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# Geoeconomic Analyses of Türkiye: An Evaluation from a Geopolitical and Geostrategic Perspective

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***Research Article***

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***Abstract***

*This study provides a strategic analysis of Türkiye's geoeconomic and geopolitical position within the context of transformations in the international system. In the post-globalization era, economic power instruments have moved to the core of states' foreign policy toolkits. In contrast, energy, trade, finance, and technology policies have emerged as key determinants of geoeconomic spheres of influence. Edward Luttwak's conceptualization of "geoeconomics" underscores the role of economic instruments in achieving strategic objectives, whereas Susan Strange's "structural power" approach demonstrates how the global economy reshapes state behavior.*

*Within this framework, the study examines Türkiye's geoeconomic capacity across critical domains, including energy supply security, production and trade corridors, the defense industry, financial vulnerabilities, and technological dependence. It further assesses Türkiye's pursuit of "strategic autonomy" in the context of the Middle Corridor, the Trans-Caspian route, its ascent in defense technologies, and regional diplomatic initiatives. The findings indicate that Türkiye's geoeconomic effectiveness is not solely contingent upon resources or geography, but also depends on institutional capacity, financial stability, and the level of technological innovation. In this respect, the study argues that Türkiye's position in the global system can be strengthened through sustainable geoeconomic strategies and multidimensional policy coordination.*

*TJGE measures Türkiye's geoeconomic power across ten sub-indices: Energy, Logistics, Finance, Technology & Innovation, Human Capital, Resources, Geopolitics, Military, Institutional Quality, and Environmental Resilience. For 2024, the TJGE score stands at 56.95, positioning Türkiye at the level of a "regional power." According to projections for 2030, 2040, and 2050, the TJGE is expected to increase to 65.78, 75.14, and 85.19, respectively. The Energy, Technology, Finance, and Resources sub-indices constitute Türkiye's core strengths, while Institutional Quality and Environmental Resilience require further improvement.*

*The analysis tests the reliability of the sub-indices using Cronbach's alpha and ensures methodological robustness through Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and sensitivity analysis. This comprehensive approach underpins the projection that Türkiye could become a regional geoeconomic hub with the capacity for global influence, thereby fostering trust in the analysis's credibility.*

***Keywords:*** *Geoeconomics, Geopolitics, Geostrategy, Türkiye's Geoeconomic Development Index, Türkiye's Geographical Position, Strategic Analysis, Energy Security, Welfare Level, Center of Gravity–Power, Economic Growth, Economic Diplomacy.*

***JEL Codes:*** *F50, F52, O10, O19, O53, Q43, H56, H77.*

> "Economic development is the backbone of Türkiye's vision to remain free, independent, strong, and progressive. In pursuing this goal, Türkiye depends on two key sources of power. The first is Türkiye's diverse climates, fertile land, and strategic location, which serve as essential sources of national power. The second is the Turkish nation's skilled workforce—adept at operating machinery and wielding arms—and its elevated national consciousness, which, in critical moments, demonstrates heroism capable of shaping history."
>
> — Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the post–Cold War era, the concept of power has undergone a profound transformation, evolving from military-centric paradigms toward a multidimensional framework encompassing economic, technological, and knowledge-based dimensions. This transformation has led to the emergence of geoeconomics as a crucial tool in understanding modern strategic competition among states. According to Edward N. Luttwak (1990), geoeconomics represents "the fusion of the logic of trade with the logic of conflict," highlighting how economic instruments have increasingly supplanted military tools in strategic competition. Growing economic interdependence and the globalization of production chains have necessitated elevating economic policy to the realm of grand strategy. Geoeconomics examines how states employ economic instruments—such as trade policy, investment regulations, sanctions, and financial pressure—to achieve geopolitical objectives. This approach integrates classical geopolitics with modern political economy, making it essential for analyzing contemporary international power dynamics.

To emphasize the importance of Susan Strange's (1996) theory of structural power, this paper highlights how global financial markets and multinational corporations influence state capacities and hierarchies, thereby making the discussion more relevant for understanding shifts in global power dynamics. Within this framework, the state remains a key actor; however, its instruments, arenas, and vulnerabilities have shifted toward economic and technological dimensions. In parallel with this theoretical evolution, the global power structure has entered a multipolar phase. The diffusion of economic and technological capabilities among rising powers such as China, India, and Türkiye has diminished the West's unipolar dominance (Nye, 2011). Competition among major powers is increasingly structured around control over supply chains, energy routes, critical technologies, and digital infrastructures. Consequently, strategic analysis now requires a holistic perspective that integrates geopolitical realities with economic interdependence and technological transformation.

Türkiye's position within this evolving environment embodies a unique and inherently unstable complexity. Located at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, Türkiye serves as both a geopolitical hinge and a geoeconomic corridor. Its proximity to energy reserves, transit routes, and regions of instability enhances its strategic value. Historically, Türkiye's significance was defined through its NATO membership and regional balancing role; however, in the twenty-first century, a geoeconomic identity grounded in energy security, industrial diversification, digital infrastructure, and trade connectivity has come to the forefront. The literature on Türkiye's strategic evolution reflects this geopolitical–geoeconomic duality. Türkiye's foreign policy is increasingly anchored in economic diplomacy, logistics corridors, and defense industry capabilities, aligning with its pursuit of strategic autonomy-an effort to reduce dependence on external powers and assert independent influence within a multipolar system. Türkiye's energy partnerships, defense exports, and regional connectivity projects such as the TurkStream pipeline and the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) constitute tangible and salient indicators of its ongoing geoeconomic transformation.

Energy security is vital to Türkiye's geoeconomic strategy, highlighting its importance to regional stability and the interests of policy analysts and security experts. Positioned as a bridge between major producer countries (Russia, the Caspian region, and the Middle East) and major consumer markets (the EU), Türkiye functions simultaneously as both a transit country and an energy consumer. Projects such as TANAP, TurkStream, and the Sakarya Gas Field underscore Türkiye's ambition to become an energy corridor and a regional energy hub. Nevertheless, external dependency and financial vulnerabilities demonstrate that geoeconomic power is contingent upon macroeconomic stability and the level of value added generated.

The Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian) initiative represents another critical dimension of Türkiye's geoeconomic strategy. Efforts to connect Europe with China via the Caspian under the Belt and Road Initiative provide Türkiye with an opportunity to reduce dependence on the Russia-dominated northern route and to increase its share in Eurasian trade (Güller, 2022: 43–79; Gürdeniz, 2023: 168–169). The success of this initiative depends not only on infrastructure investments but also on financial integration, customs harmonization, and regional diplomacy.

Türkiye's indigenous defense systems—such as uncrewed aerial vehicles, fifth-generation fighter aircraft, naval platforms, and satellite programs—strengthen its security and export capabilities, fostering optimism about its expanding geopolitical influence from the Eastern Mediterranean to Sub-Saharan Africa.

However, Türkiye's geoeconomic ascent is accompanied by structural challenges. Persistent current account deficits, high external debt, income inequality, disruptions in production supply chains, elevated inflation and devaluation pressures, corporate bankruptcies, and exchange-rate volatility constrain long-term strategic maneuverability. Regional conflicts, shifting alliances, and global financial fragmentation further complicate Türkiye's geoeconomic sustainability. This underscores the critical role of effective economic governance in navigating external strategic pressures, emphasizing its importance for the audience's understanding of Türkiye's prospects.

The concept of geoeconomics originated with Luttwak's (1990) paradigm of economic competition replacing geopolitics, shifting focus from bilateral state rivalry to competition among economic regions (Cömert, 2000: 6–11). With Blackwill and Harris (2016), geoeconomics evolved into a key analytical domain of state strategy. Today, geoeconomics is a multidimensional discipline covering energy security, financial sanctions, trade corridors, technological dependence, and investment diplomacy. Suat İlhan (2005) describes geoeconomics as "a critical field where diverse economic domains—from mining and production chains to human and physical capital—are evaluated within their geographic contexts, assessing their relationships and contributions to geopolitics, "fostering appreciation for its scholarly depth.

From a theoretical perspective, geoeconomics redefines the concept of sovereignty. Economic interdependence may transform power asymmetries not into equality, but into new forms of dependency and influence (Farrell & Newman, 2019). Türkiye's efforts toward financial diversification, the development of national payment systems, and the establishment of regional clearing mechanisms highlight how regional cooperation can strengthen influence and resilience within the global financial architecture.

Accordingly, the intersection of geopolitics and geoeconomics frames Türkiye's strategic identity in the twenty-first century. Türkiye's position illustrates how middle powers can expand regional influence through economic instruments, while underscoring that sustainable influence depends critically on domestic institutional capacity, innovation, and multilateral cooperation. In summary, Türkiye's strategic trajectory represents a microcosm of the transition from traditional geopolitics to integrated geoeconomic statecraft. As the economic, technological, and security dimensions converge, Türkiye's grand strategy hinges on aligning internal reforms with external policies. Achieving internal stability and external cooperation will foster confidence and resilience in Türkiye's geoeconomic approach. This study examines Türkiye's strategies within the broader context of global economic transformation.

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Numerous definitions have been proposed for the concept of strategy, and the precise time at which it was first formulated remains unknown, though key milestones include its use by statesmen and military commanders as a "mode of thinking" (Mütercimler, 2006: 37; cited in Aksu, 2021: 109). From the 1970s onward, as the concept of strategy began to be employed within the social sciences, it has been used to denote such functions as directing, managing, dispatching, guiding, analyzing, and steering (Güçlü, 2003: 2; see also Okkan and Dayangaç, 2020: 15). This historical perspective helps contextualize strategy's development across disciplines and time periods.

Above all, strategy represents a problem-solving process (Bayır, 2014: 25). Politicians, senior military leaders, and academics have defined the concept of strategy from diverse perspectives, and a wide range of analytical approaches has emerged across the social sciences. Emphasizing its multidimensional and interdisciplinary character can help the audience appreciate the complexity and value of diverse analytical frameworks.

According to Napoleon Bonaparte, strategy is “the art of using time and space.” Carl von Clausewitz defines it as “the use of engagement for the purpose of achieving the objectives of war.” Helmuth von Moltke describes strategy as “the application of knowledge to practical life, the development of an original idea in accordance with changing circumstances, and the art of action under the most difficult conditions.” Antoine Henri Jomini defines it as “the art of conducting war on a map and of bringing the greater part of one’s forces to bear upon the decisive point of the theater of operations.” B. H. Liddell Hart conceptualizes strategy as “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy.” Arthur F. Lykke Jr., in turn, defines strategy as “the sum of ends, ways, and means” (Eslen, 2005: 72–81).

Colin S. Gray characterizes strategy as a bridge that links military power with political purpose (Gray, 1999: 1). Gregory Foster, for his part, defines strategy ultimately as the art of employing force as a final decision (Foster, 1996: 111–115), that is, the intelligent use of power. Strategy thus serves as a guide to the effective achievement of objectives through deliberate choices about what should be done and how it should be done (Okkan & Dayangaç, 2020: 17–18). Based on these definitions, strategy rests upon six fundamental pillars-such as objectives, resources, environment, decision-making, leadership, and execution-that form the core concepts necessary for a comprehensive understanding of strategic planning and implementation.

**Strategy = Power + Concept + Objective + Time + Tactics + Resolve**

From an etymological perspective, the concept of strategy derives from the word *strategos*, meaning “the art of generalship.” Recognizing this origin can inspire students and scholars to appreciate its historical significance and relevance in leadership and decision-making.

In the context of state strategy, it is the systematic identification and calculation of all influencing factors to ensure a plan achieves its objectives, and the deliberate, informed utilization of all resources, techniques, and materials in line with defined goals and missions. This process underscores the importance of strategy in achieving policy objectives efficiently. When states articulate policy objectives and missions, the need to determine “how” these objectives can be achieved in the shortest time and with the least damage highlights both the subject matter and the significance of strategy. According to Mütercimler, the concept of strategy is, in essence, an intellectual construct that establishes a durable and concrete linkage between where one stands today and where one seeks to be tomorrow (Mütercimler, 2006: 41); cited in (Aksu, 2021: 110). In the absence of the capacity to construct such an intellectual framework within a country, it becomes impossible to develop a strategy or generate meaningful projections (Aksu, 2021: 110).

If the fundamental characteristics of the concept of strategy are to be outlined (Eslen, 2005: 72–81; Mütercimler, 2006: 37–57; Toptaş, 2011: 2; Okkan and Dayangaç, 2020: 19; cited in Aksu, 2021: 110–111);

- Strategy, encompassing multiple interconnected elements, forms a complex chain of processes that require careful analysis and understanding to grasp its significance.
- By its very nature, strategy is dynamic in character.
- Strategy is a multifunctional construct derived from the synthesis of cause–and–effect relationships and an intellectual knowledge base.
- In essence and by its governing principles, strategy embodies universal characteristics in terms of its cultural, social, and natural dimensions.
- Strategy is a process of projection analysis and inherently possesses long-term attributes.
- In strategic analysis, since any influencing factor will also affect other factors, it is evident that a single tactical error may negatively impact the entire strategy.
- In strategy, it is essential to identify the center of gravity accurately.
- Strategy requires sound analysis and foresight between objectives, means, and methods.
- When formulating a strategy, a thorough assessment of both objectives and available power is indispensable.
- During the implementation of the strategy, feasibility, suitability, and whether the effort merits a cost–benefit evaluation are critical to achieving the desired objectives and ensuring success.
- Strategy is fundamentally an exercise in foresight; through strategic foresight and analyses conducted today, it encompasses the processes of determining where we will be tomorrow and how we will reach that point.
- Strategy development is based on calculation and structured reasoning.
- Strategy is not static but dynamic; internal and external factors that influence its development change over time, and their effects may either diminish or intensify.
- Strategy is not synonymous with crisis management and should not be conflated with measures taken during crises or with crisis prevention methods.
- Strategy must be proactive rather than reactive; it should aim to shape conditions instead of waiting for them to emerge.
- Strategy requires rational behavior and freedom from prejudice.
- The success of a strategy depends on the will to implement it and on determination. The formation of will and the attainment of success fall under the responsibility of policy, exercised through rational action and optimal balances.
- Strategy rests upon three fundamental pillars: power, time, and geography.

National values are the legal, moral, and economic principles that define the character of a state and shape its political system and social order. National power refers to the aggregate of instruments that a state can employ to attain national objectives in order to protect and advance its national interests. In geoeconomic and geopolitical analysis, disciplines and factors such as geography, demography, economics, scientific and technological advancement, diplomatic and political power, and military and strategic power constitute core components. The fundamental elements of national power can be outlined under eleven categories (Eslen, 2005: 170–184);

- Geographical Power,
- Demographic Power,
- Economic and Financial Power,
- Scientific and Technological Power,
- Military Power,
- Political and Diplomatic Power,
- Psychological and Social Power,
- Resolve and Rational Willpower,
- The Concept of Time and Space,
- Rationality and Vision,
- Intellectual Capital and the Capacity to Utilize Knowledge.

A country's national security policy is realized through its national security strategies, commonly referred to as **grand strategy**. The primary objective of grand strategy is to attain national goals. In this context, national values and national interests constitute the core priorities underpinning national objectives. To achieve these objectives, six fundamental strategies are adopted (Eslen, 2005: 98; cited in Aksu, 2021: 112):

- **Military Strategy**,
- **Political–Diplomatic Strategy**,
- **Education Strategy**,
- **Economic Strategy**,
- **Psychological Strategy**,
- **Geographical Strategy**.

To illustrate the distinction between strategy and tactics, the game of football provides a useful contemporary analogy. A football team's formation on the field—such as 4-4-2, 4-1-4-1, 4-3-2-1, or 3-5-2—is, by definition, a **tactical** arrangement. The combinations the team uses in its attacks within this tactical setup constitute **strategic** analyses. In this case, the overarching strategy is to win the match—ultimately, to win by scoring goals. Technique, which involves individual skills like dribbling, passing, and shooting, highlights the importance of personal mastery and can inspire respect for players' abilities. Regardless of the method, the objective remains victory. Accordingly, the strategy focuses on winning the match. At the same time, tactics concern how goals will be scored—whether through wing attacks, direct central offensives, or long passes from the back, among numerous possible combinations. While winning the match defines the strategy, the arrangements made to score the necessary goals constitute tactics. **Technique**, in turn, refers to the training and development of the individual who controls the ball and demonstrates the ability to score (Özkaya, 2019: 21–22; cited in Aksu, 2021: 112).

Within this framework, ten interrelated concepts—**evolution (progress)**, **technique**, **tactics**, **organization**, **discipline**, **equipment**, **education/training**, **capacity (power)**, **territory**, and **reflection (strategic thought)** — collectively referred to as the "10 Ts," are of critical importance in the formulation and development of strategic planning. These concepts constitute a systematic framework for the holistic development of a state's or institution's strategic capacity. They demonstrate that strategic planning is not confined solely to military or political domains, but is achievable only through the integration of an intellectual, institutional, technological, and cultural ecosystem.

Within this schema, "evolution" denotes strategic progress and continuous renewal; "reflection" represents the intellectual foundation; "technique" and "tactics" signify operational effectiveness; "organization" refers to institutional coordination, fostering a sense of stability and trust; "education" denotes knowledge transmission; "capacity" reflects the accumulation of power; and "territory" represents the tangible foundation of strategic presence. Collectively, these ten components embody both the sustainability of national power and the capacity for adaptation within a geopolitical environment characterized by intense competition.

In the contemporary era, the acceleration of scientific advancement and technological progress that enables it shows that strategy is rooted in tactics and technique, providing a clear foundation for strategic action. At the highest level, contemporary strategy is conceptualized as **Grand Strategy** (Özkaya, 2019: 21–22).

As emphasized by Aksu (2021: 112), the pace of scientific and technological advancement renders existing technical capabilities and knowledge stocks obsolete at an accelerating rate. This highlights the need for strategic adaptation, which can inspire confidence in the audience's capacity to evolve. This phenomenon necessitates moving beyond classical strategic planning paradigms and developing dynamic, learning-oriented strategy models. Accordingly, within the **"10 T"** system, the elements of technique and equipment encompass not only material assets, but also knowledge production, data management, and innovation capacity. Strategic superiority is no longer derived solely from military power; instead, it increasingly rests on the effective management of knowledge, the internalization of technology, and institutional agility. At this juncture, strategy is understood not merely as goal setting, but as a transformation process underpinned by scientific reasoning.

The concept of "Grand Strategy," as articulated by Özkaya (2019: 21–22), denotes the high-level coordination dimension of this process. Grand Strategy represents the strategic that synchronizes all state resources—military, economic, diplomatic, technological, and cultural—toward a single overarching objective. From this perspective, the "10 T" system offers an analytical structure that is fully aligned with the subcomponents of Grand Strategy, integrating the material (technique, equipment, territory), institutional (organization, education/training, capacity), and intangible (evolution, reflection, discipline) dimensions of strategy.In conclusion, contemporary strategic planning has evolved into a mode of systematic thinking that is no longer static but continuously adaptive, encouraging ongoing development. The "10 T" model constitutes both the epistemological and operational foundation of this evolution, providing a holistic framework that enhances a country's geostrategic resilience.

**Table 1: "10 T" Strategic Planning and Development Model Template**

| Concept (T) | Definition / Meaning | Strategic Importance | Area of Application (Example) | Role Within the System |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evolution (Progress) | The continuous development process of society, institutions, or the economy | Forms the foundation of long-term vision and sustainable growth | Development plans, R&D investments, innovation strategies | Ensures the evolution of processes through innovation. |
| Technique | The systematic use of scientific knowledge and applied tools | Transforms technological capacity into strategic competitive advantage | Defense industry, engineering, energy systems | Enhances operational effectiveness |
| Technique | Short-term methods applied to achieve objectives | Operationalization of strategy and an agile management approach | Crisis management, diplomacy, military planning | Serves as an operational planning instrument. |
| Organization | The systematic structuring of human resources, information, and assets | Enables coordination of national and institutional capacity | Public administration, private sector structuring | Ensures managerial order |
| Training and Discipline | The shaping of human resources through education and discipline | Determines the quality level of human capital | Education system, ethical governance, leadership training | Forms the foundation of competence, training, and professionalism. |
| Equipment | Physical tools, technological equipment, and infrastructure resources | The backbone of modernization and productivity | Military hardware, industrial infrastructure, energy networks | Forms the foundation of ethics and professionalism |
| Tedrisat | Physical tools, technological assets, and infrastructure resources | Forms the backbone of modernization and productivity | Military hardware, industrial infrastructure, energy networks | Constitutes the foundation of capability and professionalism |
| Capacity (Power) | Physical, economic, and mental resilience capability | A key metric of national resilience and strategic power | Defense economy, energy independence, public health | Indicator of strategic effectiveness |
| Territory | Geographic space, natural resources, and geostrategic position | The foundation of sovereignty and productive capacity | Agriculture, mining, border security, energy corridors | Constitutes the spatial foundation of strategy |
| Reflection | Strategic thinking, scientific analysis, and a visionary perspective | The intellectual foundation of strategic planning | Academia, public policy, innovation hubs | Provides the cognitive infrastructure and direction-setting phase |

Source: Compiled by the author.

