



TÜRKİYE BİLİMLER AKADEMİSİ  
TURKISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

# GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS and TÜRKİYE



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TÜRKİYE BİLİMLER AKADEMİSİ  
TURKISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

**GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS  
and  
TÜRKİYE**

**Editors**

A. Nuri YURDUSEV  
Mürsel DOĞRUL

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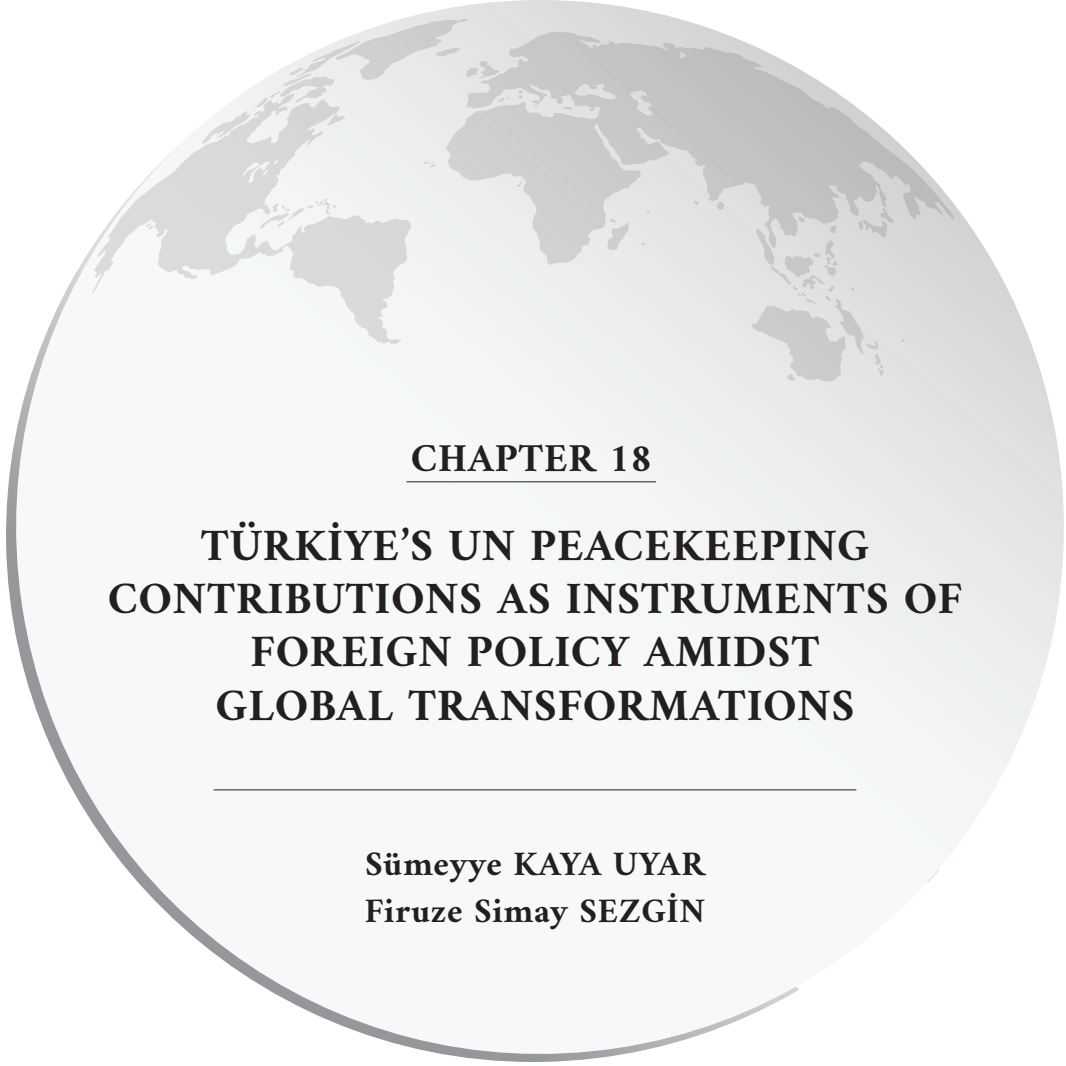
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**Sümeyye KAYA UYAR  
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# TÜRKİYE'S UN PEACEKEEPING CONTRIBUTIONS AS INSTRUMENTS OF FOREIGN POLICY AMIDST GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS

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## **Abstract**

How do states strategically engage with United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) to achieve their foreign policy goals? This study explores Türkiye's strategic engagement with UN PKOs in the context of its evolving foreign policy priorities. We argue that Türkiye employs multilateral relationships of UN PKO personnel contributions as strategic tools to achieve specific foreign policy goals. By compiling data from 2002 to 2018, we analyze how Türkiye's participation in PKOs aligns with its broader foreign policy objectives under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. The research employs logistic and negative binomial regression analyses to examine the relationship between Türkiye's peacekeeping contributions and its foreign policy alignment. Findings reveal a nuanced interplay, indicating that Türkiye's decision to contribute to PKOs is influenced by the collective actions of multiple countries aligning with its foreign policy objectives. Additionally, temporal variations highlight Türkiye's changing diplomacy, with peacekeeping commitments reflecting shifts in its policy orientations. The study underscores the significance of multilateral partnerships and foreign policy alignment in shaping Türkiye's engagement with UN PKOs, offering insights into the complex dynamics of international diplomacy and the role of emerging powers in global peace and security efforts.

## **Keywords**

*United Nations, Peacekeeping Operations, Türkiye, Foreign Policy, Strategic Engagement*

## **Introduction**

In an era characterized by complex geopolitical challenges and evolving security threats, the role of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations (PKOs) has become increasingly vital in maintaining international peace and security. As conflicts persist and new threats emerge, the demand for UN peacekeepers continues to grow, underscoring the importance of understanding the dynamics and determinants of states' engagement with these multilateral efforts.

Among the diverse array of nations contributing to UN peacekeeping missions, Türkiye stands out as a significant actor, leveraging its diplomatic influence and strategic interests to shape the trajectory of global peacekeeping endeavors. Situated at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, Türkiye occupies a unique geopolitical position that affords it both challenges and opportunities in navigating the complex landscape of international diplomacy. With a history of diplomatic engagement and a strategic vision that spans multiple regions, Türkiye has emerged as a significant player in global affairs, actively participating in various multilateral initiatives aimed at promoting peace, stability, and development.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to explore the strategic engagement of Türkiye with UN PKOs, unraveling the intricacies of Türkiye's foreign policy calculus and its implications for international security. By examining the patterns, determinants, and motivations underlying Türkiye's contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, this research endeavors to shed light on the strategic imperatives driving Türkiye's diplomatic conduct and its impact on the broader dynamics of global peacekeeping efforts.

