will be encouraged decisively (Geoffrey Pridham, 2000, p.81). Aside from anthropological, literary and other curiosity, the Balkans has also been the focus of concerted international interest at a diplomatic and political level over the past 200 years (Carmichael, 2002, P.16). EU foreign policy`s aim is also to enlarge into the Balkan states. For example, Kavalkski claims:

Enlargement into the Balkans: the EU adopts a proactive approach of offering the prospect of membership on condition of compliance with certain criteria; thus, applying the whole gamut of accession-driven socialization. In this period, the EU has promoted domestic congruence with its standards through its association/accession activities, which in turn have affected the foreign policy behavior of Balkan states (Kavalkski, 2007, pp.121-122).

It is claimed that the prospects for peace in the Balkans depend on finding viable solutions to the problems (Kavalkski, 2007, p.211). For this reason, Turkey is concerned about the stability in Balkans. Turkey is also aware of the fact that if it is not active in preserving peace in Balkans, the door is closed to its European Union. Because of these concerns, “Turkey has sought to broaden its ties elsewhere, especially with those areas and countries where it has long-standing historical and cultural ties” (Dag, 2011, p. 7). It is argued that the Balkan countries such as, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia,

Macedonia sooner or later will become members of the European Union. These countries are the last bridge Between Turkey and European Union (Cagaptay, 2008).

Turkey has never lost its interest in this region since its parting from the Ottomans at the beginning of the 20th century. It is also important to understand that this interest has not become one of main foreign policy pillars of Turkey. It is stated that the Balkan and Black Sea regions are vital for strategic relations with Central Asia and the Caucasus, especially through its ethnic, religious and cultural ties (Dicle, 2008, p. 4). In July 1996, seven countries – Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey, and Yugoslavia – adopted the Sofia Declaration on ‘Good-Neighborly Relations, Stability, Security, and Cooperation in the Balkans (Siani-Davies, 2003,p.174). As a result of both material and soft power dimensions Turkey can be considered a middle power. It seems that the Turkish economy, its geographical position, dynamic population, and military capabilities shows Turkey as a country which is somewhere between the status of great powers and small states (Yalçın, 2012). It has to be reiterated that the security-community-building process currently under way in the Balkans is not autonomous from the wider framework of the European zone of peace (Kavalkski, 2007, p.56). The common motif seems to be that as a result of their Balkan experiences both NATO and the EU have clarified the boundaries of their socialization power through the extent of the prospective inclusion of all Balkan states in their enlargement programs (Kavalkski, 2007, p.91).

The instability in the Balkan countries of Europe has prevented the end of the Cold War becoming an era of peace in Europe. Despite the competing nationalisms, economic decline and the resilience of authoritarianism, democracy has taken place since 1990 with relative success. Now the regions are engaging with open politics. Therefore, these open politics and democracy will maintain peace and stability in these regions.

The Balkan countries are very important for Turkey, regarding cultures, politics and trade. Firstly, Balkan countries are very important for the geopolitics positions. Apart from this, these countries serve as a bridge between Turkey and EU. One of the most important things is that the Balkan countries are Turkey`s neighbors. Secondly, there is a historical tie for about six hundred years. More importantly there are Turkish people`s relatives that live in those countries. 25 million people live in Turkey, originally from the Balkan countries and 1.5 million Turkish people live in those Balkan countries. Thirdly, there is a great advantage in the Balkan countries concerning trade activities (Balkanlardaki Kimlikler ve Balkanların Türkiye İlişkisi, 2006). Turkey watches the regional countries and continues low level of trade activities. Similarly, when one looks at Turkey`s visa regime towards these countries, there is not a real visa implementation at all. Another important fact is that there is a considerable population from these countries living in Turkey and still people of these countries are able to communicate in Turkish apart from other significant number of historical remains present in these countries. Turks of Balkan origin in Turkey, particularly of Albanian origin, have supported the resistance of Albanians in Kosovo since the 1980s and they had put pressure on Turkey during the Kosovo conflict (Eroglu, 2005, p. 59). For this reason, Turkey has become a more active actor in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian interventions in the Balkans (Dag, 2011, p. 30). Since 2000 there has been a big increase among the Balkan people that consider Turkey as a friendly country. According to the Gallup Balkan Monitor Survey 2010, 75.1 percent of the population of Albania, 60.2 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 93.2 percent of Kosovo, and 76.6 percent of Macedonia consider Turkey as a friendly country. The main reason for the rise of “friends of Turkey” among Albanians, both in Albania and Kosovo, is Turkey`s support for Kosovo`s independence (Turbedar, 2011).

The Cold War period divided the Balkans along ideological lines, which prevented Turkey from seeking closer relations (Dicle, 2008, p. 22). Indeed, following the end of the Cold War, successive Turkish governments have attempted to develop a pro-active strategy towards the Balkans (Dag, 2011, p. 34). The main goal of Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans has changed after the Cold War. These changes have evolved further since the AKP has come to power, which is still in the power. Through these changes, we can notice the remembrance of history and culture is extremely important in promising a new foreign policy framework in which Turkey could get what it wanted more easily and free itself from the shallowness that made it suffer throughout the 20th century. Second, Cem¹ is drawing attention to the reasons why Turkey had broken with its past in the early republican period. It did so, he argues, because it needed to carry on with the revolution that it advanced in the modernization period. Turkey needed to build a nation but what it had at the end of World War I was everything but a nation. Two main goals for Turkish foreign policy is an equal importance: the first is to become a member of the EU; and the second is to become a “decisive centre in a Eurasia that is no longer just a geographical concept but on the way to become an economic, social, and political reality (Ozdemir, 2012, p. 28).

For the purposes of this study, there is no need to go back to the beginning of the 20th century. If one starts with Turkish foreign policy towards these countries after the collapse of communism, that would serve the purposes. Further, it would be wiser to look at these countries and their relations with Turkey and other regional actors since 1990 in order to understand their relations in 21st century. The Turkish foreign minister states that:

Our Balkan policy is shaped by the defining principles of regional ownership and all-inclusiveness. It is based on four main pillars which can best be summarized as security for all, high-level political dialogue, further economic integration and the preservation of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious social structures in the region (Raxhimi, 2011).

¹ 1997-2002 Foreign minister of Turkey.

Muzalevsky also argues:

Turkey has emerged to play an active role in the Balkans after the end of the Cold War. But the gravitational pull between the two has been there for ages, cemented by politics, economics, and culture. The Ottoman Empire dominated the Balkans for several centuries, while Turkey's long fixation with the West has not subdued its nostalgia for grandeur in the region, which is home to significant numbers of Muslims and Turks. The Ottoman legacy haunts the Balkans, where regional countries have met Ankara's new policy with both applause and suspicion (Muzalevsky, 2012).

Turkey has the desire to see the Balkans as an area of peace and security rather than conflicts. The Balkan countries are supposed to draw the other peoples' attention towards these regions, in order to help the European Union with its various cultures. Preserving stability and peace was always important in the Balkans for Turkey's security. Especially after the collapse of the communist regime, the importance of Balkan countries has widely increased. It is well known that the Balkans geographically connect Turkey to Europe. Turkey's strong historical, social and cultural ties with the Balkan people have always been an essential impact in its relations with the Balkan regions. As a result, Turkish foreign policy makers have pursued a peaceful approach with all the Balkan countries. Mr. Aşan states that thanks to this foreign policy vision, Turkey is today considered as a country that not only safeguards but also disseminates human rights, democracy, rule of law and social equity and also, due to its political and economic breakthrough, the visibility and the prestige of Turkey has been increasing in regional and international fields. For this reason, Turkey pursues a foreign policy in the Balkans to further increase its positive image and prestige (Aşan, 2013). These statements clearly indicate the main pillars of the Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans.

3.5. Misunderstood Turkish Foreign Policies towards the Balkan Countries

The development stages in the Turkish foreign policy has been misunderstood since the end of the Cold. Their main argument of misunderstanding is 'Turkey tries to create a

pact-Ottoman or a neo-Ottoman' when Turkish foreign policy has changed its direction and its policy interests has been directed towards the sovereign states living in former Ottoman lands. Regarding the misunderstanding, the Albanian historian professor Ferit Duka states that today there could be certainly doubts about Turkey's image, especially when it comes to its foreign policy positions in the Balkans and Albania. Some Turkish statesmen and the scholars of international relations, today are in important state ranks or in the direction of Turkish foreign policy, have developed and promoted certain views about the role of geopolitics in the strategy of the Turkish state in the present time with regard to strengthening the position of the today's Turkey's international relations and especially within the Balkan regions and especially middle east. He states that they are the thesis from the viewpoint of political interests which aim to strengthen the international position of Turkey even more (Duka, 2013). Regarding the misunderstanding Xhaferaj also claims that Davutoğlu has been careful to avoid the speculation concerning the establishment of a new ottoman order, but it goes without saying that Davutoğlu's foreign policy is not aiming a new imperial ottoman order, but greater Turkish involvement not only in former Ottoman areas, but also in global affairs (Xhaferaj, 2013). The Albanian Prime minister Mr. Edi Rama claims that the relations with Greece, Italy and Turkey are equally important. For this reason, there is no place for misunderstandings (Shkempi, 2013). Coskun claims that the concepts "neo-Ottomanism" and "pan-Turkism" cannot explain this movement adequately, since its supporters wanted to extend Turkey's influence beyond the ex-Ottoman territories of the former Soviet Union, and because it was not exclusively pan-Turkic. Rather, it aimed to enhance Turkey's role in non-Turkic countries such as Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia (Coskun, 2008).

It is stated that Turkey became dependent on the United States from 1945 until 1991, especially since the Second World War, 'the Soviets were powerful and attempted covert

operations to subvert both Turkey and Greece' (Friedman, 2012). After 1991, Turkey did have enough strength to maintain its dependence on the US. In addition to the international factors, socio-political transformations at domestic level have also been influential in the reconstruction of old policy attitudes in foreign policy agenda' (Aktas, 2010, p.17). The new condition forced Turkey to adopt a new foreign policy which focuses on the improvement its relationships with neighbouring countries and change import and export regimes. Therefore, Turkey tries to use its economic tools more than political leverage in order to improve its foreign policy. The exports and imports of goods usually go to countries where they have socio-economic ties and cultural similarities on consumption. For example, Turkey has been developing and increasing its exports and imports with those countries where Turkish people live and work. As Tartari claims, it is not meant to create new Ottomanism. For example, over the last two years, many Albanian TV screens have begun to show Turkish soap operas which have great impacts on Albanian society. One describes this as 'Turkey returns to the Balkans, nearly 100 years after the Ottoman Empire was forced to leave the region and the scene of history' (Tartari, 2012). I have been living in Albania since 2003; I have not seen any signs regarding the New Ottomanism. The Prime Minister Sali Berisha stated "the Turkish investments in Albania increased nine times starting from 2005, but this could have been 19 times and this are an objective for the future" (Tartari, 2012).

Tartari also states:

Kiço Blushi, a writer and analyst, used the term Ballkanadoll (a word made by two, Balkan and Anadoll-Anatolia) that is born with the new engagement of Turkey in the Balkans. According to him, the Neo-Ottoman policy and culture represented by Turkey is dominating in front of Neo-Byzantium represented by Greece-Serbia coalition. Historian Ferit Duka, professor in the University of Tirana states in an interview that "I have the impression that "Neo-Ottomanism" does not represent a stream, a spirit, or a concern that is related to Albanian environment"(Tartari, 2012).

It is fair to say that Turkey never uses Turkish minorities in the Balkans as a fifth column for its foreign policy since such a policy would confirm the suspicion that Turkey wants to rebuild its hegemony in the Balkans and aims to create a Neo-Ottomanist zone of influence (Eroglu, 2005, p. 36).

The discussion on Neo-Ottomanism seems groundless, for there is neither a demand for this type of outreach by the Turks or Muslims in the Balkans or by Turkish society, nor a concrete base for the implementation of such a policy (Rüma, 2010). It is quite clear whether Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans is ‘new Ottoman’ or not. This is a highly debated topic and will be debated more in the future. The reason is that Turkey has become more stable politically and economically growing country. These developments give Turkey a unique position in the region that might be perceived as a kind of threat to other interested parties in the region. They know that public diplomacy is very important to increase international gain. For this reason, some use the term ‘New Ottoman’ in order to create public fear against Turkey which is not Ottoman in anyway. As we have seen the academicians claim that there is nothing that related to the New Ottomonism regarding the Turkish policy towards to the Balkans.

All these clearly show that Turkish foreign policy towards Albania has not been properly understood since ‘the declarations of Turkey’s Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu in Sarajevo, Bosnia, about the “old spirit of the Ottomans’. Turkey needs to explain its intentions and its actions in Albania in a detailed and wider way. The reason is that ‘the declaration is not properly understood or maybe misinterpreted’ (Tartari, 2012).

The Turkish foreign minister Davutoglu was asked some questions regarding his Sarajevo speech; he has been accused by some of promoting an anti-European Union agenda and a return to ‘neo-Ottoman’ nationalism. He responded that his speech during a visit to Sarajevo in 2009 on contemporary Turkish foreign policy has been misinterpreted as

advocating a policy of neo-Ottomanism. He said that he is not a neo-Ottoman. Actually, there is no such policy. He stated that Turkey has a common history and cultural depth with the Balkan countries, which nobody can deny; Turkey cannot act as if the Ottomans never existed in this region. He stated that his perception of history in the Balkans is that we have to focus on the positive aspects of our common past, a better future cannot be created by building on a negative view of history, need to build a better future needs to be created for the next generations that is based on common history, shared values and a joint vision. To this end, Davutoglu stated that they wholeheartedly support the Euro-Atlantic orientation of all Balkan countries because it is very important for the security for the entire region under the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Regarding the question that he was asked, many commentators in the Balkan view that as an apologist for the role the Ottoman Empire played in the Balkans, they believe Ottoman rule is the root of the region's poor economic development and internecine conflicts. Davutoglu stated that, the Balkan countries had its golden age of peace during the Ottoman reign. That is a historical fact. Those who blame the Ottoman period for the region's economic backwardness and internecine fights are under the influence of historical prejudices and stereotypes. It will be enough to travel only a few hundred kilometres to identify the patrimony created during the Ottoman rule. Therefore, we do not want to be part of this blame game. We have to focus on the good. To start with, we have to take a clear and realistic picture of the history. Those who do not know history cannot make history. Despite the positive developments taking place in the region recently and the rapprochement efforts of local leaders, which we welcome wholeheartedly, the Balkans remains to be the fragile part of Europe and the test case for lasting peace and stability in the continent. Important challenges are yet to be overcome. We must admit that wounds are fresh and need constant attention to be completely healed. We must deal with the legacy of the conflict - from organised crime to refugees and displaced persons; from

war crimes to shattered economies and infrastructure, carefully and with a visionary approach while leaving behind the misgivings without delay (Raxhimi, 2011).

According to Gjana:

The new Turkey has changed the situation with its relations with equal policy in domestic and Balkan areas. Turkey has already forgotten the hierarchical relations of history, but resurrected and reinvented the common culture, mentality and interests of history. Turkey today pursues a certain political line of 'win-win relations' and relations between equals" with the all Balkan countries. This policy has been successfully keeping going and progressing, because proud Balkan peoples and governments have needed it alongside of European Union's imperious Balkan policies (Gjana, 2011, p. 542).

The professor Duka states that regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania, there have been debates about Turkey's image in connection with its claim "to revive or recreate the image of the Ottoman Empire". The involvement of Turkey in the issues of Balkan, especially Albania, is sometimes misunderstood. It is sometimes misinterpreted as the desire to recreate the Ottoman Empire, which is to take under control the policies of the regions which once were part of the Ottoman Empire. He states that he himself as a historian has also involved in the debates and he underlined that the relations of Albania with Turkey are a very important factor and he claims that he does not think that the Turkish republic would delude itself by thinking that it could recreate the Ottoman Empire (Duka, 2013).

It has been explored in this chapter that, the main aims of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries are to improve and strengthen its relations, to open new markets area, to develop its economy in the Balkan regions. These statements and responses provide enough evidence for people who want to understand which way the Turkish foreign policy is going.

CHAPTER 4

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ALBANIA AND THE PEOPLE'S VIEWS OF ALBANIA

In this chapter, the study explores the Albanian background and its relations with the Ottoman Empire. This study also explores the period after the collapse of the communist regime in Albania and it also examines the Turkey- Albania relations since 1990. Further this chapter explores the Albanian scholars` and the people`s thoughts and ideas of Albania about the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. Lastly, this chapter analyzes the Turkish foreign policy tools towards Albania such as economy, diplomacy, military and education.

4.1. Turkish Foreign Policy towards Albania and the People`s Views of Albania

Albania is one of the Balkan countries. It is surrounded by Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Greece. Due to its strategic geo-political position, Albania is seen as an interesting and different country of the Balkans (Progonati, 2011, pp. 257-280). Albania occupies a most favorable position for mediating between Europe and Asia. It is separated from the coast of Italy by only seventy-two kilometers, while its river valleys with their numerous tributaries give easy access at relatively low altitudes to the interior of the Balkans (John Boardman F.B.A. p, 187). In ancient times, the Albanian groups – Illyrians, Epirotes, Macedonians, and Western Thracians occupied most of this region of Europe (WM. Pandeli, 1980, p.1). The Illyrians derived from early Indo-European presence in western Balkan Peninsula (Wilkes, 1996, p.39). “The Illyrians are ancient inhabitants of the western and central parts of the Balkans” (Kristaq Prifti, 1993, p.7).

By the second century AD, the native population had become known as Arbërs, and when the Roman Empire split in AD 395, Arbëria became part of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire. It has been argued that by the eleventh century a distinctly Albanian society had crystallized. By the fourteenth century this society, weakened by internal crisis and external attack, was transformed into a feudal one, and by the end of that century several noble families dominated Albania, amongst them the Dukagjini in the north (Young, 2000, p.2).

During the third and fourth centuries AD, the Illyrian regions suffered numerous invasions from the Huns (Vickers, 2001, p.2). The similar words used by the Turkish “Arnavut”, “Arnavutlar” (Bartl, 1995, p.27). In 1415 Ottoman empire came to Albania (Vickers, 2001, p.5). It is stated that during the Ottoman period there were not any problems and conflicts among Christian Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim societies that were living in Albania. They lived side by side in peace. In some places, Muslim, Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek villages, lived side-by-side for centuries with little or no cultural intermixing (Vickers, 2001, p.11). Even the Sultan’s first and foremost concern was maintaining the loyalty of his Albanian. The Arabs and other such Muslim groups with established languages as the Albanians were allowed to open their own schools in their own languages. They could even promote their own cultures and identities, if they did not advocate separatism (Heper, 2007, p.62). The present head of Albanian Muslim Committee, Selim Muça stated that the Ottoman Empire followed a liberal and tolerant politics (Kucur, 2008). During the Ottoman Empire Albanian people were in the higher positions. For example,

Numerous Albanians had distinguished themselves as diplomats and military leaders in the service of the Ottoman Porte; indeed, there had been 26 Ottoman Grand Viziers (Prime Ministers) of Albanian background, as well as many military leaders (Deliso, 2007, p.30).

“The coexistence of the different faith communities created modes of peaceful negotiation of differences and a certain level of tolerance between them. The everyday interaction and frequent mutual support of people belonging to different religions were expressively captured by the term komşuluk (a derivative from the Turkish word komşu,

meaning ‘neighbour’))” (Brodeur, 2009, p.40). It is also stated that: “There is a fact that there had been peace, justice, security for 5 hundred years since 1389 the Kosovo war. The Balkan people lived their golden age those times. Even the non Muslims were loyal to Ottomans and did not want to be separated from the Ottomans” (Ozfatura, 2001).

After 500 years of Ottoman Empire`s presence in Albania, Albania declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912 (Swire, 1929, p.370). So, Albania was recognized as an independent state in 1912 (Carmichael, 2002, P.16). After 10 years time Zog became the prime minister of Albania on 2 December 1922 (Malcolm, 1998, p.227). “On 31 January 1925 the four- member Regency was abolished, Ahmed Zogu was elected a president of a newly declared Albanian (Vickers, 2001, p.117). After 6 years, in 1928, Zog declared himself King Zog of Albania (Fisher, 1984, p.25). After Zog declared himself King of the Albanians, he transformed the country into a monarchy (Henson, 2009, p.3). In 1939 a war broke out between Italy and Albania. There were important benefits, natural resources, agricultural potential in Albania. Italian`s aim was to produce an accurate work. Mussolini was very optimistic about the Albania`s large mineral and agricultural potential (Fisher, Albania at War: 1939-1945, 1999, p.66).

By the end of the Second World War Albania was in a serious economic crisis and the population was threatened by hunger. However, immediately after liberation the work began to rebuild a country that destroyed by war. Albania was a unique example in the Eastern Europe, where the communists came to power (Myzyri, 2001, p.321). The founding meeting of the Communist Party of Albania (CPA) was held in secrecy in Tirana on 8-15 November 1941. On the first day, the merger was agreed and the CPA founded (Cola, 2003, p.25). The pledge that was made by the Albanian Communists at the Peza conference was soon tested with the emergence of the first nationalist party. Balli Kombetar (BK), in November 1942 (Amery, 1948, p.58). Slowly the factional struggle within the Albanian

leadership became more complex and violent, and was caught up in the worsening relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (Griffiths, 1963, p. 18).

The population of Albania is one of the most homogenous in all the Balkans: 91 per cent are ethnic Albanians, 7 per cent Greeks, 2 per cent Vlachs, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Roma and Serbs. Albania was a country with various religious hierarchies proved to be a simpler task. 70 percent of the Albanian Muslim majority in the Balkans had been a religious thing anomaly. The remaining Albanians were divided in the south and the Catholic Church (10 percent) were significantly Hellenized the area around Shkoder in the north fringe Orthodox Church as a significant (20 percent). Albanians, had never been accepted as religious fanatics, as an invitation for foreign intervention was accepted by the Albanian nationalists, the three religious communities (among them, not to mention the various sub-sections), despite the existence. Elsewhere in the Balkans, religion often served as a unifying force in Albania, this turned out to be divisive. This division created a block for the development of a national community, because even very religious but not a religious bigot of the twentieth century, nationalist leaders, especially Zog at least hoped to remove the control of Albanian churches from the hands of foreigners (Fisher, Albania at War: 1939-1945, 1999, p.52). It was observed during the communist regime that , religious people who rejected to cooperate either were imprisoned or in some cases executed (Skendi, 1956, p.298).

The Soviet Union officially broke off the relations with Albania in December 1961(Vickers, 2001 pp.188-189). “For nearly fifty years from 1945 -1991, it was kept tightly under a communist ruler, Enver Hoxha, entirely isolated from the entire world except briefly when it was friends with Russia and later China. No Albanian was allowed out of the country and virtually no foreigners were allowed in” (Waal, 2005, p.250). The communist

regime, which lasted for 46 years ended in 1992 in Albania. After that Albania started multi party systems (Arnavutluk, 2011).

Kaltsounis clearly summarises that period:

Various political leaders prevented Albanians from pursuing their happiness, Hoxha made things worse. He became one of the harshest dictators of modern times and set the stage for the Albanian people to suffer. Hoxha's policies served only his personal ambitions and prevented the ordinary citizen from moving forward. He stayed in power for forty years by eliminating opposition, confiscating all property and means of production, and forcing people to work in factories and collective farms mainly for the benefit of the government. He isolated the country from the rest of the world and used propaganda and severe punishment, including the death penalty, to keep people away from any source that would inspire them to think or act against his will. Religion was totally eliminated, radio listening and television viewing were limited only to government controlled domestic programs, and no traveling or any other type of contact with the outside world was allowed. Even official dealings with other countries were very selective (Kaltsounis, 2010, p.15).

Albania was the last country to emerge from the communist dictatorship in South Eastern Europe. It was also the poorest economically with a suppressed society whose members were not permitted to travel abroad. During the communist regime in Albania, Enver Hoca followed such a politics that Albania did not depend on any other countries. Albania made trade with other countries, but it did not do any economic negotiation with other countries. Albania did not take any help from other countries regarding economy and did not take any credit from other countries. The fall of communism opened the doors to democracy; it led to a pluralist party system and a market economy, ideas which were completely alien to most Albanian politicians and leaders who were severely indoctrinated by the communist propaganda and ideology which had led to the execution and imprisonment of many regime opponents and Albania was kept firmly under communist control until March 1992 (Henson, 2009, p.3). As it is mentioned above, the communist regime was destroyed in 1992 and the democracy started to take place in Albania. In 1992, Sali Berisha won the first free election. After winning the election, he immediately pushed for reforms by embracing free market policies, endorsing trade liberalization and initiating the privatization of state

held properties. Due to the economic problems social tensions fuelled by poverty and lack of prospects led to big migration of Albanians especially to the neighboring Greece and Italy. So, unemployment rates increased as state enterprises could no longer compete with imported goods, and industrial and agricultural production decreased to the lowest levels (Henson, 2009, pp.4). The Berisha`s government couldn`t succeed in improving the economic crisis in Albania. Due to the collapse of the pyramid schemes and the Albanian economy was on the verge of collapse by February–March 1997. “The most immediate challenge was to restore public order and ensure the delivery of economic and humanitarian assistance. This was intended to create conditions for holding national elections that could pave the way to stabilizing Albania politically and economically” (James Dobbins, 2008, p.11).

Some background information is given about Albania, before starting to analyze the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania and the views of people of Albania. According to the survey, majority of Albanian respondents, 273 out of 716 or 38.1 percent think that Albania has made great progress in development in social and cultural changes since 1991. 196 out of 716 or 27.4 percent respondents think that Albania has made great progress in economic development since 1991. 158 out of 716 or 22.1 percent respondents think that Albania has made great progress in foreign policy development since 1991 while 64 or 8.9 percent think that Albania has made great progress in internal politics development. Very few respondents, 25 out of 716 or 3.5 percent think that Albania has made great progress in internal and external security development (Erbaş, 2013).

I conducted an interview with the Prof. Dr. Gjergji Sinani, who is the head of philosophy chair at the Tirana University, Albania. I asked him the importance of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. He stated that considering the role of Turkey as a geostrategic pillar agent, Albania is important to realize its role in the region regarding the issues in the Balkan area. Albania is important for foreign policy as a friendly country

towards Turkey. There will be some level of collaborations of Turkey with Albania in order to be strong not only on economic level but also on the cultural level in order the people of both countries will know each other better not based on stereotype historical what the evolution of two countries is towards the freedom and democracy. He stated that this is important not only focusing on economic level (Sinani, 2013). The Turkish image in Albania is different from other Balkan countries. For example, according to Sinani, the image of Turkey and Albania is not the same in all other countries, it is necessary to have sociological study on this idea what is the image of Turkey in Albania and he goes further claiming that there is still old image of Albania about Turkey regarding the Albanian history which the communist propaganda presented about the ottoman empire etc. There is some stereotype on this issue, but regarding the intellectual level there are some good images of Turkey considering the relation and regarding the support of Turkey towards the freedom and independence. Sinani also states that it is important to have a sociological study to see what the image among different level of population, ages, and genders etc. (Sinani, 2013). Regarding the images of Albanian people towards Turkey, I conducted a survey. I conducted various gender groups, age groups and various levels of education groups. The gender groups included 364 out of 716 respondents or 50.08 percent, were female while, 352 out of 716 or 49.02, respondents were males. The age groups included 176 out of 716 or 24.6 percent, the youngest 18- 22 year olds was ranked as the first age group. The first group was followed by those of age groups of 31- 35 years old 105 out of 716 or 14.7 percent, 23- 26 years old 98 out of 716 respondents or 13.7 percent, 36-40 years old 95 out of 716 respondents or 13.3, 27-30 years old 84 out of 716 respondents or 11.7 etc. There are more opinions of younger age groups. This is very significant for the wider perspective of younger age groups. Regarding the education groups, the university graduates have the highest percentages who participated in this survey. The university graduates represent the

survey with 566 out of 716 respondents or 77.7 percent, while secondary graduates represent this survey with 160 out of 716 respondents or 22.3 percent. The respondents, who had higher education levels, helped me find the right and true results of this survey. The survey shows that majority of Albanian have good images regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania (Erbaş, 2013). Sinani also emphasizes that Turkey has to be very careful in relation with Albania regarding its foreign policy in order not to interfere too much in specific issue for example, considering history etc. He also states that Turkey's foreign policy has not to be like paternalistic perspective towards Albania like a small country and Turkey needs to see as a friendly country considering Albania. As an alien Turkey needs to support Albania reciprocally in the process of integration to Europe because Turkey and Albania in the same ideal. Turkey has to collaborate and reciprocally help each other to realize this common objective (Sinani, 2013).

4.2. Turkish Foreign Policy towards Albania

Turkey considers Albania as a strategically important country for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the Balkans, which plays a role of catalyst in its region. Strong Albania is an important pillar for Turkey's foreign policy, which aims to create sustainable peace, security and tranquility in the region and beyond. Turkey has strong historical and cultural ties with Albania and the general characteristic of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania is mutual friendship, trust and solidarity. For this reason, Turkey aims at achieving further close bilateral relationship with Albania (Aşan, 2013). Turkey is one of the best partners of Albania. We have shared the same policy for 500 years despite the historical conditions. In modern times, the role that Turkey and its Prime Minister Tansu Ciller played in 1997 was irreplaceable. These types of co-operation and support have been the main factors of the importance Albania has for the Turkish foreign policy (Nikolla, 2013). Albania is very important for the Turkish foreign policy. Ferdinand Xhaferaj ,who is an Albanian

politician and who is also the Minister of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports claims that past ten years Albania has been a part of the objectives of the Turkish foreign policy. In the 1980's, Özal's government made a shift from Kemal's ideologies. This shift was based on the concept of Neo-Ottomanism, which as a political ideology promotes a greater Turkish engagement in areas formerly under the Ottoman Empire. Turkey's foreign policy of the past ten years, however, has been based on the theories of the political scientist and diplomat Ahmet Davutoglu, who is the chief architect of the Turkish foreign policy. Davutoğlu doctrine expressed in his book "Strategic Depth," published in 2001, explains his strategic vision for Turkey. Davutoğlu has been careful to avoid the speculation concerning the establishment of a new ottoman order, but it goes without saying that Davutoğlu's foreign policy is not aiming a new imperial ottoman order, but greater Turkish involvement not only in former Ottoman areas, but also in global affairs. The desired influence will result from the promotion of liberal policies and conflict resolution and also from the implementation of 'win-win' solutions economically speaking. Therefore, Albania as a country located in the southwestern part of the Balkan Peninsula with a dominant Muslim population is part of the objectives of the Turkish foreign policy (Xhaferraj, 2013). Xhaferraj also goes further claiming that, Davutoğlu's doctrine regarding foreign policy aims to transform Turkey from a regional power towards a central power. This means that the road of Turkey toward a central power goes through fulfilling the obligations, which derives from being a regional power. Within the region, Albania, as a country with a Muslim majority, has offered all the opportunities for the Turkish foreign policy and objectives to be implemented in micro-levels and even grassroots (Xhaferraj, 2013). Professor Gjergi Sinani claims that Albania faced many problems in the Balkan area especially after the collapse of communism. Turkey played a very important role defending and supporting Albania while it was building new democratic institutions. After 1990s, Turkey played a significant role in order to save the

integrity of Albania before changes of nationalist movement in the Balkan area and Turkey also played a very important role in supporting the weak democracy after the nationalist movement (Sinani, 2013). Big countries, which they dominate the small countries, usually try to influence, assimilate and then they make the countries become dependent upon them. These are main strategies of big countries. Firstly, the dominated countries lose their own languages and they also lose their identities. Nowadays global culture threatens every region. Regarding Ottoman Empire, it did follow different strategies. Each ethnicity and each religion group preserved their identity and religion. It is stated by Albanian scholars that Ottoman Empire played an important role that Albania was assimilated by neither Slav culture nor Latin culture. Albania is in the geographical place, which is strategically very important. For this reason, many countries had desires towards Albania in history. The Turkey`s political aim towards Albania is to help Albania protect its cultural identity and also to maintain to be a developed country regarding its economy (Çağlayan, 2013). During my survey, I asked the respondents which country has the greatest influence on Albanian foreign policy. 521 out of 716 or 72.8 percent; respondents believe that the USA has the greatest influence on the Albanian Foreign Policy. The respondents, 84 out of 716 or 11.7 percent, think that Turkey is a second country, which has more influence on the Albanian Foreign Policy (Erbaş, 2013).

If we go to the history of the Turkish foreign policy relations towards Albania, in 1923- 1926, the diplomatic relations between Albania and Turkey were established (Simsir, 2001,p.18). The first Turkish diplomatic mission was opened as a Consulate in the city of Vlora in 1925 (Embassy History and Previous Ambassadors, 2013). In 1926, the Turkish consular was opened in Tirana (Simsir, 2001,p.18). In 1928, the Turkish consul was drawn back to Turkey. Three years, 1928-1931, the relations between Albania and Turkey were broken up. In 1931-1934 between Albania and Turkey again the good relations started. Due to

the conflicts between Albania and Italy, the Turkish consular was closed in 1945 in Tirana (Simsir, 2001,p.14). Mustafa Kemal Atatürk stated in 1934 “We like Albanian people; we consider them as brothers and sisters, and we consider the people very close to us. We as a country and as a nation believe and desire Albania to be strong as a country and also we desire the country to take the place in the Balkans where Albania supposed to be” (Simsir, 2001,p.14). After 15 years the Turkish consular again was opened in Tirana in 1959 .The bilateral relationships were upgraded to Ambassadorial level in 1966 (Embassy History and Previous Ambassadors, 2013). Offices of the Military Attaché and of the Commercial Counselor were set up respectively in 1992 and 2007 (Embassy History and Previous Ambassadors, 2013). Since the collapse of communism, Albania has transformed its political, economic and social structure quickly. These rapid changes and international intervention in the region forced Turkey to implement an ‘active foreign policy’ (Sülkü, 2010, p. 1).

As it is stated:

Main tenets of Turkish foreign policy towards Albania were almost identical to Turkey’s overall Balkan policy. Main objective of Turkish Balkan policy was to endure stability and peace in the region. Bearing this main objective in mind, Turkey developed its bilateral relations with Albania immediately after the end of Albanian isolationist policies following the death of Enver Hoxha. Turkey, until the mid-1990s, rapidly increased its political, military and economic ties with Albania (Sülkü, 2010, p. 1).

