

KOÇ UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

**EMERGING DONORS IN A CHANGING
DOMESTIC AND GLOBAL CONTEXT:
EVIDENCE FROM TURKEY**

by

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*To my biggest believer, my father
and to the loving memory of my mother.*

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ABSTRACT

The rise of new donors of official development assistance (ODA) since the 2000s is seen as a turning point in the field of international development, representative of the power shift between emerging powers and the established international order. Since 2002, Turkey has been identified as one of the emerging donors that have developed sizable ODA programs. In the meantime, Turkey's rapid rise as a donor of foreign aid throughout the 2000s also marks an unconventional turn in the course of its traditionally inert foreign policy. For scholars of international relations, this presents a puzzle: How, and more importantly, why, has Turkey's foreign aid policy evolved in the past two decades? What factors have exerted influence over Turkey's foreign aid policymaking, through which structures or agents, and to what extent? How do these factors differ from those present in other emerging donors? This dissertation aims to address these questions through an eclectic framework that borrows from various theoretical perspectives.

The debate surrounding the rise of emerging donors has produced a recent stream of literature positioned at the crossroads of international relations, economics, development studies, and political geography. The objective of this dissertation is to contribute to this multidisciplinary literature by developing a three-level analytical framework to uncover Turkey's foreign aid policymaking within a dynamic global and domestic context. This dissertation argues that among the myriad of international and domestic factors, including ideational forces, material interests, and political institutions, the previously overlooked role of political actors at the individual level has also had a significant influence on Turkey's foreign aid policy priorities and modalities since the 1990s. Based on the same approach, the study also proposes a four-fold periodization of Turkish foreign aid policy between 1992 and 2022. With the findings it harvests from the Turkish case, it also presents a comparative account of emerging donors in order to assess similarities and differences in policy-making, and to locate Turkey within the existing typologies and categorizations.

To investigate the shifts in Turkey's foreign aid policy in the past three decades, this study combines semi-structured elite interviews and primary documentary sources from the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TİKA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, Maarif Foundation and other non-governmental organisations to analyse Turkey's foreign aid policy in Latin America and Sub Saharan Africa.

Keywords: emerging donors, foreign aid, international development cooperation, Turkish foreign policy

ÖZET

2000'li yıllardan itibaren yeni resmi kalkınma yardımı (RKY) donörlerinin yükselişi, uluslararası kalkınma alanında bir dönüm noktası olarak görülmekte ve yükselen güçler ile yerleşik uluslararası düzen arasındaki güç takasını temsil etmektedir. Türkiye, 2002'den bu yana geniş ölçekli RKY programları geliştiren yükselen donörlerden biri olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Ancak Türkiye'nin 2000'li yıllar boyunca dış yardım donörü olarak hızlı yükselişi, öte yandan da geleneksel açıdan durağan ve reaktif konumdaki dış politikasının seyrinde alışılmadık bir değişime işaret etmektedir. Uluslararası ilişkiler araştırmacıları için bu durum bir bilmece teşkil etmektedir: Türkiye'nin dış yardım politikası son yirmi yılda nasıl (ve daha da önemlisi, neden) evrilmiştir? Türkiye'nin dış yardım politikası yapımında hangi faktörler, hangi yapılar veya aktörler aracılığıyla ve ne ölçüde etkili olmuştur? Bu faktörler diğer yükselen donörlerden nasıl farklılık göstermektedir? Bu tez, dış politika analizi ve uluslararası politik ekonomi de dahil olmak üzere çeşitli teorik perspektiflerden yararlanan eklektik bir çerçeve aracılığıyla bu soruları ele almayı amaçlamaktadır.

Yükselen donörlerin yükselişini çevreleyen tartışma, uluslararası ilişkiler, ekonomi, kalkınma çalışmaları ve siyasi coğrafyanın kesişme noktasında konumlandırılan yeni bir literatür akışı üretmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, değişen küresel ve yerel bağlamda Türkiye'nin dış yardım politikasını kavramak için çok düzeyli bir yaklaşım geliştirerek bu multidisipliner literatüre katkıda bulunmaktır. Bu tez, fikirler, çıkarlar ve kurumlar gibi çok sayıda yerel ve uluslararası faktörün yanı sıra, bireysel düzeydeki siyasi aktörlerin daha önce göz ardı edilen rolünün de 1990'lardan bu yana Türkiye'nin dış yardım politikası öncelikleri ve yöntemleri üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğunu savunmaktadır. Çalışma, Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı Başkanlığı (TİKA), Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, Maarif Vakfı ve diğer sivil toplum kuruluşlarının üst düzey temsilcileriyle yapılmış mülakatları ve veri kaynaklarını bir araya getirmektedir.

Aynı yaklaşımı temel alan bu çalışma, 1992-2022 yılları arasında Türk dış yardım politikasına dört aşamalı bir dönemselleştirme de önermektedir. Türkiye örneğinden elde ettiği bulgularla, benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları değerlendirmek ve Türkiye'yi mevcut tipolojiler ve sınıflandırmalar içinde konumlandırmak için yükselen donörlerin karşılaştırmalı bir analizini de sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: yükselen donörler, uluslararası kalkınma işbirliği, dış yardım, Türk dış politikası

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABC	Brazilian Cooperation Agency
AKP	Justice and Development Party
AMEXCID	Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation
AU	African Union
BICS	Brazil, India, China, and South Africa
BNDES	Brazilian Development Bank
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative (China)
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, and China
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
CHP	Republican People's Party
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Soviet Union)
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEİK	Foreign Economic Relations Board
EDCF	Economic Development Cooperation Fund (Korea)
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FETÖ	Fethullahist Terrorist Organization
FPA	Foreign policy analysis

FYDP	Five-Year Development Plan
G-20	The Group of Twenty
G-8	The Group of Eight
GCDFD	Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
IMM	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality
IPEA	Institute for Applied Economic Research, Brazilian Ministry of Planning
IR	International relations
IHH	Humanitarian Relief Foundation
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
KSP	Knowledge Sharing Program (Korea)
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHP	Nationalist Movement Party
MIKTA	Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey and Australia
MOSF	Ministry of Strategy and Finance (Korea)
MÜSİAD	Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NUC	National Union Committee

ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOF	Other Official Flows
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SCIO	State Council Information Office (China)
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPO	State Planning Organization
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSC	South-South Cooperation
SSDC	South-South Development Cooperation
TİKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TMV	Turkish Maarif Foundation
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TRT	Turkish Radio and Television Corporation
TURKSTAT	Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜSİAD	Turkish Industry and Business Association
TUSKON	Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists
TWRF	Turkish World Research Foundation
UAE	United Arab Emirates

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WP	White Paper
YTB	Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities

Chapter 1

Introduction

This dissertation seeks to offer a multidimensional insight into a relatively understudied yet curious phenomenon in Turkish foreign policy – that is to say, Turkey’s emergence as a donor of bilateral foreign aid since the Justice and Development Party’s (AKP) rise to power in 2002. As a late industrialised economy and a former recipient of official development assistance (ODA) a term to be used interchangeably with ‘foreign aid’ hereafter, Turkey’s rapid and unusual rise as a net donor of ODA has marked an unconventional turn in the course of its traditionally inert foreign policy. To scholars of international relations (IR), this presents a puzzle with many missing pieces. How, and more importantly, why, has Turkey’s foreign aid policy evolved in the past two decades? What factors have exerted influence over Turkey’s foreign aid policy decision-making, through which structures or agents, and to what extent? How do these factors differ from those present in other established or emerging donors? This project aims to address these questions through an eclectic framework that borrows from various theoretical perspectives native to different subfields of IR.

The concept of foreign aid, as understood in the modern sense, remained virtually nonexistent until the end of the Second World War. From the 19th until

the early 20th century, sporadic and short-term humanitarian aid initiatives were the norm, even though they typically did not involve the transfer of public funds from one government to another (Lancaster, 2007). In a landmark article on foreign aid, Hans Morgenthau (1962) famously described this phenomenon as the most “baffling [innovation] to both understanding and action” in the practice of foreign policy (p. 301). While proposing an initial political theory on foreign aid, he also drew attention to the lack of a coherent understanding of this policy practice. Sixty years after Morgenthau's oft-cited bewilderment, the IR discipline –at the intersection of others including development studies, economics, and political geography– now encompasses a growing plethora of research aiming to analyse the determinants, effects, and functions of foreign aid.

Starting in the 1950s, foreign aid as we know it first emerged as a device to boost economic development in the destructive aftermath of the Second World War. As this period intersected with the rise of a bipolar world order between the United States and the Soviet Union, foreign aid is also argued to have served broader foreign policy purposes that ensured ideological, commercial and strategic alignment, as well as diplomatic solidarity between nation-states (McKinlay and Little, 1977; Rao, 1997; Alesina and Dollar, 2000; Hopkins, 2000; Lancaster, 2000; Fleck and Kilby, 2005, Boschini and Olofsgard, 2007). The term ODA was picked up by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1969 as a descriptive

indicator to monitor and study aid flow between states. By the 1990s, ODA had gained such prominence as a policy tool that most industrialised nations of the global North had launched their own aid agencies and joined the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the primary forum tasked with informing the norms and standards of aid giving. By the turn of the new century, foreign aid had finally become more of a norm than an exception in the majority of industrialised nations (Lancaster, 2007: 13).

Today, aid giving is no longer a policy practice reserved for states within the DAC – according to OECD estimates, between 2014 and 2019, an average of nearly 20% of ODA flows originated from countries that were not members of the DAC (Table 1). As a forum founded almost exclusively by Western nations, DAC is often dubbed in the literature as a “club of the rich” (Schmelzer, 2014). The unforeseen rise of these new players –late-industrialised countries, countries of the global South, or countries formerly associated with the Eastern bloc– and the fundamental structural transformation that ensued, have prompted a great deal of debate, scrutiny and scholarly attention in the realm of international development assistance, laying the foundations for the research focus of this dissertation.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ODA from current 29 DAC member countries	151.1	143.1	157.6	161.4	164.8	151.7
ODA from 20 reporting countries beyond the DAC	25.2	12.5	17.2	18.6	22.2	16.5
Estimated development co-operation flows from ten non-reporting countries beyond the DAC	5.6	5.2	6.5	8.8	7.2	7.3
<i>Subtotal flows from non-DAC providers</i>	30.7	17.7	23.7	27.5	29.5	23.7
Estimated global total	181.9	160.8	181.2	188.2	194.3	175.4

Table 1: Estimated ODA flows in USD millions, 2014-2019

Source: OECD

Foreign aid giving is also no longer a practice particular to state actors. The need for increased resource mobilisation from private international sources to address global development challenges was a highlight of the *2002 Monterrey Consensus* and *2008 Doha Declaration on Financing for Development* (UN, 2003; 2009). In 2011, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation became the first private non-state entity to join the national governments reporting their aid flows to the OECD (Smith et al., 2011). As of 2022, a total of 40 private funds and foundations report their aid flows to the OECD alongside

national governments, echoing the structural disruption to the status-quo of international development by emerging donor states.

Following this influx of a diverse group of new donors, the field of international development assistance was appropriately described by Woods (2008) as having been “shaken by a power shift” occurring in the global economy (p. 1205). With the emerging economies of the time (such as China, Brazil, UAE, South Korea¹ and Turkey) expanding their ODA budgets and formulating aid policies in their own terms with no particular regard for DAC norms, emerging donors as a group rapidly transformed into a new area of academic interest. To analyse the internal dynamics of individual emerging donors, a fresh stream of literature is now expanding. However, the divergent and heterogeneous policy behaviour of emerging donors continues to call for deeper and more multifaceted studies of these countries. Against this backdrop, this dissertation aims to contribute to the literature on emerging donors by bringing in evidence from Turkey. While doing so, it proposes a multi-level approach to analysing foreign aid policy in emerging donors, taking into account the role of systemic, domestic, and individual factors in shaping decision making.

¹ Initially regarded as an emerging non-traditional donor, South Korea joined the DAC in 2013.

The next section of this chapter will feature a brief note on terminology, hoping to eliminate confusions about the wealth of terms associated with foreign aid, development cooperation, and donorship across different political contexts and disciplines. The third section will explain the relevance and contribution of this study, and the final section will lay out the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 Notes on terminology

The semantics of the terms associated with foreign aid and donorship are as elaborate and diverse as the new donors themselves as a group. The evolving nature of donor behaviour, shaped within a rapidly changing global context, has resulted in the blurring of the definitional lines between ODA and development cooperation. The past meaning of development cooperation was almost synonymous with ODA, which was defined by clear terms and boundaries.² There also used to exist a distinguishable international aid architecture led by the DAC, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, which would traditionally monitor and regulate practices associated with aid giving (Gore, 2013). As the monopoly held by this architecture started

² ODA has been defined in 1972 by the OECD as follows: “Official development assistance flows are defined as those flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are: provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and each transaction of which: is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and is concessional in character.” (OECD, 2021).

waning due to the proliferation of new actors in the development cooperation landscape, the term came to capture a broader collection of meanings beyond aid. An increasing number of new donors from the global South started favouring the symmetrical semantics of the development cooperation rhetoric over the rigid and asymmetrical power hierarchy that had defined donor-recipient roles in the past.

In a similar vein, the terms used to describe these new donors are also diverse. In the literature, members of the DAC have conventionally been regarded as ‘traditional’, ‘Western’ or ‘established’ donors. To identify those who are not DAC members but still engage in bilateral ODA provision, a wide pool of terms are being used including ‘non-traditional donors’, ‘emerging donors’, ‘South-South cooperators’ and ‘non-DAC donors’. To refer to donors that have accelerated their bilateral ODA spending throughout the 2000s, without priorly having been a member of the DAC, this study will use the terms ‘emerging’ and ‘non-traditional’ interchangeably.

The term ‘South-South cooperation’, on the other hand, elicits a subtle political difference in comparison with the former two terms. The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4), convened by the DAC and hosted in Busan, South Korea in 2012 is argued to have established a new discourse of international development cooperation (Eyben and Savage, 2013). Rather than reinstating the old donor-recipient hierarchies, this new international discourse

is said to emphasise a multi-stakeholder approach to development cooperation (Eyben and Savage, 2013: 1). HLF-4 was originally tasked with reviewing the implementation progress of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. However, during the preparatory phase of the forum, the focus was shifted to a discussion of the terms on which emerging donors would agree to be included (Eyben and Savage, 2013). Major emerging donors such as Brazil, China and India chose to distinguish themselves not as providers of development aid, but as ‘South-South cooperators’, with previous first-hand knowledge of being an aid ‘recipient’ (Mawdsley, 2011). They defined development cooperation as a development partnership based on the principles of mutual self-interest and respect for autonomy, rather than an asymmetrical power relationship dictated by the direction of the aid flow.

Another set of conflicting definitions which is relevant for the purpose of this study is humanitarian and development aid. Development aid, or ODA, was defined by the DAC in 1972 to include aid flows whose main objective is “the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries”, indicating longer term activities responding to systematic and structural concerns (OECD, 2021: 1). Meanwhile, rapid and short term activities relating to emergency response, material relief, relief coordination, reconstruction and disaster prevention are officially reported as ‘humanitarian aid’ by the OECD. Although the definition of ODA does not categorically exclude humanitarian aid, the growing overlap between development

cooperation, migration and security policies has pushed the DAC to introduce a new set of clarifications and eligibility rules to improve its statistical reporting (OECD, 2021). To a great extent, this overlap accelerated with the deepening refugee crisis following the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, as countries diverted their ODA budgets to fund in-donor spending directed at refugees (Anyangwe, 2015). A similar overlap also occurred following the Russia-Ukraine war of February 2022, shifting donor priorities from development aid to humanitarian assistance (Strøm-Sedgwick and Tank, 2022). Notwithstanding the theoretical value of debates focusing on whether or not the two types of aid should be studied separately, for practical considerations, this dissertation will treat humanitarian assistance as a subset of development aid.

1.2 Relevance and contribution

This study contributes to the literature on foreign policy and development studies in a number of ways. First, it develops a model to understand foreign aid policy making based on a three-level approach. Second, it offers a periodization of Turkish foreign aid policy making to explain how it has evolved prior to and during the Justice and Development Party (AKP) rule in four periods from 1992 through 2022. In doing so, it differentiates foreign aid policy from foreign policy while recognizing its role as a function of the latter. Third, rather than attempting to explain the motivations and distribution of foreign aid, a prevalent tendency in the existing literature, this dissertation

focuses on decision-making processes and sheds light on the interplay and influence of various structures and agents on policy outcomes at the individual, domestic, and international levels. Fourth, with the findings it harvests from the Turkish case, it aims to inform the existing typologies of emerging donors and contribute to the future development of these typologies by bringing in fresh evidence from Turkey.

While the primary aim of this dissertation is to address the qualitative research gap in the emerging donors literature, the theoretical framework and findings are also relevant to foreign policy analysis as a subfield within the international relations discipline. By bringing in an actor-specific focus to explain policy making, this study aims to emphasise the previously overlooked role of political leaders and actors, and their social relations, in exerting influence on Turkey's foreign aid policy outcomes in the past three decades. In doing so, it does not rule out the explanatory relevance of structural variables, and subscribes to a reconciliatory approach vis-a-vis the agency-structure problem in international relations theory.

As noted by Fejerskov et al. (2016), to take the 'new actors in development' research agenda further, what is needed is not additional accounts of the recent arrivals of the growing numbers of new donors, but more elaborate explorations on how these individual donors are most likely "hybrid forms" consisting of new and old patterns of behaviour (p. 1082). The empirical

knowledge harvested by this dissertation therefore features a relevant contribution which helps locate Turkey's unusual position among both traditional and emerging donors.

1.3 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is structured as follows. After this brief introduction, Chapter 2 will serve as a primer to understand the shifts that have taken place in the field of international development cooperation since the turn of the century, the significance of studying emerging donors, and Turkey's peculiar rise as an emerging donor of foreign aid. Through a review of the relevant literature, it will thus provide a basis on the relevance of studying emerging donors individually. The chapter will also lay out the theoretical framework and methodology that I will be using to make sense of the transformation in Turkish foreign aid policy between 1992 and 2022, and explain the utility of a three-level analysis to understand these shifts, focusing on the international, domestic and individual levels.

Chapter 3 will offer a historical account of Turkish foreign aid within a changing global and domestic context. While doing so, it will propose a periodization of Turkish foreign aid policy that is based on the shifts, continuities and ruptures in Turkey's foreign policy, domestic dynamics and the evolving global context. The first period (1992-2002) will discuss the tectonic

ideological shift experienced by the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TİKA) since its founding stages after the Cold War until its later revival under the AKP; the second period (2002-2011) will analyse the paradigm shift in Turkey's foreign policy and the subsequent rebirth of TİKA; the third period (2012-2016) will uncover the peak of Turkey's foreign aid activism following the Syrian civil war; and finally, the fourth period (2016-2022) will explain the underlying dynamics of the variance in Turkish foreign aid since the failed coup attempt of 15 July 2016 and the country's switch to a presidential system shortly afterwards.

Chapter 4 is a case study that provides an in-depth empirical exploration of Turkish foreign aid in action in the Balkans, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, tapping into the changes in ODA activity in these regions through the policy shifts analysed in the previous chapter.

Chapter 5 presents a comparative account of Turkey's foreign aid policy vis-à-vis other donors, outlining the extent to which the Turkish case differs from or converges with traditional and emerging donors. It specifically draws on examples from China, Brazil, Russia, and South Korea, while locating Turkey among these donors.

Finally, based on the discussions laid out in the previous chapters, Chapter 6 gathers the broader conclusions that can be drawn from the case of Turkish foreign aid. It summarises the findings of the dissertation and makes future research suggestions related to the study of policy making processes in emerging donors.

Chapter 2

Literature review and theoretical framework³

The influx of new donors into the field of international development has attracted significant scholarly interest since the end of the 2000s, resulting in a new stream of literature emerging at the crossroads of international relations, economics, development studies and political geography. After providing an overview of the existing literature on emerging donors of foreign aid, this chapter will continue by laying out the research questions, methodology and theoretical framework of the dissertation.

2.1. International development: a landscape in transformation

The turn of the 21st century marked an important period in international development as the established economic policy assumptions championed by Bretton Woods institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) came increasingly under attack due to their failed prescriptions for international development.⁴ The impact of foreign aid in

³ Parts of this chapter have previously been published in Yardımcı (2019).

⁴ For a selection of discussions on the post-Washington Consensus, see Stiglitz, 2003; Öniş and Şenses, 2005; Rodrik, 2006; Birdsall and Fukuyama, 2011.

particular was a focal point of scrutiny, with vocal criticisms against the effectiveness of Western ODA in the developing world (Easterly, 2003; Stiglitz, 2012). As the intellectual underpinnings of contemporary thought in the world of international development were undergoing a gradual deconstruction, a simultaneous transformation was occurring in terms of the composition of the actors operating in the same field.

In 2000, a set of eight international development goals were established for the year 2015 at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations (UN). Now succeeded by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these goals came to be known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the fundamentals of which were exclusively based on a blueprint produced jointly by Development Ministers from the countries within the DAC.⁵ During this period, many observers agreed that the world was “evenly divided” between countries who were tasked with achieving these goals on their own, and those who were to receive help from the former in doing so (Zimmermann and Smith, 2011: 722).

A decade later, this division of labour seemed to experience a disruption when a number of formerly aid-receiving countries, mostly from the global South, began growing their ODA budgets and started experimenting with foreign aid as donors rather than recipients. These countries were now assuming

⁵ The goals were outlined in a 1996 DAC report titled *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation*.

a position to compete with and challenge the rules and norms set by traditional donors (Kragelund, 2008), through what was famously termed a “silent revolution” in the field of international development aid (Woods, 2008: 1205).

The triggering causes of the power shift in this field may be regarded as two-fold. First, the global financial crisis of 2007-8 had a visible shrinking impact on DAC countries’ aid spending, which declined by 2% in 2011 and by 4% in 2012, despite having reached a peak in 2010 (OECD, 2013). Moreover, changing security concerns and the ‘global war on terror’ in the years following the September 11 attacks paved the way for a change in geographical priorities for most traditional donors (Chandler, 2007). This resulted in the Middle East, and parts of Asia (Afghanistan and Pakistan in particular) becoming top destinations for bilateral foreign aid, while other regions of the global South (most notably Sub Saharan Africa) were being neglected. Second, as most donors in the global North suffered the budgetary constraints injected by the global financial crisis, major economies of the global South such as the BRICs (China, Russia, India and Brazil) experienced high, and in some cases dramatic, economic growth.⁶ As such, despite their status on the DAC’s list of aid recipient countries, the outstanding growth rates of the BRIC economies enabled them to emerge as new actors in international development assistance, thus blurring the lines between ‘donor’ and ‘recipient’. In 2006, total ODA disbursements by non-DAC donors were estimated to make up between 7.8%

⁶ The annual GDP growth rate for BRIC countries averaged 7.9% between 2000 and 2010, while it peaked to %14.2 in 2007 in the case of China (Radulescu et al., 2014: 607).

and 9.8% of total global ODA (ECOSOC, 2008: 10 quoted in Kragelund, 2010: 4). Since then, this rapid power shift has been stimulating new understandings of the relationship between donors and recipients, which will form the basis of this literature review (Watson, 2014: 2).

The BRIC countries were quickly joined by other groups of emerging donors throughout the same decade. For instance, ten countries in the Central and Eastern European region including the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, then newcomers to the EU, together provided more than 1 billion USD of ODA in 2012 (OECD, 2013). This amount was not insignificant, considering that neither of these countries were DAC members at the time (Szent-Ivanyi and Lightfoot, 2014: 2).⁷ In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar also revived their existing development assistance programs of the 1970s and accelerated their ODA engagement. Finally, Turkey also came under the spotlight as an emerging donor after reviving its dormant aid agency, the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TİKA), in 2002 and demonstrating steady growth in its ODA spending.

Ironically, the policy practice of aid giving among some emerging donors is far from a new phenomenon. For instance, China and Russia, as well as Arab donors, had well established foreign aid programs throughout the

⁷ Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland joined the DAC in 2013, and Hungary in 2016.

second half of the 20th century. This is especially the case with Russia, whose oft-cited status as a re-emerging donor may point to a conceptual weakness in the existing categorical discussions within the literature, according to Rowlands (2012: 529). In a similar vein, Walz and Ramachandran (2011) remind that Arab states are home to some of the “oldest and most established” aid agencies (p. 3). The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, for instance, was established the same year as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Walz and Ramachandran, 2010: 3). Turkey had also briefly experimented with aid provision throughout the 1990s, even though the scale was miniscule in comparison to Russia or China. An in-depth look at this period will be provided in Chapter 4.

Horner and Hulme (2017) have looked at the transformation of the international development cooperation arena through the lens of shifting geographies, and argued that it was time for a clear departure from the binary understanding of global North and South (p. 3). In doing so, they have drawn attention to the debates on the global decline in between-country inequalities and the rise in within-country differences (see Piketty, 2014; Baldwin, 2016; Rodrik, 2017). While acknowledging the World Bank’s April 2016 declaration, which stated that countries would no longer be classified as developing or developed in the annual World Development indicators, and the broader nature of the SDGs which have refrained from singling out developing countries, Horner and Hulme have highlighted the converging patterns of inequality

between the global North and South. As such, they have contended that the deeper transformations in the field of international development necessitate a theoretical shift from international development to “global development” (p. 25).

In a similar vein, Abdenur and Da Fonseca’s (2013) interpretation of changing donor dynamics resonates with the previous narrative. The authors have observed that as new donors such as Brazil, India and China endorsed the South-South Cooperation (SSC) framework and approached the DAC’s set of norms and values from a cautious distance, Northern donors were ready to make a coordinated effort to incorporate themselves into the SSC agenda through multilateral platforms and triangular cooperation models. The new North-South cooperation configurations were thus highlighting Northern donors’ position as “rethinking” their role in international development cooperation and adapting to the newly evolving, more symmetrical norms and practices (Abdenur and Da Fonseca, 2013: 1475).

2.2. The emerging donors debate

The emergence of new ODA donors was welcomed by some as ‘a new multipolarity’ in international development, and as a growth of non-Western sources of development aid (Mohan and Power, 2008: 27). Others have

perceived their arrival as a rejuvenation of development cooperation, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kragelund, 2011: 585). However, this new phenomenon did not remain short of critique. A major criticism has been their propensity to support rogue states and regimes. In a 2007 article in *Foreign Policy*, former Venezuelan Trade Minister Moises Naim described the foreign aid programs of China, Venezuela, and Saudi Arabia as toxic (Naim, 2007). The lack of attention paid by these emerging donor states to established aid institutions and standards has also prompted concerns about regional and global security and environmental protection. For instance, Barma et al. have claimed that evolving Western notions of liberal internationalism, particularly ideas like political conditionality on development aid, have no place in this framework and hence view emerging donors as a potential threat to the future of development aid (Barma, Ratner and Weber, 2007: 27).

Other observers have warned that concerns over non-traditional aid are valid due to the potentially hampering social, political, economic, and ecological consequences they may yield for developing countries and that these claims should not be dismissed altogether (Mawdsley, 2010: 363). Such concerns are widely voiced when it comes to Chinese aid, which is often considered to be more efficient in reaching its target than the majority of Northern aid (Brautigam, 2009). The main hazard, however, is that efficiency is often a trade-off for central values and principles, as it occurs “at the expense of

governance, human rights, and the environment” (Tan-Mullins and Mohan, 2010; Mohan and Power, 2008: 861).

Without a doubt, the policies and modalities of non-DAC donors and their practices in the field require thorough research if and when such claims are to be assessed. Scholars in the subfield have long advocated for more comprehensive studies on emerging donors in order to help build empirical knowledge (Kim and Lightfoot, 2011; Tan-Mullins and Mohan, 2010; Kragelund, 2008; Kragelund 2011). In fact, an important reason for the large discrepancy between approaches to emerging donors has been due to the limited amount of deeper empirical knowledge accumulated on the donors thus far. Therefore, deeper analyses on the experiences, policies, and practices of new donors such as Turkey hold significant value.

2.3. Studying Turkey as an emerging donor

Why is Turkey worth studying as an emerging donor? The country’s unforeseen rise as a foreign aid donor and the fast-paced growth in its ODA spending provide quick answers to this question. With a staggering 55-fold increase in its ODA spending over the past 2 decades, Turkey is a striking example of a donor that has transformed from being a DAC-listed aid recipient country to an avid aid provider (Figure 1). Like many others, Turkey is described as an emerging, non-traditional and non-DAC member donor of

development assistance. Turkey also holds a hybrid and ambiguous identity within the global North–South divide. Its status as a middle income country, OECD membership, European Union candidacy and its relatively recent transformation from aid recipient to net donor complicates its position within the framework of the conventional understanding of foreign aid and North–South relations. The volume and reach of Turkish ODA has shown an extraordinary rise since 2002 (Figure 1), making it rank sixth among top donors worldwide in 2021 in terms of total ODA spending (Figure 2). Turkey ranked even higher in terms of its ODA to GNI ratio which stood at 0.96% in 2021, lower only than that of Luxembourg (Figure 3).⁸

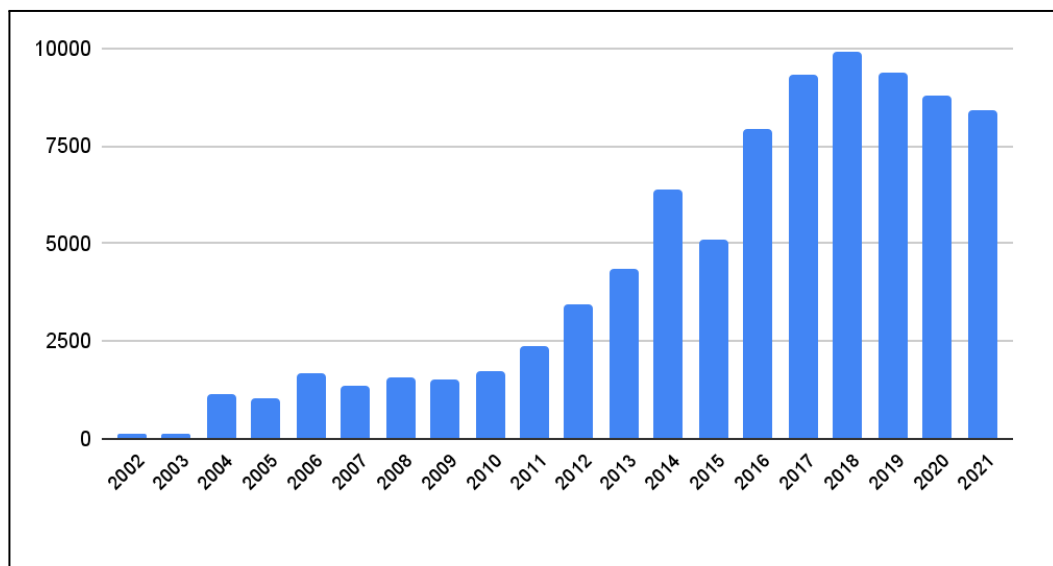


Figure 1: Turkey's net ODA disbursements, 2002-2021 (million \$).

Source: TİKA

⁸ As agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the UN target for donors' ODA to GNI ratio is 0.7% (UN, 2015). The history of the 0.7% target dates back to a 1970 UN resolution, built on DAC's 1969 definition of ODA and the UK Pearson Commission's proposal for donor states to meet this target by 1980.

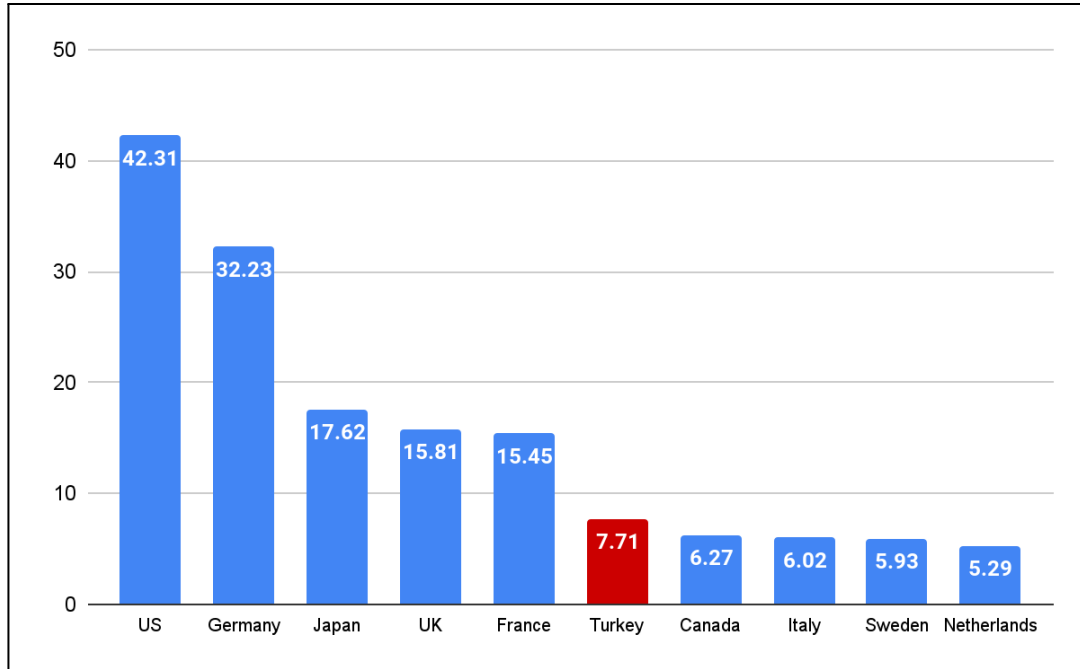


Figure 2: Total Turkish ODA in comparison with top DAC donors in 2021 (million \$). Source: TİKA

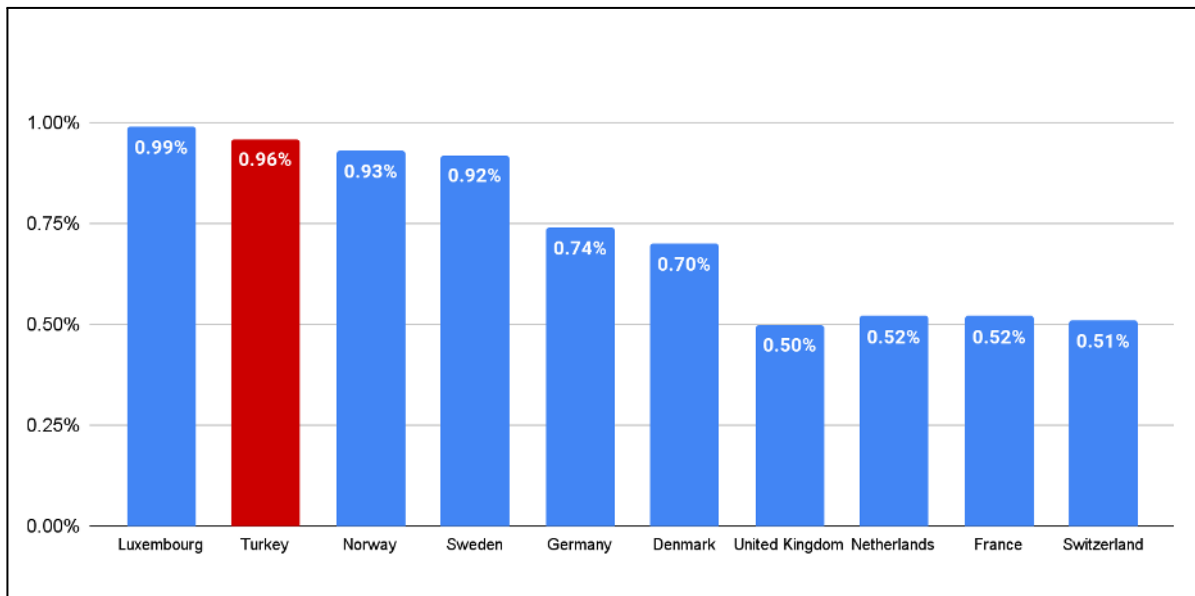


Figure 3: Turkey's ODA/GNI ratio in comparison with top performing DAC donors in 2021. Source: TİKA

Over the past two decades, studies on this phenomenon have focused on Turkey's foreign policy change and emerging donorship through a number of explanations. To explain Turkey's foreign policy activism in the earlier years of the AKP era, a number of scholars have pointed to domestic and systemic factors as major determinants, which are simultaneously influential on the sharp increase and expansion of Turkish foreign aid.

