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1 May 14, 2023 Political Impact and Importance of Türkiye's
2 Presidential Election Abroad

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6 **Abstract**

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9 **Index terms—**

10 **1 I. INTRODUCTION**

11 The presidential and parliamentary elections, which are held every five years, were scheduled for June 18, 2023.
12 However, the date of the elections was moved to May 14 due to a number of reasons, including the overlap in the
13 dates of the annual university entrance exams for a segment of the country's population, seasonal working people,
14 the religious season of the cross and summer holidays, and the perception of political uncertainty caused by the
15 February 6, 2023, earthquake disaster, centered in Kahramanmara? and affecting ten other cities, as well as the
16 perception of political uncertainty that the elections would create due to the advanced date of the elections, so that
17 they would not disrupt the public policies to be implemented after the earthquake. After President Recep Tayyip
18 Erdo?an approved and signed the early election decision according to Article 116 of the Turkish constitution, the
19 date of the early elections was finalized after the approval of this decision was published in the official newspaper.

20 On May 14, the people will elect both the thirteenth president and the twenty-eighth parliamentary candidate
21 at the same time. The Supreme Electoral Council (YSK) stated that thirty-six political parties will take part in
22 the elections and that the political parties have formed four alliances: "People's", "Nation", "Ata" and "Labor and
23 Freedom". The People's Alliance includes the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the Nationalist Movement
24 Party (MHP), the Grand Union Party (BBP), and the Re-Refah parties. Outside parties that will support the
25 People's Alliance include HÜdapar, the Democratic Left Party, and the ??reat. The author collected for this
26 research paper generally written data from newspapers and oral data. The analysis of the written and oral data
27 included three phrases: Initially, the researcher analyzed the information and explained the documents that were
28 taken by geographical areas, followed by an explanation of the importance of the part information. Secondly, the
29 data are analyzed and the details identified. After that, the major information is descriptive and compared to
30 other geographies. The aim of the study is to examine and understand the combined expectations of the world's
31 countries for the 2023 Turkish elections in behavioral ways.

32 **2 III. RUSSIA-UKRAINE**

33 One of the most important aspects of the May 14 th election in Türkiye is that the country's position on the 24
34 February 2022 date of the Russia-Ukraine war will become even more crucial during this election period.

35 If Recep Tayyip Erdo?an wins the elections again, he will maintain the position of neutrality he has maintained
36 since the beginning of the war, but if someone else wins the government, whether neutrality will continue or not
37 is important for both Russia and Ukraine in terms of Turkish foreign policy. So, these reasons explain why it
38 gains vital.

39 At the same time since, Türkiye trades with both countries and is a member of NATO, Türkiye, Russia, and
40 Ukraine. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is attending the 77th United Nations General Assembly in New York, gave
41 an interview in which he was asked which country is superior to London Journal of Research in Humanities and
42 Social Sciences "Honestly, as a leader, I am not looking for 'whether Russia is more effective or Ukraine is more
43 effective'. Our only desire is for this war to end in peace. This has been my request and advice to both Mr.
44 Putin and Mr. Zelensky. There is no winner in a war that results in the death of people" (Servisi, 2022).

3 IV. SWEDEN-FINLAND

45 He has always expressed his opposition to war and his neutrality unequivocally. On the one hand, the reason
46 for Türkiye to remain neutral in the war between the two countries is to ensure its security of Türkiye. As seen
47 in the Cold War Period or in World War I, Türkiye does not want to be a front country in the war. Because at
48 the same time, the geographical security of the Black Sea is also in question here.

49 Relations play a key role. At the same time, the responsibility of the Montreux Agreement, signed on July 20,
50 1936, continues to rest with Türkiye. Convention and did not allow the passage of Russian ships by implementing
51 Article 19 of the treaty, thus Türkiye did not make itself a front country in the war.