The choice of Türkiye as a case study stems from the uninterrupted governance of a single political party, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi: AKP), over two decades, providing a unique opportunity to observe how foreign policy priorities may evolve under consistent leadership. Additionally, Türkiye's fluctuating foreign policy, coupled with its longstanding support for UN PKOs, offers an ideal setting to investigate the alignment between foreign policy orientations and contributions to UN PKOs while controlling for factors such as party ideologies and leadership effects.

At the heart of this inquiry lies a fundamental question: How does Türkiye strategically leverage its participation in UN PKOs to advance its foreign policy objectives? Depicting the period from 2002 to 2018, this study uncovers several key findings regarding Türkiye's strategic engagement with UN PKOs. Our analysis reveals that Türkiye's participation in peacekeeping missions is intricately linked to its foreign policy objectives. We find that the presence of countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives significantly influences its decision to contribute to specific UN peacekeeping missions. Specifically, when more countries with foreign policy alignment contribute to an operation, Türkiye is more likely to enhance its participation, signaling a strategic convergence of interests and efforts to advance shared objectives on the international stage.

Across different periods, we observe varying levels of Türkiye's contributions to UN PKOs, reflecting shifts in its strategic imperatives. For instance, during periods characterized by heightened regional tensions or assertive foreign policy postures, such as the Middle Easternization and Interventionist periods, Türkiye demonstrates a greater propensity to contribute to peacekeeping missions, aligning its actions with its broader geopolitical ambitions. Conversely, during phases marked by efforts to strengthen ties with Europe or pursue more cautious diplomatic approaches, such as the Europeanization period, Türkiye's engagement with UN PKOs tends to diminish, highlighting the nuanced interplay between domestic politics, regional dynamics, and international commitments.

The paper proceeds by first discussing the existing literature and theoretical frameworks, providing a robust foundation for our analysis of Türkiye's engagement with UN PKOs. Following this, we outline the research design, detailing our methodological approach and analytical tools. Subsequently, the paper presents empirical findings derived from the analyses. Finally, the paper concludes by synthesizing key findings, emphasizing theoretical contributions, and outlining potential future research.

## UN Peacekeeping Contributions

Contributing to UN PKOs is a voluntary process for member states, guided by considerations of a “calculus of interest and capability” (Durch et al., 2002, p. 16). The characteristics of personnel-contributing countries to UN PKOs have significantly shifted over time, with non-democratic and developing nations increasingly playing a prominent role since the 2000s.

The literature on PKO contributions has two primary explanations rooted in Realist and Liberal perspectives. The focus on these perspectives for explaining contributions to PKOs is grounded in the prominent role these theories play in the intersection of PKOs and international relations. Realism and Liberalism offer contrasting yet comprehensive frameworks that address key motivations and behaviors of states in the international arena. While other theories, such as Constructivism or Marxism, offer valuable insights, the literature focuses on Realist and Liberal perspectives to benefit from a balanced examination of both power-driven and cooperative motivations.

Realist accounts propose that countries engage in peacekeeping to further their foreign policy objectives, aiming to maintain the status quo or enhance their global position and prestige (Bellamy & Williams, 2013; Neack, 1995). However, this perspective has faced criticism, particularly regarding discrepancies between contributions to peacekeeping and participation in decision-making processes within the UN. For instance, Krishnasamy’s (2001) analysis of India and Pakistan demonstrates that contributions to PKOs do not always align with these countries’ influence over UN peacekeeping policies and decisions.

The Realist perspective also suggests that states often participate in PKOs for reasons related to self-interest. These motivations may stem from historical colonial ties or the desire to secure access to strategic resources such as oil (de Jonge Oudraat, 1996; Fortna, 2008). Additionally, countries may contribute troops to prevent the spread of conflict across borders and to manage refugee or displaced populations. For example, Uzonyi (2015) suggests that analyzing refugee flows can help predict which countries are likely to contribute troops and the extent of their contribution to a specific conflict.

The Liberal perspective on PKOs posits that democratic nations exhibit a greater propensity to engage in such endeavors compared to non-democratic states (Bellamy & Williams, 2013). This inclination is underpinned by the principles of democratic peace theory, which underscores three primary incentives for democracies to contribute peacekeepers. Firstly, due to their foundational liberal principles, democracies prioritize safeguarding and promoting the rights of individuals (Bellamy & Williams, 2013; Lebovic, 2004). Secondly, democratic leaders perceive democratic practices as integral to their self-interest and view the promotion of such principles, along with humanitarian objectives, as imperative (Bellamy & Williams, 2013; Lebovic, 2004). Thirdly, democracies are more inclined than non-democratic regimes to participate in international organizations and collaborate towards achieving common goals of peace and security (Bellamy & Williams, 2013; Mansfield & Pevehouse, 2006; Pevehouse, 2002).

According to the Liberal perspective, democratic nations are inclined to engage in PKOs with the belief that such actions will advance peace, democracy, and human rights. Nonetheless, some scholars suggest that while there is a probable correlation between democracy and participation in peacekeeping endeavors, it is not a definitive one (Sezgin, 2022). This implies that although democracies tend to show a higher propensity to contribute to peacekeeping missions due to their commitment to promoting peace and democratic values, this inclination may not always translate into actual contributions.

Although Realist and Liberal perspectives have offered valuable insights into the motivations behind countries’ contributions to UN PKOs, they do not offer a comprehensive framework. Previous research has often focused on a limited set of factors, neglecting the intricate interplay of various elements that influence decision-making regarding contribution. Sezgin’s (2022) study integrates both Realist and Liberal theories in her analysis, highlighting that no single theory can fully explain the motives behind European Union (EU) member states’ contributions. Instead, the decision to commit personnel to PKOs is influenced by a wide range of interacting factors. Therefore, it is crucial to consider multiple variables when investigating why countries opt to participate in peacekeeping missions.

Bellamy and Williams (2013) propose a framework to elucidate the factors influencing states' decisions regarding their contributions to PKOs. Their framework distinguishes between motivating factors and inhibitors that shape a state's willingness or reluctance to participate in peacekeeping efforts. They argue that a state's strategic culture and institutional framework contribute to its disposition towards peacekeeping, which in turn interacts with specific policy considerations to determine its ultimate decision.