One thing is certain - this relationship has grown closer since 1990. Turkey has used various ways to enhance this relationship including economic aid, supporting social and cultural programmes by The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), training police officers and establishing schools. It is stated that Turkey considers Albania strategically an important country for the establishment of enduring peace and stability in the Balkans and supports its integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions, which, it believes, will strengthen Albania’s internal stability Turkey is also supporting Albania, in its efforts at bilateral and multilateral level, for developing its diplomatic relations and

international effectiveness. Cooperation in the field of defense constitutes a comprehensive dimension of Turkish-Albanian bilateral relations. Teams assigned by the Turkish Land, Naval and Air Forces have been training Albanian Armed Forces and supporting them in logistics and modernization aspects, while Albanian soldiers assigned to Afghanistan within NATO framework are serving their mandate within the Turkish troops deployed in this area (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs , 2012). After transitional period in early 1990s, Turkey and Albania further developed their relations. The relations between two countries in the last two decades have been more constructive, open and beneficial for their international purposes. Turkey and Albania are both members of NATO and have similar visions with regard to EU membership together with all the countries of the region. Furthermore, the two countries are active members of the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the only homegrown initiative in the region. Turkey and Albania are also cooperate as two member states within the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), multilateral political and economic initiative to ensure peace, stability and prosperity encouraging friendly and good neighborly relations in the Black Sea region. Turkey develops its bilateral relations with Albania at every aspect as a strategic partner in the region and supports Albania for its ambition for the integration to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions along with the regional initiatives to promote regional peace, stability and security. Conducting a good Turkish foreign policy towards Albania is very important. According to the survey, 304 out of 716 or 42.5 percent, the respondents think that the image of Turkey regarding the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania is important, while 232 out of 716 or 32.4 percent, the respondents believe that the image of Turkey concerning the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania is very important (Erbaş, 2013).

Turkey and Albania also share the same international objectives and foreign policy priorities in terms of Euro-Atlantic ties in achieving peaceful, safe and stable atmosphere in the Balkan region. The two countries also have close cooperation in regional and international arena (Aşan, 2013). Sinani claims that the priority of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania is to strengthen the relations on the Economic level, because Albania is on the way of entering a new stage of society, in the stage of free market economy and democracy. He goes further stating that it is important to profit by the experience of the Turkish foreign policy which has a great developed freedom and economy. Secondly, it is also more important to have mobility not only the people of trade but also on the level of intellectual changes between two countries and in the changes of idea on the level of university. It is important to have common research not only on political and economic level (Sinani, 2013). According to Edmond Haxhinasto, the foreign minister of Albania, the aim of the Turkish foreign policy is to strengthen the bilateral political dialogue to support the growth of Turkish presence in the Albanian economy and culture as well as in the matters of defence and security (Haxhinasto, 2013). Turkey had a great impact on the membership of Albania in the NATO and Turkey has played an important and influential role in the foreign policy, especially in strengthening the relations in the Balkan (Maliqi, 2013). I conducted a survey regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. According to the survey 362 out of 716 or 50.6 think that the USA is the closest ally to Albania and Turkey is thought as the second close ally to Albania with 248 out of 716 or 34.6 percent respondents. The USA and Turkey is followed by Italy with 49 out of 716 or 6.8 percent respondents. The survey indicates that the percentage of the following countries such of: Germany, France, Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, Russia, Macedonia and Montenegro, is very low regarding the closest ally countries to Albania. As it is indicated there is a good relation between Turkey and Albania. If a country is considered a closest ally, it means there

is a good result about a foreign policy issue (Erbaş, 2013). As it is stated by the Albanian well known historian, professor Ferit Duka, Turkey is one of Albania's main partners and a great country in the Balkans with which Albania has historically had good relations. Although Albania was an isolated country and its relations with the world were very weak, but with Turkey its relations has always been special and also close. Professor Duka went further by stating that for the Albanians and for Albania, Turkey is a very important country from the point of view of historical relations, stretching from the period of the Ottomans, and also from the standpoint of common interests whether in the Balkans or within European context. The Turkish foreign policy towards Albania and Albanians has become more and more active during the years. The content of the relations between Albania and Turkey has been expanded and considering the period of its interest (Duka, 2013).

The Republic of Turkey has been pursuing, since its establishment, a peaceful, realistic and consistent foreign policy guided by the principle "Peace at Home and Peace Abroad" set out by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Turkey conducts a foreign policy generating security and stability in its region and beyond based on its democratic and secular political system, vibrant economy and its tradition of reconciling modernity with its cultural identity (Turkish Embassy-Tirana, Arnavutluk, 2013).

These statements underline a general conception of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. "In the Balkans, the maintenance of peace and stability is crucial to Turkey's interests. Hence, Turkish foreign policy has been formulated so as to prevent instabilities and destabilizing factors in the Balkans" (Eroglu, 2005, p. 8). Since the Soviet Union is not the security concern of Turkey any more, ex-Soviet republics such as Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Macedonia are free to cooperate with Turkey, which they do not have any more a common border with Russia. As a result, Turkey has signed a security pact with Albania (Gunes, 2007, p.154). For a long time Turkey has been trying to preserve peace and stability in Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia (Turkiye, 2003). Why are the peace and stability important in Albania? It is worth saying that there are more Albanian people living in Turkey than in Albania (Dilipak, 2001). The Turkish

citizens of Albanian origin is estimated about 5 million (Haxhinasto,2013). For this reason, the conflict and instability immediately affect the people of Albanian origin in Turkey.

There is a visible development that Albania and Turkey are members of various regional co-operations such as the NATO, the (BSEC) Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization on June 25, 1992 (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p. 100), the Regional Cooperation Council; these memberships help both countries increase their foreign relationships further. On the side of Albania, the relation with Turkey is important because Albania was cut off from the rest of the world for fifty years does have the charm of the undiscovered. The self-imposed isolation, the retention of most of the population in rural areas, the distinctive economic development, did result, particularly amongst the rural majority, in a life-style which is unfamiliar to western Europeans (Waal, 2005, p.2). Due to the communist systems in Albania, Bulgaria and Romania there was a period of economic disruption and recession. By the mid-1990s all three countries managed to emerge from slump and appeared to be entering into a period of economic recovery. Despite the observed recovery, in the mid-1990s, almost at the same time, all three countries entered again into a sharp unexpected economic crisis, deeper in Bulgaria and Albania than in Romania (Geoffrey Pridham, 2000, p.143). Due to the economic crisis, many Albanians, mostly from central and southern Albania, emigrated to Greece and Italy to work for exploitative wages. There was little investment in the land, much of which was left untended (Young, 2000, p.3). “Thousands of Albanians fled or attempted to flee on boats to Italy. By the eighth, the whole of southern Albania was outside government control and the southern towns had set up their own governments known as Salvation Committees” (Waal, 2005, p.11). Albanians succeeded in making development despite the position in power of an anti-communist party committed to the development of a market economy. Albania increased its bilateral relations with Turkey during 1990s. Turkey helped with humanitarian aid and financial assistances in various

occasions, because Albania needed external assistances. It is necessary to state one more time that in these countries, Albanian minorities are living and they are concerned with developments in Albania (Sulku, 2010, p.64). Mesut Yilmaz was the first Turkish foreign minister who visited Albania August 1-4 in 1988. The Albanian foreign minister Reis Malile, after one year 1-5 February 1989, also visited Turkey. He also was the first Albanian foreign minister who visited Turkey. Especially, after the Berlin wall pulled down, the Albanian officials started visiting Turkey more often. For example, 25-28 June 1990, the Albanian prime minister, 30-31 July the Albanian new foreign minister Muhammed Kapplani and 17-18 October 1991, the president of Albania Ramiz Alia paid an official visit to Turkey. 18-20 February 1993, the Turkish president Turgut Özal paid an official visit to Albania (Simsir, 2001, p.362). Turkey supported the establishment of a democratic state structure in order to protect Albanian borders. In addition, Turkey supports Albania about this issue. As I have mentioned above stability and peace is also a main aim of Turkish foreign policy in the Balkan regions. Yet one of the most important policies of Turkey in the Balkan regions is to prevent any other super powers' dominance over the Balkans.

There are many factors that increase the relations between Albania and Turkey. Some of the factors are as following: There are many Turkish citizens of Albanian origin living in Turkey and of Albanians who has chosen to live in Turkey due to some reasons such as, education, health and employment or marriage bonds. In addition to this the growing size of the Turkish community settling in Albania, either as employers or professionals, strengthens the cooperation potential of the two countries (Affairs R. O., Relations between Turkey and Albania). There is an important and long history between Albania and Turkey. Albania was one of the most integrated countries that belonged to the Ottoman Empire. During the Ottoman Empire, out of 282 sadrazam (prime ministers) 28 prime ministers were Albanian. Apart from this, the Albanians from Macedonia and Kosovo live in Turkey as one nation.

According to the officials, there is more, 4.5-5, million Albanian living in Turkey than in Albania. These Albanian people have integrated living with Turkish people. Turkey gives more attentions to Albania than other Balkan countries, because these both countries have trust and confidence in each other. The Balkan countries especially, Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonia function like a bridge between Turkey and Europe (Limaj, 2013).The relation between Turkish people and Albanians has become stronger after the Turkey's support for the Kosovo's independence (Turbedar, 2011). Since 1990, Turkey undoubtedly has played and continues to play an important role towards Albania. Turkey has been and remains a powerful voice when it comes to promoting Albania, Kosovo and the interests of the Albanians. Turkey is a strong supporting voice, in support of Albanians, in support of Kosovo's freedom, in support of the interests of new state of Kosovo. Albania has a great interest in the progress of the state of Kosovo, so by supporting Kosovo, Turkey is supporting Albania too. Turkey has played an important role not only in terms of the contribution to the growth in performance in the Albanian army so that it was worth of admission into NATO but Turkey also gave political support to Albania to become a part of NATO. Mr. Duka states that Albania will not forget this support easily (Duka, 2013). Turkey considers Albania as strategic partner and balancing country in the region. In this context, Turkey actively supported NATO membership of Albania, which resulted positively for Albania in 2009. Turkey's policy is to continue supporting and or encouraging Albania's membership to regional and international organizations (Aşan, 2013). Mr.Limaj, who worked as a military attaché in Ankara between 1994-2000, states that Turkey is the country which has helped Albania more regarding education, politics, economics.Turkey also helped Albania during the process of membership of NATO.Turkey gave Albania 60 million dollars for the military defense.There was not any other country that helped Albania so much. Mr. Hajro Limaj also states that, on 12 and 27 March 1997 the prime minister of

Turkey, Tansu Ciller announced that Greece had to forget the bad intentions towards Albania (Limaj, 2013).

The professor Duka states that regarding the perspective of Turkish political interests in the Balkans, Albania is a special place. Albania is a country in the west Balkan which has been part of the western belt of the Ottoman Empire and it still remains a key strategic region, Albania is the western gate towards the Balkans. Secondly, Turkey is aware that there has been a long time of living together. The two countries have had a long term cooperation in history so that the Turkish political circles are aware that Albania remains a country with which Turkey can have a very good relationship and partnership, probably because of religious, cultural beliefs etc . Although a small country, given the role of the Albanian factor in the Balkans, Turkish policy is interested in having good relations with the Albanians in general, but especially with two countries that are the main voice of the Albanians in the region, Albania and Kosovo. There is also a large Albanian community in Turkey which is certainly well integrated. It is a community with an identity which they have carried from their mother country. Today this community is a powerful voice in Turkey which has numerous businesses. This community has a considerable role in the state and in the civil society around Turkey and the presence of so many Albanians in Turkey is another factor regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. These communities strengthen the bridges of friendship between the two states (Duka,2013).

Due to the negative relations with the European Union, Turkey has directed its way and tried to broaden its ties elsewhere, particularly with those areas and countries where it has long-standing historical and cultural ties (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011,Vol. 13 No.1). Regarding the political relations between Albania and Turkey, Turkey mainly focuses on the stability and security of the country. Turkey tries to increase its economic relations with Albania. Because of the given fact, Turkey tries to develop its bilateral relations with

Albania and support Albania in its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Turkey is a significant regional power in Albanian politics since Turkey is a member of NATO and it is also an applicant to EU. Albania is Turkey's reliable ally in the Balkan countries. Albania has a significant role to play in the Balkan regions. Thus, Turkey welcomed the Albanian decision on membership application to NATO and EU. Turkey tried to strength its bilateral relations with Albania and supported Albania's participation in regional and international organizations. The Tirana Turkish ambassador Mr. Aşan states that Turkey supports Albania's integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions; because Turkey believes that, the integration of all Western Balkan countries in Euro-Atlantic institutions is the key to restoring peace and stability in the region. In this sense, Turkey considers the integration of Albania to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions necessary and continues to support its efforts in this direction. Turkey also supports the integration of Albania to the regional organizations (Aşan, 2013). It is stated that the main purpose of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania is mutual friendship, trust and solidarity. We have seen that successful visits and contacts have been continued between Albania and Turkey. For example, the Albanian president Bamir Topi in October 2011 and the Prime Minister, Sali Berisha in April 2012 and in June 2012 visited Turkey. The speaker of the Turkish parliament Cemil Çiçek's visits Albania in May 2012. These are the recent highlights of two countries bilateral relations. The Albanian foreign minister Edmond Panariti visited Turkey and participated in the International Conference entitled "From Balkan Wars to Balkan Peace" which was co-sponsored by the Center for Strategic Research of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidency for Turks abroad and related communities in October in 2012 in Istanbul, and held talks with the foreign Minister Davutoğlu. Not long ago the speaker of the Albanian Parliament Jozefina Topalli paid an official visit to Turkey in February 2013 (Affairs R. o., Relations between Turkey and

Albania). These official visits all show that the two countries pay more attentions to the bilateral relations. Turkey's foreign policy aimed at zero problems with its neighbors which is under threat (Bulent Aliriza, 2012).

Even before entering the democracy system, Albania had never had conflicts or any negative positions towards Turkey. When the Serbia increased its pressure on the Albanian people in Kosovo, the leader of communism, Enver Hoxha stated that Turkey had always been with Albania and Turkey had always helped Albania, if something happened in Kosovo, they would demand help from Turkey. When Albania passed to the multi-party system, since 1990 the relations has increased more between Albania and Turkey. Those years, in 1990s, there were problems inside Albania due to the changed and new systems. For this reason, Greece in the south and Serbia in the north were having bad intentions towards Albania. For these reasons, the first official visitor from Turkey was the chief of defense Dogan Gunes. For the first time Albania was visited by a NATO member. Between 1990- 2000, the most political and economic relations were between Turkey and Albania than any other countries. There were many visitors between Albania and Turkey regarding military and politics positions (Limaj, 2013).

As a result, as professor Duka states that since 2000 there has been a new development in the Albanian-Turkish relations. He explained the number of factors that helped improve the Albanian- Turkish relations. Firstly, the collapse of communism and the establishment of a democratic system in Albania and the opening of Albania to the world. The relations with Turkey have widened and enriched in content too during this process. In both the Albanian and Turkish sides, there has been an increase in the consciousness towards the importance of the history, which has affected the relations. Another important factor, is the Turkish foreign policy's interest in the Balkan countries and in Albania are all the geopolitical and strategic issues, which were opened after the liberation of Kosovo. The new

reality, which was created in the Balkan countries after the independence of Kosovo, certainly increased the interest of Turkey both in the region and towards Albania in the Balkan region. The historical relations and the common geostrategic interests in the Balkan countries and beyond have led to a new dimension of the relations, aiming to assist Albania, which emerged out of the communist regime with many problems in every aspect. This is why; there has been an increase of the economic investments that Turkey has made in Albania (Duka,2013). The main priorities are related to economical and political co-operation (Nikolla,2013). Turkey has played an important role in support of the Albanian country in terms of economy, trade and foreign policy (Maliqi, 2013). Beyond the political perceptions, it seems that the Turkish interests in Albania are related to the financial and economic fields (Hebovija, 2013). During the survey I asked the respondents whether Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role regarding its foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years. The survey indicates that 508 out of 716 or 70.9 percent, the respondents believe that Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role regarding its foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years. Contrary to the positive opinions, 99 out of 716 or 13.8 percent, respondents state that Turkey has not been playing a more important and powerful role regarding its foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years. I also asked the respondents whether Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000. The survey indicates that 598 out of 716 or 83.5 percent, the respondents think that, Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000. Only few, 37 out of 716 or 5.2 percent, respondents state that Turkey has not improved its relations with Albania since 2000 (Erbaş,2013).

Mr. Duka has evaluated the future of Turkey-Albania relations. He claims that he is optimistic about Albanian - Turkish future relations. Both countries have fundamental interests to strengthen friendship, to strengthen cooperation and to walk side by side towards progress. He is optimistic which is also based on the history of Albanian - Turkey relations.

Regarding the problems in Albania, during the communism, both countries have been aware of what friendship, coexistence and cooperation offered to them. The past can be used as a capital to build a more secure present and why not to have an even more secure future, where both countries walk next to each against the problems that the countries may have. He states that Turkey can help strengthen Albania's economy. Albania and Turkey are two countries of NATO. This is a new dimension of the potential in favor of strengthening of these relations. He claims that the interest that both countries have in the Balkan countries, causes the strengthening of friendship and collaboration. With the large and powerful Albanian presence in Turkey, the already consolidated Turkish capital in Albania, the Turkish institutions to assist Albania, which are mainly educational institutions, make him optimistic for the future of the Turkish-Albanian relations (Duka, 2013). In this context, knowing the reciprocal potentials especially in such fields as economy, trade, tourism etc. The two countries can advance and strengthen them in the future (Haxhinasto, 2013). The relations between Turkey and Albania will become stronger in the future and will have a strong consolidation as in the foreign policy as well as in trade, economy and relations, etc. (Maliqi, 2013). Turkey-Albania relations will remain strong and stable even in the future (Nikolla, 2013). The survey that I conducted shows that the respondents, 365 out of 716 or 51.0 percent, have the opinions that Turkey is ranked as the friendliest state towards Albania. The respondents, 266 out of 716 or 37.2 percent, also think that the USA is the second friendliest country towards Albania. These two countries are followed by Italy, 38 out of 716 or 5.3, respondents think that Italy is the third friendliest country towards Albania (Erbaş, 2013). On the other hand, Aşan claims that, because of its historical, cultural and human ties with the Balkans, Turkey attaches a special importance to the image of the country and its prestige in Albania and in the region. Considering Albania as a strategically important country for the establishment of peace and stability in the Balkans, Turkey will

continue to support Albania in the process of integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this regard, Turkey will cooperate extensively with Albania on almost every regional and international field and high-level visits and contacts will continue to be carried out on a periodical basis to further develop the bilateral relations between two countries (Aşan, 2013). Like the other academicians, Xhaferaj also sees the Turkey – Albanian future relations very promising. He claims that it is obvious that the majority of Albanian families perceive Turkey very well, while as the relation between the two countries is excellent. Being a small country surrounded by neighbors with territorial ambitions toward Albania, through centuries Albanians have regarded Turkey as a basis of its stability and security, this also due to their tied history for approximately five centuries. Albania is welcoming towards all Turkish initiatives to further its collaboration and cooperation. When it comes to the perspective of the relations, there is no reason for them to change, thus they will continue to be very tight. If it is thought of making a project regarding the future, the past must be analyzed in order to reach certain conclusions about the future. Past Turkish-Albanian relations are an example of stability and tight cooperation in multi-dimensional aspects. The present serves as a proof of the desire of both countries to consider this cooperation as strategic as well as a crucial part of their foreign policies. The newly elected Prime-Minister , Mr. Rama, of Albania, during his official visit to Turkey at the beginning of August 2013, was clear in his message that Turkey is a strategic ally for Albania. The Turkish Prime-Minister Erdogan, on the other hand, found extensive time for around three hours to share the same thought throughout his meeting with Mr. Rama. Thus, the future seems to be excellent between two countries who share not only an already consolidated relationship, but also belonging to the Muslim belief, which serves as a strengthening of the mutual desire to further develop relations. Turkey and Albania, besides both being part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), also have in common

the joint objective of joining the European Union between the years 2020-2025 (Xhaferraj, 2013).

There are many reasons why Turkey needs to improve its Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. Not only Turkey but also all other countries need to have good relations with each other. Due to the good relations, the countries may have positive results towards each other. The reason is that, the good relations among countries, people will bring a peaceful and comfortable life to this world, and the people will look well for the future. So as a result, both countries Albania and Turkey will benefit from the good relations and friendship. Apart from the general assessment, there are also other reasons between Albania and Turkey that need to continue their relations. The historical ties between Albania and Turkey needs to continue today as well. There had not been big problems between Albania and Ottoman Empire that lived together for about 500 hundred years. Besides, the Albanian people helped Ottoman Empire in sciences, arts etc. The changes in 20th century helped Albania become independent country. The independence had not been because of the problems between two countries. The brotherhood that comes from the historical ties still continues between Albania and Turkey. If the two countries improve the relations, the both countries and people will gain profits through the good relations. The other countries` threat on Albania also necessitates the help of Turkey towards Albania. The people of two countries understand each other well due to the fact that majority of the people belong to the same religion, culture, customs etc. There are many things in common for both countries. Since the two countries are familiar with each other and they have almost same perception and same opinions. These common things help each country in the international relations. Due to the historical, geographical and cultural ties, many Albanians immigrated to Turkey and there are many Albanian people that live in Turkey. On the other hand, there are also Turks in Macedonia and Kosovo that live together with Albanian people. The relations between two

countries are important because the countries have to protect their people's rights who live in Turkey and also those who live in Macedonia and Kosovo (Çağlayan, 2013). When I conducted the survey I asked the respondents the Turkey – Albania future relations. 627 out of 716 or 87.6 percent, the respondents believe that both countries, Albania and Turkey, will have more strong relations in future. According to the result, we can assume that the Albanian people think the two countries need to improve their relations. Only few respondents, 26 out of 716 or 3.6, think that both countries will have weaker relations than it is now (Erbaş, 2013).

4.3. Turkish Foreign Policy Tools towards Albania

The term foreign policy refers to a state's international goals and its strategies to achieve those goals. Foreign policymakers follow the steps with which public policy is made. There are usually three tools of foreign policy, namely political, economic and military instruments. What seems new in the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans is the increasing importance of economic relations in Turkish foreign policy (Rüma, 2010). According to Xhaferaj Albania is a country with a dominant muslim population in which during the last ten years the Turkey's contributions have been noticed in all levels. This also due to the fact that after September 11th 2001, the U.S. President Bush's foreign policy regarded Turkey as the satellite of moderate Islam in Balkan states such as Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia&Herzegovina. Those countries posed even more of a threat due to the mass foundations and associations from Saudi Arabia and even from Iran. Therefore, having received a "green card" from the West, Erdogan's Government exploited the new strategic context and deeply introduced Turkey in the region not only as a secular Muslim country, but also as a moderate Islamic satellite (Xhaferaj, 2013). In June 2013, as soon as the socialist party's leader Mr. Rama won the election he went to Turkey to meet the prime

minister Mr. Erdogan. During the meeting the future Albanian prime minister Mr. Rama stated that his party's aim is to become a strategic partner with Turkey (Shkempi, 2013).

Cooperation in the field of defense constitutes a strong dimension of Turkish-Albanian bilateral relations. Due to close historical and cultural ties, Turkey closely cooperates with Albania in areas other than political and military relations. The said assistance is conducted in various areas such as economy, culture, protection of common historical heritage and education by our relevant public institutions in accordance with the bilateral agreements and in a spirit of solidarity. The total value of Turkish investments in Albania is developing steadily as Turkey is among the major trade partners of Albania. Thus, Turkey is generally in the top three countries with regard to overall economic relations Turkish companies mainly operate in banking, GSM / communication, mining, processing and education sectors in Albania (Aşan, 2013). Turkey has provided many contributions to Albania as in education, cultural assistance with logical equipment for safety and protection, in commercial interactions, and foreign policy especially in the NATO alliance and other international organizations (Maliqi, 2013). Kemalist ideology was also to have development in spheres such as education and the economy (M.Landau, 1991, p.85). At present, the AKP's ideology is not alien to a concern for social justice and social welfare state, the government mainly focuses on a market economy (Özbudun, 2010, p.36). Özbudun goes further claiming, "In both the 2002 and 2007 elections, opinion polls showed that Turkish voters overwhelmingly ranked the state of the economy as their first priority" (Özbudun, 2010, p.99). "The economy has increasingly become the primary concern of the voter at a time when urbanization and economic growth have turned the individual from his traditional milieu" (Evin, 1988, p.135) .I asked the respondents that what they think about the Turkish foreign policy's aim towards Albania. Albanian scholars have discussed this question as well. According to conducted survey 310 out of 716 or 43.3 percent, the

respondents think that the most important aim of Turkey's foreign policy towards Albania is to focus on its economy. This survey has shed lights on the question regarding the Turkish foreign policy. According to this survey, 92 out of 716 or 12.2, the respondents think that the other important aim of Turkey's foreign policy towards Albania is to focus on its culture and history. Thirdly, 76 out of 716 or 10.6, the respondents think that another important aim of Turkey's foreign policy towards Albania is to focus on relations with EU. According to these results, we can come into conclusions that the most important aim of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania is economy (Erbaş, 2013). This study focuses on the relations of Turkey and Albania within the framework of international and regional organizations. Turkey's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) were signed between Turkey and Albania in 2008 (Dag, 2011, p. 76). Apart from the trade agreement, Turkey and Albania signed an agreement for the modernization and the training of Albanian armed forces in 1992 (Dicle, 2008, p. 66). Sometimes, these are grouped as multilateral diplomacy, negotiations, public diplomacy, international law and organization, alliances, foreign aid, economic sanctions, trade restrictions, trade policy, persuasive use of force, military force and war fighting (Deibel, 2002). In general, Turkey uses these tools according to the situation and requirements. For example, Turkish foreign policy towards Balkans is economic and cultural than other tools used, or it can be said to be 'multi-dimensional'. Thus, 'Turkey has also signed Free Trade Agreements with Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Albania and Montenegro' (Aktas, 2010, p. 83). This statement clearly provides enough evidence in this concern. According to the survey, 392 out of 716 or 54.7 percent Albanian respondents respectively were interested in economy. On the other hand, 128 out of 716 or 17.9 percent, the respondents were interested in domestic politics. The figures also indicate that, 100 out of 716 or 14.0 percent, what the

respondents were interested was the domestic politics. As we have seen above that economy is more important than the other items that the respondents believe (Erbaş, 2013).

It is important to keep in mind that ‘Turkey shows its presence in all important political and economic decisions in the Balkans’ (Tartari, 2012) currently. When Turkey faces with political problems in the region, any or many of multilateral diplomacy, negotiations, public diplomacy international law and organisation and alliances tools are used. That is the reason why Turkey’s role in the region is seen to be a ‘modernising force’ by some local politicians. Further, it is clear that Turkey’s geography forces him to establish a web of foreign relations, in which just one link has a potential to break all political order in its region. This situation leaves no chance for Turkey to be immune from the international politics in this region. This also makes him obliged to define a strong foreign policy vision. Turkey’s new vision pursues regional peace by means of gaining democratic legitimacy in international relations and stabilizing democracy in domestic politics (Aktas, 2010, p. 85). All these require Turkey to have an internally more democratic political system and externally to be able to use foreign policy instruments effectively in order to maintain the regional peace and to protect the countries’ vital interests. According to Bull, countries may enter into relations with political groups in other states; business enterprises, trade unions, political parties, professional associations, churches, all have their being partly within the transnational. Secondly, they may enter into relations with foreign states, as when a multinational corporation enters into an agreement with a host government, political groups engage in a protest outside a foreign embassy, or revolutionary groups in one country assist their co-ideologists in another to overthrow the government. Thirdly, they may enter into direct relations with an international organization (Bull, 2002, p.267). Regarding the Turkish foreign policy, firstly, I will start with economy and trade.

4.3.1. Economy and Trade

Regarding the Economic concepts, Turkish investments have been present in Albania in numerous fields including telecommunications, various industries, energy production and in the military. Turkish business has been an integral part of the build-up of crucial infrastructure in Albania with values of even over a billion US dollars. Small businesses originating from Turkey, on the other hand, are present in all major Albanian cities (Xhaferaj, 2013). Albanians have always seen Turkey as the strategic partner with key supports in every area of the economy, culture and tourism (Maliqi, 2013).

According to Barry Rubin:

Turkey's economy is a success story, but on the other hand, the country has suffered a series of setbacks and shortcomings in this sphere. Political parties have not had the courage and ability to make necessary reforms because of their own entanglements with the state, the bureaucracy, and a network of patron-client relationships, among other factors. Whatever the longer-term reasons for the recession that began in the year 2000, the machinations of the party system and its leaders played an important role (Barry Rubin, 2002,p.2).

According to Adam: “Turkey has increasingly relied on new tools of soft power such as trade, economic integration, and conflict resolution. The use of soft power to promote Turkish interests in the region is a direct result of Turkey’s democratization process and recent economic growth” (Adam, 2012). Economy plays an essential role in foreign policy formulation through three mechanisms; material interests, multiple dialogue channels, and perceptions (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011,Vol. 13 No.1). We can say that the foreign policy in Turkey is no longer the monopoly of politicians and diplomats. It has been driven from the key economic and civil society actors (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011,Vol. 13 No.1). So, economy and trade has turned out to be the practical hand of the Turkish foreign policy (Dag, 2011, p. 33). It is stated that by November 2000, the Ecevit’s party held a comfortable majority in the parliament; it established relative economic stability and it followed a successful foreign

policy as signified by the European Union Helsinki summit in 1999, which was marked by the acceptance of Turkey as a candidate country. Despite many unexpected policy initiatives and subsequent public criticism of the performance of the party, all of these were defended on grounds of the party's critical role in providing relative success and stability in the economy (Barry Rubin, 2002, p.7).

What is argued in the following is very vital for the Turkish foreign policy. It is stated:

The formerly excluded actors of civil society and a new middle class have desire to interact with neighboring countries much more than ever slowly but steadily have gained leverage in foreign policy; as Turkey's democratization and liberalization processes have been furthered. A new class of businessman no longer buys the overselling of threats by hardliners. Indeed, they tend to establish close economic ties and then perhaps social bonds with the neighboring countries (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1).

Another scholar also argues:

The new identification of Turkey by foreign policy elites as a more autonomous actor is directly related to its new strength as a result of her improved economic situation. Turkey is no longer a country with a fragile economy, which is unable to support its foreign policy aims. Otherwise, Turkey could not dare to imagine to define such a central position for itself, were it suffering from economic problems as was the case for instance during the nineties (Yalçın, 2012).

The economic development in Turkey started particularly during Turgut Özal's period especially between 1983–1987. Turgut Özal was a man with deep religious beliefs, yet with a strong commitment to capitalism and the market economy. Özal's neo-liberal economic policies enabled a primary development in politics, economics, education and the media (Yavuz, 2009, p.51). "Özal indeed kept factionalism at bay. The MP, under Özal, quickly initiated an ambitious and comprehensive program to liberalize the economy, privatize state economic enterprises, decentralize government (by transferring authority and resources to local government), and overcome Turkey's sluggish bureaucracy and red tape" (Metin Heper, 2009, p.215). During the Özal's government, due to the industrialization of many towns and villages people increased immigration from the rural areas, and the portion of

those who lived in urban areas increased to 75 %. These developments, together with the high economic growth, urbanization and Özal's liberal reforms accelerated the restoration of democracy. Many non-democratic rules were abolished, and the masses gained legal rights to resist pressure from the establishment. When ordinary Turks and minority ethnic groups gained power, they insisted on good relations with those who they shared common values, namely the Muslim and the Turkish worlds (Laciner, 2013). Özal was as the man who opened Turkey to the free market economy in the 1980s (Islam, 2010, p.53).

It is also stated by another author :

The military coup of 1980 catapulted Özal to a position of political power. He was appointed as state minister in charge of the economy in the military government. His years in the public bureaucracy and at the helm of the state's economic affairs helped give him an image as an able technocrat. He had worked out the famous January 24, 1980 decisions to liberalize the Turkish economy under the leadership of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel. It was his technocratic performance and acumen in the winter and spring of 1980 that secured his place in the coup's military government. Özal also took credit for reducing the triple-digit inflation of 1979 down to 23 percent in three years as a cabinet minister of the military government. His credentials as an economic wizard were soundly established in the eyes of the public when he launched his campaign in spring 1983 to establish a new political party (Barry Rubin, 2002,p.24).

It is stated that in 2002 the Turkish economy was in difficult situations it was about to collapse and faced many obstacles. The recovery programme was agreed with the IMF in 2002. (News, 2012). During the AKP (Justice and Development Party) Turkey's economic has developed and grown in the first decade of the 21st century, and the economy has been free of previous eras of crises and coups (Muzalevsky, 2012). A factor supporting this point of view is the fact that Turkey is among the few countries that has not been affected from the recent financial crisis as much as the advanced economies. Moreover, it has become one of the countries that got out of the economic downturn first. Economic and political reforms continued after the AKP came to power in 2002. In the last 8 years, the Turkish economy managed to grow by an average of 6.5 percent. Turkey is now one of the largest economy

in the world, and in the last decade, Turkish per capita income has nearly doubled from \$ 5500 to \$10,500 (Dag, 2011, pp. 13-23). This fact is one of the main reasons that Turkey and Albania have ongoing trade activities. In 2010, the level of public debt was already relatively low and the effects of the recession were slightly felt. After 2010, the Turkish economy started to bounce back - to the extent that by the beginning of 2011, concerns were being raised over whether the boom was sustainable (News, 2012). "In recent foreign policy initiatives, Turkey seems to be following the functionalist framework so as to exploit economic opportunities and interdependence in further institutionalizing its relations with neighboring" (Ziya Onis M. K., 2011, Vol. 13 No.1). In 2010, Turkey entered a very important social and political transformation that was accompanied by a rise in national income per capita that eventually positioned Turkey as the 16th largest economy in the world. The process of economic success and the improving political stability in the country, gained the growth of self-confidence in the Turkish foreign policy (Turbedar, 2011). During the global financial crisis which was in 2008, Turkey was in a better position despite many countries were affected (News, 2012).

It is argued:

During the last financial crisis which heavily affected even the most powerful economies of Western countries seems as not affecting Turkish economy. With its reGulated financial institutions since 2001 crisis Turkish economy has displayed a powerful stand. This economic wellbeing has influenced most of the other power indicators (Yalçın, 2012).