52 On the one hand, Türkiye has purchased S-400 missiles from Russia. In addition, Türkiye and Russia are
53 jointly undertaking the Turkish Stream project. Another point, if we examine the relations between Türkiye
54 and Ukraine, since Türkiye is a leading country in the defense industry, Türkiye is cooperating with Ukraine
55 with unmanned aerial vehicles that Türkiye produces. At the same time, Türkiye imports wheat from Ukraine
56 (GÖRÜ?-Rusya-Ukrayna Sava??n?n Türkiye'ye Etkileri, n.d.). Although good relations were established with the
57 Russia, Türkiye condemned Russia's behavior in NATO and expressed peace instead of war. However, Türkiye
58 was not included in the embargo policy of European countries against conversations with Putin and Zelenski
59 were not affected by the war situation. He spoke to the leaders via telephone. At the same time, Erdo?an visited
60 Kiev.

61 In addition, in order to ensure peace, Erdo?an invited the leaders of both countries to the Antalya Diplomatic
62 Forum in 2022 to ensure peace. The Antalya Diplomacy Forum, which was held between March 11 and 13 at
63 the Belek Tourism Center and attended by more than 2000 people, including 20 heads of state, more than 70
64 ministers, 50 international organizations, and 500 journalists, was held at the ceremony of President Recep Tayyip
65 Erdo?an. It was held this year with the theme of "Re-establishing Diplomacy". It was important to ensure that
66 these intense talks were provided by Türkiye in terms of finding a solution to the conflict between Russia and
67 Ukraine.

68 Türkiye has also clearly demonstrated its success in the field of diplomacy. The Antalya Diplomacy Forum
69 gains importance as it is the first meeting between Russia and Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis. A very
70 important meeting took place regarding the meeting of the foreign ministers of both countries. President Erdo?an
71 met with Zelenski and Putin before the forum and conveyed his desire to bring both sides together.

72 In the Ukraine-Russian war, Türkiye has undertaken the mediation task to end the war as soon as possible and
73 ensure peace. Following the peace talks held on March 11, which lasted for about 1.5 hours after Russia declared
74 war on Ukraine. Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Dmitro Kuleba told the press that this forum was the first
75 time a meeting was held with Russia after Russia's attacks and that this was achieved by the Republic of Türkiye.
76 He also stated that he supports every step towards a solution. He then said that there was a humanitarian tragedy
77 in Ukraine and that he was trying to find a diplomatic solution. He said that the civilian population of Ukraine
78 was used as a shield. He stressed that the Ukraine crisis should be resolved as soon as possible. (ADF-Antalya
79 Diplomasi Forumu, n.d.) Finally, Russia reaffirmed its position toward NATO. In addition, Russian Foreign
80 Minister Sergey Lavrov stated that this meeting was held at the suggestion of Erdo?an. Turkish Foreign Minister
81 Mevlüt Çavu?o?lu said that he hopes the talks will have a positive effect on achieving stable peace. He also
82 stated that he hoped the war would end as soon as possible.

83 3 IV. SWEDEN-FINLAND

84 Two of the countries that came to the fore during the election process were Sweden and Finland. The process of
85 both countries becoming members of NATO has also brought the relationship between them and Türkiye to the
86 forefront. In order for a country to become a member of NATO, the unanimous approval of all countries present
87 in NATO are required for the new member of country Türkiye, which has been a member of NATO since 1952,
88 has given its approval for Finland to join NATO, while Sweden

89 has not yet been approved. (Ajans?, 2023). The beginning of the negotiations between Türkiye, Sweden,
90 and Finland was London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences determined by the mutual
91 expectations signed at the NATO Leaders' Summit in Madrid, Spain, on June 28, 2022 (Kar??l?kl? Beklentiler
92 İ??nnda Türkiye Ve ?veç Ili?kileri, n.d.). Türkiye made demands for Sweden's and Finland's membership in
93 NATO to address Türkiye's security concerns, according to the memorandum signed in 2022 (BBC News Türkç?,
94 2022).

95 Finland and Türkiye have a long history of good relations, dating back to the friendship treaty signed in
96 1924. At the same time, Finland has accepted Türkiye's conditions and tried to fulfill them. On the other
97 hand, Finland's solidarity did not go unnoticed by Erdo?an, who tried to help during the earthquake disaster in
98 Türkiye on February 6, 2023: "The helping hand extended by Finland in the face of the earthquake disaster has
99 strengthened our friendship. I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank the Finnish government
100 and people for their solidarity and the aid they have sent." (Türkiye'den Finlandiya'n?n NATO Üyeli?ne Vize,
101 2023)