- Center: Reflection (thought – strategic intelligence)
- Surrounding elements: Technique, tactics, organization, equipment as structural components
- Foundation: Territory (geographical reality)
- Apex: Evolution (progress – objective)

This model represents the construction of holistic capacity within the national strategic planning process. In this context, the components of human capital (discipline–education), instruments (technique–equipment), space (Territory), and vision (reflection–evolution) constitute the fundamental building blocks of a country's geoeconomic and geopolitical power. The **Reflection → Evolution** chain embodies vision and innovation; the **Technique → Organization → Discipline** triad represents managerial order; **Education → Equipment → Capacity** reflects production and power-generation capability; and **Territory** constitutes the physical and strategic foundation upon which all these elements are built.

The most decisive factor shaping strategy is the argument defined by political power and authority, shaped by the interaction of power, time, and space within the surrounding environment. Emphasizing risk management can help students and professionals feel reassured that challenges are manageable within the process. In strategic analysis, the process begins with capturing a snapshot of the current situation—where we stand and where we aim to arrive through strategy. This step underscores that risks are identified early, fostering a sense of control. This is followed by defining what we seek to become and identifying the vision and mission instruments that are critical to achieving these objectives (Schwanfelder, 2015: 67–68; cited in Aksu, 2021: 112). Subsequently, strategic objectives and strategic maps are formulated. This analytical process is a key pillar in forming the strategy pyramid and achieving the desired end state. Core values and strategic elements are then determined, and the tactics and analyses implemented in line with these serve as indicators of success in achieving strategic objectives. Finally, strategic outcomes are obtained, followed by evaluation of results and situational assessments. Within this framework, identifying risks and formulating mitigation measures are critical to the strategy's success (Aksu, 2021: 112–113).

Strategy, fundamentally, is about creating alignment between the organizations and activities of a country, a company, or an institution. Strategic success is closely related to executing numerous activities in a planned, organized, and effective manner. If there is no alignment among activities, there is no distinctive strategy, and the likelihood of sustainability is significantly diminished. In essence, strategy requires playing the game according to its rules. Frequent changes in strategy tend to undermine success, as they often stem from institutional misalignment and functional inconsistencies. Rather than facilitating the achievement of objectives, such conditions may result in substantial losses in organizational continuity (Porter, 2016: 41–42; cited in Aksu, 2021: 114).

The strategic planning process is a critical management instrument through which an organization, institution, or state systematically defines its current position, the objectives it seeks to achieve, and the pathways to attaining those objectives (Okkan & Dayangaç, 2020: 23). Emphasizing its importance helps readers understand why strategic planning is essential for organizational success and effective decision-making. This process is not merely a technical planning exercise; rather, it constitutes a cognitive framework that strengthens decision-making mechanisms and fosters strategic awareness.

The **Strategy Pyramid** is a conceptual model that hierarchically organizes the aims, objectives, and activities of an organization (or a state, institution, or even an economy) and establishes a linkage between strategic thinking and action. This pyramid outlines a comprehensive strategic management process that extends from high-level visions to lower-level operational plans. Its application in both organizational theory (Mintzberg, 1994; Porter, 1996) and geoeconomic analyses underscores its significance, encouraging the audience to appreciate its broad relevance.

Türkiye's geoeconomic strategy pyramid represents an architecture that transforms geopolitical power into economic sustainability and economic capacity into diplomatic effectiveness. This structure reconfigures the classical notion of "geopolitical security" into a "geoeconomic prosperity–security nexus," Serving as a framework to advance Türkiye's national interests. Consequently, Türkiye is evolving beyond the role of a mere transit geography toward becoming a control hub for energy, trade, and information flows. Regardless of whether the context is economic planning, defense strategy, development programming, or corporate governance, the Strategy Pyramid is regarded as the fundamental model that ensures alignment between ends and means. Structurally, it reflects top-down coherence among vision, policy, and activities, while simultaneously embodying a bottom-up cycle of feedback, learning, and adaptation.

Within the planning process, four fundamental questions come to the fore:

1. **Here Are We?**
    - This stage constitutes the current-state analysis, or the "as-is" assessment. The resources, capacities, infrastructure, human capital, and environmental factors of an institution or country are examined in detail. In the case of Türkiye, this includes identifying the existing status of areas such as energy production capacity, logistics infrastructure, financial depth, and human capital.
2. **Where Do We Want to Go?**
    - This phase involves the definition of strategic vision and objectives. Here, the institution or country articulates the position it seeks to attain in the medium and long term. For example, within the TJGE framework, the 2050 target envisages Türkiye becoming a regional geoeconomic hub and, in selected domains, a globally influential actor.
3. **How Can We Reach the Desired Objectives?**
    - This stage encompasses the formulation of strategies and policy options. It analyzes which instruments, resources, and reforms can be employed to achieve the defined goals. Measures such as energy investments, technological development and R&D, financial reforms, and diplomatic diversification are planned at this stage.
4. **How Are Success and Victory Achieved?**
    - The final stage focuses on defining metrics, performance indicators, and success criteria. The effectiveness of implemented strategies is monitored, and corrective measures are adopted when necessary. Within the TJGE context, the likelihood of success is assessed by testing sub-index scores through Cronbach's alpha, PCA, and sensitivity analyses.

**Analytical Assessment:**

- Strategic planning strengthens decision-making processes in environments characterized by uncertainty and volatility.
- Each question represents an interdependent and complementary phase of the planning process; incomplete or inaccurate analyses may result in inconsistent or unattainable objectives.
- In the case of Türkiye, the TJGE methodology facilitates the balancing of strengths in energy, technology, and finance against institutional and environmental weaknesses, thereby providing a roadmap for both short- and long-term policy formulation.

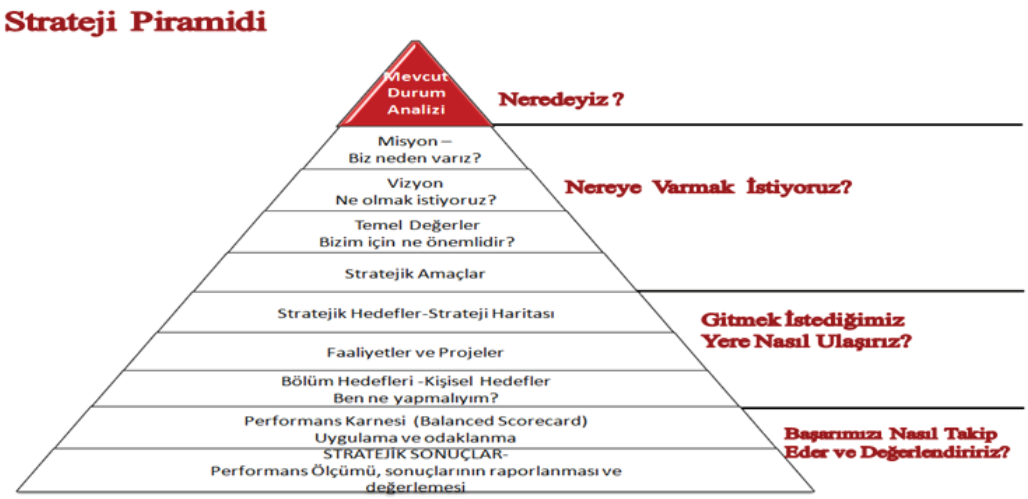
The strategic planning process is not merely a mechanism for defining objectives; it also provides a systematic framework for efficiently allocating resources and managing risks, helping stakeholders feel responsible and committed to achieving targeted outcomes. The TJGE case illustrates how this process can be implemented at the national level through geoeconomic power analysis and forward-looking projections. For Türkiye, priority considerations at this stage include energy security, strategic minerals (such as rare-earth elements), export composition, and regional trade networks.

National interests, security imperatives, and development objectives determine the fundamental orientation of a geoeconomic strategy. From Türkiye's perspective, these objectives can be consolidated under the following headings: energy independence; technological transformation: financial (fiscal) autonomy and resilience against shocks; attaining global hub status and sustainable development. To realize these objectives, economic instruments—trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, finance, and diplomacy—are prioritized accordingly, empowering stakeholders to contribute to national progress actively.

Robust institutional structures and policy coherence must support a geoeconomic strategy, fostering confidence and trust. Data-driven coordination is required among key institutions, including the Treasury, the Central Bank, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministries of Energy and Industry. Alignment with national strategies (for example, the "TÜRKKART" project, the "Green Deal Alignment Strategy," or "Digital Türkiye 2030") is essential.

The geoeconomic analysis process aims to establish a balanced framework within the economy–strategy–security triangle. For Türkiye, this process has evolved into a systematic approach to strategic planning that underscores the importance of aligning national initiatives, such as the "TÜRKKART" project, with its role as a bridge between Asia–Europe energy corridors and emerging production centers.

**Figure 1: Strategy Pyramid**




Source: *http://www.demetekin.com.tr/strateji-piramidi/*, accessed April 5, 2021.

**Table 2: Objectives, Goals, and Activities of the Strategy Pyramid**

| Pyramid Level | Function | Question | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Vision** | Long-term direction setting | What do we want to become? | To become a leader in sustainable development" |
| **Mission** | Reason for existence | Why do we exist? | To enhance societal welfare |
| **Objectives** | Mid-term objectives | What will we achieve? | "To increase employment by 10%" |
| **Tactics** | Methods to achieve the strategy | How will we succeed? | "To promote investment in education and R&D" |
| **Operations** | Day-to-day actions | With which tools? | "To establish technology centers" |

Source: Created by the author.

In a geoeconomic scenario, the focal point for achieving the outcome lies in the integrated, sustainable, and multidimensional use of economic instruments in alignment with geopolitical objectives. The issue, therefore, is not merely economic growth but rather the synchronization of economic power with strategic positioning, diplomatic influence, global agenda-setting capacity, and national security objectives.

In this context, the critical success factor is the ability to establish strategic balance at three distinct levels:

1. **Data and Time Management:** In geoeconomic analysis, acting with accurate timing is essential. Anticipating inflection points in markets, energy, finance, and technology is what ultimately drives a scenario toward success.

2. **Multilayered Coordination:** Ensuring institutional coordination among national institutions, the private sector, and international partnerships enables the effective utilization of geoeconomic instruments such as investment, finance, energy, trade, and innovation.

3. **Adaptive Strategy:** Given the continuously evolving geoeconomic environment, strategy must be reviewed on an ongoing basis within a dynamic cycle, and scenarios must be supported by alternative plans.

Ultimately, success in geoeconomic scenarios depends on how well economic rationality aligns with strategic rationality, leading the audience to feel that their understanding of this alignment is crucial to effective strategy.

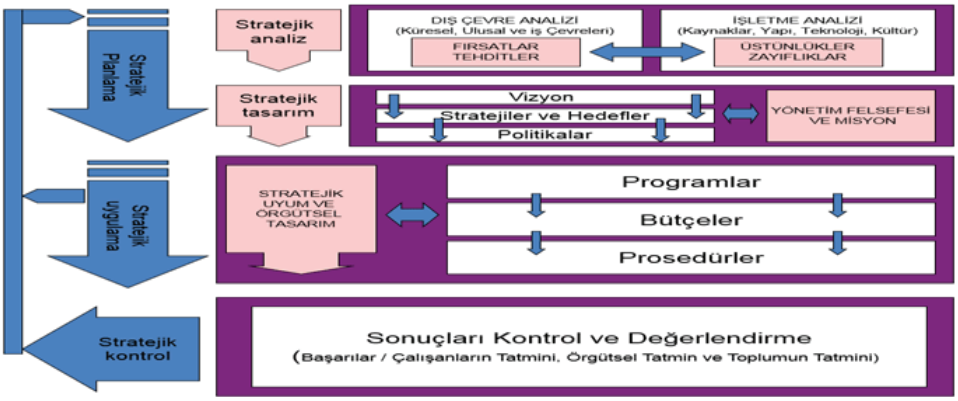
Strategy, above all, is a problem-solving process. Accordingly, the first step is to identify the problem (Akad, 2013: 24). Once the problem is defined, the question "What will be done?" must be posed, as this determines the objective. After objectives are identified, available resources should be assessed, encompassing all existing assets. Following the identification of resources, the question "How?" must be addressed, revealing the methods to be employed. It is also essential to consider potential uncertainties or obstacles, such as geopolitical shifts or economic fluctuations, that may affect the success of the chosen strategies.

In essence, strategy entails creating a new outcome aligned with a defined objective, encouraging collaboration. A strategy professional engages in forward-looking planning and analysis, seeking solutions for the desired future state, and articulates these solutions to motivate collective effort. Within this framework, strategy helps define where one will be in the future and how that future will be shaped (Bayır, 2014: 25–26; cited in Aksu, 2021: 114).

**Şekil 2: Türkiye'nin Jeoekonomik Piramidi ve Stratejik Döngüsü**

**Source: Created by the author.**

**Table 3: Strategy Management and Strategic Planning**




Source: https://www.vizyonder.org.tr/stratejik-plan-hazirlama-danismanligi, accessed April 5, 2021.

The strategic planning process unfolds across four distinct stages:

1. **Strategic Planning**
2. **Strategic Design**
3. **Strategic Implementation**
4. **Strategic Control**

This structure aligns with the planning–implementation–control cycle in classical strategic management literature (Mintzberg, 1994; Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Strategic planning is a vital process that goes beyond preparing a document, as it ensures the effective use of resources and the achievement of objectives aligned with an organization's vision and mission. This analysis encompasses global, national, and internal environmental factors, specifically identifying opportunities and threats within these contexts. Methodologies such as PESTEL, SWOT, or Porter's Five Forces, which analyze external and internal factors, may support this process.

**Strategic Design:**

At this stage, the framework emphasizes the relationship among vision, strategies, objectives, and policies. Management philosophy and mission are identified as reference points in the formulation of strategies.

- **Vision and Mission:** Define the institution's long-term purpose and core values.
- **Strategies and Objectives:** Provide a concrete roadmap for realizing the vision.
- **Policies:** Enable the translation of strategies into daily practices.

At this stage, **Strategic Implementation**, as explained in the strategy formulation literature (Ansoff, 1965; Porter, 1980), focuses on defining organizational objectives and clarifying strategic priorities. It demonstrates how strategic design is operationalized through programs, budgets, and procedures. This component highlights the importance of strategic alignment between strategy and organizational structure:

- **Programs:** Translate strategic objectives into operational projects.
- **Budgets:** Allocate and prioritize resources.
- **Procedures:** Implement strategy through standardized operational processes.

In academic literature, the success of the strategic implementation process is directly linked to effective resource management and organizational capacity (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). At the lowest level of the framework, emphasis is placed on measuring achievements, employee satisfaction, organizational fulfillment, and societal satisfaction. This represents the performance evaluation and feedback mechanism.

- **Control Mechanism:** Monitoring deviations between targets and actual outcomes.
- **Evaluation:** Assessing the effectiveness of strategies and organizational performance.

This stage constitutes a critical component of the strategic cycle in the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) and performance management literature. By integrating planning, implementation, and control, strategy management offers a systematic approach. Highlighting strategic alignment and feedback mechanisms can help the audience feel responsible for cohesive strategy execution, which is essential for success.

A state is obliged to determine policies that safeguard national interests by employing national power elements (resources) at the most appropriate place and time. Since errors at the strategic level cannot be corrected through tactical adjustments (Aksu, 2013: 50), this should instill caution and responsibility in the audience when making strategic decisions.

Administrators responsible for managing strategy must possess a thorough understanding of the country or organization's strengths and weaknesses when defining objectives and preparing. Highlighting how territorial gains impact future capabilities can help the audience appreciate the long-term significance of strategic decisions. Once decision-makers understand both their own team's capabilities and those of their competitors, they can create the conditions for strategies and actions to develop. According to Sun Tzu, "if an analysis rests on a solid foundation, the essential basis required for a strategy will likewise achieve success through such action" (Schwanfelder, 2015: 69; cited in Aksu, 2021: 114–115). Elif H. Kılıçbeyli's observation on strategy is particularly noteworthy: "When a country gains possession of a territory, the value of the advantage and capability it acquires for all future operations is measured by the extent of the losses incurred by the country that loses that territory in terms of its ability and capacity to resist aggression" (Kılıçbeyli, 2004: 26; cited in Aksu, 2021: 115).

The concept of **geostrategy** encompasses examining geographical elements from a strategic perspective and deriving strategic outcomes. It is possible to distinguish strategy into political and military dimensions, with the latter ultimately being subordinate to the former. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it became widely accepted that economic, political, and geographical factors influence strategy, and that strategy must be adapted to changing conditions and requirements.

According to one definition, it is "the science through which a state enables strategic command levels to benefit, in military operations, from the geographical, hydrographic, meteorological, and climatic characteristics and opportunities of its territory and surrounding region; in other words, the science that examines the effects of geographical factors on the military strategies of states. It is the science and art of integrating studies based on political, strategic, and geographical factors and utilizing this synthesis in military strategic operations" (http://www.serenti.org/jeostrateji-ve-turkiyenin-jeostratejik-konumu/, accessed 17.07.2017). This highlights how geostrategy directly influences military effectiveness, a factor crucial to professionals in the field.

According to another definition, geostrategy is "the manner of organizing where, when, and how large military forces will be employed in order to achieve national political objectives" (http://www.serenti.org/jeostrateji-ve-turkiyenin-jeostratejik-konumu/, accessed 17.07.2017). Mütercimler offers a further definition: "It encompasses the examination of geographical elements from a strategic perspective and the derivation of strategic outcomes. These geographical elements include economic, social, political, and physical dimensions. Accordingly, it is the science of analyzing geography for military purposes and planning and executing military operations by taking geographical conditions into account" (Mütercimler, 2011: 354–355). Highlighting these different perspectives underscores the multifaceted nature of geostrategy and its varied interpretations in academic discourse.

In addition, a country's capacity to utilize science and technology, as well as its political decision-making mechanisms, constitute influential factors in geostrategy. The fundamental elements of geostrategy are as follows (Mütercimler, 2002: 10; cited in Aksu, 2021: 117):

a) **Country Factors**
b) **Terrain Factors**
c) **Demographic Factors**
d) **Social Factors**
e) **Economic Factors**
f) **Political Factors**
g) **Strategic Factors**
h) **Historical Factors**

## 3. GEOSTRATEGIC ANALYSES OF TÜRKİYE

When examining Türkiye's geographical and geostrategic position, it is evident that the country is located in the Northern Hemisphere, at the intersection point of three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa. Türkiye lies between 36° and 42° north latitudes and 26° and 45° east longitudes. Serving as a natural passage between the European and Asian continents, Türkiye has a total surface area of 814,578 km², while its projected area amounts to 783,562 km². Approximately 3% of its territory (24,378 km²) is situated in Europe (Thrace), and 97% (760,200 km²) is located in Asia (Anatolia). This strategic position places Türkiye at the crossroads of major regional powers, including the European Union, Russia, and the Middle East, underscoring its geopolitical significance.

In terms of its territorial positioning, Türkiye's land borders extend for 2,753 km, while its maritime borders—excluding the Straits, the coastlines of the Sea of Marmara, and island coastlines—total 5,972 km. The concept of the "Blue Homeland" (*Mavi Vatan*) encompasses Türkiye's declared maritime jurisdiction areas in the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Aegean Sea, including territorial waters, continental shelf, and exclusive economic zones, covering an area of 462,000 km². These maritime claims are central to Türkiye's regional influence, economic interests, and security considerations, particularly given the strategic importance of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. In this context, Türkiye's total area reaches 1,276,578 km².

The north–south distance of Türkiye is 666 km as the crow flies, while the east–west span covers 19 meridians, corresponding to a local time difference of 76 minutes and a physical distance of approximately 1,660 km. Türkiye's average elevation is about 1,141 meters. As of 2023, the country's population stands at 85,372,377, based on the latest available data, ranking Türkiye 19th among 235 countries by population size and accounting for approximately 1.1% of the world's total population. Population density, defined as the number of people per square kilometer, is 111 nationwide. In terms of land area, Türkiye ranks 36th globally, and in terms of economic power, it is among the world's top 20 economies, underscoring its status as a geostrategically significant country. Approximately 1.73% of its territory is covered by water bodies (Aksu, 2021: 122).

Surrounded by seas on three sides, Türkiye's physical geography can be further assessed through its maritime environment. The Black Sea, together with the Sea of Azov, covers an area of 496,064 km², with an average depth of 1,197 meters and a maximum depth of 2,245 meters. Türkiye's Black Sea coastline extends for 1,795 km. Its strategic location at the crossroads of the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean highlights Türkiye's role as a key regional connector, shaping regional dynamics and security considerations (Aksu, 2021: 122).

