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### **A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS AND TENDENCIES OF BULGARIAN, UKRAINIAN AND MOLDOVAN SOCIETIES ON TURKEY AT THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC CONVERGENCE\***

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#### **ABSTRACT**

In the world economy, countries tend to increase their foreign trade for various reasons, especially for meeting their needs, earning foreign exchange income and improving their trade. And the main expectation of this activity is to increase country's welfare. At this point, on the one hand, while economies make efforts in the product supply dimension in order to be ahead of others, on the other hand, they tend to develop their economic relations at the regional level and increase their foreign trade by using regional proximity. Here, geographical proximity is an important factor and societies' views and tendencies towards each other on the economic level are important for benefiting from this geographical proximity. In this article, perceptions and tendencies of Bulgarian, Moldovan, and Ukrainian societies on Turkey (as whole sector/universe and as a single economy) are measured and analyzed via Frequency Analysis, Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Tests. The analysis shows that, the perceptions and tendencies of region economies are positive in various degrees in developing economic relations with Turkey.

Positive perception and tendencies on Turkey are at particularly high levels in Moldova and Ukraine. This positive perception in Moldova should associate with the relative impact of the Gagauz community and the existence of the Free Trade Agreement, which entered into force in 2016, and the right of free movement of citizens of the two countries between two countries that entered into force in 2018. In the study, a differentiation was observed in Bulgaria compared to other countries,

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albeit at a low level. It can be thought that the difference here is mostly due to the historical negative subconscious of the Bulgarian society and this perception may change with developing of the relations between the two communities and the economies.

### **STRUCTURED ABSTRACT**

In the world economy, countries tend to increase their foreign trade for various reasons, The main expectation of this activity is to increase country's welfare. At this point, on the one hand, while these economies make efforts in the product supply dimension, on the other hand, they tend to develop their economic relations at the regional level and increase their foreign trade by using regional proximity. Here, geographical proximity is an important factor and it should be considered that the societies' views and tendencies also towards each other on the economic level are important in this geographical proximity. In this context, in this article, perceptions and tendencies of Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine societies on Turkey (as whole region and as singular economies) measured and analyzed via Frequency Analysis, Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Tests.

In the expansion of the world economy, which started in the late 1970s, companies of developed economies pioneered step by step to this expansion. This situation continued to increase over time. The tendency to open up to world continuing in developed countries, one step later began in developing economies. From the 1980s to the 2000s, at the 20 years period, almost all the economies of the world were connected to each other in a network format. Another noteworthy step-by-step development in this process was the increasing importance of geographical proximity/neighborship relations in economic convergence in the expansion of economies to the outside World.

Economic convergence is also carried also great importance for Turkey and region economies. Here, the important point is the region's glance in the development of economic relations with Turkey. In this context, this research has focused on Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine economies which has geographical proximity to Turkey's economy; and in the study, these countries' societies' tendencies and glances related to Turkey in the economic dimension were investigated via statistical analyses. Because, obviously, for the science that examines the production-consumption processes we call the economy, one of most basic subjects is the human being who is the subject of the economy and his preferences and tendencies and their measuring.

With this research related to these countries which have a neighbor to Turkey, (in the eyes of society at the sampling scope) is examined glances and tendencies of these societies related to Turkey at the economic plane. In this context, firstly, in the first part, a general discussion about the theories of foreign trade was made, and later the research limits and methods, content were presented and at the last part, research and analyses and evaluations put forth. It is seen from the analyses that the Turkey perception has a positive outlook, in all regions examined. In Bulgaria, Turkey perception was relatively low according to other countries and the whole of the region.

The research results show that Turkey is facing clear and positive trends in the development of economic and trade relations with region countries. With this determination, the first hypothesis has verified. On the other hand, the phenomenon of problems in economic and commercial relations is very low and these results have been confirmed for all countries in the context of samples. This positive outlook and trend are also seen in the image of Turkish people in the countries of the all-region. Frequency analysis, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Mann-Whitney tests were used for their validity. Another issue seeking the answer in the research is related to place of religion in the economic, politic and social rapprochements. Answers giving to this question, which poses itself as a hypothesis, shows that the importance of religious differences still current today at a varying degree. This situation proved by the frequency analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis test, and the Mann-Whitney tests at the context of samples. The third question which poses itself as another hypothesis of the research was related to determining the role and acceptability level of geographical proximity which expresses the "natural partnership-neighborly effect" in international economic and commercial relations. The phenomenon of "Geographic Proximity" in question 3 has determined as an important-decisive factor in Frequency Analysis, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Mann-Whitney tests. It can say that the geographical proximity is an important parameter in regional economic convergence and it seems that considering the possible distance/negativity elements, it is the power that can eliminate or reduce the effect of possible standoff elements.

**JEL Classification:** F10 F14 F18 F43 F51 F63

**Keywords:** Regional Economic Convergence, Geographical Proximity, Turkey Perception, Tendencies in International Economic Relations.

## **BÖLGESEL EKONOMİK YAKINLAŞMADA BULGARİSTAN, UKRAYNA VE MOLDOVA TOPLUMLARININ TÜRKİYE'YE BAKIŞLARI VE EĞİLİMLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA**

### **ÖZ**

Dünya ekonomisinde, ülkeler gereksinimlerini karşılamak, döviz geliri elde etmek ve ticaretlerini geliştirmek gibi nedenler başta olmak üzere, çeşitli nedenlerle dış ticaretlerini artırmaya ve dolayısıyla refahlarını artırmaya yönelirler. Bu noktada ekonomiler, bir yanda ürün arz boyutunda önde olmayı getirici etkinlikler başta olmak üzere çabalara girerlerken, diğer yanda bölgesel yakınlığı kullanarak, ekonomik ilişkilerini bölgesel düzlemde geliştirmeye ve dış ticaretlerini artırmaya yönelirler. Burada coğrafi yakınlık önemli bir belirleyicidir ve bu coğrafi yakınlıkta da ülke toplumlarının birbirlerine ekonomik düzlemdeki bakışı ve eğilimlerinin önemli olduğu düşünülmelidir. Bu makalede, bu bağlamda Türkiye'nin bölgesinde yer alan Bulgaristan, Moldova ve Ukrayna'da toplumların (tüm evren ve tekil ekonomiler olarak) ekonomik düzlemde Türkiye konusundaki algıları örneklem bağlamında ölçülmüş ve Kruskal-Wallis Testi, Mann-Whitney testleri ile analiz

edilmiştir. Yapılan analizlerden görülen odur ki, incelenen örneklem bütününde, Türkiye ile ekonomik ve ticari ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi konusunda, değişen derecelerde olumlu bir görünüm vardır. Türkiye'ye dönük olumlu bakış ve eğilim özellikle Moldova'da ve Ukrayna'da yüksek düzeylerde dir. Moldova'daki bu olumlu bakışta Gagauz topluluğunun görel i etkisi ve 2016'da yürürlüğe giren Serbest Ticaret Anlaşmasının ve 2018 yılında yürürlüğe giren iki ülke vatandaşlarının serbest dolaşım hakkının varlığı vurgulanmalıdır. Araştırma kapsamındaki diğ er bir ülke olan Bulgaristan'da ise, diğ er ülkelere göre, Türkiye'ye dönük olumlu bakış ve eğilimlerde görel i bir düşüklük görülmüştür. Buradaki farklılaşmanın daha çok Bulgar toplumunun tarihsel negatif bilinçaltından kaynaklandığı ve iki toplum ve ekonomi arasında ilişkilerin gelişmesi ile bu algının değişebileceği düşünülebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bölgesel Ekonomik Yakınlaşma, Coğrafi Yakınlık, Türkiye Algısı, Uluslararası Ekonomik İlişkilerde Eğilimler

## Introduction

In the expansion of the world economy, which started in the late 1970s, companies of developed economies pioneered step by step in this expansion. In a sense, with the power of capital accumulation, these firms, which were already strong in their domestic markets, directed the opening up of developing markets. This situation continued to increase over time. In a way, the process of integration led by this companies being at the front, developed as if following the logic of the biological life processes.