Kirişçi (2009) accounts for the transformation in Turkish foreign policy through economic explanations, and devises a conceptual framework based on Rosencrance's (1986) concept of the 'trading state' and Putnam's (1988) 'two-level games' to explore the impact of economic considerations driving Turkish foreign policy. The central theme of the study holds that the nature of a trading state, such as Turkey, maintains a large coalition of actors who participate in foreign policy formation and diplomatic games. Naturally, the interests and priorities of these actors are divergent both among themselves and from the traditional foreign policy makers of Turkey.

In a similar vein, Kutlay (2011) explains Turkey's recent foreign policy initiatives through a framework which borrows from neofunctionalist and interdependence theories, positing that with its current foreign policy direction, Turkey exploits economic opportunities and seeks to institutionalise its relations with its neighbours. Kutlay (2011) identifies the transformed Turkish finance capital as the 'new practical hand' of Turkish foreign policy makers, and

suggests that the main driving force behind Turkey's soft power activism has been the economy and trade (p. 77).

Others, such as Aras and Fidan (2009) and Bilgin and Bilgiç (2011) have pointed at the role of norms and ideas as determinants of change in Turkish foreign policy. In an attempt to intertwine the influence of both interests and ideas, İpek (2015) has explained the change in Turkey's aid policy through a constructivist account which gives both interests and ideas power as agents of policy change. In this analysis which treats TİKA as an empirical case, ideas are considered as an explanatory variable in foreign policy change, and the main argument holds that a specific set of conditions at the domestic level are required for ideas to constitute values (normative) and interests (material) in foreign policy. These conditions are shared normative beliefs among the foreign policy elite policy, and the existence of an enabling political environment. As such, this study provides an important groundwork for the study of domestic determinants of Turkish development aid policy.

Finally, Öniş (2012) traced Turkish foreign policy change to the concept of 'conservative globalism', which has opened to question the lines between domestic and foreign policy. With this concept, Öniş drew attention to how the pro-active foreign policy approach adopted by the AKP helped boost the party's domestic popularity at home. Öniş's analysis holds that the 'strong Turkey' image portrayed abroad has paved the way for AKP to gain support from a

broad coalition of domestic groups, including those who belong to the nationalist tradition. His analysis further posits that the image created is not solely that of a strong Turkey, but also a ‘caring’ one – with a seemingly humanitarian concern for the issues of the least-developed parts of the world, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. This phenomenon is defined as conservative globalism, whereby the boundaries between foreign policy and domestic policy are “increasingly blurred” due to the double-sided nature of the policy (Öniş, 2012: 145).

A stream of the literature focuses on Turkey’s emergence as a humanitarian power. Some of the analyses found in this literature relate to various other themes such as peacekeeping and security. For instance, Bayer and Keyman (2012) have analysed the increase in Turkey’s humanitarian and peacekeeping operations in terms of their contribution to global security, and inquired whether Turkey fills the role of an ‘emerging hub of globalisation’. The authors have moreover observed that Turkey’s development-related activities are compatible with its foreign policy objectives, which regard both economic and human development as interdependent features of regional and global security. Other studies focusing on Turkey’s peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts abroad include Akpınar (2013), Aras (2009), Murphy and Sazak (2012) and Murphy and Woods (2014) and Yalçınkaya et al. (2018).

Another stream of work is being accumulated by studies with a particular focus on Turkey's development aid policy and practices within the wider international community of aid donors. One of the earliest academic analyses of Turkey's development aid activism in the post-2003 period is by Fidan and Nurdun (2008), which is a case study on TİKA and its institutional transformation. In this study, Fidan and Nurdun present a historical account of the changing development aid scene within Turkey and the rise of the country as a new donor of development aid. A similar study by Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun (2010) portrays a rather descriptive yet empirically sound analysis on the transformation of TİKA as an aid agency, and its implications for Turkey as a new player in the international development aid arena. The article concentrates on the bureaucratic mechanisms through which TİKA was able to rejuvenate itself as an aid agency. Authored by former TİKA presidents (Hakan Fidan and Musa Kulaklıkaya), both of these articles provide useful insights to understand the technical background of Turkey's transformation from recipient to donor. Another group of studies have specifically focused on Turkey's foreign policy vis-a-vis development cooperation (Kavaklı, 2018; Yardımcı, 2019; Zengin, 2019; Bahçecik and Turhan, 2020; Turhan, 2021; 2022).

Apaydın's (2012) work on Turkey's aid activities in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia seeks to explain the different patterns of state and non-state partnership across various recipient settings. Her findings suggest that regime type and official ideology of the recipient states are crucial factors to understand

this variation. Apaydın further finds that personalistic authoritarian regimes (i.e. Sudan and Togo) are more accommodating of public-private partnerships while clan-based authoritarian regimes (i.e. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) are less willing to cooperate with non-state actors.

Atalay (2013) focuses on the position of civil society, more particularly pro-Islamic NGOs, in the context of Turkish foreign policy. Since the 1990s, Islamic civil society has been an important area of research and debate in public and academic circles. An important change that these NGOs have experienced during the Justice and Development Party (AKP) administration is their increased levels of internationalisation. In her study on Islamic NGOs and networks, Atalay (2013) analyses the role played by the Union of the NGOs of the Islamic World (UNIW), a large coalition of Islamic faith-based NGOs, within Turkey's foreign policy. Atalay finds that UNIW acts as a soft power instrument for AKP's pro-active foreign policy objectives. Other studies by Özkan (2008; 2013), Özkan and Birol (2010), Sıradağ (2015) also account for civil society and NGO influence on Turkey's development aid efforts, with a specific focus on Africa.

İpek and Biltekin (2013) present one of the rare analyses which have a particular focus on the domestic foundations of Turkish foreign policy implementation in Africa. Rather than focusing on the decision-making process however, this study concentrates on the implementation phase. The central

argument is that the Turkish government has transcended its traditional state-to-state interactions in foreign policy implementation and that it shows an increasing reliance on cooperation with non-state actors in implementing foreign policy decisions.

Shifting the focus from Africa to the Middle East, Altunışık (2014) discusses the motivations and actors of Turkey's aid policy towards the Arab world, also taking into account the impact of an external factor –the Arab uprisings, on Turkish foreign policy. Altunışık posits that in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings– the direction of Turkish foreign aid has followed regional foreign policy, and showed a tendency to target the Islamist parties/groups in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and Syria. A central argument is that this turn in aid policy was an ideational framing of the government's interests through culturally friendly nations. Moreover, Altunışık (2014) underlines that foreign aid has therefore become “more tightly knit than ever with foreign policy”, and the former is increasingly being used to justify the latter (p. 5). This claim illustrates a useful implication of an important premise on which this dissertation will be built – namely, the treatment of aid as a tool of foreign policy rather than as an autonomous policy area focusing on development per se.

The concepts defined and discussed in this literature review will serve as a point of reference for the framework of this dissertation. One of the main

objectives of this dissertation is to understand the domestic determinants of development aid policy making in Turkey by analysing the role of ideas, interests, institutions, organisation and leadership. The following section will present the research design of the dissertation and elaborate on each of the determinants.

2.4. Theoretical framework

There is a vast literature on theories of foreign aid policy making among traditional donors, earlier examples of which include Morgenthau (1962), Huntington (1970), Katzenstein (1976) and Thorbecke (2000). Most of the classical foreign aid literature is centred on explaining the motivations of foreign aid through the different schools of thought in international relations – namely the realist, neoliberal-institutionalist, Marxist and constructivist schools, and more recently, the post-colonial and international political economy approaches. Notwithstanding the great value these discussions have brought to the field, there is still room in the literature to understand, in greater depth, how the interplay of different factors at the domestic level shapes foreign aid policy-making while simultaneously interacting with other confounding variables emanating from the international and individual levels. There is even a greater space in the literature for using this framework to make sense of emerging donors, as the vast majority of the literature is still focused on traditional donors.

Understanding the interplay of domestic factors influencing aid policy is a crucial aspect of foreign policy analysis. Hook (1995) has aptly argued that “foreign aid takes the shape of its container”, pointing to the usefulness of analysing domestic processes to make sense of donors (p. 167). Taking this argument as a point of departure, to explain the transformation of Turkey’s foreign aid policy-making, I will use Carol Lancaster’s (2007) comprehensive study on traditional donors, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development and Domestic Politics*, as the main pillar of my theoretical framework.

In the aforementioned study, Lancaster (2007) conducted a series of case studies on models of foreign aid policy making in the US, Japan, France, Germany and Denmark, and identified four domestic political forces which determine foreign aid policy:

(1) Ideas: Lancaster argues that the most fundamental ideas that influence aid policy are worldviews – a certain set of values shared within a society based on culture, ideology or religion. The origins of the norms and principled beliefs in a given society are argued to be based on these worldviews.⁹

⁹ Some of the other key works in the literature which inform my theoretical framework to understand Turkey’s foreign aid policy are Goldstein and Keohane (1993) who introduce principled beliefs (normative ideas) and causal beliefs (beliefs concerning cause-effect relationship) to the study of foreign policy; Cingranelli (1993) who analyses the effects of moral positions and political culture on policy formation; Stokke (1989) who emphasises the role of ideology in foreign policy; and Pratt (1989) who identifies values as primary determinants of foreign policy formation. Other useful pillars will be borrowed from Thérien and Noël (2000), who argue that the institutionalisation of principles at the domestic level (i.e. by political parties) may have an influence on foreign aid policy; and Murshed (2003) who identified principal-agent interaction within aid bureaucracies as a determining variable in foreign aid policy, whereby legislators are treated as principals and aid agencies as agents executing the agenda set by the principal.

(2) Institutions: These are the “rules of the political game”, and are able to influence foreign aid policy formation by determining who has veto power, who has direct access to decision makers and who ultimately makes decisions (2007: 18). Parliamentary and presidential political systems, regimes, legal frameworks, advisory committees and state-supported NGOs all fall under the umbrella of political institutions and are therefore able to shape policy.

(3) Interests: In the context of foreign aid policy, Lancaster identifies three main categories of interest groups: those who prioritise the commercial uses of aid as a means to expand their access to markets or raw materials (i.e. private sector, business associations); civil society organisations advocating a specific area of development (i.e. NGOs); and groups with a particular affinity to certain religions, ethnicities or foreign countries (i.e. religious networks, faith-based organisations, etc.)

(4) Organization: Lancaster observes that most analyses of policy-making assimilate government organisation into the broader category of ‘institutions’, although this would be a shortcoming in the case of foreign aid. How the aid bureaucracy is managed within a government affects the extent of collaboration between government agencies and non-government entities engaging in the practice of foreign aid. Moreover, government agencies and/or bureaucrats can be “political actors in their own right” depending on to what extent they choose to act within the limitations of their mandate.

In addition to these four domestic determinants, Lancaster also locates the international context as a broader source of influence which constantly shapes the domestic forces, which in turn shape foreign aid policy. Indeed, taking into account the structural transformation that has reshuffled the field of international development assistance in the last two decades, any analysis of emerging donors runs the risk of falling short should it not be based on a multilevel perspective that accommodates the influence of the international system as well as domestic factors.

A final yet crucial pillar of this eclectic theoretical framework will be built on the usefulness of the explanatory implications of agent-oriented and actor-specific theories of the foreign policy analysis (FPA) approach. My departure point borrows from the view that states are not in a position to be conceptualised as agents in the true sense as they are merely abstractions lacking real agency, as opposed to human beings whose actions ultimately comprise all policy-making (Hudson, 2005: 2). As argued by Renshon and Renshon (2008), “without direct reference to the decision making of individual leaders”, it is not possible to understand any crisis in foreign policy (p. 511). This growing literature has borrowed greatly from the seminal works of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin (1954), who offered the first systematic account of the different determinants in foreign policy decision making, and Allison (1971), who introduced a disruption to the rational actor model of FPA by pointing out the decentralised processes that may involve a wealth of actors inside various

agencies (Mintz and DeRouen Jr., 2010: 71). Other key works in the literature that have sustained the importance of individual characteristics in foreign policy making include Walker (1977; 1990), Hermann and Hagan (1998), Hermann et al. (2001) and Grove (2007).

There are empirical implications in the Turkish foreign policy literature which suggest the impact of individual characteristics and political leadership in Turkey's foreign aid policy, the earlier examples of which include Müftüler-Baç (2011), Öniş (2012), Robins, (2013), Ayata (2015), Aras (2019), and later Öniş and Kutlay (2011) and Demirtaş (2022).

In order to make sense of the effect of individuals on foreign policy, Grove (2007) proposes four strategies of leadership which may be observed in settings related to foreign policy making and implementation. These strategies are a) broadening audience, b) buying off, c) tying hands, and d) framing threat. The table below summarises each strategy by suggesting possible resources for each strategy.

Strategy	Definition	Resource
Broadening audience	Expanding coalition to create legitimacy at home or abroad, or to support message of shared identity	International norms and organisations
Buying off	Using material resources to co-opt opposition or change conditions abroad or at home	Economic aid
Tying hands	Limiting range of options in one arena to convince an actor in another arena that a particular course is necessary	Foreign aid conditions; international law
Framing threat	Depicting particular actors as dangerous to constituency at home or abroad to rally support and promote unity	Repression; military behaviour

Table 2: Four leadership strategies in foreign policy. Source: Grove (2007)

The strategies laid out by Grove have the potential to serve as explanatory variables in understanding the effects of political leadership on Turkish aid policy making. For instance, the broadening audience strategy connotes ideas introduced in Öniş (2012) and may serve as a useful tool to explain how the ‘conservative globalist’ stance of AKP has helped the party gain more popular support domestically.

Against the backdrop of a fundamental transformation in the field of international development aid, and critical domestic shifts in Turkey’s economy and politics since 2002, this dissertation will seek to address the following questions: How has Turkey’s foreign aid policy evolved in the 30 years of its

experience as a donor? What factors have influenced Turkey's foreign aid policy making? What is the interaction between domestic, international and individual determinants of Turkish foreign aid policy? How does Turkey differ from other emerging donors?

In doing so, I conduct an in-depth study of Turkey's foreign aid policy through the examples of Turkish foreign aid in Latin America and Sub Saharan Africa under the AKP era. My analysis is based on the model presented in Figure 1, devised through the theoretical basis explained priorly in this section. Devising such a model to understand foreign policy making is a complex task due to the high number of variables at play. As Lancaster (2007) warns, the sheer number of interacting variables makes it a challenge to justify any model that would be both "parsimonious and insightful" (p. 9). I argue, however, that as challenging as this task may be, incorporating diverse theoretical approaches, particularly agent-oriented explanations, bear potential to shed light on the Turkish case through a both parsimonious and insightful lens. Building on a framework devised with similar assumptions by Szent-Ivanyi and Lightfoot, I borrow the four domestic determinants (ideas, institutions, interests, and organisation) outlined by Lancaster (2007), and integrate them into a three-level model that also caters for the individual and international levels of analysis as well. At the individual level, I also introduce agent-oriented and actor-specific explanations for Turkey's foreign aid policy making, while also analysing the leadership strategies of Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

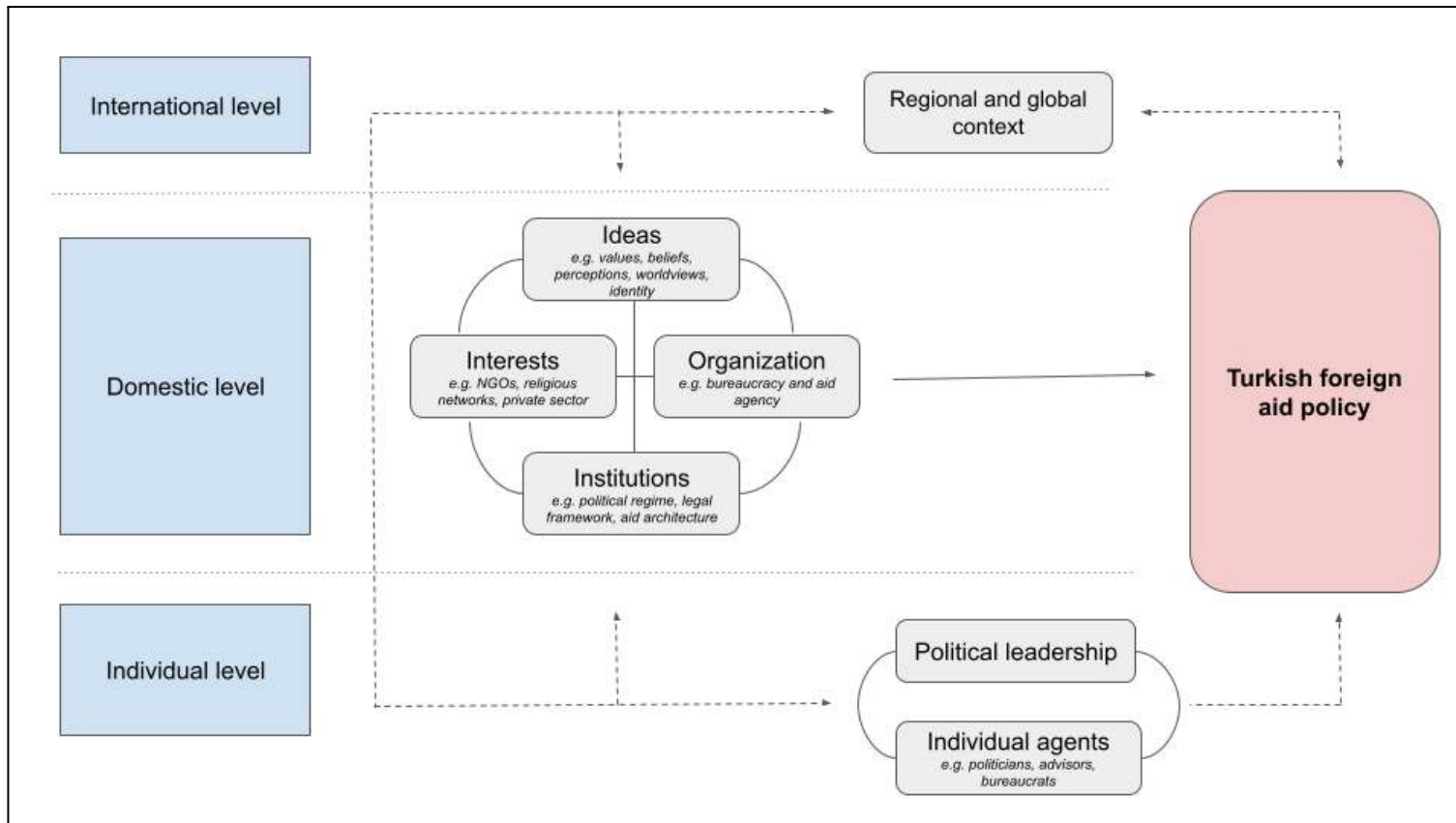


Figure 4: A three level model to analyse Turkey's foreign aid policy making

2.5. Methodology and data collection

To explain the factors at play in Turkey's foreign aid policy-making from 1992 to 2022, I conduct a case study using a process tracing method based on in-person interviews and other primary sources, which will be listed in the following paragraphs. As a within-case method, process-tracing enables the researcher to draw inferences based on evidence collected regarding mechanisms, which is "critical to the viability of small-n analysis" (Collier, 1991: 13-15; George and Bennett, 2005: 205). This study subscribes to the view that "if statistical work addresses questions of propensities, narratives address the questions of process" (Laitin, 2000: 5). As such, as the research questions guiding this dissertation require, this study aims to uncover the processes that have shaped the factors influencing Turkish foreign aid policy through narratives.

In a discussion of the uses of process-tracing, Hall (2000) has observed that "process-tracing is a methodology well-suited to testing theories in a world marked by multiple interaction effects, where it is difficult to explain outcomes in terms of two of three independent variables" (p. 18). This study argues that Turkish foreign aid policy-making presents one such fitting case, with a wealth of interacting factors across the individual, domestic and international levels.

According to George and McKeown (1985), is a useful method of opening up the “black box” of decision making to uncover “what stimuli actors attend to; the decision process that makes use of these stimuli to arrive at decisions; ... the effect of various institutional arrangements on attention, processing and behaviour; and the effect of other variables of interest” (p. 35). As such, it is a useful within-case method that enables the researcher to draw inferences. This also resounds with the emerging donors literature. In advancing the emerging donors research agenda, Fejerskov et al. (2016) have argued that emphasis should be placed on seeking answers to questions related to how players interact with systems of authority, how ideas spread across different agents or organisational structures that shape policy, and how we can compare these structures across “a variety of historical contexts” (p. 1082). This study follows this recommendation in two ways. First, as suggested in Laitin’s definition, it aims to provide answers to questions surrounding the processes of policy-making, which also caters to the need to understand the interactions between different policy determinants across the individual, domestic and international levels. Second, by proposing a periodization of the study of Turkish foreign aid in Chapter 3, it aims to capture how the relevant factors influencing Turkey’s foreign aid policy have evolved across different historical periods. This is also aligned with Collier’s (1991) and George and Bennett’s (2005) views that a major contribution of the process-tracing method has been its ability to historicize the social sciences, as intended by this study.

The data for this study was collected via archival research and semi-structured elite interviews. The archival research includes a review of the available primary sources, including official statements, press releases, reports and ODA data from relevant state and non-state actors active in Turkish foreign aid policy, i.e. Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, TİKA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Maarif Foundation and civil society actors collaborating with state agencies in the field of development cooperation. TİKA's yearly Development Assistance Reports between 2004 and 2021, as well as memoirs and reports by leading policy-makers, have been key sources that have been evaluated. To inform my analysis on the individual level, I also use data from presidential and prime ministerial speeches and interviews available through print media. Throughout a time frame of two years, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with high ranking bureaucratic executives and ambassadors, from TİKA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency of the Turkish Republic, Maarif Foundation, Tüm Afrika'nın Dostları Association, Sadakataşı Association and Doctors Worldwide. All quotations in this dissertation are either official English translations as published by the relevant formal bodies, or the author's own translations from Turkish.

As widely observed, interviewing is an underused method in modern political science methodology despite its explanatory power, and the same holds equally for the study of international relations (Rathbun, 2008). A major reason

is often cited as the difficulty of ensuring access to the interviewees, especially in the case of elite interviewing. In most cases, the process may involve bureaucratic hurdles and necessitate the establishment of exclusive connections and networking sources for the researcher to guarantee an in-person encounter with their subjects, while also establishing interpersonal trust. The process may turn even more challenging in instances where interviews need to be held in secrecy due to the interviewee's individual circumstances or privacy concerns. Elite interviewing may further prove to be a costly and laborious mode of research, as it may require international travel and language training in those instances where the researcher is not a native of the research context, or the language of direct communication.

Besides its practical restrictions, interviewing is also a neglected method in international relations due to the skepticism associated with its nature as a methodological tool. An interview may be defined as an immediate "social relationship" that develops between the researcher and the interviewee, where the latter fulfils a dual role as both a research subject and an interacting subject (Alles et al. 2017: 109). Contemporary methodological trends in international relations and political science therefore view this relationship with skepticism, as the substantial value attached to the importance of "rigorous analysis" (borrowed from the core assumptions of the natural sciences) opens the 'subjective' nature of the data to question. The prevailing methodological approaches in the discipline, particularly behavioralism and rational choice, are

built in favour of the premise that data should be as uncharged and objective as possible for the research to allow replication (see Easton, 1962; Somit and Tanenhaus, 1967).

However, Rathbun (2008) evaluates this tendency as a ‘naive’ version of behavioralism and rationalism which rejects the nature of the data collected from interviews for being “imprecise” and “subject to multiple interpretations” (pp. 685-686). To understand politics, Rathbun argues that naive behavioralism subscribes to a methodological framework that overlooks the explanatory potential of agency at the expense of structure, based on the assumption that the subjects of research, i.e. political actors, maintain an objective view of the world, and react similarly to the same stimuli (Rathbun, 2008: 686). As such, a leading preference in the behavioralist tradition has been ‘structured’ interviews, in which data is collected through predetermined response categories, and where the interviewees are asked identical questions and given a limited set of responses (Patton, 1990). According to this view, the absence of those parameters would result in a less generalizable (and more undesirable) outcome, and theories may be deemed less parsimonious where the research subjects have a greater choice and capacity to change the environment around them (Almond and Genco, 1977).

In the elite interviews conducted in this study, a major limitation has been reaching key figures in bureaucracy and decision-making due to their

preferences, and at times legal obligations, of non-disclosure. Out of the eighteen interview requests I sent to current Country Coordinators at TİKA's offices across Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, only three responded, and they ultimately declined to participate in an anonymous interview after being fully informed about the scope of the questions. I have aimed to mitigate this by diversifying my primary sources across official reports, memoirs, press interviews and news articles.

Another obstacle has been the criminalised status of many key figures and organisations who were influential in shaping Turkey's foreign aid policy prior to the 2016 coup attempt. Between 2015 and 2023, I sent a total of fifty-four written interview requests to representatives (Coordinators, Department Heads, Directors, or higher-level positions) from TİKA, the MFA, and twenty-six Turkish aid NGOs with overseas operations. The majority of those who responded positively did so after follow-up communications between 2021 and 2023.

Due to legal impediments, I have been unable to access the archives of *Zaman* daily newspaper, a key source for interviews, as well the open source archives TUSKON, Kimse Yok Mu Association, Deniz Feneri Association among others, whose operations have been halted due to their links with FETÖ.

Chapter 3

From recipient to donor:

A periodization of Turkish foreign aid policy

This chapter will provide an overview of the historical transformations in Turkey's foreign aid policy between 1992 and 2022. Through an analysis of the major breakthroughs the country's foreign aid policy has experienced within the given time period, it will present a discussion of the intricate factors that have shaped policy at the individual, domestic, and international levels. After a brief overview of Turkey's earliest encounters with foreign aid, the chapter will also propose a periodization of Turkish foreign aid policy in four categories, contingent upon the broader changes in Turkey's overall foreign policy.

3.1. Turkey's earliest experiments with foreign aid

During its Ottoman era in the 19th century, Turkey sported, within the context of its own history, the earliest elements of what came to be termed in modern times as foreign aid. The Ottoman state's response to the Great Irish Famine of 1845-1852 illustrates an intriguing example of the Turkish state apparatus taking part in the first documented bilateral donor-recipient

relationship with a geographically distant country that it shared little in common in terms of culture. Social historian Semih Çelik (2015) has highlighted a few relatively undocumented cases of financial aid-giving by the Ottoman sultan Abdülmecid during the famine that struck Ireland in the 19th century. The cases include the sultan's aid of £1000 to the *British Association for the Relief of the Distress in Ireland and Scotland*, which was seen, at the time, as the first instance of these two geographically distant societies becoming aware of each other (Çelik, 2015: 14). The British consulate personnel of the time are cited to have asked the sultan to lower the amount of the initially proposed £10,000 of aid, as this amount was multiple times higher than the contribution of Queen Victoria herself, who had given £2000 (Christmas, 1854: 20-21; Daunt, 1896: 98; Kinealy, 2013:115 quoted in Çelik, 2015: 17).

Although Sultan Abdülmecid's response to the Irish famine may be regarded as an inaugural and primitive example of the Ottoman foreign aid policy, Çelik (2015) argues that a letter sent to the British and French embassies in Istanbul by the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July 1845 shows that humanitarian ideas, in their abstract form, had a place in the state's policy considerations even prior to the famine.¹⁰ According to Çelik (2015), the reference to an abstract notion of "humanitarian values" (*muavenet-i lazime-i*

¹⁰ "[W]e acknowledge that it is among the most necessary humanitarian values to help ease the misery and absolute scarcity in a [foreign] country, where basic needs cannot be met [...]" (Prohibition of Export of Grain from Anatolia, 26.07.1261/31.07.1845,« TNA, FO. 198/78, fol. 49)

insaniyet) in a diplomatic text illustrates that the Ottoman state's understanding of humanitarian relief "went beyond short-term and practical needs of diplomacy" (p. 18). Çelik (2015) moreover posits that the cash aid provided by the Ottoman sultan to famine-struck Ireland seems "motivated by the humanitarian ideas already established in the imperial ideology, together with a diplomatic interest in being part of an international/inter-imperial order" (2015: 18).

A different example of early aid-giving practices in Turkey's history is found in the famine of 1921-1922 in Soviet Union's Crimea (Kırımlı, 2003). Following a formal communiqué signed on 2 August 1921 by Soviet Foreign Minister Georgii Chicherin, appealing to the 'Heads of All Governments' and welcoming all types of aid that "does not involve political considerations", the Grand National Assembly of Turkey was among those who responded, alongside US Secretary of Commerce (and later President) Herbert Hoover (Kırımlı, 2003: 38). Under Hoover's leadership, the American Relief Association (ARA) provided a generous amount of relief aid to the Soviet Union, followed by numerous other countries from all around Europe, Asia and South America. Although the aid provided by the Ankara government was quite modest in comparison to that of the ARA, it bore substantial meaning as its timing coincided with perhaps the most turbulent and fateful period in the history of modern Turkey. With a new nationalist government springing in Ankara under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern

Turkey, and the Ottoman Empire on the verge of disintegration, the pursuit of such diplomatic enterprises as aid-giving proved to have played a vital role in the Ankara government's plea to establish and bolster ties with the rest of the world. As such, Kırımlı (2003) reminds that the Soviet Union was one of the first states to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the Ankara government, in support of a country that was "fighting against the imperialists", which would, in turn, "contribute properly to the image for which Soviet Russia strove", namely defending oppressed peoples (p. 51).

Despite having experimented with foreign aid donorship in its Ottoman past and during its War of Independence, modern Turkey's first experience with foreign aid, or overseas development assistance (ODA) -in the modern sense of the term- dates back to the onset of the Cold War in the 1950s. In line with the US foreign policy priorities of containing the spread of Soviet communism, and rebuilding European economies after the Second World War, the Marshall Plan offered a substantial amount of ODA to Turkey and Greece in the 1940s. The total amount of aid received by Turkey during the 1950s within the framework of the Marshall Plan is calculated as \$150 million (Marshall Foundation, as cited in Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 99). The total of all development related loan and grant flows from the US to Turkey, on the other hand, is reported to have surpassed \$12.5 billion by the end of 2005 (US Department of State, as cited in Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 99).

Alongside the US, two other major sources of ODA to Turkey have been Japan and Germany. Both countries initiated technical cooperation with Turkey in the early 1970s through project-type activities administered by their respective development cooperation agencies, namely the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). Although JICA's official engagement with Turkey started in 1965, the first technical cooperation project by JICA in Turkey was implemented in 1973, with the total budget allocated for Turkey nearing approximately \$286 million (JICA Turkey Office, as cited in Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 99). GTZ, on the other hand, started its technical cooperation activities with Turkey in 1970 through the 'German-Turkish Technical Cooperation', and provided a total of €271 million to Turkey in technical assistance, as of 2003 (GTZ Turkey Office, as cited in Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 99)

Multilateral actors have also played a part in Turkey's development, and among these, the most visible has been the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Alongside others, UNDP has been an active player in shaping and supporting Turkey's development agenda for three decades through the implementation of projects in various areas such as democratic governance, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. The total technical assistance received by Turkey from the UNDP was \$33.12 million in 2000 (Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 99). Apart from UNDP, the Asian Development Fund (ADF) and

the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have also contributed to Turkey's economic development.

3.2. Phase I: The short-lived birth of TİKA after the Cold War

Despite still being on the DAC list of ODA recipient countries, Turkey launched its own first aid program in 1985 with a comprehensive aid package to the Sahel countries. Worth \$10 million in total, the aid consisted of institutional capacity building projects in Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Somalia and Sudan (Birtok, 1998: 37). One reading of this initiative has attributed its main motivation to the foreign policy activism during the Turgut Özal government in the 1980s, which prioritised the promotion of Turkey's positive image in the neighbourhood and in the international arena (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010:133-134). As such, the improved domestic economic environment enabled the utilisation of foreign aid as an instrument to foster trade relations between Turkey and the less developed countries of Africa, in search of new markets. Following decades of import substitution policies, the export-oriented period following 1984 was regarded as one during which Turkey's economic policies were increasingly aligning with "the realities and demands" of globalisation. This paved the way for the adoption of not only liberal economic policies, but also ODA as a peaceful foreign policy instrument (Pamuk, 2008:268).

3.2.1. TİKA: “A New World for the Turk”

During the first two decades of the 21st century, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA), Turkey’s official aid agency, became a vital cornerstone of Turkey’s soft power and public diplomacy abroad. Most research on Turkey’s trajectory as a foreign donor is often based on a more recent chronology and focuses on TİKA’s post-2002 revival period during the AKP era. However, the initial phase of TİKA marked an important alignment with the country’s overall post-Cold War foreign policy, based on a set of ideational factors that varied greatly from those of contemporary times.

TİKA was originally founded to provide financial and technical assistance mainly to the Turkic states in Central Asia, during their transition to a market economy. Although the need for immediate assistance to these countries was the official rationale for the establishment of TİKA, evidence collected through interviews has pointed to its founding president Ambassador Umut Arık as having played a key role in convincing the political leadership about the idea of launching a national aid agency.¹¹ In his memoir, Arık has explained that his idea of TİKA as an enabler of a “new world for the Turk” was met with criticism and disapproval across the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

¹¹ Interview with a former senior diplomat on December 22, 2021.

“The Economic Department saw the Turkic World as poor and despicable, and opposed the diversion of scarce resources there, in line with the views of European and Islamist business circles. The Political Departments, on the other hand, preferred that Turkey's main interest should be concentrated in nearby regions such as Cyprus, the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Black Sea, saying, ‘What are we going to do in the heart of Asia? What are we doing in the Gobi Desert?’” (Arık, 2020: 66)

Against all odds, Arık was able to convince President Turgut Özal in favour of this proposal, which led to the birth of a Turkic-world focused TİKA.¹² In spite of the initial hype and enthusiasm, TİKA remained an inactive and weakly organised aid agency throughout the 1990s. Constrained by a number of domestic and external factors, TİKA was unable to make adequate progress to fully meet its initial goals. It is possible to identify two important limitations as the major impediments to TİKA's performance during the 1990s. Firstly, the Gulf War acted as a major source of vulnerability for the Turkish economy, which in turn inflicted a negative impact on the ODA budget (Özkan and Demirtepe, 2012: 652) Secondly, a change of government in 1995, and political turmoil as a result of the Islamist Welfare Party's (Refah Partisi)

¹² Interview with a former senior diplomat on December 22, 2021.

victory in the 1995 general elections further exacerbated the country's economic performance by increasing uncertainty and instability.

3.3. Phase II: Paradigm shift in foreign policy and the rebirth of TİKA (2002-2011)

At the end of the turbulent decade, TİKA entered a phase of re-birth in 2003, shortly after the election of the AKP to government. Major organisational changes took effect, paving the way for a rapid improvement in reporting schemes, a quick increase in ODA spending, and the diversification of development assistance activities. In tandem with the new foreign policy of the AKP government, TİKA widened its geographical scope, shifting its sole focus on the post-communist states of Central Asia to also include the Middle East and North Africa, the Balkans, South Asia, and more recently, Sub Saharan Africa and Latin America. In retrospect, it is a fitting argument that the most important hurdle faced by TİKA as an aid agency was in fact its own (as well as the other government institutions') 'failure to understand how a modern development aid agency operated successfully' (Özkan and Demirtepe, 2012: 648).

In order to make sense of the transformation of TİKA and the emerging development assistance activism pursued by the Turkish government, it is essential to understand the recent changes in Turkish foreign policy under the AKP government. Following decades of a relatively static, reactive, and largely Western-oriented foreign policy agenda with marginal variance across different political parties, Turkish foreign policy is said to have experienced a ‘paradigm shift’ under the AKP (Sözen, 2010).

Critics have approached this claim with caution, warning against a ‘shift of axis’, one suggestive of a departure from the Euro-Atlantic orientation prevalent since the end of the Second World War in the direction of a more ‘Eastern’ oriented practice of foreign policy (Loğoğlu, 2009). Enthusiasts, on the other hand, responded with optimism, anticipating a deepening of Turkey’s engagement with regional politics and international organisations (Aras, 2009). A more cautious and moderate analysis suggests that although the ‘AKP-style’ activism considerably differs from the previous wave of foreign policy activism in the 1990s, it is not free of elements of continuity, such as a multilateral approach to policy-making (Öniş and Yılmaz, 2009: 7-8)

3.3.1. Proactive turn in foreign policy, economic recovery and political stabilisation

Moreover, Turkish foreign policy has experienced a pro-active turn within the same period, with an increasingly assertive agenda which reflected “a desire to act as an independent regional power” (Öniş, 2011: 50). This pro-active shift in Turkish foreign policy has been a fundamental factor influencing the recent upsurge of ODA provision and development assistance activism in Turkey along with a number of others. The resultant geographical reorientation within the foreign policy, favourable domestic economic conditions, and the vital transformation of TİKA comprise the crucial elements which have helped shape Turkey’s recent international development agenda.