Bellamy and Williams' (2013) framework encompasses various sectors, including political, security, economic, institutional, and normative dimensions. In the political sector, factors such as national prestige and the desire for a prominent voice in international affairs may motivate contributions, while competing domestic priorities or challenging political environments may hinder participation. Similarly, in the security sector, states may be driven by a desire to resolve regional conflicts and promote global peace, yet a preference for alternative solutions or skepticism towards UN mechanisms may impede contributions. Overall, the framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the diverse factors that influence states' decisions regarding peacekeeping contributions.

Another perspective on states' motivations for contributing to PKOs is the concept of 'peacekeeping for profit'. This notion posits that states can benefit financially from the UN's reimbursement of costs associated with deploying personnel and equipment, potentially exceeding the actual expenses incurred by developing countries (Berman & Sams, 2000; Blum, 2000; Bobrow & Boyer, 1997; Durch, 1994; Khanna et al., 1998). While studies vary in their assessment of whether this applies equally to lower-income contributors, the majority indicate that providing peacekeepers yields benefits for developing nations while constituting a cost for developed ones (Gaibullov et al., 2015; Kathman & Melin, 2017; Sheehan, 2011; Victor, 2010; Ward & Dorussen, 2016). Bove and Elia (2011) suggest that 'mercenaryization' is a significant driver of peacekeeping efforts, while Gaibullov et al. (2015) further this argument by proposing that some countries specialize in supplying peacekeepers as a lucrative venture, rooted in the public goods approach (p. 738). However, Coleman and Nyblade (2018) argue that the narrative surrounding 'peacekeeping for profit' has been overstated, asserting that even for developing contributors, profiting from UN peacekeeping remains highly restricted. An alternative explanation put forth by Ward and Dorussen (2016) focuses on policy complementarities to explain why countries contribute substantially to specific missions, finding evidence that countries contribute more when working alongside their 'friends.'

The intersection of a nation's foreign policy orientation and its contributions to UN PKOs is a critical area of study in understanding the role of states in global affairs. How countries engage with international peacekeeping efforts often reflects their broader foreign policy objectives, strategic priorities, and regional dynamics. Participating countries do not contribute evenly across missions. In principle, and if peacekeeping were independent of contributor-specific interests or foreign policy goals, one would expect an even contribution of peacekeeping resources to all regions of the world. Contributors, however, appear to have a greater interest in certain regions than others, depending on their foreign policy priorities (Meiske & Ruggeri, 2017).

### **Türkiye's Foreign Policy Priorities and Contribution in Peacekeeping Operations**

From a Realist perspective, Türkiye's contributions to UN PKOs can be seen as strategic calculations to further its foreign policy objectives and enhance its global position. Therefore, the connection between Türkiye's foreign policy objectives and its participation in UN PKOs holds particular significance, especially within the uninterrupted period of the AKP governance. Türkiye's involvement in UN PKOs has fluctuated over time, with phases of heightened and diminished contributions, as depicted in Figure 1. This raises the question: Can Türkiye's foreign policy objectives explain these distinct phases in its contributions to UN PKOs?

Choosing Türkiye as a case study for analyzing the alignment of foreign policy orientations with UN PKO contributions is driven by several factors. Firstly, the uninterrupted governance by a single political party for two decades offers a unique opportunity to observe how foreign policy priorities

evolve under consistent leadership. This period allows for the identification of trends and patterns in Türkiye's foreign policy and its alignment with UN PKO participation. We can also assume a policy consistency regarding Türkiye's contributions over these two decades.

Secondly, Türkiye's foreign policy has shown fluctuations, with shifts in regional priorities and global engagements. This dynamic environment presents an ideal setting to investigate how changes in policy orientations influence contributions to UN PKOs. Examining periods of policy adjustment or realignment helps us understand the impact of shifting foreign policy objectives on Türkiye's engagement in international peacekeeping efforts.

Moreover, the consistent rule of the AKP allows us to control for factors like party ideologies and leadership effects, isolating the influence of specific foreign policy orientations on Türkiye's decision-making regarding UN PKO contributions, without confounding variables associated with changes in leadership or party ideology.

Additionally, Türkiye's longstanding support for UN PKOs underscores its commitment to international security and stability. Focusing on a country that consistently supports UN PKOs provides insights into the underlying motivations and strategic considerations driving Türkiye's involvement in such missions. This context offers a solid foundation for analyzing the alignment between Türkiye's foreign policy objectives and its contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts, offering a broader perspective on international security cooperation.

In essence, Türkiye's combination of consistent governance, fluctuating policies, and unwavering support for UN PKOs makes it an ideal case study for examining the interplay between foreign policy orientations and peacekeeping contributions. By leveraging these factors, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of how Türkiye's evolving foreign policy objectives shape its engagement with the international community through UN PKOs.

Türkiye's foreign policy trajectory under the AKP government has been marked by a series of distinct phases, each characterized by unique priorities, challenges, and strategic imperatives. From the early years marked by Europeanization efforts and a commitment to zero problems with neighbors to later phases focusing on Middle Easternization and assertive regional power with strategic autonomy, Türkiye's foreign policy landscape has undergone significant transformation (Kutlay & Öniş, 2021; Yavuz, 2022; Oğuzlu, 2019; Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009). In this vein, Türkiye's contributions to UN PKOs offer valuable insights into the country's evolving role in international peacekeeping efforts. By examining the conditions under which Türkiye has chosen to participate in UN PKOs during different phases of AKP rule, we can gain a deeper understanding of the factors driving its engagement in global security initiatives.

During the Cold War era, Türkiye maintained relatively passive foreign policies. However, this stance shifted towards more active foreign policymaking following the end of the Cold War. The advent of the AKP era introduced a dynamic phase in Turkish foreign policy, characterized by both continuity and change. While some aspects of foreign policy exhibited continuity, such as the influence of pre-AKP agreements, other areas experienced significant ruptures and discontinuities. Despite these shifts, elements of continuity persisted, suggesting that Turkish foreign policy under the AKP government cannot be characterized by a complete rupture from past policies (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009).

A key emphasis of the AKP government was its role as a mediator or facilitator, particularly within the Middle East. This was exemplified by various diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Türkiye, such as hosting meetings to address regional issues. For instance, Türkiye facilitated discussions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as diplomatic contacts between Israel, Palestine, and Syria (Altunışık & Çuhadar, 2010). These efforts showed Türkiye's aspirations to play a constructive role in regional diplomacy and conflict resolution.