From the 1980s to the 2000s, at the 20 years period, almost all the economies of the world were connected to each other in a network format. Another noteworthy development in this process was the increasing importance of geographical proximity/neighborship relations in economic convergence in the expansion of economies to the outside world. Seen from this point, economic convergence is also great importance for Turkey and its regional economies. Here, the important point is the region's attitude at the development of economic relations with Turkey and the level of motivation in this regard. In this context, this research focuses on Bulgarian, Moldovian and Ukrainian economies as economical partners of Turkey in geographical proximity; and in this study, these countries' societies' tendencies and perceptions on Turkey in economic dimension are investigated via survey and statistical analyses. For obvious reasons, it makes sense to examine the production-consumption processes, that we call the economy, from the perspective of human beings as the basic subject of the economy, and his preferences and tendencies. And tendencies of societies effect to economic growth and external trade values.

With this research related to these countries which have a neighbor to Turkey, (in the eyes of society at the sampling scope) is examined glances and tendencies of these societies related to Turkey at the economic plane. In this context, in the first part, a general discussion about the theories of foreign trade takes place and later the limits and methods of the research and its content are presented and finally, analyses of the results is put forth.

## 1. Development of External Trade: Theoretical Discussion

There has been an intense debate in the economic literature, especially in the international economic literature, from past to present, that increasing trade between countries contributes to maximizing the benefits of the countries involved in this trade. Since Adam Smith (and even in the course of Mercantilism and the trade cycle that accompanied the British military ships), the contribution of foreign trade to the wealth of nations is clearly mentioned.

Adam Smith's theory of Absolute Advantages is the first theoretical approach to examine the effects of the rise in foreign trade on economies. Mainly, Adam Smith's theory emphasized that trade is

a result of people's tendency to exchange, and each countries superiority in the production processes. According to Smith's theory, specialization contributes to countries' trade and increase the level of trade with each other (Schumacher, 2012: 57). At the same time, "trade" brings also specialization and differentiation, which ultimately supports the development of countries' trade capacity and markets (Schumacher, 2012: 63-64).

Another approach to explain the factors and effectiveness of foreign trade is David Ricardo's theory of Comparative Advantages. In support of his basic assumptions, David Ricardo emphasizes that the comparative superiority of countries in the production processes is the cause of foreign trade. This theory was initially based upon the inherent superiority of wine production in Portugal and fabric production of England (Morales Meoqui,2012:6; Ukwandu, 2015: 20).

However, inadequacy of Ricardo's theory in some areas was later addressed by the Factor Endowment theory, which was developed by Eli Heckscher and Bertil Ohlin. This theory was based on the differences of factor equipment between countries and has become more valuable and explanatory in foreign trade (Leamer, 1995: 1-2). After Herscher-Ohlin, new approaches also emerged under the influence of the changing production structure and developments. All these theories have somewhat an explanatory point in describing the foreign trade of countries. But another dimension in the analysis of foreign trade is the dimension of demand and the factors to increase this demand.

Therefore, instead of looking at the foreign trade from the supply dimension, we will focus on the consumption dimension here. Other elements aside, it can be said that in the demand side and its effect on increasing the trade, neighborhood relations between economies is an important point. On the other side, economic growth and international trade are very important for countries, and their societies (Uğurlu,2009). Here, neighborhood means the geographical proximity of countries and its effect on facilitating foreign trade and economic converges of economies. Economic Convergences in the regional logic served, to born of Trade Blocks and regional cooperations; and these blocks supported the development of international economic relations and trade in the world economy. (Bhagwati and Panagariya,1999).

The main problem in this field is the lack of preliminary studies in the literature.

The level of neighborhood relations is related to societies' attitudes to each other, and the increasing of neighborhood relations also contributes to societies' positive perspectives to each other. In result, increased relations may increase trade between neighbors. In today's world, neighborhood relationship stands out especially in terms of regional economic cooperation (Balkanlı, 2019:22). This study focuses on Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine, as Turkey's regional neighbors. These countries' societies's perspectives and tendencies on developing economic and trade relations with Turkey are measured and analysed.

## **2. Research: Samples, Content and Method**

### **2.1.Subject, Question Classification and Hypothesis**

The content of the study consists of Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukrainian communities. In order to examine and measure the basis of regional economic cooperation among the citizens of this country, questions have been specially prepared from the fields of the international economy, regional economy, economic integration theories, and social psychology. And accordingly, visits have been made to the relevant countries, namely Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Moldova.

At the pre-preparation stage of research, survey questions were prepared for measuring;

(1) Perceptions on Turkey

(2) Relevant economies's/societies' as possible determinants of proximity and distances/standoff/chilliness

(3) preferences/trends in the development of economic and commercial relations.

At this point, 6 questions were prepared and the survey was conducted via face to face interview method and via Google survey forms in 2018 and 2019 years. Total samples count of the survey is 587 persons. 235 samples of survey have collected via Google internet forms and 352 samples have collected via face to face interview. 332 samples of the participants to this survey is male and 255 is female.

The questions prepared were classified for the purpose of the research. This classification is divided into 3 main groups.

1. Measurement Group: Perception Questions (Questions 1, 2): (i)The perception of Turkey (Question 1) and Perception of Troubles Between These Countries (question 2)[<sup>1</sup>]. The answers to these questions did not depend on long-term thinking/Perspectives. Rather, especially short-term economic and politic cases, etc. are more effective. These answers are more vulnerable to economic, political developments and cultural co-activities[<sup>2</sup>].

2. Measurement Group: Determination-Identification Questions (Question 3 and 4): These questions measure the probable determinators of proximity and distance/standoff/chilliness in economic, commercial and political relations between societies, and they are not mainly relevant for the short-term. The responses to these were not affected by changing conditions at the short period, but rather the expression of medium and long term social economic, social tendencies, thoughts, and perspectives.

3. Measurement Group: Identification-Identification Questions (Question 5 and Question 6): Question 5 focuses on measuring the social tendencies related to the development of economic and commercial relations. Question 6 measures the images of Turkish citizens in the relevant economies' societies. It can be said that answers to question 5 express general and medium and long-term thinking/perspectives. However, it should be noted that the answers to the sixth question can also be influenced by variables that express short-term external stimulation.

In these 3 countries, which were identified as the main sample population of the study, the sample scope is the citizens of the respective countries aged 18 to 65 years. 200 persons of these samples are from Bulgaria, 143 persons are from Ukraine, 244 persons are from Moldova. Moldovan society has been divided into two-sectors, the Moldovan Community and the Gagauz Community. The purpose of this divide is Gagauz society's close relations with Turkey and the frequency of this effect. Therefore, research has two sub-sectors: Bulgaria, Moldova-Moldovans, Moldova-Gagauzes and Ukraine.