Türkiye's geography, situated at the heart of the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean, should evoke a sense of its crucial regional importance for the audience. This positioning highlights Türkiye's role as a key connector and influence in regional affairs, making its strategic significance clear and compelling.

The Eastern Mediterranean, home to fifteen countries, is part of the region often called the "Fertile Crescent" by historians and scholars (Yaycı, 2020: 17). Historically, control over the Mediterranean has been a key goal for empires and states. The Ottomans sustained their maritime dominance for five centuries by following the principle of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha— "Whoever commands the seas commands the world" —which underpins maritime supremacy theory (Yaycı, 2020: 18; Aksu, 2021: 125).

Global dependence on maritime domains has steadily increased. While approximately 3 billion tons of cargo were transported by sea in 1972, by 2017, maritime trade had expanded to 11.3 billion tons carried by 93,000 commercial vessels, with petroleum products accounting for 25% of this volume. Looking ahead, projections indicate that by 2030, global maritime cargo volumes will reach 25 billion tons (Gürdeniz, 2021: 39). The strategic importance of the Eastern Mediterranean has been further amplified by the opening of the Suez Canal, which shortened the Europe–Far East maritime route by approximately 7,000 nautical miles compared to the Cape of Good Hope route, yielding significant economic and commercial advantages.

From a geopolitical and geostrategic perspective, the most critical island in the Eastern Mediterranean is Cyprus (Yaycı, 2020: 19–20). Its strategic importance is further underscored by its proximity to major energy corridors and regional security concerns, making it a focal point for international actors seeking influence in the region. Cyprus is located in the Eastern Mediterranean, between 34°33′–35°41′ north latitude and 32°17′–34′35 ′ east longitude. With a surface area of 9,282 km², Cyprus ranks as the third largest island in the Mediterranean after Sicily (25,710 km²) and Sardinia (24,090 km²) (Gürsoy, 1964:7; Gürsoy, 1971: 32; Aksu, 2013: 50–51).

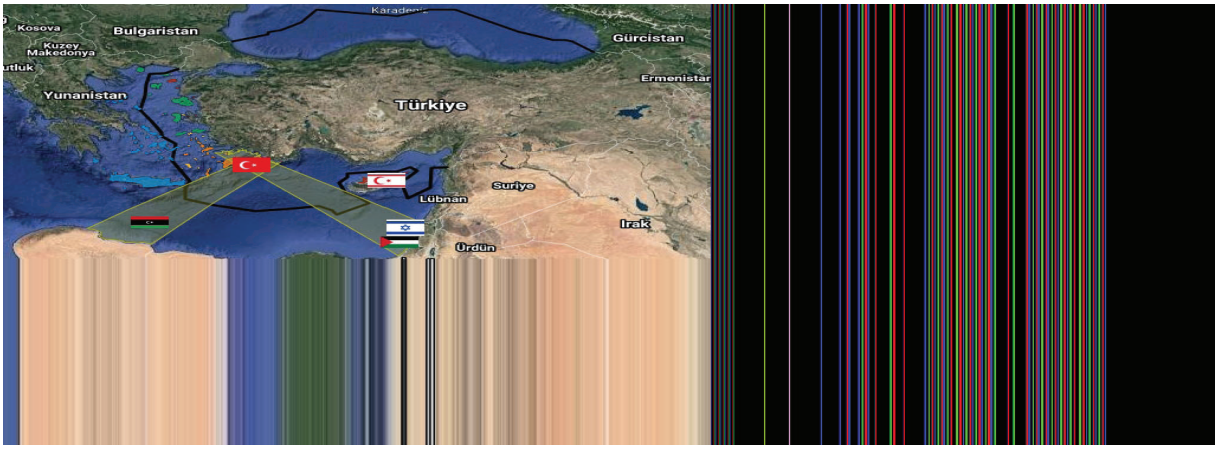
An examination of the physical geography of the island of Cyprus reveals that, like the Taurus Mountains in Anatolia, it belongs to the young fold-and-thrust belt of the Tertiary period. Understanding these features can deepen the audience's appreciation of the island's geophysical complexity. More importantly, during the early Quaternary period, the island was connected to the Taurus System in the direction of the Gulf of İskenderun (Gürsoy, 1964: 11–12; cited in Aksu, 2021: 125–126). In this context, Cyprus is an integral part of Anatolia, and its geographical characteristics closely resemble those of Türkiye's Mediterranean Region. In other words, Cyprus may be regarded as a "homeland offspring" that emerged from the Anatolian landmass (Aksu, 2013: 50).

The strategic significance of Cyprus becomes even more evident when its distances to surrounding countries are assessed, highlighting its proximity to key regional actors like Türkiye, Syria, Egypt, and Greece. The distance from Cyprus to Türkiye's coastline (between Cape Anamur and Kyrenia) is 65 km; the distance between Cape Çifte and the Syrian coast is 173 km; the distance from Paphos to Egypt (Alexandria) is 460 km; the distance between Cape Arnavut and Rhodes is 390 km; the distance between Cyprus and Crete is 600 km; the distance between Cyprus and Israel is 390 km; the distance between Ankara and Cyprus is 400 miles; and the distance between Athens and Cyprus is 685 miles (Özey, 1996: 63; Gürdallı, 2004: 64; Aksu, 2021: 126). This geographic positioning underscores Cyprus's strategic importance in regional security dynamics.

As can be observed, Cyprus is located within a one- to two-hour flight radius of the surrounding regional states. On clear days, the Taurus Mountains can be seen from the northern coast. Lebanon and Israel are only a few hours away by sea and merely minutes away by combat aircraft. The island of Cyprus commands at least a 270-degree strategic outlook over the Eastern Mediterranean and a full 360-degree vantage over the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, Cyprus's northern coastline enables surveillance and control over the entirety of Türkiye's Mediterranean shoreline, which could pose security vulnerabilities if exploited by adversaries.

Despite technological advances that allow virtually every detail of the Earth’s surface to be monitored from space, the dynamics of power struggles and strategy continue to be determined by the known physical features of the terrestrial environment (Aksu, 2013: 50–55).

**Map 1: Turkey and the Blue Homeland**




Source: https://mavivatan.net/mavi-vatan-logosu-hakkinda/, accessed October 10, 2025.

The Levant Basin, within Türkiye's *Blue Homeland*, holds some of the world's largest natural gas reserves, emphasizing its strategic importance. With an estimated gas hydrate area of approximately 3,000 km², Türkiye's energy future appears promising. The reserves, estimated at around **3.5 trillion cubic meters of natural gas and hydrates, underscore the region's potential**. Ongoing maritime disputes among Türkiye, Greece, Southern Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, and EU states highlight the competitive landscape and underscore the need to resolve boundary disputes, which are crucial for regional stability (Yaycı, 2020: 79). Türkiye's military and diplomatic presence in the Eastern Mediterranean plays a critical role in maintaining regional balances.

Through the *Blue Homeland* doctrine, Türkiye continues its policy of expanding maritime jurisdiction claims and safeguarding energy resources. In this context, Türkiye has intensified energy exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean by deploying seismic research vessels and drilling ships. Energy and mineral resources in the Mediterranean and the *Blue Homeland* are vital to Türkiye for both economic development and geopolitical security. The exploitation of natural gas and oil reserves in this region contributes to Türkiye's energy independence, while regional competition and disputes simultaneously reinforce Türkiye's strategic position. Sustaining Türkiye's access to these resources and its legal claims will play a decisive role in shaping the region's future economic and political balances.

Leveraging the multilayered advantages of its geographic position, Türkiye has become one of the most influential actors along the Eurasian axis, with significant potential to convert these advantages into geoeconomic opportunities. The interaction among geoeconomics, geopolitics, and geostrategy has given rise to a holistic national power architecture that shapes Türkiye's foreign policy orientation and economic development trajectory. Energy corridors, financial centers, defense technologies, and logistics networks constitute structural components that enhance Türkiye's strategic autonomy not only at the regional but also at the global level. With deep geostrategic depth, strong geoeconomic linkages, and its role as a geopolitical transit hub, Türkiye is evolving into a "balancing central power" within the geoeconomic order of the twenty-first century.

When addressing the *Blue Homeland* and the Cyprus issue, it is essential to approach the subject through the lenses of geopolitical and geostrategic sciences (Gürdeniz, 2023: 165–180; Yaycı, 2020: 17–78). Examining, interpreting, and analyzing political issues on maps constitutes the core subject matter of geostrategy. Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk analyzed political and social issues in the same manner as military matters—on maps—and articulated his views accordingly. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's perspective on Cyprus and the importance he attributed to the Turkish Cypriots can be discerned from the following remarks. On one occasion, while observing a military exercise in the south, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk addressed the officers around him, stating: "If Türkiye were to be reoccupied and the Turkish Armed Forces were to

Let us assume that resistance is maintained solely in this region. What would our supply lines and logistical capabilities be?" he asked. The officers put forward various views and assessments. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk listened to all of them patiently, then extended his hand toward the map and pointed to Cyprus, emphasizing, "Gentlemen, as long as Cyprus remains in enemy hands, the supply lines of this region are blocked. Pay close attention to Cyprus. This island is of vital importance to us. "The significance underscored by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is referred to in military literature as the **"Center of Gravity."** Accordingly, the value of Cyprus must be evaluated within this conceptual framework (Aksu, 2013: 53–54).

At the level of national existence, it is essential to recognize that every fragment and every square kilometer of the *Blue Homeland* is of critical importance to Türkiye. In this context, our Blue Homeland embodies vital assets both on and beneath its surface, encompassing strategic, economic, and security-related values of the highest order (Aksu, 2021: 121).

Establishing an **80-kilometer commercial and logistics bridge** between Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), linking **Anamur and Kyrenia**, is necessary to generate a transformative strategic shift. Although such a project may appear challenging due to cost and geographical constraints, its construction and utilization would yield significant advantages, including enhanced regional security and economic integration. The bridge would possess full geostrategic significance.

Comparable precedents include the bridge systems connecting islands in Japan and the bridge linking the two sides of the Crimean Peninsula. Similarly, this bridge would strengthen Türkiye's commercial, military, political, and *Blue Homeland* linkages with Cyprus. However, it is essential to consider potential geopolitical risks, such as regional tensions or opposition from rival states, to ensure the project's strategic resilience. Through such a connection, Cyprus would be physically integrated with Anatolia, enabling the transmission of electricity, water, natural gas, and other energy lines. In this respect, the project should be regarded as essential. Under these conditions, Cyprus's economic and strategic capacity would expand substantially.

Türkiye's geographical interests require a firm, resolute stance that does not compromise *Blue Homeland* policies. Accordingly, informed and rational policies must be articulated through strategic planning in order to generate leverage and tangible gains at the diplomatic table vis-à-vis counterpart states. Within this context, the Türkiye–Libya Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) agreement represents a significant and strategic achievement. Building on this, pursuing similar agreements with other Eastern Mediterranean states, particularly Egypt and Lebanon, can reinforce regional cooperation and shared strategic interests (Aksu, 2021: 122).

**Map 2: The Blue Homeland and the Status of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**

Source: Adapted from the map in Aksu (2021, p. 122).

In the twenty-first century, Türkiye's geostrategic and geopolitical analyses have acquired a significant new dimension due to population structure and demographic dynamics. Türkiye's strategic location, its young and growing population, its economic development trajectory, and its objective of becoming a regional power constitute the core elements of these analyses. Recognizing these demographic trends helps the audience understand their importance for future security and policy planning, fostering a sense of relevance and engagement.

Türkiye is positioned as a significant regional power at the intersection of the Middle East, the Balkans, and the

Caucasus. While this positioning offers substantial economic and diplomatic opportunities, it also entails risks and responsibilities. Investments in the defense industry and an active role in regional conflicts serve Türkiye's objective of consolidating its status as a regional power. Türkiye seeks to leverage its young, dynamic population to pursue this goal. Its regional influence has expanded particularly through military capabilities and economic relations. For instance, Türkiye's active military and diplomatic engagement in regional conflicts such as Syria, Libya, and Azerbaijan has reinforced its position as a regional power, providing a sense of stability and purpose for its strategic pursuits.

Organizations and alliances formed after the Second World War will become less relevant this century as they were based on Cold War paradigms. Therefore, Türkiye should focus on strengthening cooperation within these institutions, pursue policies that shape regional security debates, and develop joint solutions.

Türkiye should foster new military, economic, diplomatic, cultural, social, and structural alliances within its region and hinterland. Initiatives such as a "Turan Army," "One Language and a Common Alphabet: Turkish," a "Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic World," a "Turan Market and Common Currency System," and "Turkic World Population and Development Policies" can be pursued jointly with Turkic states under the framework of the Organization of Turkic States. Promoting these initiatives will foster regional unity and shared progress, making policymakers feel motivated by the potential for collective achievement. In shaping these policies, Türkiye bears significant responsibility as a guiding and strategic actor. Moreover, regional security cooperation and bilateral defense agreements remain critical. By concluding free trade agreements and expanding economic cooperation, Türkiye should increase its international trade volume, thereby supporting economic growth while enhancing its influence in the global economic arena (Aksu, 2024: 443). This, in turn, will further strengthen its geoeconomic significance.

Over the next 20–25 years, the Mediterranean, Red, and Black Seas will assume critical strategic importance, underscoring the need for informed policy decisions. Türkiye possesses substantial advantages in its geographical location and functions as a "central country" at the intersection of three continents—effectively a "key country." The Caucasus region is poised for heightened volatility in the near future. An examination of Caucasian communities reveals a Turanian structure. As a significant regional project, the urgent construction of a canal connecting the Caspian and Black Seas is proposed. Such a project would facilitate increased trade with Turkic states and strengthen economic linkages. Structurally, the Caucasus is characterized by a highly complex, multiethnic, and diverse sociological composition. Its role as a historic corridor for tribes and a major migration route has had profound effects on the region. Populations residing in mountainous areas exhibit different characteristics from those inhabiting plains. Türkiye should seek to unify this fragmented landscape and establish a strong Caucasus bloc, while carefully considering the potential counteractions of Russia, Armenia, Iran, and even Georgia in constructing a resilient structure.

The Balkans have historically been marked by conflict, yet under Ottoman rule, the region coexisted for 400–450 years. In the coming years, significant polarization is expected in the Balkans, with particular attention warranted for Bulgaria and Romania (Aksu, 2024: 443).

In addition to this analysis, it should be emphasized once again that over the next 20–25 years, the Mediterranean, Red, and Black Seas will play pivotal roles. Türkiye, as a central country at the crossroads of three continents, occupies a key position, with Cyprus serving as the "strategic master key" of this central role, on which no compromise can be made. Recognizing Türkiye's influence can inspire policymakers to prioritize its strategic importance and foster proactive engagement. The Caucasus is likely to experience intensified activity, and its Turanian characteristics underscore its strategic relevance. The proposed canal connecting the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea should be implemented without delay to enhance trade and economic integration among Turkic states. As a sociological structure, the Caucasus represents a strategically vital transit zone for Anatolia, characterized by

ethnic and social complexity shaped by historic migrations. Türkiye should work to consolidate this fragmented environment into a robust "Caucasus Bloc," while carefully assessing the roles of Russia, Armenia, Iran, and Georgia in shaping a durable structure.

Similarly, alliances should be cultivated in the Balkans. Countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bulgaria, and Romania warrant particular attention, as do partnerships with Asian states. The Red Sea represents a critical maritime transit corridor. It is likely to become an increasingly volatile theater in the near future—potentially a key flashpoint in a Third World War. While numerous interpretations and analyses circulate about this global conflict, three critical regions stand out: the Pacific, the Mediterranean basin, and the Indian Ocean. Expansionist and hegemonic policies pursued by certain European Union member states, rooted in competition over interests and conflicts, have effectively reached an impasse (Kennedy, 1996: 170–171). Diverging strategic visions and interests among Northern and Southern European states are likely to deepen existing fractures, potentially undermining the Union's cohesion. The United Kingdom may play a key role in reuniting Europe and restoring stability. As migration pressures intensify and strategic maneuvering on the global stage expands, EU member states are likely to experience severe strain.

Similarly, the federal structure of the United States—with its fifty states—faces the risk of fragmentation and escalating internal conflict, which could threaten societal stability. The country may no longer remain a cohesive whole, potentially collapsing from within, much like the Roman Empire. Diamond (2005) highlights the growing income inequality in both the United States and Europe, noting that this trend undermines social cohesion. Drawing on historical cases of collapse—such as those of the Maya and Roman civilizations—he emphasizes how elite privilege distorted resource distribution and ultimately precipitated systemic failure. Despite comprising only 5 percent of the world's population, the United States consumes approximately 25 percent of global energy resources. As Diamond concludes, "Societies collapse because, even when they recognize environmental limits, their political and economic structures refuse to confront this reality" (Diamond, 2005: 487–489, 498–522).

"China and India are two countries with population potentials so vast that they cannot be placed in the same category. Consequently, in the event of a conflict, these two states will not be brought together within the same strategic bloc. The Chinese state comprises numerous autonomous and centrally governed regions and represents a cosmopolitan structure comprising 58 ethnic groups. In the near future, the fragmentation and division of China is considered inevitable, as it is unlikely to sustain itself under its repressive and totalitarian (Communist Party–led) system. Indicators of this trajectory are already observable."

For instance, according to official Chinese figures, there are substantial discrepancies between the declared Turkic population in the Xinjiang–Uyghur region and the actual number of Turkic peoples residing there. This discrepancy should concern policymakers and scholars, as it underscores the importance of accurate demographic data in understanding regional dynamics and human rights issues.

China's "Silk Road" strategy necessitates engagement with the Turkic World, as these regions are vital for maintaining its trade routes and regional influence. China is encircled both by land and sea, with its production corridors under threat. A misstep in foreign or domestic policy could lead to fragmentation, especially given the complex issues in Inner Asia involving India, Kyrgyzstan, the Uyghur–Xinjiang region, Russia, and Tibet. The Silk Road initiative is thus central to China's efforts to secure strategic breathing space amid these challenges.

Although Russia spans a vast expanse, it is expected to continue to exist while gradually losing territory. Its sustainability will largely depend on the degree to which the Turkic World permits it. The Turkic World (the Turan region) encompasses a population of approximately 350–400 million and is home to one of the most ancient civilizations in the region. The policy framework of a Union of Turkic States is expected to reach critical milestones beginning in 2025 and to expand at an accelerating pace. Notably, certain European countries are also expected to seek inclusion in this unification process. The Turan Union is envisaged to emerge across a broad spectrum, encompassing economics, military affairs, sports, culture, education, and politics (Aksu, 2024: 448).

Türkiye must urgently implement the principal policies and structural reforms required in the twenty-first century. In this context, comprehensive economic reforms are necessary to ensure macroeconomic stability and to support sustainable growth. These reforms should aim to improve the business climate, strengthen the investment environment, and maintain fiscal discipline. Budgetary reforms should be undertaken to ensure effective public expenditure management and fiscal responsibility. Transparency and accountability must be enhanced to increase public sector efficiency. Strengthening social welfare programs, healthcare services, and the education system is essential to fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment among policymakers for maintaining internal stability and social cohesion (Aksu, 2024: 450).

For Türkiye to expand its role as a global power in the twenty-first century, it must manage demographic dynamics efficiently and develop comprehensive strategies in this domain. Emphasizing education and employment of the young population, implementing social security reforms to address population aging, managing migration dynamics, and ensuring high standards in education, healthcare, and quality of life will all contribute to Türkiye's enhanced effectiveness on the global stage. These strategies are essential for leveraging demographic advantages and reinforcing Türkiye's position as a global leader.

Various projections and scenarios exist regarding the population size required to sustain Türkiye's global power status. These projections are based on multiple factors, including demographic trends, economic development, health policies, and migration movements. In this respect, managing population trends and policies through intelligent national strategies and ensuring the efficient and effective use of national resources are of paramount importance. This approach is critical for achieving sustainable development, realizing national objectives, enhancing social welfare, and attaining an ideal standard of living (Aksu, 2024: 450). Policymakers should recognize that resource efficiency is essential for Türkiye's long-term success and global influence.