During the early years of the AKP government, spanning from November 2002 to October 2005, Türkiye experienced a period often referred to as the 'golden years of the AKP,' marked by a pursuit of Europeanization (Bilgin, 2005). This era witnessed Türkiye's concerted efforts to align its policies with European standards and norms, reflecting its commitment to closer integration

with the EU and its aspiration for membership (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2005). This strong orientation towards Europeanization was accompanied by a policy of fostering 'Zero Problems' with neighboring countries, aimed at maintaining stable and cooperative relations with neighboring countries (Oğuzlu, 2007). This approach extended to regions such as Europe, Egypt, Georgia, and various countries within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

**Figure 1**  
Türkiye's Contribution Rates to UN Peacekeeping Operations

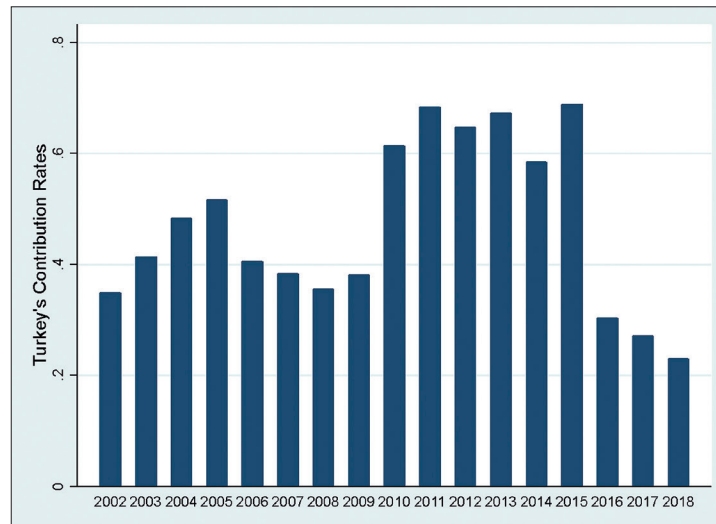
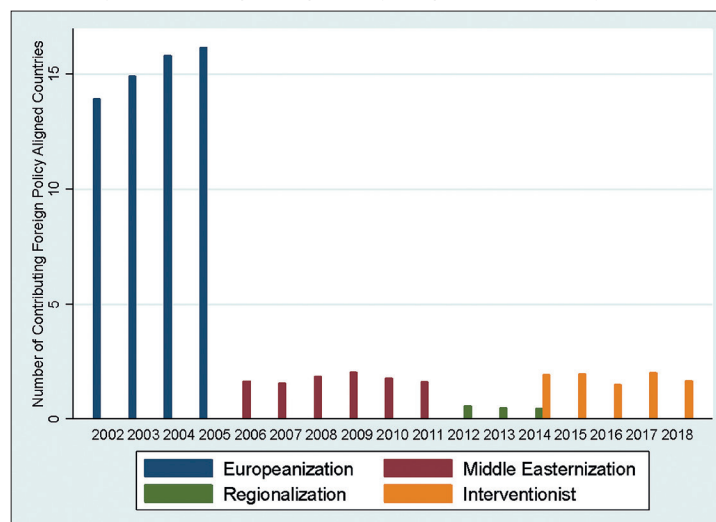


Figure 1 demonstrates a consistent upward trend in Türkiye's contributions to UN PKOs during the Europeanization period, reflecting the nation's heightened engagement with peacekeeping efforts. This period coincides with Türkiye's concerted efforts to align its foreign policy objectives with European standards and norms, particularly as it sought closer integration with the EU.

Figure 2 presents the number of contributing foreign policy aligned countries categorized by periods. Notably, Figure 2 illustrates how Türkiye's contributions to UN PKOs exhibit distinct fluctuations in response to shifting foreign policy priorities. Specifically, during the Europeanization period, Türkiye's contributions peak, particularly in missions involving countries aligned with its foreign policy objectives, such as EU member states. These findings underscore the dynamic relationship between Türkiye's foreign policy orientations and its peacekeeping engagements, highlighting the strategic recalibrations undertaken in response to evolving geopolitical dynamics.

**Figure 2**  
Number of Contributing Foreign Policy Aligned Countries by Periods



From 2006 to 2011, Turkish foreign policy underwent a process of Middle Easternization, with a shift in focus towards the Middle East region. This period saw Türkiye becoming increasingly engaged in regional affairs, particularly with countries such as Israel, Iran, Syria, and Egypt. The Middle Easternization of Turkish foreign policy reflected a strategic reorientation towards the region and a desire to play a more assertive role in Middle Eastern politics (Oguzlu, 2019).

Between 2012 and 2014, Turkish foreign policy exhibited characteristics of an assertive regional power, emphasizing strategic autonomy and independence from Western influence. During this time, Türkiye sought closer ties with non-Western powers, including Russia and China, while also strengthening relations with Turkic states such as Azerbaijan. Additionally, Türkiye cut ties with Egypt during this period, signaling a departure from traditional alliances in favor of a more independent foreign policy stance.

From 2014 to 2018, Turkish foreign policy took on an interventionist approach, characterized by active involvement in regional conflicts and crises. Türkiye expanded its presence in the Middle East, particularly in countries like Qatar, and extended its influence into Africa, establishing military bases in Somalia, Sudan, and Djibouti. Despite international criticism, Türkiye maintained close ties with non-Western powers and continued to assert its autonomy in foreign affairs. Turkish foreign policy shifted towards a focus on strategic autonomy, driven by a desire to assert independence in the face of international isolation. This period saw Türkiye strengthening its ties with countries such as Qatar and Russia, prioritizing partnerships with non-Western powers. The emphasis on strategic autonomy reflected Türkiye's determination to pursue its national interests and assert itself on the global stage.

Given Türkiye's evolving foreign policy orientations from 2002 to 2018, which include periods of Europeanization, Middle Easternization, emphasis on strategic autonomy, and pursuit of regional influence, we argue that Türkiye's likelihood of contributing to UN PKOs is higher when countries that align with its foreign policy objectives contribute to peacekeeping efforts. Considering these evolving foreign policy orientations and strategic imperatives, our hypotheses seek to explore the relationship between peacekeeper contributions of Türkiye's foreign policy aligned countries and Türkiye's likelihood of contributing to UN PKOs during those specified periods.

From a Realist perspective, grounded in the notion that states often seek to align their actions within multilateral frameworks, such as UN PKOs, with their broader foreign policy objectives, we reach our first hypothesis. In the case of Türkiye, which operates within a complex geopolitical landscape, its foreign policy objectives have changed throughout the depicted two decades, and have included concerns of regional stability, the promotion of specific ideological or strategic interests, and the projection of influence on the global stage. Therefore, if countries that align with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives actively contribute to UN PKOs, we expect Türkiye to be more inclined to contribute to those same operations. This alignment with certain states may serve Türkiye's strategic interests by bolstering its diplomatic alliances, enhancing its reputation as a responsible international actor, and advancing its broader foreign policy agenda.