According to the survey result that I have conducted in Albania, 232 out of 716 or 32.4 respondents think that Turkey is ranked as the first country, which has the greatest influence on Albanian Economy. This shows that recently Turkey has developed a lot its economy. Contrary to the conducted survey, the perceptions and opinions of Albanian people are different according to the INSTAT 2013. According to the 2012 Business Register,

Foreigner and Joint (Albanian + Foreign) active enterprises by economic activity in total producers of goods Italy is ranked as the first country. Greece is ranked as the second country while Turkey is ranked as the third country (Nurja, 2012). Fidan states that the latest crises have not affected the Turkish economy and Turkey has improved its economy through the neighboring countries including Albania. Turkey has been promoting and developing closer economic integration in the neighboring regions and beyond in an effort to deepen interdependence. Consequently this reflects positively the liberal functionalist approach to international cooperation and integration, with its emphasis on institutionalization (Fidan, 2013). We can also say that, economic success, along with the improving political stability in Turkey has led to the growth of self confidence in Turkish foreign policy (Turbedar, 2011). From the earliest times, the Albanian people have been developing relations with many regions, not only within the Balkan countries but also in the European and in Asian countries. In addition to its favorable geographical situation, Albania also enjoys conditions especially economic developments (John Boardman F.B.A.p, 187). It is stated that Turkey sent peace troops in peacekeeping operations to Albania and Kosovo and improved its political and economic relations with all Balkan states. Consequently, the Balkan countries welcome Turkey`s efforts for its regional peace and stability.

“Turkey is rich in mineral resources; these include coal, gold, copp-er, iron, tin, lead, and mercury and many other minerals” (Tongas, 1939, p.68). Turkey mainly exports iron, steel, textile, electronic products and iron products to Albania. Turkey imports metal gem, leather, animal and herbal raw sources and cafe and cacao from Albania. Ten items that most frequently imported to Turkey from Albania constructs 95, 8% of all Albanian exports to Turkey. This rate implies the concentration of Turkish importation from Albanian Market (Sulku, 2010, p.145). At the present, the Albanian lands have been a crossroads for world interaction and trade (Young, 2000, p.2).The Economic relations between Turkey and

Albania have been growing fast particularly after the AKP government came into power. Turkey develops its economic relations with Albania according to the EU rules. It is sated that Albania is well known for its rich natural resources. Turkish exports and investments have been increased towards Albania. The Economic and trade relations have been increased between Turkey and Albania after the Free Trade Agreement, which entered into force in 2008. Apart from that, the two countries recognized to remove custom duties for unlimited or quoted quantities of some agricultural products. Turkey is one of the biggest investors in Albania. It is stated that Turkey takes the 3rd place in Albania regarding imports. Due to international financial crises and recession in the Euro zone trade region, within the period of January-July 2009 Turkey's export to Albania decreased 18% compared to former period of 2008 and total amount of export was totaled to USD \$ 151 million. Turkey's import in the same period decreased dramatically with rate of 89% and total import from Albania to Turkey amounted to only USD \$ 3 million. In 2008 Albania was the 68th country that Turkey realized most of its exportation and in 2006 and 2007, Albania's rank were 63rd and 60th respectively. Turkey was the 105th country that realized most of its importation from Albania in 2008. In 2006 and 2007 Turkey was the 114th and 110th country respectively, which had realized most of its importation from Albania (Sulku, 2010, p.142). There is an increasing trend in the trade activities between Albania and Turkey. For example, the trade volume 'between the two countries had being risen from US \$120m (90.8 m euro) in 2008 to \$210m (158.9m euro) in 2009' (Hamidi, 2012). The new figures are higher than these. In April 2012, Prime Minister Erdoğan stated, "Albania is Turkey's strategic ally in the Balkans. Currently trade between the two countries is valued at \$400 million... and we intend to boost Turkish investments that have already surpassed one billion dollars" (Likmeta, 2012).

Albania's transition into the market economy was an uphill struggle compared to neighboring countries. Albania was poorer, and the harsh communist dictatorship, which had controlled the country since the Second World War, had produced a chaotic and backward economy. After the regime change, initial signs were positive; however, lack of experience, corruption and organized crime continued to undermine the country's performance, so much so that in 1997 Albania became victim to a bitter internal struggle. Recently Albania has enjoyed a comfortable economic growth, the tourist and construction industries are booming, the road infrastructure and financial services have seen major improvement, and in August 2008, inflation sat comfortably at 2.5 per cent year-on-year. Moreover, Albania signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union (EU) in June 2006 (Henson, 2009, p.9).

It is claimed:

After a sharp decline in economic activity in Albania in 1991 and 1992, economic recovery was led by a rapid growth of agricultural output as well as a construction boom and a growth of the service sector. From 1993 to 1996 Albania achieved one of the highest growth rates of Eastern Europe. In 1993, and again in 1995, GDP increased by 11 per cent. However, these rapid rates of growth should be seen in the context of a dismally low starting point. Moreover, economic growth was supported by large inflows of foreign aid and remittances of earnings of Albanian migrant workers abroad, rather than being an outcome of significant economic reforms (Geoffrey Pridham, 2000, p. 144).

Albania offers a big advantageous investment opportunities and chances for the Turkish entrepreneurs, because it has strategic doors that open to European, Balkan and Mediterranean countries. The construction companies are big investments in Albania (Limaj, 2013). There are more than 60 small and big Turkish firms and institutions in Albania that create and provide job opportunities for the Albanian people. These firms and institutions have been working in Albania for many years. Some of the big firms and institutions are as following:

Gintaş - Alb construction company was set up in Albania in 1994 (Qintas, 2011). Gintaş was the first Turkish construction company in Albania which led the Laprake Uydukent Projesi (Laprake district project). Gintaş is well known for its infrastructure project in the cities in Fush Kruje and Peshkopi in Albania (Genel Bakış, 2011).

Another Turkish companies namely Enka (Bechtel– Enka) construction company signed a contract for the highway and tunnel construction project with Albania in 13th of October, 2006. According to the contract the highway and tunnel are supposed to be completed in June 2009. That project cost 418 million Euro which was one of third of public investment budget. This Highway connects Rreshen to northern part of Albania and it also connects to Kosovo. This contract is the biggest amount that has ever been between Albania and Turkey (Enka, 2006). The construction was completed on 26 June 2009. The Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Albanian prime minister Sali Berisha attended the opening ceremony. They both underlined the importance and growth of the Albanian Turkish economic relations and cooperations. Apart from the construction, Enka also supported American army program for Albanian immigrants. Another Turkish company is Tümaş which was established in 1995 (Turkish Exporter) focuses on evaluation of the potential reserves and possibilities of infill drilling, Review of the existing enhanced oil recovery methods and suggestions to improve recovery (Tümaş).

Çalık Holding: Century old fixed landline operator of the Balkans; Alb telecom. Alb telecom, the largest fixed landline operator and internet provider in Albania. Alb telecom, which aims to accelerate and simplify the communication resources, provides to the people of Albania, it is not only the first choice of the Albanian people, but it is also the company that best meets the demands of customers with a widespread urban network, technological infrastructure and high quality services on the modern and digital platform. Alb telecom, which has been operating in the scope of Çalık Holding since 2007, made the decision to

merge with Eagle Mobile, Çalık Holding's affiliate in the GSM sector in 2012. Over 1,500 people are employed within the capacity of Alb telecom and Eagle Mobile which add new dimensions to the Albanian Telecom sector day by day (Telecom, 2013).The Turkish bank BKT is the second-biggest bank in Albania (BKT, Best Bank of Albania, 2011).

Iron and steel manufacturer company which is called Kürüm. “Kürüm Iron-Steel Joint Stock Company. Kürüm International’s facility occupies an area of more than 219,410 square meters and is equipped with cutting-edge technology. The Company is the sole iron and steel manufacturer in Albania and ranks among the most prominent corporations in the country” (Kurum International Sh.A., 2011).

The gas station Alpet entered Albania in 2005 and the company invested more than USD \$15 million to spread its gas station network all over the country in 80 different locations. Today Alpet is one of the best qualified and trusted gas stations in Albania (Sulku, 2010, p.151).

The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) a new foreign aid organization. TIKA was signed on 31 January 1996 between Turkey and Albania. TIKA projects in Albania contribute to reveal the close historical and cultural relations between Turkey and Albania. TIKA activities in this sense constitute important support for development projects of Albania in many spheres (Aşan, 2013).TIKA Project Coordination Office was established in Tirana as the regional office responsible for managing projects in Albania. TIKA was established after the collapse of the Eastern Block and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, in order to provide development support to the newly independent states in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkan regions. The primary goal of TIKA is to help Turkish speaking states and neighboring states in their efforts for development in economical, trade, technical, social, cultural, educational realms through implementing cooperation projects and programs. In addition, TIKA organizes

grand projects in regional and international arena arranges meetings, forums, conferences and training programs that gather experts from Balkan (Sulku, 2010, p,98). TİKA drew a lot of attention by implementing various unprecedented projects in different parts of Albania in 2012 (TİKA to Finance Project on CEC's Technical Infrastructure, 2013). There are many activities that have been done by TİKA. For example, TİKA has built an organic agriculture laboratory, which based on the international standards to make analysis and tests in Albania. TİKA supports organic agriculture as a means of improving agricultural activities. The lab provides latest high technology devices for a scientific research. During the opening ceremony, the President of Agricultural University Tirana, Fatos Harizaj expressed her pleasure and gratitude for the lab. (Albania Gets New Organic Agriculture Laboratory , 2013). TİKA supports Albanian businessmen's participation in Trade Fairs that are held in Turkey to encourage them to initiate trade relations with Turkish companies (Sulku, 2010, p,101). For example, 'in Albania TİKA has established a kilim (traditional woven Turkish rugs) weaving course in cooperation with an Albanian NGO to assist Albanian women in developing skills that would help support their families. During the course, women attend discussions on domestic violence, women's rights and ethics. They also receive help against illiteracy' (et.al, 2012). According to TİKA's 2010 annual report, '32.88 % of its resources were spent in the Balkan region' 3.28% of this amount was spent in Albania (Others, 2011, p. 8). TİKA also signed a protocol with Tirana University Turkology Department in 2004 (Sulku, 2010, p,102).

The immediate cause of the initial riots was the collapse of two of the biggest pyramid schemes based in the south. Large numbers of Albanians had put money into the schemes and many lost everything, including in some cases their apartments sold to increase investment capital. Reporters and analysts were astonished by what they saw as incredible naivety on the part of the pyramid scheme participants. Some concluded that people had

fallen for the schemes because they had grown up in a country innocent of capitalism, lacking financial savoir faire. A misconception which ignored the fact that some Albanians including government ministers, profited handsomely, and that plenty of people in capitalist systems, have been similarly conned. The Titan Business Club, for instance, was outlawed in England in 1996, after 13,000 British savers had collectively lost £25million to its organizers. The main factors which explain the widespread participation (Waal, 2005, p.12).

Turkey has been developing the trade cooperation with Albania. It is claimed that “Turkey is the second major trade partner of Albania. The total value of Turkish investments in Albania is over 1 billion Euros. The most recent meeting of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) was held in November 2011” (Affairs R. O., Relations) between Turkey and Albania). Albania has also made important development recently. According to the IMF and the Ministry of Finance in Albania, the Albanian economy had seen decisive growth in recent years. Despite a low level of increase during the period 1998–2002 (4.7%), 2002 was the fifth year that Albania showed economic growth (Bitzenis, 2009, p.286). Geoffrey Pridham states, “In the context of South-East Europe one can identify two distinct groups of countries with quite different sets of preconditions for economic and political transition. The first group is composed of the former centrally planned economies of Albania, Bulgaria and Romania” (Geoffrey Pridham, 2000, p.134).The Albanian economy, despite the domestic crisis in 1997 and also despite the negative sight of Kosovo war in 1999, had a permanent progress between 1991- 2002.In 2002 the Albanian economy had a slow progress. The Albanian economy has been developing well till the present time. The Albanian economy was not affected by the crisis in 2008, because the economy does not belong much to other countries (Arnavutluk, 2011). Due to the break-up of the monopoly in the Albanian insurance market, many foreign investors try to enter the market, attracted by the fact that domestic enterprises also operate

in the markets of Macedonia and Kosovo (Henson, 2009, p.205). If any investor enters the Albanian market, it is not difficult to invest in Kosovo and Macedonia through Albania.

According to Roselli:

It was a scenario in which the economic interests of other countries in the oil industry, especially Britain, played a role, but in which Italy was in prime position politically speaking, its vital security interests in the Adriatic having been acknowledged in an international forum. On the other hand, the Albanian government was still maintaining an attitude which was open and non-prejudicial towards any foreign power. Its main interlocutor in both political and economic matters remained the League of Nations, which recognized its role in assisting and protecting the young state (Roselli, 2006, p.12).

Henson claims:

In a similar way to other countries within the Soviet Bloc, the communists in Albania believed in a centralized planned economy and prioritized nationalization of private land, and the development of agriculture and heavy industry to ensure an egalitarian society. These measures immediately transformed the face of the country and for the first time for many years, the majority peasant population of Albania enjoyed a higher standard of living. Illiteracy rates dropped and thanks to the communists encouraging a 10 Background to the Market pro-family ideology, the Albanian population rose from 1.2 million in 1950 to 3.3 million in 1990 (Henson, 2009, pp.9-10).

The Albanian people who live and work abroad play a big role regarding the Albanian economy. (Henson, 2009, p.6). For example, during the crisis in Greece many Albanian people, who were working in Greece, had to come back to Albania. It is claimed “Albania signed its first agreement with the European Commission in 1992, regarding Trade and Co-operation. At the same time, it became eligible for funding under the EU Phare programme. After that, the country gained various benefits from the Autonomous Trade Preferences with the EU while in 2000 there was an extension of duty-free access to EU markets for Albanian products” (Bitzenis, 2009, p.247). The Turkey’s image is very good in Balkans now, but some European countries affect the Turkey’s image in negative way. Turkey has increased its collaborations and investments in Albania since 2000 (Limaj,

2013). Regarding Economy and trade perspective, Albania and Turkey have improved their capacity and strategy of cooperation.

4.3.2. Diplomacy

Diplomacy is one of the important tools of the foreign policy. Therefore, diplomacy includes both the formulation of a state's external policy and its execution. The formulation of policy includes the gathering and assessment of information about the international environment and the weighing of alternative lines of policy. Execution comprises the communication to other governments and peoples of the line of foreign policy that has been decided, attempts to explain and justify this policy to them and, where appropriate, to secure their cooperation and neutralize their opposition in carrying it out by reason and persuasion if possible but sometimes by threats of force or other kinds of coercion (Bull, 2002, p.158). Diplomacy is the act of dealing with other nations, usually through negotiation and discussion. Diplomacy includes meetings between political leaders, sending diplomatic messages, and making public statements about the relationship between countries. It is obvious that most diplomacy occurs behind the scenes as officials hold secret negotiations or meet privately to discuss key issues. It is clear that foreign policy decisions have very important consequences for nations, their allies, and rival countries. Even the decisions can affect the survivability of leaders in power (DeRouen, 2010, p.25). When the leaders, who are in power, make decisions about foreign policy, the decisions will affect their future. The leaders can change world order by making a proper foreign policy. Scott Burchill claims that "liberal internationalists were naively optimistic about the prospects for a new world order based on the rule of law, open diplomacy and collective security, and they thought their ideas were dangerous because they distracted attention from the main task of foreign policy which is to ensure the security and survival of the state" (Scott Burchill, 2005, p.86). The diplomacy between Albanian state and Turkish state has been developing recently.

According to Yalçın:

It seems that Turkish foreign policy in recent years can be described as a middle power approach in terms of both material capabilities and foreign policy goals. Turkey with its renewed self-identification and foreign policy orientation aims to fill the gaps in international politics through creative diplomacy. It aims to increase its diplomatic capabilities by directing its efforts to those ignored areas. These kinds of efforts give Turkey a middle power status which tries to gain a higher level of significance that would not be acquired using only hard power capabilities. However, that does not mean Turkish foreign policy aims are divorced from its material capability basis. In contrast, they are strictly shaped by the available material capabilities (Yalçın, 2012).

Turkey follows various strategies to solve the conflicts in the neighboring regions. Turkey relies heavily on diplomacy, engagement and dialogue with the countries. Diplomacy is very important for the conflict resolution. In many ways, it is observed that the transformation of Turkey's foreign-policy practices shows the effect of a more liberal understanding of international relations, multidimensional diplomacy, cooperation, zero problems with neighbors, visa liberalization, win-win strategies, limitless cooperation, conflict resolution, mediation, defending democratic ideals and demanding a just international order (Fidan, 2013).

4.3.3. Military Force

Bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania mainly started with initiating cooperation in economic and military issues. As it was also pointed out by the WP (the Welfare Party) the need to develop an independent foreign policy which will enable Turkey to fully use its own manpower and resources (Evin , 1988, p.129). Therefore, High-level officials paid several visits during 1990s. During these visits exchange of thoughts and agreements on several issues the two countries developed their relations. The President Demirel paid an official visit to Albania and Macedonia in 1999 to particularly discuss about the Kosovo issue, stability in Albania and situation of the refugees. The following year Demirel again visited Tirana to talk about Kosovo issue and some other regional and

international issues regarding the interests of Turkey and Albania. In 2000, Albanian Prime Minister Ilir Meta visited Ankara to ask for advancement of economic cooperation between two countries. Regarding the cooperation in the field of military in 2000, Albania and Turkey together with Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan realized a military tactical operation named Peaceful Star-2000 at HQ of Military Academy (Sulku, 2010, p.66). It is well known by the Albanian people that in 1999 the Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit declared that Turkey and the Turkish military are ready to help Albania in case any external threat, Turkey will never allow any country which threatens Albanian borders, if needed Turkey is ready to maintain the brotherhood Albanian independence against external threats (Limaj, p.188).

Yalçın claims:

It would not be surprising to see that Turkish military power is increasingly becoming more competitive compared to its rivals. Additionally a stable domestic political arena controlled with a stable and powerful single party government is another asset of Turkish capabilities that increases its capacity to act in an organized way with a single powerful voice (Yalçın, 2012).

There are Turkish-Albanian bilateral relations regarding the Military. Teams assigned by the Turkish Land, Naval and Air Forces in order to train Albanian Armed Forces and support them in logistics and modernization aspects (Affairs R. O., Relations between Turkey and Albania). Turkey and Albania signed an agreement for the modernization and the training of Albanian armed forces in 1992 (Dicle, 2008). After this agreement, the Turkish armed forces have provided assistance for the education and training of a large number of Albanian military officers in Turkish universities and military academies (Zarko Petrovic, 2011). Turkey became a member of NATO on 4 April 1952. According to the NATO agreement in 1949, NATO required that before a state could join, it must have established a national security authority to fight against communism (Gökay, 2006, p.76). Albania was also invited to join the NATO at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008

and in 2009 Albania got its full membership of the NATO. This membership with NATO shows that Albania has strongly aligned its military with the West and it also shows that the political stability has achieved a role for the membership of the European Union (Henson, 2009, p.7).

Albania is a country, which has strategic military and economic ports, which open to Adriatic and Mediterranean Sea. For this reason, Albania is very important for Turkey. Turkey began to strengthen its relations with Albania by signing agreements on defense and military issues in 1992. The aim of this cooperation was to develop the relations between Turkey and Albania under BSEC. The BSEC was established on June 25, 1992 during the İstanbul Summit. The BSEC encourages political and economic cooperation on free market principles between member states in order to ensure peace, stability, prosperity and good-neighborly relations in the Black Sea region (Sulku, 2010, p.69). The BSEC includes Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine as members (Bozdaglioglu, 2003, p.100). After signing the agreements on defense and military, Turkey sent 800 troop unit to the UN Multinational Peace Protection Force (ALBA) which was established to prevent the domestic chaos in Albania which caused by the pyramid crises in 1997. Whenever I meet any Albanian they all remember Turkey's support and Tansu Çiller's reaction to Greece during the crises in 1997. The former prime minister Tansu Çiller stated that, Turkey cannot allow external forces, which threaten Albania and Turkey is always against the external threats towards Albania (Limaj, pp.108-109).

The bilateral collaboration consists of giving aid, technical support (being one of the main countries for its aid to our Army) and training to military cadets (ranked first). On 26 October 2013, the Rama government approved in principle the Agreement on military-

financial collaboration between the two countries as well as the Protocol of the implementation of financial aid (about 1.3 million \$) (Haxhinasto, 2013).

4.3.4. Education

Turkey has had great contributes regarding Albania's educational system, mainly schools, universities and cultural associations. Furthermore, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) plays a major role regarding the implementation of different projects which aim the reconstruction of cultural heritage from an Islamic origin such as Mosque's. This is done under the philosophy that it is not aimed to bring Islam, instead it is tried to protect the already existing aspects of it in Albania. TIKA has also fully reconstructed the building of the "Albanian Muslim Community" (Xhaferraj, 2013). The Turkish government has helped in reconstructing several schools in our country, especially the school "Atatürk" in Zallbasta-Tiranë and the high school "Atatürk" in Vlorë; as part of the collaboration of MASH with TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency), there are now these active projects: Equipment with school materials of the school "Hajdar Zogu", in Tapizë of Krujë; Equipment of the computer laboratory in the school "Sheh Shamia" in Shkodër; Equipment with furniture and an audio system of the conference room in the Ministry of Education; there are professors for the training in Turkey from the Polytechnic Faculty of Tirana. It is currently being evaluated a request made by the Faculty of Medicine in Tirana for the establishment of a laboratory and a research center near this faculty. TIKA has also supported projects for the training of teachers and professors of the Turkish language (Haxhinasto, 2013).

As a result of close interaction and cooperation between the two countries, Albanian people have a great interest in Turkey and Turkish language. Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers both in Tirana and in Shkodra have been offering Turkish language courses and organizing various cultural activities. Turkish series on Albanian television screens attracted

even more curiosity and interest in Turkish culture and language. We observe an increase for the number of applicants to Yunus Emre Cultural Centers for Turkish language classes (Aşan, 2013). Government scholarships are given to Albanian students for graduate and post-graduate programmes at various areas of studies, from science, medicine, engineering to social sciences and tourism. Training programmes and protocols are offered ranging from technical issues to health, telecommunication, forestry, law enforcement, fire extinguishing etc. (Aşan, 2013). There are more than three thousand common words in Albanian and Turkish languages due to the historical relations. Tiran Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center, which was opened by the Turkish President Abdullah Gul in December 2009, has been providing Turkish language courses and hosting various cultural activities. Shkodër Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center was opened in October 2012 (Affairs R. o., Relations between Turkey and Albania). Mr. Murat Yigit, the director of Yunus Emre Turkish Culture Center in Tirana states that the center develops the cultural relations among the countries in the region. The director also states that Albanian people show great interest in learning the Turkish language (Magazine, 2012). The Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center started giving another activity namely handcrafts courses, which started on 22 April 2013. During this opening ceremony, the director of the centre Murat Yiğit held a presentation about Cultural Centre's activities and the projects planned to be carried out (Tiran Yunus Emre Turk Kultur Merkezi, 2013).

On 28 November 2012 some Turkish officials, Vice PM and member of Board of Directors of Yunus Emre Foundation Bekir Bozdağ, the head of Turkey-Albania Friendship Group in the Turkish Parliament and MP of Justice and Development Party Mr. Rifat Sait, the Turkish Ambassador to Albania Mr. Hasan Sevilir Aşan, were invited by the Albanian Prime minister Sali Berisha for the celebrations of 100-th anniversary of Albania. During that visit they visited the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Tirana. Mr. Bozdağ

expressed his happiness as a member of the Board of Directors of Yunus Emre Foundation which carries on its work as an institution that aims to spread the Turkish language and culture all over the world, he emphasized that “Albania and Turkey are inseparable by the values they bear from the past, pointing out that Albanian and Turkish cultures share many common names like the Turkish national poet Mehmet Akif and Şemsettin Sami who holds a very important place in Turkish literature” (Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural, Tirana , 2012). TİKA projects and the activities of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers in Albania with Turkish soap operas contribute to the prestige of Turkey in Albania as well as the region (Aşan, 2013).

Turkish schools were the first private education institutions to open in post-communist Albania. On 16 February 1993, the president of Turkey Turgut Özal opened the Turkish Mehmet Akif College in Tirana. Limaj states that the most important investment is the Turkish schools in Albania. The Turkish schools have also increased Turkey`s activities and Turkey`s image in Albania. The Turkish schools have a great potential now. There are thousands of students that graduated from the Turkish schools, the students have finished their higher education abroad and they come back to Albania. Today there are Turkish schools from kindergarten till university. These are big investments in Albania (Limaj, 2013). During the school`s opening, former Turkish president Turgut Özal expressed his hope that the school would serve as a bridge between the people of Turkey and Albania. He stated that “Opening this school, which is named after Mehmet Akif Ersoy, will improve relations between Turkey and Albania. Have no doubt that education is the most important investment. Of course, resources and other things are important as well, but the most important thing is people, good and qualified people. Turgut Özal stated that the young girls and boys that are educated at the Turkish schools will play a significant role in the creation of a better Albania. I also hope that they will serve as a bridge between the Turkish and

Albanian people”. After two months, the school was opened the president Turgut Özal died. So the first school, private Mehmet Akif Ersoy College, became very successful within a short period, and it is highly appreciated by the Albanian people. In respect of the increasing number of potential students and demands by Albanian people, the company started opening other schools in other cities. The schools are so popular in Albania and many government workers in Albania send their children to Turkish schools. In Albania, it is a privilege to be able to attend a Turkish school (Orhan, 2010). When the Turgut Özal complex was opened, the former Education Minister Hüseyin Çelik and the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan participated in the opening ceremony. After the ceremony, the Prime Minister Erdoğan wrote the following in the school’s guestbook: “Turkish educational institutions in Albania are good examples of fraternity”(Orhan, 2010). The Turkish schools are very popular in Albania regarding its valuable education and discipline. The schools have the most up to date means and technology to support the best teaching and learning process, fully equipped laboratories, teachers assisting students in Olympiads preparation and project competition in Albania and abroad. Due to the best of technology and experienced teaching, Turkish colleges soon became the first choice for the Albanian parents. Every year nearly 2000 students take the entrance exam. Starting with a relatively small number of students, Turgut Özal and other Turkish colleges now offer the best education for nearly four thousand students. As a result the students have big opportunities to have education in English spoken countries and also universities where the education is taught in English. After graduating from these Turkish schools all students get acceptance from the well-known universities in the world.

At these Turkish schools, the students are educated how to use the principles of understanding and dialogue in every aspect of their life to help enhance humane values in Albania and throughout the world. By getting proper education, the students are guided by

vision and consideration towards any nationality, race, belief and religion. The schools also give the students to become citizens who respect democracy and law, love their country and represent it with dignity wherever they are. The schools supply the students with a rich education program and numerous activities related to literature, art, culture, tourism, science and sport. The schools provide the students with quality linguistic education that will enable the students to convey their opinion fluently in English, Turkish and German. The schools provide the students with contemporary technology, which the students will use in their future careers. The schools supply the students with the equipment necessary for experimental study in science to comply with the principle of “learning through practice”. The schools boost the students’ self-esteem in their intellectual and physical capabilities. To nurture the sense of communal responsibility towards duty, society and nation. The schools raise the awareness of the new generations towards values such as goodwill, helpfulness, respect and understanding (Kolegji Turgut Özal).

The same company Turgut Özal Education Foundation opened a private university namely Epoka University in 2007 in Tirana, Albania. The Turkish President Abdullah Gül and the Albanian Interior Minister Lulzim Başa (former minister) and Albanian Education Minister Mërkurrem Tafaj also attended the groundbreaking ceremony of the campus of Epoka University. During the ceremony, Gül stated, “This sight is reassuring for the future of Turkish-Albanian relations, these schools are the best gift Turkish businessmen have given to Albania”. The President Gül stated in his speech that their mutual trust would continue and he stated that he was proud to see the peoples of the two countries contributing to the solidarity of both states (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2009). Consequently, education also plays a big role regarding the foreign policy. Duka claims that the Turkish foreign policy after 2000 has always shown interest to help Albania not only with economical investment presence but also with a wider presence in educational institutions

which were founded during these times. There has been an increase in schools spread throughout the territory of Albania which have been giving a great contribution to the education of a large part of the Albanian youth. The performance of these schools has been extremely good and they have become an example to follow, in order to take the education system in Albania into higher and higher levels. The presence of Turkey in education and economy is evident, especially since 2000. With all the presence of the Turkish capital and educational institutions which is an aid for Albania. Mr. Duka went further that Albania needs the Turkish investments even more, especially in sectors that Turkey can give very precious assistance (Duka, 2013).

There have been many developments regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. Firstly, when there was conflict in Kosovo, Turkey tried to help solve the problems by meeting Serb's officials and Turkey was the first country which recognized Kosovo as an independent state. Secondly, Turkey worked so much for Albania that Albania would be member of NATO. Thirdly, Turkey founded TIKA in order to help Albania regarding its economy. TIKA has done different projects in different regions of Albania. Fourthly, In order to improve Albanian cultural relations Turkey founded Yunus Emre Institution in Tirana and in Shkodra. Yunus Emre institution gives Turkish courses, it does cultural activities and it also gives different courses and trainings. Besides, Yunus Emre Institution also provides scholarships for education. Turkey is such a country which has a policy to have good relations with every country. Turkey is also such a country which tries to find solutions to the problems, it is not such a country which creates conflicts and problems. Turkey might be examples to other countries which has not had any problems with Albania so far (Çağlayan, 2013). Turkey has always been eager to support and protect the small country with a Muslim majority in the Balkans. It can be inferred that Turkey's ambitions in the foreign policy involve tight connections with Albania. Albania will benefit

in many aspects such as economical, military and cultural ones among others. Moreover, Turkey seems to be an 'security umbrella' for Albania while it tries to consolidate itself as a crucial country in the Western Balkans (Xhaferaj, 2013).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

After the cold war, Turkey has tried to follow more active foreign policy and that policy has been in accordance with Turkey's size and strength since it has been an important country in the region. Due to its geographical and cultural positions in the international system, it is believed that Turkey should interact and develop its relations with all countries especially with its neighbours. The Turkey's regional policy is to minimize problems in the region and to develop economic and political relations with the neighbouring countries to the highest level of integration. The Turkish politicians have always believed that the people of Balkan origin within Turkey as an important link and solid bridge between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Turkey has focused on the improvement of bilateral relations in order to strengthen the mechanisms of political and economic cooperation, and create a regional sense of ownership and problem solving in the Balkans. Turkey follows such a policy to find solution to the chronic problems, play a mediator role between conflicting parties, and stabilize the way for a regional order in the Balkans (Aras, 2012). Turkey's strong historical, social and cultural ties with the Balkan people have always been an essential impact on its relations with the Balkan regions. Turkey has been active and has offered its assistance to Albania during all its hard times (Haxhinasto, 2013). As a result, Turkish foreign policy makers have followed a peaceful approach with all the Balkan countries. Mr. Aşan states that thanks to the foreign policy vision, Turkey is today considered as a country that not only safeguards but also disseminates human rights, democracy, rule of law and social equity and also, due to its political and economic breakthrough, the visibility and the prestige of Turkey has been increasing in regional and international fields. For this reason, Turkey pursues a foreign policy in the Balkans to further increase its positive image and prestige (Aşan, 2013). Turkey follows an ambitious policy to find solution to the chronic problems, plays a mediator

role between conflicting parties, stabilize the region, and pave the way for a regional order in the Balkans. Whenever there is a conflict in the Balkan countries Turkey involves in the issues and tries to find solutions. The last decade, the Turkish foreign policy and Turkey's engagement and relations with its neighbourhood has been attracting considerably the academic and as well as public attention. Turkey's engagement and relations with its neighbouring countries have a positive influence on the transformation of its neighbourhood. Turkey's foreign policy highlights the Turkey's transnational relations to offer a more parsimonious understanding of Turkey's engagement of its neighbourhood and ability to contribute to regional transformation (Kirisci, 2012).

The developments in the Turkish foreign policy since the end of the Cold War have been misunderstood by various people and states. Their main argument was 'Turkey tries to create a pact-Ottoman or a neo-Ottoman' when Turkish foreign policy changed direction and her policy interests were directed towards the sovereign states living in former Ottoman lands. The Albanian historian professor Ferit Duka states that today there could be certainly doubts about Turkey's image, especially when it comes to its foreign policy positions in the Balkans and Albania (Duka, 2013). The Albanian Prime minister Mr. Edi Rama claims that the relations with Greece, Italy and Turkey are equally important. For this reason, there is no place for misunderstandings (Shkembi, 2013). Coskun claims that the concepts "neo-Ottomanism" and "pan-Turkism" cannot explain this movement adequately, since its supporters wanted to extend Turkey's influence beyond the ex-Ottoman territories of the former Soviet Union, and because it was not exclusively pan-Turkic. Rather, it aimed to enhance Turkey's role in non-Turkic countries such as Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia (Coskun, 2008). The discussion on Neo-Ottomanism seems groundless, for there is neither a demand for this type of outreach by the Turks or Muslims in the Balkans or by Turkish society, nor a concrete base for the implementation of such a policy (Rüma, 2010).

Davutoglu stated that he is not a neo-Ottoman. Actually, there is no such policy.

Regarding the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries, we have explored that there are several reasons.