**Table 4: Factors Affecting Population Geopolitics and Geostrategy (From the 1800s to the Present)**

| Period | Population Factors | Geopolitical and Geostrategic Impacts |
|---|---|---|
| **1800-1900** | Industrial Revolution and Population Growth | · The Industrial Revolution accelerated competition among great powers (United Kingdom, Germany). |
| | Urbanization | · The growing population in Europe provided a significant advantage in terms of military power. |
| | Transition from an Agrarian Economy to an Industrial Economy | · Migration movements accelerated (migration to the Americas). |
| **1900-1950** | World War I and World War II | · Large populations became a strategic advantage in warfare. |
| | Population Loss and Reconstruction | · Post-war population losses affected labor supply and military capacity. |
| | Population Loss and Reconstruction | · Migration and population displacements in Europe. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1950-1970** | "Baby Boom" Dönemi | • With the population boom, the United States and the USSR increased their military and economic power. |
| | Cold War and Armament | • - During the Cold War, large populations played a significant role in military strategies (U.S.–Soviet rivalry). |
| | Nuclear Arms Race | |
| **1970-1990** | Decline in Population Growth Rate | • Population growth rates slowed, and population aging began in developed countries (particularly in Europe). |
| | Migrant Labor | • Labor migration influenced global economic balances. |
| | Globalization | • Population mobility increased with globalization. |
| **1990-2010** | Aging Population | • Aging populations in developed countries put pressure on social security systems and economic growth. |
| | Rise of Young Populations (Africa, Asia) | • Regions with dense young populations transformed into potential centers of economic power (China, India). |
| | Technological Developments | |
| **2010-Günümüz** | Population Stagnation (in Developed Countries) | • Migrant crises and refugee flows reshaped security policies in Europe and the United States. |
| | Migration and Refugee Crises | • Climate change intensified competition over resource access and strategic rivalry (Africa, the Middle East). |
| | Climate Change and Population Movements | • Mass migration movements have historically been dangerous, with the Migration Period being the foremost example. They pose threats to internal security and national defense of states. |

Source: Compiled by the author using UN and World Bank data; adapted from Aksu (2024, p. 433).

## 4. ANALYSES OF GEOECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPTS

According to Edward N. Luttwak (1990: 17–23), "Geoeconomics represents a new logic in international competition in which trade has replaced war. Strategic struggles conducted by states through economic instruments have supplanted military confrontations." Recognizing this shift can help the audience see their role in understanding evolving global strategies, making them feel their insights are important.

Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris (2016: 4–6) define Geoeconomics as "the strategic use of economic instruments—such as trade, investment, energy, and finance—by states to achieve foreign policy objectives." Highlighting these tools can empower the audience and help them recognize their relevance in shaping international relations.

According to Mikael Wigell and Mikael Scholvin (2018: 7–9), "Geoeconomics is the exercise of power through economic instruments. States strategically manage trade, energy, and financial dependency relationships to increase global influence or constrain other actors." This view can help the audience feel that their understanding of economic dependencies is crucial for grasping power dynamics.

Mikael Siddi (2020: 482) characterizes geoeconomics as "a realist approach that explains the power of economic instruments in international relations; economic interdependence and energy security shape states' foreign policy behavior." Emphasizing this realist perspective can foster respect for the analytical depth and relevance of geoeconomics in understanding global power dynamics.

Sanjay Chaturvedi and Mark Beeson (2019: 10–11) define geoeconomics as an approach that "emphasizes the decisive impact of economic power on the political sphere in the redefinition of the global order." Highlighting its role in shaping the global order can inspire curiosity about the influence of economic strategies on world politics.

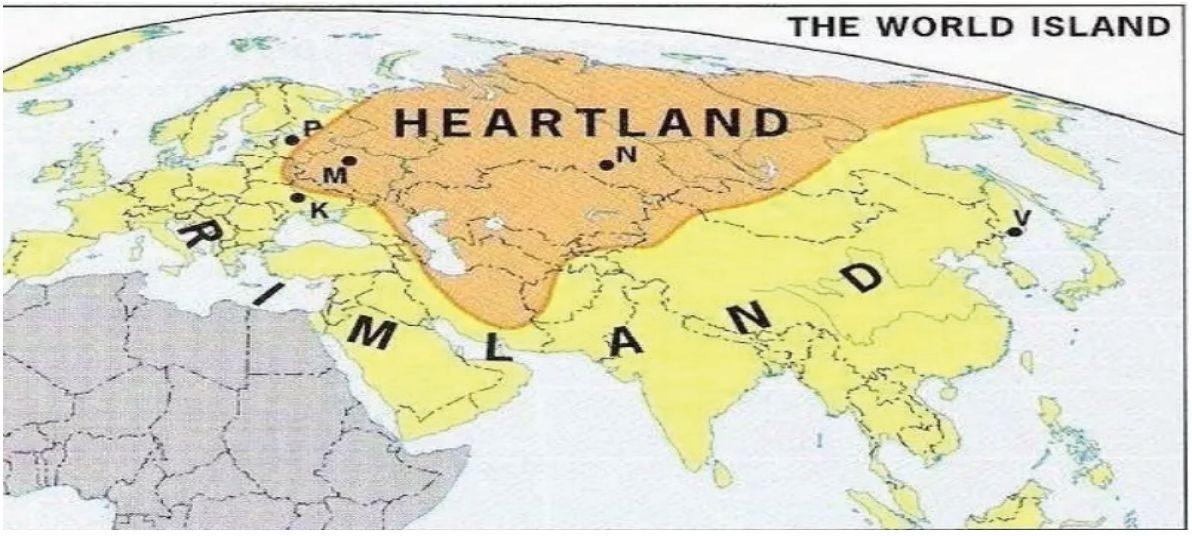
Pascal Lamy (2018: 22) offers a more systemic definition: "Geoeconomics is not merely the use of economic tools for political objectives, but the transformation of the economic order itself into a strategic battlefield." Emphasizing this transformative aspect can foster confidence in geoeconomics as a lens for understanding global change.

The term *geopolitics* was first introduced in 1899 by the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén in his work *Staten som lifsform* ("The State as a Living Organism"). According to Kjellén, the state is a living organism, and geography defines its "living space" (Kjellén, 1916: 45–47). In the early twentieth century, Karl Haushofer, a leading figure of the German geopolitical school, further developed Kjellén's ideas and transformed geopolitics into a "science of the state." Haushofer defined geopolitics as "the science that examines how geography shapes the destiny of states" (Haushofer, 1939: 27).

Within the Anglo-Saxon school, Halford Mackinder (1904) and Alfred Thayer Mahan (1890) laid the theoretical foundations of geopolitics by emphasizing land and sea power. Mackinder's *Heartland Theory* (1904: 422) remains one of the most influential strategic formulations in geopolitical thought: "Who rules Eastern Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; who rules the World Island commands the world."

Türkiye's geopolitical position constitutes not merely a geographical variable, but also a historical, cultural, and demographic source of power. According to Mackinder's Heartland theory (1904: 436), control over Eurasia is crucial in global politics. In the contemporary adaptation of this framework, Türkiye functions as a "rimland buffer" at the western gateway of the Heartland. It is positioned as both a security barrier and a connective corridor between the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Black Sea basin.

**Map 3: Mackinder's World Island "Heartland" Map**




Source: *https://strasam.org/analiz-ve-raporlar/analiz/rusya-ukrayna-savasi-dunya-adasinin-hearthlandinda-turklerin-jeopolitik-uyanisi-745*, accessed April 5, 2025.

According to Mahan (1890: 25), under the **Sea Power Theory**, the state that controls maritime trade routes will achieve global dominance, emphasizing the critical role of sea control in shaping world power. This historical framework led geopolitics to evolve into a discipline encompassing not only military dimensions but also economic, logistical, and energy-related aspects. Within this context, Mahan argued that as Germany began to threaten the power of the United Kingdom and France at the turn of the twentieth century, Britain should prioritize controlling the seas rather than engaging in large-scale land operations, thereby exerting control over regions beyond Europe, and that it would be appropriate for the United States to act in concert with Britain.

During this period, a contrasting view was advanced by Germany's most prominent admiral, Alfred von Tirpitz, drawing on Clausewitzian principles. According to this perspective, "Germany must break its chains, expand beyond Europe, and project power globally; to do so, it must possess a strong navy, anticipating a decisive naval confrontation between fleets" (Freedman, 2022: 213–217). This highlights Germany's strategic aim to extend its influence worldwide, a goal that remains relevant for understanding modern geopolitical ambitions.

Geopolitics is the planning of a state's policies based on geographical factors, which shape strategic decisions and influence global power dynamics. Existing geopolitical theories may be categorized under two main headings (İlhan, 2005: 35):

1. **Theories Based on Physical Geography:** Land Power (Heartland) Theory and Rimland Theory.
2. **Theories Based on Power:** Sea Power Theory and Air Power Theory.

In essence, all of these approaches adopt Mackinder's geographical analyses. Highlighting their importance can inspire students and researchers to appreciate the depth of strategic thinking involved. Their differences stem primarily from the emphasis placed on distinct elements: among geography-based theories, the Land Power Theory prioritizes control of the Heartland, whereas the Rimland Theory focuses on the surrounding belt (the boundary zone); power-based theories, by contrast, prioritize naval and air power (İlhan, 2005: 35). These theories are grounded not only in "power" or "physical geography," but also in shifts in technological and strategic paradigms. Accordingly, this transformation is incorporated to enhance the classification's explanatory value. This analytical perspective underscores that geopolitics is not solely "geography-based," but rather a form of strategic thinking rooted in power, technology, and ideology.

- **Land Power Theory (Heartland Theory)** — Developed by Halford J. Mackinder (1904), positing that control over the Eurasian landmass determines global dominance.
- **Rimland Theory** — Advanced by Nicholas Spykman (1944), arguing that control of the peripheral zones, rather than the core landmass, shapes the global balance of power.
- **Sea Power Theory** — Formulated by Alfred T. Mahan (1890), emphasizing naval power as the decisive factor in national supremacy.
- **Air Power Theory** — Proposed by Giulio Douhet (1921), asserting that air forces constitute the primary determinant of modern warfare.

Examining history through geopolitical data provides a critical analytical foundation for understanding how a country's past power struggles, geographical position, and strategic orientations influence the contemporary international system. For instance, understanding the historical significance of the Silk Road helps explain current trade route priorities. History should be viewed not merely as a chronological sequence of events, but as the continuity of strategic behaviors shaped at the intersection of geography, human agency, and power. In this regard, geopolitical elements—such as natural resources, transportation corridors, energy routes, and waterways—represent not only the physical environment, but also the historical reflexes that shape states' decision-making processes.

Within this framework, history and geopolitics are not mutually exclusive disciplines, but rather complementary ones. When the continuity offered by history converges with the dynamic and power-centered nature of geopolitics, it becomes possible to understand state behavior in a multidimensional manner. Recognizing that historical legacies, such as power balances across Eurasia, are being redefined today through energy routes and trade networks can deepen the audience's appreciation of current geostrategic developments.

Within the philosophy of history articulated by Arnold Toynbee, the transformative role of geopolitical data in historical processes and its impact on geostrategic decision-making can be encapsulated in his oft-cited observation: **"Historical forces can be more explosive than the atomic bomb"** (İlhan, 2005: 43). The "historical forces" emphasized by Toynbee are not merely reflections of the past, but also constitute the ideological and strategic infrastructure of contemporary geopolitical potential. Recognizing the importance of interpreting past geopolitical ruptures can help states avoid strategic pitfalls and build resilience, making this understanding crucial for contemporary decision-makers.

In this context, Russia's Eurasian vision, the strategic consciousness shaped by the Ottoman–Byzantine legacy in Türkiye's regional identity, and China's revitalization of the historical Silk Road through the Belt and Road Initiative exemplify how history is transformed into geopolitical agency (Güller, 2022: 47–69). As Toynbee suggested, while atomic weapons may be devastating in the short term, historical forces—ideological, cultural, and economic—possess a far greater capacity to reshape the global order over the long term. Appreciating this long-term influence can inspire policymakers to consider history as a vital tool for strategic planning in the digital age, where information flows are increasingly potent.

This yields an important lesson. Toynbee's emphasis on "inter-civilizational interaction" paved the way for Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis, underscoring the contemporary relevance of cultural geopolitics

In his work titled *"The Clash of Civilizations,"* Huntington argues that understanding the fragmentation and confrontation of opposing civilizations is crucial for grasping current global conflicts. He identifies the principal civilizational blocs as the "Catholic World," the "Western (Anglo-Saxon) Civilization," the "Slavic-Orthodox World," the "Islamic World," the "Taoist and Sino-Confucian Civilization," and the "Japanese Civilization" (Huntington, 1993: 22–49; Şahin, 2020: 58–59). Recognizing these civilizational fault lines can help students appreciate the complexity of today's crisis regions.:

- **Ukraine:** The Catholic–Orthodox fault line (West–Russia tension).
- **Middle East:** The Islam–West axis (U.S. interventions, energy geopolitics) and the Israel–Palestine conflict.
- **East Asia:** The Confucian–West axis (Taiwan, the South China Sea, technology wars).

Initiatives such as the **Organization of Turkic States (OTS)** and **Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)** are part of Türkiye's broader strategy to become a regional economic and diplomatic hub by enhancing cooperation in energy, transportation, investment, and trade standards. Emphasizing Türkiye's strategic goals can help readers grasp its long-term regional ambitions. The influence of these organizations depends on political proximity, ideological orientations, shared ethnic and cultural ties, economic capacities, and external actors' interests. Through projects like the Middle Corridor, Türkiye is working to integrate the Eurasian hinterland into its geoeconomic sphere (Gürdeniz, 2023). This effort aims to transform Türkiye from an "energy transit country" into a "regional production and financial center," highlighting its strategic positioning.

Türkiye constitutes a natural crossroads linking Europe, Asia, and Africa. The Turkish Straits, land–sea routes between Southeastern Europe and the Middle East, and the Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian) collectively position Türkiye as a central hub for logistics and energy transit. In an era of supply-chain diversification (near-shoring), this position provides Türkiye with supply-routing leverage and transit revenues; when reinforced by infrastructure investments (ports, railways, airports), the country's potential as a logistics hub is further strengthened. Via the

Trans-Caspian/Middle Corridor (TITR), Türkiye functions as a critical actor connecting Asia–Europe land and maritime modalities, with the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway, ports, and transshipment capacities forming the core of this system. The route has gained particular importance as demand for alternatives to Russia has risen.

Türkiye's geographic advantages can be translated into tangible, sustainable economic gains; however, such a transformation requires the simultaneous alignment of infrastructure development, environmental policy, energy strategy, and multidirectional diplomacy. Türkiye's geopolitical room for maneuver can expand through regional initiatives (OTS, BSEC) and an active role in the Middle Corridor, yet major power competition, regional conflicts, and global climate/energy pressures also pose risks. The most effective path forward for Türkiye is to pursue a coordinated strategy integrating infrastructure development, institutional reform, and environmental balance. These dynamics have increased Türkiye's weight in energy supply security and economic diplomacy (Yergin, 2006: 112). Energy corridors not only transport resources but also redefine Türkiye's economic geopolitics and shape strategic relationships through the energy dependencies of regional powers, emphasizing its critical role in regional energy transit and geopolitics.

Geopolitics is the discipline that examines the effects of geography on states' foreign policies and international relations. At its core lies the analysis of how a country's geographic location, natural resources, transportation routes, demographic structure, climatic conditions, and military–strategic advantages shape political decision-making. Recognizing these factors can help students feel more confident in understanding how geography fundamentally influences global politics.

Nicholas Spykman (1942: 41–43), in *America's Strategy in World Politics*, defines geopolitics as "the planning of a state's policy based on geographic factors," Which helps students appreciate how geography influences decisions. Karl Haushofer (1939: 27), in *Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans*, defines geopolitics as "the science that examines the determining influence of geography on the fate of states," Inspiring curiosity about geographic impacts. Saul Bernard Cohen (2003: 12) offers a more contemporary definition: "Geopolitics is the analysis of geographic assumptions and perceptions that play a role in shaping world politics," Encouraging students to see the relevance of perceptions in geopolitics. These varied definitions can deepen students' understanding and interest in the field.

The expansion from classical geopolitics (Mackinder, Mahan, Spykman) to neoclassical or contemporary geopolitics (Cohen, Brzezinski, Lacoste) demonstrates theoretical continuity and underscores the field's growing relevance over time. The works of theorists such as Mackinder (1904) and Spykman (1944) further show that geopolitics is not merely "geography-based," but a discipline that evolves in response to political and technological developments, which can inspire students to see it as a dynamic field.

In its broadest sense, geopolitics is the study of geography's influence on politics. For example, understanding how control of the Arctic or the Strait of Malacca impacts global power illustrates this concept. Contemporary definitions emphasize that the field encompasses not only physical geography, but also economic, military, technological, cultural, and energy-based power relations. Yves Lacoste (1993: 15) defines geopolitics as "the study of the political meaning of space and the power struggles over space." Colin Flint (2017: 14) conceptualizes geopolitics as "an interdisciplinary field that examines how geographic assumptions and representations affect the conduct of world politics." Zbigniew Brzezinski (1997: 38) frames geopolitics in terms of strategic decision-making: "Geopolitics concerns the strategic management of geographic space for the acquisition of political power." Saul Bernard Cohen (2003: 12) provides a more analytical formulation: "Geopolitics is the analysis of geographic perspectives and structures that shape power relations among states."

Synthesizing these definitions, geopolitics may be described as "a multidimensional analytical field that explains how the strategic, economic, and cultural dimensions of geography determine power relations among states." For example, understanding the geopolitical importance of Ukraine or the Middle East can clarify current conflicts and alliances. The fundamental objective of geopolitics is to transform a state's geographic advantages into instruments of power projection. As Brzezinski notes, "Geopolitics is the strategic management of space; it aims

to convert geographic position into political power" (Brzezinski, 1997: 38). Brzezinski's assertion that "whoever controls Eurasia controls the world" remains increasingly relevant today (Şahin, 2020: 58). From this perspective, geopolitical analysis helps explain why states pursue specific foreign policy choices, prioritize certain regions for investment or military engagement, and seek particular positions within the international system.

Geopolitics originated with geographers and political geographers and was further developed by political scientists, as noted by İlhan (2005: 24). Rudolf Kjellén, a Swedish scholar who introduced the term into academic literature in 1899, defined geopolitics as "a discipline that examines the complex relationships between the state and its geography and produces syntheses from these interactions" (İlhan, 2005: 23–29; Polat, 2005: 27). Understanding a nation's geography is essential for interpreting its foreign policy and assessing the strength of its economy. Geopolitics offers a comprehensive framework that integrates geography with social, economic, military, and cultural factors to address global issues effectively.

Etymologically, geopolitics can be summarized as "geographical policy," "policy based on geography," or "policy guided by geography." Essentially, geopolitics involves applying strategic thinking to geography—the art of using a nation's geographic features within the context of world politics (İlhan, 1993: 3–4; Babüroğlu, 2016: 113–115; Aksu, 2021: 119). This highlights its role in shaping political strategies in line with geographic realities.

According to another definition, "Geopolitics is a scientific discipline that shapes global politics and constitutes the intellectual and informational foundation of such policies" (İlhan, 1993: 5; cited in Aksu, 2021: 119). This highlights how geopolitics influences world affairs, inspiring the audience to see its significance in international decision-making.

"The scientific foundation and intellectual environment generated by geopolitics have guided numerous policies and modes of action. Geopolitical analysis is an indispensable instrument of political futurism. Without a geopolitical perspective, it is insufficient to explain many of the major problems of our century and the present day. Geopolitics does not itself produce policy; rather, it provides data to those who formulate policy. It examines the relationship between 'power' and 'purpose' at present and future political levels, drawing on physical and political geography. Geopolitics analyzes and evaluates all elements of power on a geographical foundation and presents these data as resources to policymakers" (İlhan, 2005: 23–33; cited in Aksu, 2021: 120).

Geopolitics is necessarily concerned with concluding the future. In essence, it constitutes a rigorous process of projection and analysis, which should inspire confidence in the audience's intellectual capabilities. Its success depends not only on geography but also on drawing strength from other disciplines such as space studies, economics, human capital, social structure, culture, organization, history, climate, law, politics, digitalization, electronics, and anthropology. As İlhan notes, "Geopolitics draws not only from political geography, but also from physical, biological, climatic, historical, and human geography; it employs the time dimension and generates numerous hypotheses and judgments regarding the future" (İlhan, 2005: 32–33; cited in Aksu, 2021: 120).

While "Türkiye's geopolitics" refers explicitly to Türkiye's geographic location and its spheres of influence within its borders and immediate surroundings, "Turkish geopolitics" encompasses a broader geography that includes the entire Turkic World (İlhan, 2005: 39); cited in (Aksu, 2021: 120). Although the two concepts appear similar, they differ substantially in scope and content. Geostrategy is more closely associated with security and defense issues. In contrast, geopolitics is used to analyze the general approaches of actors in international relations and to assess the strategic "chess moves" of states (Mütercimler, 2011: 358–359; cited in Aksu, 2021: 120).

Geopolitics is no longer merely a "science of geography"; it is a multidimensional field situated at the intersection of international relations, economics, energy, security studies, and cultural analysis. In the contemporary world, geopolitics extends beyond territorial control to include strategic management of energy flows, financial networks, information technologies, and transportation corridors. For this reason, the concept of geoeconomics is treated in modern literature as the economic dimension of geopolitics (Flint, 2017: 107; Cohen, 2003: 32).