*Hypothesis 1:* If countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives contribute to UN PKOs, Türkiye is more likely to contribute to those operations.

Hypothesis 2 builds upon the premise that the level of participation by countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives in a specific UN PKO serves as a proxy for the operation's perceived relevance and importance to Türkiye's strategic interests. As the number of such countries contributing to a particular peacekeeping mission increases, it suggests a growing consensus among states with shared interests regarding the significance of that operation. Consequently, Türkiye is more likely to view its own participation in the operation as beneficial and aligned with its foreign policy objectives. This hypothesis implies that Türkiye's decision to contribute to UN PKOs is influenced not only by its individual foreign policy considerations but also by the collective actions of other states with similar strategic goals.

*Hypothesis 2:* As the number of countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives that contribute to a specific UN PKO increases, Türkiye's likelihood of contributing more personnel to that operation also increases.

Considering contributions to PKOs as strategic actions aimed at achieving specific foreign policy objectives, it is reasonable to anticipate fluctuating levels of engagement over time, aligned with Türkiye's evolving foreign policy objectives. These objectives shape Türkiye's approach to international affairs and influence its priorities in UN PKOs. Therefore, it is natural to expect varying degrees of contribution corresponding to different phases of Türkiye's foreign policy orientations. For instance, during periods characterized by a focus on regional stability or interventionist policies, Türkiye may exhibit heightened participation in PKOs to assert its influence or address security concerns. Conversely, during phases emphasizing diplomacy or alignment with certain regional blocs, Türkiye's contributions to PKOs might diminish as it prioritizes other avenues of engagement. Thus, fluctuations in Türkiye's contributions to PKOs can be seen as reflective of its strategic alignment with specific foreign policy objectives during different time periods.

## **Research Design**

### **Data**

We decided to include post-2002 data specifically concerning Türkiye's involvement in UN PKOs due to the significant shifts and developments under AKP governance. The AKP's ascension to power marked a transformative period in Türkiye's foreign policy, including its approach to international peacekeeping efforts.

Under the AKP government, Türkiye experienced a notable reorientation in its foreign policy objectives, with an emphasis on proactive engagement in regional and international affairs. This shift led to a more assertive stance in contributing to global peacekeeping initiatives, aligning with the AKP's broader vision of Türkiye as a major player on the world stage. Furthermore, the AKP's tenure witnessed a diversification and expansion of Türkiye's participation in UN PKOs.

By including data from 2002 to 2018, our research aims to capture these significant changes and provide a comprehensive understanding of Türkiye's evolving role in UN peacekeeping efforts within the context of AKP governance. This period covers 51 UN PKOs that were active at some point within this timeframe. Timewise and geographically, the almost two-decade-long timeframe and the global reach of cases offer an attractive analysis.

The dataset encompasses not only the countries actively contributing to UN PKOs but also those eligible to participate yet opting not to. By integrating data from 195 such nations into our sample, we aim to accurately discern the variances between Türkiye's contribution choices and its foreign policy inclinations. The dataset's unit of analysis is country-year per mission. We intentionally chose yearly aggregation instead of monthly observations. This decision reflects the recognition that while foreign policy preferences might be discernible in specific months through leadership speeches, significant shifts in overarching foreign policy priorities take time to manifest in PKOs.

### **Dependent Variables**

Türkiye's contribution to PKOs is represented by two dependent variables: one binary and one continuous. The binary variable, *Contribution*, indicates whether Türkiye contributed personnel to a mission in a given year, while the continuous variable, *Contribution Size*, quantifies the extent of Türkiye's personnel contribution to that mission during the same year. These dependent variables are accordingly differentiated for Hypotheses 1 and 2.

We employed TUBAKOV dataset for Türkiye's peacekeeping contribution data until 2015, and the rest of the years were filled manually from the Peacekeeping Database provided by the International Peace Institute (IPI, n.d.). These two datasets include various types of peacekeeping personnel, including armed troops, formed police units, individual police, and military observers.

However, instead of analyzing personnel contributions based on their specific roles, our study focuses on the aggregated number of personnel contributed by Türkiye. This approach allows us to examine Türkiye's overall engagement in UN PKOs without delving into the specific duties and effects of different types of peacekeeping personnel.

### Independent Variables

The independent variables, mirroring the structure of the dependent variables, encompass both binary and continuous variables. While Türkiye's foreign policy preferences are delineated into distinct time periods, our analysis involves examining each time period individually as well as adopting a comprehensive approach spanning from 2002 to 2018. This dual approach allows for a detailed exploration of specific time periods while also offering a broader perspective encompassing all foreign policy preference periods.

For an encompassing foreign policy preference, we introduced two variables: *Foreign Policy Alignment* and *Cumulative Foreign Policy Alignment*. The binary variable, *Foreign Policy Alignment*, indicates whether Türkiye's contribution aligns with its foreign policy preferences, with a value of 1 denoting synchronous personnel contribution with its preferred countries and 0 otherwise. Meanwhile, the continuous variable, *Cumulative Foreign Policy Alignment*, reflects the aggregate tally of how many foreign policy-preferred countries have contributed to a particular operation in a given year. This differentiation accounts for a nuanced understanding of the significance of foreign policy preferences across different contexts. The data regarding personnel contributions to UN PKOs from all contributing countries are sourced from the IPI's Peacekeeping Database (IPI, n.d.).

To analyze each time period individually, we look at the cumulative foreign policy alignment, meaning the sum of how many foreign policy-aligned countries contributed to a PKO for that year, for each time period. This variable is dubbed *Total Time Period [1, 2, 3, 4] Alignment*.<sup>1</sup>

### Control Variables

We incorporate a range of control variables to comprehensively analyze the factors influencing Türkiye's peacekeeping contributions and its foreign policy preferences. These variables encompass both internal and external factors, aiming to capture the multifaceted dynamics shaping the outcomes of conflicts and peacekeeping efforts. Each variable is carefully selected based on theoretical relevance and data availability, ensuring robustness in our analysis.

Firstly, we include the yearly total of *battle-related deaths* in the host country, serving as an indicator of battlefield violence. This variable records the number of casualties resulting from direct combat between a country's government and a conflicting rebel group on a yearly basis. Each observation represents the annual aggregation of individual events recorded in the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) for each host country (Sundberg & Melander, 2013). Measuring conflict intensity with battle casualties enables comparisons across different peacekeeping settings and patterns. *Battle-related deaths* is logarithmically transformed to overcome disparities.