102 The May 14 elections are important for Sweden as they will determine whether Erdo?an and his Justice and
103 Development Party will remain in power. Either Sweden will accept Türkiye's demands in order to become a
104 member of NATO, or there will be renegotiations after the elections. Finland joined NATO before Sweden,
105 becoming the thirty-first country to join NATO. Finland's President Sauli Niinistö has stated that talks with
106 Recep Tayyip Erdogan have been held, and he believes that they will have a smooth process (Finlandiya

107 NATO'nun 31. Üyesi Oldu, BBC News Türkçe, 2023). But if Erdo?an loses the elections, Finland, which is
108 already a member, is unlikely to be affected much by the election results.

109 **4 V. UNITED STATES**

110 Although the relations between Türkiye and the U.S have their differences and discrepancies, the White House
111 and Ankara seem to have rational cooperation and understanding of foreign policies with each other. The main
112 principles of foreign policy between the US and Türkiye are security and defense mechanisms (Bloomberg HT,
113 2022). Before and after the elections, the politics between the US and Türkiye gain importance. The constant
114 dialogue between Presidential Spokesperson ?brahim Kal?n and US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan
115 addresses the events between the two countries from a broad perspective and pragmatically. On the other
116 hand, the S-400 and Syria crises are still ongoing between the US and Türkiye. At the same time, the US
117 has been neutral in the periodic tensions between Türkiye and Greece. The US administration, which also
118 supports Sweden's recent membership in NATO, closely follows Türkiye-Sweden relations in this context. On the
119 other hand, Turkish-US relations have developed especially in the field of trade in 2022, apart from defense and
120 security. A volume of 28 billion dollars was achieved in January and October ??Bloomberg HT, 2022). At the
121 same time, the presence of nearly 980 US companies in Türkiye also shows developments in relations between
122 the two countries. (Bülteni, 2018).

123 The US Ambassador to Ankara, Jeff Flake, paid a pre-election visit to Kemal K?l?çdaro?lu, who is running
124 for the presidency. In addition, the US government has openly stated that it supports the National Alliance
125 against Erdo?an in the elections (Euronews, 2020). This was also stated in a video in the program called The
126 Weekly in 2022, prepared by the New York Times. (BBC News Turkish, 2020). In other words, if K?l?çdaro?lu
127 wins, it seems that a closer and smoother relationship with the US will be maintained. K?l?çdaro?lu also stated
128 that he would attract US investors to Türkiye. As for relations with NATO, it is expected that a path closer
129 to Europe will be followed. ??Yetkin, 2023). According to the research conducted by Foreign Policy magazine,
130 in the article published in "What if Kemal Kilicdaroglu Wins Turkey's Election?", he mentioned the election
131 processes and stated that Erdogan has a high chance of winning the elections. (2022'de Türkiye-ABD ?li?kileri:
132 Ortak Çal?ma Grubu Ve ABD Kongre Seçimleri, n.d.). Regardless of the election results, it can be predicted
133 that the situation regarding Syria, defence and security relations will continue to be ongoing.

134 London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

135 **5 VI. EUROPE REGION**

136 The importance of the May 14 elections for Europe can be categorized under the following countries: Germany,
137 Spain, France, Greece, and Cyprus. In Germany, where many Turkish citizens reside, German Chancellor Olaf
138 Scholz and Türkiye maintain a harmonious relationship ??Nü, n.d.). Both countries are strategically important
139 to each other. For Germany, which follows a neutral policy in the elections, the importance of these elections is
140 the political policy between the two countries and their communication on migration and refugees. In 2023, the
141 foreign trade partnership between Germany and Türkiye will gain importance. Therefore, the election results
142 will directly and strategically affect relations with Germany.

143 Spain, which has historically maintained good relations with Türkiye, has consistently maintained good
144 relations. The reason for this can be interpreted as the fact that they have historical commonalities. Spain is
145 important for Türkiye because it supports Türkiye's accession to the EU, and Türkiye sees Spain as a true friend
146 in Europe. Whatever the results of the elections between Türkiye and Spain, it is expected that a harmonious
147 and real relationship between Spain and Türkiye can be maintained.

148 France is also at significant with "I hope that after the elections in Türkiye, whatever the outcome of the
149 elections, conditions will prevail that will allow for a gradual improvement of relations" (Service, 2022).