Geopolitics is shaped by the interaction of multiple variables, commonly grouped in the literature under the following categories:

1. **Physical Factors:** Geographic location, climate, topography, transportation networks, maritime and land borders (Spykman, 1942: 44–46).
2. **Economic Factors:** Energy resources, minerals, trade routes, economic centers, and production zones (Flint, 2017: 88–90).
3. **Demographic Factors:** Population size, age structure, education level, and labor-force quality (Cohen, 2003: 25–27).
4. **Military Factors:** Defense capabilities, base locations, alliance networks, and deterrence capacity (Brzezinski, 1997: 40–42).
5. **Cultural and Ideological Factors:** National identity, cultural influence, and religious or ideological spheres of influence (Nye, 2004: 10–11).
6. **Technological Factors:** Information and communication technologies, cyber security, and space technologies as emerging power domains (Flint, 2017: 104–107).

Examining Türkiye's physical geography from a maritime perspective highlights the Black Sea—along with the Sea of Azov—covering 496,064 km² with an average depth of 1,197 meters and a maximum of 2,245 meters. Türkiye's Black Sea coastline spans 1,795 km. Its central position among the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean makes Türkiye crucial hub for the political, economic, military, and security power centers in these regions. By connecting Europe, Asia, and Africa and controlling key regional land, air, and maritime routes, Türkiye's geopolitical and geoeconomic importance is unmatched (Aksu, 2021: 119).

Addressing problems through a geography-based approach, combined with economic, social, and military data, makes geopolitics central to strategic analysis. Geopolitics examines how geographic factors shape policy decisions. It analyzes the core elements of politics—power and objectives—from a spatial perspective, providing a solid scientific basis. Therefore, all major decisions on national issues should be based on thorough geopolitical analysis. Developments in policy and security require a geopolitical lens. Geopolitics guides the trajectory of national security strategies and the process of protecting national interests, from initial steps to the achievement of strategic goals. In key security, foreign policy, and planning decisions, geopolitical assessment ensures disciplined thinking and comprehensive analysis (Aksu, 2013: 50).

The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits defines the status and importance of maritime navigation and the Turkish Straits. Emphasizing its significance can foster a sense of responsibility among policymakers and scholars to uphold regional stability, as the Straits influence both civilian commerce and military strategy: the security of the Black Sea, the flow of maritime traffic, and the legal regimes governing the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, and the Bosphorus (such as the Montreux Convention) shape Türkiye's strategic decision-making (Yaycı, 2020: 19).

In this context, the **Canal Istanbul** project—envisaged with a budget of approximately USD 65 billion and a route length of 45,2 km—would begin at the Küçükçekmece Lake isthmus, pass through Altınşehir and the Sazlıdere Dam basin, and reach the Black Sea. Excavated material from the project would be used to construct three artificial islets the size of Burgazada in the Sea of Marmara, along with two container ports through coastal reclamation on both the Marmara and Black Sea sides (Gürdeniz, 2021: 45–47). This canal project would, in effect, undermine the territorial definition of the Turkish Straits region, which underpins the Montreux Convention. The emergence of a "Western Istanbul Island," with a population of eight million over an area of 1,600 km² and a density of 5,000 people per km², would introduce an entirely new defense and security paradigm. Western Istanbul Island would become a focal point of Türkiye's geoeconomic and geopolitical sensitivity (Gürdeniz, 2021: 47). In this regard, the perspectives and sensitivities of Black Sea states—particularly Russia—are of critical importance.

Türkiye's military capacity in regional operations across land, air, and sea enhances its geostrategic effectiveness, underscoring its vital role in regional stability, which should resonate with policymakers and analysts. Geostrategic power must therefore be pursued in parallel with ensuring the security of commercial and public infrastructure, including ports and energy facilities. Maritime affairs and the Straits are among the most critical components of geostrategic systems, shaping global power projection at both economic and military levels. Historically, states that controlled sea lanes have determined not only trade flows, but also political influence and security architectures.

In this context, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles—Türkiye's control over the only natural passage linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean—possess a unique strategic value. This geopolitical position places Türkiye at the center of maritime trade, energy transportation routes, and military balance systems (Yaycı, 2020: 19–27). Through the Montreux Convention (1936), Türkiye acquired sovereignty-based control over the Straits, thereby becoming one of the guarantors of regional stability in both wartime and peacetime. The long-term strategic consequences of Türkiye's control over these vital waterways shape regional power dynamics, particularly regarding the potential impacts of the Canal Istanbul project on regional influence and security architectures.

Türkiye's maritime power is measured not only by naval capacity, but also by logistics, port infrastructure, commercial fleets, and energy security policies. Recognizing this broad scope can inspire a sense of national pride and confidence in Türkiye's regional influence. In recent years, the *Blue Homeland* doctrine (Gürdeniz, 2023: 165–172) has strengthened Türkiye's strategic vision for defining and protecting its maritime jurisdiction areas. When combined with the balance policy pursued in the Black Sea under the Montreux regime, this approach affords Türkiye's strategic position that is aligned with the Western bloc as a NATO member, while remaining balanced in its relations with Russia and other Black Sea states. For example, security vacuums that emerged in the Black Sea following the Russia–Ukraine war have enabled Türkiye to stand out as both a maritime security provider and a mediator. Similarly, the presence of the Turkish Navy in Libya, Somalia, and the Eastern Mediterranean enhances Türkiye's geostrategic influence at both regional and global levels.

Control over sea routes and straits has historically shaped power balances within the international system, emphasizing the importance of maritime strategy. Britain's control over Gibraltar and Suez, the United States' strategic focus on the Malacca and Panama passages, and China's establishment of military-commercial facilities in Gwadar, Djibouti, and Piraeus under the Belt and Road Initiative all reflect the enduring significance of maritime geopolitics. These examples demonstrate that the triangle of sea power, trade, and strategic control remains decisive in international relations, underscoring Türkiye's need to develop resilient maritime strategies.

For Türkiye, this landscape reveals not only a regional but also a transcontinental geoeconomic role. Accordingly, maritime policies must be supported not only by military capacity but also by energy security, commercial integration, and diplomatic flexibility. This integrated approach can foster a sense of purpose and unity among policymakers and analysts, positioning Türkiye as a sustainable and multidimensional actor within the maritime-centered power competition of the twenty-first century.

**Figure 3: Relationships Between Geoeconomic, Geopolitical, and Geostrategic Domains**

Source: Created by the author.

1- **GEOECONOMIC ISSUES:**

- Resource allocation and energy supply security,
- Production chains and global supply networks,
- Trade routes and export strategies,
- Financial sovereignty, reserve currencies, SWIFT, and economic sanctions,
- R&D and technological superiority (e.g., semiconductors, rare earth elements),
- International investment strategies (Foreign Direct Investment – FDI),
- Regional economic blocs (EU, BRICS, ASEAN, etc.),
- Economic security policies.

**2. GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES:**

- States' geographical positions and transportation corridors,
- Border security and maritime dominance areas (such as the *Blue Homeland*),
- Sovereignty over natural resource regions,
- Power centers and spheres of influence (e.g., the NATO–Russia axis),
- Sea lanes, straits, air corridors, and transit rights,
- Regional conflicts and security alliances,
- Sovereignty and international law (e.g., Montreux Convention, UN resolutions).

**3. GEOSTRATEGIC ISSUES:**

- Defense strategies and deterrence policies,
- Military–technological superiority (e.g., drones, missile systems, cyber security),
- Space, energy, and data security strategies,
- National security doctrines and alliances,
- Strategic communication, diplomacy, and intelligence networks,
- Defense industry exports and domestic production policies.

➤ **Issues at the Intersection of Geoeconomics and Geostrategy:**

- Energy dependence and supply security strategies,
- Strategic importance of critical minerals (e.g., boron, lithium, rare earth elements),
- National security dimensions of high-technology investments,
- Economic impact of domestic production capacity in the defense industry,
- Effects of economic sanctions on military strategies,
- Space mining and energy competition.

➤ **Issues at the Intersection of Geopolitics and Geostrategy:**

- Control of straits, sea lanes, and military bases,
- Strategic advantages derived from geographical position (e.g., Türkiye's bridge role among three continents),
- Regional military balance policies,
- Military alliances (NATO, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, etc.),
- Geographical implications of cyber and space defense strategies,
- Defense diplomacy and deterrence.

➤ **Issues at the Intersection of Geoeconomics and Geopolitics:**

- Energy corridors and pipelines (TANAP, TurkStream, etc.),
- Geopolitical competition over trade routes,
- Economic effects of port and transportation networks (e.g., national electric high-speed rail projects),
- Economic returns of maritime jurisdiction areas (EEZs),
- Regional development and influence-expansion policies,
- Utilization of population and human capital,
- Sanctions, embargoes, and energy diplomacy.

➤ **Issues at the Intersection of Geoeconomics, Geopolitics, and Geostrategy (Triple Overlap):**

- Global competition over energy and mineral resources,
- Alignment of economic interests with dominance over land, sea, and air domains,
- Critical technologies (AI, space, defense, data) and national security policies,
- Türkiye's integrated strategies such as the "Middle Corridor," "Blue Homeland," and the "National Technology Initiative,"
- The geocomplex structure formed by the alignment of geoeconomic development, geopolitical position, and geostrategic defense,
- Balance and deterrence policies in a multipolar world order (U.S.–China–EU–Russia–Türkiye).

**Table 5: Relationship Matrix of Geoeconomic, Geopolitical, and Geostrategic Domains**

| Field | Definition / Focus Area | Core Elements | Objective / Outcome | Examples in the Turkish Context | Geoeconomic–Geopolitical–Geostrategic Intersection |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Geoeconomics** | The integration of economic power elements with geographic and political objectives; the use of economic instruments for strategic purposes | Energy, trade, finance, technology, production chains, infrastructure, investment, resource management | To establish economic superiority, create regional spheres of influence, and ensure strategic autonomy | TANAP, TurkStream, Marmaray, Istanbul Finance Center, Teknopark Istanbul. | Geoeconomics functions as the economic instrument of geopolitics and as an operational sub-system of geostrategy |
| **Geopolitics** | A discipline that analyzes the impact of geography on states' foreign policy and security strategies | Geographic location, natural resources, borders, sea lanes, transportation routes, security belts | To safeguard security and spheres of influence and to maintain the balance of power | Eastern Mediterranean, Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Middle Corridor, Caucasus policies | Geopolitics guides geoeconomics and constitutes the decision-making framework of geostrategy |
| **Geostrategy** | The art of safeguarding national interests through the coordinated management of geography, economy, technology, and military power | Military power, defense industry, alliances, diplomacy, strategic depth, deterrence | To ensure national security, shape regional power balances, and achieve long-term superiority | Blue Homeland Doctrine, UAV/SİHA technologies, NATO membership, defense industry exports | Geostrategy is the applied domain that integrates geoeconomics and geopolitics |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Intersection Domain (Common Set)** | The convergence point of economic power, geographic advantage, and military/ diplomatic coordination | Energy corridors, transportation networks, defense industry, financial diplomacy, technology strategy | To maximize the state's global competitiveness and strategic autonomy | Turkey's "central country" approach, the Middle Corridor project, role as an energy transit country, indigenous defense industry | This domain is defined by the concepts of "Geo-economic Intelligence" and "Strategic Depth" |

| **Intersection Domain** | **Content and Variables** |
|---|---|
| **Geoeconomics □ Geopolitics** | Energy corridors, maritime and land trade routes, transit passage superiority, customs unions, and areas of economic integration. |
| **Geoeconomics □ Geostrategy** | Energy security policies, defense industry investments, technology and innovation centers, and strategic financing mechanisms. |
| **Geopolitics □ Geostrategy** | Military bases, border security, diplomatic alliances, and the establishment of spheres of influence in crisis regions. |
| **Triple Intersection Domain (Geoeconomics □ Geopolitics □ Geostrategy)** | Alignment of national interests, sustainable development, a vision of becoming a regional power, strategic autonomy, and Turkey's "central country" position. |

Source: Created by the author.

Türkiye's transformation from a "bridge country" to a "core state" underscores its growing strategic importance, positioning it as a decisive actor in regional energy, security, and technology dynamics. This tripartite structure demonstrates that Türkiye reinforces its geoeconomic power through its geopolitical position and, in turn, consolidates its geopolitical advantages through geostrategic planning. In this manner, Türkiye is evolving not merely as a "bridge country," but as a "core state," becoming a decisive actor in the regional power equation across the axes of energy, security, and technology. In the Turkish context, geoeconomic and geopolitical domains are deeply intertwined. Türkiye's economic growth strategies are directly linked to geopolitical stability; the security of energy routes is a determining factor for regional peace processes and the investment climate. For example, the security balance in the Black Sea and energy competition in the Eastern Mediterranean shape both Türkiye's economic interests and its geopolitical orientations.

Türkiye's young and dynamic demographic structure offers the potential to convert human capital into tangible geoeconomic advantages. Initiatives such as TÜBİTAK and TEKNOFEST have cultivated a technology-driven innovation ecosystem, directly enhancing Türkiye's competitiveness in defense, artificial intelligence, and space technologies. This technological advancement underpins Türkiye's geostrategic capacity, with indigenous defense technologies such as Bayraktar, Anka, and Akıncı not only bolstering national security but also generating significant export revenues, thereby strengthening its economic influence.

Robust logistics and economic infrastructure (geoeconomics) boost transit revenues, attract investments, and expand international influence. Simultaneously, diplomatic efforts and regional agreements (geopolitical factors) enhance corridor security and stability, thereby facilitating trade growth. Military (geostrategic) capacity safeguards infrastructure and maritime and land routes. However, imbalances may arise if economic openness triggers geopolitical crises or aggressive military postures undermine investor confidence, risking economic instability or systemic crises.

In the contemporary era, states are driven toward the brink of conflict primarily in pursuit of economic hegemony. The desire for greater access to resources, increased wealth, and enhanced economic power necessitates the development and implementation of geopolitical and geoeconomic strategies. Thus, throughout human history, persistent warfare and struggle have been mainly rooted in the aspiration to attain economic power and prosperity; behind every conflict lies the fundamental objective of securing economic strength and material well-being.

**Table 6: Triple Intersection Analysis Table**

| Domain | Tangible Elements (Turkey Example) | Explanation and Strategic Impact |
|---|---|---|
| **Energy Security and Geoeconomic Sovereignty** | TANAP, TurkStream, solar–wind–hydroelectric investments, Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant | Turkey has shifted from being merely an energy transit country toward becoming an energy hub. Geoeconomic gains generate geostrategic independence. |
| **Geoeconomic Utilization of Geopolitical Position** | Middle Corridor, Zangezur route, Marmaray, Baku–Tbilisi–Kars | Turkey functions as a logistics hub along the Asia–Europe–Africa axis. Geopolitical position is transformed into economic transit advantage. |
| **Defense and Technology Intersection** | Bayraktar TB2, Akıncı, Kızılelma, TCG Anadolu, indigenous radar systems | Technological autonomy and military production capacity generate geostrategic deterrence. |
| **Digital and Financial Power** | Istanbul Finance Center, digital currency initiatives, fintech investments | Financial geoeconomics constitutes a supporting pillar of national power projection. |
| **Diplomatic Flexibility and Multipolarity** | NATO–Shanghai Cooperation dialogue, the Organization of Turkic States, Africa Initiative | Turkey balances geopolitical risks and expands its geoeconomic space through multidimensional diplomacy. |
| **Human Capital and Demographic Dynamics** | Youth population ratio of 15.8%, growth in STEM education, indigenous entrepreneurship ecosystem | Human capital ensures the continuity of innovation and productive capacity. |
| **Natural Resources and Rare Elements** | Seventy-three percent of global boron reserves, lithium and thorium potential | Resource diversity provides an advantage in strategic production and energy transition. |
| **Geostrategic Deterrence** | “Blue Homeland” policy, cross-border operational capability, balanced diplomatic policy | Enables the synchronized use of military, diplomatic, and economic power. |
| **National Interest and Strategic Autonomy** | Indigenous defense industry with an 80% localization rate, national energy policy, independent foreign policy | Turkey aims to achieve strategic autonomy within the global system. . |

Source: Created by the author.

**Application Areas in the Case of Türkiye:**

- **Energy:** TANAP, TurkStream, Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, solar power (GES) investments.
- **Logistics:** Marmaray, the Middle Corridor, the Zangezur route, port modernization.
- **Finance:** Istanbul Financial Center, digital currency initiatives, deepening of capital markets.
- **Technology:** TOGG, Baykar, Türksat, domestic software development and defense R&D.
- **Military Strategy:** *Blue Homeland*, UAV/SİHA systems, MİLGEM, KAAN 5th-generation fighter aircraft, regional deterrence strategy.

The intersection of Türkiye's geoeconomic, geopolitical, and geostrategic positioning has made it a distinctive actor, emphasizing its importance in economic and strategic dimensions. Owing to its location at the crossroads of three continents (Europe, Asia, Africa), Türkiye functions as a **"hub state"** or **central country** (Brzezinski, 1997: 35–139). This positioning places Türkiye at the junction of east–west and north–south energy, trade, and security corridors. Accordingly, Türkiye is not a "bridge country" in the classical sense, but rather a geoeconomic center of gravity and a geostrategic balancing actor, underscoring its comprehensive regional influence.

Türkiye's geoeconomic potential derives not only from its resources but also from its capacity to direct strategically and manage them. Leveraging its unique geopolitical position, Türkiye has emerged as a regional hub in energy, trade, and security. In this context, Türkiye has become a multi-centered actor capable of accessing both its immediate hinterland (the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia) and global networks. This transcends the traditional "bridge country" paradigm, positioning Türkiye as a center that generates influence, shapes outcomes, and sets agendas. The geostrategic depth constructed at the intersection of geoeconomics and geopolitics enables Türkiye to evolve from a mere transit zone into a **power hub** and **center of gravity**, demonstrating strategic innovation. This multidimensional transformation positions Türkiye as a decisive actor in regional equations along the axes of energy, security, and technology. The integration of geoeconomic rationality with geopolitical vision will enable Türkiye to construct a sustainable central-state model within the twenty-first-century global system.

Türkiye is anticipated to pursue a strategic regional expansion over the next 5–10 years, emphasizing geopolitical influence and regional integration. This trajectory is portrayed as inevitable, stemming from historical and cultural responsibility. Within this framework, it is argued that Israel's ability to sustain itself in the Middle East depends not on the United States or European countries, but on Iran, which is portrayed as harboring latent strategic affinities. Iran is identified as one of the actors likely to oppose the formation of a Turan Union and as a destabilizing factor in the region. It is emphasized that a substantial Turkic population—estimated at 40–42 million—resides in Iran, and that Iran must recalibrate its policies toward the Turkic World to avoid fragmentation and strategic decline.

Countries and regions such as Greece, Armenia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Albania are identified as falling within Türkiye's expanding influence zone. Extending a conceptual line from Aleppo through Mosul to Kirkuk is framed as an economic–strategic reinterpretation of the *Misak-ı Milli* boundaries under contemporary conditions. Turkmen regions and historically significant cities—such as Thessaloniki, Xanthi, Kardzhali, Pristina, Skopje, Batumi, Plovdiv, Kirkuk, Aleppo, Nakhchivan, and Tabriz—are depicted as cultural and historical nodes within this broader sphere of influence (Aksu, 2021: 128).

Türkiye's gravitational pull is increasingly felt across the Balkans and the Caucasus through economic interaction, investment, and trade networks. Countries such as Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, and Kosovo are receptive to Türkiye's growing economic influence via foreign direct investment and commercial ties. Turkish firms in construction, electronics and innovation, energy, banking, and defense industries shape employment and infrastructure investment in these regions. This dynamic can be conceptualized as **soft-power-based geoeconomic expansion** (Jean, 2002: 84; Cohen, 2003: 12).

Regions such as Aleppo, Mosul, and Kirkuk hold enduring strategic value due to their energy resources and position along historic trade routes. Türkiye's economic and logistical engagement with these areas may be interpreted as a geoeconomic reinterpretation of *Misak-ı Milli* rather than territorial expansion—signifying economic integration and deepening of influence.

Furthermore, cooperation with the Turkic World (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) within the framework of the **Organization of Turkic States** constitutes the institutional foundation of Türkiye's Eurasian geoeconomic integration. This cooperation establishes a platform for shared geoeconomic solidarity in energy, transportation, and the digital economy (SAM, 2023; SETA, 2024). As emphasized by Aksu (2021: 128), the notion of a "growing Türkiye geography" should be understood not as military expansion, but as the strengthening of economic and strategic domains. Türkiye's twenty-first-century existential strategy rests on a geoeconomic transformation that fortifies geopolitical power through economic instruments, with the potential to elevate Türkiye to a globally significant strategic actor.

Regional power projection operates through two principal mechanisms:

(a) **Geographic and demographic proximity combined with diasporic ties (soft power)**, and

(b) **Economic, military, and institutional capacity (hard power)**.