Secondly, we incorporate data on peacekeeper *fatalities*, measured as the yearly total from the Military and Non-Military Interventions Dataset (MILINDA) (Jetschke & Schlipphak, 2019). Peacekeeper fatalities are examined as a crucial metric of mission risk and operational challenges, offering insights into the dangers faced by peacekeeping forces on the ground. Peacekeeper fatalities can deter countries from contributing personnel to peacekeeping missions due to concerns about personnel safety. High casualties may lead to public and political pressure to withdraw or reduce involvement in such operations.

1 Time Period 1 (Europeanization) encompasses members of the EU, along with Egypt, Georgia, and select members of the OIC. Time Period 2 (Middle Easternization) includes countries from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region such as Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen. Time Period 3 (Regionalization) consists of Russia, China, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Lastly, Time Period 4 (Interventionist) encompasses MENA countries, Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Russia, and China.

Additionally, peacekeeper fatalities can lower military morale and affect recruitment rates for future missions. Countries may adjust their contributions in response to fatalities by implementing safety measures or reducing peacekeeper deployments to high-risk areas.

Furthermore, the inclusion of control variables related to strategic resources and socio-economic factors enriches the analytical framework by incorporating realist perspectives. For Türkiye, refugees are a critical aspect from a Realist perspective, with evident refugee flows to Türkiye. The inclusion of the outgoing *refugee* population from the operation-receiving country as a control variable serves to address the potential spillover effects of conflict on neighboring regions and the destabilizing consequences that large refugee outflows may entail for both the host country and the wider region (Bove & Elia, 2011). The data on outgoing refugee populations is sourced from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, n.d.). To mitigate the influence of extreme values, *refugee* data is logged.

In addition to conflict related variables, it is necessary to include Türkiye-related variables to control for changes in Türkiye's context. Türkiye's *military strength*, as measured by the total armed personnel, reflects its capability to contribute to peacekeeping missions. A larger military force suggests that Türkiye has the resources and personnel power available to deploy troops for PKOs. This variable helps us to understand Türkiye's readiness and ability to engage in such missions, providing context for its level of involvement in international peacekeeping efforts. *Military strength* data is from the World Bank (World Bank, "Armed forces personnel," n.d.).

Lastly, Türkiye's *GDP growth rate* serves as an indicator of its economic stability and prosperity. A higher GDP growth rate suggests that Türkiye's economy is expanding, which may positively influence its willingness and ability to contribute resources to peacekeeping missions. Conversely, a downturn in GDP growth rate could suffice for the argument of peacekeeping for profit, with receiving benefits from contributing to operations. Türkiye's *GDP growth rate* is sourced from the World Bank (World Bank, "GDP per capita growth," n.d.).

Lastly, the geographical proximity between Türkiye and the host country is considered. This variable is determined using CEPII's dyadic GeoDist database, which measures the distance between the capital cities of the recipient and participating countries (Mayer & Zignano, 2011). *Distance* is included as a control variable to account for regional security considerations and potential spillover effects. *Distance* is logarithmically transformed.

## **Research Method**

The analysis is structured into two distinct sets of large-scale analyses to comprehensively investigate Türkiye's involvement in UN PKOs. In the first set of analyses, the focus is on examining the binary nature of Türkiye's contribution to peacekeeping missions, using the dependent variable *Contribution*. This is accomplished through logistic regression analysis, which is well-suited for modeling binary outcomes.

In the second set of analyses, we shift our focus to the level of Türkiye's contribution to peacekeeping missions, with the dependent variable being *Contribution Size*. Unlike the binary analysis, this set of analyses aims to quantify the extent of Türkiye's involvement using negative binomial regression.

The rationale for choosing negative binomial regression lies in its suitability for modeling count data and its ability to handle overdispersion. Count data, such as the number of personnel Türkiye contributes to peacekeeping missions, often exhibit overdispersion, where the variance exceeds the mean. This overdispersion can result from inherent variability in the data, which simpler regression models cannot adequately address. Negative binomial regression extends traditional regression by introducing an additional parameter to model overdispersion, allowing the variance to exceed the mean. This flexibility makes negative binomial regression a more robust and appropriate choice for analyzing count data with overdispersion. In the context of modeling Türkiye's contributions to peacekeeping missions, negative binomial regression allows for a comprehensive examination of the factors influencing the magnitude of Türkiye's

contributions. By correctly accounting for the variability and potential overdispersion in the count data, this method leads to more reliable results. By analyzing both the likelihood and magnitude of Türkiye's contribution to peacekeeping missions, we can gain valuable insights into the underlying factors shaping Türkiye's involvement in international peacekeeping efforts.

## Results and Analysis

How does Türkiye strategically engage with UN PKOs to achieve its foreign policy goals? The strategic engagement of Türkiye with UN PKOs to achieve its foreign policy goals is a multifaceted phenomenon, as evidenced by the findings presented in Table 1. Hypothesis 1 posits that if countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives contribute to UN PKOs, Türkiye would be more inclined to contribute to those operations. However, the results yield a mixed picture.

For the binary variable *Foreign Policy Alignment*, the analysis in Model 1 suggests a decrease in Türkiye's likelihood of contributing to PKOs when there is a contributing foreign policy-aligned country. This finding contrasts with expectations and highlights a nuanced relationship between foreign policy alignment and Türkiye's engagement in peacekeeping efforts. On the other hand, the variable *Cumulative Foreign Policy Alignment* presents a clearer scenario in Model 2. As the number of foreign policy-aligned countries increases, Türkiye's contributions to PKOs tend to rise. This suggests that Türkiye's involvement in peacekeeping efforts is influenced by the collective actions of multiple countries aligning with its foreign policy objectives.

Further examination across different time periods provides additional insights. From Models 4 to 6, during periods characterized by Middle Easternization, Regionalization, and Interventionist policies (Time Periods 2 to 4), an increase in the contribution of foreign policy-aligned countries corresponds to a notable (accordingly a 0.26, 0.08 and 0.07 units) increase in Türkiye's contributions to PKOs. However, the dynamics differ in the Europeanization period (Time Period 1 in Model 3), where an increase in alignment with foreign policy objectives corresponds to a 0.01 decrease in Türkiye's contributions to peacekeeping efforts.