The strengthening of Turkey’s cooperation efforts with developing nations, particularly with Central Asia, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa, was a clear manifestation of the shifting geographical priorities in Turkish foreign policy. The theoretical basis of this reorientation is often attributed to Ahmet Davutoğlu’s oft-cited book *Strategic Depth: Turkey’s International Position* published in 2001. The book became an academic best-seller following AKP’s election to government in 2002, and preserved its popularity through Davutoğlu’s appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs in

May 2009.¹³ In *Strategic Depth*, Davutoğlu contended that Turkey's earlier foreign policies deprived the country of its 'natural sphere of influence', namely former Ottoman territories and regions with Turkic or Muslim populations (Davutoğlu, 2001: 536). Davutoğlu later stressed that 'Turkey's natural interest lies in the proper utilisation of its geography', pointing to a perceived need to re-engage with the geography with which Turkey possesses cultural, religious and historical ties (Davutoğlu, 2007: 92). By some, this was greeted as a 'new geographic imagination' – one that sought Turkey's real interests in the Eurasian region (Aras and Fidan, 2009: 193-215). By others, it was received with more caution, interpreted as the 'Middle Easternization' of Turkish foreign policy and its disassociation from the West (Oğuzlu, 2008: 3-20).

At the domestic level, economic recovery and political stability were key factors that paved the way for the AKP government to pursue a pro-active foreign policy, and to overcome the obstacles which had prevented previous governments from engaging in a more active overseas development agenda. Following its election to government in 2002, AKP continued the economic stabilisation program designed by Kemal Derviş in the wake of the 2001 banking crisis and committed to fiscal discipline and tight monetary policies as proposed by the program (Özkan and Demirtepe 2012: 655). Moreover, an IMF-EU-US nexus was key in the restructuring of the post-crisis economy,

13 Davutoğlu was formerly a Professor of International Relations at the Islamic University of Malaysia and Marmara University, and chief foreign policy advisor to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

where the IMF's active involvement was shaped by the post-9/11 security concerns of the US combined with the EU conditionality serving as an anchor for political and economic reform in the country (Öniş and Şenses, 2007: 271). As a result, the inflation rate dropped to 8.39% in 2007 from a soaring 68% in 2001. Fiscal balances showed equal progress and the share of budget deficit in overall GDP was reduced to 41% in 2007 from 90% in 2001 (Özkan and Demirtepe, 2012: 655).

The restructuring of the economy and political stability set a convenient domestic context for financing ODA programs. Combined with the pro-active turn in foreign policy and new geographic priorities, TİKA became a key soft power instrument for the AKP government's new foreign policy vision. Following more than a decade of modest ODA programs with little international visibility, TİKA entered a phase of re-organization in 2003. Due to a considerable budget increase and as a result of complying with the DAC guidelines for data collection and reporting, a sharp increase in ODA was recorded between 2003 and 2004, rising from \$76 million to \$339 million (Figure 1) (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 138). However, effective data collection remained a persistent challenge due to the lack of awareness on coordination, inadequate communication between different state institutions, incomplete data and underreporting. In order to overcome these issues, TİKA was designated as the central institution to collect and report all ODA data in

2005, replacing the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 138).

3.3.2. Organisational changes and the restructuring of TİKA

Following the centralization of aid coordination under TİKA, ODA figures went up dramatically, displaying a nearly tenfold increase from \$76 million in 2003 to \$601 million in 2005 (Figure 1). Annual ODA figures would previously appear less as the aid provided by numerous other state institutions were not being reported to TÜİK (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 138). As a result, the reported ODA figures for 2002 and 2003 remained as low as \$85 million and \$76 million respectively. With TİKA's revival in 2003, the geographical trends in Turkish ODA destinations portrayed a visible alignment with Davutoğlu's 'strategic depth' doctrine, in accordance with the new foreign policy vision of the AKP.

3.3.3. Shifting geographies and priorities

The shifting geography and evolving priorities of Turkey's development assistance have also signalled the role of ODA as an effective instrument to elevate Turkey's presence in regional affairs. Turkey became an active

contributor to peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction activities in its neighbourhood, including in the South Caucasus, the Balkans, and the Middle East (Murphy and Sazak, 2012). Afghanistan, as a case in point, became a central focus of Turkey's reconstruction and peace-building efforts after the collapse of the Taliban regime in the country. According to the figures reported by TİKA, Turkey's contributions to Afghanistan totaled nearly \$20 million between 2006 and 2011. Turkey's contributions to Afghanistan continue on a multilateral basis, both in military (through NATO) and non-military (post-conflict reconstruction) terms.¹⁴

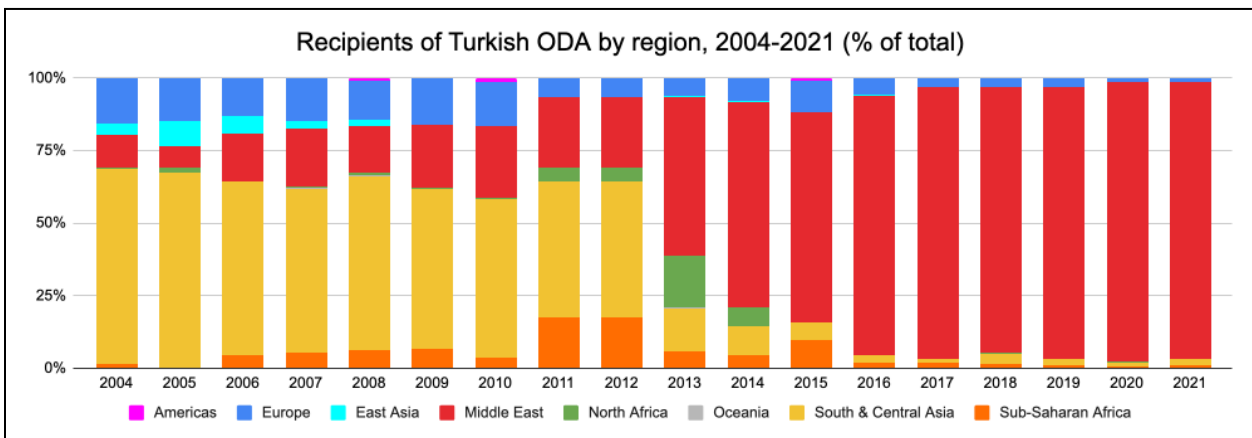


Figure 5: Recipients of Turkish ODA by region. 2004-2021. Source: TİKA

¹⁴ For a detailed account of Turkey's presence in Afghanistan, see Bayer and Keyman (2012).

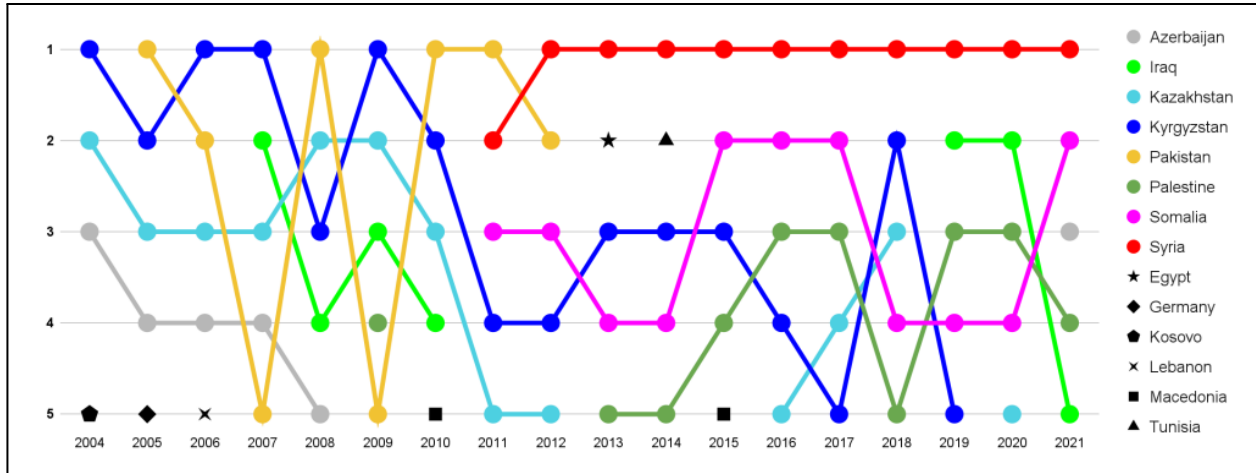


Figure 6: Top recipients of Turkish ODA by rank order, 2004-2021. Source: TİKA

In line with the pro-active foreign policy vision of the AKP, and with its assumed role as a rising international player, Turkey furthermore relied on ODA to extend its global reach and to actively attend to issues of global concern. As a result of its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eradication of extreme poverty became an area of focus for Turkey's development assistance agenda, along with a new and unprecedented focus on Africa. In 2011, ODA disbursements to the African continent totalled \$269.78 million, with the majority being channelled to projects going on in Somalia and Sudan (Figure 2 and 3). This tendency complies with the main concerns of the MDGs as Turkey has also taken Africa as a focus region. The year 2005 was declared as 'The Year of Africa' in Turkey, as a visible continuation of the 'Opening Up to Africa' policy which was initiated by a policy document as early as 1998 (Özkan and Akgün, 2010: 532). Particular importance was attached to capacity development projects in Africa, with vocational training

courses targeting specific sectors according to the needs and priorities of the partner countries (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 137). TİKA furthermore opened offices in Ethiopia, Senegal, and Sudan to improve the coordination of its development projects across the continent.

3.3.4. Rising influence of non-state actors

In addition to the improvements in data collection and reporting, the private sector and civil society have been crucial factors for the increase in ODA spending. Following the post-crisis economic restructuring, the private sector's recovery enabled Turkish firms to make direct investments in developing countries (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2008: 145 ff. 6). Civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGO), on the other hand, also contributed to this change as TİKA started collecting aid data from NGO providers in 2005. Growing cooperation between TİKA and NGOs resulted in an increase in the number of NGO-led projects financed by public funds (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 138).

3.3.4.1. Civil society

Non-governmental organisations have played a key role in facilitating the recent development assistance activism in Turkey. The total aid provided by Turkish NGOs nearly quadrupled in six years, increasing from \$56.7 million in

2005 to almost \$200 million in 2011 (TİKA, 2011). The total contributions of various Turkish NGOs (including the Turkish Red Crescent) are estimated to surpass those made by the government (TİKA, 2011). The comparative flexibility of NGOs in comparison with national donor agencies and their low profile in aid delivery have made them well-received actors in recipient countries (Fidan and Nurdun, 2008: 98). It has been argued that Turkey's interest toward Africa was driven to a large extent by the agenda-setting efforts of Turkish humanitarian NGOs, as a result of their growing influence in policy processes (Kardaş, 2013: 4). A concrete example of this influence was the appointment of Kani Torun, a former medical NGO official with Doctors Worldwide, as Turkey's first ambassador to Mogadishu – which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

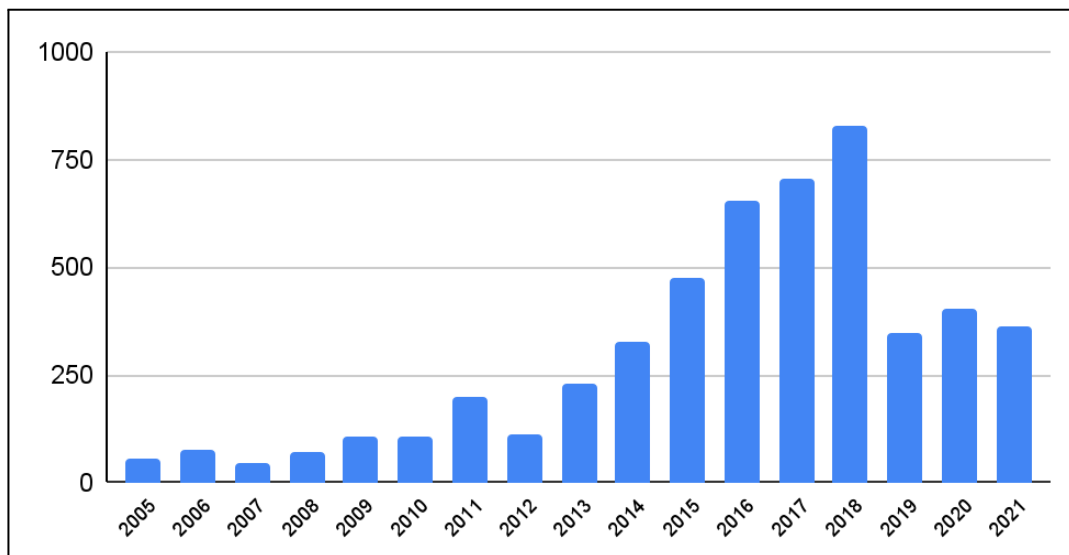


Figure 7: Foreign aid by Turkish NGOs (million \$). Source: TİKA

Due to the increasing role of Turkish NGOs as providers of international development and humanitarian assistance, TİKA set up the Department of Coordination and Cooperation with NGOs in 2009 (TİKA, 2010: 21). This was an important organisational arrangement to harmonise TİKA's official aid programs with those of various NGOs operating in the same sectors, and hence to avoid project overlaps and minimise transaction costs (Kragelund, 2008: 557). The accommodation of nongovernmental and private donors as partners was a move which was motivated by TİKA's aim to incorporate sector-wide approaches (SWAps) in its ODA management (Apaydin, 2012). SWAps have been identified as a departure from an orthodox aid modality focused solely on project-based aid towards a mixed modality integrating project-based aid with a sector-wide approach. By definition, SWAps involve cooperation between governmental and non-governmental donors at a sectoral level (e.g. healthcare, education etc.) and within a common sectoral policy, where the government plays a key role in setting standards and priorities (Foster, 2000). In sum, with the attention it has paid to align non-governmental aid donors with its own ODA activities through the adoption of new approaches, TİKA has taken an important step in diversifying its ODA modalities.

The majority of Turkish non-governmental aid providers with which TİKA has cooperated, including Kimse Yok Mu (Anybody Out There?) Association, Deniz Feneri (Light House) Association, Doctors Worldwide

Turkey and Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), are faith-based organisations. A number of these NGOs, most notably Kimse Yok Mu and Deniz Feneri, have known formal or informal links with exiled Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen, whose quarrel with the Turkish government will be discussed in the next sections of this chapter. Although most of these organisations, most notably the IHH, advertise a universal focus for their aid, their activities are shaped within a noticeably Islamic discourse, with the majority of their regular aid recipients being Muslim communities around the world (Apaydın, 2012: 5). Prior to the recent controversies regarding Gülen-linked structures, the religious inclination of these organisations has at times resulted in criticism, with the Deniz Feneri Association having been involved in a major corruption scandal in Germany in 2007 (Milliyet, 2008), and the IHH having caused controversy for its active participation in the 2010 Gaza flotilla incident against Israel (Hürriyet, 2010).

An important field of humanitarian and development assistance in which Turkish NGOs have been active is healthcare development. As part of the extensive Turkish mobilisation for Somalia in 2011, Doctors Worldwide Turkey launched a comprehensive medical project that involved the construction of Shifa Hospital in the Hodan district of Somalia. With a capacity of 62 beds, the hospital aimed to provide healthcare services to 300,000 patients annually (Reliefweb, 2012). IHH is another key non-governmental partner of TİKA that operates in healthcare assistance. Having accounted for 27% of the total Turkish

NGO aid in 2011, IHH provided Libya with 682 tons of food and medical supplies and a €2 million mobile hospital during the country's political crisis, and moreover built 340 clean water supply systems for Somalia (TİKA, 2011: 73).

Education and culture have been other key areas of aid provision for Turkish NGOs. *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı* (Turkish World Research Foundation - TWRF) has been a close partner of TİKA in implementing education related projects in developing countries. TWRF has opened and supported numerous schools, faculties and public courses across the Turkish-speaking developing world including the Jalalabad Faculty of Social Sciences in Kyrgyzstan, Baku Faculty of Management in Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Turkish Language and Literature Department in Kazakhstan, Kyzylorda State University and Baku Atatürk High school in Azerbaijan (TİKA, 2011: 74). *Türk Diyanet Vakfı* (Turkish Religious Foundation - TRF), another partner NGO operating in educational and cultural development, has opened schools and provided scholarships for Turkish-speaking and/or Muslim students in Bulgaria, Romania, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. 79 TRF has also undertaken several restoration and renovation projects for public buildings, schools, historical sites and mosques in these countries (TİKA, 2011: 77).

Even prior to the political spat between the AKP and the Gülen movement, certain aspects of TİKA's partnership with NGOs have been subject to criticism. A major source of controversy was the Africa Cataract Project carried out in partnership with the İHH. The project started in April 2007 with the aim of treating 100,000 cataract patients across Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Ghana, Benin, Togo and Chad. Between 2007 and 2012, the project achieved a total of 68,035 cataract surgeries and 270,194 eye examinations across all ten of the target countries (İHH, 2012). However, a particular focus on the shared legacy of Sunni Islam between the two countries helped to facilitate both the project and İHH's presence in Sudan to show an expansion. A major criticism was that the project catered to former Sudanese leader Omar Al-Bashir's efforts to gain external support and legitimacy for his regime's controversial practices (Apaydın, 2012: 12).

3.3.4.2. Private sector

Since 2002, there have been discussions on whether Turkey's aid is more motivated by humanitarianism or economic interests, against the backdrop of the significant influence of private sector agents over the country's foreign policy. Some have referred to this as the economy acting as the “practical hand” of Turkey's foreign policy (Kutlay, 2011: 68). Turkey's private sector has shown to be a vital motivator of development assistance provision from Turkey to a number of developing countries, particularly in the Middle East and Africa.

Constrained by the increasingly uneasy global economic context and fueled at the same time by the fundamental transformation of small and medium sized enterprises at home, Turkish foreign policy did not remain untouched by the changes within the domestic and global economic structures. Indeed, some accounts of Turkish foreign policy activism have carefully drawn attention to the crucial role played by economic factors, both at the global and domestic levels, in the shaping of AKP's foreign policy vision which prioritised international development assistance (Öniş, 2011; Kirişci, 2011: 33-35; Ayata, 2004).

The global financial crisis of 2007-2008, in parallel with the Eurozone crisis, has had a consolidating effect on Turkey's new foreign policy as well as on the promotion of international development assistance. While the economy of the EU as Turkey's main trade partner was troubled by the difficulties stemming from the crisis, the need to reach new markets became a primary driver of Turkey's foreign policy activism towards neighbouring countries (Öniş, 2011: 56). This activism moreover proved an important instrument for the AKP government to maintain its domestic popularity during a difficult phase marked by the negative impact of the global financial crisis (Öniş, 2011: 56). In other words, Turkey's new regional orientation and its revival of international development assistance as a central component of foreign policy owed significantly to the interplay of global structural conditions.

The crucial changes the Turkish business sector underwent on a domestic level proved to have a similar impact on the growth of Turkish international development assistance. Starting as early as the 1990s, the rise of a new wave of industrialization in Turkey enabled the emergence of new centres of capital across different cities in Anatolia, marked by an increasing interest in non-European markets such as the Middle East and Africa (Tok, 2008: 81-89). This wave (commonly referred to as the ‘Anatolian tigers’) was significantly aided by a firm coalition of civil initiatives such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Independent Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (MÜSİAD) and the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON)¹⁵, all of which have shown to be highly influential in shaping the direction of Turkish foreign policy in the recent period. It has been observed that these interest groups’ relationship with the government was not limited to ordinary interactions with public entities, but featured a noticeable ease of access into decision-making structures (Kirişçi, 2011: 50).

The influence of private sector actors in Turkish foreign policy has been highly visible through a number of high-profile summits and initiatives involving the Middle East and Africa. A prominent example has been the Turkish-African Business Forum of August 2008 in Istanbul, organised jointly

¹⁵ TUSKON was outlawed due to alleged terror links with FETÖ after 2016.

by TOBB, Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK) and the former Undersecretariat for Foreign Trade. This forum was held in tandem with the Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, a meeting of high level government representatives hosted personally by former Turkish President Abdullah Gül. The summit offered African representatives bilateral meetings with the then Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in an attempt to bolster trade and economic activity between Turkey and African countries (Özkan and Akgün, 2010: 536). Indeed, Davutoğlu himself had previously acknowledged that private business actors had now become a major driver of Turkish foreign policy (Turkishtime, 2004).

Foreign direct investment (FDI) and credit flows from Turkey to its development partners have also demonstrated the influence the private sector has on the direction of Turkish foreign policy. For the first time in 2006, TİKA's Annual Report included data on private flows to partner countries as a sub-field of development cooperation. Through consultations with government organisations including the Central Bank of Turkey, and further collaborations with embassies, direct investments made by Turkish businesses and individual entrepreneurs were recognized as part of development cooperation engagements (Kulaklıkaya and Nurdun, 2010: 140).

Data reported by TİKA suggests a close relationship between the changes in Turkey's outward FDI and its foreign policy initiatives. Following a

slight decrease between 2007 and 2010, Turkey's total outward FDI flows have made a quick return in 2011 (Figure 8). More strikingly, the geographical breakdown of outward FDI since the Turkey-Africa summit of 2008 particularly pointed to an increasing share of FDI flows to Africa (Figure 8). Total FDI to Africa has more than doubled within two years, rising from \$89.78 million in 2009 to \$224.6 million in 2011. The FDI figures suggest a mutual geographical focus on Africa in Turkey's outward FDI flows and foreign policy initiatives, as well as development assistance priorities.

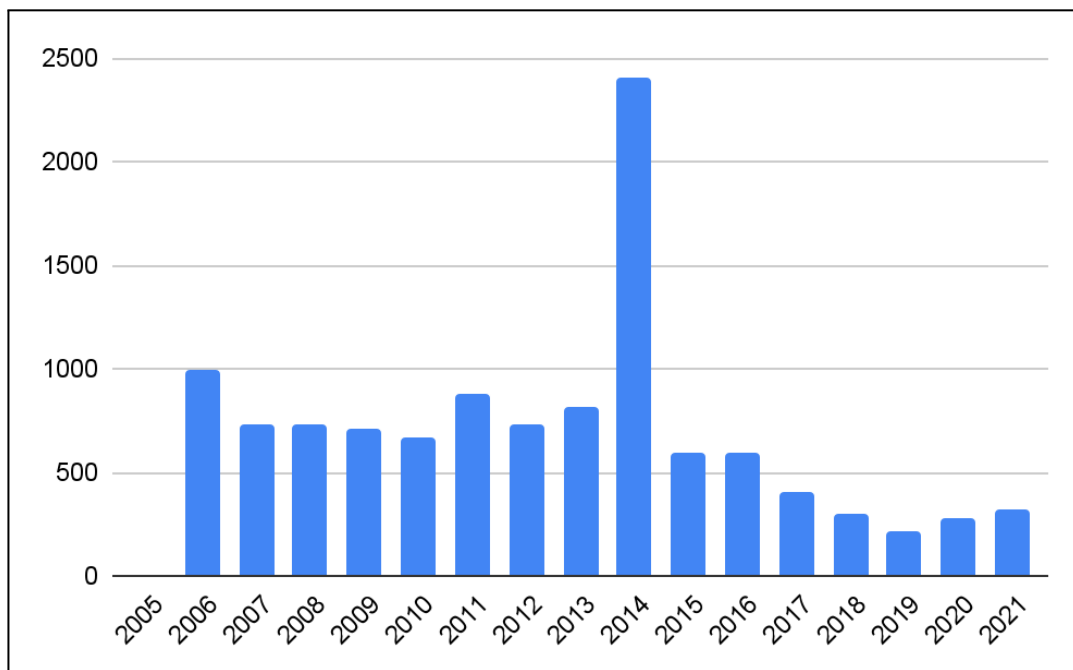


Figure 8: Turkey's total outward FDI, 2005-21 (million \$).

Source: TİKA

In addition to ODA and FDI flows, TİKA also reports non-ODA flows to its partner countries. These are primarily constituted by the credits made available by the Turkish Export-Import (Eximbank) within the Country Credits and Guarantees program for Turkish firms investing abroad (*Türk Eximbank*). In recent years, the Turkish Eximbank has continuously provided credit for projects being implemented in Sudan, where TİKA and partner NGOs (most notably IHH) have been actively carrying out development assistance projects. The Turkish Eximbank provided €21.13 million in credit to the Sudanese Ministry of Finance in 2011 to be used in the construction of a centralised sewerage system in the Bahri region of Khartoum (TİKA, 2012: 63) The project is expected to cater to 134,000 people following its completion. The Turkish Eximbank has also provided credit for the construction of the Al Halafaya bridge in the north of Khartoum. This project received €13.9 million in 2009 and \$1.4 million in 2010 (TİKA, 2011: 36). Overall, the credit flow data reported by TİKA provides further evidence that the geographical orientation of Turkish exports and investments abroad intersect with those regions prioritised by Turkey's recent foreign policy initiatives and development assistance targets.

3.4. Phase IV: Crisis at home and beyond (2012-2016)

Prior to acknowledging the unequivocal impact of the changes in Turkey's domestic political structures in its foreign aid policy, special attention must be paid to the external determinants that have played a key role in shaping Turkey's ODA from 2011 onwards. The fundamental changes in the regional security structure of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region after the Arab uprisings, especially the Syrian civil war, have led to the most visible change in Turkey's ODA policy in the recent period. Compared to its neighbours in the region and Western governments, Turkey was quick to declare its support for the various opposition movements in the MENA, and to try to forge amicable relations with the new coalitions as they came to power. As pointed out by Altunışık (2014), the majority of Turkey's ODA in the MENA went to Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon prior to the uprisings (p. 338).

3.4.1. Syrian civil war and refugee crisis

The refugee crisis that has ensued following the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011 has played a key transformative role in Turkey's development aid policy. In 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) cited the Syrian refugee crisis as the biggest refugee and

displacement crisis since the Second World War (UN Refugee Agency, 2016). Turkey's official aid for the refugee crisis exceeded \$1 billion in 2012, reaching \$2.3 billion in 2014, and a record \$7.2 billion in 2017 (Graph 7). In 2016, official ODA to Syria showed a sharp increase in line with Turkey's Euphrates Shield military operation in the country. One of the important investments was the building of the Jarabulus Turkish Hospital, which serves 60,000 patients yearly. During this time, the concept of 'humanitarian diplomacy' was cited generously by Foreign Minister Davutoğlu to ward off criticisms against Turkey's political involvement in the Syrian crisis.

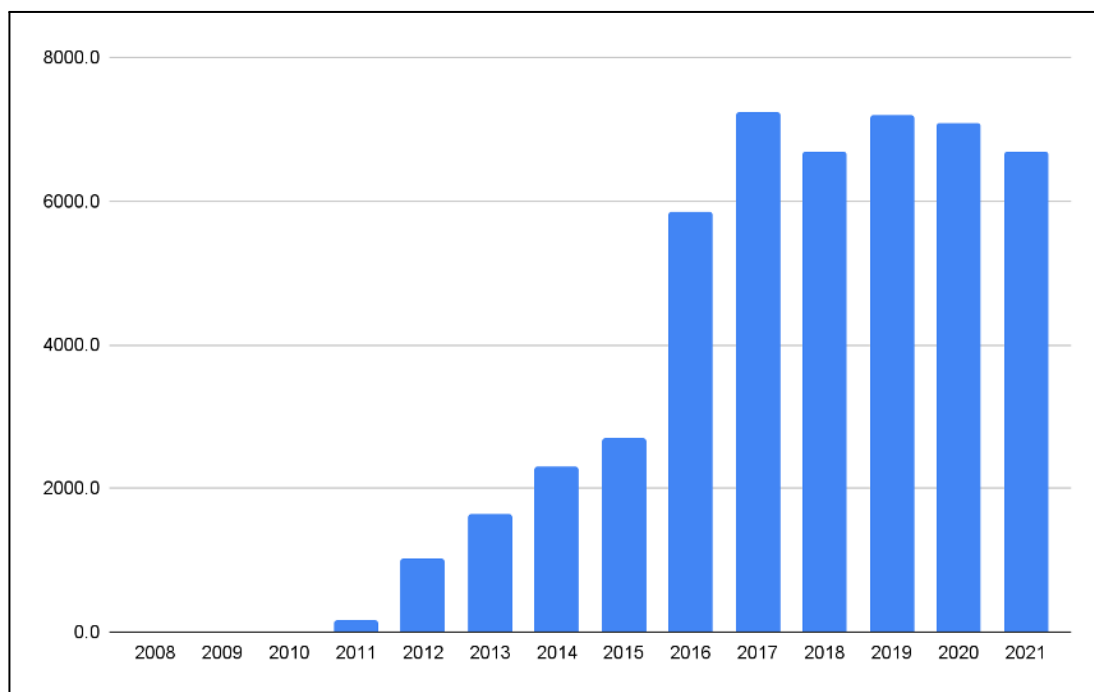


Figure 9: Turkey's net ODA disbursements to Syria, 2008-2021 (million \$).

Source: TİKA

3.4.2. Changing domestic coalitions

An important domestic factor that had a bearing on Turkey's development aid policy within the same period was the historic rupture between the then Prime Minister Erdoğan and US-based Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen, the two key actors of the intellectual alliance that had ruled the country in the past decade. The split was publicly marked on 17 December 2013 by the police investigation into the corruption claims against Erdoğan's political entourage, including his son Bilal Erdoğan and three cabinet ministers.¹⁶ Although the probe was seen as the first overt manifestation of the divide between Erdoğan and Gülen, numerous analysts had pointed at earlier incidents as being suggestive of the growing discordance between the two. One such example is the 'MIT crisis', where a prosecutor had called the Chief of the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) Hakan Fidan to testify in an ongoing probe in 2014. Fidan had served as the Head of TİKA between 2003 and 2007, prior to being appointed as the Chief of MIT.

Erdoğan deemed the investigations a 'judicial coup' orchestrated by the Gülen movement, and an extensive crackdown ensued in the police and judiciary. In the following months, the government appointed its trustees to all Gülen-affiliated media outlets and private institutions in a bid to counter the

¹⁶ The first investigation was opened on 17 December 2013 against 14 members of the high-level AKP elite, who were accused of bribery, corruption, fraud, money laundering and gold smuggling. On 25 December, the then Prime Minister Erdoğan announced a cabinet reshuffle to replace the ministers who had resigned following their involvement in the probe.

Gülen affiliates in the public and private spheres. The process led to a drastic change in the image of the US-based cleric who had once been considered a revered Islamic intellectual and a strategic ally of the AKP. Gülen's image changed from the leader of a religious community to that of an illegal network, dubbed the 'Parallel State'. The name referred to the accusations against Gülen and his followers of attempting to establish an alternative state structure, parallel to that of the Turkish state.

3.5. Phase IV: Post-July 15 (2016-2022)

The failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 marked a historical turn in Turkish politics, as virtually no aspect of social and political life in the country went unaffected by the consequences of this unprecedented incident. In an attempt to illustrate the peculiarity of the July 15 coup attempt, Esen and Gümüşçü (2017) have observed that, for the first time in modern Turkish history, a civilian government was able to mobilise its own mass following to stop a military takeover attempt as it was unfolding. The failed coup attempt resulted in an interrupted period of state of emergency rule for nearly two years, starting on 20 July 2016 and ending on 9 July 2018. The state of emergency rule was characterised by frequent decree laws that enabled a mass crackdown on members of the armed forces and public servants, including those from TİKA and the Foreign Ministry. As a result of the crackdown, tens of thousands of public officials and army personnel were discharged from their positions. This

purge, unprecedented in scale, was seen to represent the apex of the fight between Gülen and the AKP (Taş, 2018).

In terms of rhetoric, the primary consequence of the July 15 coup attempt was the evolution of the ‘Parallel State Structure’ organisation (PDY) to the ‘Fethullahist Terror Organisation’ (FETÖ). Taş (2018) has argued that unlike the limited scope of the term ‘parallel state’, the term FETÖ was effectively used to label all followers of Gülen as part of a terrorist organisation (p. 402).

3.5.1. Understanding the AKP-Gülen schism

Taş (2018) explains that politically, the ideas of Erdoğan and Gülen stem from different branches and traditions of Islamic activism in Turkey - the National Outlook Movement (*Milli Görüş*) (led by Necmettin Erbakan) and the Nurcu Movement (led by Gülen and inspired by the teachings of Said Nursi) respectively. He further draws attention to the fact that most of the AKP’s founding elite had come from the National Outlook Movement, which was characterised by its pursuit of a religious revival through partisan politics in contrast with the Nurcu Movement, whose intellectual leader Gülen deliberately chose to stay away from politics and “employed a gradualist approach focusing on a bottom-up Islamization of society” instead (Taş, 2018: 396). In this

respect, Taş (2018) observes, the difference between Erbakan and Gülen in the 1990s was “equivalent to that between ‘political Islam’ and ‘cultural Islam’” (2017: 396)

Erdoğan on the other hand is observed to have identified with a political form of Islam, partially based on the thought of Turkish poet Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, who interpreted the end of the Ottoman Empire as the rise of Westernization and the disintegration of the “Muslim body” (Taş, 2018: 18). Despite its ideational roots in the National Outlook tradition heralded by Erbakan, the newly founded AKP identified a new trajectory for itself, hinting that they had updated their “old identity” and now subscribed to view in favour of democracy, separation of religion and the state, and a future for Turkey that lied in the European Union (Yavuz, 2018: 19).

In exploring the origins of the political alliance that formed between Erdoğan’s AKP and Gülen, Yavuz (2018) suggests that as outcasted “Black Turks”, followers of Gülen and Erdoğan originated from similar socio-economic backgrounds (p. 19). As most Islamic movements in Turkey held traditionally favourable views towards EU membership as a way of “rolling the Kemalist military back into its barracks and opening more space for Islamic sectors”, the shared interests of the two circles had merged around this agenda (Yavuz, 2018: 19). The two circles thus converged in a shared direction.

3.5.2. Changes in foreign aid architecture

As of 2019, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that the fight against FETÖ constitutes one of the main tenets of Turkey's current foreign policy (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -a). The repercussions of the deepening rift between the AKP government and the Gülen movement became apparent in many policy areas, including ODA. A striking example of this was observed in the 2013 Turkish Development Assistance Report, in which TİKA deliberately did not list the Gülen-affiliated Kimse Yok Mu Association among NGOs which had reported their overseas development aid activities that year. In 2011 and 2012, however, the Kimse Yok Mu Association had ranked second and first respectively in the list of ODA-giving Turkish NGOs as reported by TİKA. In 2011, Kimse Yok Mu Association provided 17.39% of all the aid given by Turkish NGOs. In 2012, the association's total aid amounted to \$45 million USD. Although it remains unclear whether it was the Kimse Yok Mu Association that refused to report data to TİKA, or if TİKA refused to publish in its annual report the data reported by the association, this case is a clear illustration of the impact caused by the 17-25 December crisis on Turkey's ODA policy and implementation.

As per a recommendation by the National Security Council on 26 May 2016, the "parallel structure" (a term coined earlier to refer to FETÖ affiliates) was listed by the Turkish government as a terrorist organisation,

known by the name *Fethullahçı Terör Örgütü* (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization) or FETÖ. As a result of the crackdown induced by decree laws, a total of 14 TİKA employees were discharged from their duties between September 2016 and June 2018 due to their alleged links with FETÖ. Of the 14 TİKA employees, 2 were admitted back to their positions with additional decree laws. The decree law no. 672 alone (enacted on 1 September 2016) resulted in 10 TİKA personnel being discharged from their positions. Meanwhile, a staggering 20% of the entire stock of career diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also discharged following the decree laws.

Another institution that has suffered severe personnel loss for alleged FETÖ links is the Diyanet Foundation. The Diyanet Foundation, which works closely with the Directorate of Religious Affairs, was established in 1975 to support the activities of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and actively engages in official ODA provision. In 2014 (the final year that the data reported to TİKA by NGOs was published in the Development Assistance Report) the official overseas aid provided by the Diyanet Foundation was \$49.91 million USD, and \$35.74 million USD in 2013.

In an attempt to incapacitate the hundreds of Gülen-linked schools worldwide, the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) was established in 2016 with a special law enacted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) with the aim of “becoming Turkey’s gate to the world in the field of education”

(Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, 2023). Within two years, the foundation established official contacts and lobbied in over 90 countries to take over Gülen-affiliated schools and open new ones. As of July 2019, TMV has taken over control of 108 Gülen-affiliated schools in 15 countries and opened 52 new schools in 16 countries. Currently, TMV runs a total of 377 schools in 44 countries in the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Africa (Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, n.d.).

This chapter has traced the evolution of Turkey's foreign aid policy from its nascent stages in the Ottoman era to its contemporary status as a new donor of ODA. The historical periodization presented delineates the major phases of development from early humanitarian efforts to the strategic deployment of aid aligned with a variety of domestic factors. The analysis of these periods highlights the complex interplay of the said factors across the individual, domestic and international levels. As Turkey continues to navigate its role on the global stage, the chapter has shown that ODA remains a pivotal element of its foreign policy..