Influence generated through geoeconomic instruments—energy, trade, investment, and infrastructure—manifests not in territorial change, but in economic integration, political influence, security cooperation, and cultural identity convergence. This framework aligns with the TJGE (Türkiye Geoeconomic Development Index) analysis. Türkiye's expanding economic and diplomatic influence across the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East—through deepened diaspora relations, increased trade volumes, infrastructure investments, expanded diplomatic networks, cultural exports, and FDI flows—illustrates a pattern of **"silent influence"** driven by energy diplomacy and economic leverage rather than classical military force (Lorot, 1999; Blackwill & Harris, 2016: 25–27). This dynamic strengthens Türkiye's potential as a geoeconomic hub state.

At the geostrategic level, Türkiye reinforces this positional advantage through military capacity, defense industry development, and foreign policy vision. Projects such as the KAAN 5th-generation fighter aircraft, UAV and UCAV systems (Bayraktar, Anka, Akıncı, Kızılelma); the Altay main battle tank, amphibious assault vehicles (ZAHA, SAMB); PARS III 8×8/6×6 variants; indigenous missile systems (OMTAS, UMTAS, Cirit); MİLGEM naval platforms, Reis-class submarines, TF-2000, MUGEM, and aircraft carrier projects; alongside the *Blue Homeland* doctrine and Cyprus policy, have significantly enhanced Türkiye's regional deterrence capacity. This architecture establishes a geostrategic balance in which geoeconomic interests are protected by military capability.

Geostrategically, Türkiye operates within a four-directional sphere of influence encompassing the Caucasus, the Middle East, the Black Sea, and the Eastern Mediterranean. This geography necessitates a **peripheral security belt** approach in both defense and economic planning. The Black Sea security equation, Eastern Mediterranean energy diplomacy, and maritime jurisdiction disputes in the Aegean illustrate Türkiye's integrated land–sea strategic vision. In this context, the *Blue Homeland* concept (Yaycı, 2020. 19–31; Gürdeniz, 2021: 48–84) has evolved into a geoeconomic strategic paradigm combining economic security, energy control, and maritime diplomacy.

One of Türkiye's strongest attributes within this triple-intersection domain is its ability to deploy economic and diplomatic instruments in a coordinated manner. The **"entrepreneurial and humanitarian foreign policy"** approach has expanded Türkiye's economic and strategic influence across Africa, Central Asia, and the Balkans. Institutions and instruments such as TİKA, the Yunus Emre Institute, entrepreneurial Turkish investors, diplomatic missions, diaspora organizations, educational institutions, and Turkish Airlines integrate Türkiye's geoeconomic power with a comprehensive soft-power strategy.

Simultaneously, Türkiye is strengthening its geoeconomic strategy through financial depth and innovation capacity. The establishment of the Istanbul Financial Center, national digital currency initiatives, and technology-intensive investments reflect Türkiye's pursuit of geoeconomic autonomy. The defense industry's domestic content ratio exceeding 80 percent further enhances geoeconomic resilience by reducing external dependency (Presidency of Defence Industries, 2023 Report: 14–46).

Türkiye's demographic structure and human capital are also decisive factors within this triple-intersection framework. A young, dynamic, and increasingly educated population constitutes a strategic advantage in both productive capacity and innovation potential. As emphasized by Lutz and Skirbekk (2014: 211), demographic potential represents not merely a quantitative, but a qualitative power asset. Investments in digital transformation and education reforms form the human foundation of Türkiye's geoeconomic sustainability.

Located in a region of high geopolitical risk, Türkiye seeks to convert these risks into strategic advantages. Crises such as the Russia–Ukraine war, Eastern Mediterranean energy tensions, the Israel–Palestine conflict, and the Syrian civil war have positioned Türkiye as a regional mediator and balancing actor. In line with Waltz's (1979: 88) realist theory, this demonstrates how middle powers can assume stabilizing roles within the international system.

In conclusion, the intersection of geoeconomics, geopolitics, and geostrategy in Türkiye's case possesses the potential to elevate the country from a regional power to a decisive actor within the architecture of global power. At the core of this intersection lie the principles of **alignment of national interests**, **strategic autonomy**, and **regional integration**.

Geopolitics and geoeconomics are complementary yet analytically distinct strategic disciplines for understanding states' positions within the international system.

While geopolitics analyzes power projection through geography, military capacity, and spatial strategy, geoeconomics examines how this power is exercised through economic instruments. Edward Luttwak (1990: 18), in *From Geopolitics to Geoeconomics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce*, argues that the post–Cold War era has witnessed a shift from military logic to economic logic in international relations: "The methods of commerce are replacing the methods of war; economic competition is the continuation of conflict by other means."

Accordingly, geoeconomics is not merely the "economic version" of geopolitics, but a mode of expressing state power through economic mechanisms. As Blackwill and Harris (2016: 4–6) succinctly state: "If geopolitics is the logic of military competition, geoeconomics is the logic of economic competition in pursuit of geopolitical objectives." In the modern era, geopolitics and geoeconomics are inseparably intertwined, as states increasingly deploy economic, technological, and energy-based strategies alongside military tools to achieve geopolitical ends—establishing a new paradigm in which geoeconomic instruments serve geopolitical objectives (Miller, 1998: 255–275).

- The United States' strategy of preserving dollar dominance is a geoeconomic instrument, yet it is ultimately oriented toward sustaining geopolitical primacy. The U.S. approach of focusing separately on four world regions in order to maintain global supremacy can be evaluated within the scope of geoeconomic analysis (Brzezinski, 1997: 40).
- China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), although presented as an economic investment project, functions as an instrument of geoeconomic and geostrategic influence expansion (Güller, 2022: 45–69).
- Russia's energy policies (leveraging natural gas dependence) constitute a geopolitical pressure instrument over Europe.

Geoeconomics is the contemporary extension of geopolitics. In the literature, three principal theoretical approaches are emphasized to explain the geopolitics–geoeconomics interaction:

1. **Realist Approach:** Power- and interest-centered; economic instruments serve the state's security interests (Mearsheimer, 2001: 34). → Türkiye's policy of controlling energy corridors constitutes an example of realist geoeconomic strategy.

2. **Liberal Institutionalist Approach:** Argues that global economic interdependence promotes peace (Keohane & Nye, 2000: 120). → Türkiye's integration with institutions such as the EU Customs Union and the IMF aligns with this logic.

3. **Neo-mercantilist Approach:** Focuses on the use of economic power as a foreign policy instrument (sanctions, energy cartels, trade restrictions) (Strange, 1994: 39). → U.S. sanctions, China's raw material policy, and Türkiye's regional energy strategies correspond to this model.

## 5. GEOECONOMIC ANALYSES OF TÜRKİYE

Türkiye is located geopolitically at the transition point among Eurasia, the Middle East, and Europe; geoeconomically, it is positioned at the center of energy, logistics, and production corridors.

- **Energy dimension:** Türkiye is a geoeconomic power hub as a transit country on the Russia–Europe energy line (TANAP, TurkStream).
- **Logistics dimension:** Projects such as Marmaray, the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars line, and the Middle Corridor have transformed Türkiye into a "logistics pivot" of Eurasian trade.
- **Financial dimension:** The Istanbul Financial Center and digital finance infrastructure aim to enhance Türkiye's geoeconomic capacity.
- **Technological dimension:** The defense industry, artificial intelligence, drone technology, and the national space program constitute geoeconomic production areas that support geopolitical autonomy.

For these reasons, Türkiye's political position rests on the balance between "geopolitical challenge" and "geoeconomic opportunity." After the Cold War, a hard-power geopolitical approach increasingly gave way to a smart-power geoeconomic strategy (Nye, 2009: 160). Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy, energy mediation, and trade-based foreign policy preferences reflect this transformation. This has elevated the primacy not of "territorial control" in the classical sense, but of control over energy, finance, technology, and information networks. In other words, the "economics of space" has begun to shape the "strategy of space."

Geopolitics and geoeconomics are not mutually exclusive; they are complementary concepts. Geopolitics defines the "state's space of existence," while geoeconomics ensures the "economic sustainability" of that space. Blackwill and Harris (2016: 8) summarize this relationship as follows: "Geoeconomics provides the instruments; geopolitics defines the objectives." Thus, success in the modern international system lies not solely in military or economic strength, but in the ability to manage geoeconomic instruments in alignment with geopolitical vision.

Türkiye's geopolitical role depends on its ability to conduct multi-vector balancing along the Eurasian axis, where energy and trade routes converge. As a NATO member aligned with the Western alliance while simultaneously pursuing Eurasia-centered independent strategic initiatives, Türkiye has strengthened its profile as a **balancing state**.

Anatolia, located in an exceptionally valuable and geostrategic position on the planet, hosts the Turkish nation, which—by virtue of its geography—possesses highly significant mineral resources. In the twenty-first century, ten key strategic minerals are expected to exert substantial influence on economic structures and activities, and states possessing them will emerge as major economic powers. These ten strategic and valuable resources are identified as: **gold, silver, boron, thorium, osmium, titanium, "yeda," platinum, lithium, and petroleum and its derivatives**. In addition, rare earth elements will be critical for future technologies.

Türkiye holds approximately 73% of global boron reserves, concentrated primarily in Eskişehir (Kırka), Kütahya (Emet), Balıkesir (Bigadiç), and Bursa (Kestelek). It is also claimed that approximately 694 million tons of rare earth element ore reserves have been identified in Beylikova (Eskişehir). This figure is often cited as ore volume; however, the purity, processability, and conversion into economically extractable reserves have not yet been substantiated with fully verified data. In this context, "yeda" is described as an unknown power element. Among these minerals, gold and silver are expected to become increasingly indispensable to the economy. The two strategic commodities of the mercantilist era (gold and silver) are projected to remain essential in this century (Aksu, 2020: 120; Aksu, 2021: 250).

The twenty-first century is widely characterized as an era shaped by energy transition, digitalization, and defense technologies. Accordingly, rare earth elements (REEs) and strategic minerals—such as lithium, thorium, titanium, platinum, boron, and osmium—play a central role in the redefinition of global economic power (Humphries, 2013: 4; Goonan, 2011: 11). These elements serve as critical inputs for high-tech industries, renewable energy systems, battery production, space technologies, defense industries, AI hardware, and communications systems (Wübbeke, 2013: 25).

In particular, boron, lithium, rare-earth elements, and thorium are of strategic importance for energy independence and the green transition. Countries that control these minerals gain not only a natural resource advantage but also a geoeconomic power-projection advantage (Blackwill & Harris, 2016: 33). Anatolia has historically served as both a civilizational transit zone and a junction of subsoil resources. Given its location at the intersection of Eurasian, African, and Middle Eastern energy corridors, it may be described as a "geoeconomic axis geography" (Aksu, 2020: 122).

Türkiye's possession of 73% of boron reserves positions it uniquely within global energy and industrial value chains (Eti Maden, 2023). In addition, Türkiye possesses rich deposits of thorium, chromium, nickel, manganese, gold, and silver (MTA, 2024). The foremost strategic mineral of the twenty-first century is boron. With the quality and scale of its boron reserves and ores, Türkiye is among the world's leading countries. While boron minerals are sometimes used in raw form, they are generally converted into refined boron compounds and specialty boron products prior to broader utilization. Boron minerals are used across an expanding range of applications—from glass, detergents, metallurgy, and agriculture to information technologies, neural-network infrastructures underpinning AI, space industries, and nuclear applications—underscoring their strategic importance for Türkiye.

In the twenty-first century, boron minerals—conceived as a strategic-economic commodity—are expected to play an indispensable role in Türkiye's future. The strategic, technological, and economic importance of boron continues to increase globally. Approximately 72.3% of global boron reserves are located in six provinces in western Türkiye (Balıkesir, Eskişehir, Bilecik, Manisa, Kütahya, and Bursa). Other central reserves exist in countries such as the United States, Russia, China, Chile, Peru, Kazakhstan, and South Africa. Global boron reserves, measured on a B2O3 basis, total 1.176 billion tons, comprising 369 million tons of proven reserves and 807 million tons of probable/possible reserves. Türkiye's share is 72.3%, compared to 6.8% for the United States and 8.5% for Russia. Türkiye's boron reserve life is estimated at 567 years, whereas Russia's reserve life—despite being the second-largest reserve holder—is estimated at 67 years (Yenmez, 2009: 59–60).

The Turkic world (the Turan region) spans a broad geography from Central Asia to the Caucasus and comprises countries bound by cultural and historical ties. These countries possess significant resources, including energy reserves, minerals, and youthful populations. Under Türkiye's leadership, economic, political, and cultural cooperation among Turkic states is expanding. Projects conducted under the Organization of Turkic States deepen economic integration and enable coordinated action on the global stage. It is asserted that a Turkic nation capable of shaping outcomes will rewrite world history in this century.

The global population is expected to reach between 9.7 and 10.1 billion by 2050, though growth will not be evenly distributed. Fertility rates are declining in developed countries, while population growth is expected to continue in developing regions such as Africa and South Asia. In Europe and Japan, populations are aging and economic growth is slowing. By 2050, the share of people aged 65 and above worldwide is expected to rise significantly. According to UN data, 16% of the world population will be over 65 in 2050, compared to about 9% today. The period is also expected to see increases in private property, entrepreneurial freedom, disposable personal income, and associated wealth accumulation and social stratification. Major transformations are anticipated in occupational structures, digitalization, automation, engineering, sustainability, and health technologies. The future workforce will increasingly consist of individuals with technological literacy, environmental awareness, data-driven decision-making capacity, and continuous learning orientation.

This transformation will reshape countries' economic and social structures and reconfigure labor markets. However, labor utilization in the agrarian era differs fundamentally from labor utilization in the information-technology era—an important point of emphasis. Labor is shifting from reliance on physical strength to cognitive capacity (Aksu, 2016: 69).

Everything in the world is sustained by energy. Since the earliest days of human existence, energy and its use have been among the most critical resources for meeting fundamental needs, sustaining life, and raising living standards. A life without energy is inconceivable. Türkiye, due to its central position in Eurasia, strategic location on energy corridors, young and dynamic population, historical hinterland, and regional power potential, stands as a focal point of contemporary geoeconomic analyses. Unlike classical geopolitical analysis, which centers on military and geographical power parameters, geoeconomics focuses on the role of economic capacity in safeguarding national interests and shaping global competition. In this context, Türkiye occupies a distinctive position both as a junction of East–West energy and trade flows and as an actor with potential to balance between production and financial centers.

Türkiye's energy security strategy rests on both supply diversification and transit capacity. Logistics corridors such as the Middle Corridor and the Development Road Project strengthen Türkiye's role as a transit country in Asia–Europe trade. With a population of roughly 85 million, more than half of whom are under 35, Türkiye is regionally competitive in both production capacity and domestic market scale. According to OECD (2023) data, Türkiye ranks among the top three European countries in terms of youth labor-force density. However, increasing investments in education and technology is necessary to effectively utilize human capital.

**Tablo 7: Türkiye'nin Jeoekonomik SWOT Analizi**

| Category | Elements |
|---|---|
| **Strengths** | • **Geographic location:** Role as a bridge and transit corridor between Eurasia, the Middle East, and Europe (Black Sea, TANAP, TurkStream, Middle Corridor). |
| | • Young and dynamic population structure; large domestic market. |
| | • Rising defense industry capacity and growth in technological production. |
| | • Subsurface wealth: boron minerals, other minerals, and natural resource potential. |
| | • Logistics infrastructure projects: ports, railways, airports, and logistics corridor initiatives. |
| | • **Export potential** and advantages stemming from the Customs Union. |
| **Weaknesses** | • **High dependence on energy imports;** supply security risks. |
| | • Exchange rate volatility, high inflation, and financial uncertainty. |
| | • **Dependence on foreign technology and high value-added products;** limited patent and R&D capacity. |
| | • **Lack of institutional stability;** bureaucracy and unpredictability in the investment environment. |
| | • **Regional development disparities;** infrastructure deficiencies in hinterland connections. |
| | • Current account deficit and external debt burden. |
| **Opportunities** | • **Near-shoring trends in Europe;** potential to attract investment to Turkey. |
| | • **Development of hydrocarbon resources in the Black Sea;** natural gas discoveries. |
| | • **Renewable energy investments** and green transformation projects. |
| | • **Strengthening of regional trade corridors** (Middle Corridor, Trans-Caspian, etc.). |
| | • **Growing demand in financial services, fintech, and the digital economy** driven by a young population. |
| | • **Opportunities for diplomatic normalization** with global institutions and foreign capital. |
| **Threats** | • **Regional geopolitical risks:** conflicts in Syria, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. |
| | • **Global economic slowdown** and contraction of demand in the EU market. |
| | • Deterioration of exchange rate stability and macroeconomic balances. |
| | • **Risks associated with the global energy transition** and the move away from fossil fuels. |
| | • **Deterioration in foreign investor perception** and rising costs of access to external finance. |
| | • **Climate change, water scarcity, and environmental risks.** |

Source: Created by the author.

**1- Geoeconomic Significance of Strengths:** Türkiye's geographical position—at the intersection of logistics and energy transit corridors—provides both economic advantage and strategic leverage. A young population and an expanding domestic market support consumption demand while also facilitating investment in production and innovation through labor-force potential. Strengths such as the defense industry and logistics infrastructure increase Türkiye's foreign policy capacity and strategic autonomy under geopolitical pressure. If leveraged in a coordinated manner, these strengths could position Türkiye as a regional **core state** and, in selected sectors, as an indispensable node within global supply chains.

- **Strategic geographic position (bridge/junction role):** Located at the Europe–Asia–Africa nexus, Türkiye's role in the Straits and the Middle Corridor provides leverage in energy, trade, and military maneuver. Transit revenues can be converted into greater hub-state shares in logistics/finance/energy.

- **Energy corridor and rising domestic production potential:** Beyond TANAP/TurkStream-type projects, Black Sea gas discoveries and potential solid-fuel/natural gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean may elevate Türkiye from a transit actor to a supplier profile (energy as a diplomacy instrument).

- **Expanding defense–technology sector:** Technological advances by domestic defense firms (UAVs, electronic systems, software) contribute to exports and strategic autonomy, reinforcing geostrategic deterrence.
- **Young population and growing domestic market:** Demographic dynamics generate demand, labor supply, and a potential workforce for innovative energy/technology sectors; with appropriate investment and education, this can translate into higher value-added production.
- **Developing logistics infrastructure:** Projects such as Marmaray, new ports, and the BTK line can position Türkiye as an alternative corridor within global supply chains.
- **Strategic raw material reserves:** Critical minerals—especially boron—can provide Türkiye with bargaining power and industrial integration advantages in global value chains.
- **Multi-vector foreign policy capability:** Flexibility to engage both Western and Eastern actors provides maneuver space during periods of crisis.

**2- Risk Analysis of Weaknesses:** Dependence on imported energy and reliance on external financing increase vulnerability to exogenous shocks. Inflation and exchange-rate volatility reduce investment and planning predictability. Limitations in the production of high-value-added technology constrain geoeconomic competitiveness. Bureaucratic constraints and the need for institutional reform may negatively affect investment attractiveness. Türkiye's position contains vulnerabilities alongside opportunities. Energy import dependence, external financial openness, and regional crises (Syria, Ukraine, Eastern Mediterranean) affect Türkiye's geoeconomic equation. Moreover, the economic spillovers of geopolitical tensions can periodically pressure monetary policy and the investment environment (Rodrik, 2019: 42). Thus, the sustainability of the triple-intersection domain is directly linked to economic resilience and strategic foresight capacity. Weaknesses create fragility against exogenous shocks and may obstruct the sustainable conversion of geoeconomic advantages.

- **Macroeconomic fragilities:** High inflation, FX volatility, external debt, and current-account deficits can erode investor confidence and raise financing costs for major infrastructure/energy projects.
- **Energy supply dependence and transition risk:** Fossil-fuel dependence may reduce transit-rent advantages as global energy transition (renewables/hydrogen) accelerates; a parallel green transition strategy is required.
- **Institutional and regulatory uncertainties:** Weaknesses in rule of law, investor protection, bureaucracy, and predictable regulation can constrain FDI inflows.
- **Structural gaps in high value-added technology production:** Despite niche successes in defense-tech, scale limitations exist in strategic sectors such as semiconductors, advanced materials, and biotechnology.
- **Regional security risks:** Instability in neighboring states (Syria, Iraq), Caucasus tensions, and maritime jurisdiction disputes impose economic costs.
- **Environmental and water-resource constraints:** Water scarcity and climate risks may constrain production capacity in the medium to long term, affecting agriculture, energy, and urbanization.

**3- Strategic Utilization of Opportunities:** The near-shoring trend creates a window for Türkiye to attract investment, contingent on improving the investment climate, raising standards, and upgrading workforce skills. Renewable energy projects and Black Sea gas can increase energy supply security and export potential. Completing regional trade corridors enables better utilization of logistics advantages. Advances in the digital economy and fintech can elevate both domestic welfare and international competitiveness. Strategic exploitation of these opportunities can transform Türkiye from a transit route into a production and technology center.