Firstly, Turkey gives great importance to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries and maintains good relations with all of them and has the belief that its own security and stability can only be achieved through the security and stability of the region. In this context, Turkey's multi-dimensional, constructive, proactive, realistic and responsible foreign policy is one of the most important assets in realizing its national and international goals (Aşan, 2013). Turkey's aim is to create and assist peace within Turkey and its neighbouring countries (Uzer, 2011, p.3). The key objective of the Turkish foreign policy has been to contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the world. "Any instability that emerges in the region may have political, economic and cultural ramifications on Turkey. For this reason, to have peace and stability in the Balkans is among Turkish foreign policy's top priorities" (Turbedar, 2011). The Balkan countries is a geostrategic concern for Turkey due to its geographical proximity and contiguity. Turkey considers the maintenance of security in the region and prevention of trans border crimes such as human trafficking and smuggling vital for its own security. Apart from this, since the Balkans is the only land connection between Turkey and Western Europe, lack of stability and peace in the region will affect Turkey's international trade (Ekinci, 2013). Besides, there is millions of Turkish citizens that have their origins in the Balkans. Turkey aims at lasting peace and stability in the Balkans. Turbedar states that "Turkey's twin goals are: first to make peace with its neighbours through policies of conciliation, and second to act as an agent of mediation between its clashing neighbouring countries" (Turbedar, 2011). Sulku underlines the importance of relations between Turkey and the other Balkan countries based on common policy goals to maintain peace and security in the Balkan regions (Sulku, 2010, p.65). Davutoglu states that Turkey's

aim is to eliminate the existing disputes and tension and to increase stability in the region by seeking innovative mechanisms and channels to resolve conflicts, by encouraging positive deeds and by building cross-cultural bridges of dialogue and understanding (Davutoglu, 2010). Turkey has the desire to see the Balkans as an area of peace and security rather than conflicts. Preserving stability and peace has always been important in the Balkans for Turkey's security especially after the collapse of the communist regime. Hence, Turkish foreign policy has been formulated so as to prevent instabilities and destabilizing factors in the Balkans" (Eroglu, 2005, p. 8). Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, to expand the sphere of peace and prosperity and to generate stability and security in its region and beyond. Turkey sees its involvement in the Balkans in complementary terms with the EU and Turkey has also played a regional stabilizer role, and supported both the consolidation of Kosovo independence and political stability in the post-Dayton Bosnia (Aras, 2012). Turkey has not only turned into a highly relevant actor in the peacekeeping missions, but it has also hugely benefited from the stability in the region by encouraging cooperation and through resolving conflicts. With every passing year, Turkey has sought a more influential role in maintaining the stability in the region. It initially started with involvement in multilateral operations, but soon evolved past that point. In conflict resolution it is very relevant to emphasize the value of Turkish shuttle diplomacy. Turkey has made an attempt to establish balance and stability in the region, with the notable example of troubled relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Knezović Sandro, 2013). As a result of this principled approach and its continued efforts, as well as thanks to its increasing means and capabilities Turkey has in fact become a leading country that works to expand the sphere of peace and prosperity in its region; generate stability and security; help establish an order that paves the way for prosperity, human development and lasting stability. The security situation remains fragile in

the Balkans so long as the political landscape is not stable. The Balkan countries can cope with the myriad economic, political, and security challenges only through closer cooperation among themselves. It is, however, an inescapable fact that despite the rich history of peaceful coexistence and many cultural similarities, nationalist historiographies in the Balkans have forged bitter images of each other in the last century (Aras, 2012).

Secondly, the most important aim of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan countries is are of economy and trade which are practical hand of the Turkish foreign policy (Ziya Onis, 2011,p.57). Despite the last decades, particularly last five years the trade between Turkey and the Balkan countries has dramatically increased (Gjana, 2011, p. 546). Knezović Sandro states that the cooperation in the economic sector has shown that the main factors that continually develop the relations between Turkey and the Balkans countries (Knezović Sandro, 2013). Given the close ties between politics and business in the region, closer political ties provide Turkish businessmen with preferential treatment (Cornell, 2012). The Turkish foreign policy`s engagement in the Balkan countries is to improve its economic and foreign trade situations (Turbedar, 2011). Since the early 1980s, Turkish governments have adopted an export-led growth strategy. Its proximity to Turkey, easy accessibility and the relatively underdeveloped situation of its financial and industrial sectors has made the Balkans a quite suitable market for Turkish entrepreneurs. Turkey also regards its contribution to the economic progress and interdependence of the Balkans as a means to consolidate regional peace and stability as well as to gain political benefits. Furthermore, since the Balkans is situated between Turkey and Western Europe, economic and commercial cooperation will directly or indirectly contribute to Turkey`s economic relations with the EU(Ekinci, 2013). Nowadays, in this global world, economic strength leads countries to a stronger position than a military one (Aktas, 2010, p. 89).

Thirdly, according to Turbeder, another reason is that the Turkish foreign policy in the

Balkans is to secure allies among these countries to support Turkey's EU bid in the future. Turkey is keen on strengthening its position in the Balkans, in order to improve and develop its status on the global scene (Turbedar, 2011). Bugajski claims, "An enhanced Turkish role in the security, democratic development, and economic progress of the Balkan neighbourhood will reverberate positively on Ankara's efforts to be accepted as a genuine contender for future EU membership" (Bugajski, 2010).

Fourthly, with this perspective, attaching particular importance to its 'transatlantic' ties Turkey is strengthening its relations with the countries in the Balkans, a priority for Turkey not only from the political, economic and geographical perspectives, but also due to its historical, cultural and human ties with the region (Aşan, 2013). The populations and cultures of the region are familiar with each other. If there are any conflicts or instabilities that emerge in those countries may have political, economic and cultural influence on Turkey (Turbedar, 2011). Since 2000 there has been a new development in the Albanian-Turkish relations. Firstly, the collapse of communism and the establishment of a democratic system in Albania and the opening of Albania to the world. The relations with Turkey have widened and enriched in content too during this process. In both the Albanian and Turkish sides, there has been an increase in the consciousness towards the importance of the history, which has affected the relations. The historical relations and the common geostrategic interests in the Balkan countries and beyond have led to a new dimension of the relations, aiming to assist Albania, which emerged out of the communist regime with many problems in every aspect (Duka, 2013).

As a result of some historical and economic ties, Turkey is concerned more about the instability in the Balkan regions. That is why, it is necessary for Turkey to build closer relations with the Balkan countries in order to show its significance to the West. These countries are very important for Turkey in international arena because of the historical ties,

economic and trade. Thus, Turkey should try to help these regions to preserve security, peace, and stability. Any crisis and conflicts in these regions influence Turkey. Turkey considers Albania as a strategically important country for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the Balkans, which plays a role of catalyst in its region. Strong Albania is an important pillar for Turkey's foreign policy, which aims to create sustainable peace, security and tranquility in the region and beyond. Turkey has strong historical and cultural ties with Albania and the general characteristic of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania is mutual friendship, trust and solidarity. For this reason, Turkey aims at achieving further close bilateral relationship with Albania (Aşan, 2013). Davutoğlu has been careful to avoid the speculation concerning the establishment of a new ottoman order, but it goes without saying that Davutoğlu's foreign policy is not aiming a new imperial ottoman order, but greater Turkish involvement not only in former Ottoman areas, but also in global affairs (Xhaferaj, 2013). Duka states that regarding the perspective of Turkish political interests in the Balkans, Albania is a special place. Albania is a country in the west Balkan which has been part of the western belt of the Ottoman Empire and it still remains a key strategic region, Albania is the western gate towards the Balkans (Duka,2013).Turkey's foreign policy towards Balkans in general and particularly Albania is not unique. In other words, Turkey tries to implement its foreign policy; whereby 'multi-dimensionality envisages increase of influence in all of its neighbouring regions and improving its relations with all international actors (Aktas, 2010, p. 85). Turkey in the last decade has established equilibrium between minorities and Balkan governments and Turkish statesman and civil society groups can contact with the Turkish people easily and comfortably unlike the recent past, because Balkan governments have already understood that Turkey does not have any irredentist aim within the region, but has to be a soft power by searching for win-win policies and as a result mutual trust could be established between Turkey and the region's governments (Gjana,

2011, p. 543). Finally we can say as Ruma states that Turkey has always supported the Balkan countries and Turkey has always been a part of the larger international presence in the Balkans (Ruma, 2010). We have clearly observed that the majority of the Balkan people perceive Turkey very well, while the relations between Turkey and Balkan countries are excellent. We have seen that for many years the Balkan countries have regarded Turkey as a basis of its stability and security and Turkey should increase more its cooperation and collaborations towards the Balkan countries. It is very essential that “Turkey should not assert itself as a “big brother” (Ekinici, 2013) as we have noticed during the interviews and surveys that Turkey should avoid involving in those countries’ internal affairs.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

- ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐ AGE
- EDUCATION**
- ☐ PRIMARY ☐ SECONDARY ☐ UNIVERSITY
- PROFESSION**
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TEACHER | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMIST |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOCTOR | <input type="checkbox"/> STATESMAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACADEMICIAN | <input type="checkbox"/> SECONDARY SCHOOL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICIAN | <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LAWYER | <input type="checkbox"/> UNIVERSITY STUDENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS MAN | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHERS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS WOMAN | |

Q.1. Which event are you most interested in?

- ☐ Foreign policy ☐ Domestic politics ☐ Economy ☐ Celebrity programs

Q.2. Which of the followings do you think Albania has made great progress since 1991?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal and external security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign policy development | development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internal politics development | <input type="checkbox"/> Development in social and cultural changes |

Q.3. What is the influence of Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy?

- | | |
|---|--|
| Have an impact from a historical perspective | <input type="checkbox"/> Have an impact from an economical perspective |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have an impact from a cultural perspective | Have an impact from a religious perspective |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Have an impact on democracy |

Q.4. Which of the following countries is the closest ally of Albania?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.5. Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Economy?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.6.Which of the following countries do you think is the friendliest towards Albania?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.7.Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.8.Which of the following countries do you think will be less important to Albania in future?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.9.Which of the following countries will develop more its foreign policy towards Albania in future?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> USA | <input type="checkbox"/> France |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italy | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey | <input type="checkbox"/> China | <input type="checkbox"/> Greece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia | <input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia | | | |

Q.10.Do you think that Turkey needs to improve its foreign policy towards Albania?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Q.11.What is the most important aim of Turkey`s foreign policy towards Albania?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on its economy | <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on its external security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on its culture and history | <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on relations with EU/Europe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on its national and state interests | <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |

Q.12.What is the most important issue between Albania and Turkey?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Democracy and human rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural and historical ties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economy | <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Political instability | |

Q.13.Do you think Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role concerning foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Q.14. Do you think Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Q.15.How important is the image of Turkey concerning the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not too important |
|---|---|--|

☐ Not at all important

☐ No opinion

Q.16.What do you think about the relations between Turkey and Albania in future?

☐ Both countries will have more strong relations

☐ Both countries will have weaker relations than it is now

☐ Both countries will break up the relations

☐ No opinion

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE (ALBANIAN VERSION)

☐ Mashkull

☐ Femër

MOSHA

18-22 ☐ 22-26

☐ 26-30

☐ 31-35

☐ 36-40

☐ 41-45

☐ 46-50

☐ 50-60

ARSIMIMI

☐ Filllore

☐ E mesme

☐ Universitet

PROFESINI

☐ MËSUES

☐ DOKTOR

☐ AKADEMIK

☐ POLITIKAN

☐ JURIST

☐ BIZNESMEN

☐ BIZNESMENE

☐ EKONOMIST

☐ NËNPUNËS

☐ NXËNËS NË SHKOLLË TË

MESME

☐ STUDENT UNIVERSITETI

☐ TË TJERA

P.1.Cilat ngjarje ju interesojnë më shumë?

☐ Politika të jashtme ☐ Politika të brendshme

☐ Ekonomia

☐ Programe mbi

njerëzit e famshëm

P.2.Në cilën prej të mëposhtmeve Shqipëria ka patur progresin më të madh që prej 1991?

☐ Zhvillimi Ekonomik

☐ Zhvillimi i sigurisë së brendshme dhe të jashtme

☐ Zhvillimi i politikave të jashtme

☐ Zhvillimi i politikave të brendshme

☐ Zhvillimet dhe ndryshimet në jetën sociale dhe kulturore

P.3.Cfarë indikimi kanë njerëzit që jetojnë jashtë vendit mbi politikat e jashtme të Shqipërisë?

☐ Kanë patur indikimi nga një prespektivë historike

☐ Kanë patur indikimi nga një prespektivë ekonomike

☐ Kanë patur indikimi nga një prespektivë kulturore

☐ Kanë pasur indikimi nga një prespektivë fetare

☐ Kanë pasur indikimi në demokraci

P.4.Cili nga shtetet e mëposhtme është aleati më i mire i Shqipërisë ?

☐ Gjermania

☐ SH.B.A

☐ Bullgaria

☐ Serbia

☐ Italia

☐ Kina

☐ Maqedonia

☐ Rusia

☐ Franca

☐ Mali I Zi

☐ Turqia

☐ Greqia

☐ Kroacia

P.5.Cili nga shtetet e mëposhtme ka patur influencën më të madhe mbi ekonominë shqiptare?

☐ Gjermania

☐ SH.B.A

☐ Bullgaria

☐ Serbia

☐ Italia

☐ Kina

☐ Maqedonia

☐ Rusia

☐ Franca

☐ Mali I Zi

☐ Turqia

☐ Greqia

☐ Kroacia

P.6.Cili prej shteteve të mëposhtme është miku më i mirë i Shqipërisë?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gjermania | <input type="checkbox"/> SH.B.A | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kina | <input type="checkbox"/> Maqedonia | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusia | <input type="checkbox"/> Franca | <input type="checkbox"/> Mali I Zi | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Greqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kroacia | |

P.7.Cili prej shteteve të mëposhtme ka patur influencën më të madhe mbi politikat e jashtme të Shqipërisë?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gjermania | <input type="checkbox"/> SH.B.A | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kina | <input type="checkbox"/> Maqedonia | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusia | <input type="checkbox"/> Franca | <input type="checkbox"/> Mali I Zi | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Greqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kroacia | |

P.8.Cili prej shteteve të mëposhtme mendoni se do të ketë ndikimin më të vogël në të ardhmen Shqipërisë?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gjermania | <input type="checkbox"/> SH.B.A | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kina | <input type="checkbox"/> Maqedonia | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusia | <input type="checkbox"/> Franca | <input type="checkbox"/> Mali I Zi | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Greqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kroacia | |

P.9.Cili prej shteteve të mëposhtme do të zhvillojë më shumë politikat e jashtme në lidhje me Shqipërinë?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gjermania | <input type="checkbox"/> SH.B.A | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullgaria | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kina | <input type="checkbox"/> Maqedonia | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rusia | <input type="checkbox"/> Franca | <input type="checkbox"/> Mali I Zi | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Greqia | <input type="checkbox"/> Kroacia | |

P.10.A mendoni se Turqia duhet të përmirësojë politikat e jashtme në lidhje me Shqipërinë?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Po | <input type="checkbox"/> Jo | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuk kam opinion |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

P.11.Cili është pikësnyimi kryesor i politikave të jashtme të Turqisë në lidhje me Shqipërinë?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fokusimi në ekonominë | <input type="checkbox"/> Fokusimi në sigurinë e jashtme |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fokusimi në kulturën dhe historinë | <input type="checkbox"/> Fokusimi në lidhjet me BE/Europen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fokusimi në interesat kombëtar | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuk kam opinion |

P.12.Cila është çështja më e rëndësishme mes Turqisë dhe Shqipërisë?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demokracia dhe të drejtat e njeriut | <input type="checkbox"/> Lidhjet kulturore dhe historike | <input type="checkbox"/> Mungesa e stabilitetit Politik |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ekonomia | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuk kam opinion | |

P.13.A mendoni se Turqia ka luajtur një rol më të rëndësishëm dhe të fuqishëm në lidhje me politikat e jashtme të Shqipërinë përgjatë 10 viteve të fundit?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Po | <input type="checkbox"/> Jo | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuk kam opinion |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

P.14. A mendoni se Turqia ka përmirësuar marrëdhëniet me Shqipërinë që prej vitit 2000?

☐Po

☐Jo

☐ Nuk kam opinion

P.15.Sa i rëndësishëm është imazhi i Turqisë në lidhje me drejtimin e politikave të jashtme kundrejt Shqipërisë?

☐Shumë i rëndësishëm

☐Pak i rëndësishëm

☐Nuk kam opinion

☐I rëndësishëm

☐I pa rëndësishëm

P.16.C'mendoni mbi lidhjet e ardhshme mes Shqipërisë dhe Turqisë?

☐Të dy vendet do të kenë lidhje më të fortë

☐Të dy vendet do të kenë një lidhje më të dobët se tani

☐Të dy vendet do të shkëpusin marrëdhëniet

☐Nuk kam opinion

The names of the 28 Albanian (sadrizam) prime ministers during the Ottoman Empire:

Gedik Ahmed Pasha (1474-1477), Davud Pasha (1482-1497), Dukaginoglu Ahmed Pasa (1514-1515), Ayaz Mehmed Pasa (1536-1515), Kara Ahmed Pasa (1553-1555), Semiz Ahmed Pasa (1579-1580), Koca Sinan Pasa (1580-1582), (1586-1591), (1593-1595), (1595), (1595-1596), Ferhad Pasa (1591-1592), (1595), Yemisci Hasan Pasa (1601-1603), Nasuh Pasa (1611-1614), Ohirli Huseyin Pasa (1621), Mere-Huseyin Pasa (1622), (1623), Tabaniyasi Mehmed Pasa (1632-1637), Kemankes Mustafa Pasa (1638-1644), Civan-Kapucubasi Sultan-zade Mehmed Pasa (1644-1645), Kara Murad Pasa (1649-1650), (1655), Tarhuncu Ahmed Pasa (1652-1653), Zurnazen Mustafa Pasa (1656), Koprulu Mehmed Pasa (1656-1661), Koprulu Fazil Ahmed Pasa (1661-1676), Koprulu Mustafa Pasa (1689-1691), Arabaci Ali Pasa (1691-1692), Amcazade Huseyin Pasa (1697-1702), Koprulu Numan Pasa (1710), Memis Pasa (1808-1809), Giritli Mustafa Naili Pasa (1853), (1857), Avlonyali Mehmet Ferid Pasa (1903-1908), Damat Ferid Pasa (1919-1920) (Simsir, 2001, pp.433-440).

Survey about the Views of Albanian People regarding the Turkish Foreign Policy.

The primary purpose of this survey was to find out Albanian people's perceptions of Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. This study was conducted upon taking into consideration the opinions of the Albanian people about the relations between Albania and Turkey. In order to reach these primary objectives, this study uses qualitative and quantitative methods based on this survey which started in December 2012 and finished in July 2013. This survey took about 7 months. This survey covers 716 people in different Albanian cities mainly: Tirana, Shkoder, Kaveje, Kruje, Lushnije and Durres. The cities were chosen according to the random sampling. I tried to conduct this survey by asking people, particularly, who were studying in the universities or who graduated from the universities. The age group was 18 and above. The questions were based on 20 questions. The survey questions were completed by different group of people such as: teachers, doctors, academicians, politicians, lawyers, businessmen, economists, students, people who work in private sectors and also some other profession groups.

I paid particular attention to the gender, which were 49.2 percent or 352 males and which 50.8 percent or 364 were females out of 716 respondents, age group, level of education, the people's interests such as: Foreign policy, Domestic politics, economy and celebrity programs, the opinions of the Albanian people that how much they think that Albania has made progress since 1991, the opinions of the Albanian people that what they think about the influence that Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy, the opinions of the Albanian people of which countries are the closest allies to Albania, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries they think have the greatest influence on Albanian Economy, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries they think are friendliest towards Albania, the opinions of the Albanian people which countries

they think have the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy and also the opinions of the Albanian people about the relations between Albania and Turkey regarding the foreign policy. Overall my expectation was here to explore how much Albanian people think that Turkey` foreign policy influences Albania. The survey questionnaire was prepared by Isa Erbaş with the help of my supervisor, associate professor, Enika Abazi. Besides the survey, I also made interviews with well-known Albanian scholars. Through these survey and interviews, I wanted to find out that how much the survey results and interviews results are compatible with each other. As I stated, the primary purpose of this study was to understand and explore the Albanian people`s opinions about foreign policy. In order to understand the background of the respondents I asked some general questions in this survey. The survey was conducted randomly and each survey took about 8-10 minutes. After the survey and interview was conducted, I used the SPSS 16 and Nvivo 12 in order to analyze the data. The following 60 figures represent the findings and results in the conducted survey. There are 20 questions about the survey. Each question represents three figures. For instance, figure 1.1 represents detail about the question and result, figure 1.2 represents the frequency and figure 1.3. represent the percentage.

Figure 1.1: Gender (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	352	49.2	49.2	49.2
	Female	364	50.8	50.8	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1.2: Gender (Frequency)

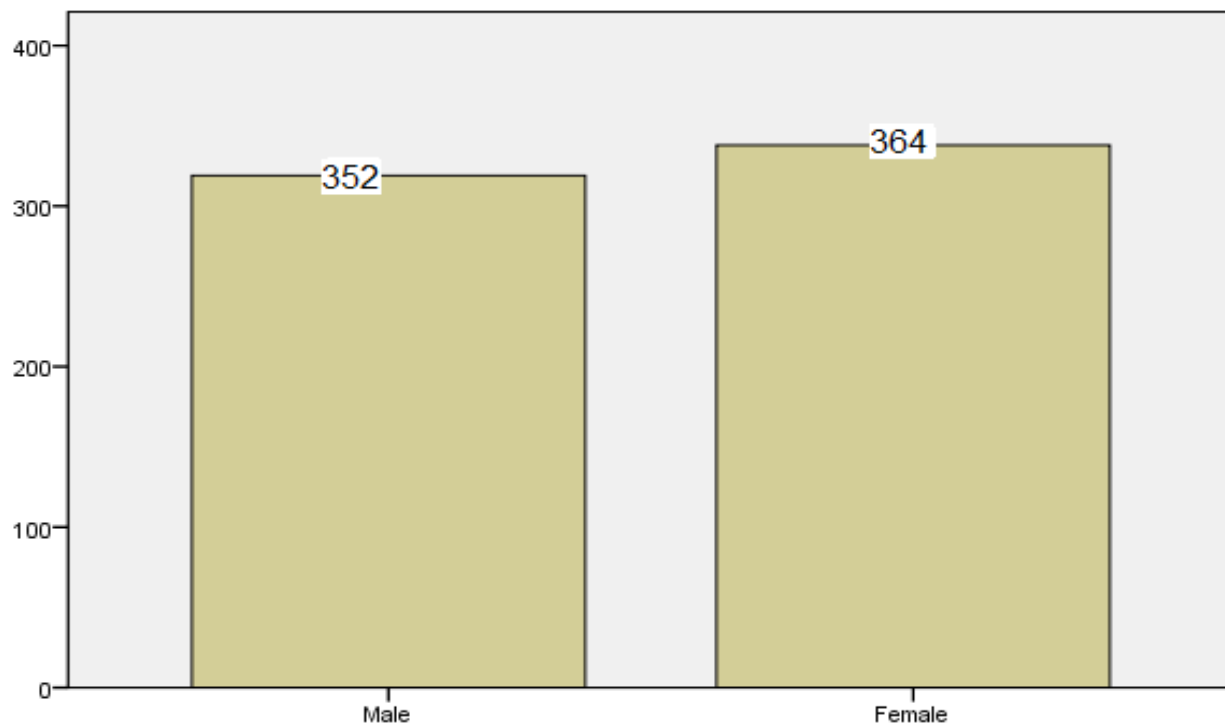


Figure 1.3: Gender (Percent)

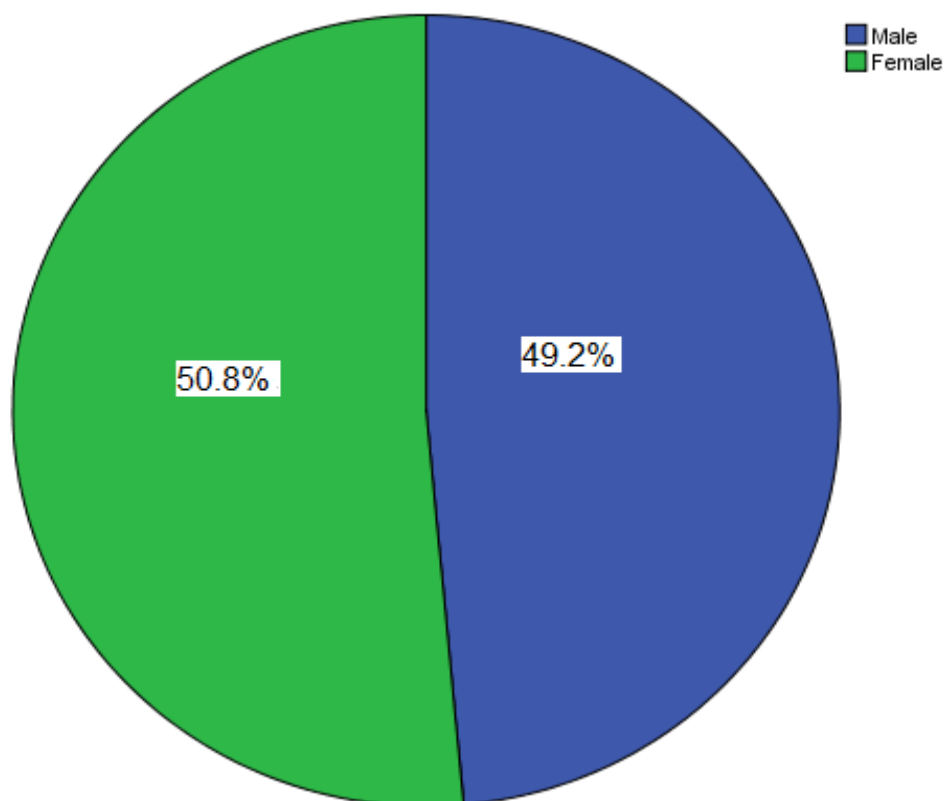


Figure 2.1: Age (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-22	176	24.6	24.6	24.6
	23-26	98	13.7	13.7	38.3
	27-30	84	11.7	11.7	50.0
	31-35	105	14.7	14.7	64.7
	36-40	95	13.3	13.3	77.9
	41-45	61	8.5	8.5	86.5
	46-50	41	5.7	5.7	92.2
	51-60	56	7.8	7.8	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 2.2: Age (Frequency)

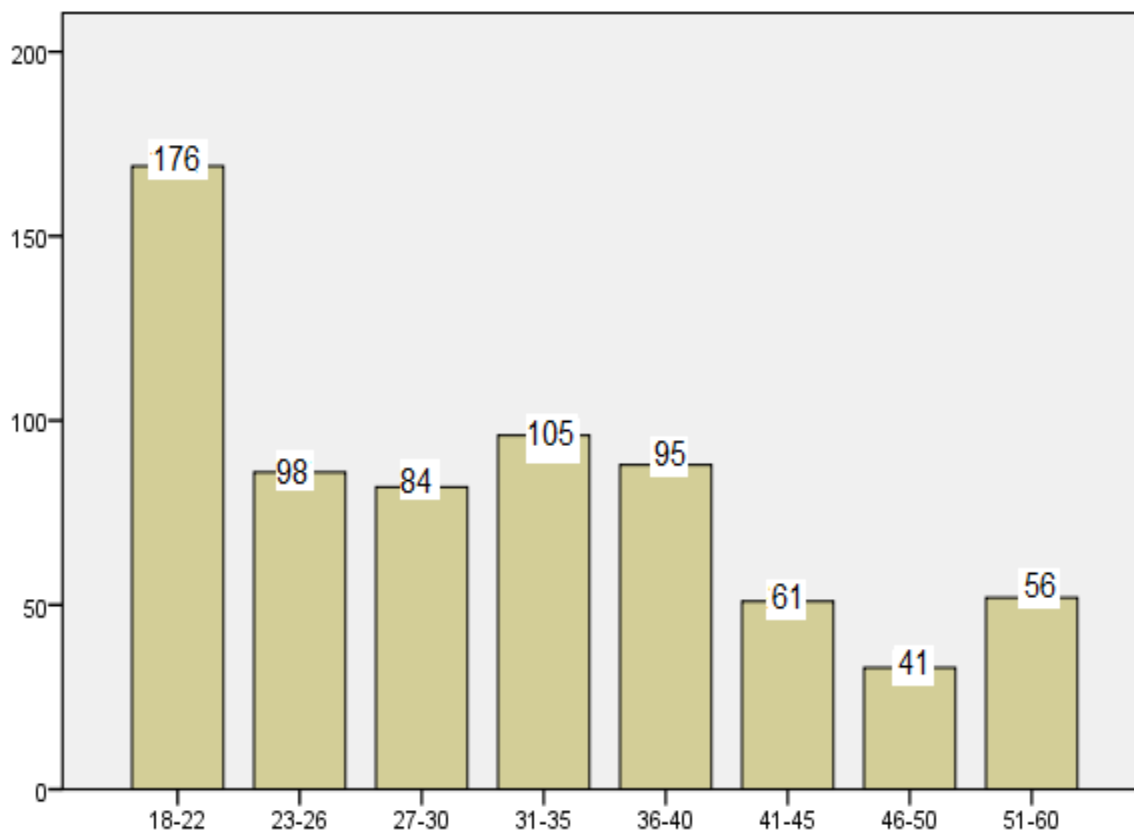


Figure 2.3: Age (Percent)

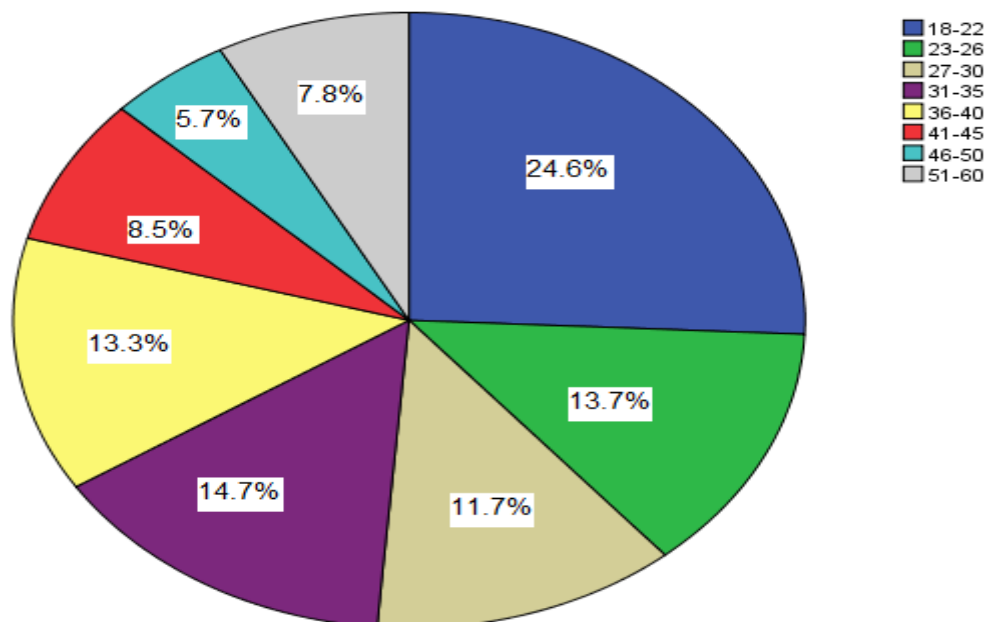


Figure 3.1: Education (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary	160	22.3	22.3	22.3
	University	556	77.7	77.7	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 3.2: Education (Frequency)

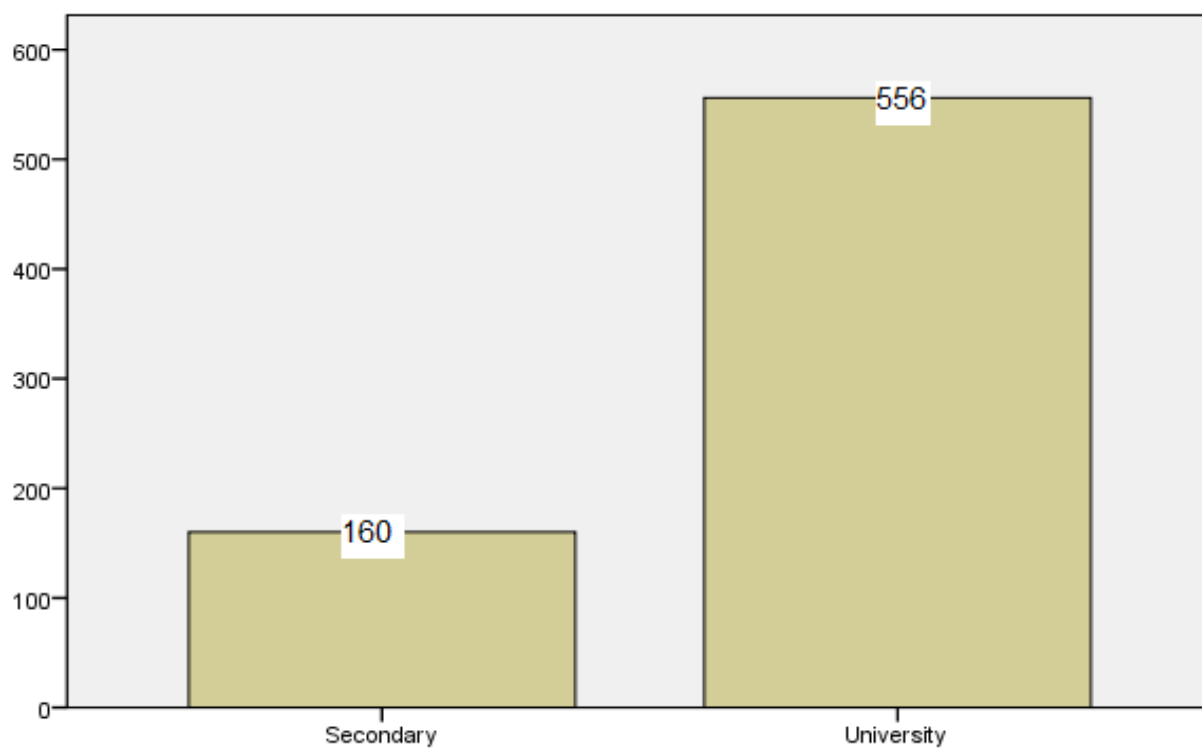


Figure 3.3: Education (Percent)

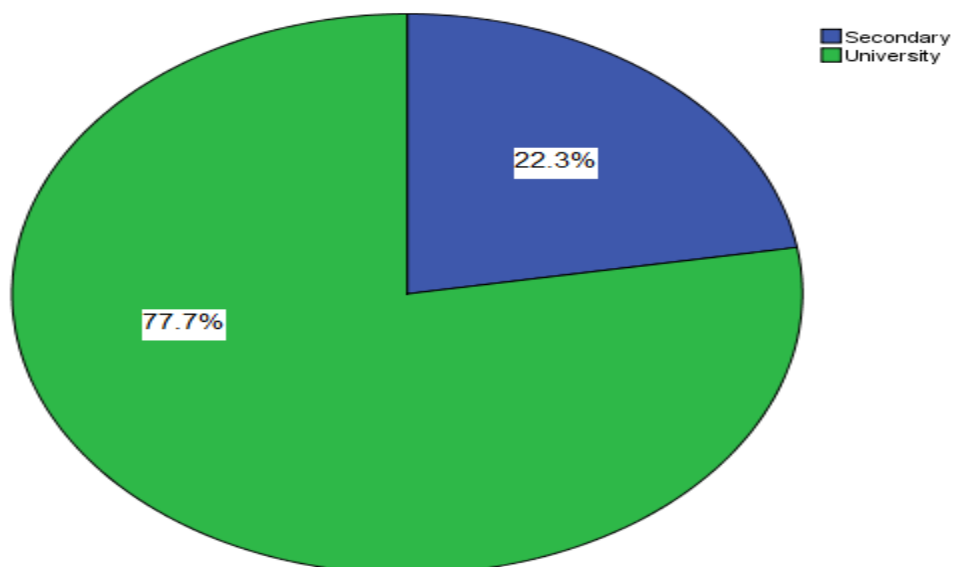


Figure 4.1: Occupation (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teacher	179	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Others	77	10.8	10.8	35.8
	Doctor	22	3.1	3.1	38.8
	Academician	37	5.2	5.2	44.0
	Politician	2	.3	.3	44.3
	Lawyer	27	3.8	3.8	48.0
	Businessman	65	9.1	9.1	57.1
	Economist	68	9.5	9.5	66.6
	Private sector	60	8.4	8.4	75.0
	University Student	179	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.2: Occupation (Frequency)