In the scope of this research, the hypothesis of the questions can be classified as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Perception is the interpretation and perception of the information, beliefs or thoughts and sensations that arise in relation to the internal conditions of the people and the environment in which they take place by being processed and organized in various ways (Dönmez, 971:131; Okanlı,2/6, Access:3.12.2018). Everything that people can see, hear, smell, touch (influence) with sensory organs around them at a certain moment constitutes their perception field. (Okanlı,2/6, Access:3.12.2018). The perceptual process has five main features (1) Being instant, (2) Detecting objects by structure (structure), (3) Stasis (Stable even when objects are moving), (4) Meaning. (We perceive objects as meaningful wholes by acting from our experience of them and the sequence relationships with other objects) (5), Selectivity. On the social level, the value of the stimulus, the (emotional) significance of the stimulus, the familiarity of the stimulus, the intensity of the stimulus affects perception. (Akyıldız, 1988:110-111).

<sup>2</sup> Social and political interactions behind the perceptions of the country are of great importance. For example, the positive interaction of the politicians of the country (the existence of such an image in society) is also a factor here. Therefore, such perceptions may change rapidly depending on the intensity and magnitude of perception influences, the repetition of the stimulus, the contrast or contrast of the stimulus, the sudden changes in the sense of innovation, the unusualness of the stimulus, and the mobility of the stimulus(Okanlı, 8,Access: 03.12.2018).

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H1: There is no difference at the slant on the development of economic and trade relations between societies of Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine with Turkey.

H2: There is no difference of perception between countries regarding the significance of religion in the development of economic and political relations.

H3: According to the societies of Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine, in economic relations with Turkey, there is no difference in the degree of the importance of geographical proximity.

## **2.2. Data Evaluation Method and Limitations**

Statistical analysis of the data was performed with SPSS 22.1 program. In this study, both face-to-face interviews and Google form application were used to collect information. The questions in the questionnaire did not include hierarchical grading and Likert scaling according to Gutman scale and they were prepared directly in the form of field-oriented and closed-ended judicial questions and the answers were collected accordingly. The characteristic of the research and the specific state of the sample population and sample set were the main determinator in this.

The research area includes former Socialist countries and these countries have politic and social risks at the changing levels. Therefore, large cities were taken as a basis in the research process in general. On the other hand, in order to avoid confusion and to make clearer measurements in the research process (because of the fact that there was a foreign country/language/culture risk), a strict questionnaire method including questions in direct inelastic and closed-ended response content was applied, instead of Likert scaling and question refinement. Under the influence of these factors, Cronbach's Alpha test (Lee Cronbach,1951) calculated 0.308, for 4 items. In generally Linkert scaling has big importance on the value of the Cronbach's Alpha test (Ercan ve Kan, 2004:214-215; Yıldız and Uzunsakal, 2018:15; Bademci,2006). In statistical analysis, (primary) Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, (later) Kruskal-Vallis test and Mann-Whitney test are used.

The main purpose of the research is to investigate the outlook for the development of economic and trade relations of relevant economies' societies with Turkey and to examine the factors that can be effective in these perspectives. These indicators may supply ways and prospectuses to develop neighborhood relations.

At the process of interview (2018-2019 years), in the Ukraine Republic, Odesa, Izmail, Bolgrad, Rozdil and Berezivka cities and in the Bulgaria Republic, Varna, Dobric, Sliven, Kotel, Burgas, Omurtag cities, in the Republic of Moldova, Kishinev, Tiraspol, Komrat, Çadır cities were interviewed with samples. In the internet surveys conducted with the Google survey form, the presentation environment has been quite widespread and varied in Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine, ie., social media groups (via direct e-access to different economic, political and cultural groups). In the survey via interview, it was paid attention to the fact that the samples were from different economic and social, ideological conditions and from different locations. For each country, the regions that are not very close to each other have been selected as the study area and the settlement areas representing different economic-social positions have been selected in the selection of sample items. In order to be able to measure the main trends in societies, the number of samples available is considered sufficient. With this scale (587 samples in the whole region), the sample size is an acceptable value for certain universes as whole regions and countries.

### 3. Data Set, Research Findings and Analysis

#### 3.1. Findings and Frequency Analysis

##### 3.1.1. Frequency Analysis of the whole Region

###### 3.1.1.1. Perception of Turkey in the All Regions Frequency and Dekko to Turkish Citizens

The positivity on the perception of Turkey is 77.7 percent as of the whole region. The rate of the group, who say no idea is 16.5 percent in the whole region, and the rate of the group, who have negative perception is 6.3 percent in the whole region. In general, it is seen that the positive perceptions about Turkey in the whole region represents a very high level. In fact, in late 1990s, when the conflict of the pre-1990 socialist-capitalist economies finished, the negative historical-political point of view of the past between these economies has largely disappeared at the world economy and policy.

This transformation realized in the Balkans as well as in the world. However, the high level of the positivity of the frequency distribution of the perception of Turkey is important. Despite the relatively high negative intensity in Bulgaria, Moldovan (both for Moldovan and Gagauz societies') and Ukrainian societies have higher positive perception effect. Therefore it can be said that the negative frequency level in Bulgaria (14 percent as a valid percentage) is balanced by the positive frequency elevation in the Republic of Moldova (both the Moldovan community (79%) and the Gagauz community (89.6%)) and Ukraine society (81.1%).

**Table 1:** Turkey Perception in Whole Region.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No idea	94	16,0	16,0	16,0
Valid Positive	456	77,7	77,7	93,7
Valid Negative	37	6,3	6,3	100,0
Total	587	100,0	100,0	

**Table 2:** Problem Perception Between Countries in Whole Region

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	421	71,7	75,6	75,6
Valid Yes	66	11,2	11,8	87,4
Valid No idea	70	11,9	12,6	100,0
Total	557	94,9	100,0	
Missing System	30	5,1		
Total	587	100,0		

With the collapse of the old structures and barriers, and with the influence of globalization, the peoples relations with each other increased in the 1990s and later. As a result of this, the positive perception of Turkey has also strengthened in the countries of this region. It can be said that an increase in this positive perception has largely eliminated the obstacles to the development of economic relations



and trade within the countries of the region. And the development of the positive perception can increase economic relations and external trade in the future.

This positive outlook of countries in the region about Turkey can also be found at the answers to the question put forth to Problem Perception between countries. While 71.7 percent of the participants of research stated that "there is no problem" between their countries and Turkey, 11.2 percent of the respondents stated that "there is a problem" and 11.9 percent of them said that "they have no idea". If such research had been made in the beginnings of 1990, those positive perceptions of Turkey could be significantly at lower levels.

It is necessary to see the interactions between these countries as a factor in the height of positive perception. Increases in tourism takes its place as an important factor here. In late 1990s, between Turkey and the countries of the region, especially touristic activities increased. Such that, only in year 2017, 1,248,735 persons from Ukraine, (total population: 44,222,947) 1,852,867 persons from Bulgaria (Total population:(7,050,034) came to Turkey as a tourist. These tourism numbers show the level of interaction.

The diplomatic-economic activities carried out by Turkey with the regional economies need also be taken into consideration. Because the activities carried out in this field have had a positive effect on this interaction (and on the positive perception). For example, trade and economic and political agreements with Ukraine and Moldova carried Turkey's relations more forward. Under the influence of these developments, Turkey's image is noteworthy positive in the whole region and in singular economies. Such that, the perception on Turkish people is positive by 72.2 percent, and negative opinion is 7.8 percent in the whole region in the year 2019.