Chapter 4

Turkish foreign aid in action: evidence from Sub Saharan Africa and Latin America

A vague yet disproportionately significant summary of Turkish foreign aid policy since 2002 was outlined in a lengthy speech delivered by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2016, during a convention showcasing TİKA's projects. In this speech, Erdoğan coined the term 'Turkish-type development model' to refer to Turkey's outstanding position in the field of international development cooperation:

"From the Drina Bridge to the Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Dervish Lodge, each of the projects touched by TİKA has a different meaning and importance. You know how I refer to [terms such as] 'Turkish-type constitution', 'Turkish-type presidential system', and 'Turkish-type women's rights' – I believe that with TİKA's work, we have put forward a 'Turkish-type development model'." (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016a)

While coining the term, President Erdoğan did not only single out Turkey's foreign aid activism as a unique case in point but also provided an indication regarding the geographical scope and priorities of Turkish foreign aid policy, through references to major cultural assets renovated by TİKA in Bosnia

and Herzegovina and Kazakhstan – two countries of former Ottoman and Turkic heritage, respectively. Nevertheless, Erdoğan's indication did not remain limited to regions of significance or proximity to Turkish history and culture, as he also praised TİKA for having established “a throne in the hearts of millions of people” from Central Asia to the Balkans, from Africa to South Asia, and more recently, from Latin America to the Pacific (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016a).

In the same address, President Erdoğan also offered hints about the domestic underpinnings of Turkey's rise as an emerging donor. In reference to the characteristics of Turkey's foreign aid, Erdoğan identified TİKA's work as "extending a hand to the victims and the oppressed, for the sake of Allah," thereby pointing at the culturally and religiously motivated ideational factors that have exerted influence over foreign aid policy at the domestic level during the AKP's rule since 2002 until present day.

Delivered only months before the failed coup attempt targeting his presidency on July 15, Erdoğan's speech also resonated with the weight of his leadership as a driver of aid policy at the individual level:

"You see, some columnists keep saying the same thing: 'If Erdoğan leaves, stability will come.' How was the state of Turkey when Erdoğan came, and how is the state of Turkey today? ... [In 2002] We took over a Turkey where we were in need of a penny, and we have come this far

from that day. ... As I always say, now we have a Turkey that is a giving hand, not a receiving hand." (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016a)

By positioning his political leadership as a vanguard of Turkey's rise out of poverty and promotion from aid recipient to aid donor, Erdoğan provided clues on the prominence of his personal influence as a leader in the advancement of Turkish foreign aid policy from 2002 onwards.

Last but not least, Erdoğan's multidirectional address contained yet another crucial implication on the influence of the international context vis-a-vis the formulation of Turkish foreign aid policy:

"Those who lost their minds 100 years ago because they were unable to break the integrity of this region's soul, are trying to achieve that today. We may not have been able to prevent artificial borders from being drawn between us that day, but today we will not allow our unity of heart to be shattered." (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016a)

These remarks clearly demonstrated a linkage with leadership strategies in foreign policy, such as expanding coalitions through shared identities, and generating legitimacy through the international context at the domestic level. They also illustrated an unmistakable example for the many functions of foreign

aid, and the international standing garnered by it, as a force to elevate domestic legitimacy while interacting with the wider global system.

This introduction serves as an anecdotal prelude to the rest of the chapter, which aims to unravel the forces that have been prevalent in the making of Turkish foreign aid policy since 1992. It will seek to do so by focusing on the trajectory of Turkey's aid specifically in newer regions of interest which, when juxtaposed with the longer-standing destinations of Turkish ODA, have been traditionally absent from the country's foreign policy at a broader level. The unfolding of Turkish foreign aid policy towards Latin America and Sub Saharan Africa therefore presents ample opportunity to decode the interplay of the various policy-shaping determinants and their interaction through a three-level approach.

At the domestic level, focus will be placed on factors such as ideational forces, including ideas and identities, material interests, and institutions as determinants of foreign aid policy making in Turkey. At the system level, changes in the international context and the external influences they engender will be analysed to assess the weight of the global shifts in shaping Turkey's aid policy. Factors emanating from the individual level, such as leadership characteristics and the role of political actors, will also inform an important pillar of the study. A main assumption of this analytical framework will be that

policy determinants on all three of the levels exist in a state of flux and in constant interaction with one another, thereby rendering multilevel approaches a requirement rather than a theoretical preference in understanding the complex nature of Turkey's evolving aid policy.

4.1. The domestic political economy of Turkish foreign aid

In analysing the determinants of foreign aid policy, Lancaster (2007) situates the domestic level as the central one. She identifies domestic politics as the predominant influence over “aid’s purposes and uses”, and locates it as a mediator that remains interdependent with the international context (p. 9). Although the overall conceptual framework of this dissertation puts a greater level of theoretical emphasis on the international level of analysis, and does not ignore agent-based explanations at the individual level as useful tools to reach a more holistic understanding of foreign aid in Turkey, it will nevertheless consider the four domestic variables outlined by Lancaster as bedrocks in making sense of the domestic factors that have shaped foreign aid policy in Turkey in the past three decades. The analysis presented in the following sections will position ideas, interests, institutions and organisation as the main internal forces in Turkish aid policy, and make use of their explanatory power as useful analytical lenses.

4.1.1. From ‘Turkish cultural geography’ to ‘heartfelt geography’: ideas and identities in Turkish foreign aid policy

Constructivist IR theory features a vast literature that places ideational factors at the forefront of foreign policy-making. Constructivism views identities and interests of agents as socially produced and fluid, as opposed to the more traditional realist and rational choice methods and theories of IR.¹⁷ Ruggie (1998) has defined “human consciousness” as fundamental in informing the ideas, norms and knowledge influencing policy outcomes (p. 856). Like rational choice, it has been argued that constructivism offers more of a research program for the study of international politics than a substantive theory (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001; Wendt and Fearon, 2002; Hopf, 1998). It offers a “framework ... for thinking about the nature of social life and social interaction”, without making predictions on policy outcomes (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 393). This study will benefit from constructivist approaches in understanding the ideational forces at play in the formulation of Turkish foreign aid policy.

Based on evidence from in-person interviews, memoirs, a review of presidential and ministerial speeches and official reports by relevant state

¹⁷ For a review of the literature, see Adler (1997), Finnemore and Sikkink (2001), Wendt (1999), Ruggie (1998).

institutions within Turkey's foreign aid architecture, this study argues that three major categories of ideas have steered Turkish foreign aid policy-making since 1992. The first one is cultural affinity based on shared identities, linguistic backgrounds, or religious beliefs. The second one is the humanitarian obligation of philanthropy rooted in Islamic values. The third one is consideration for national prestige and international standing. This section will provide a closer look at each category to understand the shifts between these categories of ideas across different historical periods.

4.1.1.1. Cultural affinity

The founding stages of TİKA provide a fertile yet understudied ground to uncover the agency's original roots, which demonstrate a stark discrepancy with the current ideational forces that rule over it and the wider aid architecture. In the words of a senior TİKA executive, the agency was launched in 1992 with two clear motivations: to elevate "Turkish existence" across the Eurasian region and to facilitate the successful integration of the Turkic states into the international system.¹⁸ In his memoir, founding president Umut Arık fondly recalls the opening day of TİKA with a special reference to the entrance of its headquarters, which boasted a replica of the Göktürks' Orkhon inscriptions (Arık, 2020: 77).¹⁹ In a sense, this replica had stood there both as a reminder

¹⁸ Author's interview with a former senior executive from TİKA on December 22, 2021.

¹⁹ Orkhon inscriptions are the oldest known form of Turkic script, erected by the Göktürks in the early 8th century in modern-day Mongolia.

and a badge for TİKA's original mission – to help build a “new world for the Turk”, as suggested by the memoir's title. Arık further recalls the attendance of Alparslan Türkeş, the founding leader of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the Pan-Turkist Grey Wolves movement, as a proud moment during the opening ceremony of the country's aid agency (Arık, 2020: 77).

These anecdotes demonstrate that at the domestic level, Turkey's first institutional attempt to enter the field of development cooperation was heavily fuelled by notions of cultural affinity and a shared ethno-linguistic identity with the Turkic states of Central Asia. However, it should also be noted that the post-Cold War regional context in the former Soviet bloc was also an intervening force over the domestic salience of such notions as Turkic affinity, as these ideas were instrumental in echoing the state's broader transatlantic alignment in foreign policy. The impact of factors originating at the international level will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming sections.

Expectedly, ODA figures from the same year show a clear alignment with TİKA's ideational and geographical priorities at the time. According to a report by the State Planning Organization, a staggering 86.2% of all ODA disbursements for the year 1992 (by TİKA and other state agencies combined) flowed to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Similarly, Kavaklı (2018) finds that

before 2003, development aid (not to be confused with humanitarian aid)²⁰ disbursements to a recipient country whose population is at least 90% Turkic would be, on average, 110% higher than a recipient without a Turkic population (p. 8). The same study has also found that this figure would fall to a mere 43% after 2003.

In reference to the strategic underpinnings of Turkey's aid agency, Arık explains that TİKA was, in essence, established with the sole aim of operating within a region which he defined as the 'Turkish cultural geography':

"... the new cooperation mechanism to be established would, by definition, work in this Turkish cultural geography from the very beginning and increase Turkey's influence. For example, the Eurasian Turkic Republics would join the Organization of the Islamic Conference. A vast new geography would have been put in place to enable the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC) to open up to the world. Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova would receive reassurance from Turkey against the possibility of a new Russian expansionism." (Arık, 2020: 67)

Arık envisioned this future geopolitical scenario as a hypothetical output of TİKA's development cooperation efforts, whereby Turkey's elevated influence in the Eurasian region would serve as an instrument for achieving shared strategic interests together with the Turkic states, TRNC, and even

²⁰ Following DAC guidelines, TİKA reports bilateral ODA flows under two main sub-components, humanitarian and development aid.

non-Turkic countries of the wider Eurasian region. The term ‘Turkish cultural geography’ hence signalled a primary role for the Turkish identity as a dominant force across the region, to be established through the work of TİKA. There is indeed ample evidence for the role of international dynamics in informing this vision, which will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming sections. However, Arık’s reference to an envisioned ‘Turkish cultural geography’ as a defining pillar for the original mission of TİKA is an important example that illustrates the fundamental transformation of ideas that have guided Turkey’s foreign aid policy in the past three decades.

In spite of its ambitious vision for Turkey as a pro-active provider of foreign aid, TİKA entered a phase of hibernation following Arık’s departure from office in 1996. TİKA remained a mostly dormant state body until 2002, when it was re-structured under the AKP government. What perished together with TİKA’s original mission was the idea of ‘Turkish cultural geography’ which would later be replaced by a disparate alternative within the next decade. During a state visit to Washington D.C. in 2018, President Erdoğan addressed the members of the Turkish American National Steering Committee (TASC) in a speech that made specific references to Turkey’s humanitarian aid operations in the Rohingya conflict in Myanmar, and peacebuilding efforts in Somalia. In this speech, he popularised in the public eye a term²¹ that would replace Arık’s vision of the ‘Turkish cultural geography’, and one that would be used as

²¹ The term ‘heartfelt geography’ (*gönül coğrafyası*) was first coined by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu in a speech he delivered at the Turkish Diyanet Foundation on June 1, 2013.

widely as the previously mentioned ‘Turkish-type development model’ in the country’s contemporary political parlance.²²

“Remember: Turkey has a physical geography and also a ‘heartfelt’ geography. The heartfelt borders of our country are actually far beyond its physical borders. That is why, even though we have no geographical ties, we go on the road to heal the wounds of our brothers and sisters in Arakan. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs, my wife and I can go all the way to Arakan together. ... That is why, while no one goes regardless of geographical distance, we are closely interested in the problems of our Somalian brothers and sisters.” (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2018a)

By differentiating Turkey’s physical borders from a set of imagined ones linking Turkey to its Ottoman past and predominantly Muslim culture, it may be argued that Erdoğan put forward an alternative notion to replace the geographical orientation of Turkey’s foreign aid policy. In a similar vein with Arık, Erdoğan’s understanding of the ‘heartfelt geography’ also indicated a vision of a broader sphere of geopolitical influence for Turkey, albeit on different cultural interpretations and meanings. It may thus be argued that cultural affinity as an idea has been a pervasive determinant of Turkey’s foreign aid policy since 1992, although its definitions may have been stretched and transposed.

²² For an overview of the political influence of the ‘Turkish-type development model’, see Turhan (2022).

The term ‘heartfelt geography’ immediately resonated across different state and non-state stakeholders who either intersected with the work of TİKA, or aligned themselves politically with the AKP. For instance, Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB)²³, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, and even TRNC’s Directorate of Foundations initiated their own series of ‘Cultural Gatherings of the Heartfelt Geography’ which heavily borrowed from Erdoğan’s narrative (Anadolu Ajansı, 2019; Kıbrıs Postası, 2019; Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2022). In an interview, an NGO director who works in close collaboration with TİKA, explained his organisation’s understanding of the term as follows:

*“We should consider the fact that Turkey has ruled a significant portion of the world outside Anatolia for many centuries. In other words, the people living in those lands used to be our people. We can also think of this as a desire to claim them as our own. One of the most important reasons for Turkey’s increasing influence in these regions in recent years is the strengthening of communication. Turkey’s intensive contact with the regions we call ‘heartfelt geography’, especially Africa.”*²⁴

In other words, this term resonated with an alternative understanding of the Turkish identity – one that sought its roots far away from the scriptures of

²³ Founded in 2010, YTB operates under the Ministry of Culture and acts as Turkey’s official diaspora relations agency, which was formerly a body associated with TİKA.

²⁴ Author’s interview with an NGO director on April 2, 2021.

the Göktürks and rather in the course of the 600-year rule of the Ottoman Empire. While the reign of the Ottoman state stretched all the way from Eastern Europe to the borders of Sub-Saharan Africa, it was also home to the seat of the Islamic Caliphate, a religious territorial monarchy often compared to the Catholic Pope. In this sense, the interviewee reported a moral claim over what he defined as the heartfelt geography and positioned it as an ideational basis informing their aid activities. This finding also appears to be in line with arguments in the literature which hold that the foreign policy discourse of the AKP government featured Neo-Ottomanist tendencies (Sözen, 2010).

The interviewee further stated that members of the heartfelt geography, such as countries of the Balkans, Caucasus, and Africa, were a priority in their selection of aid destinations. This evidence confirms the view that ideational factors play a decisive role at the domestic level in influencing overall policy priorities within the broader architecture of Turkish foreign aid.²⁵

4.1.1.2. Islamic philanthropy

Several studies focusing on the foundations of Turkey's foreign policy towards Sub Saharan Africa have drawn attention to the role of religious beliefs as drivers in policy-making (Özkan and Akgün, 2010; Özkan, 2013; Turhan and

²⁵ Author's interview with an NGO director on April 2, 2021.

Bahçecik, 2021). Others have pointed to the rise of the Presidency of Religious Affairs²⁶ (hereafter Diyanet) as an active player in Turkish foreign policy (Demirtaş, 2015; Öztürk and Sözeri, 2018). A common ground for such observations lies in the philosophical roots of the Islamic faith, which places great emphasis on philanthropy through one of its five pillars, *zakat* (obligatory almsgiving), and other customs such as *sadaqah* (non-obligatory almsgiving) (Morvaridi, 2013: 309).

Such religiously motivated humanitarian ideas emerge as an evident theme in President Erdoğan's conceptualization of Turkey's outlook on foreign aid. In a speech addressing members of the Diyanet Foundation²⁷, Erdoğan explicitly portrayed the influence of Islamic obligations in shaping Turkey's aid activism:

"We will rush to the aid of all our brothers and sisters and hold the hands of all our brothers and sisters in accordance with the command of our Prophet. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, he does not oppress him, he does not leave him helpless, he does not insult him."

(Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016b)

²⁶ Formerly known as the Directorate of Religious Affairs, this state agency has been bureaucratically attached to the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey after the country's switch to a presidential system in 2017.

²⁷ Diyanet Foundation is a Turkish transnational humanitarian NGO affiliated with the Presidency of Religious Affairs.

In other words, while praising the state-affiliated Diyanet Foundation's humanitarian aid operations as part of Turkey's overall foreign aid framework, Erdoğan justified their value through a direct reference to a *hadith* by Prophet Muhammad.²⁸ This view is also confirmed in an interview by a former senior diplomat. While referring to Turkey's humanitarian campaign during the drought and famine in Somalia, the diplomat listed the idea of "helping our Muslim brothers" and "religiously motivated efforts" as one of the main drivers of Turkish foreign aid in the country.²⁹

What this confirms, however, is not that Islamic imperatives are the main drivers of Turkish ODA into Muslim-majority nations in Sub Saharan Africa, such as Somalia. Rather, it confirms the suggestion that ODA as an instrument of Turkey's overall foreign policy is contingent on a policy rhetoric derived from the Islamic ideas and attitudes towards philanthropy. Erdoğan outlined these attitudes in an address during the 3rd African Religious Leaders Summit in Istanbul in 2019. What he argued was that Turkey's presence in the African continent was not sourced by ideas of exploitation, but rather by Islamic thinking as instructed by Turkish Sufi poet Yunus Emre:

"We are members of a faith and a religion that regards the human being as the most honourable among all created beings. ... The friends of

²⁸ *Hadith* (Arabic) is a term in Islamic theology that refers to the words, actions, or teachings of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as transmitted through secondary narrators.

²⁹ Author's interview with a former senior diplomat on June 9, 2023.

Allah, who put the seal of Islam on these lands, commanded us to love the creature because of its Creator. Our ancestors observed justice and equity in every inch of the 22 million square kilometres they ruled. For this reason, there is no racism, colonialism, occupation, oppression and massacre in any period of our thousands of years of history. As a country and as a nation, we have never sought to gain prosperity through the natural resources, sweat, labour and blood of any society. We have never despised and despised any people because of their language, colour and belief. We have never looked at the continent from the perspective of gold, diamonds and oil like the imperialists.”
(Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2019)

In this account, Erdoğan also incorporates an implicit and critical attitude towards traditional Western humanitarian engagements in Africa, through references to Europe’s colonial past and dealings with racial discrimination and slavery. In this sense, Erdoğan disentangles Turkey’s humanitarian presence in Sub Saharan Africa from that of Western donors based on two assumptions. Firstly, he disconnects Turkey’s engagement with the region from a supposed hidden agenda driven by material interests, such as extracting the continent’s natural resources and labour force. Secondly, he underlines that the nature of Turkey’s stance towards the region is devoid of racial or religious discrimination, as required by the Islamic tradition which informs their policy.

Nevertheless, the above discussed argument by Erdoğan which posits that Turkish ODA does not demonstrate a bias in favour of Muslim nations remains open to scrutiny. A quantitative study by Kavaklı (2018) found that ODA flows to Muslim-majority recipients showed a 50% increase since 2003, after AKP's coming to power (p. 8). It should however be noted that this finding is valid for the humanitarian component of ODA. One explanation Kavaklı (2018) offers for this trend is the role of public opinion – the higher visibility of humanitarian crises and emergencies such as natural disasters and wars may be pinpointed as the driving factor behind AKP's "selective favouritism" towards humanitarian aid rather than development aid, as public opinion pays lower regard to development-focused expenditures as opposed to helping "fellow Muslims" (p. 8). Diverging stances towards humanitarian aid between other donors and Turkey's selective approach will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

4.1.1.3. National prestige

The distinction between domestic and international politics has become increasingly difficult to discern in the current global context. Since 2002, this phenomenon has been one of the defining features of Turkish foreign policy, as the degree to which foreign policy is intertwined with domestic politics grows progressively. This pattern is also visible in how the Turkish government

promotes Turkey's success in foreign aid at home. The 2019 edition of the Development Assistance Report published annually by TİKA opens with remarks by Turkey's Minister of Culture and Tourism that substantiate this argument, echoing Turkey's elevated international standing as a product of its ODA-related engagements:³⁰

“The activities of all our relevant institutions, which produce policies and projects in the field of development cooperation in accordance with the fact that 'the world is bigger than 5', which is expressed by our President on every platform, make significant contributions to the promotion of our country and keep the values of our nation's deep-seated culture and history alive on a global scale.” (TİKA, 2019: 8)

The motto quoted by the Minister was originally stated by President Erdoğan during the 74th UN General Assembly in New York, in reference to his view that the five permanent members of the UN Security Council had failed to live up to the mission of the UN by failing to produce viable solutions to the Syrian civil war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2019b). TİKA's use of the motto to promote its achievements in development assistance is an indication of the ideas surrounding national prestige as a central source of policy inspiration. As such, it can be argued that in the mind of the

³⁰ TİKA currently operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

country's leadership and decision-making structures, foreign aid is conceived as a two-sided source of leverage vis-a-vis the international system, and also public opinion at home.

In a similar vein, Öniş (2012) has observed that Turkey's growing regional and global role has yielded many political benefits at the domestic level, most notably in the form of a strong electoral appeal. According to Öniş (2012), a "strong and caring Turkey" was the image that was portrayed via the new humanitarian emphasis of Turkey's foreign policy (p. 145). In the eyes of the electorate, this was the representation of a country that was powerful and resilient enough to shoulder the problems not only of its own but also of the most vulnerable across the world (Öniş, 2012: 145).

A candid illustration on the cover page of TİKA's 2016 Development Assistance Report offers a visual confirmation of the above argument (Figure 10). The illustration depicts Turkey in the middle of a world map and within a seemingly competitive setting including the leading DAC and non-DAC donors of Luxemburg, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the United Arab Emirates. The map also features labels marking the ratio of humanitarian aid to GNI for each country, where Turkey is in the lead with %0.69. To highlight Turkey's leading role as the top humanitarian donor in terms of the GNI ratio, a bold tagline in the bottom right hand corner of the page reads: "Turkey, the most generous

country in the world”. What is important in this illustration is TİKA’s selective approach towards the GNI ratio. Footnote 5 in Chapter 1 explains that the DAC and UN target of 0.7% for foreign aid is calculated based on the share of total ODA to the donors’ GNI. Humanitarian aid, on the other hand, is a *component* of ODA and not its substitute. However, as considerations of international standing as a domestic narrative play a key role informing foreign aid policy, Turkey’s ODA performance on the global scale is interpreted selectively at the domestic level.



Figure 10: Cover page of TİKA (2016) Annual Development Assistance Report.

An interview with a senior TİKA executive resounds with the overall argument, as they highlight Turkey's rising influence in Sub Saharan Africa through notions of power and reputation:

*“We may not be like the big players such as China or France, but we are present in Africa. As Turkey, we have advanced to that position. Say, when there is an African Summit in Turkey, all the presidents and prime ministers jump on a plane and just fly over here. In the past, only countries like China and France had the power to make this happen. Now, it is the Turks. What this shows is that we have the power now.”*³¹

What this shows is the increase in Turkey's regional bargaining power as an emerging donor of foreign aid in Sub Saharan Africa, as well as other regions, is tied to ideas surrounding reputation and international standing. In fact, a former senior diplomat confirms that “Turkey's opening to Africa is perhaps the greatest success achieved by the AK Party government in the past 20 years”, due to the prestige it has granted the country at the international level.³²

³¹ Author's interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

³² Author's interview with a senior former diplomat on June 9, 2023.

4.1.2. Turkey rediscovers Sub Saharan Africa: the rise of non-state actors in foreign aid policy implementation

Traditionally, the study of foreign policy has been conceptualised in state-centric terms. Hudson (2005) has observed that in many analyses, decision units, whether they be a person or a group, are ultimately approximated to the state – a tendency that is often labelled as the ‘black-boxing’ of the state (p. 2). However, as İpek and Biltekin (2013) note, non-state actors often take up operational functions in the implementation phase of foreign policy, as in the case of Turkish foreign aid in Sub Saharan Africa. Indeed, the close interaction of state and non-state actors has been a prevalent characteristic of Turkish foreign policy in the AKP era, and evidence can be derived from the wider literature pointing at this phenomenon (see Özkan, 2010; Öniş, 2012; Atalay, 2013; İpek and Biltekin, 2013; Turhan and Bahçecik, 2021).

The influential role played by non-state actors in informing and implementing foreign aid policy in Turkey resounds with Nye and Keohane's (1971) criticism of the realist assumption that the state's main agents must be “the diplomat and the soldier”, leaving little space for the diverse set of actors that have emerged as a result of the changes in the global system (p. 329). Turkish foreign aid illustrates a case in point for such criticisms of the state-centric view, through a trajectory that has showcased the primacy of civil

society actors in shaping Turkey's foreign aid policy. Building on this point, the focus of this section will be to provide a deeper understanding of the rise of Sub Saharan Africa as a region of interest for Turkish foreign aid policy and how the influence of NGOs and private sector organisations has been key in this regard.

4.1.2.1. Civil society and private sector as joint driving force

Although the interaction between the African continent and the Ottoman empire goes back centuries, modern Turkey's relations with Sub Saharan Africa remained rather limited until 1998. In 1998, Turkey's government adopted a strategy document titled 'Opening Up to Africa Action Plan', argued by some to be in response to the disappointment caused by the EU's unwillingness to recognize Turkey as a candidate for EU membership (Özkan and Akgün, 2010). However, due to a change in the coalition government the following year and the economy's decline as a result of the 2001 financial crisis, the political implementation of the plan turned out unsuccessful.

The return of Africa to Turkish foreign policy did not take place before the mid-2000s, when the AKP government took office in 2002 and declared the 'Year of Africa' shortly afterwards in 2005. This was a turning point that marked a significant change not only in the course of Turkey's foreign aid policy but in its broader foreign policy orientation as well. In the years that followed, Turkey quickly accelerated its economic relations with the continent, which will be analysed in the next section. In 2007, when the then

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Ethiopia upon an invitation by the African Union (AU), a leading highlight of his speech was the pivotal role played by TİKA's development cooperation programs in bringing Turkey and African countries closer together (CNN Türk, 2007).

Although TİKA was instrumental in pioneering Turkey's entry into Sub Saharan Africa, in no way was it on its own or autonomous in this pursuit. Banks and Hulme (2014) have observed that "the institutional landscape of development can be crudely characterised along the three pillars of state, market and civil society" (p.182). Turkey's re-opening to Sub-Saharan Africa presents a textbook example of this nexus, with both civil society and the business sector positioned as pro-active forces driving policy. A symbolically significant marker of the leading part played by Turkish civil society organisations in opening up Turkey's path to Sub Saharan Africa was the 2011 appointment of former Yeryüzü Doktorları (Doctors Worldwide) director Kani Torun as Turkey's first ambassador to Somalia after the country's civil war. A medical doctor by training, NGO director by profession and a longtime resident of the UK, Torun had no prior experience in the Turkish foreign service but had extensive knowledge of the Sub Saharan region as a humanitarian aid professional.³³

³³ Author's interview with a former senior diplomat on June 9, 2023.

Traditionally, civil society in Turkey has been visibly weak. There is a wealth of different explanations for the causes of this trend. For instance, Şerif Mardin (1969) has been a proponent of the view that the authoritarian culture and the legal structure of the Ottoman state effectively inhibited the flourishing of a space for NGOs. Mardin (1969) claimed that civil society represented “a part of society that could operate independently of the central government and was based on property rights”, which was practically non-existent within the Ottoman system (p. 264). Others have sought explanations in the early Republican era, arguing that the founding elite deliberately hindered the growth of civil society, fearing that it could “develop alternatives to the state which may threaten the survival of the state and the Kemalist ideology” (Sıradağ, 2015: 8). Since the 1990s, however, there has been an acceleration in the number and capabilities of faith-based NGOs in Turkey, whose activities did not only gain momentum at home but also advanced internationally by moving overseas. According to Özkan and Akgün (2010), a region of interest for these NGOs was Sub Saharan Africa, among others including the Balkans, with the Humanitarian Relief Association (İHH) leading the way, joined by others, such as the Blue Crescent Association, Deniz Feneri Association and Kimse Yok Mu Association. To improve their methods of operation and resources, these NGOs relied heavily on their close ties with the business community and quickly elevated their position to “intervene and influence international politics in the direction that they find appropriate” (Doğan, 2013: 78). The majority of these

interventions took the form of providing religiously motivated humanitarian assistance in war or disaster-hit areas, such as Bosnia during its civil war between 1992 and 1995 or Iran after the 2003 Bam earthquake. Regular and prominent humanitarian campaigns by these NGOs in Sub Saharan Africa included food parcel donations during the month of Ramadan and meat donations during Eid Al-Adha holidays, as per Islamic custom.³⁴

The above explained trajectory of Turkish civil society is confirmed by the director of a leading faith-based humanitarian NGO:

*“I have been involved in this line of work since 1992. During the years of the Bosnian War, the establishment of international humanitarian aid NGOs was not permitted by the state, if not forbidden by law. Only the Red Crescent was tasked with such humanitarian work. After 1995, it was officially allowed to establish international NGOs in Turkey. The first of these was IHH, where I was also a board member. ... It was difficult to work in Africa at that time, as flight times exceeded 30 hours before Turkish Airlines and we had to travel through Dubai, going through strict security measures.”*³⁵

Indeed, the arrival of Turkish Airlines in Africa and direct flight

³⁴ Author’s interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

³⁵ Author’s interview with an NGO director on April 2, 2021.

operations between Turkey and the region was a breakthrough that boosted the strength of the state-business-civil society triad in the region. The strengthening of Turkish NGOs and their precedence over the state in Sub Saharan Africa throughout the 1990s, as well as İHH's position as a flag bearer, also resounds with the analysis of a senior TİKA official:

*"At the end of 2002, before the AK Party came to power, civil society was far ahead of the state in Turkey. For instance, in 2002 the İHH had nearly 90 representations abroad, in countries where Turkey had no diplomatic representation. So in a way, Turkey's [sociological realities] were one step ahead of the state. When the state decided to join forces with these [sociological realities], the gap was closed, and this time the state moved ahead of civil society. In a way, civil society paved the way ahead for the expansion of the state."*³⁶

Indeed, Turkey had only 12 diplomatic missions in Africa when the AKP came to power in 2002, including those in the Northern African region. By 2015, this number had gone up to 35 and currently sits at 44 (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -b). In sum, it may be argued that civil society organisations were the greatest asset of the state on the ground – and by harnessing their experiences, connections and operational capabilities through effective cooperation, the state was not only able to amplify its standing in Sub Saharan

³⁶ Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

Africa, but also transfer power to its formal institutions such as TİKA, and business actors at home in search of new markets. According to a former senior diplomat, this marked an unprecedented match between the state and civil society, which had greater implications for steering new directions in Turkish foreign policy, especially its peacebuilding efforts in Somalia.³⁷

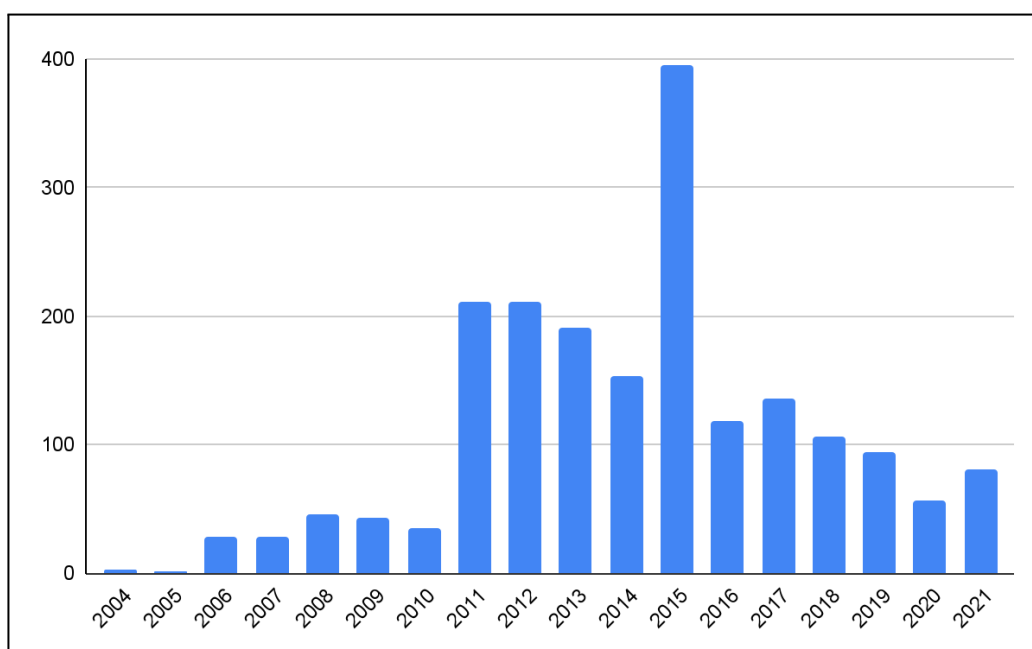


Figure 11: Turkey's net ODA disbursements to Sub-Saharan Africa (million \$)

Source: TİKA

As shown in Figure 11, Turkey's foreign aid to Sub Saharan Africa increased dramatically after 2005, reaching its first peak with a more than 500% year-on-year increase in 2011 during the famine that hit Somalia. In the same

³⁷ Author's interview with former senior diplomat on June 9, 2023.

year, Prime Minister Erdoğan became the first non-African leader to visit the civil war-torn country after 20 years, flying to Mogadishu with a plane carrying a delegation of 200 Turkish politicians, businessmen, NGO representatives, and celebrities (Akpınar, 2013: 740). The visit was covered extensively by international media outlets, drawing parallels between Turkey's rising position next to China, Brazil and India in the "race for new markets in Africa" (Reuters, 2011; BBC, 2011). Recalling the groundbreaking nature of the visit, a former diplomat observes:

*"Mogadishu Airport was a place where no commercial aeroplane had landed for a long time until that day, except for those transporting humanitarian aid. Even the UN had halted all its operations in Somalia and moved them to Nairobi due to security threats. Turkey made a major entrance into Somalia under such dangerous conditions. As someone who has experienced the conditions of civil war and who is familiar with the security situation in Somalia, I was able to comprehend how 'crazy' this was."*³⁸

Turkey thereby launched one of its largest peacebuilding operations in Somalia. Since 2011, Turkey's bilateral ODA engagements with Somalia have taken the form of peacebuilding and civilian capacity building. Studies on Turkish ODA in Somalia are therefore positioned within the framework of

³⁸ Author's interview with former senior diplomat on June 9, 2023.

humanitarian diplomacy rather than development cooperation (see Bayer and Keyman, 2012; Murphy and Sazak, 2012; Keyman and Sazak, 2014; Achilles et al. 2015; Sazak and Woods, 2017). Although there is no overarching concept document describing Turkey's outlook on peacebuilding, Sazak and Woods (2017) observe that "most Turkish officials discuss the term peacebuilding within the context of development" (p. 95). This also points to a conceptual cross-cutting between humanitarian diplomacy and development cooperation, which will be discussed later on.

Turkey's aid to Somalia reached a second peak in 2015, as did the diplomatic relations between the two countries when Erdoğan visited Mogadishu in January. ODA disbursements to Somalia totaled \$314.8 million and accounted for 80% of all ODA outflows into Sub Saharan Africa (Graph 7). Financed projects included 45,000 tons of humanitarian aid, establishment of a temporary accommodation camp in the Jazeera region for 25,400 people, mobile kitchens and bakeries, construction of military facilities in Mogadishu, and the construction of the Anatolian Faculty of Agriculture (TİKA, 2015). A key project that was put into service the same year was the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Teaching Hospital, whose opening ceremony was attended by President Erdoğan himself on January 25. Domestic pressures such as the failed coup attempt of July 2016, increasing costs of humanitarian operations targeting Syrian refugees, and the country's overall economic downturn followed by rising costs of borrowing, excessive current account deficit and the sharp fall of

the Turkish lira cut Turkey's ODA outflows into Sub Saharan Africa by more than 70% in the following year.

To be sure, Turkey's business sector acted as a third and indispensable pillar of its successful opening to Sub Saharan Africa, as explained in an interview:

*“Africa presents a rare instance in Turkish foreign policy where three actors [the state, civil society and business sector] came together successfully. The state drew a roadmap, civil society established networks, and business actors helped advance relations onto a rational basis, to ensure sustainability. Everyone put their own agenda on the table and this made the state's work easier. The reason why Turkey-Africa relations have progressed so fast in a short period of 10 years is because these three actors were able to operate together.”*³⁹

According to the interviewee, the operational harmony between these three entities presents an outlier case in the context of Sub Saharan Africa. The absence of strong civil society actors in the case of Turkey's opening to Latin America, for instance, was testament to this – even though diplomatic and economic relations with this region reached historic highs after the opening of the first TİKA office in the region.