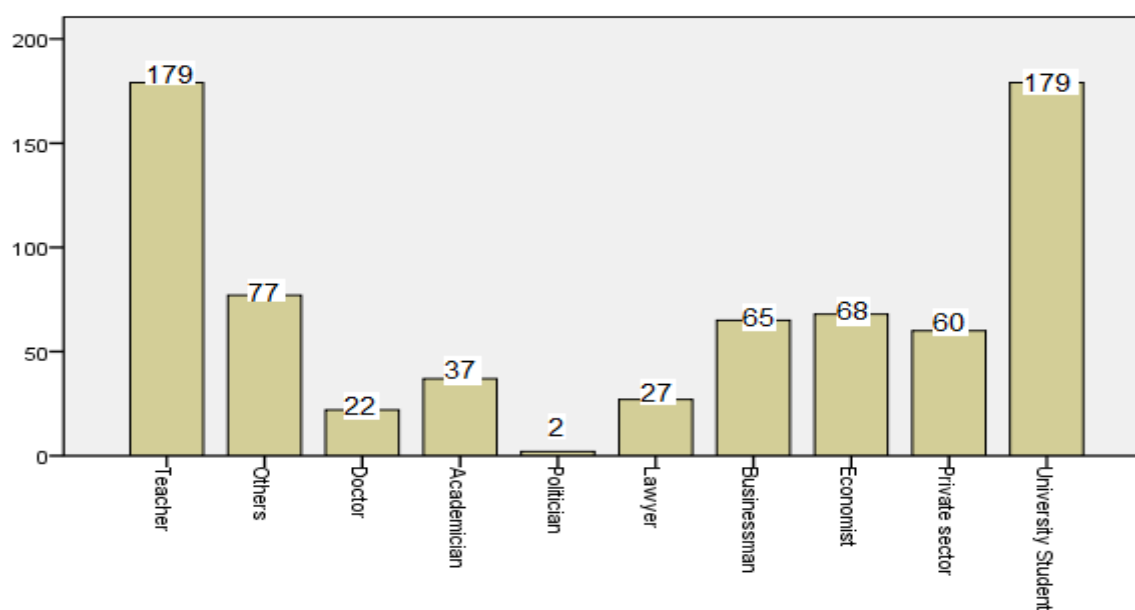


Figure 4.3: Occupation (Percent)

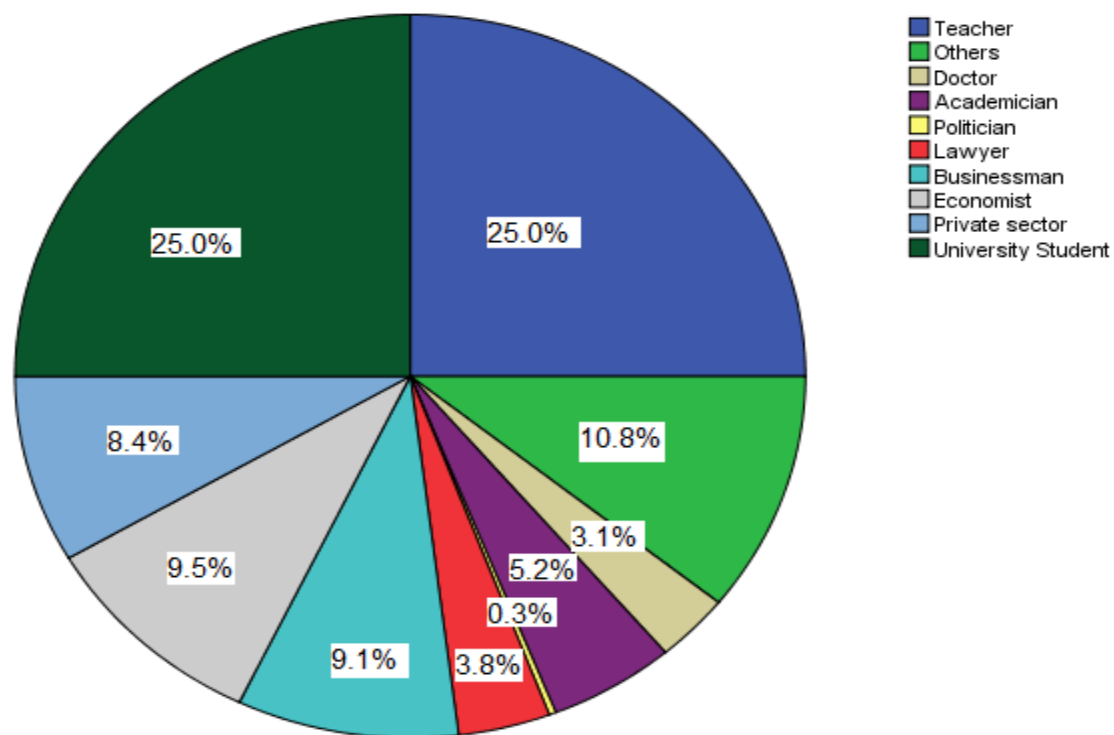


Figure 5.1: Which event are you most interested in? (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Foreign policy	100	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Domestic politics	128	17.9	17.9	31.8
	Economy	392	54.7	54.7	86.6
	Celebrity programs	96	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5.2: Which event are you most interested in? (Frequency)

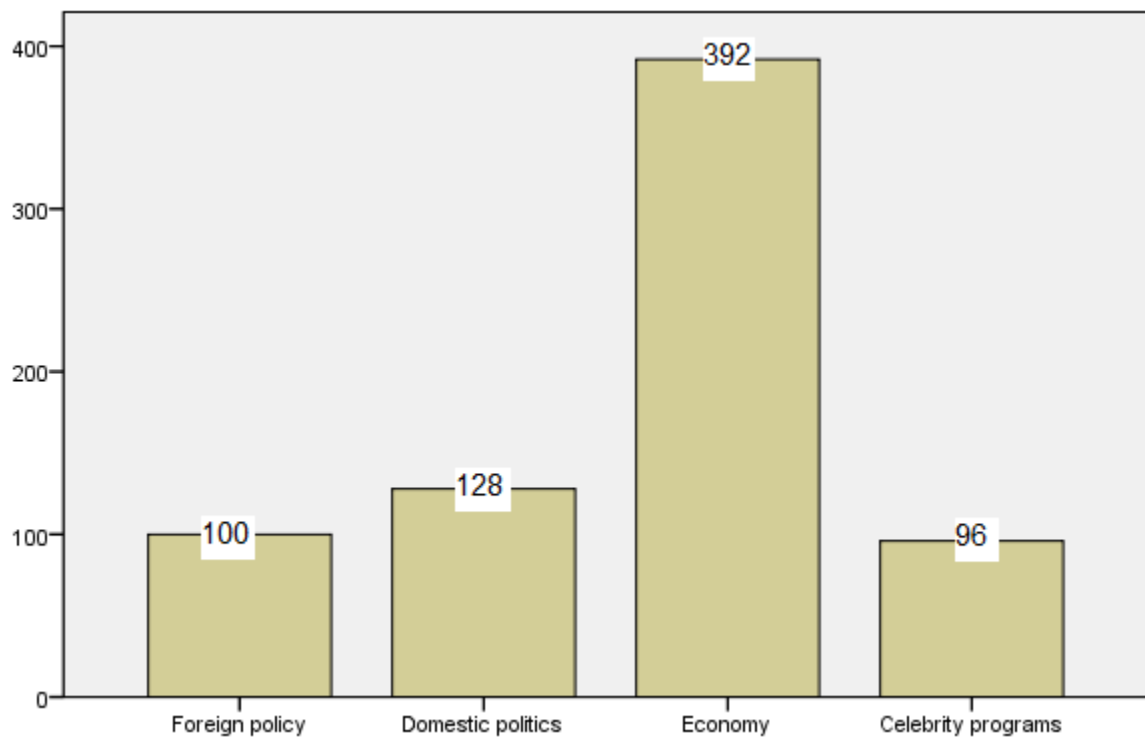


Figure 5.3: Which event are you most interested in? (Percent)

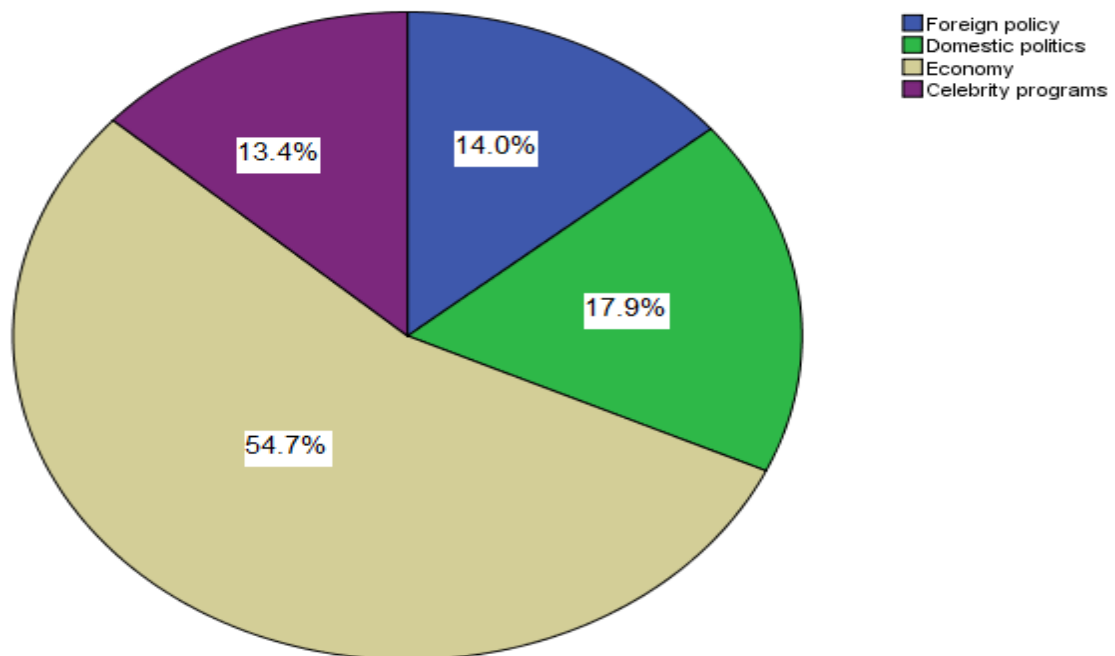


Figure 6.2: Which of the followings do you think Albania has made great progress since 1991? (Frequency)

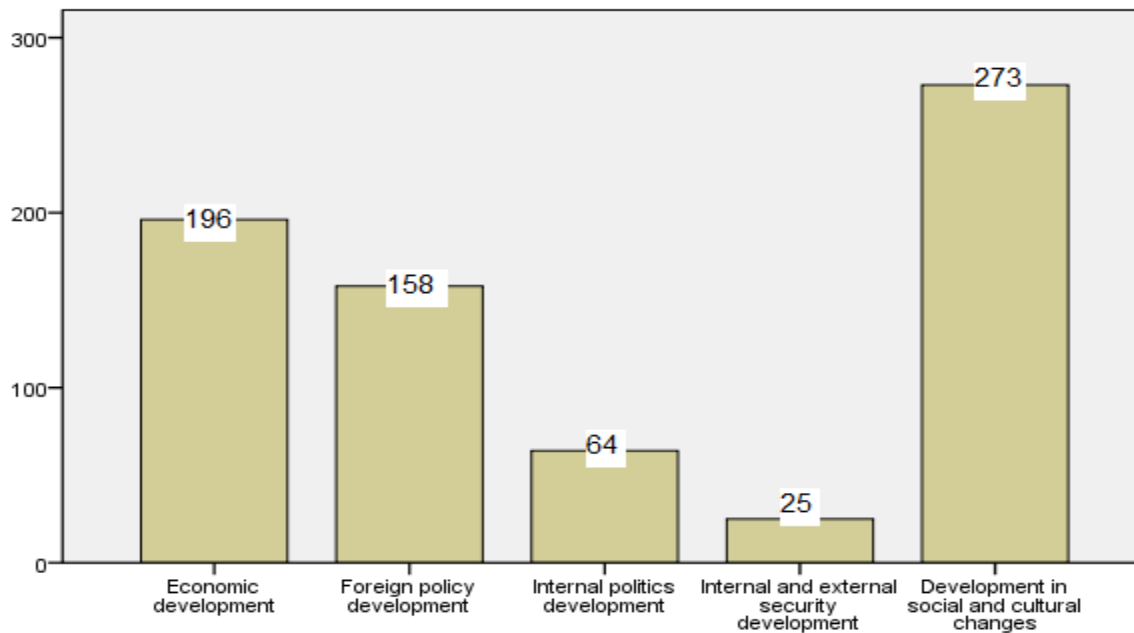


Figure 6.3: Which of the followings do you think Albania has made great progress since 1991? (Percent)

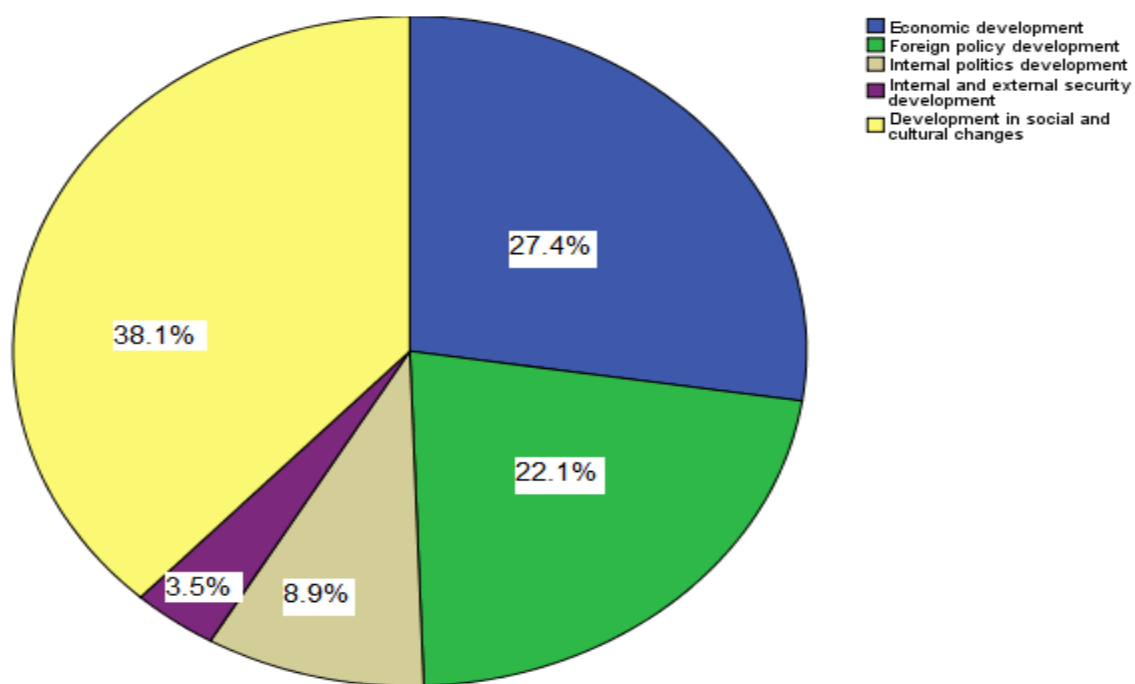


Figure 7.1: What is the influence of Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy? (**Detail**)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Have an impact from a historical perspective	45	6.3	6.3	6.3
	Have an impact from a cultural perspective	114	15.9	15.9	22.2
	Have an impact from an economical perspective	335	46.8	46.8	69.0
	Have an impact from a religious perspective	23	3.2	3.2	72.2
	Have an impact on democracy	199	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 7.2: What is the influence of Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy? (**Frequency**)

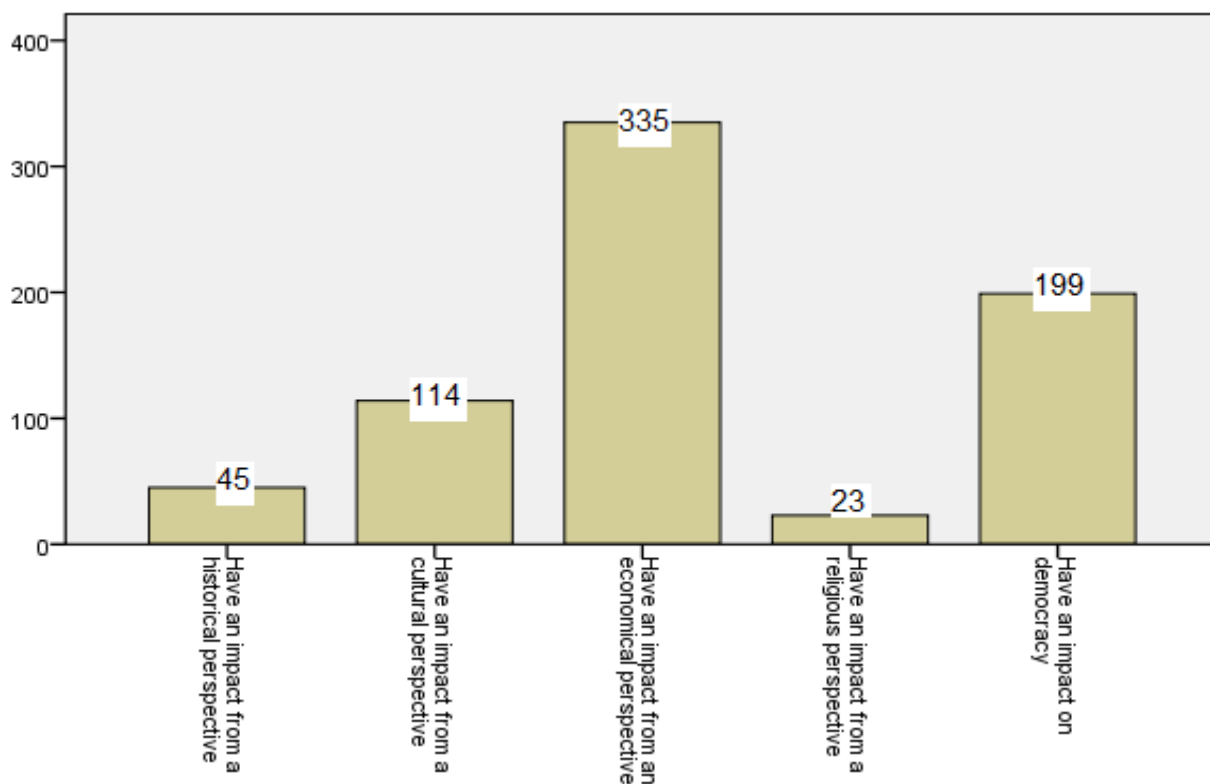


Figure 7.3: What is the influence of Albanian people living abroad on the Albanian foreign policy? (Percent)

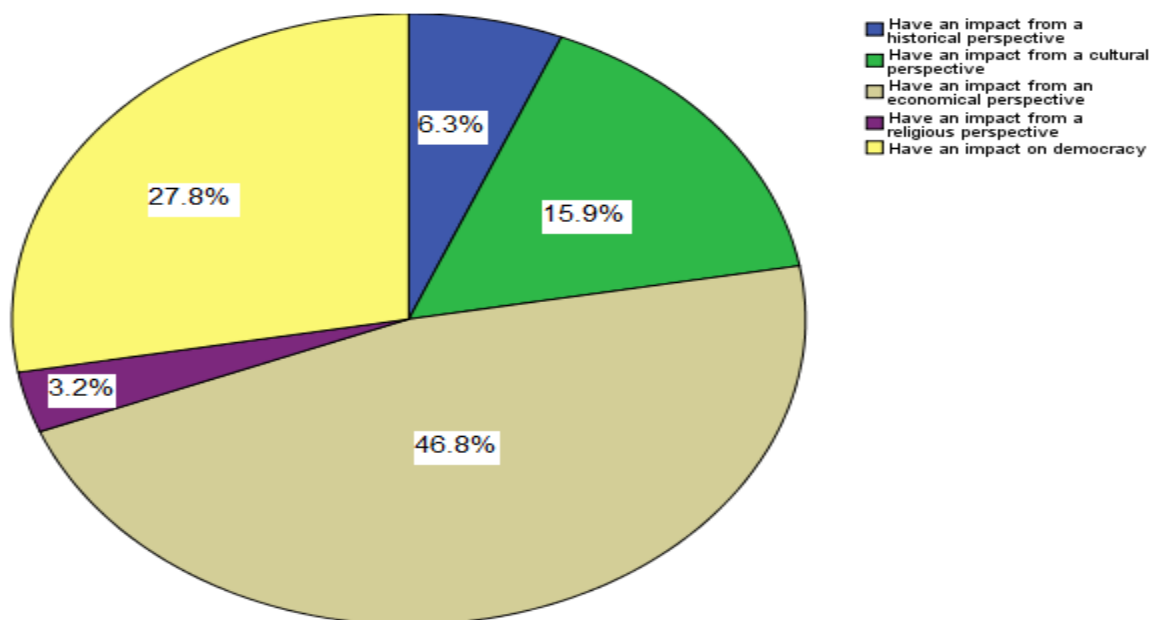


Figure 8.1: Which of the following countries is the closest ally to Albania? (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	25	3.5	3.5	3.5
	France	5	.7	.7	4.2
	Greece	4	.6	.6	4.7
	Croatia	1	.1	.1	4.9
	Italy	49	6.8	6.8	11.7
	Bulgaria	1	.1	.1	11.9
	Russia	3	.4	.4	12.3
	Turkey	248	34.6	34.6	46.9
	Macedonia	5	.7	.7	47.6
	USA	362	50.6	50.6	98.2
	Montenegro	1	.1	.1	98.3
	China	12	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 8.2: Which of the following countries is the closest ally to Albania? **(Frequency)**

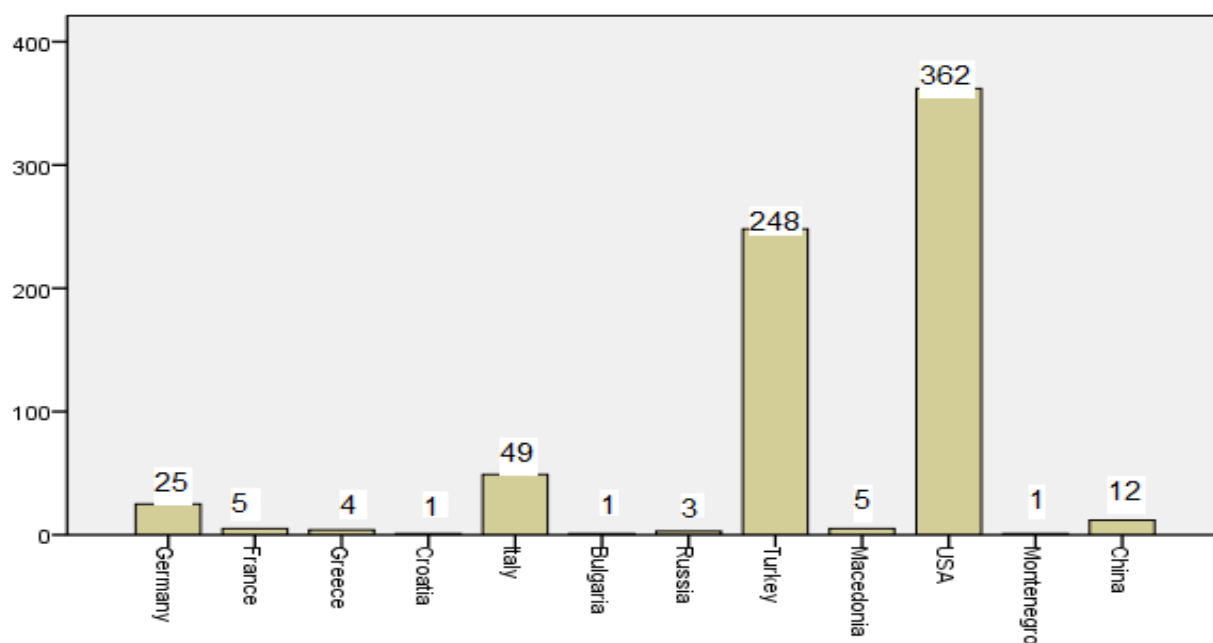


Figure 8.3: Which of the following countries is the closest ally to Albania? **(Percent)**

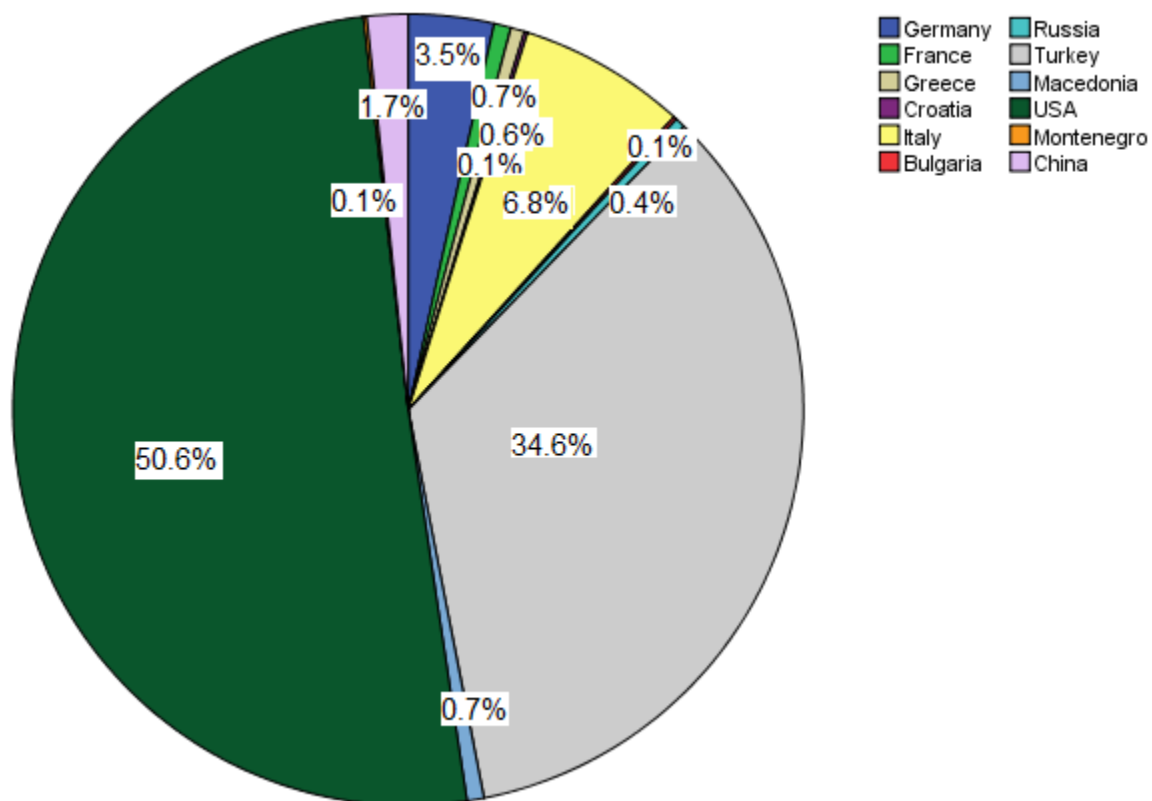


Figure 9.1: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Economy? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	28	3.9	3.9	3.9
	France	8	1.1	1.1	5.0
	Greece	70	9.8	9.8	14.8
	Croatia	1	.1	.1	14.9
	Serbia	1	.1	.1	15.1
	Italy	167	23.3	23.3	38.4
	Bulgaria	1	.1	.1	38.5
	Russia	5	.7	.7	39.2
	Turkey	232	32.4	32.4	71.6
	Macedonia	4	.6	.6	72.2
	USA	180	25.1	25.1	97.3
	China	18	2.5	2.5	99.9
	Montenegro	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 9.2: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Economy? **(Frequency)**

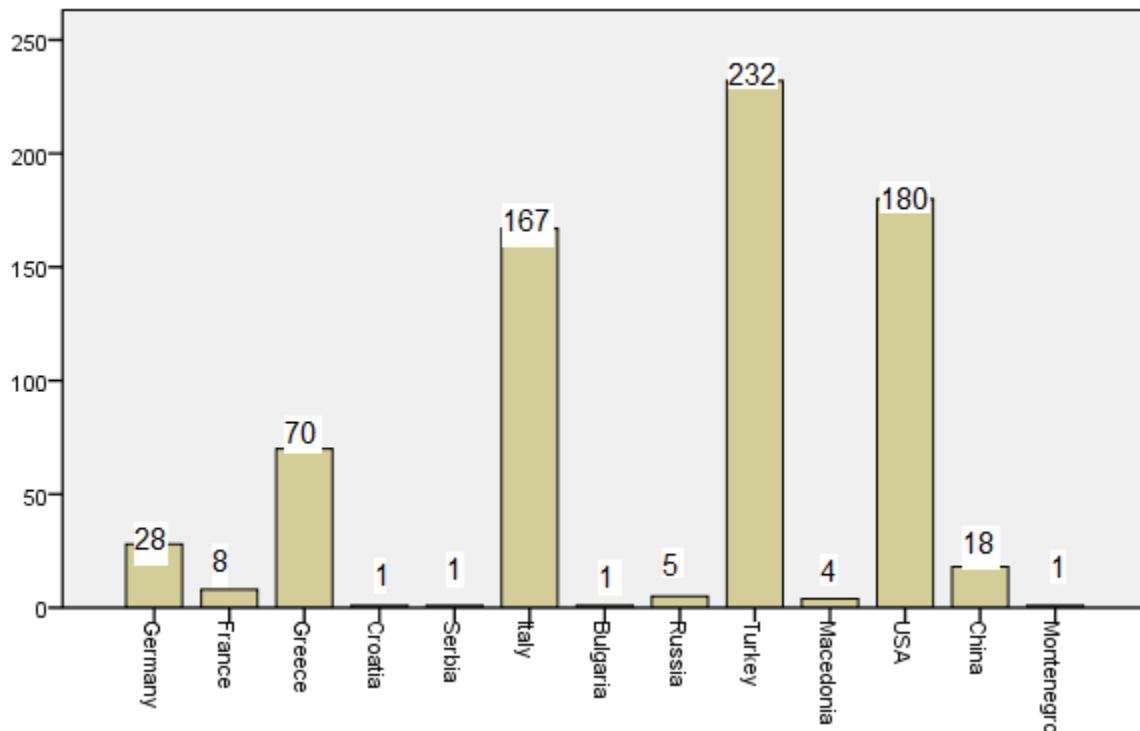


Figure 9.3: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Economy? (Percent)

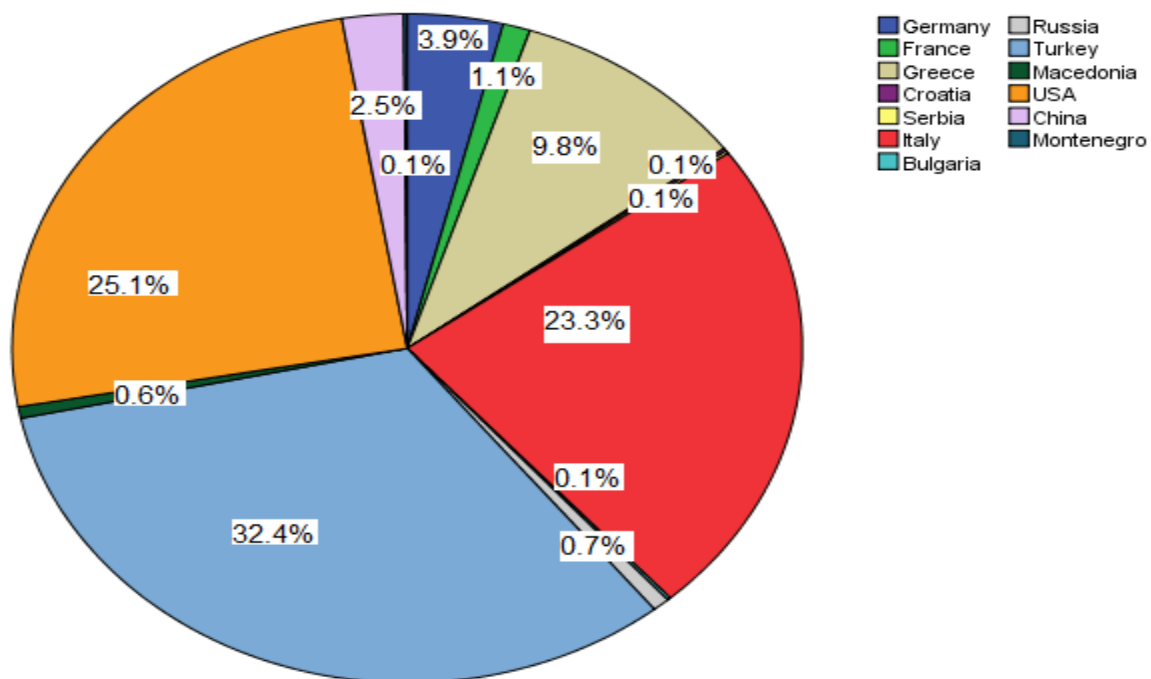


Figure 10.1: Which of the following countries do you think is the friendliest towards Albania? (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	12	1.7	1.7	1.7
	France	5	.7	.7	2.4
	Greece	8	1.1	1.1	3.5
	Croatia	1	.1	.1	3.6
	Serbia	1	.1	.1	3.8
	Italy	38	5.3	5.3	9.1
	Bulgaria	2	.3	.3	9.4
	Russia	5	.7	.7	10.1
	Turkey	365	51.0	51.0	61.0
	Macedonia	5	.7	.7	61.7
	USA	266	37.2	37.2	98.9
	China	6	.8	.8	99.7
	Montenegro	2	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 10.2: Which of the following countries do you think is the friendliest towards Albania? (Frequency)