**Table 3:** The Perception of Turkish Citizen in Whole Region.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Normal People	273	46,5	48,5
	Good People	127	21,6	71,0
	Rude people	10	1,7	72,8
	Trusted people	21	3,6	76,6
	Unreliable people	17	2,9	79,6
	People who can work together	51	8,7	88,6
	Difficult People Doing Business Together	19	3,2	92,0
	Very good people	45	7,7	100,0
	Total	563	95,9	100,0
Missing System	24	4,1		
Total	587	100,0		

### 3.1.1.2. Possible Proximity/Distance Determinators in Whole-Region about Turkey

For all the people of the region within the sample, as a determinator of proximity between their countries and Turkey, "Geographic Proximity" is 30.2 percent of valid value and the "Common Movement's Benefit" is 33.6 percent of valid value. Here, "Cultural proximity" is important at 14.2 percent between their countries and Turkey. But, it is necessary to emphasize that an important factor is

Gagauz society. Because in Gagauz society, cultural proximity indicator with Turkey is 42.6% and this rate effects whole region's rate. The value of "having a common history" is 8.5 percent throughout the region. Those who say we have nothing in common is 10.4 percent in the whole region.

**Table 4: Proximity Determinators**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Geographical Proximity	168	28,6	30,2	30,2
	Cultural Proximity	79	13,5	14,2	44,4
	having a common history and Historical Relations	46	7,8	8,3	52,7
	Religious Proximity	18	3,1	3,2	55,9
	Common Movement's Benefit	187	31,9	33,6	89,6
	No-proximity	58	9,9	10,4	100,0
Missing	Total	556	94,7	100,0	
	System	31	5,3		
Total	587	100,0			

**Table 5: Determinators of Distance/Standoff**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Geographical Distance	81	13,8	14,7	14,7
	Cultural Distance	85	14,5	15,5	30,2
	Religious Distance	233	39,7	42,4	72,5
	Not having a common history	32	5,5	5,8	78,4
	Lack of common habit of acting	119	20,3	21,6	100,0
	Total	550	93,7	100,0	
Missing	System	37	6,3		
	Total	587	100,0		

In all-region scale, peoples' attitudes in relations between their countries and Turkey as distance/standoff factor emphasize as the first factor, with 42.4 percent, "religious differences". "Absence of joint action habit" was in the second, with 21.6 percent. At the third, "Cultural Differences" was expressed with 15.5 percent. Of course, it cannot be said that these factors create direct negativity in relations. These results should be considered as the existence of a standoff/chilliness and a possible avoidance factor, or a difference, instead of cutting the relations. The probability of geographical distance, being the cause of negativity is 14.7 percent. Not having a common history has a value of 5.8 percent.

### 3.1.1.3. The Appraisal to the Tendency of the Development of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Whole Region

According to results, it can be said that regional economies see the development of economic and trade relations with Turkey in a positive way. Such that, 56.5 percent of participants look forward for the increasing of economic and trade relations. 21.5 percent of participants of the survey says that

increase in economic and trade relations will strengthen both economies. However, the rate of those who say that it would be very good to increase economic and commercial relations between the two countries is 9.1 percent. As can be understood from these answers, after the collapse of the Soviets Union, people of the region have largely focused on the new economic reality, instead of political and ideological differences. Indeed, when all positive answers are collected, 84.9 percent of the total sample in all-region wants to increase their economic and trade relations with Turkey.

**Table 6:** The Preferences, Related to the Development of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Whole Region

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Good	323	55,0	56,5	56,5
No good	9	1,5	1,6	58,0
God but not continue	34	5,8	5,9	64,0
Valid Good, and both economies will be strengthened	123	21,0	21,5	85,5
It does not matter to me.	31	5,3	5,4	90,9
It will be very good	52	8,9	9,1	100,0
Total	572	97,4	100,0	
Missing System	15	2,6		
Total	587	100,0		

### 3.1.2. Singular Economy Frequency Analysis

#### 3.1.2.1. The Findings and Frequency Analysis of Bulgaria

The Bulgarian society has undergone major changes after 1990, similar to the other societies of the region. As a result of this, the Turkey-Bulgaria economic and trade (and political) relations also gained a positive outlook after these dates. This positive outlook is continuing in nowadays. Such that, Turkey's positive perception in the Bulgarian society is 67.0 percent in the year 2019. While those who have negative perception are 14.0 percent in total, and those who have no idea are 19.0 percent. On the other hand, 71.4 percent of the Bulgarian society stated that there is no problem in the relations between the two countries, while 18.7 percent stated that there is a problem. It should also be noted here that, despite the 14 % negative perception of Turkey in Bulgaria, 90 percent of Bulgarian society has a positive perception about Turkish people, at the sampling scope. If we would make inferences from this, it can be said that negative perceptions on Turkey in the Bulgarian society is related more with political and historical factors, rather than societies' outlook on each other.

It should be noted here that the political, capital and touristic movements between the two countries have a positive effect on the relations during the period after the 1990s (Balkanlı, 2019:55/81). The positive outlook on Turkey in the Bulgarian society also affects the tendency to increase economic and trade relations. The trade-enhancing effect of the neighborhood relations is seen from data between Bulgaria and Turkey. (Balkanlı, 2019:113).

According to the Bulgarian society, the closeness between Bulgaria and Turkey, the geographic proximity (neighborhood/natural partnership effect) comes in the first place, as 56.0's percent. "Benefit form the common movements" is the second, with 22.5 percent. On the other hand, as a distance determinator, 53.1 percent of Bulgarians emphasized firstly religious difference, and 21.5 percent of society emphasized the cultural difference as the second. "The lack of habit of acting jointly" had a share of 18.6 percent.

It is seen that 84.7 percent of the Bulgarian society is positive to increase economic and trade relations between Bulgaria and Turkey in varying degrees. While the rate of those who give the negative answer is 3.5 percent, the rate of those who give that no importance is 11.6 percent. When all these data are evaluated together, increasing Bulgaria-Turkey economic and trade relations will continue in the next period.

**Table 7:** Turkey Perception in Bulgaria

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No idea	38	19,0	19,0	19,0
Valid Positive	134	67,0	67,0	86,0
Negative	28	14,0	14,0	100,0
Total	200	100,0	100,0	

**Table 8:** Turkish People Perception in Bulgaria

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Normal People	88	44,0	45,8	45,8
Good People	48	24,0	25,0	70,8
Rude people	2	1,0	1,0	71,9
Trusted people	10	5,0	5,2	77,1
Unreliable people	9	4,5	4,7	81,8
Valid People who can work together	17	8,5	8,9	90,6
Difficult People Doing Business Together	7	3,5	3,6	94,3
Very Good People	11	5,5	5,7	100,0
Total	192	96,0	100,0	
Missing System	8	4,0		
Total	200	100,0		

**Table 9:** Problem Perception Between Bulgaria and Turkey in the Bulgarian Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	130	65,0	71,4	71,4
Valid Yes	34	17,0	18,7	90,1
No İdea	18	9,0	9,9	100,0
Total	182	91,0	100,0	
Missing System	18	9,0		
Total	200	100,0		

**Table 10:** Closeness Determinators in the Bulgarian Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Geographical proximity	112	56,0	56,0	56,0
Cultural Proximity	16	8,0	8,0	64,0
To have common history / historical relations	11	5,5	5,5	69,5
Valid Religious Proximity	6	3,0	3,0	72,5
Common Movement's Benefit	45	22,5	22,5	95,0
We're not close.	10	5,0	5,0	100,0
Total	200	100,0	100,0	