In addition to the main variables of interest, control variables consistently exhibit statistically significant results. While an increase in battle-related deaths tends to decrease Türkiye's peacekeeper contribution, other factors such as the outgoing refugee population, distance to the host country, and Türkiye's military strength and GDP growth are associated with an increase in Türkiye's contributions to PKOs.

Table 2 provides the results for Hypothesis 2, which states that an increase in the number of countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives contributing to a specific UN PKO would correspond to a higher likelihood of Türkiye contributing more personnel to that operation. The findings presented in Table 2 offer robust support for Hypothesis 2.

In Models 1 and 2, both binary and cumulative *Foreign Policy Alignment* variables demonstrate statistically significant relationships. A unit increase in either binary or cumulative alignment with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives leads to an expected increase in Türkiye's personnel contributions to the PKO by 1.97 and 0.003 units, respectively. These results suggest that Türkiye is more inclined to contribute to peacekeeping efforts when more countries that align with Türkiye's foreign policy are involved.

As in Table 1, Table 2 presents similar dynamics for different time periods. For Time Periods 2 to 4, corresponding to Middle Easternization, Regionalization, and Interventionist policies, the analysis reveals significant positive relationships. Specifically, an increase in contributions from foreign policy-aligned countries is associated with an expected increase in Türkiye's personnel contributions to the PKO by 0.1, 0.63, and 0.1 units, respectively.

However, an interesting deviation is observed for Time Period 1 (Europeanization), where a unit increase in contributions from foreign policy-aligned countries is associated with a decrease in Türkiye's personnel contributions by 0.01 units. This suggests that during the Europeanization period, characterized by a focus on European and democratic values, Türkiye was less inclined to contribute to PKOs involving European countries.

Consistent with the findings in Table 1, all control variables exhibit statistically significant and consistent relationships. With a unit increase in battle-related deaths, outgoing refugee population, distance to the host country, and Türkiye's GDP growth, we expect a decrease in Türkiye's contribution to PKOs. However, with an increase in fatalities, and Türkiye's military strength, we expect an increase in Türkiye's peacekeeper contributions.

The results underscore the nuanced nature of Türkiye's strategic engagement with UN PKOs. The findings suggest that the presence of foreign policy-aligned countries significantly influences Türkiye's decisions to contribute to peacekeeping efforts, with a single variation observed for a time period. Notably, Türkiye's decision to contribute to peacekeeping efforts is contingent upon the alignment of participating countries with its foreign policy agenda. This relationship exhibits distinct nuances when considered from both binary and cumulative perspectives. Although having a single foreign policy aligned country does not intrigue Türkiye's contribution decision, the cumulative sum of all foreign policy aligned countries matters for Türkiye's decisions in contributing to PKOs.

**Table 1**  
Türkiye's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping Operations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Foreign</i>	-0.127***					
<i>Policy Alignment</i>	(0.0185)					
<i>Total Time Period (TP)</i>		0.00455***				
<i>Total TP 1</i>			-0.0116*** (0.00138)			
<i>Total TP 2</i>				0.263*** (0.00949)		
<i>Total TP 3</i>					0.0896*** (0.0203)	
<i>Total TP 4</i>						0.0711*** (0.00574)
<i>Battle-related deaths</i>	-0.0682*** (0.00204)	-0.0628*** (0.00206)	-0.0672*** (0.00200)	-0.0521*** (0.00204)	-0.0635*** (0.00203)	-0.0599*** (0.00205)
<i>Fatalities</i>	0.220*** (0.00605)	0.213*** (0.00588)	0.218*** (0.00579)	0.198*** (0.00568)	0.214*** (0.00579)	0.206*** (0.00588)
<i>Refugee</i>	0.0636*** (0.00203)	0.0673*** (0.00195)	0.0667*** (0.00196)	0.0675*** (0.00199)	0.0675*** (0.00196)	0.0681*** (0.00194)
<i>Military strength</i>	0.00000456*** (0.000000162)	0.00000441*** (0.000000166)	0.00000493*** (0.000000169)	0.00000327*** (0.000000164)	0.00000449*** (0.000000163)	0.00000545*** (0.000000183)
<i>GDP growth rate</i>	0.109*** (0.00226)	0.107*** (0.00228)	0.111*** (0.00226)	0.126*** (0.00229)	0.108*** (0.00224)	0.107*** (0.00224)
<i>Distance</i>	0.645*** (0.0126)	0.645*** (0.0126)	0.646*** (0.0126)	0.586*** (0.0124)	0.648*** (0.0126)	0.640*** (0.0126)
<i>Constant</i>	-9.293*** (0.163)	-9.338*** (0.163)	-9.614*** (0.164)	-8.452*** (0.160)	-9.402*** (0.162)	-9.939*** (0.171)
<i>N</i>	94078	94078	94078	94078	94078	94078
<i>Standard errors in parentheses</i>						
* $p < 0.10$ , ** $p < 0.05$ , *** $p < 0.01$						

**Table 2**  
Türkiye's Contribution Amount to UN Peacekeeping Operations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Foreign</i>	1.971***					
<i>Policy Alignment</i>	(0.0160)					
<i>Total Time</i>		0.00366***				
<i>Period (TP)</i>		(0.000661)				
<i>Total TP 1</i>			-0.0133*** (0.000569)			
<i>Total TP 2</i>				0.101*** (0.00324)		
<i>Total TP 3</i>					0.630*** (0.00907)	
<i>Total TP 4</i>						0.105*** (0.00203)
<i>Battle-related deaths</i>	-0.177*** (0.00207)	-0.285*** (0.00166)	-0.292*** (0.00167)	-0.283*** (0.00157)	-0.285*** (0.00160)	-0.283*** (0.00157)
<i>Fatalities</i>	0.0227*** (0.000584)	0.0536*** (0.000966)	0.0556*** (0.000968)	0.0544*** (0.000927)	0.0466*** (0.00102)	0.0487*** (0.000911)
<i>Refugee</i>	-0.0189*** (0.00191)	-0.0171*** (0.00234)	-0.0113*** (0.00236)	-0.0242*** (0.00237)	-0.0194*** (0.00241)	-0.0207*** (0.00225)
<i>Military strength</i>	0.00000189*** (9.35e-08)	0.00000276*** (0.000000128)	0.00000354*** (0.000000132)	0.00000140*** (0.000000133)	0.00000141*** (0.000000123)	0.00000695*** (0.000000141)
<i>GDP growth rate</i>	-0.0510*** (0.00130)	-0.0515*** (0.00146)	-0.0450*** (0.00146)	-0.0411*** (0.00147)	-0.0531*** (0.00142)	-0.0488*** (0.00141)
<i>Distance</i>	-1.281*** (0.0111)	-1.435*** (0.0138)	-1.409*** (0.0136)	-1.498*** (0.0142)	-1.411*** (0.0138)	-1.449*** (0.0132)
<i>Constant</i>	13.62*** (0.126)	16.26*** (0.162)	15.56*** (0.161)	17.47*** (0.168)	16.82*** (0.157)	13.83*** (0.161)
<i>Alpha (ln)</i>	-0.00644 (0.00549)	0.215*** (0.00526)	0.209*** (0.00521)	0.197*** (0.00540)	0.150*** (0.00542)	0.192*** (0.00530)
<i>N</i>	44943	44943	44943	44943	44943	44943