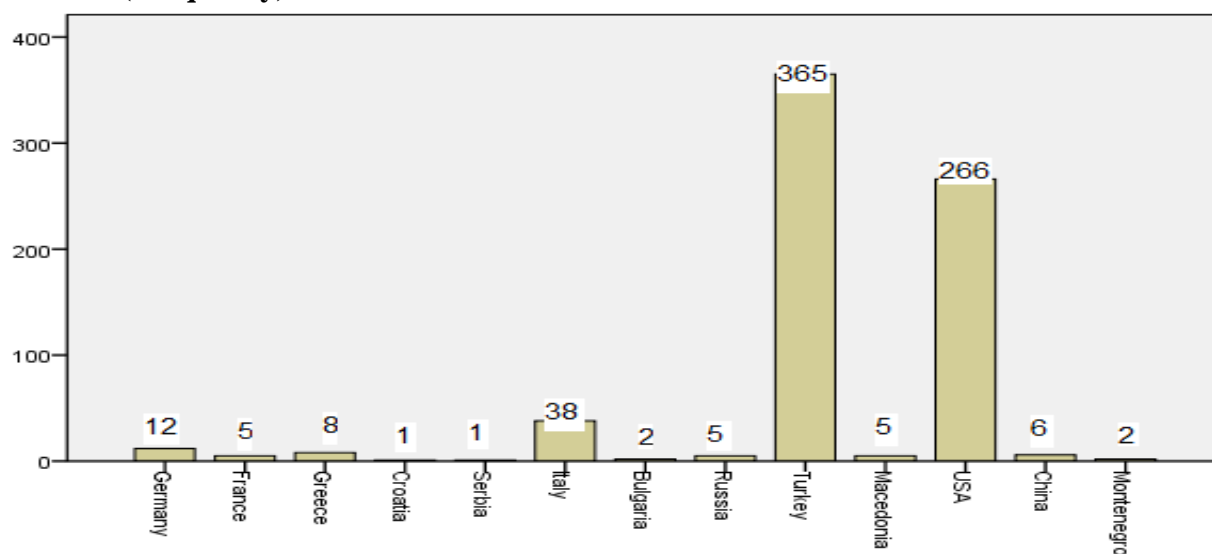


Figure 10.3: Which of the following countries do you think is the friendliest towards Albania? (Percent)

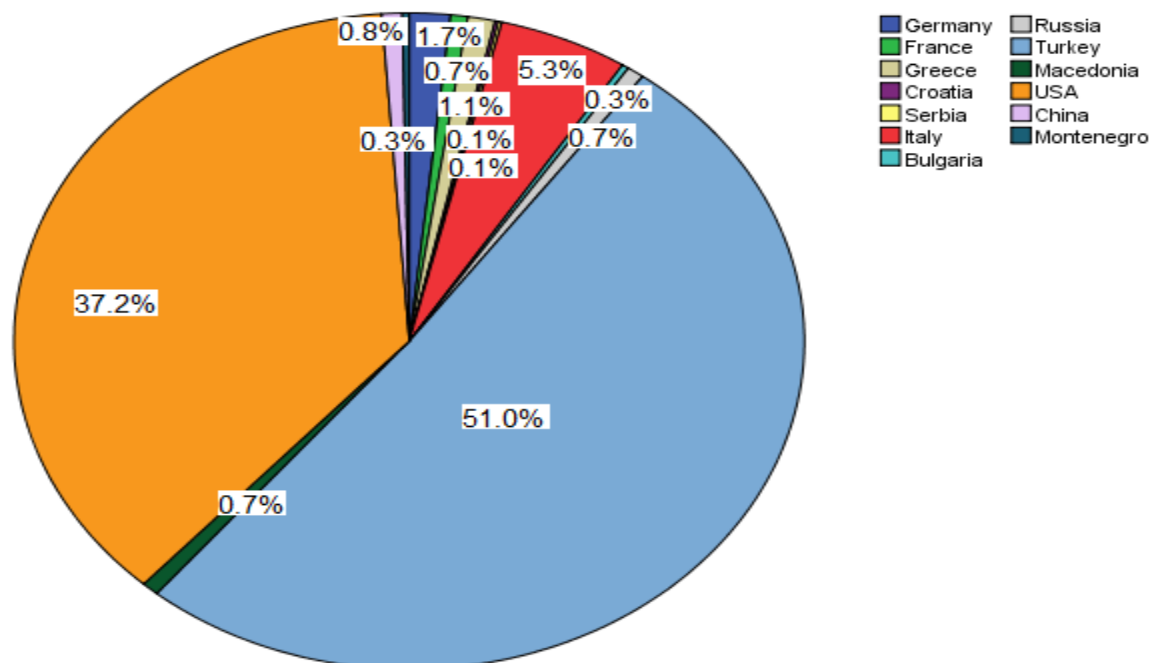


Figure 11.1: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy? (**Detail**)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	23	3.2	3.2	3.2
	France	16	2.2	2.2	5.4
	Greece	16	2.2	2.2	7.7
	Serbia	4	.6	.6	8.2
	Italy	37	5.2	5.2	13.4
	Bulgaria	1	.1	.1	13.5
	Russia	4	.6	.6	14.1
	Turkey	84	11.7	11.7	25.8
	Macedonia	4	.6	.6	26.4
	USA	521	72.8	72.8	99.2
	China	5	.7	.7	99.9
	Montenegro	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 11.2: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy? (**Frequency**)

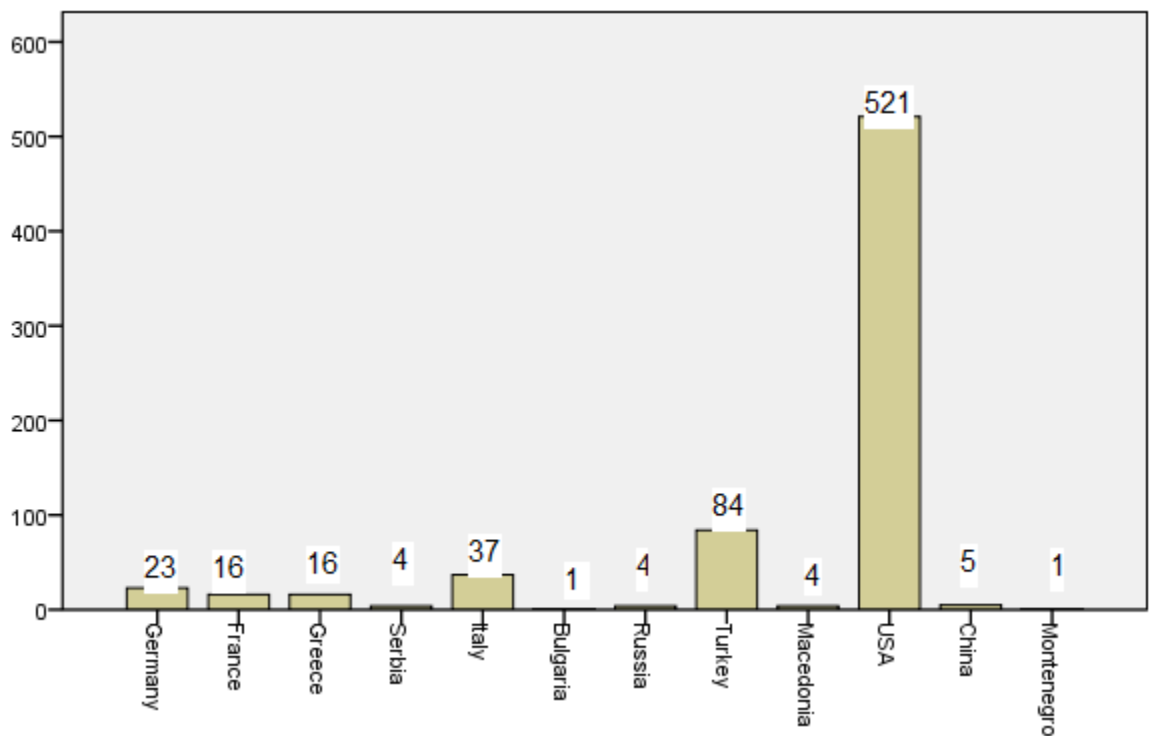


Figure 11.3: Which of the following countries has the greatest influence on Albanian Foreign Policy? (Percent)

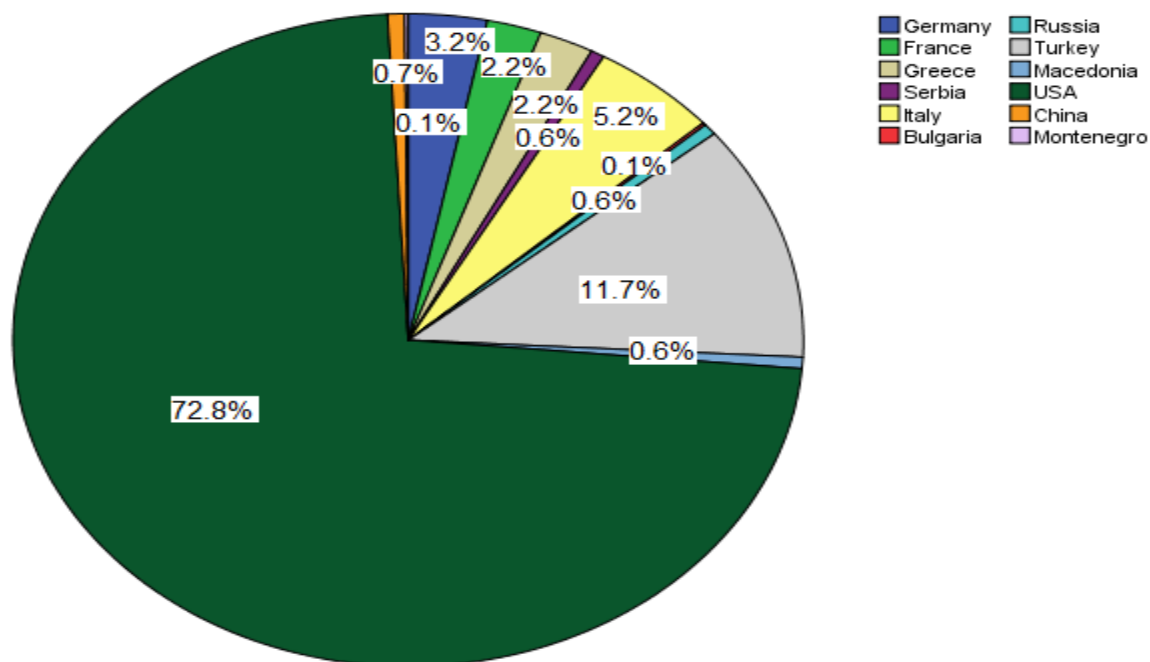


Figure 12.1: Which of the following countries do you think will be less important to Albania in future? (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	7	1.0	1.0	1.0
	France	16	2.2	2.2	3.2
	Greece	71	9.9	9.9	13.1
	Croatia	52	7.3	7.3	20.4
	Serbia	268	37.4	37.4	57.8
	Italy	8	1.1	1.1	58.9
	Bulgaria	81	11.3	11.3	70.3
	Russia	74	10.3	10.3	80.6
	Turkey	26	3.6	3.6	84.2
	Macedonia	15	2.1	2.1	86.3
	USA	32	4.5	4.5	90.8
	China	40	5.6	5.6	96.4
	Montenegro	26	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 12.2: Which of the following countries do you think will be less important to Albania in future? **(Frequency)**

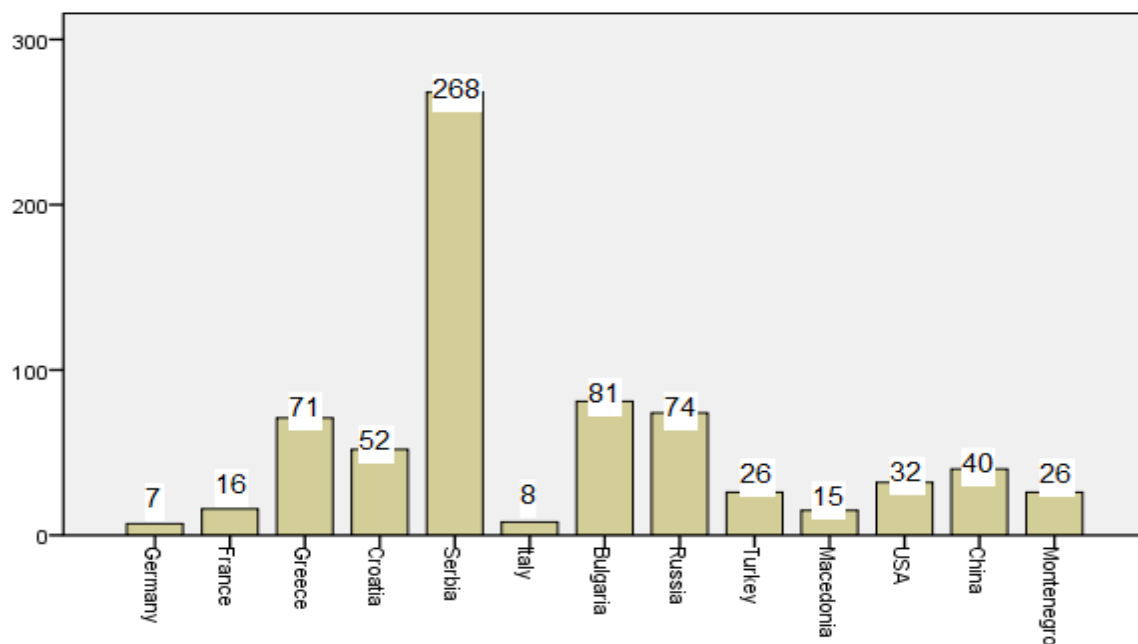


Figure 12.3: Which of the following countries do you think will be less important to Albania in future? **(Percent)**

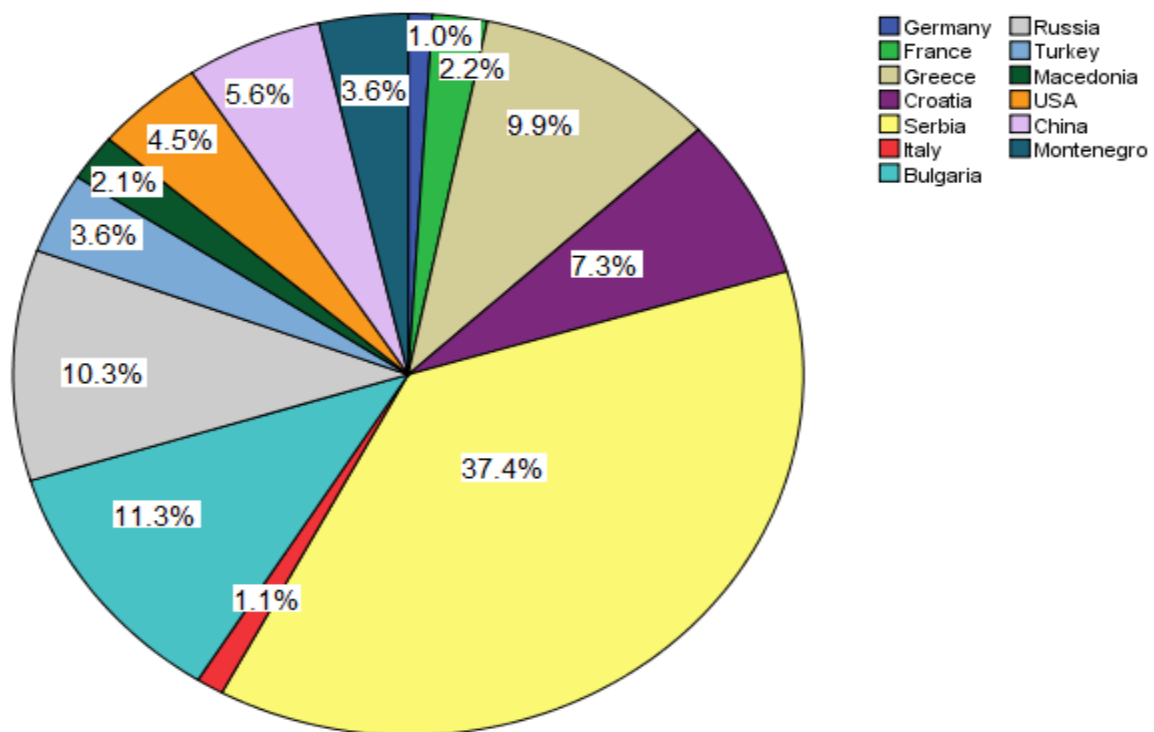


Figure 13.1: Which of the following countries will develop more its foreign policy towards Albania in future? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	67	9.4	9.4	9.4
	France	17	2.4	2.4	11.7
	Greece	23	3.2	3.2	14.9
	Croatia	6	.8	.8	15.8
	Serbia	40	5.6	5.6	21.4
	Italy	69	9.6	9.6	31.0
	Bulgaria	4	.6	.6	31.6
	Russia	7	1.0	1.0	32.5
	Turkey	215	30.0	30.0	62.6
	Macedonia	25	3.5	3.5	66.1
	USA	198	27.7	27.7	93.7
	China	39	5.4	5.4	99.2
	Montenegro	6	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 13.2: Which of the following countries will develop more its foreign policy towards Albania in future? **(Frequency)**

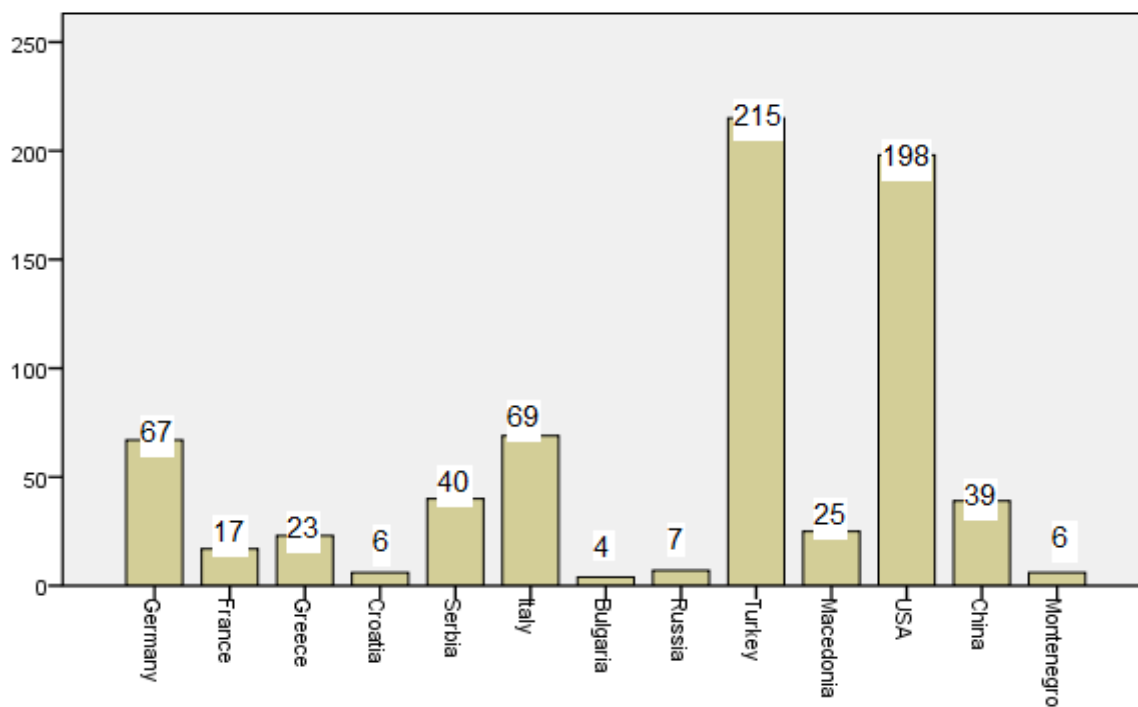


Figure 13.3: Which of the following countries will develop more its foreign policy towards Albania in future? **(Percent)**

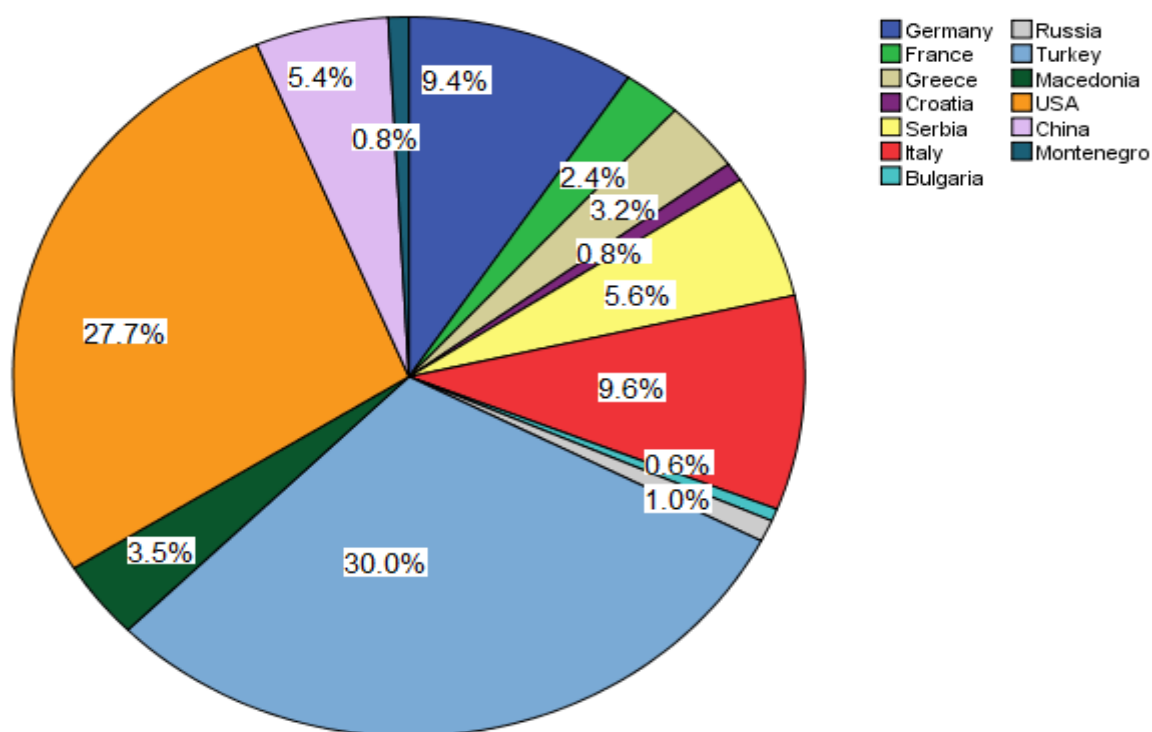


Figure 14.1: Do you think that Turkey needs to improve its foreign policy towards Albania? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid					
	Yes	432	60.3	60.3	60.5
	No	115	16.2	16.2	76.5
	No opinion	168	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 14.2: Do you think that Turkey needs to improve its foreign policy towards Albania?
(Frequency)

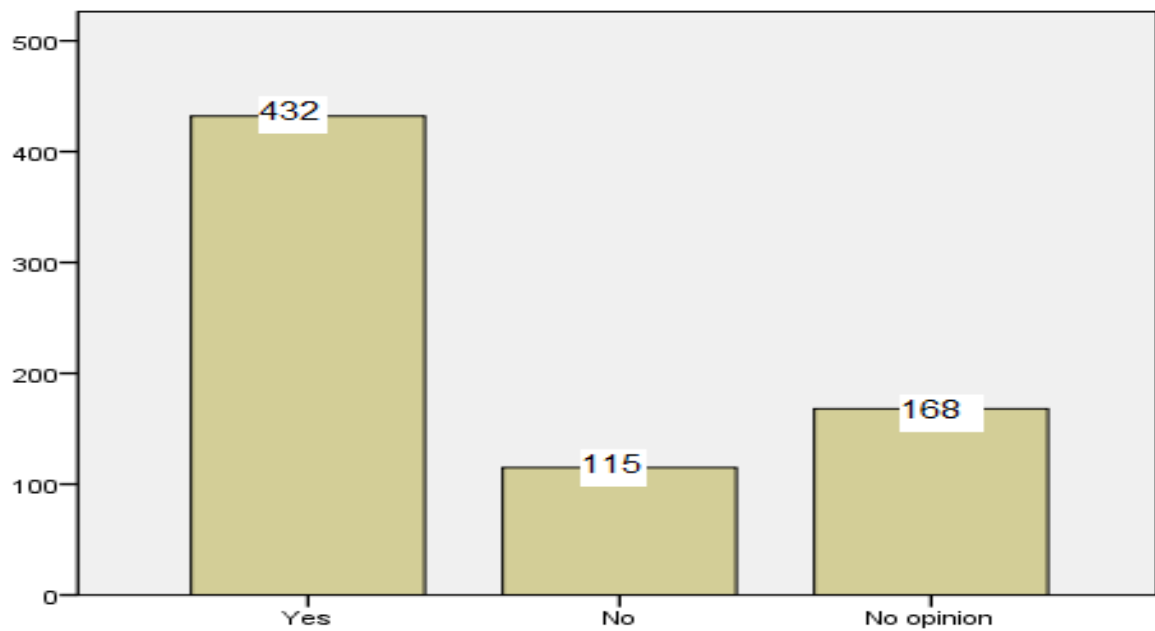


Figure 14.3: Do you think that Turkey needs to improve its foreign policy towards Albania?
(Percent)

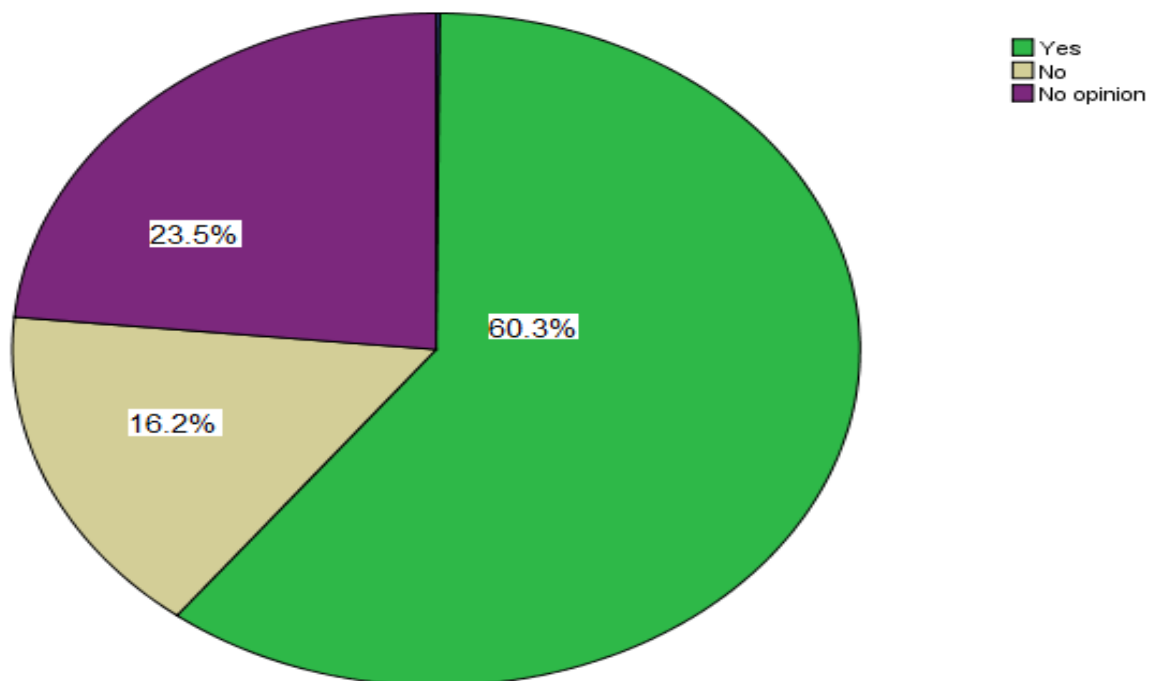


Figure 15.1: What is the most important aim of Turkey`s foreign policy towards Albania?
(Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Focus on its economy	310	43.3	43.3	43.3
	Focus on its culture and history	92	12.8	12.8	56.1
	Focus on its national and state interests	60	8.4	8.4	64.5
	Focus on its external security	55	7.7	7.7	72.2
	Focus on relations with EU	76	10.6	10.6	82.8
	No opinion	123	17.2	17.2	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 15.2: What is the most important aim of Turkey`s foreign policy towards Albania?
(Frequency)

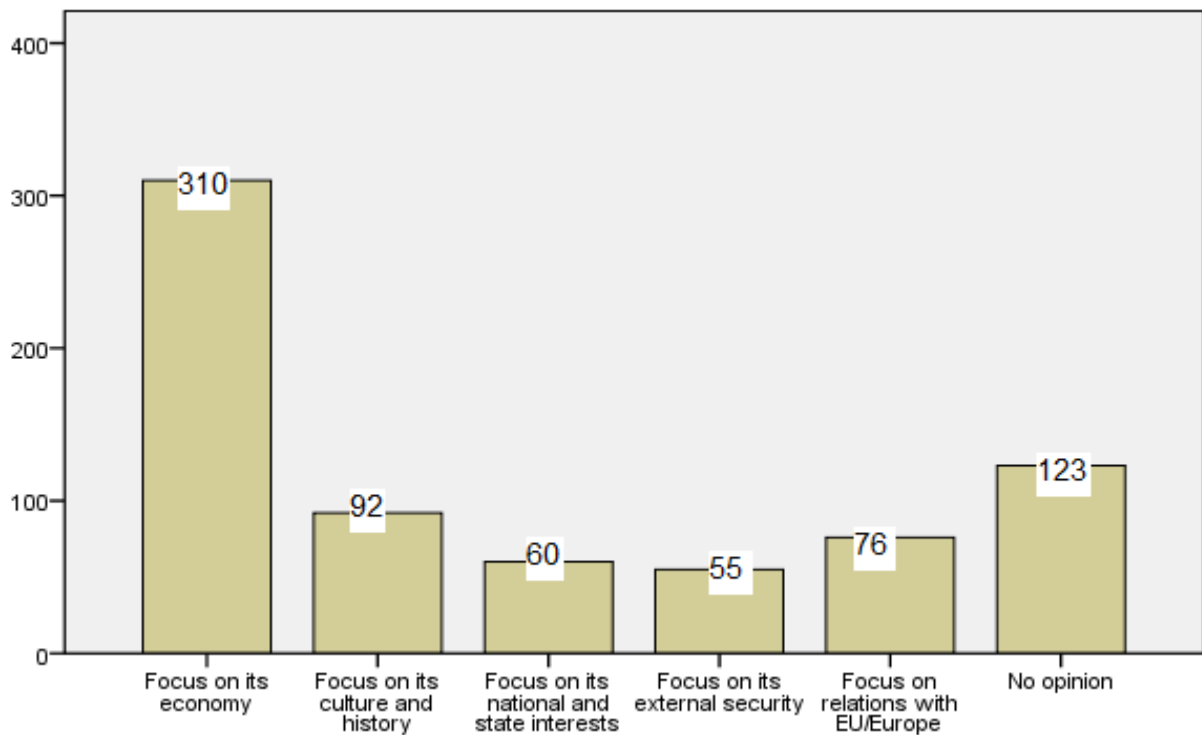


Figure 15.3: What is the most important aim of Turkey`s foreign policy towards Albania? (Percent)

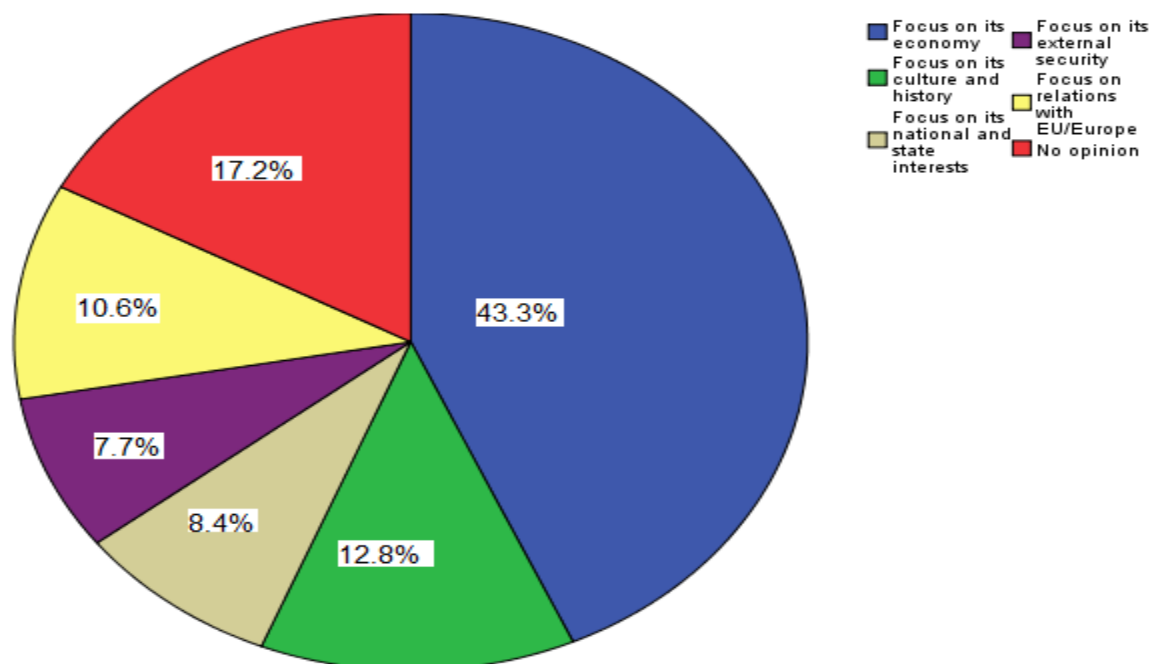


Figure 16.1: What is the most important issue between Albania and Turkey? (Detail)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Democracy and human rights	59	8.2	8.2	8.2
	Economy	298	41.6	41.6	49.9
	Cultural and historical ties	251	35.1	35.1	84.9
	No opinion	75	10.5	10.5	95.4
	Political instability	33	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 16.2: What is the most important issue between Albania and Turkey? (**Frequency**)