**Table 11:** Distance Determinators in the Bulgarian Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Geographical Distance	2	1,0	1,1	1,1
Cultural Distance	38	19,0	21,5	22,6
Religious Differecies	94	47,0	53,1	75,7
Valid Not having a common history/historical relations	10	5,0	5,6	81,4
Lack of common habit of acting	33	16,5	18,6	100,0
Total	177	88,5	100,0	
Missing System	23	11,5		
Total	200	100,0		

**Table 12:** The Preferences, Related to the Development of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Bulgaria

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Good	92	46,0	48,4	48,4
No Good	7	3,5	3,7	52,1
God but not continue	16	8,0	8,4	60,5
Valid Good, both economies will be strengthened	42	21,0	22,1	82,6
It does not matter to me.	22	11,0	11,6	94,2
It will be very good.	11	5,5	5,8	100,0
Total	190	95,0	100,0	
Missing System	10	5,0		
Total	200	100,0		

### 3.1.2.2. Ukraine Findings and Frequency Analysis

Ukraine is a country having a maritime border with Turkey. During the Soviet Union, Ukraine was one of the most important member states of the Soviet Union after Russia. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, it had to face serious economic problems as it's economic resources were

not like the Russia Federation. And in this process, Ukraine faced serious problems with Russia, which was the dominant power of the Soviet Union. Today's Ukrainian society is also under the influence of these historical developments. This interaction/conflicts with the Russia Federation had a formative impact on the political, social and economic behavior and decisions of Ukrainian society. Under the influences of these events, Ukraine was in search for solid partnerships.

The perception on Turkey in Ukraine is 81.1 percent in the context of the entire sample. Negative perception rate is 1.4 percent, the rate of the participants who say "I have no idea" is 17.5 percent. Ukrainians believe that there is no problem between Ukraine and Turkey, at the rate of 68.1 percent in the context of samples. On the other side, while the Ukrainian society considers Turkish citizens (In the context of the sample) 51.9 percent as normal people, 18.6 percent see them as "good people", and 8.5 percent see them as "very good people". The overall positive outlook to the Turkish people in Ukraine is 88.3 percent.

From Turkey to Ukraine and from Ukraine to Turkey there is a remarkable mobility in tourism, education, investment, business and labor. As a result, these activities are important activities in terms of affirmative views on each other for these societies. For example, while the number of tourists coming to Turkey from Ukraine in the 2015 year was 706.550 people, (in the 2016 year is 1.045.043 persons), in the year 2017 it increased to 1.284.735 persons. (<https://www.tursab.org.tr/Access:30.01.2019>) . The rate of increase from 2015 to 2017 is 82 percent. This situation can be considered as a reflection and indicator of this positive outlook.

**Table 13:** Turkey Perception in Ukraine

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No idea	25	17,5	17,5	17,5
Valid Positive	116	81,1	81,1	98,6
Valid Negative	2	1,4	1,4	100,0
Total	143	100,0	100,0	

**Table 14:** Turkish People Perception in Ukraine

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Normal People	67	46,9	51,9	51,9
Valid Good People	24	16,8	18,6	70,5
Valid Rude People	5	3,5	3,9	74,4
Valid Unreliable people	5	3,5	3,9	78,3
Valid People who can work together	12	8,4	9,3	87,6
Valid Difficult People Doing Business Together	5	3,5	3,9	91,5
Valid Very Good People	11	7,7	8,5	100,0
Total	129	90,2	100,0	
Missing System	14	9,8		
Total	143	100,0		

**Table 15:** Determinators of Closeness in Ukraine

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Geographical Proximity	27	18,9	20,6
	Cultural Proximity	5	3,5	24,4
	To have common history / historical relations	7	4,9	29,8
	Religious Proximity	5	3,5	33,6
	Common Movement's Benefit	59	41,3	78,6
	We're not close	28	19,6	100,0
Total	131	91,6	100,0	
Missing System	12	8,4		
Total	143	100,0		

In Ukraine, when asked about the possible reasons for the closeness of the two countries in affecting economic, commercial and political relations, the ratio of those who emphasize "geographical proximity" remained at 20.6 percent, and the ratio of those who emphasized "common movement's benefit" was 45.0 percent.

As a determinant of the possible weaknesses and negativity in economic, political and social relations or possible distance/standoff between the two countries (in the context of the total sample), "lack of common acting habits" is emphasized by 30.1 percent, geographical distance is emphasized by 24.1 percent. The rate of those who emphasize religious differences was 29.3 percent.

The data shows that Ukrainian society is willing to be in good economic and trade relations with Turkey. Such that, the rate of those who say it is "good" to increase of economic and trade relations of two countries is 63.1 percent, the rate of those who say that "it is good, and both economies will be strengthened" is 18.1 percent and the rate of those who say "it will very good" is 6.3 percent. In total, 97.1 percent of Ukrainian society, (within the framework of the samples), looks positively to increase the economic and commercial relations with Turkey.

**Table 16:** Turkey Perception in Ukraine

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No idea	25	17,5	17,5
	Positive	116	81,1	98,6
	Negative	2	1,4	100,0
	Total	143	100,0	100,0

**Table 17:** Possible Determinators of Distance Between Ukraine and Turkey

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Geographical Distance	32	22,4	24,1
	Cultural Distance	13	9,1	33,8
	Religious Distance	39	27,3	63,2
	Not having a common history	9	6,3	69,9
	Lack of common habit of acting	40	28,0	100,0
	Total	133	93,0	100,0
Missing System	10	7,0		
Total	143	100,0		

**Table 18:** The Preferences, Related to the Development of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Ukraine Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Good	88	61,5	63,8
	Good but not Continue	12	8,4	8,7
	Good, and both economies will be strengthened	25	17,5	18,1
	It does not matter to me.	4	2,8	2,9
	It will be very good.	9	6,3	6,5
	Total	138	96,5	100,0
Missing System	5	3,5		
Total	143	100,0		

### 3.1.2.3. Moldova-Moldovan Society Research Findings and Frequency Analysis

Moldova-Turkey economic and political relations, since Moldova's independence from the Soviet Union, had a positive outlook. Free Trade Agreement was signed on 11 September 2014 between Moldova and Turkey. This development is important and positive event for Moldova, who lives serious economic problems and also for Turkey, who wants to increase economic cooperation in the region. With this agreement, Moldova, and Turkey have entered into a strategic partnership and it is continuing since 2014. ([www.milliyet.com.tr/ 2017/ 05/08](http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2017/05/08),(Access:20. 01.2018)). As with the close economic relations between the two countries, also increased political relations. By the year 2018, the two countries lifted the visa requirements between them and provided free movement for their citizens ([https://www. cnnturk.com/ dunya/ moldovaya-kimlikle-seyahat-donemi-resmen-basladi](https://www.cnnturk.com/dunya/moldovaya-kimlikle-seyahat-donemi-resmen-basladi),Access: 06.12.2018).

These developments are very important developments for the Moldovan and Turkish societies. Perception on Turkey in the Moldovan society is very high positively. Such that, in the context of samples, Moldovan society's positive perception on Turkey is 79 percent, and those who report negative idea is only 5 percent. The persons, who report no idea is 16 percent. While 53.8 percent of Moldovan society defines Turkish citizens as "normal people", 17.9 percent of society defines them as "good people", 7.7 percent as "reliable people", 7.7 percent as "people who can be worked together", 7.7 percent as "very good people", but only 5.2 percent of society defined them as "negative people". According to these values, it can said that the Moldovan society has a positive attitude towards the Turkish society at a rate of 94.8 percent. Also, 83.9 percent of the society thinks that there is no problem in Moldova-Turkey economic and trade relations.