Standard errors in parentheses

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

An intriguing aspect illuminated by the findings is Türkiye's inclination to contribute to PKOs during periods characterized by a divergence from European and democratic values in its foreign policy trajectory. This divergence suggests a deliberate alignment of Türkiye's peacekeeping engagements with its evolving policy orientations, underscoring the instrumental role of UN missions in realizing broader strategic objectives. The trend wherein Türkiye's contributions increase alongside the involvement of foreign policy-aligned countries accentuates the significance of multilateral partnerships in shaping Türkiye's approach to global peacekeeping efforts.

Moreover, the differential impact of foreign policy alignment across distinct time periods offers valuable insights into Türkiye's diplomatic maneuvering. During periods associated with Middle Easternization, Regionalization, and Interventionist policies, Türkiye's propensity to contribute

to PKOs escalates in tandem with the participation of aligned nations. This dynamic underscores Türkiye's strategic leveraging of international partnerships to advance its interests within specific geopolitical contexts, reflecting a pragmatic approach to diplomacy and security.

Conversely, the observed decrease in Türkiye's personnel contributions during the Europeanization period displays the complex interplay between ideological orientations and foreign policy decision-making. Here, Türkiye's reluctance to engage in PKOs involving European countries signals a divergence from the prevailing diplomatic discourse, highlighting the interplay between Türkiye's domestic political dynamics and its external engagements.

Furthermore, the significant influence of control variables such as battle-related deaths, outgoing refugee population, and military strength underscores the multifaceted nature of Türkiye's engagement in PKOs. These variables serve as critical determinants shaping Türkiye's contributions, reflecting the intricate nexus between security imperatives, humanitarian concerns, and national interests in informing Türkiye's strategic calculus.

In essence, the findings highlight Türkiye's adept navigation of the international landscape, wherein its contributions to UN PKOs are strategically aligned with its evolving foreign policy objectives. By leveraging multilateral partnerships and adapting to shifting geopolitical realities, Türkiye effectively positions itself as a proactive stakeholder in global peace and security efforts, thereby consolidating its diplomatic influence on the world stage.

## **Conclusion**

This study provides significant insights into Türkiye's strategic engagement with UN PKOs, revealing the intricate relationship between Türkiye's foreign policy objectives and its contributions to global peacekeeping efforts. By conducting a thorough analysis of Türkiye's participation in UN missions, the research explores whether underlying foreign policy motivations shape its strategic decisions regarding PKO contributions. At the core of this investigation lies the examination of how Türkiye strategically utilizes its multilateral relationships, particularly through personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, to advance its foreign policy objectives. The central research question guiding this inquiry is: How does Türkiye's involvement in UN PKOs align with its broader foreign policy objectives?

The results emphasize Türkiye's approach to engaging with UN PKOs, revealing that the presence of foreign policy-aligned countries significantly influences its decision-making regarding peacekeeping contributions. While the involvement of a single aligned country may not impact Türkiye's decisions, the cumulative alignment of multiple nations does. Notably, Türkiye shows a propensity to contribute during periods divergent from European and democratic values, aligning its peacekeeping engagements with evolving policy orientations. This trend emphasizes the importance of multilateral partnerships in shaping Türkiye's approach to global peacekeeping. Moreover, the differential impact of foreign policy alignment across time periods highlights Türkiye's strategic maneuvering and the complex interplay between ideological orientations and foreign policy decisions.

This study has made several contributions to the literature on both Türkiye's foreign policy conduct and the dynamics of contributions to UN PKOs. Firstly, the findings highlight the nuanced nature of Türkiye's strategic maneuvering within the UN framework, underscoring the instrumental role of peacekeeping missions in advancing Türkiye's diplomatic interests and geopolitical objectives.

Moreover, the identification of distinct temporal patterns in Türkiye's peacekeeping contributions, corresponding to shifts in its foreign policy orientation, offers valuable insights into the changing nature of Türkiye's diplomatic engagements. From periods characterized by Middle Easternization to assertive regional power projection, Türkiye's peacekeeping commitments have mirrored its evolving policy priorities, reflecting a pragmatic approach to diplomacy in response to changing geopolitical dynamics.

Furthermore, the analysis has shed light on the significance of multilateral partnerships and foreign policy alignment in shaping Türkiye's engagement with UN PKOs. The observed correlation between the participation of countries aligning with Türkiye's foreign policy objectives and Türkiye's likelihood of contributing to specific missions marks the strategic importance of diplomatic coalitions in facilitating Türkiye's proactive involvement in global peacekeeping efforts.

In light of the findings, several avenues for future research emerge, offering opportunities to deepen our understanding of Türkiye's role in UN PKOs and its broader implications for international security and diplomacy. Firstly, further investigation into the specific mechanisms through which Türkiye's foreign policy objectives influence its peacekeeping engagements would provide valuable insights into the dynamics of diplomatic decision-making within the Turkish context. Additionally, exploring the role of regional dynamics, such as Türkiye's relationships with neighboring states and regional security challenges, in shaping its peacekeeping commitments would enrich our understanding of the broader geopolitical context informing Türkiye's strategic calculus. Moreover, comparative studies examining Türkiye's peacekeeping conduct vis-à-vis other regional actors and global powers could offer valuable insights into the distinctiveness of Türkiye's diplomatic approach and its implications for broader patterns of international cooperation and conflict resolution.

In conclusion, this study contributes to an understanding of Türkiye's strategic engagement with UN PKOs, presenting the multifaceted factors shaping Türkiye's contributions to global peace and security. By analyzing the interaction between Türkiye's foreign policy objectives, diplomatic alliances, and peacekeeping commitments, this research offers valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of international diplomacy and the role of emerging powers in shaping the global security landscape. Essentially, the aggregation of foreign policy-aligned countries may incentivize countries to increase their contributions to PKOs, potentially triggering a chain reaction of additional countries joining in.

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