³⁹ Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

	Exports				Imports		
	North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Total		North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Total
2002	1,267	430	1,697		2,138	558	2,696
2003	1,577	554	2,131		2,519	820	3,338
2004	2,203	765	2,968		3,231	1,589	4,820
2005	2,544	1,087	3,631		4,212	1,835	6,047
2006	3,097	1,469	4,366		4,878	2,526	7,405
2007	4,030	1,947	5,977		3,616	3,168	6,784
2008	5,850	3,212	9,062		5,267	2,503	7,770
2009	7,416	2,739	10,155		2,238	1,700	3,938
2010	7,025	2,258	9,283		3,098	1,726	4,824
2011	6,701	3,633	10,334		3,342	3,425	6,767
2012	9,444	3,913	13,357		3,308	2,613	5,922
2013	10,931	4,104	15,035		3,631	2,560	6,191
2014	10,240	3,997	14,237		3,584	2,590	6,175
2015	8,919	4,212	13,131		3,173	2,152	5,325
2016	8,069	3,834	11,903		3,253	2,152	5,405
2017	7,918	4,319	12,237		4,203	2,979	7,182
2018	9,915	5,174	15,089		4,686	2,452	7,137
2019	10,829	5,794	16,623		4,010	1,811	5,821
2020	9,224	6,017	15,241		4,757	2,552	7,310
2021	13,336	7,876	21,212		5,418	2,815	8,233
2022	14,110	9,509	23,619		6,099	3,412	9,511

Table 3: Turkey's trade with Africa, 2002-2022 (million \$)

Source: TURKSTAT, Özkan and Akgün (2010), Akbay (2015).

The economic outcomes of Turkey's foreign aid activism in Sub Saharan Africa are shown in Table 3. The total trade volume between Turkey and Sub Saharan African countries stood at a mere \$988 million in 2002, which quickly increased more than six-fold by reaching \$6.5 billion in 2011. As of 2022, Turkey's total trade volume with the region is \$12.9 billion, and total exports by Turkish businesses amount to \$9.5 billion.

Özkan (2013) has identified the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON) and the Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen (MÜSİAD), as having played a significant part in supporting Turkey's presence in Sub Saharan Africa. Founded in 1990, MÜSİAD is often portrayed as a religiously motivated counterpart of Turkey's leading business association TÜSİAD, which openly aligns itself with liberal, democratic and secular values.⁴⁰ MÜSİAD represents nearly 60,000 businesses in Turkey, mostly consisting of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The association opened an overseas office in Somalia in 2018, and currently has over 200 representations in US, Europe, Asia and Africa (Dünya Gazetesi, 2018).

⁴⁰ Established in 1971, TÜSİAD identifies itself as a voluntary and independent business NGOs whose activities are aimed at "creating social cohesion based on the competitive market economy, sustainable development and participatory democracy" (TÜSİAD, 2023). The organisation's member companies operate mainly in the metropolitan areas of Turkey, specifically in Istanbul and its surrounding region. TÜSİAD collectively represents 50% of Turkey's private national income, and 85% of its foreign trade, excluding energy exports (TÜSİAD, 2023).

According to Özkan (2013), TUSKON “pioneered in bringing African businessmen to Turkey and encouraging Turkish businesses to expand to Africa” (p. 46). With offices in Brussels, Moscow, Washington DC and Beijing, TUSKON was established in 2005 and represented over 11,500 businessmen across Turkey (Özkan and Akgün, 2010). Similar in nature to MÜSİAD, TUSKON was a religiously driven business association – according to Kuru (2008), TUSKON was “the most influential Islamic movement inspired by Fethullah Gülen” (p. 529). TUSKON organised several international trade summits to accelerate Turkey’s business relations with Africa, one of which was organised at the sidelines of the Turkey-Africa Cooperation summit in 2008, and was attended by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Babacan (Özkan and Akgün, 2010: 540). In a press interview, TUSKON’s former President Rızanur Meral explained that the Turkish domestic market was unable to saturate the rapid increase in Turkey’s production capacity, and that African markets were thus crucial in saving Turkish SMEs from “annihilation” (Dünya Gazetesi, 2009). Meral further explained that they were eager to “look around the world to open new markets and new horizons for the business world”, and that the “untouched” status of the African market presented an opportunity for such small companies (Dünya Gazetesi, 2009). Despite its quick rise and growth, TUSKON’s operations were halted after an arrest warrant was issued for 114 businessmen including TUSKON’s president for allegedly providing financial support to FETÖ after the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016.

4.1.3. Turkey discovers Latin America: institutional changes as policy drivers

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs traces the earliest diplomatic contact between Turkey and Latin America to the second half of the 19th century, during the initial stages of the migratory waves from the Ottoman Empire to Latin America starting in the 1860s (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -c). In a speech during his first state visit to Mexico, then Prime Minister Erdoğan made a reference to this piece of history, explaining to his audience that although the majority of the 19th century migrants had come from the Arab populations of the Ottoman Empire, they were greeted as ‘el Turco’, thus laying the foundations for the first large-scale cultural contact between Latin America and Turkey (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2015). Migration from the Ottoman Empire to Latin America continued throughout the next fifty years, until the end of the First World War. Following the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Chile was the first country in the LAC region to recognize the newly founded Republic of Turkey (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -c).

Turkey’s ties with this distant part of the world, however, remained mostly dormant until the 1990s. According to Turkey’s MFA, relations were “friendly, but stagnant”, mostly due to geographical distance and diverging

foreign policy priorities (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -c). Latin America started emerging as a region of interest for Turkish foreign policy only after the end of the Cold War, in line with Turkey's then intention to pursue a more diverse foreign policy (Oğuz, 2022). Then president Süleyman Demirel's visit to Argentina, Brazil and Chile in April 1995 was the first official visit to the region by a sitting Turkish president. In the same year, 8 bilateral agreements were signed, followed by the adoption of the *Action Plan For Latin America and the Caribbean* in 1998. Despite these initial efforts to improve relations, Turkey's engagement with Latin American countries remained weak until 2006, when the year was declared as the 'Year of Latin America' in Turkey. Similar to the case of Sub Saharan Africa, the initial Action Plan of 1995 was renewed. However, it was not until 2015 that relations gained momentum, when President Erdoğan went on a state tour of Mexico, Colombia and Cuba in February – the second such visit after Demirel's tour in 1995. President Erdoğan made a second visit to the region the year after, this time meeting with the presidents of Chile, Peru and Ecuador. The number of Turkey's embassies in the Latin American region increased from 6 in 2002 to 17 in 2022.

A review of the literature suggests that at the domestic level, it is possible to locate two main determinants that have exerted influence over Turkey's opening up to the Latin American region – namely, the multidimensional shift in foreign policy and the role of economic interests in establishing economic and commercial ties based on mutual gains (Dışişleri

Bakanlığı, n.d. -c; Alpar, 2023). Interview evidence collected through this study also points to the role of individual agents in shaping micro decisions regarding Turkey's foreign aid policy, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Another important dimension is the observation that, in contrast to Sub Saharan Africa, the humanitarian dimension of Turkish foreign policy was not a defining force in the case of Latin America, as Turkey approached its opening to the continent within the scope of 'enterprising and humanitarian foreign policy' (Oğuz, 2022). According to the MFA, this policy resonates with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's broader vision of "peace at home, peace in the world", and reflects the "enterprising spirit and humanitarian values of our nation" (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d. -d).

According to Levaggi (2013), Turkey's expansion into Africa in the previous years served as a "mirror example" for that of Latin America, even though evidence collected through interviews has shown in the previous section that the perception of the Latin American experience has not resonated in the same way inside the state's structure.⁴¹ A major reason for this is argued to be the lack of experience on the part of Turkish civil society organisations in steering connections at the local level, which had been a prominent

⁴¹ Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

characteristic of Turkey's experience in Sub Saharan Africa. This is partially due to the specific geographical inclinations of Turkish international humanitarian NGOs, most of which are either faith-based or religiously motivated, thus displaying a selective approach towards Muslim populations across Sub Saharan Africa.⁴² Another practical reason why is that most of these NGOs have little to no knowledge of the field in Latin America, where they have not run any prior operations due to the region's past irrelevance in Turkey's foreign policy and civil society.

Nonetheless, the entrance of TİKA into Latin America was a crucial first step towards building civilian ties between the region and the wider Turkish foreign aid architecture. In 2015, TİKA opened its first Latin American office in Mexico, followed by the Colombia office in 2016. Since 2015, most projects carried out by TİKA have focused on education, healthcare, water and sanitation, administrative capacity building and agriculture. A leading example for these projects is a school built by TİKA in El Orejon, Colombia – a rural region of symbolic importance for the peace process between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) militants. The opening ceremony of the TİKA school in El Orejon was attended by Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos (TRT Haber, 2017).

⁴² Author's interview with an NGO director on December 23, 2021.

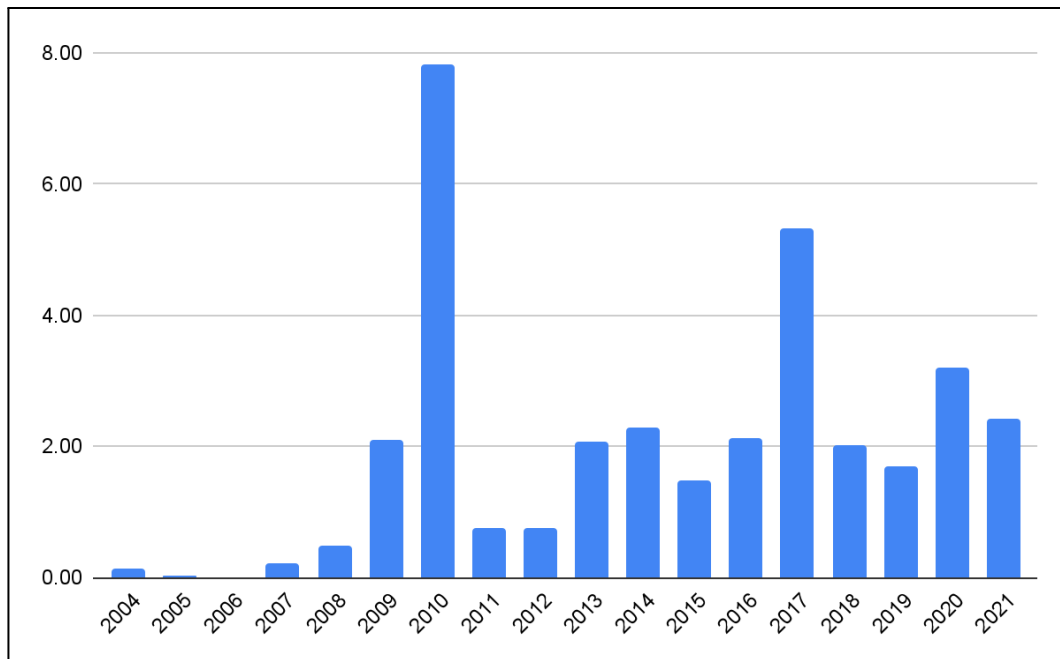


Figure 12: Turkey's net ODA disbursements to Latin American countries, 2004-2021 (million \$) Source: TİKA

As illustrated in Figure 12, Turkey's ODA to Latin American countries showed a gradual, if inconsistent, increase starting from 2013. The year 2010 stands out as an exception, as TİKA channelled \$6.87 million in emergency aid to Haiti following the fatal earthquake that struck the southwestern region of the country. Another outlier is 2017, when nearly half of TİKA's total aid budget for Latin America flowed into Colombia after the flood disaster that hit the Putumayo province (TİKA, 2017b). In the following years, Colombia kept its position as the recipient of the highest Turkish ODA within the group of Latin American countries, the main reasons of which will be explained through an agency-structure approach in the next section.

The economic outcome of Turkey's rising presence in Latin America is shown through Turkey's exports to the region in Figure 13. Since 2011, Brazil and Argentina have been the top destinations for Turkish exports, who have recently been joined by Venezuela.

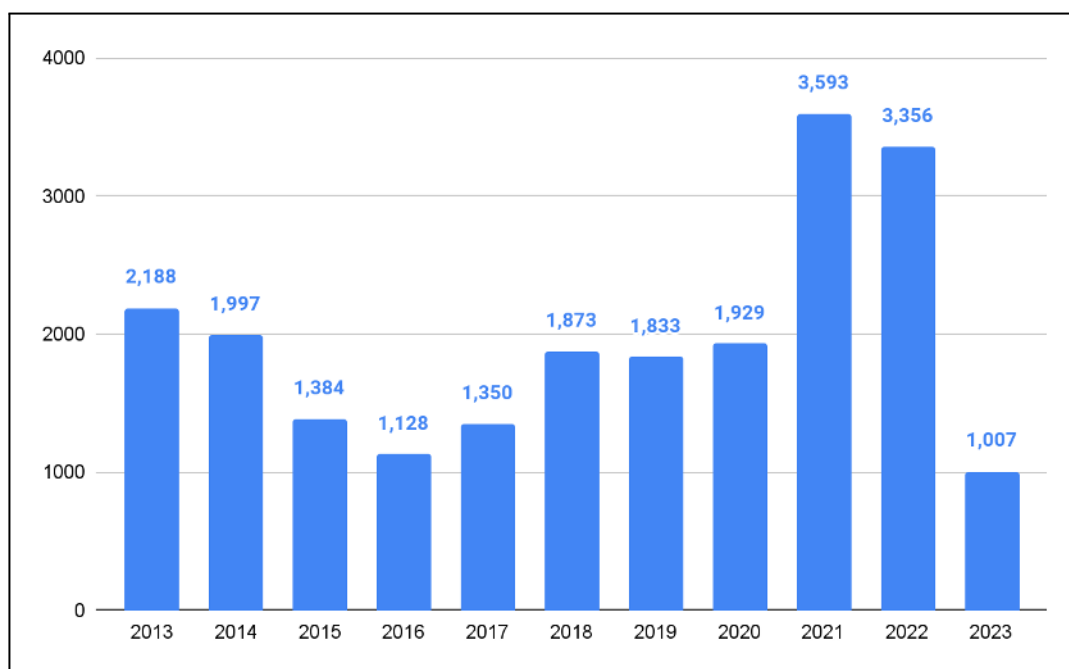


Figure 13: Turkey's exports to Latin American countries, 2013-2023 (million \$).

Source: TURKSTAT

4.1.3.1. Bureaucrats as policy-makers

The expansion of Turkey's foreign aid policy into Latin America features a significant example of the interaction between domestic and individual levels in decision-making. Lancaster (2007) has observed that most of the research focusing on factors affecting public policy tends to remain within the limited scope of ideas, interests, and institutions, with bureaucracy often categorised under the broader heading of 'institutions'. In the case of foreign aid, however, Lancaster has suggested that this would be erroneous – based on her first-hand experience in the field of policy-making, she has argued that: “Where legislators are uninformed or uninterested in aid issues, bureaucracies have much more say over the amount and purposes of aid and much less public accountability for those decisions” (Lancaster, 2007: 20).⁴³

The case of TİKA's Colombia operations presents a very particular case of Lancaster's (2007) argument in action. An interview with a former senior TİKA official illustrates how bureaucrats may enforce a bottom-up role and exert significant influence in policy-making priorities, and how the institutional arrangements in Turkey's foreign aid policy architecture exhibit an enabling effect for individual political actors to influence ODA priorities and modalities:

⁴³ Lancaster has served as Deputy Head at USAID between 1993 and 1996.

“TİKA called me to South America because I spoke Spanish. I said okay, but what am I going to do there? Will you give me a blueprint? I realised that they did not know either. They vaguely mentioned South-South Cooperation. I realised that there was nothing of substance. I told them, then you will leave it to me, and I will build it from scratch, as I more or less have knowledge of the literature.”⁴⁴

This account simultaneously confirms arguments about the lack of an overarching policy understanding that directs Turkey’s foreign aid policy, which will be discussed further in the next chapter. Shedding light on the steps they took in creating their own policy blueprint, the bureaucrat explained the methodology they adopted as follows:

“Immediately after opening the office, I invited around ten academics working on development assistance at universities in the capital city. I held a half-day workshop with them. The main question was: what have other countries done in Latin America, and what have they failed to do? What should Turkey do, what would be successful? And I said, now I need to build a discourse. I then created a "TİKA Latin America Discourse". This discourse was centred on education, healthcare and rural development projects, in line with the outputs of the workshop.”

⁴⁴ Author’s interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

The interviewee underlined that this methodology was very much contrary to the way TİKA traditionally operated – which is based on demand, and not supply. In other words, as an international aid agency, TİKA is typically tasked with collecting project proposals from local stakeholders, such as NGOs, universities and local and national-level government bodies, and later making a decision based on their evaluation of the projects. As the “logic of development aid” requires, TİKA does not “go after projects” but is rather on the receiving end of financing requests.⁴⁵ What this evidence suggests is that the structural priorities of Turkey’s foreign aid policy in the largest TİKA office in Latin America were single-handedly determined by the individual agency of a bureaucrat. This example also resonates with the principal-agent problem, as the interviewee reported that they took initiative without the knowledge of the TİKA headquarters, “who would not have allowed this to happen anyway”, should they have been informed of the bureaucrat’s decision.⁴⁶

The case of TİKA’s Colombia office also illustrates how bureaucrats may utilise institutional arrangements to channel influence over financial decisions:

“There is a vast space for bureaucrats to engage in decision-making within Turkish foreign aid policy. This is because TİKA’s annual budget

⁴⁵ Author’s interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

⁴⁶*ibid.*

*is not pre-allocated in terms of countries. There is no distribution ratio by region or country. The regional departments at the TIKA headquarters allocate funding according to the quality of project proposals incoming from countries under their responsibility. Therefore, the number of countries where TIKA spends money each year may vary. Sometimes it is Afghanistan, sometimes Bosnia, and so on. As countries are not allocated an initial budget to work with, if country representatives work better and bring in higher-quality projects, they would be allocated a higher budget.*⁴⁷

An even more focused example of this bureaucratic leeway is found in how aid bureaucrats may distribute project budgets according to their own priorities, while lawfully bypassing the limitations imposed by regulations on aid expenditure:

*“There is a ‘direct procurement limit’ imposed by government regulations, at that time this limit was \$30,000. What I mean by direct procurement is: when you are going to support a project, you are legally required to open a tender and collect at least three bids. If the project budget exceeds \$30,000 dollars, you have to open a tender. So, in the call for proposals, I called for projects with a budget below \$30,000.”*⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Author’s interview with a former senior TIKA official on May 30, 2023.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

In light of this evidence, it may be argued that the agency of aid bureaucrats does not only have an influence on shaping policy discourse and priorities, but also aid modalities, which may have an impact on how a donor's ODA affects the wider international development environment within a given country.⁴⁹

4.1.3.2. Rise of state-driven NGOs

As portrayed in Chapter 3, the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016 represents one of the most critical junctures in Turkey's domestic politics, the consequences of which have been the dismantling of various institutional structures within the state, facilitating the path leading to the country's shift to a presidential system. As previously discussed, non-state actors aligned with the movement of Gülen, such as TUSKON, Kimse Yok Mu Association and others, have been pervasive in the wider realm of Turkish foreign aid. Therefore, their removal from the inner circles of this realm has resulted in a rupture in civil society.

⁴⁹ Aid modality refers to the way in which ODA funds are transferred to recipients.

Political institutions are often regarded as shapers of ‘the rules of the political game’.⁵⁰ This is understood as a product not only of their power to influence decision-making and agenda-setting, but also to decide who maintains direct access to the decision makers (Lancaster, 2007). Similar arguments are echoed by Hall (1990), Sikkink (1988), Goldstein and Keohane (1993), Woods (1995), Milner (1997), who draw attention to the role played by institutional conditions through which ideas may influence policy. This is a useful approach to understand how the rupture in the alliance between the AKP and Gülen movement has affected civil society involvement in Turkish foreign aid policy.

The rupture in the AKP-Gülen alliance after July 15 brought with it an important change in the way civil society operated as an actor within Turkey’s foreign aid policy. Gülen’s movement, named *Hizmet* among its followers, was a particularly influential entity that promoted Turkey’s public diplomacy efforts in Sub Saharan Africa and beyond. Their expertise was positioned in the education sector, as the movement owned and ran a wide network of primary and secondary schools in the US, Americas, Russian Federation, Central Asia, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia (Norton and Kasapoğlu, 2016). According to Donelli (2019), Turkey’s wider foreign policy establishment benefited from this network in the field of education as a subsector of international development cooperation. The collaboration, however, came to an

⁵⁰ See Haggard and Matthew McCubbins (2001) quoted in Lancaster (2007) for a review of the literature on the role of political institutions in foreign policy.

abrupt end after the 2016 coup attempt, and Africa became a “theater of internal fighting” (Donelli, 2019: 67).

This split led to a complete transformation of the Turkish state’s attitude towards international education cooperation. The overseas Gülenist school network was no longer perceived as a civil society ally but as part of a cross-border operation belonging to FETÖ. In fact, the school system was now perceived as the mechanism through which FETÖ “internationalised” its operations (Özkan and Akgün, 2020: 60). What ensued was Turkey’s move to “re-claim its own domain” from the control of FETÖ by neutralising its school system (Özkan and Akgün, 2020:60)

Indeed, it is argued that the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) was made active in 2016 with this particular goal (Donelli, 2019; Özkan and Akgün, 2020; Öz, 2022). TMV’s structure and image reveal its profile as a state-controlled body that is structured in the form of an NGO – for instance, the sitting deputy president at TMV is formerly associated with TİKA, as well as numerous country coordinators stationed in TMV’s overseas offices.⁵¹ Moreover, TMV’s budget is primarily financed by the state – Presidential Decree 7030 issued in May 2023 authorised the transfer of 3.5 billion TL from

⁵¹ Author’s interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

the Ministry of Education to fund TMV's activities. This showed an almost two-fold growth in TMV's funds, which stood at 1.87 billion TL in 2022 and 1.32 billion TL in 2021 (Sol Haber, 2023).

The generous funding TMV receives from state institutions is mostly utilised towards a sole mission, which may be described as “reclaiming educational soft power” from FETÖ-linked schools around the world (Özkan and Akgün, 2020: 65). As of 2023, TMV runs overseas missions in 51 countries across the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia (Figure 3). Interview evidence also points to the previous argument, confirming that state takeovers of FETÖ-affiliated schools abroad have been a “top agenda item” in high-level meetings between Turkey's president and his counterparts abroad, including in Latin America.⁵²

A chronological tracing of President Erdoğan's diplomatic engagements with his Venezuelan counterpart Nicolas Maduro in 2018 echoes this suggestion. The two presidents first held a video conference on 17 May, followed by a phone call from Maduro to Erdoğan on 25 June to celebrate his election victory. On 9 July, Maduro visited Ankara to attend Erdoğan's presidential inauguration in person. On 21-22 September, Foreign Minister

⁵² Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu travelled to Caracas to hold a series of meetings with his counterpart Jorge Arreaza. On 30 November, Turkey’s ambassador to Caracas Şevki Mütevellioğlu signed a protocol with the Venezuelan Minister of Education Aristóbulo Iztúriz Almeida and TMV Board Member Nedim Kaya, finalising the handover of the two FETÖ-linked schools in Venezuela to the TMV (NTV, 2018). Finally on 3 December, Erdoğan paid an official visit to Venezuela to meet Maduro. In their joint press statement, Erdoğan praised the Venezuelan leader for his cooperation on the transfer of FETÖ-linked schools to the TMV, while highlighting that his visit “opens a brand new page with Venezuela” (BBC, 2018).

4.2. Turkish foreign aid policy in relation to the changing global context

This chapter has so far analysed changes in Turkey's foreign aid policy emanating from the domestic level. This analysis, however, would be incomplete without taking into account the factors that have shaped the trajectory of Turkey's foreign aid policy at the international level. The remainder of this chapter will provide a brief analysis of how Turkey's aid has evolved in reference to the wider changes at the regional and global level.

Interview evidence has shown earlier in the chapter that the ideology of TİKA's founding president was an unmistakable influence that shaped the initial rhetoric and priorities of the agency. This ideology, nonetheless, cannot be thought of in isolation of the existing international context at the time. The two clear motivations upon which TİKA was established in 1992 were to elevate "Turkish existence" across the world, and moreover to facilitate the post-Cold War transition of Turkic states whose presence had "priorly been compressed within a Soviet understanding".⁵³ In other words, the founding president's worldviews on foreign aid were informed by the recent disintegration of the

⁵³ Author's interview with a former senior diplomat on December 22, 2021.

Soviet Union and the disruption in the balance of power that followed the disappearance of the bipolar international system.⁵⁴ This example is in line with arguments in the post-Cold War Turkish foreign policy literature which hold that policy changes often mirror those in the international system, with states adjusting themselves to the new balance of power in international relations (Karaosmanoğlu, 2000; Sayarı, 2000).

The founding TİKA president's close ties to the country's political leadership, and the alliances they formed inside the bureaucracy through interpersonal relations, were instrumental at the individual level in navigating the political conflicts of interest that initially came in the way of TİKA's establishment.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, evidence also shows that these individual level quarrels were, to a significant extent, also shaped by the developments occurring at the regional level:

“Unfortunately, this project [TİKA] was never understood or appreciated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – they tried to downplay it by putting it into a simple technical cooperation framework. ... A few years later, the project was tried to be taken off the agenda by saying

⁵⁴ Author's interview with a former senior diplomat on December 22, 2021.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

things like 'We are Europeans, we have established the Customs Union, we must become Europeans and turn our face towards the West'." ⁵⁶

In other words, the founding president's previously discussed vision for a Eurasia-oriented 'Turkish cultural geography' as the basis for Turkey's foreign aid was met with opposition from individual decision-makers inside the MFA establishment, whose ideas were in turn influenced by Turkey's signing of the 1995 EU–Turkey Customs Union agreement, an initiative heralded by then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller. This example resounds with arguments in the literature which locate 'Europeanization' and the impact of EU's accession conditionality to changes in Turkey's foreign policy (Aydın and Açıkmeşe, 2013).

The case of Turkish foreign aid in Sub Saharan Africa is another illustration of how the international context has influenced Turkey's approach to foreign aid. Turkey's peacebuilding efforts in Somalia, which were discussed previously in this chapter, are particularly relevant as they represent the country's "shift from ... hard security-based peacebuilding to the civilian participation and technical assistance that characterises Turkey's activities in recent years" (Sazak and Woods, 2017: 95). This may be understood in relation

⁵⁶ Author's interview with a former senior diplomat on December 22, 2021.

to the effects of EU conditionality on Turkey and how they influenced its foreign policy transformation from a “coercive regional power” in the 1990s to a “benign power” throughout the 2000s (Öniş, 2003). An interviewee described Turkish involvement in Somalia as the country’s “largest overseas state-building project, second only to the TRNC”.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Author’s interview with former senior diplomat on June 9, 2023.

Chapter 5

Locating Turkey in the field of international development assistance: a comparative perspective

The vast majority of research on individual foreign aid donors has so far focused on traditional donors. Among the typical countries of interest have been the United States (see Morgenthau, 1962; Cingranelli and Pasquarello, 1985; Milner and Tingley, 2010), the United Kingdom (see Bowles, 1987; Mawdsley, 2015) and Japan (see Arase, 1995; Jain, 2016). In part, this is due to the chronological precedence of traditional donors in providing ODA. Some have observed, however, that emerging donors were in fact ignored or “substantially discounted” in the literature until recently (Rowlands, 2012: 629). In explaining the reasons behind this trend, it is also important to note that the lack of adequate country-level data on the sources, channels, and recipients of ODA has been a contributing factor in the underrepresentation of emerging donors in the literature. Limited access to data on non-traditional donorship is linked with a key defining characteristic of emerging donors, namely the lack of an overarching central monitoring structure similar to the DAC. While some emerging donors hold observer or participant status and publicise their ODA data through the DAC’s reporting system, others such as China, Brazil and

India have refrained from doing so.⁵⁸ In addition, researchers have not always had ready access into the black box of foreign aid decision-making across most emerging donors – thus, the goal of this dissertation is to add fresh qualitative evidence from Turkey to the existing body of research (see İpek, 2015; Süssler and Alden, 2022; Turhan and Bahçecik, 2021).

This research gap has led to broad, loosely defined categorizations in the study of emerging donors, some of which have placed Turkey in ambiguous categories. One of the aims of this chapter is to critically evaluate these typologies by pinpointing their strengths and weaknesses vis-a-vis Turkey's position and practices as an emerging donor. Through a survey of the emerging donors literature, and in light of the findings presented in Chapter 4, the remainder of this chapter will inductively identify the major fault lines that distinguish Turkey's foreign aid policy-making from the wider field of international development assistance. The chapter is organised as follows. After an evaluation of the existing typologies of emerging donors, Section 5.2 will discuss the extent to which foreign aid policy making is guided by grand-strategic considerations among emerging donors, with particular focus on China and Russia. Section 5.3 will locate how Turkey differs from its counterparts, particularly South Korea (hereafter Korea), in terms of role

⁵⁸ All non-DAC members of the OECD have observer status in the DAC, however not all observers have agreed to report ODA data to the DAC (such as Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica). Meanwhile, a number of non-DAC, non-OECD states have agreed to report their ODA data to the DAC (such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and UAE). DAC provides data estimates for the remaini such as China, Brazil, South Africa and India.

conceptions and approaches to donor identities. Drawing linkages again with Korea, Section 5.4 will highlight the extent to which political leadership may become a determining factor in foreign aid policy making. Finally, Section 5.6 will discuss how Turkey compares to other major emerging donors, including China, Brazil and Korea, in terms of the sectoral allocation of their ODA budgets.

5.1. An assessment of existing emerging donor typologies

Dreher, Nunnenkamp and Thiele (2011) authored one of the first quantitative studies on non-DAC donors, using project-level data for 16 non-DAC member donors from 2001 until 2008 to assess the aid allocation patterns of these new donors. They found that new donors were, on average, less responsive to recipient needs. Dreher et al. also found that non-DAC donors exhibited a propensity to provide aid despite high levels of corruption or undemocratic tendencies in recipient countries, while not performing much differently in this regard than traditional donors. However, due to a lack of public data and further research, the authors studied non-DAC donors monolithically under a single category. Although the authors themselves acknowledged this as a shortcoming in their work, the limitation is nonetheless

indicative of the continuing data and research gap on the aid policies and practices of individual non-DAC donors.

Quantitative studies such as the above-mentioned research are extremely valuable as they help to identify and evaluate the main trends in the ODA practices of emerging donors. However, they are also suggestive of the need for further research and in-depth qualitative analyses of policy-making processes in non-DAC donor countries individually. In other words, although large-N studies focusing on the policy behaviour of emerging donors may point to important markers within this group of countries, they nevertheless limit the possibilities to understand the policy formulation processes that lead to certain outcomes and to thoroughly account for the variance within the individual, domestic, and system-level factors influencing the members of this analytical category. It is therefore a central intention of this chapter to identify some of the intra-group differences among emerging donors in terms of policy-making and its determinants at the individual, domestic, and international levels. An overview of the existing typologies will help locate how Turkey may or may not deviate from these groupings.

The present literature on emerging donors offers a number of typologies to categorise and understand the policy behaviour of non-DAC donors. The following section will demonstrate that the existing typologies share an inclination to concentrate on the technical characteristics of aid (e.g., volume,

modality, donor alignment, donor participation in international organisations and processes, etc.), thus falling short of offering a categorization based on deeper insight into the strategic, ideational, and complexities surrounding policy-making processes in emerging donor countries.

5.1.1. Manning's typology

A former chairperson of the DAC, Richard Manning (2006) was the first in the literature to identify four main groups of new donors in the international development aid architecture, namely non-DAC OECD members, non-OECD EU members, Middle Eastern and OPEC members, and emerging donors (Table 4). The final group of 'emerging donors' was described as "the most disparate and the subject of the greatest current interest (Manning, 2006: 374). In this typology, donors are grouped in terms of their membership status in the OECD, DAC, and EU and their tendencies to align their policies with DAC principles. The four main groups identified by Manning are as follows:

Non-DAC OECD members	South Korea ⁵⁹ , Turkey, Mexico
Non-OECD EU members	Bulgaria and Romania
Middle East and OPEC members	Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia
Emerging donors (non-EU, non-OECD)	BRICS, Israel ⁶⁰ , Taiwan

Table 4: Emerging donor categories as outlined in Manning (2006)

⁵⁹ South Korea joined the DAC in 2010.

⁶⁰ Israel joined the OECD in 2010.

In describing the first group, Manning observed that both Turkey and South Korea pursued “ambitious plans to scale up their aid”, whose respective ODA disbursements of \$339 million and \$423 million for the year 2004 were higher than two of the existing members of the DAC (Manning, 2006: 373). Manning (2006) also claimed that both South Korea and Turkey had plans to join the DAC around the year 2010, which turned out to be true for South Korea in 2013 and false for Turkey as the country still remains an invitee of the DAC.

Interview evidence shows that despite having met the membership criteria, Turkey currently does not exhibit any visible political will to join the DAC. Even though Turkey adopts a generally cooperative attitude towards DAC and complies with its reporting requirements, a senior TİKA executive explains the following:

*“In 2002, Turkey could not fulfil the ODA/GNI ratio requirement of 0.7% or the total aid criterion of \$100 million. At that time, our system was very weak, as aid did not exceed \$60 million. In 2004, with a Prime Ministry circular, we started to collect data from all government bodies. We then realised that Turkey had already met this criterion. ... However, becoming a member of the DAC is a decision to be made by the political will, not by TİKA”.*⁶¹

⁶¹ Author’s interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

The interviewee further explains, albeit cautiously, that a practical reason why Turkey has refrained from joining the DAC is due to the more flexible and efficient nature of Turkish ODA:

*“Compared to DAC countries, TİKA has a much more agile structure and can respond to needs immediately without the entanglements of bureaucracy, which does not happen all the time with DAC donors.”*⁶²

The argument for agility and the proposition that non-DAC structures maintain the organisational capacity to perform more successfully in meeting aid standards resound with other research in the literature. For instance, the findings of a study by Palagashvili and Williamson (2020) suggest that DAC donors' performance in complying with ODA provision criteria has substantially worsened since 2004, resulting in their failure to “meet their own standards” (p. 822). Another finding of the study further revealed UN agencies to be outperforming DAC donors, which stands as an unexpected outcome as the UN has historically received a strikingly more substantial volume of criticism within the literature (Easterly, 2003).

⁶² Author's interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

5.1.2. Kragelund's typology

In a similar vein with Manning (2008), Kragelund has put forth a categorization of non-DAC donors based on their EU and OECD membership status (Table 5). Kragelund has argued that a) EU membership has a direct influence on non-DAC donors' ODA policies, as multilateral aid is typically channelled through the European Commission and bilateral aid through "shared development objectives" of the EU, and that b) OECD membership also has a decisive influence, as the OECD is "not only a club of the rich", but also "a community of shared values", most notably market economy and democracy (Kragelund, 2008: 556).

EU and OECD members	Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary
Non-EU OECD members	Iceland, South Korea, Mexico, Turkey
Non-OECD EU members	Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Cyprus
Non-EU non-OECD members	OPEC, BRICS, Israel, Taiwan, Thailand

Table 5: Emerging donor categories as outlined by Kragelund (2008)

The analysis in Chapter 4 has shown that although Turkey's foreign aid policy does not demonstrate any particular disagreements with OECD values, it is also not necessarily guided by them. The ideas, values, and identities shaping Turkey's foreign aid policy in comparison to others will be discussed further in the next sections.

5.1.3. Zimmermann and Smith's typology

OECD economists Zimmermann and Smith (2011) have proposed three main typologies of new donors based on more practical criteria that bring into focus how each donor identifies their position within the wider field of development cooperation and which principles they subscribe to (Table 6). The first group, 'emerging donors', includes Turkey and is identified by the donors' overall adherence to the basic principles laid out by the DAC and their acceptance of the term 'aid donor'. South-South Development Cooperators (SSDC), on the other hand, are observed to be aligned with the principle of South-South cooperation as laid out by the 1955 Bandung Conference.⁶³ SSDC is also identified as being in dismissal of the traditional norms of donor-recipient relations due to the hierarchical nature of the said norms. Finally, Arab donors are grouped separately as they fit in neither category – while they do not reject the term 'donor' as in the case of SSDC, they also do not demonstrate a particular adherence to DAC approaches. This is a result of their administrative procedures being rather "light" and not as systematised as those of the 'emerging donors' group (Zimmermann and Smith, 2011: 730).

⁶³ Organised in 1955 jointly by the governments of Indonesia, Myanmar, India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, the Bandung Conference was the first large-scale gathering of the newly independent Asian and African states. The central aim of the conference was to accelerate economic cooperation between Asian and African states in an effort to oppose any forms of colonialism.