150 **6 VII. MIDDLE EAST**

151 Türkiye's strategic depth starts in the Middle East. This strategic depth is shaped by geoeconomic and
152 geographical factors. Immigration policies and security policies follow each other. Türkiye is itself a Middle
153 Eastern country, and its overall policy in the region is based on a peaceful and unifying attitude that embraces its
154 people. Achieving a lasting peace is one of the main goals of Turkish foreign policy. Türkiye's High-Level Strategic
155 Cooperation Council seeks to sustain Türkiye-Middle East foreign policy relations. In other words, Türkiye's post-
156 election economic, peaceful, and cooperative policy is important for the Middle East. For Azerbaijan and Türkiye,
157 which characterize each other as two brotherly countries, Türkiye's support for Karabakh gains importance in
158 these elections. If there is a change of government, the developments between Türkiye and Azerbaijan are not
159 expected to be affected, but there may be changes to the Middle East policy.

160 **7 VIII. CONCLUSION**

161 As a result, the May 14th elections in Türkiye have gained importance not only within the country but also on
162 the world agenda. The main reasons for this are the country's geographical importance with its territories in Asia
163 and Europe, its mediation role in the Russia-Ukraine war, the NATO processes of Switzerland and Finland, its
164 foreign policy communication with the US, the large number of Turks residing in the European region, especially

7 VIII. CONCLUSION

165 in Germany, and its trade relations; Türkiye's historically good relations with Spain and its support for Türkiye's
166 accession to the EU, the dispute with Greece over Cyprus and the seas; the role of France; and Türkiye's role
167 in the Middle East, migration policy, security, and Karabakh. It is precisely for these reasons that the elections
168 in Türkiye affect the world. As Deputy Chairman Numan Kurtulmu? said, "This is the election of the century."
???ha, 2023)"¹



Figure 1:

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¹ This research paper is based on the qualitative research method of observation in the Türkiye. In the qualitative method, the researcher is the instrument of the research paper. The descriptive way of qualitative research is, according to the author's main objective, to be unbiased and aware of the importance of giving the data about phenomena. The author's approach is to cut away from personal perspectives when the research reports.

Ukraine, on the other hand, has a neutral approach to the elections in Türkiye. It does not have a clear opinion. Yevgeniya Gaber, a Ukrainian foreign policy expert at the Atlantic Council, is grateful for Erdo?an's support for Ukraine. Although Gaber is grateful for this support, Ukraine is ready to welcome a new leader to Turkey. The reason for this is that relations between Türkiye and Ukraine are based on a long history and trust. (Rusya Ve Ukrayna, Türkiye'deki Seçimlere Nas?l Bak?yor, 2023). Relations between Russia, Ukraine, and Türkiye have become more visible since the outbreak of the war between Ukraine and Russia, with Türkiye acting as a mediator. If Recep Tayyip Erdo?an wins the elections again and comes to power, the foreign policy between these countries will continue to be stable. If the opposition wins, the long-established order of the Justice and Development Party, which has been in power in Türkiye for twenty-one years, will change radically. Although K?l?çdaro?lu has stated that if

he wins the elections, he will adopt a consistent stance between Russia and Ukraine, Ali Babacan, who supports the national alliance, defends the behavior of the Europeans towards Russia.

(Ukrayna'daki Sava??n Kaderini Türkiye'deki

Seçimler Belirleyecek, 2023). Even within the

National Alliance, there are disagreements on foreign policy, and it is unclear what kind of foreign policy he will adopt if he wins the elections.

Russia and Ukraine are interested in Türkiye's elections in May for a number of reasons.

According to BBC Turkish, Yuri Mavashev, head of the Center for New Turkish Studies (YETAM), said that Russia is generally interested in the Turkish elections. He also said that;

"Putin clearly does not want to recognize any other leader except Erdogan. I am 100 percent sure of this. It is easier with him, it is clearer and it is clearly seen that Putin supports Erdo?an" (Ak pamuk, 2023).

Looking at Türkiye's foreign policy from the perspective of the National Alliance, presidential candidate Kemal K?l?çdaro?lu told Ayd?n Sezer that if he wins the elections, he will maintain a

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7 VIII. CONCLUSION

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