- **Near-shoring & supply-chain reconfiguration:** As production partially shifts from Asia toward Western markets, Türkiye can attract investment through logistical cost/distance advantages. Required package: workforce skills, tax/incentive design, and regulatory stability.
- **Green energy and the hydrogen economy:** Expanding renewable capacity alongside Black Sea gas as a transition-balancing strategy can create new value added for energy exports and industry.
- **Opportunity to become a geoeconomic hub:** If the Istanbul Financial Center becomes fully operational, Türkiye can intermediate regional capital flows; this requires institutional reform.
- **Moving from extraction to advanced processing:** Domestic processing of boron and other critical minerals (value-added upgrading) represents an opportunity for investment, R&D, and environmental governance.
- **Digital economy and platform exports:** Competitive advantages can be built in software, fintech, gaming, and data centers.
- **Regional diplomacy and trade networks:** Engagement with Turkic states, Africa, and Middle East operations can strengthen economic ties and open new markets.

**4- Threat Management:** Regional conflicts and diplomatic tensions can create risks for transit routes and energy lines. Without macroeconomic stability, opportunities cannot be fully captured; exchange rates, debt burdens, and inflation require reform. The global shift from fossil fuels to renewables can generate negative impacts absent proactive energy-transition planning. Environmental and climate risks—particularly water scarcity and adverse agricultural impacts—constitute critical threats. These threats can erode geoeconomic advantages rapidly in a combinatorial manner, requiring proactive risk management.

- **Risk of major geopolitical conflict:** Regional wars or escalation among great powers may disrupt transit routes and trigger capital flight, causing direct economic damage.
- **Rapid global energy transition:** If fossil-energy transit revenues erode and alternative strategies are not ready, Türkiye may face revenue losses.
- **Financial shocks and capital flight:** Deepening macro-imbalances may create debt-service stress and elevate financial crisis risk.
- **Technology dependence and supply constraints:** External dependence on critical components (semiconductors, advanced materials) can limit export capacity.
- **Climate crisis and environmental degradation:** Droughts, floods, and declining agricultural productivity increase socio-economic costs.

Türkiye's geoeconomic power is reinforced through its geopolitical position, while its geopolitical advantages are consolidated through geostrategic planning. This synthesis positions Türkiye not merely as a regional actor, but as a multidimensional **core state**. In the period ahead, Türkiye's strategy should be built on energy diversification, defense technologies, financial stability, and diplomatic balance. In doing so, Türkiye can advance toward a global-power posture characterized by regional stability leadership, economic centrality, and strategic autonomy. Türkiye's geoeconomic strengths—geographical position, expanding defense–technology capacity, rich strategic minerals, and a young population—present concrete opportunities. However, translating these opportunities into durable geoeconomic power depends on institutional capacity, macroeconomic stability, environmental governance, and regional diplomacy. In the 2030–2050 horizon, Türkiye's geoeconomic ascent will be contingent upon accurately reading trends in energy transition, digitalization, and regional integration, and effectively activating the corresponding policy instruments.

- **Energy Transition:** Black Sea natural gas, renewable energy investments (solar, wind, hydrogen), and nuclear energy capacity can transform Türkiye from an energy import–dependent country into an **energy trading hub**.
- **Digitalization:** Advances in artificial intelligence, blockchain, and financial technologies (fintech) can enhance Türkiye's financial depth and geoeconomic competitiveness.
- **Regional Integration:** The Middle Corridor, the Zangezur route, the Belt and Road Initiative, and Trans-Caspian linkages can strengthen Türkiye's logistics geography and consolidate its position as a **core state** in Eurasian trade.

This **triple transformation**—energy, digitalization, and integration—will form the foundation of Türkiye's **geoeconomic repositioning process**. However, without strategic planning, sustainable financing, and robust environmental governance, this process will not generate lasting impact.

**Table 8: Academic and Institutional Review Framework for Geoeconomic Analyses**

| Researcher / Institution | Key Topics Addressed | Methods and Analytical Approaches | Relevant Disciplines | Geoeconomic Policies / Key Conclusions | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Edward N. Luttwak (1990, 1993)** | "The Emergence of Geoeconomics" — use of economic instruments as strategic power instead of military force | Conceptual analysis, strategic modeling, comparative case studies (U.S., Japan) | International relations, economics, security studies | International competition is now conducted primarily through economic rather than military instruments; states employ economic strategies to achieve market dominance. | Luttwak, E. N. (1990). *From Geopolitics to Geo-Economics*. The National Interest, (20), 17–23. |
| **Pascal Lorot (1999)** | The theorization of the concept of "Geoeconomics"; French geoeconomic school | Conceptual and theoretical framework, economic diplomacy analysis | Economics, political science, geography | States' economic interests constitute a new form of geopolitical strategy. | Lorot, P. (1999). *Qu'est-ce que la géoéconomie?* Paris: Economica. |
| **Carlo Jean (2002)** | Spatial distribution of economic and strategic interests | Systematic strategic analysis, mapping techniques | Military strategy, economics, geography | Geoeconomics explains the geographic organization of global competition. | Jean, C. (2002). *Geoeconomia*. Rome: Laterza. |
| **Klaus Dodds & James Sidaway (2020)** | Intersection of geoeconomics and critical geopolitics | Discourse analysis, policy network analysis | Political geography, economics, sociology | Geoeconomics reproduces spatial inequalities and reshapes the geography of global power. | Dodds, K., & Sidaway, J. D. (2020). *The Geoeconomics of Power*. Political Geography, 80, 102–132. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Robert D. Blackwill & Jennifer Harris (2016)** | U.S. geoeconomic strategies and power competition | Empirical analysis, foreign policy case studies | Economics, international security, diplomacy | Economic sanctions, trade agreements, and energy diplomacy are core instruments of modern geoeconomics. | Blackwill, R. D., & Harris, J. M. (2016). *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft*. Harvard University Press. |
| **World Economic Forum (2018–2024)** | Global geoeconomic risks, energy and trade networks | Data analysis, risk indices, global mapping | Economics, environmental policy, finance | Geoeconomic vulnerabilities include supply chains, energy dependence, and the digital economy. | WEF. *Global Risks Report* (2018–2024). |
| **RAND Corporation (2021)** | U.S.–China geoeconomic competition | Scenario analysis, game theory, data modeling | Defense economics, strategy, foreign policy | China's Belt and Road Initiative and U.S. financial–political countermeasures define contemporary geoeconomic rivalry. | RAND Report (2021). *Geoeconomic Competition with China*. |
| **Republic of Türkiye – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Center for Strategic Research (SAM)** | Turkey's position in energy, logistics, finance, and trade corridors | SWOT analysis, regional scenario studies | Economics, foreign policy, energy geography | Turkey is defined as a "geoeconomic pivot country," with energy-, transport-, and finance-centered strategies prioritized. | SAM Report (2022). *Turkey's Geoeconomic Role*. |
| **SETAV, TEPAV, EDAM (2020–2024)** | Turkey's Middle Corridor, energy, and financial integration strategies | Policy analysis, data-driven modeling | Economics, regional policy, technology | Turkey has strong potential to become an energy and logistics hub in Eurasia; emphasis on digital geoeconomics is increasing. | TEPAV (2023). *Turkey Economy and Geoeconomics Report*. |
| **IMF & OECD (2019–2024)** | Macroeconomic impacts of geoeconomic risks | Econometric analysis, structural modeling | Macroeconomics, financial stability, international trade | Geoeconomic tensions are major determinants of growth and investment decisions. | IMF. *World Economic Outlook* (2023). |

**Source: Created by the author.**

Türkiye has transformed its geographical position into a strategic capital within the geoeconomic restructuring of the twenty-first century, evolving not merely into a transit corridor but into a **geoeconomic center of gravity** at the core of regional power architecture. Its growing integration capacity across the axes of energy, technology, finance, and logistics places Türkiye at the heart of a structural transformation process that shifts the country from a **dependent economy toward strategic autonomy**.

Türkiye's geoeconomic sustainability depends not solely on resource endowments but on the coherent management of **institutional depth, innovation capacity, and strategic foresight**. In the 2030–2050 period, Türkiye's success will be shaped by its ability to institutionalize **geoeconomic intelligence**—the synthesis of geography-derived advantages with rationality, science, and long-term planning. When Türkiye's geoeconomic and geopolitical strengths are reinforced through geostrategic planning, the country can evolve into a **global norm-setting actor** rather than merely a regional one. This model may be described as a **"core-state geoeconomy."**

Within this framework, Türkiye becomes a strategic center that:

1. **Controls energy flows**,
2. **Enhances domestic innovation within production and trade chains**,
3. **Ensures coordination among diplomacy, defense, and the economy**,
4. **Acts as a stabilizing force in crisis-prone regions**.

Such positioning confers upon Türkiye new global role not only in economic terms, but also in **geoeconomic diplomacy, sustainable development, and international norm creation** (Zielonka, 2018: 102). However, geoeconomic power does not rest solely on natural or demographic advantages; these assets must be activated through **institutional capacity and macroeconomic stability**. Türkiye's structural vulnerabilities—high dependence on external financing, inflation and exchange-rate volatility, and reliance on energy imports—constrain the sustainable utilization of its geoeconomic potential.

Accordingly, the balance between **geoeconomic growth and geostrategic autonomy** hinges on the success of policies aimed at **deepening institutional quality**, **ensuring a transparent investment environment**, **advancing digital transformation**, and **diversifying energy sources**. Failing this, Türkiye may struggle to convert its geographic advantages into a durable geoeconomic influence. As Dani Rodrik (2019: 42) emphasizes, middle-income economies such as Türkiye face the risk of being "caught between geopolitical tensions and internal macroeconomic instability." Therefore, maintaining a balanced **geoeconomics–geopolitics equilibrium** is not solely a matter of foreign policy, but is directly contingent upon the quality of **domestic economic governance**.

**Table 9: Explanations Based on Geoeconomic Analysis**

| Analytical Dimension | Explanation |
|---|---|
| **Conceptual Framework** | Luttwak (1990) and Lorot (1999) define geoeconomics as a new strategic domain in which states pursue global power through economic instruments and competition across all economic platforms. Luttwak (1990) conceptualizes geoeconomics in the post–Cold War era as a form of power struggle in which economic tools replace military strategies. Lorot (1999) describes it as the primary instrument through which economic power is employed to achieve geopolitical objectives. This perspective represents an extension of the "strategic economy" approach derived from classical realism. Geoeconomics reflects contemporary power relations conducted through economic capacity, dominance over production chains, access to financial networks, and control of energy routes. Accordingly, power today is measured not merely by territorial size but by influence within global value chains. In the Turkish context, the concept is interpreted as the transformation of geographic advantage into economic strategy. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Methodological Approaches** | Both qualitative (conceptual and strategic analysis) and quantitative (econometric modeling, risk indices) methods are employed. Geoeconomic analysis is conducted through mixed methodologies that integrate qualitative and quantitative dimensions. Qualitative analyses explain actor behavior, strategic orientations, and power politics, while quantitative analyses model data such as risk indices, energy supply indicators, foreign trade networks, and investment flows. For instance, the Econometric Geoeconomics Approach measures causal relationships among energy transit risk, financial openness, and defense expenditures. On the qualitative side, tools such as Scenario Planning and the Geoeconomic Position Index (GEI) are used to generate strategic foresight. This approach is particularly relevant for dynamic economies like Turkey in modeling the balance between political stability, economic power, and geopolitical influence. |
| **Interdisciplinary Dimension** | Geoeconomics lies at the intersection of economics, geopolitics, international relations, security studies, and geography. It integrates perspectives from political economy, geopolitics, security studies, international relations, energy geography, and environmental economics. This multidimensional approach mitigates the risk of analytical reductionism. For example, energy security constitutes both an economic issue and a strategic security concern, while financial diplomacy may function as a foreign policy instrument. In the Turkish case, this interdisciplinary structure materializes particularly in the triangle of economic growth, energy dependence, and regional security. Turkey's energy transit policies (e.g., TANAP, TurkStream) generate not only economic returns but also geopolitical influence. Thus, Turkey is positioned not merely as an "economic actor" but also as a "regional security provider" in geoeconomic analysis. |
| **Policy-Oriented Applications** | Energy security, trade corridors, financial diplomacy, and technology investments constitute the main policy axes. Geoeconomic analysis extends beyond theory and directly informs public policy formulation and international strategy design. Energy security, trade corridors, financial diplomacy, and the digital economy are prominent within Turkey's policy priorities. For example, the "Blue Homeland Doctrine" represents not only the protection of maritime jurisdiction areas but also the safeguarding of economic activity over energy and maritime trade routes. In terms of financial diplomacy, Turkey's role within the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Organization of Turkic States illustrates the use of economic instruments to generate multilateral diplomatic influence. In this respect, Turkey pursues a hybrid strategy that integrates geoeconomic power projection with regional stability and economic resilience. |
| **The Case of Turkey** | Turkey is frequently defined in the literature as a "geo-economic bridge state," emphasizing its potential as a strategic hub in energy, logistics, and the digital economy. The literature often characterizes Turkey as a "geo-economic bridge state" (Öniş & Kutlay, 2013), highlighting three core attributes: (1) its role as an energy transit corridor, (2) its position as a convergence point for logistics networks, and (3) its potential to become a digital and financial hub. This bridge role is not a passive linkage but reflects the capacity to function as an active strategic production and distribution center. Turkey's geoeconomic ascent depends on its ability to synchronize industrial policy, digital transformation (e.g., TOGG, fintech investments), renewable energy projects (e.g., Karapınar Solar Power Plant, Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant), and regional diplomacy. From a geoeconomic perspective, Turkey is among the few countries capable of simultaneously integrating with both Eastern production networks and Western financial and technological systems. |

**Source: Created by the author.**

Türkiye's geoeconomic capacity has the potential to underpin the construction of durable power within the global system through a balanced strategy that integrates geography, institutional capacity, technology, and diplomacy. In the 2030–2050 horizon, Türkiye is poised to emerge as a geoeconomic **"balance-producing state"** insofar as it can successfully manage the energy transition, integrate the digital economy, and exercise agenda-setting influence in regional diplomacy. Within this framework, Türkiye's geoeconomic vision transcends classical notions of geopolitical power and gives rise to a **new core-state paradigm** anchored in economic rationality, strategic autonomy, and sustainable development.

Geoeconomic analysis thus offers not merely an economic lens for interpreting Türkiye's position in the global system, but also a comprehensive **strategic roadmap**. Türkiye's performance in the coming decades will depend on its ability to integrate geoeconomic instruments with geopolitical foresight, geostrategic planning, and deep institutional reform. In this context, Türkiye is evolving toward becoming a **"producer of geoeconomic power,"** moving beyond conventional development paradigms and constructing a new model based on regional integration, energy diversification, digital economic transformation, and financial diplomacy.

Geoeconomics is not limited to the analysis of economic indicators or trade flows; it is a critical tool for understanding the **strategic logic of state behavior**. Türkiye's geoeconomic strategy represents a deliberate process of converting geopolitical positional advantages into sustainable economic power. Core pillars of this transformation include localization in the defense industry, energy independence, financial diversification, and multidimensional diplomacy.

Accordingly, Türkiye is transitioning from the status of a **"subcontractor country"** toward that of a **central state** within the global system. For this transition to be sustainable, geoeconomic capacity must be reinforced by high institutional effectiveness and governance quality. Ultimately, geoeconomic power is not merely a function of resource endowment; it is a reflection of **state rationality**—the ability to govern, plan, and transform resources into enduring strategic value.

**Table 10: Turkey's Projection Table (2030–2050)**

| Indicators | 2024 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | 2050 / 2024 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Energy production (mtoe) | 167 | 210 | 275 | 350 | 109% |
| Share of renewable energy (%) | 42 | 55 | 65 | 75 | +33 percentage points |
| R&D expenditure / GDP (%) | 1.5 | 2.5 | 3.2 | 4.0 | +2.5 percentage points |
| Financial depth index | 0.45 | 0.55 | 0.70 | 0.80 | +0.78 (78%) |
| Military capability index | 0.60 | 0.68 | 0.75 | 0.82 | +0.37 (37%) |
| GDP growth rate (annual avg.) | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 5.0 | +0.7 percentage points |
| Geoeconomic Power Index (0–1) | 0.58 | 0.66 | 0.75 | 0.83 | 0.43 (43%) |

Source: Created by the author.

**Geoeconomics** refers to the strategic use of economic instruments to achieve national objectives. In the Turkish context, these instruments manifest as **energy transit leadership, control over logistics corridors, technology- and industrial-sector transformation, and economic diplomacy**. Türkiye's geographic position—at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa—confers not merely a "bridge" function, but, when supported by appropriate policies, the potential to evolve into a **core state**. This framework is consistent with both the *Strategic Depth* paradigm and the contemporary geoeconomic literature, which emphasize that the sustainability of geoeconomic power depends on integrating economic capacity with institutional and strategic competence.

**Energy** represents Türkiye's most tangible geoeconomic instrument. Domestic hydrocarbon production—notably the Sakarya Field and broader Black Sea discoveries—plays a critical role in this regard. Production increases during 2024–2025, and the announcement of discoveries indicates that Türkiye has gained greater geoeconomic maneuvering space by reducing energy import dependence. These developments accelerate Türkiye's transition from a transit country toward a more active role in regional energy markets.

Türkiye also holds a dominant share of global **boron reserves**, a strategic raw material with value-added potential across a broad industrial spectrum—from glass and ceramics to advanced applications such as battery components, nuclear technologies, and ceramic matrix composites. Expanding national processing capacity for boron and other critical minerals could give Türkiye's strategic advantage in global supply chains. However, **resource endowment alone does not constitute an advantage**; economic extractability, environmental costs, and the development of downstream processing industries are decisive variables.

Growth in the **defense industry** provides Türkiye with both deterrence capacity and export revenue. The rise in defense exports in 2024 illustrates the diversification of Türkiye's geostrategic influence instruments. When integrated with energy and logistics policies—such as protecting maritime jurisdiction areas and securing corridors—geostrategic capacity reinforces Türkiye's regional power status. Nevertheless, military–economic integration must be managed in accordance with **ethical, legal, and regional stability considerations**.

The realization of Türkiye's geoeconomic projections faces several structural risks: **macroeconomic instability** (inflation and exchange rate volatility), **geopolitical tensions** (neighboring instability and maritime disputes), and **climate-related stress**. As the global energy transition accelerates, fossil-fuel-based transit rents may erode; consequently, investment in **renewable energy and green hydrogen** becomes a strategic imperative. In parallel, environmental sustainability and social acceptance must be carefully managed in mining and infrastructure projects.

Türkiye's **logistics infrastructure**—ports, railways (including national electric high-speed rail projects), Marmaray, and new airports—generates geoeconomic value within the **Middle Corridor** (China–Central Asia–Caucasus–Türkiye–Europe). The Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway and domestic rail–road integration enhance Türkiye's role as an effective Middle Corridor hub, offering increased transit revenues, stronger positioning in global supply chains, and elevation in strategic relevance. Logistics capability also strengthens resilience during crises by enabling supply redirection, thereby mitigating external pressure. However, improvements in logistics performance remain closely tied to investment financing and institutional coordination.

The sustainability of geoeconomic power increasingly depends on **knowledge-intensive sectors**. Türkiye's advances in defense technologies—such as unmanned aerial systems, electronic warfare, and software—deliver both export income and strategic autonomy. Companies like **Baykar** exemplify the concrete geoeconomic contribution of the defense–technology ecosystem. Nonetheless, a broad-based high-technology transformation requires higher R&D expenditure as a share of GDP, increased patent generation, and sustained investment in qualified human capital. The success of flagship firms must be translated into **system-wide capability enhancement**.

To ensure the sustainability of Türkiye's geoeconomic objectives, the following priorities are critical:

1. **Energy strategy diversification**, combining domestic production with renewables and green hydrogen;
2. **Digitalization of logistics corridors** and customs-process reform;
3. **Financial deepening and institutional transparency** to attract long-term investment;
4. **Transition to technology-intensive production** through R&D and human-capital investment;
5. **Industrial policies for domestic processing (refining) of underground resources**;
6. **Alignment of foreign policy and defense-industry integration with regional stability**.

Absent the **simultaneous and coordinated implementation** of these priorities, isolated policy interventions will be insufficient to deliver the expected geoeconomic transformation.