Emerging donors	Turkey, Israel, Iceland, Poland, Hungary, Russia
SSDC	BICS
Arab donors	Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE

*Table 6: Emerging donor categories as outlined by Zimmermann and Smith
(2011)*

Within a framework as such, it may be argued that Turkey's location in the broader category of DAC-like donors is more fitting than the categories proposed by the former two typologies. Although Turkey remains reluctant to accept the DAC's invitation to join as a member, it nevertheless follows the wider approaches and standards encouraged by the DAC, and shows no eagerness to position itself within the South-South Cooperation rhetoric, which will be discussed in the following sections.

5.1.4. Walz and Ramachandran's typology

Finally, based on the framework provided by Zimmermann and Smith (2011), Walz and Ramachandran (2011) have proposed a very similar typology based on three main categories:

DAC model	Turkey, Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Russia
Arab model	Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE
Southern model	BICS, Chile, Venezuela, Argentina

Table 7: Emerging donor categories as outlined by Walz and Ramachandran (2011)

Although it largely echoes Zimmermann and Smith (2011), this typology has noted that Turkey may be distinguished within its own category due to its “BRIC-like” status, as aid is “mostly targeted at neighbours”, and “contributions to Africa are growing” (Walz and Ramachandran, 2011: 11).

While it is true that many of the aforementioned studies feature significant flaws in the way they categorise emerging donors, it is also true that the body of empirical knowledge regarding these newly rising donors was much smaller when these studies were conducted. Against all odds, it may be argued that each of these studies provided an initial blueprint for researchers studying emerging donors and contributed to the accumulation of deeper investigations into the donors individually. The remainder of this chapter will seek to identify some of the main components of foreign aid policy-making through which the Turkish case diverges from other emerging donors.

5.2. The question of strategy

The DAC identifies ODA as the “gold standard” of foreign aid and defines it as (strictly non-military) governmental resource flows that particularly address welfare and economic development objectives in developing countries (OECD, n.d.-a). According to Palmer and Morgan (2006), “whatever its other purposes and merits, [foreign aid] is a tool of foreign policy” (p. 122). Their argument holds that states distribute foreign aid ultimately due to their conviction that aid motivates recipient states to behave in conformity with their interests, regardless of the myriad purposes and functions the said aid might serve. Consistent with this view, Palmer et al. (2002) have proposed that foreign aid should be treated as part of a state’s “foreign policy portfolio”, and hence should not be considered in isolation from other foreign policy issues (p. 6). This view holds that the study of foreign aid is, after all, the study of foreign policy. Departing from this premise, this section will investigate the extent to which foreign aid policy making in emerging donors is informed by greater strategic considerations.

Grand strategy outlines how states leverage their sources of power to achieve specific objectives, making it valuable to examine whether emerging donors formulate their foreign aid policies based on discernible strategic objectives. Based on this premise, this section aims to assess the extent to which

Turkey's foreign aid aligns with an overarching strategy and how it compares to other emerging donors, particularly Russia and China.

5.2.1. Strategy and its meanings

Following Paul Kennedy's influential work *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (1991), which popularised the term, some scholars have noted that the study of foreign policy as a subfield of international relations has increasingly been subsumed by the study of grand strategy (Hill, 2004; Silove, 2018). Broadly defined, grand strategy represents "the highest level of national statecraft," guiding how states "prioritize and mobilize [...] military, diplomatic, political, economic [...] sources of power to ensure what they perceive as their interests" (van Hooft, 2017). The concept's origins are rooted in the military sphere of the 18th and 19th centuries, where discussions of strategy first emerged as "a product of the growth of [...] professional armies" (Strachan, 2005: 35). In 1766, French lieutenant-colonel Paul Gideon Joly de Maizeroy articulated the purpose and function of strategy as "[the study of the] relationship between time, positions, means and different interests, and takes every factor into account" (quoted in Strachan, 2005: 35).⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Contemporary scholarly work from the 21st century grand strategy literature include Lobell (2003), Gaddis (2009), Miller (2016) and Silove (2018), although the concept was introduced in the earlier works of Liddell Hart (1929/1967), Clausewitz (1832/1976) and Corbett (1911/1988).

Despite its popularity, the concept of ‘grand strategy’ remains ambiguous and “fuzzy” – continued debates on how it should be defined as a term are widespread in the relevant literature (Miller, 2016: 238; Silove, 2018). Most of these discussions are centred on the fundamental questions of whether grand strategy exists in the first place, whether it is particular to great powers or exercised by all states, and the extent to which it is fixed or adaptable (Silove, 2018). For some scholars, the concept simply denotes an “overarching guide”, a “basic strategic view” or even “sets of ideas shared by policymakers”, rather than “detailed plans, blueprints, or recipe books” on how states should utilise their sources of power and capabilities to achieve their interests (Martel, 2015: 33; Hattendorf, 1991: 11; Silove, 2018: 39).

5.2.2. Russia

The emerging donors literature characterises Russia, alongside China, as a ‘re-emerging’ donor (Rowlands, 2012; McEwan and Mawdsley, 2012; de Renzio and Seifert, 2014). During the Cold War, both countries ran established and well-functioning foreign aid programs to compete with their Western rivals. Between 1969 and 1988, net ODA disbursed by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)⁶⁵ totaled as much as 10% of all aid globally (Manning, 2006: 372). These aid programs were commonly regarded as an effort by the Soviet Union to keep its Warsaw Pact allies at bay in the face of a

⁶⁵ CMEA consisted of the former Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.

“global geostrategic competition” (Rowlands, 2012: 634). With the aid competition coming to an end after the Cold War, Russia re-emerged after a short respite in the international development assistance field, as the Soviet Union’s main successor. The past assumptions of “ideological competition” within the aid scene were seemingly weakened as Russia was now seeking OECD membership (Rowlands, 2012: 634).

Nevertheless, Russia’s return as an aid donor did not take long to arouse speculations on whether it would defy the existing development aid regime, together with the emergence of new aid-giving approaches that sidelined the DAC’s established norms of conditionality and transparency (Bakalova and Spanger, 2013). That is to say, the past ideological conflicts of the bipolar world order this time materialised in the form of mistrust towards new donors.

Russia’s interest in re-gaining a foothold in international development cooperation accelerated immediately after President Vladimir Putin’s chairmanship of the G8 in 2006 (Bakalova and Spanger, 2013; Zaytsev, 2020). Shortly after the calls for enhanced support for developing countries at the G8 summit in St. Petersburg, the Russian president quickly approved its first concept paper on development cooperation, titled *Concept of Russia’s Participation in International Development Assistance* in 2007. The concept document stated that it sought to present a “strategic vision” of Russia’s policy priorities on “the provision of international financial [...] aid to facilitate

socioeconomic development in recipient countries” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007:2). The document also stated that it was designed in a way that would “assure that the federal government uses a systemic approach to Russia’s participation in international development assistance” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007:2).

Indeed, the design of the first Concept portrayed a demonstrable effort to initiate the country’s re-entry into the international development assistance realm with a strategic outlook, aligned with the overall considerations in the country’s broader early-post-Cold War foreign policy. Firstly, it conveyed Russia’s commitment to a set of narrowed-down objectives and principles which included homages to the pillars of the mainstream development paradigm, such as the elimination of poverty, a commitment to “democratic processes” and “sustainable economic development”, as well as an effort to foster “market-oriented economies” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007: 5-6). On the other hand, they also showed an alignment with Russia’ greater foreign policy goals, such as “strengthen[ing] the credibility of Russia and promot[ing] an unbiased attitude to the Russian Federation in the international community” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007: 6).

The Concept also laid out regional priorities and preferred aid modalities. In determining these priorities, the document stated that “Russia’s national interests in the process of multidimensional cooperation with the CIS

countries” would be observed, as well as a special focus on meeting development needs in Sub-Saharan Africa in the context of the MDGs, and strengthening cooperation with Latin America (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007: 7). The list of preferred modalities included triangular cooperation with traditional donors, debt relief, technical assistance and trade tariff privileges to “improve the access to Russian market” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007: 9). The Concept also stated that aid-related financial activities would be planned in three-year periods, depending on the “review and forecast of Russia’s economic development” (Russian Ministry of Finance, 2007: 11).

Russia’s second –and latest to date– Concept on ODA published in 2014 further emphasised that it “pursues an active and targeted policy in the field of international development assistance which serves the national interests of the country”, based on “the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020” and “the Concept of the Russian Federation’s Foreign Policy” (Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). The strategic outlook of the document has been associated with the country’s aim to establish a “national ODA system”, in line with systematised geographical and sectoral priorities (Zaytsev, 2020: 478). This adherence to an overarching framework is also apparent in the progressive increase in Russia’s ODA after 2014 (Figure 15). Although Russia’s ODA sums have been humble after 2014 compared to other donors, they nonetheless remained significant in the face of the country’s economic troubles due to international sanctions following the annexation of

Crimea (Zaytsev, 2020). For reference, it is important to note that these ODA amounts are nearly equal to the overall budgets of the 10 poorest regions of the country (Zaytsev, 2020: 478). The makeup of Russia’s Concept documents on ODA indicates an effort to align the country’s foreign aid policy with the wider strategic goals of its foreign policy.



Figure 15: Official development assistance (ODA) disbursements by the Russian Federation, 2005-2017 (million \$) Source: Zaytsev, 2020

5.2.3. China

China's State Council Information Office issued the first of its White Papers (WP) on foreign aid policy in April 2011, while marking 60 years of the country's engagement with ODA. The document was the first of its kind, summarising different historical periods, principles and financing arrangements of China's aid policy up to 2009. The second WP, published in 2014, followed a similar structure, and featured updated data and summaries covering the period between 2010 and 2012. The third WP titled *China's international development cooperation in the new era* is currently the most up-to-date and elaborate document as it presents a comprehensive overview of China's foreign aid philosophy and activities.

China's 2021 WP offers an outlook that is closer to a strategy document than the previous two, as it broadens its focus away from bilateral ODA and involves more in-depth discussions on China's role in South-South cooperation, while signalling a new direction in development cooperation in accordance with the outcomes of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012 (UNDP, 2021). China's ODA priorities are made clear in the 2021 WP through the idea of "grand foreign aid" (*da yuan wai*) (UNDP, 2021). This is done by exploring the philosophical and cultural foundations of this strategy.

The 2021 WP expressly indicates that China has a “national character that attaches great importance to good faith, friendship, justice and righteousness”, which stands as “an inherent force” that drives the country’s development cooperation efforts (SCIO, 2021: 4). Among the approaches that inform China’s foreign aid policy, the document particularly cites South-South cooperation as a focus area, described as “essentially different from North-South cooperation,” as China’s development cooperation is “a form of mutual development assistance between developing countries” (SCIO, 2021: 5).

As a foreign aid strategy document, the 2021 WP stands out as it positions the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the key medium through which China’s ‘grand foreign aid’ ambitions are to be materialised. Since its inception in 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the BRI has widely been acknowledged as China’s “greatest international economic ambition” – a multi-faceted initiative that aims to promote economic development across Asia, Europe and Africa (Huang, 2016: 314). While the initiative is primarily focused on investing in infrastructure projects in the aforementioned regions, the BRI also seeks to facilitate trade, political dialogue and financial cooperation between nations (Huang, 2016). In this context, foreign aid is granted a strategic role in enabling this ambitious initiative, as the WP places repeated emphasis on the importance of ODA in generating “space and opportunities” for the implementation of the BRI (SCIO, 2021: 20).

In stark contrast with Russia and China, Turkey lacks a comprehensive strategy document that lays the theoretical foundations for its newfound emerging donor identity. In spite of the rebirth of TİKA after 2002 and the subsequent rise in ODA spending, Turkey has followed no clear, overarching, and systematic approach to its foreign aid policy, unlike major emerging donors such as China and Russia. Main TR government output that resembles Russia's concept document is "Yıllık Kalkınma Planı Devlet Yardımları Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporları" - which are far from laying the intellectual groundwork for Turkey's overall outlook on foreign aid

5.2.4. Turkey

Prior to Turkey's shift from a parliamentary to a presidential system following the 2017 referendum, the main characteristics of the country's foreign aid policy were principally laid out in the national Five Year Development Plans (FYDP) devised by the now-defunct State Planning Organization (SPO).⁶⁶ The National Union Committee (NUC), a transitional military committee set up to rule Turkey after the military coup on May 27, founded the SPO in 1960. Before it was dissolved with the 1961 general elections, the NUC established the SPO based on the criticism that the ousted government of former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes had mismanaged the country's economy due to their heavily populist economic policies and widespread vote-buying practices (Pamuk, 2014). The principal aim of the organisation was to equip Turkey's

⁶⁶ The FYDPs were taken over by the Ministry of Development in 2011, and by the Presidency of Strategy and Budget in 2019.

lingering industrialization efforts with a roadmap, guiding the public and private sectors at the same time. The first-ever FYDP produced by the SPO in 1963 also received substantial backing by the OECD (Karaosmanoğlu et al. 2003).⁶⁷

Turkey's first FYDP, covering the years between 1963 and 1967, positioned Turkey as a net beneficiary of international development cooperation. The plan underlined that estimations regarding Turkey's pace in economic development did not solely take into account the country's internal resources, but also the "external resources that can be made available through international cooperation" (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1963:3). The plan further identified international solidarity as an avenue for support that would complement the country's national development efforts (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1963: 3). Meanwhile, the first reference to international cooperation in a reciprocal perspective appeared in the second FYDP (1968-1972), which briefly laid out a number of principles and policies in the realm of technical cooperation. Although vaguely, the principles positioned Turkey as both a provider and recipient of technical aid:

"As a country that both gives and received technical aid, Turkey's technical assistance policy will be oriented towards enabling countries to become self-sufficient in the shortest possible time with the means provided and, for this purpose, to train through technical assistance, in

⁶⁷ Turkey is a signatory to the 1960 Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and a founding member of the OECD.

Turkey and abroad, the manpower which Turkey cannot train to a certain quality with its own resources” (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1968: 202).

Technical cooperation remained as a brief heading until the fourth FYDP (1979-1983), which featured the earliest hints of Turkey’s future role as a provider of ODA. While the plan located Turkey as an apt candidate for providing international technical assistance, it also identified the lack of a central monitoring body for such activities as a shortcoming:

“Turkey has been in a position to provide technical assistance to various countries at different stages of development and to participate effectively in technical cooperation. However, an organisation capable of closely monitoring, evaluating and reflecting the developments and changes in the world in various aspects has not been realised” (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1979: 51)

The fifth FYDP (1990-1994) distinctively acknowledged Turkey’s elevated role as a potential provider of technical assistance for the first time and foreshadowed the establishment of TİKA, the country’s official aid agency. The plan suggested that as Turkey had progressed in economic development, it had now “reached the stage of contributing to international technical cooperation”, and that as a principle, technical assistance “shall be provided especially to countries on the path of development” (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1990:

160-161). The plan further proposed a temporary solution to the institutional shortcomings mentioned in the fourth FYDP, stating that all bilateral, as well as multilateral, international cooperation activities would be carried out under the coordination of the SPO (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 1990: 161).

Despite the proactive shift in Turkey's foreign policy and ODA engagements after AKP's rise to power, Turkey's FYDP for 2007-2013 dedicated a visibly narrow space for foreign aid, and mentioned international cooperation only within the context of the country's EU accession process (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 2006). Meanwhile, the changes in the country's foreign policy were acknowledged in the tenth FYDP for 2014-2018, suggesting that the proactive shift in the country's foreign policy brought along the need for increased "sensitivity" and "responsibility on a global scale", hinting at the need for a more strategically informed outlook on Turkey's foreign aid policy (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2013: 141).

Turkey's eleventh and most recent FYDP (2019-2023) differed from the previous few plans as it underlined, for the first time, the need for strategic alignment between foreign aid foreign policy:

"The main objective is to ensure that Turkey's international development cooperation activities, including humanitarian assistance, contribute to the development of our country and other countries in a more effective and coordinated manner with an inclusive and strategic approach,

taking into account the stability and needs of our country and the region, and our existing obligations arising from international law and international humanitarian law.” (Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı, 2019: 184).

The plan further noted that Turkey’s international development cooperation activities would be informed by “priorities and strategies” identified at a regional level, and that all government bodies active in this field would be streamlined accordingly (Presidency of Strategy and Budget, 2019: 185). The plan moreover promised that a “National Strategy Document” would be published to increase the effectiveness of Turkey’s ODA (Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı, 2019: 185). In summary, when compared to other non-traditional donors such as China and Russia, Turkey’s experience as an emerging donor lacks evidence of a clear, systematic, and overarching strategy in its foreign aid policy, and even more so in its broader foreign policy. This observation is also in line with interview evidence, which states that ODA in Turkey is mostly “demand-driven”, as the government “does not yet have an official international development aid strategy document”, and operates “without clarity” on overarching matters relating to budget and destinations.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Author’s interview with a senior official from the Presidency of Strategy and Budget on December 22, 2021.

Despite growing interest in scholarly discussions on grand strategy since the end of the Cold War, debates on Turkey's grand strategy have been "extremely rare" in the Turkish foreign policy literature (Aktürk, 2020: 153). The lack of such discussions is partially explained by the argument that "only a superpower (in practice, solely the U.S.), or minimally a great power (extending the list to China and Russia), has the sufficient institutional and material resources to formulate and implement a grand strategy" (Balzacq et al. 2019: 2, quoted in Aktürk, 2020: 153). Although widely contested, this standpoint is useful in making sense of how emerging donors like Turkey, Russia and China may differ in terms of strategic alignment in foreign aid policy. In a different vein, Aydınli has argued that the point of departure for a "grand directive" in any actor's foreign policy must feature "a minimum consensus [among the government, people and the military] on what everyone wants the country to be" – a consensus that one can argue to be largely absent in Turkey's ambivalent domestic political structures (Aydınli, 2020: 237).

5.3. Approaches to donor identity

The previous two chapters have shown that ideational factors have been prominent domestic and international forces acting upon Turkey's foreign aid policy-making throughout different historical contexts. Ideas related to cultural affinity and identity, religious practices of philanthropy, and national prestige

have been the central drivers informing the rhetoric surrounding aid policy. These factors, along with Turkey's status as a middle-power, have also played a role in how the country positions itself both as a donor in the field, and vis-à-vis the wider aid architecture of international development assistance. Borrowing elements from middle-power theory, this section will discuss how Turkey's relationship with the evolving architecture of international development assistance compares to those of other emerging donors, drawing particular linkages with South Korea.

As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, the arrival of new donors into the international development assistance field prompted a wealth of discussions surrounding the semantics of aid, donorship, and cooperation. SSC-aligned donors like Brazil, China, and India took the lead in questioning Western ideas of development assistance and calling for a more horizontal relationship based on mutual development, autonomy, and shared interests. Other new donors, most visibly South Korea, were more cautious and pragmatic in how they aligned their ideological standpoints as donors.

5.3.1. Korea: From ODA recipient to DAC donor

As an exemplary case of the East Asian developmental state model of the 1970s, South Korea's experience with economic development became a focus of attention and prompted widespread interest in understanding its

developmental trajectory. This was particularly relevant for countries aspiring to adopt robust state intervention and implement industrial policies similar to those observed in East Asian economies (Kim, 2017). Since the recognition of the developmental state model as a viable framework for African countries in the 2000s, there has been a surge of curiosity in gaining knowledge about the Korean experience (Doucette, 2020; Edigheji, 2010; Mkandawire, 2001; Samatar, 1999).

In 2004, the Korean Ministry of Economy and Finance launched the Knowledge Sharing Program (KSP) in response to the growing demand for knowledge on the country's development expertise. The KSP positioned Korea's development experience as "[containing] practical solutions accumulated through trial and error" and described its knowledge of "successes and failures" as a key asset for developing countries taking on development challenges (KSP, n.d.). KSP's emphasis on Korea's first-hand experience of economic development, reached through 'trial and error', is often argued to portray a hidden criticism of mainstream Western neoliberal policy prescriptions for the developing world. This positioned Korea's development experience as a 'development alternative' distinct from the perspective of traditional donorship (Doucette, 2020: 658). Meanwhile, it has also been argued that such hybrid positioning of development cooperation initiatives has created "a zone of awkward engagement", in which contradicting interpretations of the Korean development experience have been adopted and

advocated by development practitioners (Doucette, 2020: 656). This observation resounds with Kim and Garland (2019), who contend that as Korea attempts to occupy a middle ground between DAC and SSC narratives, it meanwhile conceals its own economic ambitions and concerns by adamantly locating its own distinct cultural and historical attitudes as a 'solution' for developing countries.

Despite the careful balance it maintains between SSC and DAC narratives, Korea was the first former aid recipient country to join the DAC in 2009. During a visit by a DAC delegation in the same year, Korea's aid program was verified to have fully met the DAC's criteria (OECD, 2012).⁶⁹ Based on these findings, the DAC secretariat extended a unanimous invitation for Korea to become a formal member, which went into effect on January 1, 2010. This step was perceived as a prestigious leap forward for Korea's leadership and society, as it signified the country's "[recognition] as an advanced country by the world" (Chun et al. 2010: 789). Nevertheless, some have argued that Korea's admission to DAC is not sufficient for the country's self-positioning as a donor to be categorised as 'Northern' or 'established', as the domestic composition of the Korean foreign aid bureaucracy to this day is marked by competing policy priorities with no decisive authority of a singular narrative (Mawdsley et al., 2017). The nature of this hybridity will be discussed further in the following section.

⁶⁹ [Korea's membership to the DAC was officialized on Jan 1, 2010.](#)

5.3.2. Turkey: Between two narratives

Korea's official relationship with the DAC, however, stands in stark contrast with that of Turkey, as Turkey has cautiously refrained from accepting the Committee's invitation for full membership since before the accession of Korea. A visit by the former DAC president Brian Atwood in 2011 to Turkey showed the Committee's eagerness to involve Turkey as a full member, during which Atwood reiterated their invitation verbally to Turkey's former Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdağ and former TİKA President Serdar Çam by stressing that the DAC was "looking forward to strengthening cooperation with China, Brazil and Turkey" in the upcoming period (TİKA, 2011). The invitation was extended publicly for a second time in 2013 during another visit by the then DAC President Eric Solheim, who praised Turkey's involvement as an aid donor in Somalia and suggested that the country should join the DAC in order to "set an example for other member states" (Milliyet, 2013). An interview with a senior TİKA executive also highlighted the political weight of the insistent visits by the DAC, pointing out that "for a long time, the DAC has been putting a lot of pressure on us to become a member", and that they "held a series of very intensive working meetings" with TİKA in pursuit of Turkey's accession.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Author's interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

Notwithstanding, the high level visits by the DAC were perceived as a source of national prestige and were often instrumentalized to accentuate Turkey's elevated international standing as a political leverage in domestic contexts. In an address to a local business association, former Deputy PM Bozdağ made specific references to these visits and portrayed the repeated membership invitations by the DAC as a source of power and national reputation for Turkey:

“During my term as minister, both the former chairman and the current chairman [of the DAC] visited twice, and both times they repeatedly reiterated [their invitation to] Turkey to become a member of the OECD-DAC. They stated that this would contribute greatly to both the DAC and Turkey. Considering that Turkey has been left waiting for years at the door of many international organisations, such an invitation to be admitted to OECD-DAC is in fact a result of the success of TİKA and the echo and reflection it has created in the world” (İhlas Haber Ajansı, 2013).

In this sense, attributing national prestige to their recognition and appraisal by the DAC emerges as a common feature in the positioning of both Turkey and Korea, despite their differing forms of attachment to the Committee (Chun et al., 2010; Baydağ, 2020).

In understanding the evolution of Turkey's identity as an emerging donor, it is pivotal to note the influence of domestic factors through the political power shift that ensued after the AKP's rise to power in 2002. Priorly, Turkey's FYDP for 2001–2005 had explicitly suggested that the government would be “working towards increasing and maintaining the level of Turkey's [foreign] aid in order to become a member of the OECD-DAC”, showing clear signs of willingness to integrate Turkey as a new donor into the international development assistance architecture through a path similar to that of Korea (SPO, 2001: 57). However, evidence shows that the AKP government has since adopted a different direction, as the country intentionally remains outside the DAC's mandate while maintaining a close and amicable working relationship.⁷¹ Despite having followed divergent trajectories in their official involvement with the DAC, Korea and Turkey have pursued similar attitudes in how they traditionally aligned their practices with the DAC's agenda (Baydağ, 2020; Cihangir-Tetik and Müftüler-Baç 2021; Hausmann 2014; Stallings and Kim 2017).

5.3.3. Middle-power diplomacy

As members of the Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, Australia (MIKTA) bloc –a “second-generation BRICS group” formed at the sidelines of

⁷¹ Author's interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

the UN General Assembly in 2013– both Turkey and Korea are considered in the wider IR literature as emerging middle-powers (Öniş and Kutlay, 2017: 4-5; Cooper and Flemen, 2013; Dal and Kurşun, 2016; Çevik, 2018). It has been argued that both countries utilise their middle-power role through a framework where foreign aid is leveraged as a key foreign policy tool (Öniş and Kutlay, 2017; Baydağ, 2020). By the same token, Baydağ (2020) has observed that as the two countries are positioned closer to traditional donors, they also share an official discourse that makes room for alternative approaches to donorship “with insights from SSC” (p. 437). Pursuant to this observation, a senior TİKA executive explains the following in reference to Turkey’s position vis-à-vis the SSC:

*“We are [involved in] South-South Cooperation. We are in it because Turkey is the country right in the middle between the global South and the global North. We believe in the following: South-South Cooperation is important, but it can never replace North-South Cooperation. It can only be complementary. This is Turkey's position. [...] South-South Cooperation can be considered as something similar to ‘neighbourly solidarity’ The North is crucial as they have the resources, expertise, and past experiences.”*⁷²

⁷² Author’s interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

Donelli and Levaggi (2018) have drawn attention to the interplay of international and domestic factors as having embedded a “Southern dimension” in Turkey’s foreign aid approach (p. 95). Although Turkey has shied away from fundamentally challenging the international development assistance architecture based around DAC’s norms and principles, the ruling AKP’s ideological underpinnings (influenced heavily by Islamic conservatism) have nonetheless amplified the Southern dimension of Turkey’s foreign aid discourse. Accordingly, a senior NGO executive working in close cooperation with TİKA recounts the following, with regard to the non-traditional characteristics of the Turkish approach towards aid:

“There is a huge difference between the understanding of aid in our country (and in Islamic countries) and the understanding of aid in Western countries. The latter has a colonial approach, while the former has a faith-based humanitarian approach. First of all, according to our understanding, one of the five pillars of being a Muslim is giving zakat. Charity is also a cultural responsibility for us. For one thing, even the name of our association [comes from] the rich history behind this.”⁷³

Within the context of middle-power diplomacy, Turkey’s eclectic identity as a DAC-conforming yet SSC-sounding donor stands in contrast to that of Korea. As discussed in earlier chapters, Islamic philanthropy and cultural/religious affinity have had a significant influence on the policy discourse surrounding

⁷³ Author’s interview with an NGO director on April 2, 2021.

Turkey's foreign aid. These factors have also served as an ideational foundation for the country's humanitarian-focused, alternative positioning in the wider realm of international development assistance. Korea, on the other hand, has pursued an overt preference to differentiate itself as a DAC donor, emphasise its own development experience as an asset, and thereby expand its global influence and prestige (Baydağ, 2020: 441).

5.4. Leadership versus bureaucracy

In an interview, Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has explained that '[he] tended to think of history as run by impersonal forces, but when you see it in practice, you see the difference personality makes.' (quoted in Çuhadar et al. 2021: 1). As indicated by this quote, leadership traits are often an essential force that shapes foreign policy. Although Chapter 4 has shown that bureaucrats and diplomats have, in certain instances, played a key role in influencing decision-making, overall policy priorities of Turkish foreign aid have traditionally been anchored by political leadership, particularly in the period after 2002. Evidence collected by elite interviews have unanimously confirmed this view.

5.4.1. Turkey: Political leadership as driver of policy making

As mentioned previously in Chapter 2, there have been empirical implications within the wider Turkish foreign policy literature that have drawn attention to the growing influence of political leadership and individual characteristics in Turkey's wider foreign policy. For instance, in analysing the limits of the EU's power and influence in its periphery, Öniş and Kutlay (2019) have identified 'charismatic leadership' and the rise of nationalist-populist orientations as an emerging force in the face of post-GFC economic turmoil and uncertainties. As such, influential leaders have been considered "the safest route to power and prosperity", whereas concepts surrounding pluralism and cohesion have been increasingly associated with fragmentation and instability (Öniş and Kutlay, 2019: 234). Also, Turkey's status-seeking position vis-a-vis its role conception as a middle-power has been a salient discussion within the Turkish foreign policy literature. The majority of these discussions hold that Turkey has been performing a regional middle power role in its neighbouring regions (Öniş and Kutlay, 2017; Dal, 2016; Dal 2018; Demirtaş, 2022).

Similar implications highlighting the role of political agency in shaping foreign aid policy may be derived from literatures across different disciplines focusing on traditional and emerging donorship. From a critical geography

perspective, Mawdsley et al. (2017) have analysed the cases of Brazil and Korea to pinpoint the relationship between the impact of political leadership and development cooperation policy. They found presidential diplomacy, among others, to be a leading characteristic of non-traditional development cooperation. Fuchs and Richert (2018), in a different vein, have examined the effects of the personal characteristics of development ministers in a large-N study conducted across twenty-three DAC member states. Their findings pointed to a relationship between the ministers' experience in the development sector, and ODA volume and quality. Studies of this nature and scope thus indicate the rising relevance of actor-specific approaches in understanding both Turkish foreign policy in particular, and also foreign aid policy making in general.

In their analysis of the effects of leaders' personality traits on Turkish foreign policy, Çuhadar et al. (2021) have argued that foreign policy decision making entails a “dynamic relationship between political leadership as *agency* and international, institutional, normative and cultural constraints as *structures*” (p. 2). In this understanding, structure provides the context for policy decisions to be made, while agency refers to the role played by human actors and their individual traits during decision making processes (Çuhadar et al., 2021). Through an in-depth analysis of eighteen Turkish foreign policy cases, the same study has found that President Erdoğan's leadership style featured *expansionistic* traits, through his “high belief in the ability to control events and

active involvement” (Çuhadar et al., 2021: 17). In this setting, a structural factor that has been argued to be at play is the one-party nature of Erdoğan’s tenure, both as prime minister and later as president, given that coalition settings may impose different sets of limitations on the governing styles of leaders (Çuhadar et al., 2021). To be sure, Turkey’s switch from a parliamentary system to a presidential one in 2017, and the unprecedented powers bestowed upon President Erdoğan, have marked a key institutional shift that has nurtured this leadership style.

Data collected by elite interviews points to several cases where the expansionistic leadership traits portrayed by Erdoğan have significantly influenced Turkey’s foreign aid policy. Interview evidence with a senior TİKA official reveals that direct instructions coming from the president himself are commonplace, and often turn into policy. For instance, “the Head of State of a Country X may make a special request to Mr. President, and he may then directly instruct TİKA to take action accordingly”.⁷⁴ Immediate, vertical instructions on decisions relating to foreign aid denote a “high belief” in the leader’s ability to influence events, which is in line with the expansionistic leadership style that Çuhadar et al. (2021) attribute to Erdoğan (p. 17). In the same vein, the same interviewee also emphasises that TİKA positions itself as an “implementer” of policy, and rarely produces or involves itself policy directions that could have an overall impact on Turkey’s foreign aid policy.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Author’s interview with a senior TİKA official on December 24, 2018.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

Moreover, an interview with a senior MFA official reveals that after Turkey's shift to a presidential system in 2017, the Ministry has kept close contact with the Presidency in almost every aspect of their work, including decisions related to foreign aid policy:

*“As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is frankly rare, if not non-existent, that we are able to make independent decisions on development assistance on our own. [...] After the [switch to the] presidential system, we have kept in contact with the presidency on every issue”.*⁷⁶

In stark contrast to this account, Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate that actors within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) have traditionally played a significant role in shaping Turkey's international development assistance policy prior to the AKP government, with the prime example being the very birth of TİKA as the brainchild of a former diplomat (Chapter 3, Section 2.1). In line with the account of a former ambassador, the lack of MFA involvement in the progression of Turkey's development assistance policy marks a significant shift from previous practices.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Author's interview with a senior MFA official on August 27, 2021.

⁷⁷ Author's interview with a former Ambassador on January 7, 2022.

While exhibiting an expansionist style, Erdoğan's leadership was also shaped by several individual actors, most notably former Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and former President of TİKA Hakan Fidan.⁷⁸ According to an interview with a senior TİKA official, both individuals have had distinguishable influence in facilitating the pro-active policy shift in Turkey's ODA allocations in Sub-Saharan Africa:

*“In Turkey-Africa relations, Davutoğlu's role has been significant, both as a minister and as an advisor. Similarly, Hakan Fidan also played an important role while he was the head of TİKA. However, the primary influence has always been the President. The leader's impact has been greater than that of the institutions. The actor who established the overarching vision was Erdoğan.”*⁷⁹

As outlined in Chapter 2, Grove (2007) has suggested that leaders often use a set of strategies to generate support at home or abroad (see Table 2). Among these, the ‘broadening audience’ strategy is identified as the way in which the leader expands a coalition “to create legitimacy for his policy goals at home or abroad, or support a message of shared identity” (Grove, 2007: 5). To utilise this strategy, Grove argues that leaders often make use of “accepted norms” in the international community (Grove, 2007: 5). In Erdoğan's case, broadening his audience as a leadership strategy has implications for both

⁷⁸ Fidan was appointed as Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs on June 4, 2023.

⁷⁹ Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

Turkish foreign policy in general and foreign aid in particular. Such a strategy provides a useful lens to understand how the ‘conservative globalist’ stance of the early AKP era, as outlined by Öniş (2012), has enabled Erdoğan to gain increased popular support both domestically and internationally. Turkey’s pro-active foreign policy turn, including the discovery of ODA as a tool and the revival of TİKA, has helped reinforce Erdoğan’s popularity in domestic politics and also broadened his sphere of influence abroad. For instance, his confrontation with the West regarding the Palestinian issue echoed as strongly at home as it did across the Muslim world (Öniş, 2012: 145). Inherently, this approach portrayed “the image of a strong Turkey”, which resonated widely across the domestic sphere.

5.4.2. Korea: Bureaucratic turf wars as driver of policy making

In contrast to Turkey, Korea's foreign aid policy represents a dynamic and competitive field, marked not solely by the political leadership, but by the interplay of collaboration and rivalry among various stakeholders and diverse policy narratives. The nation's growing involvement in international development has led to a significant increase in the number of participants engaged in shaping its aid policy, as well as a heightened level of discourse surrounding these policy issues (Kim, 2016).

As discussed briefly in the previous section, the domestic foreign aid architecture of Korea presents an array of competing actors that operate on a “hotly contested terrain” (Kim, 2016: 68). According to Kim (2016), the government and legislature, research organisations, development NGOs, business actors, and media and public opinion comprise the top stakeholders in Korea’s ODA policy. The bureaucratic framework governing South Korea’s foreign aid reflects its broader political and economic evolution as an emerging donor within the international community. Since transitioning from an aid recipient to a donor, South Korea’s approach to international development has been deeply influenced by its rapid economic development and complex bureaucratic dynamics. The country’s dual role as both a recent aid recipient and a new donor provides a unique perspective in its governance of foreign aid, often leading to internal conflicts that shape its foreign aid policies (Kim, 2016).

Korea’s bureaucratic structure for managing foreign aid involves two major channels: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) along with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), which are responsible for managing grants, and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF), which oversees concessional loans through the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) administered by the Export-Import Bank of Korea. This structural division is a primary source of “bureaucratic turf wars”, as each ministry advocates for its approach to delivering aid, reflecting broader tensions within

the government's strategy towards international development (Kim, 2016: 70).

On the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and KOICA focus on using foreign aid as a diplomatic tool to enhance Korea's international stature and to promote global humanitarian efforts. This approach is informed by South Korea's historical context as a beneficiary of international aid, which fuels a sense of responsibility to contribute positively to global welfare. MOFA's strategy is influenced by global norms and the desire to align South Korea with international humanitarian standards, positioning the nation as a bridge between developed and developing countries (Kim, 2016: 73).

Contrastingly, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance, along with EDCF, champions a development model that emphasises economic cooperation. This perspective draws from Korea's own economic development experience, advocating for a model that integrates aid with trade and investment to promote economic self-reliance among recipient countries. MOSF's approach reflects a pragmatic stance on foreign aid, emphasising the strategic use of aid to foster economic ties and mutual benefits through development cooperation. This ministry is often described as a 'super ministry' due to its extensive influence over the national budget and economic policies, which allows it to shape the aid agenda significantly (Kim, 2016: 71-72).