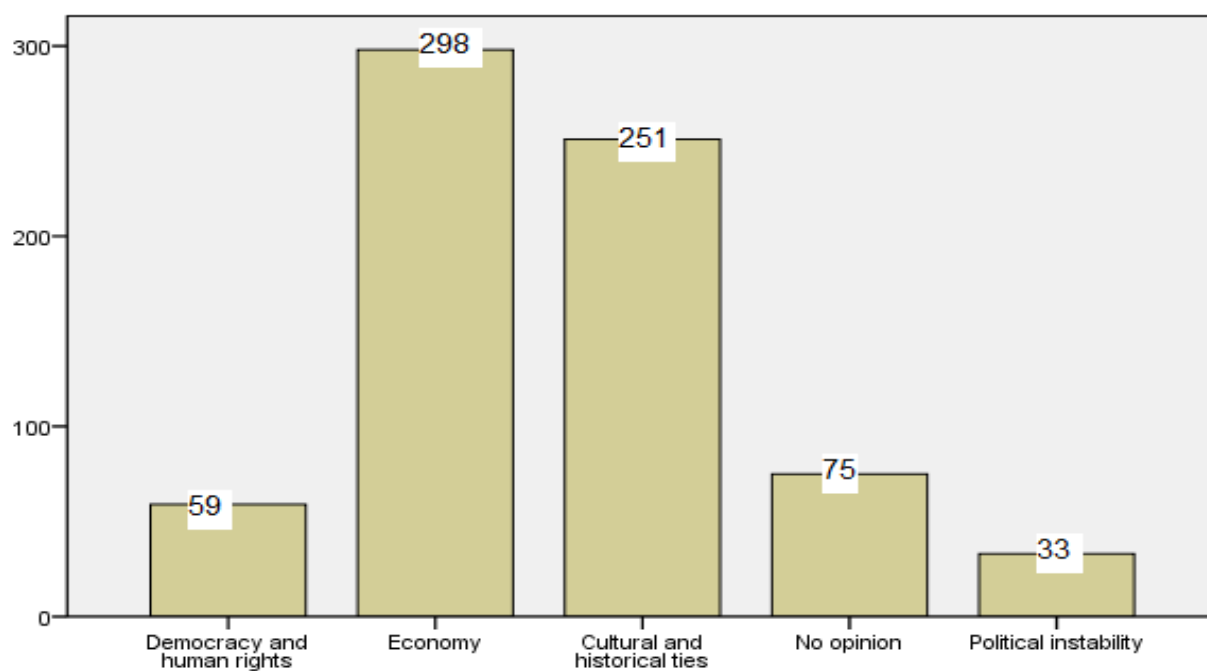


Figure 16.3: What is the most important issue between Albania and Turkey? (**Percent**)

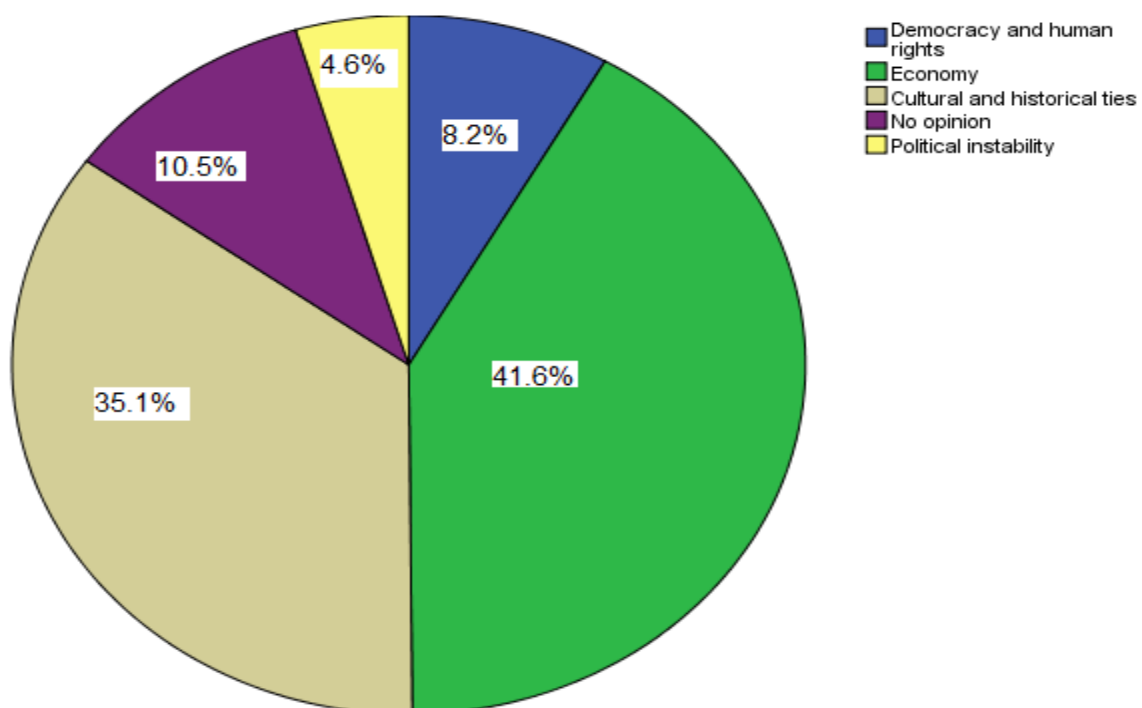


Figure 17.1: Do you think Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role concerning foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	508	70.9	70.9	70.9
	No	99	13.8	13.8	84.8
	No opinion	109	15.2	15.2	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 17.2: Do you think Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role concerning foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years? **(Frequency)**

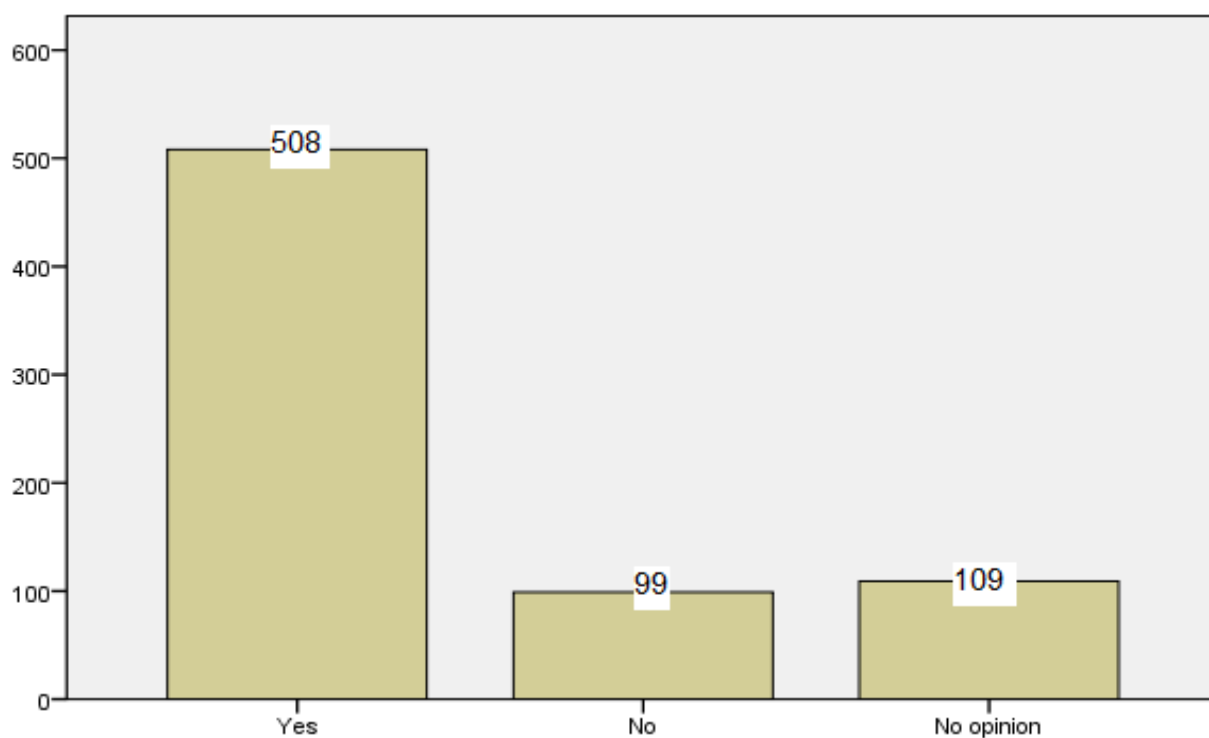


Figure 17.3: Do you think Turkey has been playing a more important and powerful role concerning foreign policy towards Albania last 10 years? **(Percent)**

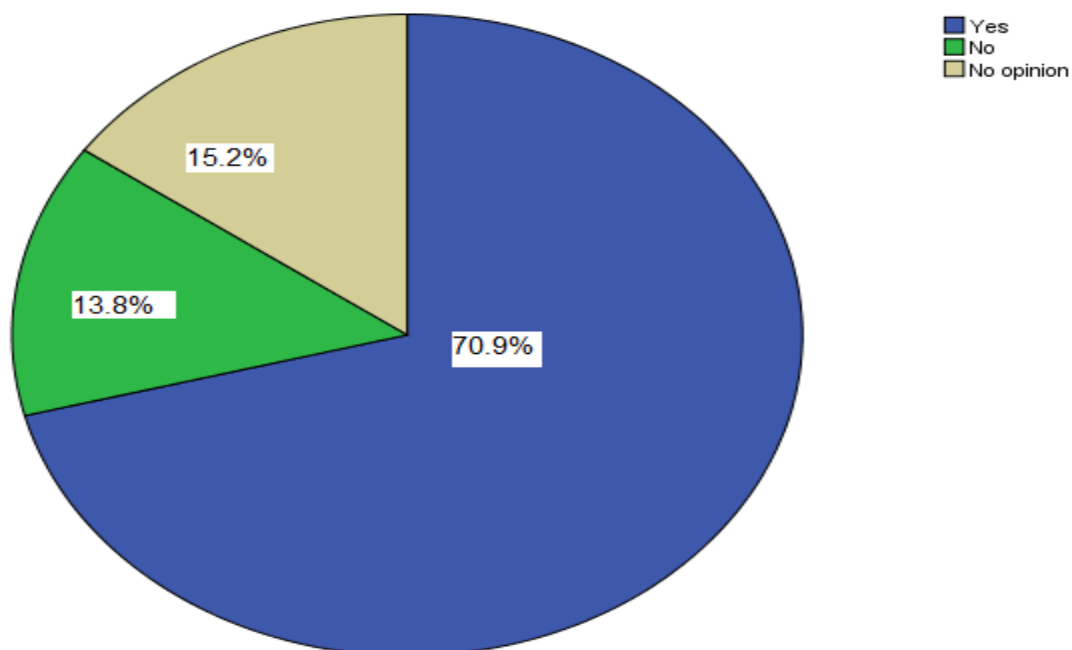


Figure 18.1: Do you think Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	598	83.5	83.5	83.5
	No	37	5.2	5.2	88.7
	No opinion	81	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 18.2: Do you think Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000?
(Frequency)

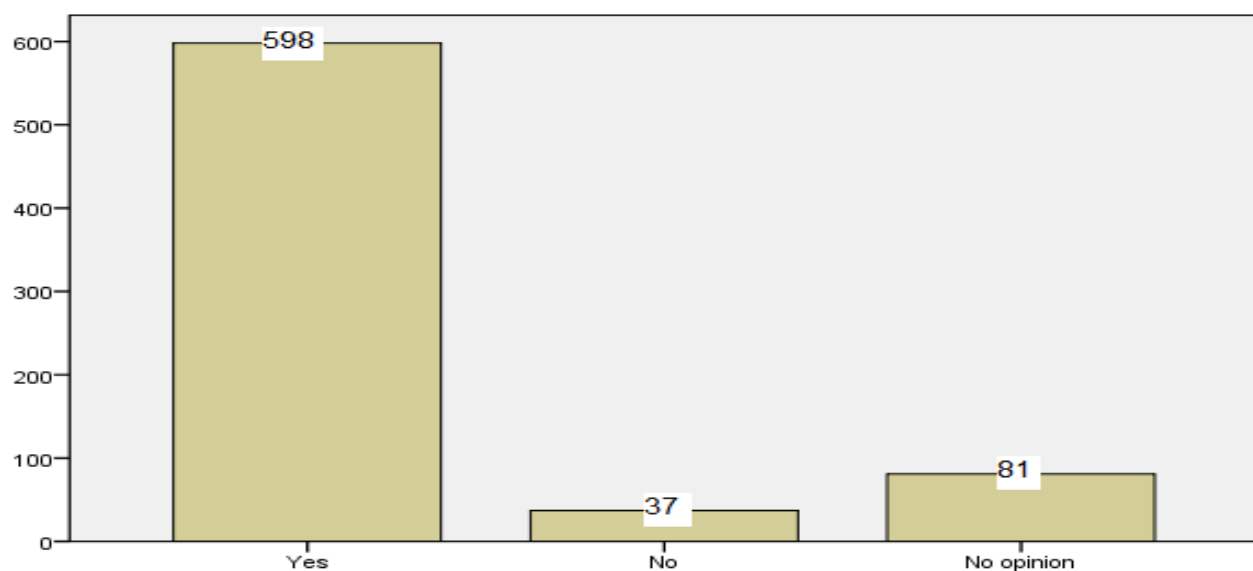


Figure 18.3: Do you think Turkey has improved its relations with Albania since 2000?
(Percent)

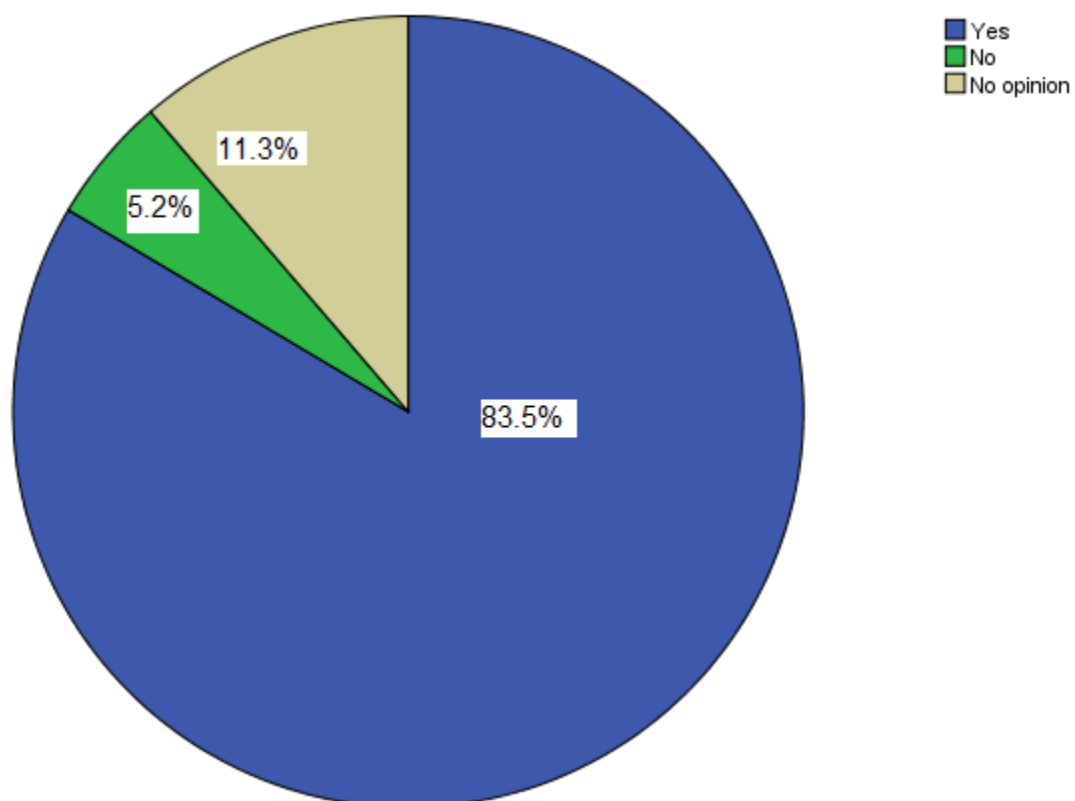


Figure 19.1: How important is the image of Turkey concerning the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very important	232	32.4	32.4	32.4
	Important	304	42.5	42.5	74.9
	Not too important	62	8.7	8.7	83.5
	Not at all important	27	3.8	3.8	87.3
	No opinion	91	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 19.2: How important is the image of Turkey concerning the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania? **(Frequency)**

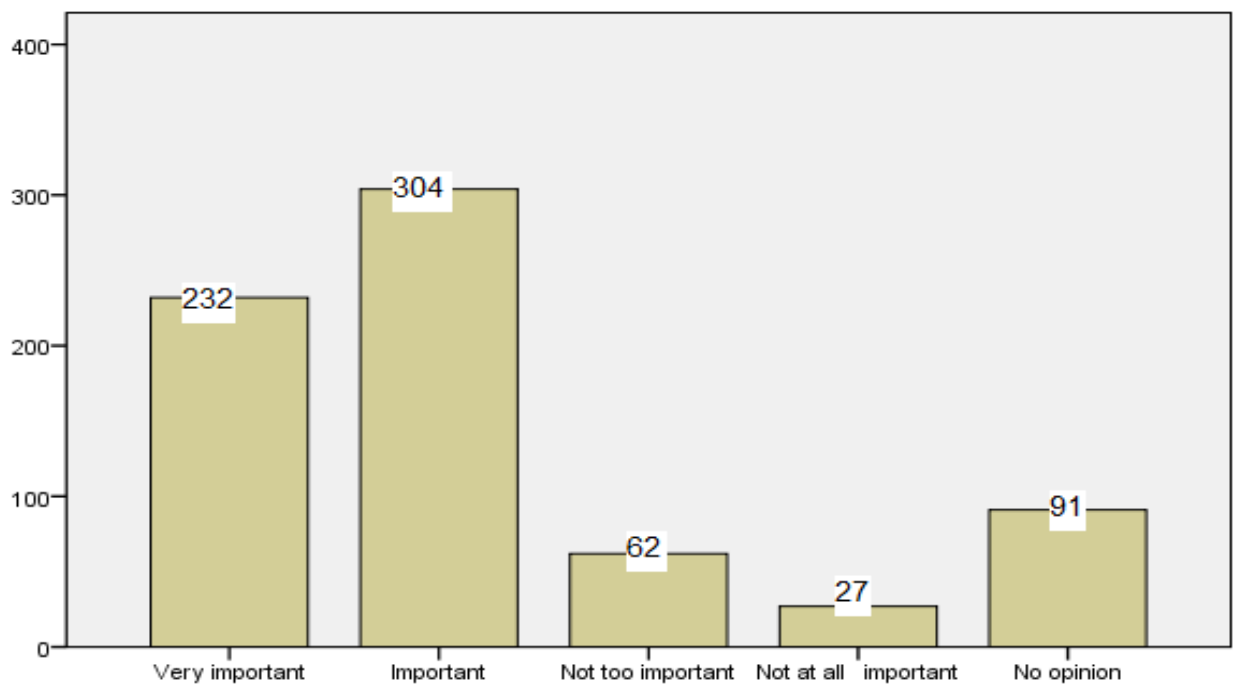


Figure 19.3: How important is the image of Turkey concerning the successful conduct of foreign policy towards Albania? **(Percent)**

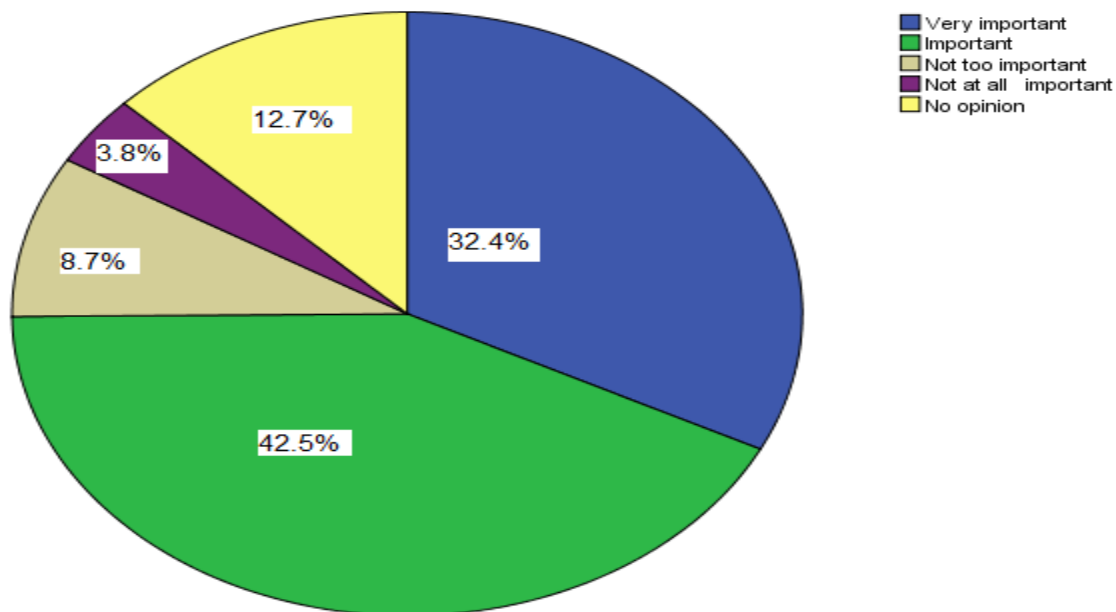


Figure 20.1: What do you think about the relations between Turkey and Albania in future? **(Detail)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Both countries will have more strong relations	627	87.6	87.6	87.6
	Both countries will have weaker relations than it is now	26	3.6	3.6	91.2
	Both countries will break up the relations	6	.8	.8	92.0
	No opinion	57	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	716	100.0	100.0	

Figure 20.2: What do you think about the relations between Turkey and Albania in future?
(Frequency)

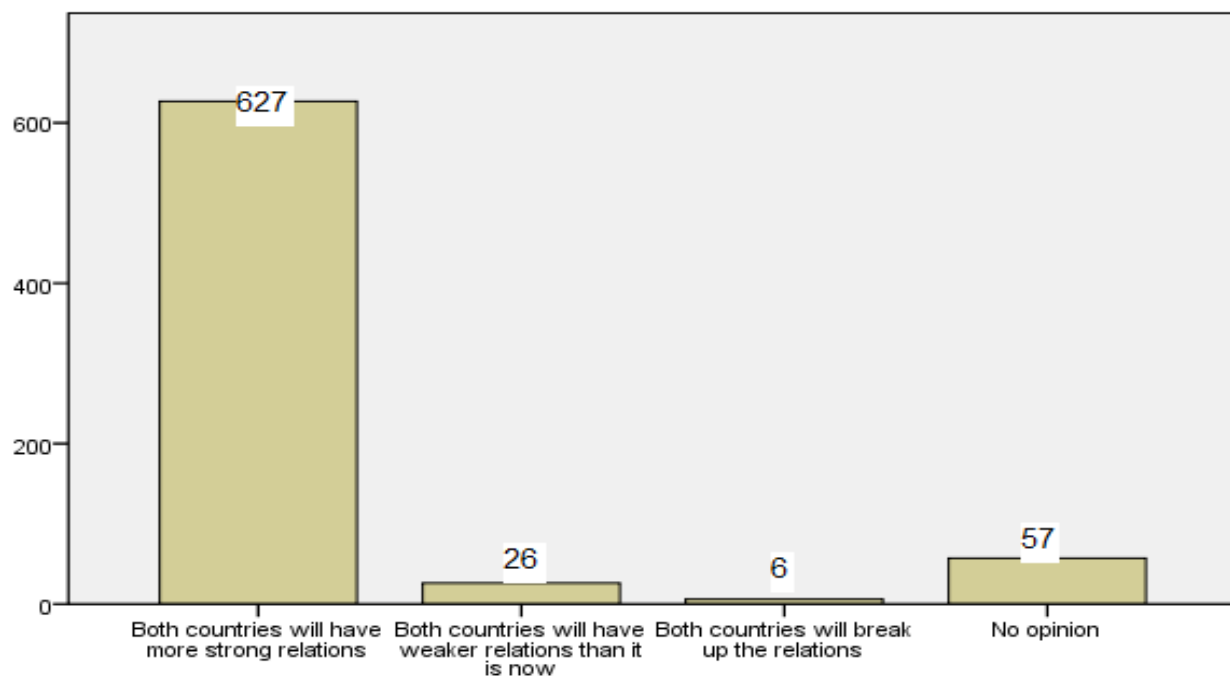
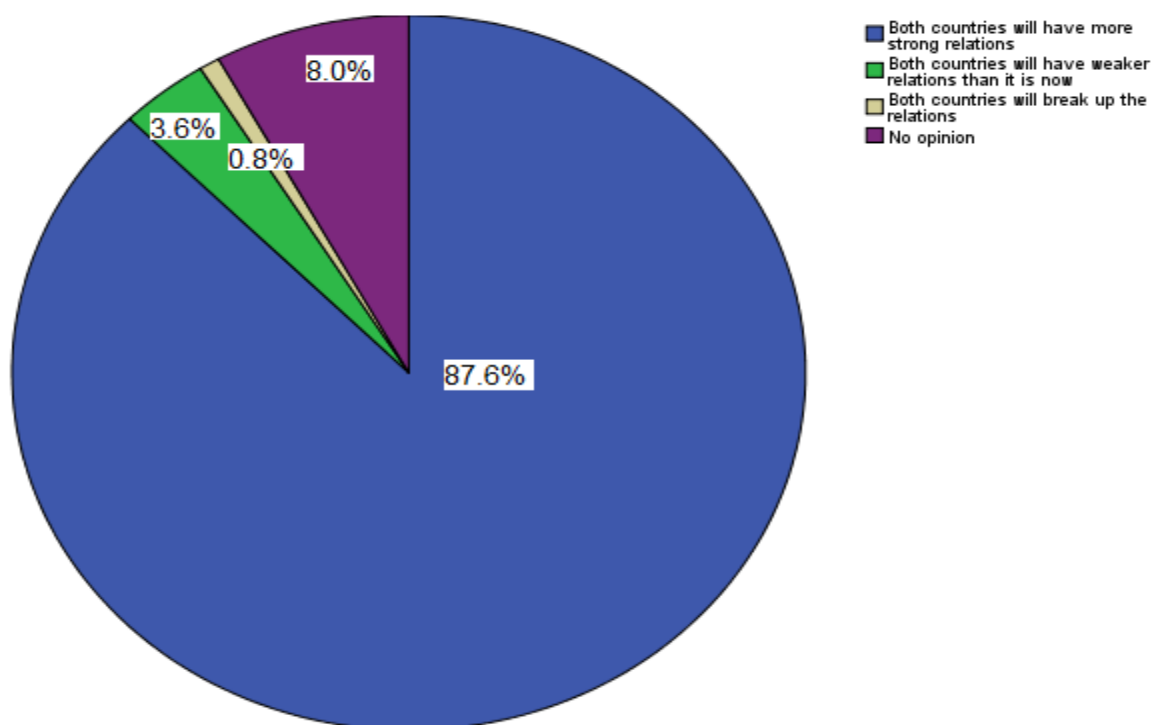


Figure 20.3: What do you think about the relations between Turkey and Albania in future?
(Percent)



Interviews

Interview 1

Prof.Dr. Ferit Duka, Albanian historian, European University of Tirana, April 18, 2013.

Q.1. Why Albania is important for the Turkish foreign policy? What do you think about that?

Turkey is one of Albania's main partners and a great country in the Balkans with whom Albania has historically had good relations. Although Albania was an isolated country and its relations with the world were very faint, with Turkey its relationship has always been special and also close. I want to emphasize the fact that for the Albanians and for Albania, Turkey is a very important country from the point of view of historical relationship, stretching from the period of the Ottomans, and also from the standpoint of common interests whether in the Balkans or within European context. In my opinion, the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania and Albanians has become more and more active during the years. The content of the relations between Albania and Turkey has been expanded and considering the period of your interest, I can say that since the year 2000 there has been a new dimensioning in the Albanian-Turkish relations. I think that there are a number of factors affecting. The first point is the collapse of communism and the establishment of a democratic system in Albania and the opening of Albania to the world. The relations with Turkey have widened and enriched in content too during this process. In both the Albanian and Turkish sides, there has been an increase in the consciousness towards the importance of the history in affecting these relationships. Another important fact in the increase is the interest of Turkish policy in the Balkans and Albania are all the geopolitical and strategic issues, which were opened after the liberation of Kosovo. The new

reality that was created in the Balkans with the liberation of Kosovo certainly increased the interest of Turkey both in the region and towards the Albanian factor in the Balkan. The historical relations and the common geostrategic interests in the Balkans and beyond have led to a new dimension of the relations, aiming to assist Albania, which came out of the communist regime with many problems in every aspect. This is why there has been an intensification of the economic investments that Turkey has made in Albania. The Turkish policy after 2000 has always shown interest to help Albania as I mentioned not only with economical investment presence but also with a wider presence in educational institutions, which were founded during these times. There has been an increase in schools spread throughout the territory of Albania, which are giving a great contribution to the education of a large part of the Albanian youth. The performance of these schools has been extremely good and they have become an example to follow, in order to take the education system in Albania into higher and higher levels. I emphasized that the presence of turkey in education and economy is evident, especially since 2000. With all the presence of the Turkish capital and educational institutions here, that is an aid for Albania. We need the Turkish investments in Albania to even more present, especially in sectors that Turkey can give very precious assistance (Duka, Professor Doctor, 2013).

Q.2. What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy towards Albania?

I think that from the perspective of Turkish political interests in the Balkans, Albania is a special place. Albania is a country in the west Balkan, which has been part of the western belt of the Ottoman Empire, and it still remains a key strategic region, Albania is the western gate towards the Balkans. Secondly, Turkey is aware that there has been a long time of living together. The two countries have had a long term cooperation in history so that the Turkish political circles are aware that Albania remains a country with which

Turkey can have a very good relationship and partnership, probably because of religious, cultural beliefs etc . Although a small country, given the role of the Albanian factor in the Balkans, Turkish policy is interested in having good relations with the Albanians in general, but especially with two countries that are the main voice of the Albanians in the region, Albania and Kosovo. There is also a large Albanian community in Turkey, which is certainly well integrated. It is a community with an identity, which they have carried from their mother country. Today as I am aware, this community is a powerful voice in Turkey, which has numerous businesses. This community has a considerable role in the state and in the civil society around Turkey and I think that the presence of so many Albanians in Turkey is another cause in the Turkish foreign policy in Albania. These communities strengthen the bridges of friendship between our states.

Q.3. Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy towards this country especially since 1990s?

Turkey undoubtedly has played and continues to play an important role towards Albania. Turkey has been and remains a powerful voice when it comes to promoting Albania, Kosovo and the interests of the Albanians. I think that Turkey is a strong supporting voice, in support of Albanians, in support of Kosovo's freedom, in support of the interests of new state of Kosovo. Albania has a great interest in the progress of the state of Kosovo, so by supporting Kosovo, Turkey is supporting Albania too. To illustrate this is the assistance, which was provided to Albania in its admission to NATO from Turkey. As far as I know turkey has played an important role not only in terms of the contribution to the growth in performance in the Albanian army so that it was worthy of admission into NATO but Turkey also gave political support to Albania to become a part of NATO. I believe that Albania will not forget this easily..

Q.4. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country?

This is a very interesting question, because today there could certainly be doubts about Turkey's image, especially when it comes to its foreign policy positions in the Balkans and Albania. You know some Turkish statesman and the scholars of international relations, that today are in important state ranks or in the direction of Turkish foreign policy have developed and promoted certain views about the role of geopolitics in the strategy of the Turkish state in the present time with regard to strengthening the position of the today's Turkey's international relations and especially within the Balkan regions and especially middle east. Of course, they are thesis from the viewpoint of political interests, which aim to strengthen the international position of Turkey even more. Of course, when it comes to the Turkish relations with Albania, there have been debates about Turkey's image in connection with its claim "to revive or recreate the image of the Ottoman Empire". The involvement of Turkey in the issues of Balkan, especially Albania, is sometimes misunderstood. It is sometimes misinterpreted as the desire to recreate the Ottoman Empire that is to take under control the policies of the regions, which once were part of the Ottoman Empire. I have been involved myself in these debates and I have emphasized that the relations of Albania with turkey are a very important factor and I don't think that the Turkish republic would delude itself by thinking that it could recreate the ottoman empire.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

For all those reasons I mentioned in answer to the previous questions I am optimistic for the Albanian - Turkish relationship. Both countries have fundamental interests to

strengthen friendship, to strengthen cooperation and to walk side by side towards progress. I am optimistic also based on the history of Albanian - Turkey relations. In days or even years with many problems for Albania, as the years of communism, both countries have been aware of what friendship, coexistence and cooperation offered to them. The past can be used as a capital to build a more secure present and why not to have an even more secure future, where both countries walk next to each against the problems that we may have. I think that Turkey can help strengthen Albania's economy. I am also optimistic because they are two countries of NATO. This is a new dimension of the potential in favor of strengthening of these relations. In addition, I believe that the interest that both countries have in the Balkan, causes the strengthening of friendship and collaboration. With the large and powerful Albanian presence in Turkey, the already consolidated Turkish capital in Albania, the Turkish institutions to assist Albania, which are mainly educational institutions, make me optimistic for the future of the Turkish-Albanian relations (Duka, 2013).

Interview 2

Mr. Hasan Aşan, the Turkish ambassador to Albania, May 02, 2013.

Q.1. Why Albania is important for Turkish foreign policy? What do you think about that?

Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, to expand the sphere of peace and prosperity and to generate stability and security in its region and beyond. With this perspective, attaching particular importance to its 'transatlantic' ties Turkey is strengthening its relations with the countries in the Balkans, a priority for Turkey not only from the political, economic and geographical perspectives, but also due to its historical, cultural and human ties with the region.

Being itself a Balkan country, Turkey attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with the Balkan countries, maintains good relations with all of them, and has the belief that its own security and stability can only be achieved through the security and stability of the region.

In this regard, Turkey considers Albania as a strategically important country for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the Balkans plays a role of catalyst in its region.

Turkey supports Albania's integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. Strong Albania is an important pillar for Turkey's foreign policy, which aims to create sustainable peace, security and tranquility in the region and beyond.

Q.2.What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

Turkey has strong historical and cultural ties with Albania and the general characteristic of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania is mutual friendship, trust and solidarity. For this reason, Turkey aims at achieving further close bilateral relationship with Albania. Turkey also believes that the integration of all Western Balkan countries in Euro-Atlantic institutions is the key to restoring peace and stability in the region. In this sense, Turkey considers the integration of Albania to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions necessary and continues to support its efforts in this direction. Turkey also supports the integration of Albania to the regional organizations. Turkey and Albania are both members of NATO and have similar visions with regard to EU membership together with all the countries of the region. Furthermore, the two countries are active members of the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the only homegrown initiative in the region. Turkey and Albania are also cooperate as two member states within

the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), multilateral political and economic initiative to ensure peace, stability and prosperity encouraging friendly and good-neighborly relations in the Black Sea region. Turkey develops its bilateral relations with Albania at every aspect as a strategic partner in the region and supports Albania for its ambition for the integration to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions along with the regional initiatives to promote regional peace, stability and security.