**Table 19:** Turkey Perception in Moldova

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No idea	19	16,0	16,0
	Positive	94	79,0	95,0
	Negative	6	5,0	5,0
	Total	119	100,0	100,0



**Table 20:** Turkish People Perception in Moldova

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Normal People	63	52,9	53,8
	Good People	21	17,6	71,8
	Rude People	2	1,7	73,5
	Trusted People	9	7,6	81,2
	Unreliable People	1	,8	82,1
	People who can work together	9	7,6	89,7
	Difficult People to Do Business Together	3	2,5	92,3
	Very Good People	9	7,6	100,0
	Total	117	98,3	100,0
Missing	System	2	1,7	
Total		119	100,0	

**Table 21:** Problem Perception Between Turkey and Moldova in Moldovan Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	99	83,2	83,9
	Yes	8	6,7	90,7
	No idea	11	9,2	100,0
	Total	118	99,2	100,0
Missing	System	1	,8	
Total		119	100,0	

While Moldovan society, for the question of what are the likely factors for proximity between Moldova and Turkey, mentions "benefit from common movements" with the rate of 52.4 percent, "Geographical Proximity" was the second with the rate of 22.3 percent. On the other hand, according to Moldovan society, religious differences have an importance with the rate of 41.5 percent of people, as distance determinant between Turkey and Moldova. The cultural differences have also importance for 23.7 percent of people. And the 17.8 percent of people emphasized the "absence of joint action habit" as determinators. Moldovan society in general seems positive at the rate of 94.1 percent (in varying forms) on the development of economic and trade relations between Turkey and Moldova.

**Table 22:** Determinators of Closeness Between Turkey and Moldova in Moldovan Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Geographical Proximity	23	19,3	22,3	22,3
	Cultural Proximity	6	5,0	5,8	28,2
	Religious Proximity	3	2,5	2,9	31,1
	Common Movement's Benefit	54	45,4	52,4	83,5
	We're not close.	17	14,3	16,5	100,0
	Total	103	86,6	100,0	
Missing	System	16	13,4		
Total		119	100,0		

**Table 23:** Determinators of the Distance Between Turkey and Moldova According to Moldovan Society

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Geographical Distance	11	9,2	9,3	9,3
	Cultural Differences	28	23,5	23,7	33,1
	Religious Differences	49	41,2	41,5	74,6
	Not having a common history	9	7,6	7,6	82,2
	Lack of common habit of acting	21	17,6	17,8	100,0
	Total	118	99,2	100,0	
Missing	System	1	,8		
Total		119	100,0		

**Table 24:** The Preferences, related to the Developing of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Moldova

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Good	69	58,0	58,0	58,0
	No good	2	1,7	1,7	59,7
	Good but not Continue	3	2,5	2,5	62,2
	Good, and both economies will be strengthened	30	25,2	25,2	87,4
	It does not matter to me.	5	4,2	4,2	91,6
	It will be very good.	10	8,4	8,4	100,0
	Total	119	100,0	100,0	

### 3.1.2.4. Moldova-Gagauzian Society Findings and Frequency Analysis

The Gagauzes are citizens of the Republic of Moldova and they have the autonomous state structure according to the constitution of the Republic of Moldova and have the presidency, capital city, ministries, and parliament within this structure. Turkey perception in Gagauz society has relatively more pronounced according to Moldovan society. Such that, the perception of Turkey in the Gagauz community has a positivity rate of 89.6 percent. This rate is 79 percent for Moldovan society. In response to questions asked about whether the problems between their countries and Turkey, 82.4 percent of the whole sample said that no problem. However, 10.9 percent of society said they had problems.

According to Gagauz society, "cultural proximity" with Turkey has importance at 42.6 percent in the potential determinators of closeness. This value is very different from other societies. On the other side, having common history/historical relations with Turkey for Gagauz society has importance at the rate of 23.0 percent. The total rate of determinants of "cultural proximity" and "having common history/historical relations" rate is 65.6 percent. Here, the "common movement's benefit" is accepted at the rate of 23.8 percent.

The Gagauz society in Moldova rates the "religious differences" at 41.8 percent, as distance/standoff determinator. Here, the "geographical distance" factor is at the 29.5 percent, the factor of "the lack of habit act jointly" is 20.5 percent. On the other side, Gagauz society looks positive at a rate of 100.0 percent (in varying forms) to the development of economic and commercial relations between Turkey and their country.

**Table 25:** Turkey Perception in Gagauz Society, Moldova

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No idea	12	9,6	9,6	9,6
Positive	112	89,6	89,6	99,2
Negative	1	,8	,8	100,0
Total	125	100,0	100,0	

**Table 26:** Turkish People Perception in Gagauz Society, Moldova

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Normal People	55	44,0	44,0	44,0
Good People	34	27,2	27,2	71,2
Rude People	1	,8	,8	72,0
Trusted People	2	1,6	1,6	73,6
Unreliable People	2	1,6	1,6	75,2
People Who Can Work Together	13	10,4	10,4	85,6
Difficult People Doing Business Together	4	3,2	3,2	88,8
Very Good People	14	11,2	11,2	100,0
Total	125	100,0	100,0	

**Table 27:** Problem Perception in Gagauz Society, Moldova

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	98	78,4	82,4	82,4
	Yes	13	10,4	10,9	93,3
	No idea	8	6,4	6,7	100,0
	Total	119	95,2	100,0	
Missing	System	6	4,8		
Total		125	100,0		

**Table 28:** Determinators of the Distance Between Turkey and Moldova According to Gagauz Society

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Geographical Distance	36	28,8	29,5	29,5
	Cultural Differences	6	4,8	4,9	34,4
	Religious Differences	51	40,8	41,8	76,2
	Not having a common history	4	3,2	3,3	79,5
	Lack of common habit of acting	25	20,0	20,5	100,0
	Total	122	97,6	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,4		
Total		125	100,0		

**Table 29:** The Preferences, Related to the Development of Commercial and Economic Relations with Turkey in Gagauz Society, Moldova

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Good	74	59,2	59,2	59,2
	Good but not Continue	3	2,4	2,4	61,6
	Good, and both economies will be strengthened	26	20,8	20,8	82,4
	It will be very good.	22	17,6	17,6	100,0
	Total	125	100,0	100,0	

**Table 30:** Determinators of Closeness in Gagauz Society, Moldova

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Geographical Proximity	6	4,8	4,9	4,9
	Cultural Proximity	52	41,6	42,6	47,5
	Common History	28	22,4	23,0	70,5
	Religious Proximity	4	3,2	3,3	73,8
	Common Movement's Benefit	29	23,2	23,8	97,5
	We're not close.	3	2,4	2,5	100,0
	Total	122	97,6	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,4		
Total		125	100,0		

### 3.2. The Statistical Comparison of Countries: Kruskal-Wallis Analysis

In the study, the answers aren't sequential ordinal answers. Answers are in the form of the non-Likert, closed-ended, clear-choice answers. In this research, on the one side, all economies are defined and examined as a whole and on the other side, examined singularly and also it is tried to determine whether there is a significant difference by comparing with the whole region. Parametrical tests weren't used, because the research has non-parametric data. And the research is included situation dialogue, and the responses were categorical and also used an independent sample set. Therefore, in the research non-parametric statistical analysis were used (Karagöz, 2010: 24; Nachar, 2008: 5-17). If the data were intermittent and proportional, parametric tests could be used. Vice versa. (Saturated, 2018, (Web Access: 01.12.2018). For nonparametric tests, it is often necessary to obtain data randomly and independently and to use a nominal or ordinal scale (Karagöz, 2010: 19). In this context, statistical analyses realized after the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test" via by "Kruskal-Wallis Test" and "Mann-Whitney Test". Mann-Whitney tests used because it was necessary to compare and analyze as two independent groups to countries.