The inter-ministerial competition is further complicated by the Committee for International Development Cooperation (CIDC), a body intended to ensure coherence and coordination across various government entities involved in aid. Chaired by the Prime Minister, the CIDC includes representatives from 15 ministries, the two public aid agencies, and seven civilian experts. Despite its comprehensive makeup, the CIDC struggles to reconcile the divergent priorities and approaches of MOFA and MOSF, reflecting the broader challenge of aligning national development goals with international aid strategies (Kim, 2016: 70).

The differing approaches between MOFA and MOSF not only reflect contrasting perceptions of Korea's role in international development but also manifest in the allocation and management of aid resources. MOFA's grant-based programs often prioritise humanitarian assistance and developmental partnerships, while MOSF focuses on creating economic opportunities for Korean businesses and bolstering recipient countries' economic infrastructure. This divergence often leads to a fragmented aid strategy that may undermine the efficiency and coherence of South Korea's aid efforts (Kim, 2016: 72).

In conclusion, South Korea's foreign aid policy is shaped by a complex interplay of bureaucratic stakeholders, each guided by distinct strategic

imperatives. The ongoing turf wars between MOFA and MOSF illustrate the challenges of managing a coherent foreign aid strategy within a context of rapid economic transformation and evolving global responsibilities. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for appreciating Korea's unique position in the global development landscape and its efforts to balance national interests with international commitments (Kim, 2016).

5.5. Sectoral priorities

5.5.1. Turkey: ‘Humanitarian turn’ in foreign aid policy

There is hardly any sphere of policymaking in Turkey that has been left untouched by the outbreak and aftermath of the 2011 civil war in Syria, which shares a land border with Turkey. The country is currently home to 3,274,059 registered Syrian refugees under temporary protection, which makes Turkey the host of the largest refugee population in the world (UNHCR, n.d.). According to data published by the Migration Management Administration of the Turkish Ministry of Interior, an additional 82,489 Syrian nationals have been issued official residence permits as of 2023 (Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı, n.d.). A statement delivered by the Minister of Interior at the Turkish parliament further states that

“nearly 238,000” Syrians have been granted Turkish citizenship (BBC Türkçe, 2023).

The Turkish government’s proactive response to the human consequences of the Syrian conflict have had perhaps the most visible impact on the country’s foreign aid policy. Syria has uninterruptedly ranked first among the destinations of Turkey’s ODA since 2012, reaching a peak of \$7,246 million in 2017 (see Figure 9, p. 24). Ranking second, Somalia received only \$60.6 million in ODA – nearly 120 times less than Syria. Most of the ODA targeted at Syria comprises in-donor humanitarian assistance provided to the refugee population in Turkey. A notable ODA-eligible project carried out in Syria under TİKA’s coordination was the launch of the Jarabulus Turkish Hospital in 2017, in the greater province of Aleppo. The location of the hospital is also in strategic proximity to the areas covered by Turkey’s two military operations that took place in Syria in 2017, namely Operation Euphrates Shield near Jarabulus, and Operation Spring Shield, in the neighbouring governorate of Idlib.

Since 2011, Turkish foreign aid policy has followed an expressly humanitarian-oriented path. For the first time in 2012, the share of emergency and humanitarian assistance surpassed all other sectors combined in Turkey’s outward ODA flows, comprising 61.8% of the total. This marked the beginning of an unbroken trend in Turkish foreign aid, as the share of humanitarian

assistance in total ODA flows has dominated all other sectors to date. Reaching a peak of \$7,541 billion in 2019, humanitarian assistance accounted for 87% of the country's total ODA for the year (Figure 16).

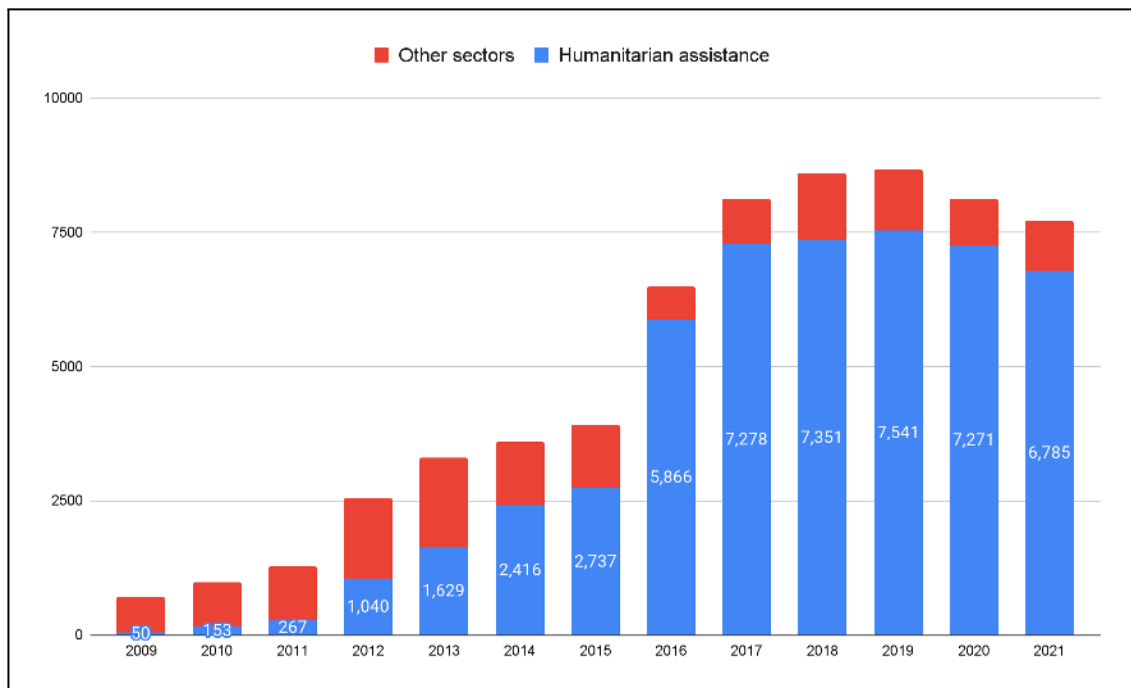


Figure 16: Share of humanitarian assistance in total Turkish ODA, 2007-2021 (million \$). Source: Own creation based on TİKA Development Assistance Reports (2007-2021)

According to DAC's reporting guidelines, humanitarian assistance is classified as a sectoral component of ODA.⁸⁰ It is defined as a form of aid that

⁸⁰ Sectors of ODA listed by the DAC are as follows: social infrastructure (e.g. education, healthcare, water and sanitation, and civil infrastructure), economic infrastructure (e.g. transportation and storage, energy, and communications infrastructure), production, multisector, program assistance, debt relief and humanitarian aid (OECD, n.d.-b).

seeks to “[save] lives, [alleviate] suffering and [maintain] human dignity following conflict, shocks and natural disasters” (OECD, n.d.-c). Traditionally, this type of ODA flows are regarded as short-term relief while flows focusing on other sectors, such as social or economic structure, are seen as long-term, sustainable types of development assistance. With the growth in the number of refugees as a result of military conflicts that have erupted in Syria and Ukraine in 2011 and 2014 respectively, humanitarian assistance has shown a steady increase among traditional donors as well. Humanitarian assistance by DAC donors has jumped from \$9,395 billion in 2012 to \$24,878 billion in 2021, showing a %164 increase (OECD, n.d.-b).

In the face of this trend, the DAC revised its statistical reporting system in 2021 and published a guiding document to improve accuracy in donor reporting as a response to “the increasing overlap of development co-operation policy objectives with those of other sectors such as migration and security” (OECD, 2021: 3). The new criteria for ODA-eligibility in humanitarian assistance allowed for counting in-donor costs, as refugee and asylum seeker protection is a “legal obligation”, while reaffirming that expenditures of this nature should not apply beyond the duration of 12 months (OECD, 2021: 3).

Turkey topped global humanitarian assistance charts between 2016 and 2021. Turkey’s humanitarian assistance to GNI ratio in 2016 stood at 0.69%, followed by UAE with 0.18%, and Luxembourg with 0.15%. Denmark and

Sweden both ranked fourth with 0.14% (Global Humanitarian Assistance Report, 2016). However, the same report also suggested that Turkey's reported contributions were "not directly comparable with those of other donors", as the numbers reported to the DAC "largely comprise[d] spending on hosting Syrian refugees in Turkey" (Global Humanitarian Assistance Report, 2016: 3).

An immediate reason for the overwhelming influence of Syria on shaping the sectoral composition of Turkey's foreign aid since 2012 has been the high number of refugees that the country has taken in, and the subsequent rise in in-donor refugee protection costs, as explained previously. From a foreign policy standpoint, however, this trend also matched Turkey's role conception at the time. As Bayer and Keyman (2012) observed, Turkey's ODA-related engagements were "compatible with its main foreign policy objectives, which [saw] economy, security, and human betterment as intertwined aspects of regional and global stability and peace" (p. 77).

Moreover, Turkey's perceived role during this period transformed from that of a coercive player to a "benign regional power" (Öniş and Kutlay, 2016: 7). This was especially so in the pre-Arab Spring period where Turkey was able to build its soft power through championing "economic interdependence, cultural ties, and a common identity" (Öniş and Kutlay, 2016: 13). During this period, particular attention was paid to elevating Turkey's international status

by the political elite's enthusiasm towards active participation in international and regional forums (Öniş and Kutlay, 2016).

Öniş and Kutlay (2016) identify a set of conditions that enable emerging middle powers to become influential in a changing global context, which includes “the capacity to find niche areas [...] where they can make a distinct and unique contribution” (p. 3). Turkey was able to fill this niche through assuming the role of a humanitarian state with an orientation towards soft-power practices, including humanitarian foreign aid (Öniş and Kutlay, 2016).

5.5.2. Korea: Knowledge transfer and technical cooperation

Compared to Turkey, humanitarian assistance expenditure has remained considerably low for other emerging donors. For instance, focus on humanitarian aid has been miniscule in Korean ODA in comparison with Turkey. Although Korea's humanitarian spending has increased in size significantly over the years, the rate of this increase is nowhere as exceptional as Turkey. Between 2010 and 2020, Korea's humanitarian assistance grew approximately five fold while Turkey's humanitarian assistance disbursements increased over eighty-six fold (Figure 17).

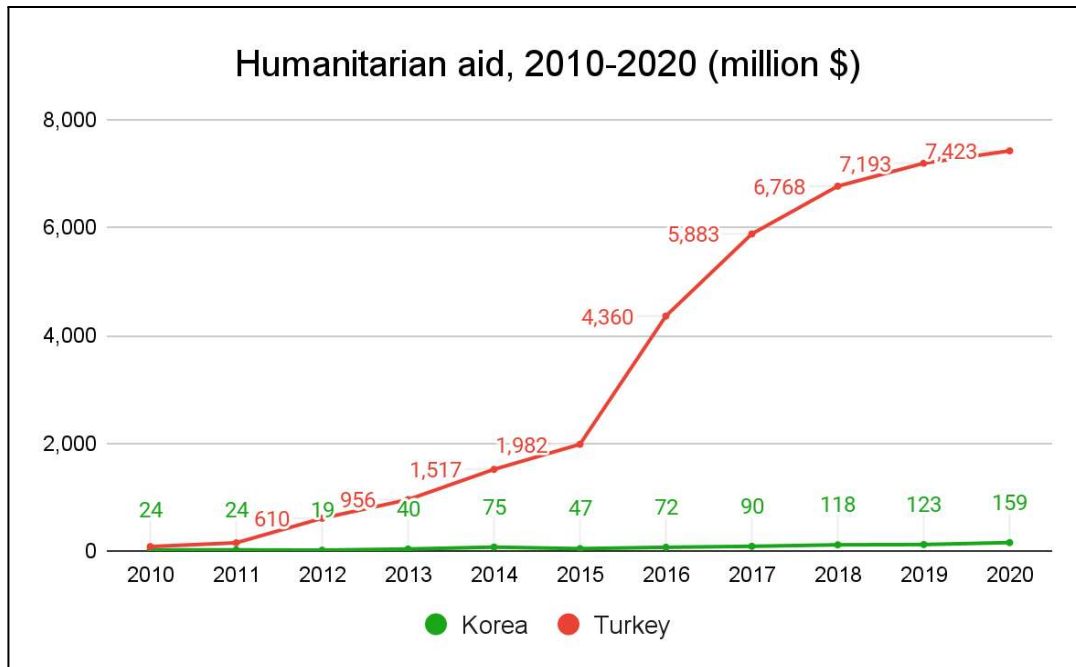


Figure 17: Humanitarian aid disbursements by Turkey and Korea, 2010-2020 (million \$). Source: TİKA; OECD.

In contrast with Turkey, Korea’s ODA has traditionally been focused on supporting economic infrastructure in recipient countries (Figure 18). As discussed in section 5.3, this is largely a result of the shift in Korea’s foreign aid diplomacy towards the promotion and prioritisation of the Korean model of development through knowledge sharing and technology transfer practices within the scope of the KSP. Some have partially located the determinants of this shift at the international level, as the international community is observed to have played an eager part in “push[ing] the Korean government to play a more significant role” in development cooperation through the propagation of its own experience (Bae and Lee, 2020: 885).

Meanwhile, the share of economic infrastructure aid in Turkey's ODA budget has remained considerably low in comparison with Korea (Figure 18).⁸¹ Between 2007 and 2009, Turkey's aid spending on economic infrastructure fluctuated between 9% and 15%, yet experienced a notable downfall following the surge in the share of humanitarian assistance since 2012. From 2018 onwards, economic infrastructure accounted for less than 1% of the total ODA budget (Figure 22). On the other hand, Korea has consistently increased its ODA spending on economic infrastructure since 2012, reaching a peak of \$1,327 million in 2021 – an increase of 1911% since 2012. This trend was only interrupted in 2020 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

⁸¹ See Figure 21 for a detailed breakdown of Turkey's ODA components between 2007 and 2021.

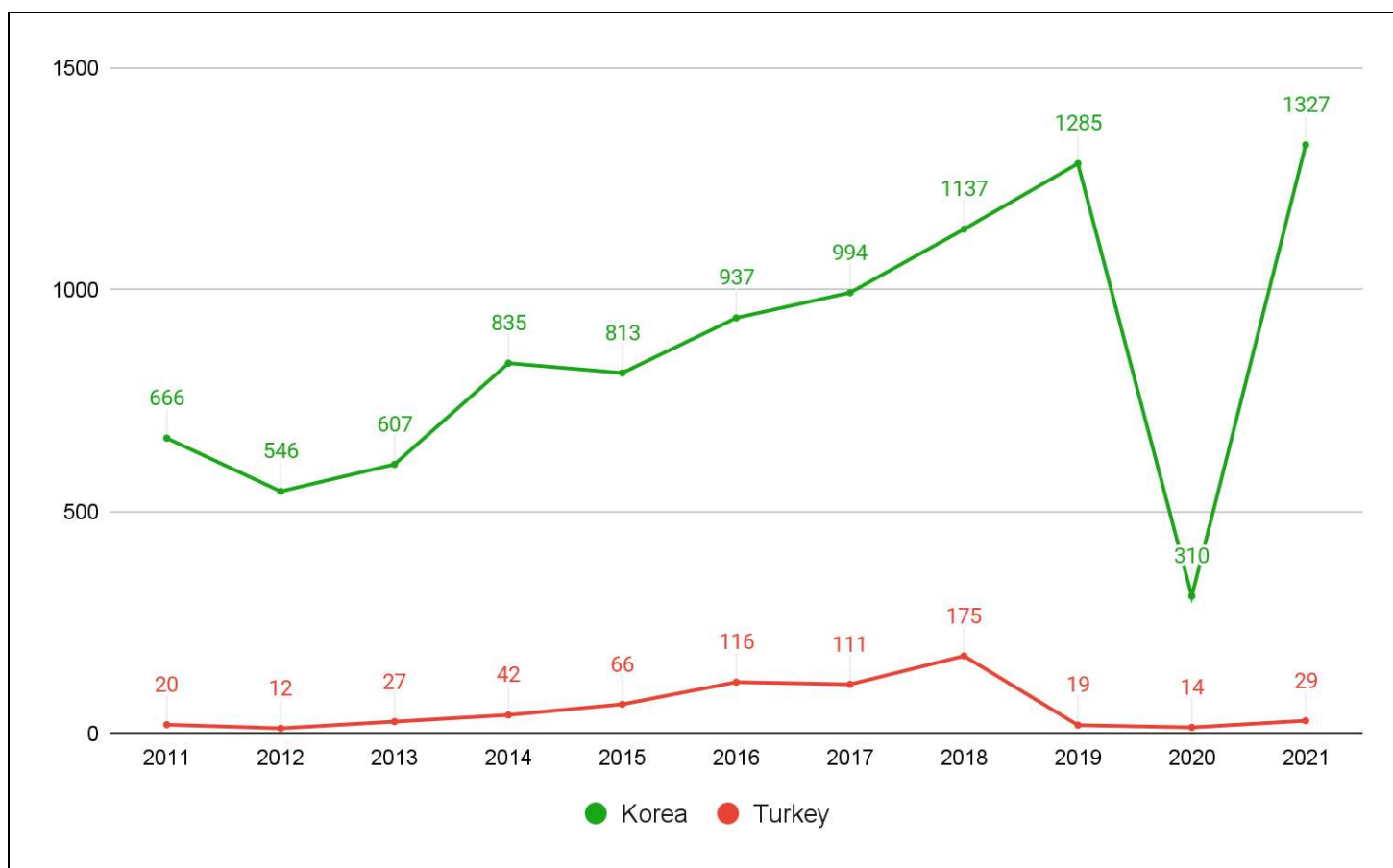


Figure 18: Economic infrastructure aid spending by Turkey and Korea, 2011-2021 (million \$). Source: TİKA; OECD.

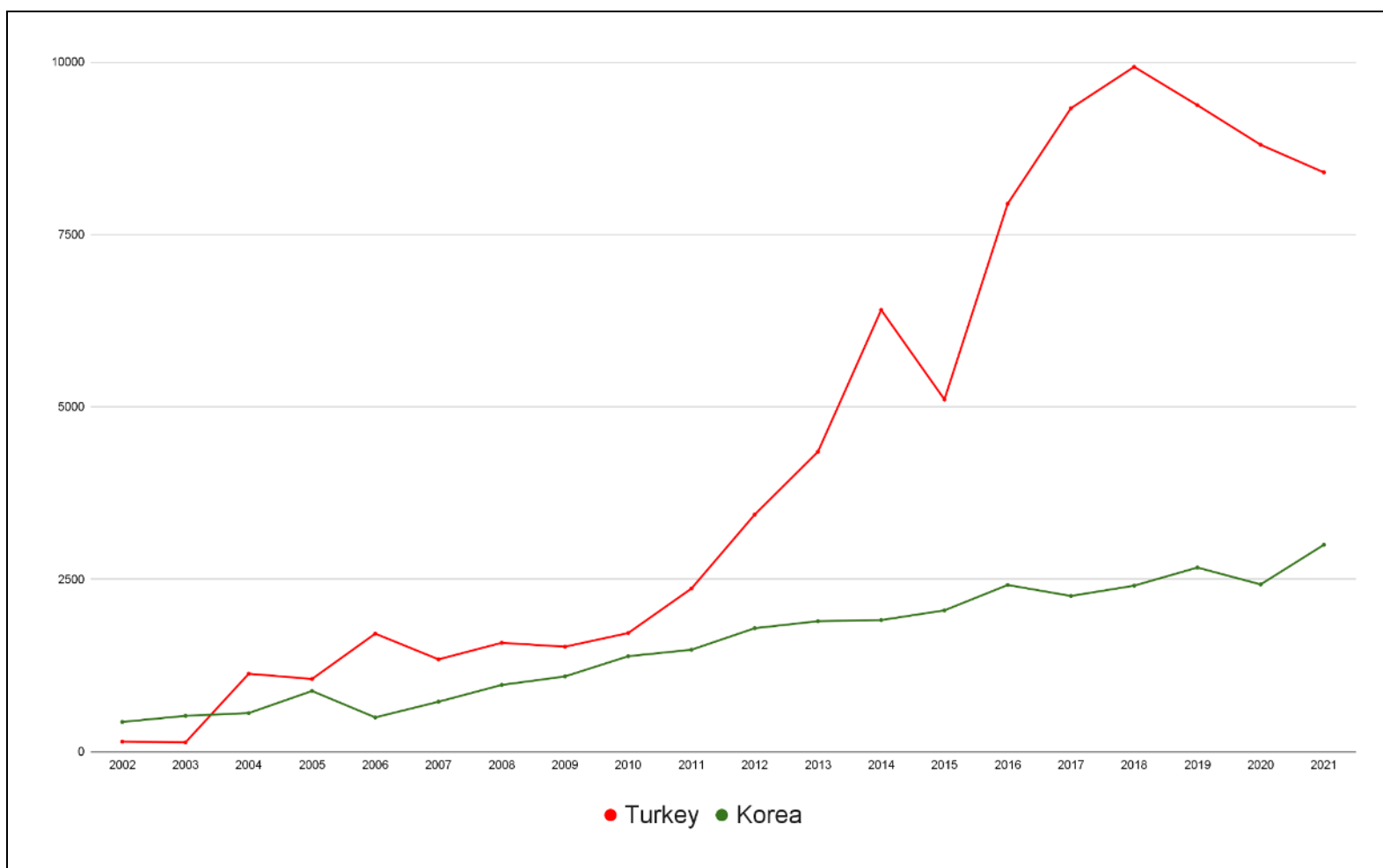


Figure 19: Total ODA disbursements by Turkey and Korea, 2002-2021 (million \$).

Source: TİKA; OECD.

5.5.3. China: Economic infrastructure as driver

A leading emerging donor with substantial focus on economic infrastructure is China. Studying Chinese foreign aid is commonly a challenge for researchers as the country regards aid policy “as a sensitive area, a state secret” (Brautigam, 2009: 2). To unravel the true nature and characteristics of Chinese ODA, scholars are bound to count on unofficial estimates, as official data on China’s aid activities is simply “not available” (Asmus et al., 2017: 18). One such dataset is AidData’s Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset (GCDFD) Version 3.0, which locates 20,985 projects that were financed through China’s ODA-like development finance instruments or other official flows (OOF) between 2000 and 2021 (Dreher et al., 2022; Custer et al., 2023).

Different estimates on China’s foreign aid such as the GCDFD vary to a great extent due to the sheer inaccessibility of official data, which makes it challenging for researchers to distinguish between OOFs, such as non-concessional loans, and ODA-eligible flows that are encompassed by the conventional definition of ODA.⁸² By DAC guidelines, ODA-eligible loans must be concessional in nature and must “have a grant element of at least 25%” (OECD, 2021). For that reason, what counts as aid in Chinese development

⁸² For other estimations, see Kitano and Harada (2016).

finance, as well as most of other SSC donors, ultimately remains a subject of debate (Asmus et al., 2017).

AidData's GCDFD shows that the recipients of China's ODA-like disbursements span 165 countries across all continents. In fact, some observe that a more relevant question than 'who receives Chinese aid?' is 'who does not receive Chinese aid?', as "[a]lmost every developing country in the world is a recipient of some form of Chinese aid" (Asmus et al., 2017: 19). The sectoral breakdown of China's ODA is also as diverse as its recipients. Unlike Turkey, whose ODA has been staggeringly dominated by humanitarian assistance since 2012, Chinese ODA exhibits a more balanced composition distributed between economic infrastructure (transportation and storage, energy, banking and communications), social infrastructure (governmental and civil infrastructure, healthcare, water and sanitation), and other sectors (Figure 20).

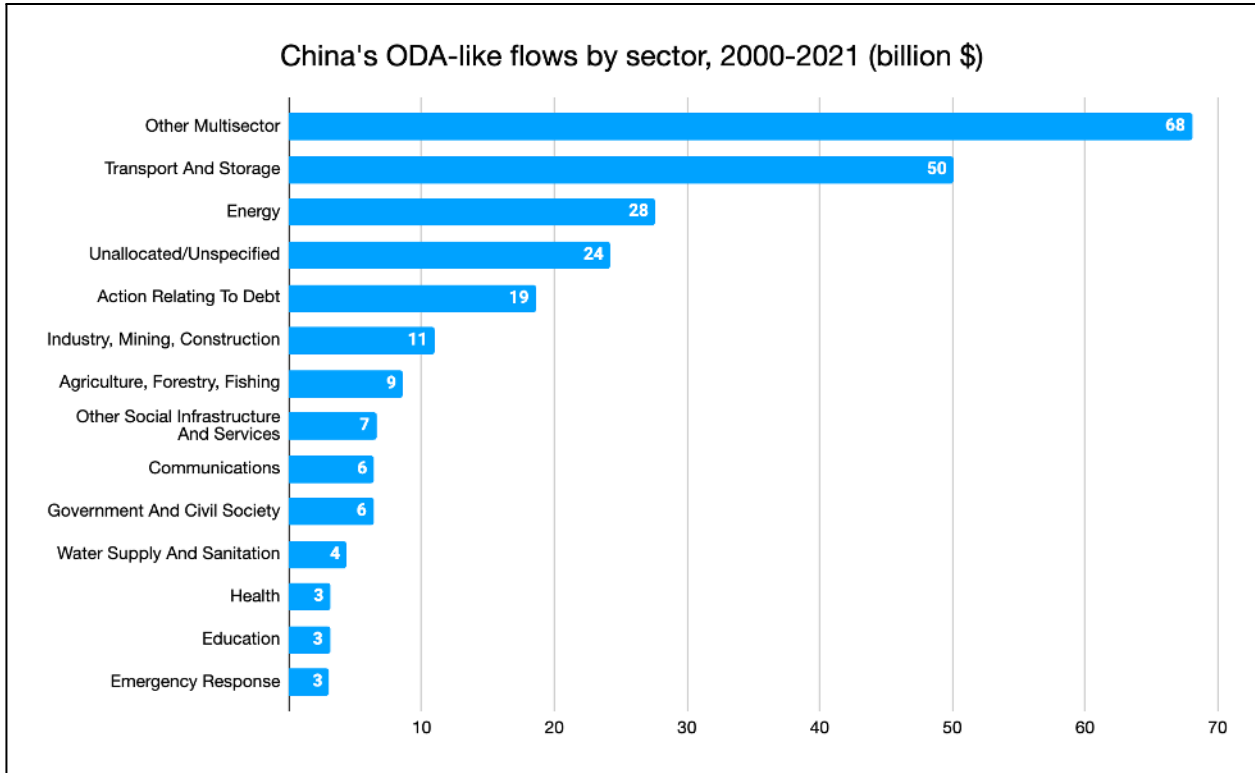


Figure 20: China's ODA-like flows by sector, 2000-2021 (billion \$). Source:

Own creation based on AidData Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset

(Custer et al., 2023)

In comparison with China, Turkey's ODA spending targeted at economic infrastructure has remained minimal since 2012, although the share of this sector in Turkey's overall ODA was not negligible until in the humanitarian turn in 2012. For instance, 15.4% of Turkey's overall ODA was spent in supporting economic infrastructure related projects in 2008 (Figure 22). A sizable portion of this spending comprised Turkey's capital contributions to ECO, a regional

development bank.⁸³ Starting with the country's humanitarian turn following the 2012 war in Syria, the share of other sectors in Turkish ODA fell dramatically. Since 2016, emergency and humanitarian assistance disbursements have continuously equaled at least 90% of all ODA, leaving all other sectors a mere 10% share in total.

Although humanitarian assistance has not remained absent in China's foreign aid, it has taken up a negligible portion in stark contrast to Turkey. Moreover, China has shown a preference to channel most of its humanitarian assistance disbursements multilaterally through the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund. In 2017, China donated \$17 million to support emergency response and recovery efforts in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica, through the Fund (UNDP, 2019).

⁸³ Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Trade and Development Bank is an intergovernmental regional institution established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey to promote economic and technical cooperation. ECOBANK was joined by Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in 1992.

Sector	Amount (million \$)	Percentage share
OTHER MULTISECTOR	68,082	27.71%
TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	50,116	20.40%
ENERGY	27,634	11.25%
UNALLOCATED/UNSPECIFIED	24,240	9.87%
ACTION RELATING TO DEBT	18,605	7.57%
INDUSTRY, MINING, CONSTRUCTION	10,987	4.47%
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING	8,620	3.51%
OTHER SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES	6,602	2.69%
COMMUNICATIONS	6,415	2.61%
GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY	6,376	2.60%
WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION	4,370	1.78%
HEALTH	3,146	1.28%
EDUCATION	3,073	1.25%
EMERGENCY RESPONSE	3,067	1.25%
DEVELOPMENTAL FOOD AID/FOOD SECURITY ASSISTANCE	1,104	0.45%
BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES	1,034	0.42%
TRADE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS	759	0.31%
GENERAL BUDGET SUPPORT	642	0.26%
RECONSTRUCTION RELIEF AND REHABILITATION	608	0.25%
GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	86	0.03%
BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES	86	0.03%
DISASTER PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS	11	0.00%
OTHER COMMODITY ASSISTANCE	10	0.00%
POPULATION POLICIES/REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH	2	0.00%
Grand Total	245,674	100%

Table 8: China's ODA-like flows by sector, 2000-2021

Source: Own creation based on AidData Global Chinese Development

Finance Dataset (Custer et al., 2023)

5.5.4. Brazil: Social infrastructure

The size of Brazilian ODA is far from being large in comparison with most DAC donors, China, and post-2012 Turkey. According to OECD estimates, Brazil's ODA totaled \$316 million in 2013, showing a significant decrease from \$411 million in 2012 (OECD, n.d.-d). Another estimate suggested that Brazil's ODA-eligible aid reached a peak of \$1.2 billion in 2010, ranking near DAC donors such as Ireland and Austria (Figure 21). It is argued that foreign aid was prioritised under the administration of President Lula da Silva between 2003 and 2010, and gradually declined after 2010 with the election of President Dilma Rousseff (Asmus et al., 2017).

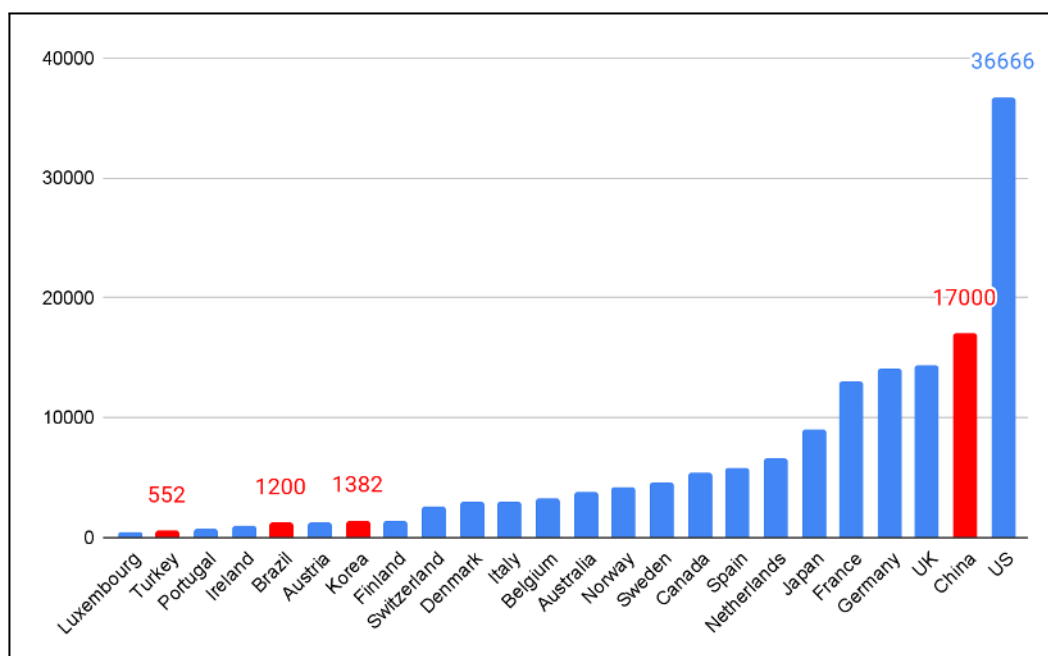


Figure 21: Estimates on total ODA disbursements by Turkey, Korea, China, Brazil and DAC countries in 2010 (million \$). Source: OECD; Custer et al. (2023); Baker (2010)

Similar to China, differentiating Brazil's ODA-like expenditures from OOFs, such as non-concessional loans, is a difficult endeavour due to lack of aid transparency. Untangling the obscurity in Brazil's South-South cooperation activities has been a challenge for the DAC as Brazil seemingly "join[ed] their game", but "is not a part of their club" (Burges, 2014: 355). It is also a challenge for researchers in the field to distinguish which components of Brazil's foreign aid could be identified as ODA, as data availability and transparency on the country's aid are almost nonexistent. For instance, a 2010 article by *The Economist* claimed that Brazil's foreign aid expenditure had already hit \$4 billion for the year, and likened Brazil's growing aid engagements to those of "generous donors such as Sweden and Canada" (The Economist, 2010). However, as Baker (2010) pointed out, the majority of Brazil's 2010 aid flows were in fact loans issued by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES). In the absence of project-level data that publicises interest rates and repayment plans, it is "impossible" to reach an estimation of the grant element of the BNDES loans (Baker, 2010).

Brazil also takes an active part in triangular cooperation, which is a "Southern-driven" partnership practice that involves two developing countries that are provided support by either a multilateral organisation (such as the UN) or a an established donor country, to help implement development-related projects (UNOSSC, n.d.). 66% of Brazil's total ODA in 2013 was distributed

via multilateral channels, namely the United Nations (57%) and the Inter-American Development Bank (43%) (OECD, n.d.-d).

The AidData 2012 dataset provides a comprehensive overview of Brazil's South-South Cooperation, detailing over 1,000 projects from 2005 to 2011 (AidData, 2012). A study analysing this dataset reveals that education was the predominant sector in Brazil's foreign aid during this period, comprising 19.68% of total aid expenditure. This was closely followed by agriculture, which accounted for 11.05%, and healthcare projects, making up 10.44% of the total aid disbursements (Semrau and Thiele, 2017: 292). As illustrated in Table 9, the study also reveals that although agriculture ranks second in terms of expenditure share, it leads in the number of projects undertaken.

Sector	Commitment amount	Commitment share (%)	Number of projects	Share of projects (%)
Education	\$29,081,178	19.68	27	2.72
Agriculture	\$16,334,816	11.05	167	16.85
Basic health	\$15,435,613	10.44	100	10.09
Secondary education	\$14,301,140	9.68	26	2.62
Other social infrastructure	\$13,053,716	8.83	72	7.27
Government/Civil society	\$10,160,216	6.87	98	9.89
Health, general	\$9,309,804	6.30	76	7.67
Other multisector	\$5,841,133	3.95	51	5.15
Basic education	\$4,898,948	3.31	8	0.81
Population policies	\$4,292,265	2.90	44	4.44
Other	\$25,088,959	16.99	322	32.49
Total	\$147,797,788	100	991	100

Table 9: Brazil's foreign aid allocation by sector, 2007-2010.

Source: Semrau and Thiele (2017)

While it upholds the principle of non-intervention in the internal matters of development cooperation partners, Brazil simultaneously asserts its willingness to assume a greater role in shaping development practices (Burges, 2014). This is evident in its commitment to disseminating knowledge about its own successful social initiatives such as *Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger) and *Bolsa Família* (Family Allowance) – leading social welfare programs focusing on hunger and poverty reduction, adopted during the presidential term of da Silva (IPEA, 2011). Accordingly, a close look at Brazil’s sectoral aid allocation priorities will reveal a bias towards social infrastructure projects. In fact, around 72% of Brazil’s technical cooperation projects during the 2000s were tied to social infrastructure – a figure notably higher than those of DAC donors, who earmarked 38.7% to the social sector on average (Semrau and Thiele, 2017: 291). Brazil’s position as a prominent exporter of agricultural goods also provides a comparative advantage to Brazil over other donors in offering agricultural assistance (Semrau and Thiele, 2017). Moreover, Brazil’s priorities in aid allocation have been argued to be in harmony with the country’s own developmental priorities and experience (Asmus et al., 2017).

Brazil’s heavy bias towards social infrastructure-related projects has led to a minimal focus on other key sectors including economic infrastructure or humanitarian assistance. This trend differs notably from China and Korea, which have traditionally geared their aid towards economic infrastructure and

related areas including energy, transportation, and communication (see Figures 17 and 19). Between 2007 and 2010, the share of humanitarian assistance in Brazil's foreign aid ranked below the first 10 sectors, amounting to less than 3% of overall aid disbursements (see Table 9).