Q.3. Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy towards this country especially since 1990s?

Albania was under the rule of Enver Hoxha for decades. After transitional period in early 1990s, Turkey and Albania further developed their relations. The relations between two countries in the last two decades have been more constructive, open and beneficial for their international purposes. Turkey and Albania share the same international objectives and foreign policy priorities in terms of Euro-Atlantic ties in achieving peaceful, safe and stable atmosphere in the Balkan region. The two countries also have close cooperation in regional and international arena. Turkey considers Albania as strategic partner and balancing country in the region. In this context, Turkey actively supported NATO membership of Albania, which resulted positively for Albania in 2009. Turkey's policy is to continue supporting and/or encouraging Albania's membership to regional and international organizations. Cooperation in the field of defense constitutes a strong dimension of Turkish-Albanian bilateral relations. Due to close historical and cultural ties, Turkey closely cooperates with Albania in areas other than political and military relations. The said assistance is conducted in various areas such as economy, culture, protection of common historical heritage and education by our relevant public institutions in accordance with the bilateral agreements and

in a spirit of solidarity. The total value of Turkish investments in Albania is developing steadily as Turkey is among the major trade partners of Albania. Thus, Turkey is generally in the top three countries with regard to overall economic relations. Turkish companies mainly operate in banking, GSM/ communication, mining, processing and education sectors in Albania. TİKA projects in Albania contribute to reveal the close historical and cultural relations between Turkey and Albania. TİKA activities in this sense constitute important support for development projects of Albania in many spheres. As a result of close interaction and cooperation between the two countries, Albanian people have a great interest in Turkey and Turkish language. Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers both in Tirana and in Shkodra have been offering Turkish language courses and organizing various cultural activities. Turkish series on Albanian television screens attracted even more curiosity and interest in Turkish culture and language. We observe an increase for the number of applicants to Yunus Emre Cultural Centers for Turkish language classes. Government scholarships are granted to Albanian students for graduate and post-graduate programmes at various areas of studies, from science, medicine, engineering to social sciences and tourism. Training programmes and protocols are offered ranging from technical issues to health, telecommunication, forestry, law enforcement, fire extinguishing etc.

Q.4. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?

Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering the developments in a positive direction, in a region where the impact of global changes is greatest. In this context, Turkey's multi-dimensional, constructive, proactive, realistic and responsible foreign policy is one of the most important assets in realizing its national and

international goals. Thanks to this foreign policy vision, Turkey is today considered as a country that not only safeguards but also disseminates human rights, democracy, rule of law and social equity. Due to its political and economic breakthrough, the visibility and the prestige of Turkey has been increasing in regional and international fields. On the other hand, because of its historical, cultural and human ties with the Balkans, Turkey attaches a special importance to the image of the country and its prestige in Albania and in the region. For this reason, Turkey pursues a foreign policy in the Balkans to further increase its positive image and prestige. TİKA projects and the activities of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers in Albania with Turkish soap operas also contribute to the prestige of Turkey in Albania as well as the region.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

In general, the Balkans, being the geographical connection of Turkey with the rest of Europe, bears great importance with the special place it had in the historical context that shaped the Turkish nation and the future potential it carries within the framework of regional integration and the EU accession objective which we share with all the countries of the region. Our leading objectives are the acceleration of the existing cooperation through the creation of “areas of joint interest” among the countries of the region and the attainment of an extensive regional integration. Considering Albania as a strategically important country for the establishment of peace and stability in the Balkans, Turkey will continue to support Albania in the process of integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this regard, Turkey will cooperate extensively with Albania on almost every regional and international field and high-level visits and contacts will continue to be carried out on a periodical basis to further develop the bilateral relations between two countries (Aşan, 2013).

Interview 3

Dr.Bunyamin Çağlayan, the former Director of Yunus Emre (Turkish Culture Center) of Tirana, May 29, 2013.

Q.1.Why Albania is important for Turkish foreign policy? What do you think about that?

There are many reasons why Turkey needs to improve its Turkish foreign policy towards Albania. The reasons are:

A. Not only Turkey but also all the countries need to have good relations with each other. Due to the good relations, the countries may have positive results towards each other. The reason is that, the good relations among countries, people will bring a peaceful and comfortable life in this world, and the people will look well for the future. So as a result, both countries Albania and Turkey will benefit from the good relations and friendship. Apart from the general assessment, there are also other reasons between Albania and Turkey that need to continue their relations.

B-The historical ties between Albania and Turkey needs to continue today as well. There had not been big problems between Albania and Ottoman Empire that lived together for about 500 hundred years. Besides, the Albanian people helped Ottoman Empire in sciences, arts etc.The changes in 20th century helped Albania become independent country. The independence had not been because of the problems between two countries. The brotherhood that comes from the historical ties still continues between Albania and Turkey. If the two countries improve the relations, the both countries and people will gain advantages through the good relations.

C-The geographical situations is the reason that Albania and Turkey need to have good relations. The two countries are very near each other and they are also neighboring countries. These all provide good advantages for both countries. The other countries` threat on Albania also necessitates the help of Turkey towards Albania.

D- Another reason of the both countries why they need to improve the relation, because there are also cultural ties between two countries. The people of two countries understand each other well due to the fact that majority of the people belong to the same religion, culture, customs etc. There are many things in common for both countries. Since the two countries are familiar with each other and they have almost same perception and same opinions. These common things help each country in the international relations.

E- Due to the historical, geographical and cultural ties many Albanians emigrated to Turkey and there are many Albanian people that live in Turkey. On the other hand, there are also Turks in Macedonia and Kosovo that live together with Albanian people. The relations between two countries are important because the countries have to protect their people's rights who live in Turkey and also who live in Macedonia and Kosovo.

Q.2. What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

Big countries, which they dominate the small countries, usually try to influence, assimilate and then they make the countries become dependent upon them. These are main strategies of big countries. Firstly, the dominated countries lose their own languages and also they lose their identities. Nowadays global culture threatens every region. Regarding Ottoman Empire, it did follow different strategies. Each ethnicity and each religion group preserved their identity and religion. It is stated by Albanian scholars that Ottoman Empire played an important role that Albania was assimilated by neither Slav culture nor Latin culture. Albania is in the geographical place, which is strategically very important. For this reason, many countries had desires towards Albania in history. The Turkey's political aim towards Albania is to help Albania protect its cultural identity and also to maintain to be a developed country regarding its economy.

Q.3. Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy towards this country especially since 1990s?

We can say that these developments happened. Firstly, when there was conflict in Kosovo, Turkey tried to help solve the problems by meeting Serb's officials and Turkey was the first country which recognized Kosovo as an independent country. Secondly, Turkey worked so much for Albania that Albania would be member of NATO. Thirdly, Turkey founded TIKA in order to help Albania regarding its economy. TIKA has done different projects in different regions of Albania. Fourthly, In order to improve Albanian cultural relations Turkey founded Yunus Emre Institution in Tirana and in Shkodra. Yunus Emre institution gives Turkish courses, it does cultural activities and it also gives different courses and trainings. Besides, Yunus Emre Institution also provides scholarships for education.

Q.4. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?

Turkey is such a country which has a policy to have good relations with every country. Turkey is also such a country which tries to find solutions to the problems, it is not such a country which creates conflicts and problems. Turkey might be examples to other countries which has not had any problem with Albania so far.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

There is a good saying that politicians usually use. "What is done, it is a guarantee for the future deeds". This saying is compatible with Turkey-Albania relations. We can observe there are many developments in the Albania – Turkey relations. We believe that the

relations between Albania and Turkey will go further .These two countries need to continue these relations further.

Interview 4

Hajro limaj, former Albanian military attaché to Ankara, May 14, 2013.

Q.1.Why Albania is important for the Turkish foreign policy? What do you think about that?

There is an important and long history between Albania and Turkey. Albania was under the Ottoman Empire and Albania was one of the most integrated countries. During the Ottoman Empire, out of 282 sadrazam (prime ministers) 28 prime ministers were Albanian. Apart from this, the Albanians from Macedonia and Kosovo are living in Turkey as one nation. According to the officials, there is more Albanian living in Turkey than in Albania. According to the official documents there are about 4.5-5 million Albanian people in Turkey. These Albanian people have integrated living with Turkish people. Turkey gives more attentions to Albania than other Balkan countries, because these both countries have trust and confidence in each other. The Balkan countries especially, Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonia function like a bridge between Turkey and Europe.

Q.2. What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

Even before entering the democracy system Albania had never had conflicts or any negative positions towards Turkey. When the Serbs increased pressure on Albanian people in Kosovo, the leader of communism, Enver Hoxha stated that Turkey had always been with Albania and Turkey had always helped Albania, if something happened in Kosovo, they would demand help from Turkey. When Albania passed to the multi-party system since 1990 the relations between Albania and Turkey increased more. Those years, in 1990s there were

problems inside Albania due to the changed and new systems. For this reason, the neighbor Greece in the south and the neighbor Serbia in the north were having bad intentions towards Albania. For these reasons, the first official visitor from Turkey was the chief of defense Dogan Gunes. For the first time Albania was visited by a NATO member. Between 1990-2000, the most political and economic relations were between Turkey and Albania than any other countries. There were many visitors between Albania and Turkey regarding military and politics positions.

Q.3. Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy towards this country especially since 1990s?

Turkey is the country which has helped Albania more regarding education, politics, economics and Turkey also helped Albania during the process of membership of NATO. Turkey gave Albania 60 million dollars for the military defense. There was not another country that helped Albania so much. On 12 and 27 March 1997 the prime minister of Turkey, Tansu Ciller announced that Greece had to forget the bad intentions towards Albania.

Q.4. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?

The Turkey's foreign policy is very important towards Balkans. When the socialist system was over after 1990, there were many conflicts and problems in the Balkans including Romania and Bulgaria. Firstly those years, the Turkey's foreign policy influenced especially Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo. Turkey played an important role in solving conflicts in those countries. In those years there were ethnic problems in Bulgaria, there were problems between multi parties in Albania, conflicts and problems were too big in

Kosovo, Yugoslavia was breaking up. Turkey was very active in those countries regarding its foreign policy. The USA was not much affective in Balkan countries those years. Turkey was always with us, with Balkan countries. Turkey had a great image and the image increased more in Balkan countries. Turkey also started its political and diplomatic relations with Slovenia and Croatia. It is argued that in the Balkan countries that how much Turkey followed peaceful politics during Bosnian conflicts. For this reason, Mr. Suleyman Demirel wrote a letter to the world and to the president of the USA stating: We cannot let the problem continue like in Bosnia. We are facing the same problems in Kosovo.

The Turkey`s image is very good in Balkans now, but some European countries affect the Turkey`s image in negative way. Turkey has increased its collaborations and investments in Albania since 2000. We can say that the most important investment is the Turkish schools in Albania. The Turkish schools have also increased Turkey`s activities and Turkey`s image in Albania. For example, on 16 February 1993, the president of Turkey Turgut Özal opened the Turkish Mehmet Akif College. The college has a great potential now. There are thousands of students that graduated from the Turkish colleges, the students have finished their higher education abroad and they come back to Albania. Today there are Turkish schools from kindergarten until university. These are big investments in Albania. Besides the Turkish schools, there are also construction companies, which are big investments in Albania as well.

Interview 5

Prof. Dr. Gjergj Sinani, University of Tirana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Head of Philosophy Chair, Albania, July 27, 2013.

Q.1. Why Albania is important for Turkish foreign policy? What do you think about that?

These are the questions regarding some practical issues just focus on philosophy as a citizen and person who flows diplomacy or foreign policy I think considering the role of Turkey as a geostrategic pillar agent, I think Albania is important to realize its role in the region considering the issues in the Balkan area. I think that Albania is important for foreign policy as a friendly country for Turkey. I think there will be some level of collaborations of Turkey with Albania in order to be strong not only on economic level but also on the cultural level in order people would know each other better not based on stereotype historical what are the evolution of two countries towards the freedom and democracy I think this is important not focusing on economic level.

Q.2.What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

I think the priority of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania is to strength the relations as I have mentioned before on the Economic level, because Albania is on the way of entering new stage of society, in the stage of free market economy and democracy I think it is important to profit by the experience of the Turkish foreign policy which is growing up freedom and economy in Turkey. Secondly I think it is also more important to have mobility not only the people of trade but also the on the level intellectual changes between two countries and in the changes of idea in the level of university. I think it is important to have common research not only on political and economic level. These are the main priorities.

Q.3.Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy towards this country especially since 1990s?

Considering the problems that faced in the Balkan area especially after the collapse of communism. I think that Turkey has played important role defending and supporting Albania in the way of building up new democratic institution and in some crucial moment after 1990s

Turkey played a role to save the integrity of Albania before changes of nationalist movement in the Balkan area and Turkey played very important role supporting in the beginning step of weak democracy after the nationalist movement.

Q.4. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?.

This is a very hard question, because the image of Turkey and Albania is not the same in all the country, I mean it is necessary to have sociological study on this idea what is the image of Turkey. Considering my impression, maybe I am wrong there are still old image of Albania on Turkey considering our history of our communist propaganda has presented the Ottoman Empire etc. There are some stereotypes on this, but in the intellectual level, I think there are some good image of Turkey considering the relation and considering supporting Turkey towards the freedom and independence. I have mentioned before what are the priorities can be the sociological study to see what the image among different level of population is, ages, and gender issues etc. I think Turkey has to be very careful in relation with Albania regarding its foreign policy in order not to interfere too much in specific issue for example considering history etc. I think Turkey's foreign policy has not to be like paternalistic perspective towards Albania like a small country I think to see as a friendly country considering Albania. As an alien Turkey needs to support Albania reciprocally in the process of integration to Europe. I think Turkey and Albania in the same ideal. Turkey has to collaborate and reciprocally help each other to realize this common objective.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

Considering future, I am optimistic because If we take into consideration the collaboration after 1990s. I think the future has offered in the relation Turkey - Albania good

way considering even now that the top project create strong relation economically. I think gradually the relation between Albania and Turkey can be grown up on a common perspective on a common way to build democratic institution and how to create condition to organize freedom and the main idea is the two countries have to build the life based on dignity of human being. I think the relations between two countries can be very fruitful not only economical, but cultural, academic and scientific way of collaboration

Interview 6

Dr.Ferdinand Xhaferraj, Albanian former Minister of Tourism, Cultural Affairs and Youth and Sports, August 15, 2013.

Q.1.Why is Albania important for Turkey's foreign policy? What is your opinion on this issue?

I believe this question would have received a more adequate answer if a high official of the Turkish Foreign Ministry were to be asked, however in my humble opinion and mostly based on the relations between Turkey and Albanian throughout the past ten years, it is easy to derive that Albania has been a part of the objectives of the Turkish foreign policy. In the 1980's, Özal's government made a shift from Kemal's ideologies. This shift was based on the concept of neo-Ottomanism, which as a political ideology promotes a greater Turkish engagement in areas formerly under the Ottoman Empire. Turkey's foreign policy of the past ten years, however, has been based on the theories of the political scientist and diplomat Ahmet Davutoglu, who is the chief architect of the Turkish foreign policy. Davutoğlu doctrine expressed in his book “Strategic Depth,” published in 2001, explains his strategic vision for Turkey. Davutoğlu has been careful to avoid the speculation concerning the establishment of a new ottoman order, but it goes without saying that Davutoğlu’s foreign

policy is not aiming a new imperial ottoman order, but greater Turkish involvement not only in former Ottoman areas, but also in global affairs. The desired influence will result from the promotion of liberal policies and conflict resolution and also from the implementation of 'win-win' solutions economically speaking. Therefore, Albania as a country located in the southwestern part of the Balkan Peninsula with a dominant muslim population is part of the objectives of the Turkish foreign policy.

Q.2.What are the priorities of Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

Davutoğlu's doctrine regarding foreign policy aims to transform Turkey from a regional power towards a central power. This means that the road of Turkey toward a central power goes through fulfilling the obligations, which derives from being a regional power. Within the region, Albania, as a country with a Muslim majority, has offered all the opportunities for Turkish foreign policy and objectives to be implemented in micro-levels and even grassroots.

Q.3.Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy especially since 2000?

Albania is a country with a dominant muslim population in which during the last ten years, the Turkey's contributions have been noticed in all levels. This also due to the fact that after September 11th 2001, U.S. President Bush's foreign policy regarded Turkey as the satellite of moderate Islam in Balkan states such as Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Those countries posed even more of a threat due to the mass foundations and associations from Saudi Arabia and even from Iran. Therefore, having received a "green card" from the West, Erdogan's Government exploited the new strategic context and deeply

introduced Turkey in the region not only as a secular Muslim country, but also as a moderate Islamic satellite.

Turkey has had great contributes regarding Albania's educational system, mainly schools, universities and cultural associations. Furthermore, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) plays a major role regarding the implementation of different projects which aim the reconstruction of cultural heritage from an Islamic origin such as Mosque's. This is done under the philosophy that we are not aiming to bring Islam, instead we are trying to protect the already existing aspects of it in Albania. TIKA has also fully reconstructed the building of the "Albanian Muslim Community".

Economically speaking, Turkish investments have been present in Albania in numerous fields including telecommunications, various industries, and energy production and in the military. Turkish business has been an integral part of the build-up of crucial infrastructure in Albania with values of even over a billion US dollars. Small businesses originating from Turkey, on the other hand, are present in all major Albanian cities.

Q.4.How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?

It is obvious that the majority of Albanian families perceive Turkey very well, while as the relation between the two countries is excellent. Being a small country surrounded by neighbors with territorial ambitions toward Albania, through centuries Albanians have regarded Turkey as a basis of its stability and security, this also due to our tied history for approximately five centuries. Albania is welcoming towards all Turkish initiatives to further our collaboration and cooperation.

When it comes to the perspective of our relations, I see no reason for them to change, thus they will continue to be very tight. This because if you are thinking of making a project regarding the future you must analyze the past in order to reach certain conclusions about the future. Past Turkish-Albanian relations are an example of stability and tight cooperation in multi-dimensional aspects. The present serves as proof of the desire of both countries to consider this cooperation as strategic as well as a crucial part of their foreign policies. The newly elected Prime Minister of Albania, during his official visit in Turkey at the beginning of August 2013, was clear in his message that Turkey is a strategic ally for Albania. The Turkish Prime-Minister Erdogan, on the other hand, found extensive time for around three hours to share the same thought throughout his meeting with Mr. Rama.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

Thus, the future seems to be excellent between two countries who share not only an already consolidated relationship, but also belonging to the Muslim belief, which serves as a strengthening of the mutual desire to further develop relations. Turkey and Albania, besides both being part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), also have in common the joint objective of joining the European Union between the years 2020-2025.

Turkey has always been eager to support and protect the small country with a Muslim majority in the Balkans. It can be inferred that Turkey's ambitions in the foreign policy involve tight connections with Albania. Albania will benefit in many aspects such as economic, military and cultural ones among others. Moreover, Turkey seems to be a 'security umbrella' for Albania while it tries to consolidate itself as a crucial country in the Western Balkans.

Interview 7

Edmond Haxhinasto , Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania, December 20, 2013.

1. Why is Albania important for Turkey's foreign policy? What is your opinion on this issue?

For modern Turkey, with consolidated democracy and fast economic development, areas within the former Ottoman Empire constitute a priority, or rather a new shaft in its foreign policy. Despite the negative image left after the fall of the former empire, Turkey wants to state that it is in the same political line as former major colonial powers i.e Great Britain or France, whose policies have never left aside those territories, on the contrary. So, in the Turkish foreign policy, the dimension of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans, including Albania , constitutes a re-discovered direction that aims to strengthen more, serving Turkey's today Strategy , to enhance and strengthen its role as an international actor in all areas .

Secondly, it seems that Albania is considered by Turkish foreign policy based on the development of their traditionally very good relations, since Albania gained its independence. The spectrum of these relationships has been and is multidimensional regardless of the form of the regime in Albania .Maintaining these relations has been greatly influenced by the cultural and amicable ties between citizens of the two countries and the existence of a relatively large number of Turkish citizens of Albanian origin (estimated at about 5 million) being consequences of the common heritage during the Ottoman period including the aspect of religious connections (despite the two countries have chosen the secular form of state and where in Albania four religion forms coexist harmoniously , with the majority belonging to the Islamic religion) .

My opinion is that the above goals of the Turkish foreign policy, while they serve strengthening its role in the international arena , they also do not conflict with the basic strategy of this country (NATO member and EU member candidate) to be part of the western political, military and economic sphere, so even with the political volition and desire of the Albanians for more of Turkey's presence (i.e economic) in Albania and all Albanian region .

Q.2.What are the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy regarding Albania?

As is treated in point 1, the priorities of Turkish foreign policy towards Albania can be summarized as follows:

Further strengthening of bilateral political dialogue to support the growth of Turkish presence in the Albanian economy and culture as well as in the matters of defense and security.

Considering that Turkey is welcome to Albania and Kosovo (soon Albania and Turkey shall sign the Declaration of Strategic Partnership) more than in any other Balkan countries (along with Bosnia), it aims to increase its presence everywhere, in every field, to enable so an easier deployment of this influence on other countries of the region (except for bilateral ties that continue to strengthen, with each of them: Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia and Romania).

Increment of Turkey's political weight toward Albanian politics, to enable the achievement of common positions in different multilateral activities such as various regional and international organizations in order to strengthen its presence as a major international player.

Q.3.Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy especially since 2000?

Based on a policy of benevolence and transparency, Turkey has been active and has offered its assistance to Albania during all its hard times, i.e. after the fall of communism in 1992 or during the crisis of 1997 and beyond. With the establishment and growth of a democratic system in Albania, this activity, mainly after the war in Kosovo of 1999, has become obviously more organized. It is extended in all fields, from which can be distinguished:

Defense: The bilateral collaboration consists of giving aid, technical support (being one of the main countries for its aid to our Army) and training to military cadets (ranked first); It offers short term courses in the PFP center, the Center of War on Terror in Ankara and in the Center of Strategic Simulation in Istanbul; the treatment of more than 900 Albanian servicemen and their family members should be also noted; as far as peacekeeping missions are concerned, a reconnaissance platoon of b2k of BRBSH has been involved in the Turkish contingent in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, where it has had the support of the Turkish side. On 26 October 2013, The Rama government approved in principle the Agreement on military-financial collaboration between the two countries as well as the Protocol of the implementation of financial aid (about 1.3 million \$).

Domestic issues: logistical support for our commando troops, first aid forces and Guard of the Republic, the annual education of our students in the Police Academy of Ankara as well as the training of our specialists in the Center of Training against Organized Crime and Drugs (TADOC) in Ankara; 16 specialists of the crime against State Police have been trained and, since 1991, from 557 students graduated from 13 countries all over the world in the Police Academy of Ankara, 89 have been from Albania. Every year, there are organized meetings of the Common Commission for Security Issues; in 2010, the Turkish government immediately gave aids by offering transport helicopters and medical-military

personnel and also gave financial and medical support during the incident of Gërdec; it also evacuated Albanian citizens from Libya, etc.

Education and Science: As part of the collaboration program, there are over 140 Albanian students who study in Turkey who have scholarships for undergraduate and graduate studies. For the academic year 2011-2012, the Turkish side offered 5 scholarships for Masters and Doctorates, 4 research scholarships as well as 5 scholarships to follow the Turkish language and culture summer course; the Turkish government has helped in reconstructing several schools in our country, especially the school “Atatürk” in Zallbasta-Tiranë and the high school “Atatürk” in Vlorë; as part of the collaboration of MASH with TIKa (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency), there are now these active projects: Equipment with school materials of the school “Hajdar Zogu”, in Tapizë of Krujë; Equipment of the computer laboratory in the school “Sheh Shamia” in Shkodër; Equipment with furniture and an audio system of the conference room in the Ministry of Education; there are professors for the training in Turkey from the Polytechnic Faculty of Tirana. It is currently being evaluated a request made by the Faculty of Medicine in Tirana for the establishment of a laboratory and a research center near this faculty. TIKa has also supported projects for the training of teachers and professors of the Turkish language.

Culture: TIKa’s office has invested in: education (reconstruction and building of schools such as in Berat (in the village Roshnik); support and subsidization for the preservation and the development of the tradition of craftsmanship, especially in the rural areas, having as objective to stimulate the employment of women in the district of Puka, in the area of Bathore in Tirana, etc.; the development of employment courses in the craftsmanship of weaving carpets; in 2010, IMK and TIKa signed a Memorandum of Understanding; the sultan’s decrees in relation to Albania have been published in

collaboration with the State Archive; the training of reconstruction experts of IMK in Turkey (2009 – 2011); it has offered its support mainly for the Cultural Heritage, of which it is worth mentioning the project of rehabilitating 5 mosques, which are cultural monuments in Albania, for around 4 million Euros, the sustenance with logistical equipments of the office of Archaeological Service, support for the National Library, etc; it is being worked currently with the projects for reconstructing the Mosque in the Castle of Preza and the Mosque in the castle of Kruja, the Mosque of Iljaz bej Mirahoriin Korçë, the Mosque of Lead in Berat, the Mosque of Nazireshtë in Elbasan as well as investments for the reconstruction of the Center of Sports Medicine near the Agency of Sports Service.

Healthcare: there has been an active collaboration which has been successful and in many directions, from which we can distinguish: The free treatment of 100 Albanian patients every year in Turkish hospitals; free training courses for the Albanian medical personnel; giving aids related to medical and pharmaceutical equipments for the Albanian hospitals; a direct help by TIKa has been the investment at the Blood Bank in Vlorë in a value of 100 000 Euro for the purchase of the modern equipments of this Bank; Every year, TIKa sponsors the participation in short-term training courses for different specialties, where physicians from different hospitals and clinics in Albania are sent, especially from QSUT; As part of the strategic partnership, the Turkish side will offer assistance to organize the necessary changes in several services of the Albanian medical system, e.g. the organization of the Emergency Service, the construction of the system “Track& Trace” for medicaments, the management of hospitals and currently the Turkish aid for building the Regional Hospital of Fier, etc. Economy: The financial contribution of TIKa is appreciated: during the period 2004-2005, for financing the first stage of the project “The reconstruction of roads in the area of the City of Students to the Reservoir “as well as in offering technical

assistance for economic experts in different Albanian institutions; the assistance in the Customs and for the electronic system of the Central Elections Commission.

Q.4.How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say?

In general, Turkey is broadly welcome in Albania and in the Albanian territory But, moreover, in this territory, Turkey is seen in two points of view: The first is related to the general image that "Turks and Albanians, disregarding wars in the course of history (in Skanderbeg's time and in the time of independence), have mostly coexisted, given and taken from each-other's culture and also have shared and continue to share a common fate. This image was not shaken even by some historical events which were harmful to Albanians e.g the deportations of Kosovars to Turkey according to the Agreement between Turkey and Serbia, or that of the çames (descendant of Albanians expelled from northern Greece) to Turkey according to the Agreement of Lozano, because, regarding the relationships with neighboring countries, Turkey has been seen by most of the average people as "protector from neighboring countries which have intended its fissure...". It may be right or wrong; however, this image is deeply rooted in the national Albanian psychology.

The second dimension of the positive image that Turkey has in the eyes of Albania is given by the fact that Albanians and Turks share a common culture (including religion) and that both these nations "want to be called western" along with their elites, which work and try hard to achieve the goal of theirs. Moreover, along with the economic growth and military strengthening of Turkey, it is highly possible that Albanian-Turkish relations grow fonder, because they are based on, or "fed by" the positive image we are analyzing.

The general positive image of Turkey is additionally made stronger by the manifestation that this great Muslim country makes to religion and the institution of religion, even the Christian one (entry in NATO and EU, state and its democratic values etc.). These values, for sure have their historical basis in the middle of today's Turkish folk (the mixture of races and religions in the Ottoman period) and the Turkish elite of Kemalist root (regardless of some recent shakes under the leading of the party of Erdogan and Davutoglu with religious basis), but come also after the religious tolerance among Albanians.

Albania and Turkey have entered a long road of cooperation, that should get stronger and gain more momentum, with regard to the potential reconfigurations of Europe's alliances, the European integration, and NATO's strengthening. This is made more indispensable when the near future is actually about Turkey having a huge role in Mediterranean strategies and with increasing economic and military power and also becoming a great actor in bringing together both sides of the Mediterranean Sea and the different cultures that clash in the Turkish territory.

Q.5. How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

The newly declared strategic partnership of Albania and Turkey, lean on some principles and interests, both in the bilateral plane, as well as in the regional 1, European and wider as follows:

In the bilateral plane: The magnificent relationships between the two countries and widespread in all fields, at the basis of which stand friendship and traditional relationships require their institutionalization at the highest level. The strategic document that is expected

to be soon signed by both sides is a meaningful indicator that the Turkish-Albanian relationships will know new developments in the future.

In this context, knowing the reciprocal potentials especially in such fields as economy, trade, tourism etc. The two countries can advance and strengthen them in the future. Expressed in legal language and figures, the bilateral cooperation includes: around 160 signed agreements and around 20 in the process of discussion and signing; annual commercial trade over \$ 400 million (2012). Turkish investments in Albania reach \$ 1.5 billion; in Albania work around 100 Turkish companies, out of which 6 are powerful companies which have invested in strategic fields such as banks, telecommunication, energetic, heavy industry etc. The fast growth of the Turkish economy, which in these last years has been appraised even by international institutions, this partnership is even more indispensable.

In the regional and European plane: All the regional countries are involved in a series of regional initiatives, whose aim is to strengthen the cooperation between the regional countries on behalf of peace, security and their acceleration in the euro-Atlantic integrating processes. In this point of view, the strategic Albanian-Turkish cooperation only helps and accelerates this process.

Furthermore, this strategic Albanian-Turkish partnership as well as having a general bilateral interest, “produces” also a positive impact of the role of Albania in relation with Greece, Serbia, and even Italy.

Global plane: In the last years, we can see that within the globalization processes, within certain regions of the world, different countries have put importance on bilateral strategic partnership, aiming for economical growth and procurement of peace and stability.

For example, Romania has established strategic partnerships with several neighbor countries for a few years, as well Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and even Turkey itself, which has strategic partnerships with 13 countries. This tendency is another argument in choosing Turkey as Albania's strategic partner.

Interview 8

Lefter Maliqi , Albanian Deputy, December 12, 2013.

Q1.Why Albania is important for the Turkish foreign policy? What do you think?

The countries have an early friendship between them. Turkey has played an important role in support of the Albanian country in terms of economy, trade and foreign policy. Both countries are parts of the NATO.

Q2.What is the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania?

Turkey had a great impact on the membership Albania in the NATO and Turkey has played an important and influential role in the foreign policy, especially in strengthening of relations in Balkan.

Q3.Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy especially since 2000?

Turkey has provided many contributions to Albania as in education, cultural assistance with logical equipment for safety and protection, in commercial interactions, and foreign policy especially in the NATO alliance and other international organizations such as OKB etc.

Q4.How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say about that?

Albanians have always seen Turkey as the strategic partner with key supports in every area of the economy, culture and tourism. Our customs and traditions are inherited and are almost the same with those of Turkey. The religious harmony plays an important role between the two countries.

Q5.How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

The relations between Turkey and Albania will become stronger in future and will have a strong consolidation as in the foreign policy as well as in trade and relations, economy etc. The both countries will have a strong collaboration in the North Atlantic alliance. Those relations will be improved in the field of defense and national security.

Interview 9

Ilir Nikolla, former chairman of municipality of Saranda, December 15, 2013.

Q1.Why Albania is important for the Turkish foreign policy? What do you think?

Turkey is one of the best partners of Albania. We have shared the same policy for 500 years despite the historical conditions. In modern times, the role that Turkey and its prime minister Tansu Ciller played in 1997 was quite irreplaceable. These types of co-operation and support have been the main factors of the importance Albania has for the Turkish foreign policy.

Q2.What are the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania?

The main priorities are related to economical and political co-operation. Turkey has also paid certain attention to the Albanian Army. Furthermore, Turkey was one of the very first countries, which assumed the independence of Kosovo in 2008.

Q3.Could you comment on the contributions that Turkey offered to Albania on the basis of its foreign policy especially since 2000?

Turkish businessmen have been present in the economic development of Albania. Turkish military aid has made the protective strategies of Albania much more sophisticated.

Q4.How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania? What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say about that?

Turkey is seen as an ally country in Albania. It has a very positive image in our country. Turkey and Albania have some common attitudes in their foreign policies and as a result the level of appreciation Albanians have towards Turkey is increasing day by day.I personally consider Turkey an absolute contributor in Albanian development.

Q5.How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

I am confident that Turkey-Albania relations will remain strong and stable even in the future.

Interview 10

Ilir Hebovija, Journalist, Academician, Mediterranean University of Albania, December 17, 2013.

Q1.Why Albania is important for the Turkish foreign policy? What do you think?

Basically, the reasons why there is an actual “special relationship” between Turkey and Albania concern the cultural heritage and the common historical experiences. The two countries have had many liaisons in their past, which strongly influence their present. The common religious roots are also important to define the familiarity between the two nations, and to stabilize links in the present days by both the governments. Given these two reasons –

let alone other non-indifferent factors as an almost common outlook toward the EU, almost same perception on behalf of the Balkan's policy in both Tirana and Ankara etc. - the main policies are without any doubt too much related.

Q2.What are the priorities of the Turkish foreign policy towards Albania?

There is a view, shared in many Western foreign policies' watchdogs, which gives Albania the role of the Turkish standpoint in Europe (intended in its geopolitical meaning). The discussion over a non-official Neo-Ottomanist strategy (toward Albania, Bosnia and Kosovo) seeks to justify these kinds of equations. Beyond these political perceptions, it seems that the Turkish interests in Albania are related to the financial and economic fields. The need to create a common background in the diplomatic action toward other partners in the region should be enlisted amidst them.

Q3. How Turkey is seen and what kind of image it has in Albania. What are the reflections of Turkey's foreign policy in this country? What can you say about that?

There are views, which attribute to Turkey the role of a Big Brother, in both literal and fictional sense. In other cases, especially amid the strong West-wing opinion makers in Albania, this is a role which seeks to destabilize an inner political stabilization, as a mere tentative to paralyze an independent view on foreign issues, which Albania has not achieved yet, in part due to Turkish interferences.

Q4.How do you evaluate the future of Turkey-Albania relations?

Principally there are signs, which make think about a good perspective, although the nowadays Turkish-Albanian relations depend on the dynamics within the domestic Turkish policy and the role that T.R. Erdogan in it.

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