Kolmogorov Smirnov test results show that the variables are not normally distributed then we will use non-parametric tests. Obviously, for parametric tests, assumptions must be met. In the absence of this, the Mann Whitney U-Test will be able to meet this requirement. If the Mann-Whitney test used for two samples in the context of dependent paired t-test, it is called the Wilcoxon test. Mann-Whitney test is the most appropriate test for comparing the trends of the societies of the two countries as two independent variables (Karagöz, 2010: 19). In this test, the two independent groups are compared with the median values of the groups and it is determined whether there is a significant difference from each other. Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value is p-value and it must be less than 0.05 for the significance of the difference. Mann-Whitney test says that if there is a value less than  $p < 0.05$  between two samples, there is a significant difference. According to the Mann-Whitney test, if  $p > 0.05$ , there is no significant difference.

**Table 31:** One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinators of Closeness	Determinators of Distance	Preferences, On Developing Economic And Trade Relations	Turkish People Perception
N		587	557	559	550	572	563
Normal Paramt. <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	1,9029	1,3698	3,2862	3,0418	2,4510	2,709
	Std. Deviation	,46271	,69662	1,89425	1,29173	1,79688	2,3668
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute Positive	,423	,458	,255	,238	,355	,328
	Negative	,354	,458	,193	,238	,355	,328
		-,423	-,298	-,255	-,185	-,210	-,235
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		10,248	10,811	6,040	5,590	8,491	7,787
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

Kruskal-Wallis test is the nonparametric equivalent of "One-way Anova". With this test, the significance of the difference between the means of three or more groups can be tested in non-normal distributed groups. The Kruskal-Wallis test, as shown in the formula, has important explanatory value in the presence of multiple variables. Kruskal-Wallis test is a test for non-parametric groups and is used to determine whether 3 or more groups/samples come from the same universe (Ostertagova ve

Ostertag, Kovac, 2014: 115-117; <http://mustafaotrar.net/statistics/kruskal-wallis-h-testi>). In this research, 4 societies under the name of 3 countries were examined. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis test is the most appropriate statistical research test, here.

$$KW = \left[ \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum n\bar{R}^2 \right] - 3(N+1)$$

**Tablo 32:** Kruskal-Wallis Statistical Test Results

	Problem Perception	Turkey Perception	Determinators of Closeness	Determinators of Distance	Preferences, on developing economic and trade relations	Overview of Turkish citizens (Perception on Turkish People).
Chi-Square	14.662	4.189	85.685	5.799	6.850	2.119
df	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.002	.242	.000	.122	.077	.548

In here, according to the Kruskal-Wallis test for the whole region, the trends of the societies in 3 economies were examined in the context of answers to the questions and the hypotheses was the test and compared to see whether there was a difference. Within the scope of the test, 4 groups were compared in 3 countries: Bulgarian society, Ukrainian society, Moldova-Moldovan, and Moldova-Gagauz society.

According to test results, the perception of Turkey in all societies have the same level of positivity and the absence of significant differences between countries in this perception ( $p = 0.242$ ). This positivity and indifference are also seen in the overview of Turkish citizens ( $p = 0.548$ ). But countries have thought completely different from each other about what are the determinators of closeness with Turkey ( $p=0,000$ ).

On the other side, all of the countries which the research subject have tended to the increased economic and trade relations between their country and Turkey ( $p=0.077$ ). Region societies also think the same about the likely distance/standoff determinators between their countries and Turkey ( $0,122$ ). Finally, societies are completely thinking different from each other as to whether there is a problem between their country and Turkey ( $p = 0.002$ ).

### **3.3. The Comparison of the Tendencies and Perspectives of the Bulgaria-Ukraine, Moldova (Moldovan and Gagauz) Societies with the Mann-Whitney Test**

The Mann-Whitney test can be used to compare trends in two independent variables. Because the Mann-Whitney test, nonparametric, has great explanatory value in the examination of two independent variables. Accordingly, when compared with the Ukrainian and Bulgarian societies, it can say that "Turkey perception" between the two communities is the same way (no significant difference,  $p = 0.082$ ). Ukraine and Bulgaria societies are considering in the same direction at the subject of whether it is a problem between their countries and Turkey. In this topic no significant difference between the two countries ( $p=.184$ ).

On the other hand, there isn't a significant difference in Ukraine and Bulgaria societies about what might be of determinators of the possible distance/standoff about Turkey ( $p=0.588$ ). There was no significant difference in the perspectives on Turkish citizens in both countries ( $p = .622$ ). But between

Ukrainian society and the Bulgarian society, there is significantly different about what might be of determinators of proximity with Turkey from each other. It's p value is 0.000. There is a significant difference between the two countries about the subject to enter more economic and commercial affairs with Turkey. In here, its p-value is 0.00.

**Table 33: Bulgaria-Ukraine Mann-Whitney Test Results**

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinants of Distance	Determinators of Closeness	Preferences, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Perception on Turkish People
Mann-Whitney U	13027.000	11680.000	11369.000	7101.000	11064.500	12008.500
Wilcoxon W	23323.000	28333.000	20280.000	27201.000	20655.500	20393.500
Z	-1.806	-1.328	-.541	-7.456	-2.656	-.492
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.082	.184	.588	.000	.008	.622

According to the Mann-Whitney test, at the comparison of the Bulgarian-Moldovan societies, the p-value for Turkey perception is 0.381 (the same). This value shows no significant difference between the two societies. In Bulgarian and Moldovan societies, about the subject of whether if there is a problem between Turkey and their countries p-value is 0.025. This value indicates that there is a significant difference between the two communities on problem perception.

The p-value for determinators of closeness between Turkey and these countries is 0.000. This value shows that there is a significantly different perspective between the two countries on this subject from each other. The p-value for the possible distance/standoff determinators between the two countries is 0.151. And this p-value says that there is no significant difference between the two countries glance on this subject.

The p-value in the subject of entering into further economic and trade relations with Turkey is 0.224 between Bulgarian and Moldovan societies. This value is big from 0.05 and it shows that no significant difference between them. About the perception towards Turkish people, the p-value is 0.329. With this value, it can say that there is no significant difference between the two countries.

**Table 34: Bulgaria-Moldova Statistical Test Results**

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinators of Distance	Derminants of Closeness	Preferences, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Turkish People Perception
Mann-Whitney U	11347.000	9514.000	9483.500	5806.000	10451.000	10538.000
Wilcoxon W	18487.000	16535.000	16504.500	25906.000	17591.000	17441.000
Z	-.876	-2.245	-1.434	-6.648	-1.216	-.976
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.381	.025	.151	.000	.224	.329

According to the Mann-Whitney test, in comparison with Bulgarian society and Moldova-Gagauz society, there is no significant difference at the Turkey perception. In here, the p-value is 0.598. And both societies' outlook to Turkey's citizens with p=.569 value does not seem a significant difference.

Bulgarian society in comparison with Moldova-Gagauz society, at the subject of whether their countries are the problem with Turkey, there is a significant difference between Bulgaria society and Moldova-Gagauz society. Because, in this subject, the p-value is 0.035. Two societies consider differently that there is about what might be determinators of the proximity. Here the p-value is 0.000.