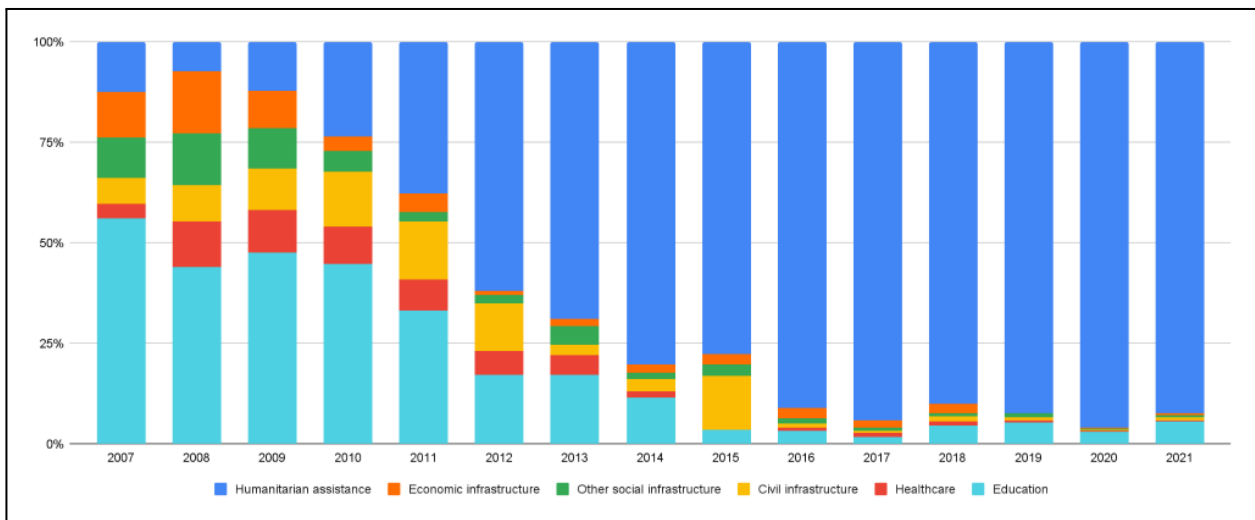


Figure 22: Turkish ODA by sector, 2007-2021 (% of total ODA)

*Source: Own creation based on TIKA Development Assistance Reports
(2007-2021)*

Similarly, Turkey's sectoral priorities in ODA have also been standing in contrast with those of Brazil since 2012, due to the notable spike in the share of humanitarian assistance, as discussed previously. Nevertheless, Turkey's ODA allocation closely resembled Brazil's pattern prior to its humanitarian pivot in 2012, primarily targeting components of social infrastructure (Figure 22).

Similar to Brazil, Turkey prioritised education and healthcare in this period, although it did not prioritise agriculture as in the case of Brazil. This shift represents a departure from its earlier focus on education and aligns distinctly from Brazil's continued emphasis on social infrastructure within its foreign aid portfolio.

Chapter 6

Broader conclusions on emerging donors and the transformations in Turkey's foreign aid policy

This dissertation on Turkey's foreign aid policy as an emerging donor of ODA aims to introduce fresh empirical data and bridge structural and agential approaches to understanding decision making in Turkey's foreign aid policy between 2002 and 2021. In doing so, it employs an eclectic and multidisciplinary perspective, borrowing from various literatures, including foreign policy analysis, political geography, and development studies. In contrast with the multitude of quantitative studies geared towards identifying a conclusive set of independent variables to explain why, or under what conditions, emerging donors give foreign aid, this dissertation is concerned with tracing the processes related to the dynamic set of determinants that shape decisions in the black box of foreign aid policy making. While doing so, it employs a three-level approach, providing insight on the interaction between different factors on the individual, state, and system levels. In an effort to encourage future discussion among different research perspectives and methodologies, this dissertation identifies a broad set of factors that influence

ODA spending among a number of emerging donors including Turkey, Brazil, Russia, China and Korea.

This chapter is organised as follows. The first section highlights the key empirical findings and theoretical implications through evidence from Turkey. The second section presents a summary of the broader conclusions that can be derived from this research vis-a-vis emerging donors and foreign aid policymaking. The final section underlines avenues for further research on Turkey's foreign aid policymaking and international development cooperation.

6.1. Main findings on Turkey

In explaining the domestic politics of foreign aid, ideational factors have been identified as a “bedrock” by Lancaster (2007: 6). How political elites formulate foreign aid spending in terms of shared values and worldviews usually has a recognizable effect on the public's acceptance of foreign aid. Likewise, the experience of Turkey's rise as an emerging donor in the period after 2002 has shown that ideational influences, including cultural and religious identity, and the notion of national prestige, have been instrumental, if not exclusive, in shaping the country's policy making behaviour as a donor. Within this scope, ideas and identities informing foreign aid policy priorities have also

demonstrated a considerable shift across the different periods identified in Chapter 3. Identity has stood out, as Kutlay and Öniş (2021) agree, as a core component of Turkey's autonomy-focused foreign policy orientation in the later stages of the AKP government.

Chapters 3 and 4 have shown that the initial launch and earlier years of TİKA in the 1990s demonstrated an evident ideological slant towards championing a strengthened and democratically-aligned “Turkish existence” in the postcommunist Eurasian region, by way of providing technical cooperation and economic assistance to the newly independent Turkic states of the former Soviet Union.⁸⁴ This policy move was also compliant with the Turkish state's broader alignment with the US in the post-Cold War period. The ideational underpinnings of TİKA's early period were built upon the vision of a “Turkish cultural geography”, marking a territory formerly dominated by a superpower as fresh grounds for Turkey to be positioned as the leading cultural and political influence (Arık, 2020: 67). Throughout the next decade, however, this vision evolved into one that was founded upon an alternative understanding of Turkish identity, detached from ethno-linguistic ties and oriented towards a shared post-imperial legacy and religious affinity. The so-called “heartfelt geography” was a term coined by former Foreign Minister Davutoğlu and popularised by President Erdoğan to demarcate a broader sphere of geopolitical influence that comprised not only the Turkic-speaking states of Central Asia, but also the

⁸⁴ Author's interview with a former senior executive from TİKA on December 22, 2021.

successors of the former Ottoman lands in the Balkans, Middle East, and North Africa (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2018a). In terms of ODA destinations, the heartfelt geography stretched beyond the borders of cultural and religious identity, extending strategically to the global South, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. The ideational basis for this expansion was supported by an adherence to the Islamic notion of philanthropy, portrayed as a guiding principle for an inclusive and humanitarian-oriented donor that “never sought to gain prosperity through the natural resources, sweat, labour and blood of any society” (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2019). This outlook was also in line with the broader paradigmatic shift in Turkey’s foreign policy from the post-Cold War ‘logic of interdependence’ to a ‘strategic autonomy’, whereby the welfare of least-developed nations would be highlighted through the advocacy of a multipolar international order (Kutlay and Öniş, 2021: 1092).

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, non-state actors have been an indispensable component in Turkey’s foreign aid policy making since the early 2000s. Lancaster (2007) has identified interests as “the most dynamic factor” shaping foreign aid policy making, constituting not just private sector forces and civil society organisations, but also informal networks and government agencies as the actors comprising different interest groups. This is evident in Turkey’s arrival in Sub-Saharan Africa after the country’s ‘Opening Up To Africa’ policy in 2005. Chapter 4 has demonstrated that even though TİKA played a crucial role in providing the means for this entrance, it nonetheless did

not function independently. Turkey's re-opening to Sub-Saharan Africa through renewed ODA priorities provided a typical example of the state, market and civil society operating concomitantly within the institutional landscape of development (Banks and Hulme, 2014: 182). As the emergence of Turkish civil society organisations in Africa in the early 1990s predated that of the Turkish state, and the network of connections and know-how accumulated as a result of this early entrance usefully guided Turkey's foreign and economic policy towards the continent. As a matter of fact, this overall policy framework was "co-produced by a coalition of public and private actors" active in the region (Angey, 2018: 55). Put differently, Turkish civil society organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa served to "open up room" for the Turkish state and private sector organisations to reinforce their existence in the region.⁸⁵

From a public diplomacy standpoint, Turkish NGOs, as well as business organisations, have been identified as belonging to the same state-led informal network that has actively sought to communicate a benevolent "brand image" for Turkey as an ODA donor (Çevik, 2016: 59). The proportion of NGO flows in Turkey's ODA spending is an indication of this concordance. Since TİKA first reported them in 2005, the share of NGO flows in Turkey's overall ODA has steadily remained above 4%, with the exception of a few outliers (Figure 23). A sharp decline in 2012 occurred as a result of a \$39.4 million fund transfer by state institutions to NGOs, to be channelled into their overseas aid

⁸⁵ Author's interview with a former senior TİKA official on May 30, 2023.

activities (TİKA, 2012). Meanwhile, a sudden rise was recorded in 2016, owing to the worsening of the humanitarian crisis in Syria due to the civil war, according to TİKA. TİKA's 2016 Development Assistance Report specifically acknowledged the sizable share of ODA flows by Turkish NGOs as an effort to provide emergency relief to the Turkmen population in Latakia's Al Rabiaa (Bayırbucak) district (TİKA, 2016). This intimate contact between TİKA and state-led Turkish NGOs therefore provides a case in point for projecting an idealised image for Turkey's "global communications" while also acting as a mechanism to strengthen the domestic support base of the AKP government (Çevik, 2016: 55).

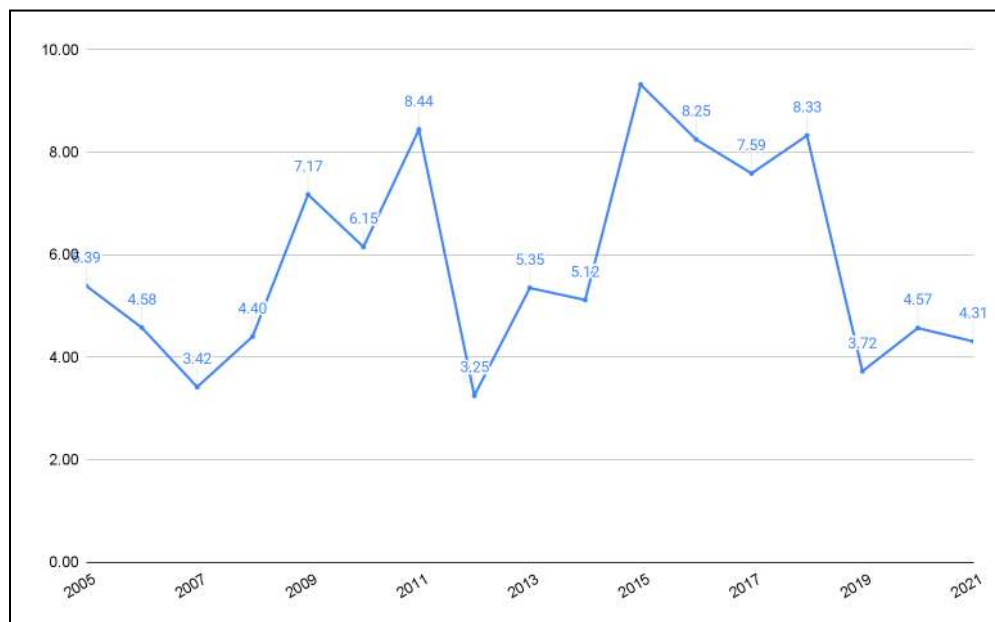


Figure 23: Share of non-governmental organisation (NGO) flows in Turkey's overall ODA, 2005-2021. Source: TİKA

Additionally, a thorough overhaul of the legal framework governing NGO operations in 2018 may account for the considerable decrease in the share of NGO flows in 2019. After the 2017 referendum, the first Presidential Decree issued on July 10, 2018 instructed the establishment of a General Directorate of Civil Society Relations under the Ministry of the Interior, which would introduce and enforce new regulations and criteria for NGOs (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2018b). Clause (ğ) and (h) of the decree ordered the Directorate, respectively, to identify and sanction any illegal activities carried out by NGOs and civil society organisations, and also “determine their long-term strategies” (Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2018b). This observation also presents an example of the impact of institutional factors, such as the country’s shift to a presidential system, on Turkey’s dealings with ODA.

Alongside NGOs and civil society actors, Turkish business organisations—and, by extension, material interests—have been another significant influence driving Turkey’s foreign aid policy under the AKP government. The internationalisation of the emerging Anatolian bourgeoisie in the early 2000s was often seen as the “practical hand” of Turkey’s new foreign policy (Kutlay, 2011: 67). The close contact between state institutions and newly rising business associations such as TUSKON and MÜSİAD was visible in many aspects of foreign policy, including international development cooperation. An interview with the director of a Turkish NGO active in Sub-Saharan Africa revealed that Turkish business representatives intending to

build access to African markets would often approach Turkish NGOs with the aim of building connections through their existing local network, by way of providing direct donations for the NGOs' development-related projects.⁸⁶

Lancaster's (2007) analysis of traditional donors has shown that political institutions are another key determining factor in the domestic politics of foreign aid policy making. The structure of the government, legislatures, and even electoral rules play an imperative role in how policy decisions are made in terms of foreign aid-giving (Lancaster, 2007). In line with this argument, the changes in the structure of the Turkish government following the July 15, 2016 coup attempt and the country's switch to a presidential system after the 2017 referendum have affected the nature and influence of civil society actors operating within the field of international development cooperation. The Gülen movement, formerly a key player in shaping Turkey's ODA policy, was officially associated with a terrorist organisation identified by the name FETÖ (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization) as per a statement by the country's National Security Council on 20 July 2016 (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu, 2016).

In terms of overall foreign policy, it has been argued that the 2016 coup attempt and the government's political 'divorce' with the Gülen movement did not mark a complete rupture with the past in Turkish foreign policy. Instead, it led to a "fine-tuning" between policy and rhetoric, adapting to shifts at both the

⁸⁶ Author's interview with a Turkish NGO director on 23 December 2021.

domestic and global levels (Aras, 2019: 6). Exacerbated by growing political polarisation, changes in domestic coalitions transformed foreign policy into a contentious arena. In 2019, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that “the fight against FETÖ” constituted a main pillar of the country’s current foreign policy (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d.). In Turkey’s dealings with international development cooperation, the fight against FETÖ became most apparent in the country’s efforts to either close down or acquire educational institutions associated with the Gülen movement. These efforts to incapacitate the global influence of Gülen affiliates were particularly prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa, one of the “strongholds” of the movement (Turhan, 2021:1-2). As discussed in Chapter 4, spearheaded by the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV), the rise of ‘state-driven civil society’ emerged as a new phenomenon in Turkey’s overseas development cooperation policy, functioning not only as a development actor but also as a diplomatic device defending the interests of Turkey’s changed domestic coalition.

According to Lancaster (2007), the way in which governments organise their aid bureaucracy and where different policy actors are positioned within this hierarchy ultimately determines the level of influence exerted by competing interest groups within the government. This is especially the case in contexts where legislators are either not knowledgeable or not interested in issues surrounding foreign aid, which may lead to bureaucrats having “more say” and “less public accountability” for the decisions they make (Lancaster, 2007: 20).

Chapter 4 provides ample evidence supporting this argument, showing the extent to which individual agency matters in driving Turkey's foreign aid policy in Latin America. The case of TİKA's operations in Colombia, particularly, illustrates a relevant case of Lancaster's argument in practice. Interview evidence has shown that the agency of bureaucrats has been single-handedly influential in shaping Turkey's ODA policy towards Colombia and the wider region, in terms of not only policy outcomes but also financial decisions.

6.2. Broader conclusions on emerging donors and foreign aid policy

As a concept, development engenders a great diversity of meanings and processes that promise to improve the human condition. In essence, each of these approaches offers a long-term historical project, ultimately devised with the claim to free societies from the ills of underdevelopment, poverty, or oppression (Gray and Gills, 2016: 557). Consequently, the emergence of competing development narratives promising alternative paths to human betterment has significantly disrupted the field of international development, leading to what Woods has famously called a "silent revolution" in the field of development assistance (Woods, 2008: 1205).

The rise of this new post-DAC development cooperation paradigm continues to divide opinion in the field. Since the late 2000s, the world of international development has been torn between optimistic views about the arrival of new donors and those that remain wary of the conditions attached to their *modus operandi* as aid providers. A significant portion of this debate is focused on whether elites from these rising powers, as policymakers, genuinely aim to challenge the prevailing—and seemingly defunct—global development structures or whether they intend to sustain and reproduce the same order through terms of their choosing (Gray and Gills, 2016). Therefore, empirical insights on policymaking-related structures and agents are essential to gain a more elaborate understanding of the relevance of these debates. Against this backdrop, this section will summarise the broader conclusions that may be derived from the findings of this dissertation on foreign aid policy making among emerging donors.

First, the issue of donor identity remains a contested area for middle-power status seeking donors. Discussions in Chapter 5 have shown that certain emerging donors, notably the BRIC countries, openly align their aid policies with the principles represented by the South-South Cooperation (SSC) framework. By contrast, others such as Turkey and Korea, subscribe to a more balanced stance, synthesising their earlier experiences as aid recipients with current status-seeking aspirations guided by their middle-power diplomacy efforts. In such a setting, foreign aid is often harnessed as an important foreign

policy tool (Öniş and Kutlay, 2017). Yet in the case of Turkey, the norms and values represented by the SSC framework “can only be complementary” due to the country’s careful positioning “right in the middle of the global North and the global South”.⁸⁷

Second, categorising emerging donors remains an important task that calls for in-depth empirical inquiry into individual donors, guided by a parsimonious approach. The analysis in Chapter 5 has underlined that the early typologies of emerging donors in the existing literature are mostly based on donorship mechanics, such as participation in international organisations or preferred ODA modalities – which may not always be an adequate indicator for the political realities on the ground. For instance, Manning (2006) and Kragelund (2008) have grouped Turkey together with Mexico and Korea in lieu of their (formerly) shared membership status in the DAC, OECD or EU. Empirical findings, meanwhile, point to a more nuanced reality – while Korea has aligned its ODA more formally with DAC’s norms and principles by ultimately becoming a member of the Committee, Turkey has willingly chosen to continue as a non-member despite repeated invitations by the DAC. Interview evidence shows that “Mexico shares the same situation with [Turkey]”, having stated clearly that DAC membership would interfere with their flexibility.⁸⁸ In this regard, further research into Mexico’s role as a non-traditional donor “seeking to project itself as a middle-power” would

⁸⁷ Author’s interview with a senior TİKA executive on June 6, 2023.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

greatly contribute to the efforts to identify more robust emerging donor typologies.

Third, integrating foreign policy analysis (FPA) approaches to the study of foreign aid policy making in emerging donors may shed new light on the domestic-level factors that influence ODA. Over the last two decades, a number of scholars have drawn attention to an awkward theoretical distance between mainstream IR approaches and FPA (Carlsnaes, 2002; Flanik, 2011; Kaarbo, 2015). This is marked by the position of domestic-level factors as featuring an ontological paradox in IR theory – although domestic politics and agent-level factors have increasingly become integrated into realist, liberal, and constructivist research programs, years of agent-centred decision making analyses in the FPA subfield have largely been ignored (Kaarbo, 2015: 189). It is possible to sum up this disengagement between IR and FPA as the mainstream IR's reluctance to acknowledge FPA as an integral component of 'IR theory' (Kaarbo, 2015). This dissertation, however, posits that incorporating FPA approaches to the study of foreign aid policy making by non-traditional donors may offer a productive step towards enhancing the body of empirical knowledge in the emerging donors literature. While FPA may concentrate on the choices and actions of agents, it nonetheless recognizes these actions as components of a wider set of interactions between state and non-state actors. As Kaarbo (2015) observes, "compared to 20 years ago, domestic political and decision-making concepts are very much part of

contemporary IR theory and theory-informed empirical investigation” (p. 189). Likewise, to account for the significant role that domestic factors played in shaping Turkey's foreign aid policy, empirical discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 have liberally borrowed from FPA approaches.

Fourth, the staggering dominance of humanitarian assistance has been a characteristic of Turkey's ODA as an emerging donor, although the same trend is visible also among traditional donors (Figure 24). In analysing sectoral priorities in foreign aid policy among emerging donors, Chapter 5 has shown that humanitarian aid has taken up an overwhelming portion of overall Turkish ODA since 2012, primarily due to the rise in in-donor refugee costs after the Syrian civil war. However, it should also be noted that the increase in the share of humanitarian aid disbursements in overall ODA has largely become a global phenomenon. As seen in Figure 24, the same trend is visible in DAC donors, specifically following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Within the development studies literature, there are ongoing theoretical debates on whether humanitarian and development aid should be regarded essentially as separate financing streams, which will be identified as an avenue for future research later in this chapter.

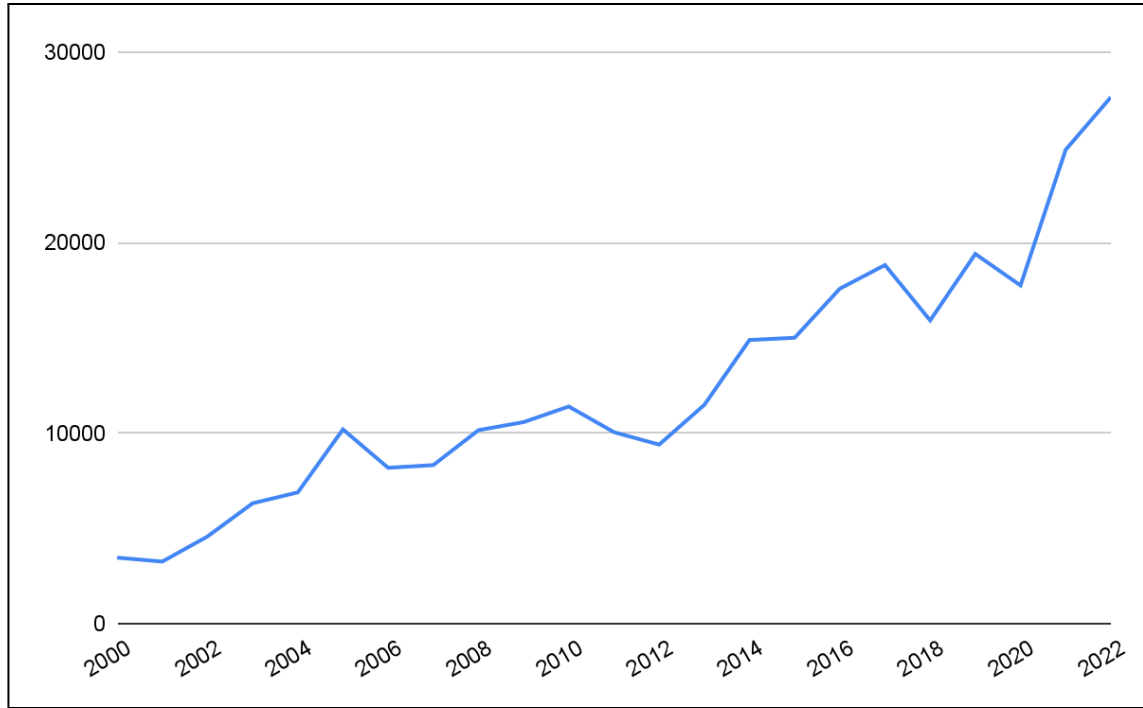


Figure 24: Humanitarian aid disbursements by DAC countries, 2000-2022

(million \$). Source: OECD.

6.3. Limitations

As laid out in Figure 4 in Chapter 1, this dissertation has focused on making sense of the evolution of Turkey's foreign aid policy by analysing the interplay of various determinants at the 1) individual level, comprising private, political or bureaucratic agents involved in decision making processes vis-a-vis foreign aid policy, 2) state level, which constitutes the entirety of the set of conditions Turkey is contingent on as an emerging donor of foreign aid, and 3)

international level, which focuses on the global system as a whole including the international aid architecture, the distribution of power within the said architecture, and overall norms related to ODA spending. However, in the case of Turkey's foreign aid, sporadic evidence indicates that the group/sub-state level arises as a fourth level of analytical significance to paint a complete picture of the country's peculiarities as an emerging donor. Although this dissertation does not delve into the dealings of Turkish municipalities, a thorough analysis of city diplomacy efforts pursued by local government entities in Turkey has the potential to introduce fresh empirical evidence to the emerging donors literature. Demirtaş (2016) argues that an often overlooked aspect of 2000s Turkish foreign policy has been the modest yet growing role of local government actors in foreign policy. City diplomacy ties between Turkey's metropolitan municipalities and their international counterparts have particularly advanced following opposition victories of 2019 in Ankara and Istanbul, the country's capital city and largest city, respectively. As pointed out by Demirtaş (2024), "city diplomacy in less democratic states has the potential to offer an alternative approach to [...] regional initiatives" (p. 229). In the case of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM), an example of these initiatives has been the launch of the B40 Balkan Cities Network in 2021, a city-level assembly aiming to promote economic and technical cooperation in a number of development-related matters including climate change resilience, migration management and smart city transformation (B40, n.d.). A further example that illustrates alternative city diplomacy approaches to foreign aid is

theThe 2.12 million TL (roughly \$78,000) in humanitarian aid that the IMM directly sent to the Polish city of Warsaw for Ukrainian refugees serves as another illustration of alternative city diplomacy strategies for foreign aid (Sözcü, 2022). 2.12 million TL (approximately \$78,000) worth of humanitarian assistance dispatched directly by the IMM to the city of Warsaw in Poland for Ukrainian refugees (Sözcü, 2022).

With regard to data collection, a limitation of this dissertation has been the quantity of individual interviews. As discussed in further detail in Chapter 2, elite interviewing is usually considered to be a costly and difficult methodology in political science and international relations, as access to key decision makers often depends on establishing interpersonal trust. The outlawed position of many individuals and organisations that have played a significant part in influencing Turkey's foreign aid policy in the period before the 2016 coup attempt has prolonged and complicated the interviewing process for this dissertation. Moreover, a substantial portion of the digital archival sources relevant to this research, such as Gülen-linked media and civil society organisations, are presently unavailable to researchers due to their illegalized status.

6.4. Avenues for future research

The interdisciplinary nature of this dissertation presents an attempt to shed light on the complex interplay of individual, domestic, and global factors that shape foreign aid policy making among non-traditional donors while contributing to bridge the gap between official data and ground realities through the case of Turkish foreign aid policy. Contemporary challenges faced by scholars studying non-emerging donors are manifold – data on the nature, volume, and direction of development financing remains either incomplete or unavailable for most non-DAC donors, and direct research access to individual agents and decision makers often incurs barriers and costs. Although there are a growing number of studies focusing on the domestic dynamics of foreign aid among emerging donors, a significant research gap nonetheless remains on the nature and processes of policy making (Kim et al., 2023). Therefore, it is a central proposition of this dissertation that building further empirical knowledge of emerging donors necessitates an eclectic theoretical outlook, interdisciplinary approaches, and diverse methodological tools. In the absence of such a research perspective, the emerging donors debate will be confined to small, inward looking academic silos. Departing from this premise, the rest of this section will concentrate on identifying avenues for further research in understanding foreign aid policymaking in emerging donors.

A central finding of this dissertation, as presented in Chapters 4 and 5 through interview evidence, indicates that the role of agents –including political leadership, bureaucrats and other individual actors– has carried more weight than previously thought in influencing Turkey’s foreign aid policy. This finding signals that complementing structural analyses with individual-level research into agency could provide fresh insights on the black box of foreign aid policy making among non-traditional donors. As observed by Mawdsley et al. (2017), the effect of political leadership on foreign aid policy making among emerging donors is yet to be exposed to a “broader conceptual framing” (p. 2173). More specifically, discrepancies between high-level statements and their practical interpretations in more intricate real-world situations remain an area to be further investigated (Mawdsley et al., 2017). As state affairs are typically “highly personalised” through language in non-traditional donor states, an accumulation of thorough analyses of these processes may benefit our understanding of emerging donorship to a greater extent (Mawdsley et al., 2017: 2173).

Since the academic discussion around emerging donors gained traction in the late 2000s, a number of global and regional crises have had direct consequences for the field of international development – most notably the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and Russia's war against Ukraine in 2022. The war in Ukraine particularly stands out, with significant implications for the future of ODA. According to OECD data, Russia’s war against Ukraine has had

a disruptive impact on global ODA in terms of volume, sectoral breakdown and destinations. With \$204 billion in 2022, aid to Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees reached the second-highest level ever provided to a single country, next to Iraq in 2005 (Carey et al., 2023: 1-2). A sizable portion of this aid was associated with in-donor expenditures addressed at hosting Ukrainian refugees in DAC countries, which may indicate that increased in-donor refugee costs (i.e. humanitarian assistance) are “here to stay” – prompting concern that DAC donors might have to allocate smaller budgets for development-related ODA to developing countries (Carey et al., 2023: 2). Indeed, coupled with the economic recession that has impacted most DAC countries since early 2022, ODA flows from DAC countries to the global South “among the areas most likely to feel the impact of tight budgets” as DAC members navigate strategies to adapt their ODA budgets to adequately address the humanitarian crisis (Strøm-Sedgwick and Tank, 2022: 2). Whether and how emerging donors will fill this ODA gap, and what this may imply for the wider field of international development assistance, remains an avenue of future research.

As discussed in Chapter 5, humanitarian assistance is officially recognized as a component of ODA according to DAC’s reporting guidelines. In contrast to other sectors of development aid, which maintain a long term focus and may feature elements of conditionality, humanitarian aid is an impartial, short term instrument that aims to save human lives and minimise physical suffering in situations of crisis and emergency (Development

Initiatives, 2010). However, with the outbreak of the refugee crisis following the 2010 Syrian civil war and Russia's 2022 war in Ukraine, the status of humanitarian aid as a sector of overall ODA is increasingly being put to question. With DAC donors diverting ODA budgets to “fund the humanitarian response in their own countries as refugee numbers swell”, debates on the division between humanitarian and development aid are becoming more prevalent (Anyangwe, 2015). This rise in in-donor refugee costs has been a major area of scrutiny for Turkey’s ODA, even though it has proven to be an equally widespread trend among traditional donors. Critical views in the field of development studies have argued that humanitarian and development aid should be, in theory, “distinct” as they fundamentally stand at odds in terms of their objectives (Carbonnier, 2014: 44). While development aid aims to facilitate “profound social, economic, political and cultural transformation”, humanitarian aid exclusively seeks to relieve human suffering in post-crisis situations – in other words, “to treat the symptoms without necessarily addressing the causes, or even explicitly refraining from doing so” (Carbonnier, 2014: 44). The competing narratives of humanitarian development aid, and whether they should be classified as separate streams of aid financing, remains a fruitful avenue for further debate.

Another important area of debate for the future of foreign aid policy making, with implications for emerging donors, is the rise in the share of ‘climate finance’ as a component of ODA. At the 5th session of the Conference

of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen, “developed countries” including US, Germany, France and Japan pledged to mobilise at least \$100 billion annually in climate finance, in the form of both grants and loans, to “address the needs of developing countries” in combating the effects of climate change (UNFCCC, 2010). Since this turning point, climate finance has been a centrepiece in debates surrounding international development. Likewise, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted by all UN member states in 2015, positions climate change as a key challenge facing all nations globally. Number 13 of the Sustainable Development Goals created by the *2030 Agenda* aims to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact” (UN, n.d.). According to the OECD, total climate finance provided by developed nations to developing nations rose by 7.6% in 2021, amounting to a total of \$89.6 billion (Cormann, 2023: 8).

Against this backdrop, Ramachandran and Smith (2023) warn that the current record on climate finance shows it may be on a path to replace traditional ODA. Quoting a recent study, the authors underline that 52% of the climate finance provided by 23 states between 2011 and 2020 constituted “money that previously went to development budgets”, such as programs focusing on healthcare, education and gender equality (CARE International, 2023 quoted in Ramachandran and Smith, 2023). Moreover, the United Kingdom government classified climate finance as “development aid”, a

preference that may be regarded as a step in the direction of ODA eventually being subsumed by climate finance (Ramachandran and Smith, 2023). Other traditional donors, including Germany, France and the US, have also been identified as moving in the same direction, “siphon[ing] off climate finance from development spending” (Ramachandran and Smith, 2023). More strikingly, Japan –a leading traditional donor and the world’s “largest climate funder”– currently makes no additional development aid expenditure on top of its 0.7% pledge to ODA (CARE International, 2023, quoted in Ramachandran and Smith, 2023). Given this context, how –or whether– future contributions to climate finance by emerging donors will impact the nature of their overall ODA policies also emerges as an avenue for future research.

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APPENDIX A: List of interviewees

Institution	Position
Sadakataşı Association	Director
Doctors Worldwide	Former Executive
Tüm Afrika'nın Dostları Association (TADD)	Director
Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA)	Former Head of Office in Colombia
Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA)	Deputy TİKA President
Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA)	Senior TİKA Official
Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA)	Former TİKA President
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	Former Ambassador to Mogadishu
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	Senior official, Bilateral Relations Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	Former Ambassador to Syria
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	Former Ambassador to Lagos
Presidency of the Republic of Turkey	Senior Official

APPENDIX B: List of interview questions

Interview questions for government institutions:

A) Internal functioning:

1. Can you summarize the active work of your institution/unit (if any) regarding international aid activities?
 - 1.1. What are the areas your projects focus on? (Health, education, culture, etc.) What kind of activities do you manage in these areas?
 - 1.2. Which cities and countries do your projects focus on?
 - 1.3. How much is the budget of your projects and from what sources are they financed?
2. Can you summarize the stages of your strategy and policy development process?
 - 2.1. Who are the main actors and decision makers in this process?
3. How do reshuffles and appointments impact policy making (and implementation) processes? Can you give an example?
4. Do you think your institution has a clear and well-established aid policy? What principles are your projects shaped around?
5. How do decision-making processes generally work in your institution?
6. What changes did the presidential government system bring to the bureaucracy and functioning of your institution?
 - 6.1. Have there been any changes regarding the project budgets?
 - 6.2. What changes have occurred regarding the project areas and contents?

B) Relations with other institutions:

1. How would you describe your institution's relations with TIKA? To what extent do these two institutions influence each other?
2. What other government institutions do you have close relationships with? In what areas do you collaborate?
3. How is your communication with the Presidency?
4. How is your communication with non-governmental organizations?
5. Do you consult NGOs in idea and project development processes?
6. Which NGOs are you in closest contact with?

C) Political climate and its effects:

1. How did the 17/25 December period affect your activities and the aid policy formation process?
2. How did the July 15 coup attempt affect your activities and the aid policy formation process?
3. Was there any personnel change in the institution after the events of 17/25 December and 15 July?

Interview questions for NGO representatives

A) Internal functioning:

1. Could you give brief information about your corporate structure? (Board of directors/board of trustees etc.)
2. Can you summarize your international aid activities and active projects?
3. What are the areas your projects focus on? (Health, education, culture, etc.) What kind of activities do you manage in these areas?
4. Which cities and countries do your projects focus on?
5. How much is the budget of your projects and from what sources are they financed?
6. How are your project areas, locations (city, country) and budgets determined? (In other words, how do you determine where, how much, and how you will provide aid?)
7. How does the decision-making mechanism in your project development processes work?
8. Who or which departments are active in this process?
9. Are there any authorities you consult when creating ideas and projects?
10. Do you think your institution has a clear and well-established aid policy? What principles are your projects shaped around?
11. How do decision-making processes generally work in your institution?
12. Can you give information about donation processes? For example:
13. Which channels do you collect donations the most?
14. Are the majority of your donors anonymous? What are their general profiles? (E.g. Business people, companies, corporate employees, students, retirees, housewives, etc.)
15. Do you also accept donations from abroad?

16. What is your relationship with your donors? Are they involved in the processes related to your projects?

B) Relations with government institutions:

1. Is there a partnership with TİKA (or another government institution) in your activities? (Can be financial, operational, bureaucratic or informal)
2. How would you describe the cooperation between your institutions, if any?
3. If you have activities that are financially supported by TİKA (or a different government institution), how independently can you act when projecting them?
4. How close is your relationship with government institutions (TİKA, Foreign Affairs, Yunus Emre Institute, Diyanet, AFAD, etc.)? Do you think this relationship has a positive or negative impact on the activities of your association?
5. Have you ever received a briefing/information request on any subject from any government institution involved in international aid activities?
6. How is your communication with the ministry or undersecretariat level?
7. If you have such communication, do you think it has a positive or negative impact on the activities of your institution?
8. How is your communication with the Presidency?
9. If you have such a communication, what area does it focus on?
(Additional questions may be asked such as the frequency of communication, which specific authority or authority it is with, etc.)

C) Political climate and its effects:

1. Did the 17/25 December period affect your activities and your institution in any official or unofficial way? (After this question
2. How did the July 15 coup attempt affect your activities and the aid policy formation process?
3. Was there any personnel change in the institution after the events of 17/25 December and 15 July?