On the other hand, at glance at the subject of what might be of the possible distance/standoff determinators between the two communities, there is a significant difference. In here p-value is 0.018. On the other side, at the subject of the development of economic and trade relations with Turkey, there is the same point of view ( $p = 0.444$ ) in both societies. Here, there is no significant difference between two societies.

**Table 35:** Bulgarian and Moldova-Gagauz Societies Mann-Whitney Statistical Results

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinators of Distance	Determinators of Closeness	Preferences, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Perception on Turkish People
Mann-Whitney U	12174.000	9665.000	9167.500	8075.500	11320.000	11571.500
Wilcoxon W	20049.000	16805.000	16670.500	28175.500	19195.000	30099.500
Z	-.528	-2.105	-2.373	-5.285	-.765	-.570
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.598	.035	.018	.000	.444	.569

In comparison with Ukraine and Moldova-Moldovan societies according to the Mann-Whitney test, there is no significant difference in the perception of Turkey and glance to Turkish citizens. The p values are 0.366 and 0.687, respectively. Ukrainian and Moldovan societies, at the problem perception have a significant difference ( $p=0.002$ ).

On the other hand, between the two countries, at the subjects of determinators of the proximity to Turkey, and the development of economic and commercial relations with Turkey, and determinators of possible distance/standoff have not seemed significant difference. The p values in these elements are 0.713, 0.226, 0.635, respectively.

**Table 36:** The Statistical Results of Ukraine-Moldovan Societies

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinators of Distance	Determinators of Closeness	Preferences, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Turkish People Perception
Mann-Whitney U	8125.500	6785.500	7584.000	6570.000	7583.000	7340.000
Wilcoxon W	18421.500	13806.500	14605.000	11926.000	17174.000	14243.000
Z	-.905	-3.053	-.474	-.368	-1.211	-.403
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.366	.002	.635	.713	.226	.687

In the Republic of Moldova, the Moldovan community and the Gagauz community compared with the Mann-Whitney test. According to this analysis, at the two communities there was no significant difference in Turkey Perception and Turkish People Perception. Such that, Turkey perception p-value is 0.595 and Turkish people (citizens) perception p-value is 0.178. The Problem Perception of two communities p-value is 0.841. According to this p-value, it can say that two communities have the same overview.



The dissimilarity point of two communities in the Moldova Republic is related to glance of two communities to the proximity with Turkey. Here it is seen that there is a significant difference. p-value is 0.000. According to the Moldovan community, determinants of the proximity are mainly geographical proximity and motive of common movement's benefit. But according to the Gagauz community, determinants of proximity have mainly "common culture" and "common history" with Turkey.

But here it must say that Moldovan and Gagauz communities have, in general, the same overview at the statistical meaning, outside of determinants of proximity perspective on Turkey. Both communities have the same consideration on the development of economic and trade relations. Both communities do not consider significantly difference (P = 0.280) on determinants of distance/standoff, according to each other.

**Table 37:** Moldova, Moldovan-Gagauz Societies Statistical Results

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinants of Distance	Determinants of Proxiimity	Preferences, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Turkish People Perception
Mann-Whitney U	7253.000	6952.000	6644.000	4349.500	7282.500	6629.000
Wilcoxon W	14393.000	13973.000	14147.000	11852.500	14422.500	13532.000
Z	-.532	-.201	-1.080	-4.126	-.318	-1.346
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.595	.841	.280	.000	.7511	.178

In the comparison between the Ukrainian society and the Gagauz communities in Moldova, according to the Mann-Whitney test, Turkey perception is not significantly differenced for two societies (p = 0.096). But determinators of the proximity with Turkey (p = 0.000) and Problem perception between countries (p = 0.003 ) have a significant difference. On the other hand, between the two countries, at the subject of determinators of likely distance/standoff with Turkey, at the subject of the development of economic and trade relations, at the subject of Turkish people perception there isn't detected a significant difference. Such that, "p" values are 0.138, 0.148, 0.333, respectively.

**Table 38:** Ukraine-Moldova Gagauz Societies Statistical Results

	Turkey Perception	Problem Perception	Determinants of Distance	Determinants of Proximity	Preference, on Developing Economic and Trade Relations	Turkish People Perception
Mann-Whitney U	8287.000	6871.500	7275.500	5257.500	7850.000	7532.000
Wilcoxon W	18583.000	14011.500	14778.500	12760.500	17441.000	15917.000
Z	-1.663	-2.965	-1.484	-4.848	-1.446	-.969
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.096	.003	.138	.000	.148	.333

**Conclusion**

It is seen from the analyses that the perceptions on Turkey has a positive outlook, in all the regions examined. In Bulgaria, perception was relatively low in comparison with other countries and the whole of the region. But it can be said that this perception is more about political, ideological, historical reasons than economicals. In some clusters of the Bulgarian society, the traumas of the past have not been wiped off. However, the overall rate, in general, is positive, and it can be said that

increasing economic relations and foreign trade between these two economies can also lead to the strengthening of the other aspects of the relations between these two societies.

The research results show that Turkey is facing clear and positive trends in the development of economic and trade relations with region countries. On the other hand, the problems in economic and commercial relations is very low and these results have been confirmed for all countries at the context of samples. This positive outlook and trend are also seen in the image of Turkish people in the countries of the all-region. Question 5, Question 1, Question 2, Question 6 revealed these perspectives and trends. Frequency analysis, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Mann-Whitney tests were used for their validity.

Another issue seeking an answer in the research is related to place of religion in the economic, politic and social rapprochements. Answers given to this question, which poses itself as a hypothesis, shows that the importance of religious differences still exists today at a varying degree. Question 4 is intended to determine this, and this situation proved by the frequency analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis test, and the Mann-Whitney tests at the context of samples.

The third question which poses itself as another hypothesis of the research was related to determining the role of geographical proximity, which is expressed as the "natural partnership-neighborly effect" in international economic and commercial relations. The phenomenon of "Geographic Proximity" in question 3 had an important-decisive factor in Frequency Analysis, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Mann-Whitney tests. Therefore, it can be said that the geographical proximity is an important parameter in regional economic convergence and it seems that considering the possible distance/negativity elements, it has the power to eliminate or reduce the effect of possible distance elements. In a way, it can be said that geographical proximity is an expression of the easy and fast accessing to markets and resources.

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**Survey**

State:

City:

Society:

Sex

Woman ( )

Man ( )

Age:

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**1) What would you think when you hear the name of Turkey?**

(a) I have no idea (b)Positive (c) Negative

**2) According to you, are there problems between your state and Turkey?**

(a)No (b)Yes (c) I have no idea.

**3) According to you, (if there is) what is the cause of the closeness between your country and Turkey?**

(a)Geographical Proximity (b)Cultural Proximity (c) Common History

(e) Religious Proximity (f)Common Movement's Benefit.

(g) We're not close.

**4) According to you, [if there is] what is determining the distance/negativity between your country and Turkey?**

(a)Geographical Distance (b)Cultural Differences

(c)Religious differences (e)No Common History

(f) Lack of common business habit.

**5) What about the development of economic and commercial affairs of your country with Turkey?**

(a)Good (b)Not Good (c)Good but not continue

(d) Good and in result both economy will be strengthened.

(d)Not important for me (e)It will be very good

**6) What do you think people who come to your country from Turkey?**

(a)Normal People (b)Good People (c),Rude People (d)Trusted People

(e)Unreliable People (f) People who can work together

(g) Difficult people to work with together (h) Very Good People

**Thanks**

The Survey prepared for research by researcher and translated to Bulgarish, Moldovan Languages and Gagauz dialect.