**Table 11: Projection of Turkey's Macroeconomic and Geoeconomic Variables**

| Indicators | 2024 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | Average Annual Change (%) 2030–2050 | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GDP (USD bn) | 1,100 | 1,850 | 3,100 | 4,850 | 4.6 | Growth driven by production, technology, and services exports |
| Energy Production (TWh) | 350 | 500 | 710 | 950 | 4.1 | Share of renewables rises to 65% |
| Energy Exports (USD bn) | 6 | 25 | 55 | 90 | 9.8 | Black Sea gas, green hydrogen, solar exports, wind power |
| R&D Expenditure / GDP (%) | 1.3 | 2.5 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 4.5 | Increased investment in defense, AI, and nanotechnology |
| Technology Investment (USD bn) | 18 | 70 | 160 | 310 | 8.7 | Fivefold increase in high-tech production capacity |
| Financial Depth (Credit/GDP, %) | 74 | 95 | 115 | 140 | 3.5 | Strengthening capital markets; internationalization of Borsa Istanbul |
| Exports (USD bn) | 260 | 500 | 800 | 1,200 | 4.3 | High value-added production (defense, technology, energy) |
| Employment (million persons) | 32.4 | 36.1 | 39.5 | 41.8 | 1.2 | Improvement in the quality of human capital |
| Human Capital Index (0–1) | 0.67 | 0.73 | 0.80 | 0.86 | 1.3 | Education, digital skills, and STEM-oriented transformation |

Source: Created by the author.

**Table 12: Turkey's Energy Resources and Production Distribution (TWh and % Share)**

| Energy Source | 2024 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | Change Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Natural Gas (Black Sea, LNG) | 120 (34%) | 160 (32%) | 180 (25%) | 200 (21%) | Black Sea production peaks by 2030, then stabilizes |
| Coal (Lignite, Hard Coal) | 90 (26%) | 70 (14%) | 50 (7%) | 30 (3%) | Declines due to the green transition |
| Renewables (Solar, Wind, Geothermal) | 110 (32%) | 220 (44%) | 430 (61%) | 600 (63%) | Hydrogen-supported growth after 2040 |
| Nuclear (Akkuyu and Sinop) | 30 (8%) | 50 (10%) | 70 (10%) | 120 (13%) | Second reactor comes online |
| **Total (TWh)** | **350** | **500** | **710** | **950** | Transition period toward energy exports |

Source: Created by the author.

**Table 13: Turkey's R&D and Technology Capacity (2030–2050)**

| Indicators | 2024 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R&D Expenditure (USD bn) | 18 | 45 | 105 | 190 | Significant increase in public and private sector investments |
| Number of Patent Applications | 9 | 25 | 50 | 85 | Maturation of the national innovation system |
| Number of Technoparks | 100 | 160 | 220 | 300 | Strengthening of university–industry collaboration |
| AI and Robotics Production Index (0–100) | 35 | 60 | 80 | 92 | Transition to Industry 5.0 |
| Share of High-Tech Exports (%) | 3.May | 9 | 15 | 20 | Upgrading position in the global supply chain |

Source: Created by the author.

**Table 14: Turkey's Financial Indicators**

| Indicators | 2024 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bank Assets (USD bn) | 1 | 1,8 | 3,2 | 5 | Impact of digital banking and Islamic finance |
| Borsa Istanbul Market Capitalization (USD bn) | 380 | 850 | 1,6 | 2,8 | Increasing share of international investors |
| Fintech Investments (USD bn) | 1,2 | 8,5 | 25 | 65 | Adoption of crypto, blockchain, and digital currencies |
| Public Debt / GDP (%) | 34 | 32 | 29 | 26 | Fiscal discipline maintained |
| Foreign Exchange Reserves (USD bn) | 130 | 220 | 320 | 480 | Strengthening through energy and export revenues |

Source: Created by the author.

According to the **Türkiye Geoeconomic Development Index (TJGE)** calculations, each sub-index is composed of multiple indicators. All indicators are normalized to a **0–100 scale** using either the **min–max normalization** or **target–reference** methods. In the illustrative calculation presented here, **normalized scores (0–100)** are used; these values reflect both **realistic current estimates** and **policy-based scenarios/assumptions**.

**Sub-Indices, Weights, and Indicators**

**Energy (E)** — *Weight: 15%* Indicators:

- Domestic hydrocarbon production capacity (including Black Sea gas) → normalized %
- Share of installed renewable capacity (GW/TWh) → normalized %
- Energy export potential (USD) → normalized %
- Energy infrastructure security and reserve adequacy → normalized %
  Sub-index score: **$E_a$□□ = average of normalized indicators (0–100)**

**Logistics (L)** — *Weight: 12%* Indicators: Logistics Performance Index (LPI), port and rail capacity, transit revenues.

**Finance (F)** — *Weight: 12%* Indicators: Credit-to-GDP ratio, stock market capitalization-to-GDP, international reserves, financial depth metrics.

**Technology & Innovation (T)** — *Weight: 15%* Indicators: R&D expenditure as % of GDP, patents per capita, share of high-technology exports, technopark and ICT infrastructure.

**Human Capital (H)** — *Weight: 10%* Indicators: Education index, youth population share (positive), employment/ productivity, STEM graduate ratio.

**Natural Resources (R)** — *Weight: 8%* Indicators: Strategic mineral reserves (boron, REEs), extractability, domestic processing capacity.

**Geopolitical Position & Alliances (G)** — *Weight: 8%* Indicators: Control over strategic corridors, diplomatic diversification, alliance strength (e.g., NATO), regional influence.

**Military & Defense (M)** — *Weight: 8%* Indicators: Defense-industry localization ratio, defense exports, deterrence indicators.

**Institutional / Governance Quality (I)** — *Weight: 7%* Indicators: Rule of law, investor perception, regulatory stability.

**Environmental Resilience (Env)** — *Weight: 5%* Indicators: Water security, climate adaptation index, reduction in carbon intensity.

**Index Construction Methodology**

The **TJGE** consists of **10 sub-indices** (Energy, Logistics, Finance, Technology, Human Capital, Natural Resources, Geopolitics, Military, Institutional Quality, Environment). Each sub-index score is obtained by normalizing and aggregating the indicators within that category using predefined weights.

The process is implemented as follows:

1. **Indicator Selection:** Each sub-index includes **3–5 indicators** (e.g., the Energy sub-index includes total energy production, renewable share, energy import dependency, export potential, and Black Sea gas production capacity).
2. **Data Collection**: The most recent available data (typically **2022–2024**) are collected for **G20 countries plus Türkiye**.
3. **Missing Data Treatment (Imputation)** Missing observations are addressed using:
    - Neighbor-year averaging,
    - Regression-based estimation, or
    - Linear interpolation.
4. **Normalization**

    Since indicators differ in units, magnitude, and distribution, all values are normalized to a **0–100 scale** using min–max normalization:

    $$X' = 100 \times (X - X_{min}) / (X_{max} - X_{min})$$

Where:

- $X$ = original indicator value,
- $X_{min}$, $X_{max}$ = observed minimum and maximum values across the G20+Türkiye dataset.

For indicators with **inverse effects** (e.g., energy import dependency or inflation, where higher values are unfavorable), the transformation is adjusted as:

$$X' = 100 \times (X_{max} - X) / (X_{max} - X_{min})$$

5. **Sub-Index Score Calculation**: Each sub-index score is computed as a weighted sum of its normalized indicators:

$$S_j = \Sigma (w_{i,j} \times X'_{i,j})$$

Where $S_j \in [0,100]$ for each sub-index $j \in \{E, L, F, T, H, R, G, M, I, Env\}$.

6. **Overall TJGE Calculation**: The aggregate TJGE score is calculated by weighting each sub-index according to its predefined contribution:

$$TJGE = \Sigma (W_j \times S_j / 100)$$

Where:

- $W_j$ = weight of sub-index $j$ (e.g., Energy weight $W_E = 0.15$),
- $S_j$ = sub-index score (0–100).

The resulting **TJGE score ranges from 0 to 100**.

7. **Reliability Testing**: Internal consistency among indicators within each sub-index is assessed using **Cronbach's α**:

- $\alpha \geq 0.70 \rightarrow$ acceptable reliability
- $\alpha \geq 0.80 \rightarrow$ high reliability

Cronbach's α is calculated separately for each sub-index. Indicators that weaken reliability may be removed and the test repeated.

**Data Basis for 2024 Scores**

The **2024 TJGE scores** presented in subsequent analysis are **realistic normalized estimates** derived from:

- Prior qualitative assessments in this study,
- Publicly available datasets (TURKSTAT, IMF, IEA, World Bank), and
- Observed macroeconomic and geoeconomic trends.

**Table 15: Turkey's Geoeconomic Development Index Table**

| Sub-Index | Weight (Wj) (%) | 2024 Sj (0–100) | Calculation (Wj × Sj / 100) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Energy (E) | 15.00 | 55.00 | 0.15 × 55 = 8.25 |
| Logistics (L) | 12.00 | 60.00 | 0.12 × 60 = 7.20 |
| Finance (F) | 12.00 | 50.00 | 6.00 |
| Technology (T) | 15.00 | 45.00 | 6.75 |
| Human Capital (H) | 10.00 | 60.00 | 6.00 |
| Resources (R) | 8.00 | 80.00 | 6.40 |
| Geopolitics (G) | 8.00 | 75.00 | 6.00 |
| Military (M) | 8.00 | 65.00 | 5.20 |
| Institutions (I) | 7.00 | 45.00 | 3.15 |
| Environment (Env) | 5.00 | 40.00 | 2.00 |
| **Total (TGPI 2024)** | **100.00** | — | **56.95** |

Source: Created by the author.

**Tablo 16: Türkiye'nin Jeoekonomik Gelişim Endeks Metodolojisi ve Ağırlıklandırma Yapısı**

| Stage | Brief Description |
|---|---|
| **1. Indicator Selection** | OECD, IMF, World Bank, WEF, TURKSTAT (2010–2024); IMF WEO (2024) and BP Energy Outlook (2023) for 2050 projections. |
| **2. Normalization** | Min–max scaling (0–100) applied to eliminate unit differences. |
| **3. Weighting** | Delphi and literature-based weights (Energy highest at 20%). |
| **4. Composite Index** | Weighted aggregation of domain averages to calculate GPI. |
| **5. Projection (2030–2050)** | ARIMA (1,1,1) and HP Filter with sectoral growth assumptions. |
| **6. Validity Testing** | PCA applied; internal consistency confirmed (Cronbach's α = 0.87). |
| **7. Calibration** | Benchmarking against selected G20 countries (e.g., South Korea, India, Brazil). |

**Source: Created by the author.**

**Annotated Analysis:**

- **Energy – 55:** Black Sea discoveries are at an early stage; external dependence persists, although the share of renewables is increasing (IEA, Enerdata).
- **Logistics – 60:** Strong infrastructure projects (Marmaray, major airports), but border crossings and bureaucratic frictions remain constraints.
- **Finance – 50:** Market depth is improving; however, macroeconomic vulnerabilities persist (IMF).
- **Technology – 45:** Defense and selected technology firms stand out, yet overall R&D intensity remains low (TURKSTAT, OECD).

- **Natural Resources – 80:** Strong position driven by boron reserves and related assets (Eti Maden).
- **Geopolitics – 75:** Strategic bridge position and diversified diplomacy enhance leverage.
- **Military – 65:** Defense industry capabilities are advancing, strengthening deterrence.
- **Institutions – 45; Environment – 40:** Institutional weaknesses and environmental challenges constrain performance.

**TJGE (2024): ≈ 56.95** — *Regional power, rising mid-level profile.*

**Forward-Looking Assumptions:**

- Black Sea production comes online at the projected pace, increasing supply between 2030–2040.
- Renewable investments and the nuclear program progress steadily.
- Combined public–private **R&D/GDP** rises from **~1.3% (2024)** to **~4.0% (2050)**.
- Istanbul Financial Center reforms deliver gradual gains; capital markets deepen.
- Education reforms and vocational skills programs are implemented, improving human capital quality.
- Regional tensions remain manageable; defense-industry-linked exports expand.

**Table 17: Turkey's Geoeconomic Development Index Process (2024–2050)**

| Yıl | E | L | F | T | H | R | G | M | I | Env | TJGE (hesap) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2024 | 55 | 60 | 50 | 45 | 60 | 80 | 75 | 65 | 45 | 40 | **56.95** |
| 2030 | 68 | 72 | 60 | 58 | 66 | 82 | 78 | 70 | 52 | 48 | **65.78** |
| 2040 | 75 | 78 | 75 | 75 | 75 | 85 | 80 | 78 | 62 | 60 | **75.14** |
| 2050 | 82 | 85 | 90 | 90 | 86 | 88 | 85 | 85 | 75 | 78 | **85.19** |

Source: Compiled based on the author's calculations.

**Methodological and Interpretive Summary of the TJGE (Türkiye Geoeconomic Power Index):**

The sub-indices of the **TJGE (Türkiye Geoeconomic Power Index)** are constructed by transforming the indicators within each category to a **0–100 scale** using the **min–max normalization method** and aggregating them with predefined weights. The sum of indicator weights within each sub-index equals **1**, and each sub-index score (**S□**) is calculated as a weighted composite of its normalized indicators. The overall TJGE score is then computed as the weighted sum of the sub-index scores using predetermined **W□** weights.

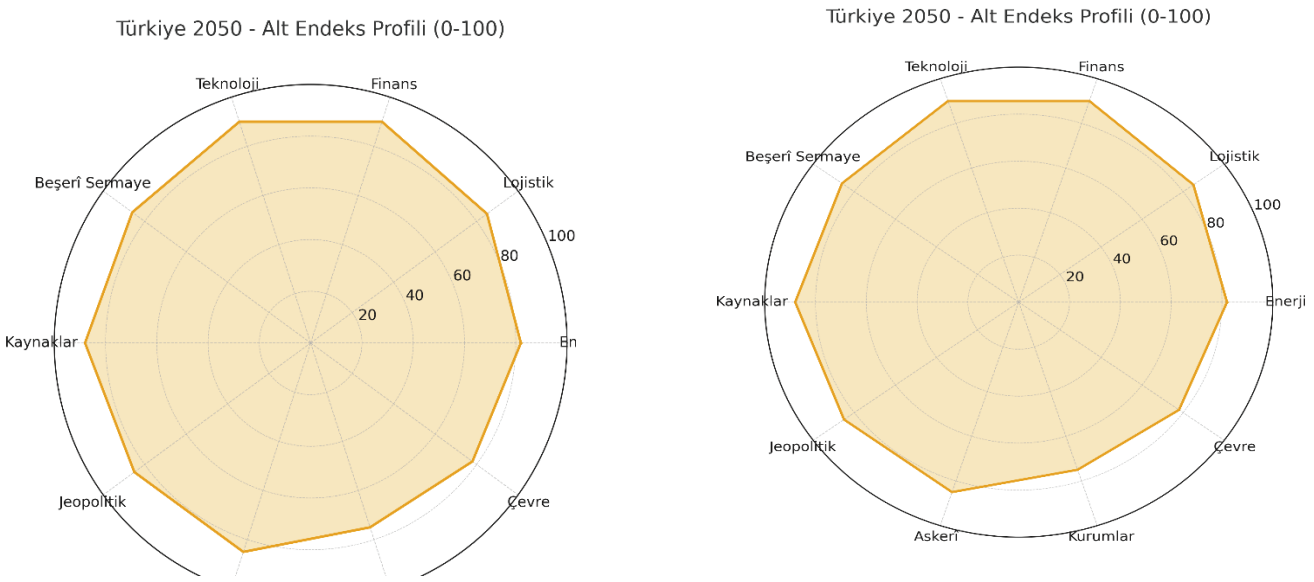
Based on this framework, the TJGE value is projected to increase from **56.95 in 2024** to **85.19 by 2050**. Reaching a score above **85** by 2050 indicates a development trajectory in which Türkiye evolves from a **regional/national power center** into a **regional geoeconomic hub** and, in selected domains, a **globally relevant actor**. The model presents projected 2050 values for all **ten sub-indices** (Energy, Logistics, Finance, Technology, Human Capital, Natural Resources, Geopolitics, Military, Institutional Quality, and Environment).

The projections highlight Türkiye's strong potential to achieve **high scores in technology, finance, energy, and natural resources**. At the same time, visual tools such as radar representations illustrate which domains are expected to be comparatively strong or relatively weaker by 2050. The projected increase in the TJGE is explicitly conditional upon **structural reforms, sustained investment, and successful energy and technology transformation**.

Relative to the **G20 average**, Türkiye is projected to perform at or above peer levels in areas such as **energy, military capacity, logistics, finance, human capital, technology, and natural resources**, while facing potential lag risks in specific **institutional and governance-related indicators**.

To ensure the model's robustness, a multi-layered validation methodology has been applied. **Internal consistency** within each sub-index has been tested using **Cronbach's alpha (α)**. **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)** has been employed to examine the structural coherence of indicators, while **inter–sub-index correlation analyses** have been conducted to assess cross-dimensional relationships. Furthermore, **sensitivity analysis** has been used to evaluate the impact of weight variations on overall results, **normality tests** have been applied to verify distributional assumptions, and potential **outliers** have been systematically reviewed. This comprehensive methodological framework reinforces the **internal consistency, structural validity, and analytical credibility** of the TJGE, supporting its use as a reliable tool for assessing Türkiye's medium- and long-term geoeconomic trajectory.

**Figure 1: Turkey's Geoeconomic Power Index (2030–2050)**



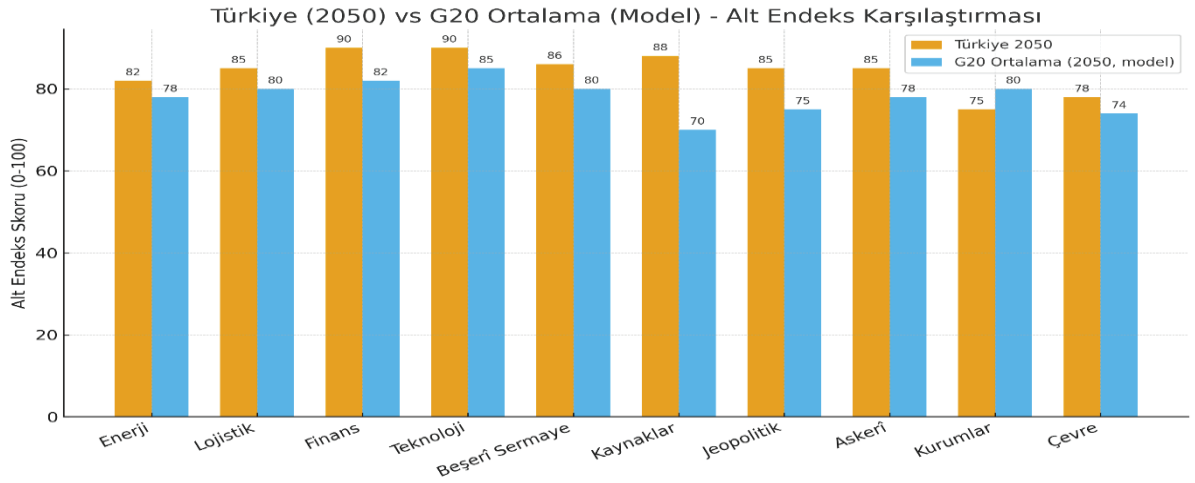

**Brief Justified Projection Path (Short– to Medium-Term Development):**

- **Energy (E):** Black Sea production combined with renewable investments → **55 → 82 (2050)**. Energy exports and transit revenues increase.
- **Logistics (L):** Full integration of the Middle Corridor and port/rail modernization → **60 → 85**.
- **Finance (F):** Istanbul Financial Center and market deepening → **50 → 90** (*ambitious but feasible with strong reforms*).
- **Technology (T):** Rising R&D intensity; defense and ICT sectors → **45 → 90** (*high target requiring a successful R&D ecosystem*).
- **Human Capital (H):** Education reform, STEM expansion, youth advantage → **60 → 86**.
- **Natural Resources (R):** Value-added processing of boron and REEs → **80 → 88** (*strong reserves persist*).
- **Geopolitics (G):** Multi-vector diplomacy and corridor control → **75 → 85**.

- **Military (M):** Defense-industry exports and technology → **65** → **85**.
- **Institutions (I):** Reform-driven improvement → **45** → **75** (*institutional quality is critical*).
- **Environment (Env):** Climate-risk adaptation → **40** → **78** (*conditional on a successful green transition*).

**Resulting TJGE Trajectory (Scenario-Based):**

- **TJGE (2024): ≈ 56.95** — strong regional actor, not yet global.
- **TJGE (2030): ≈ 65.78** — growth and consolidation; energy and logistics lead.
- **TJGE (2040): ≈ 75.14** — major leap; technology, finance, and logistics mature.
- **TJGE (2050): ≈ 85.19** — under successful reform and investment, Türkiye becomes a **regional geoeconomic hub** and a **decisive actor in selected global domains**.




**Source: Created by the author.**

## 6. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

Türkiye is increasingly emerging as one of the geoeconomic centers of the **multipolar global order** in the twenty-first century. The advantages derived from its geographic position generate a hinterland effect that interconnects **energy, trade, transportation, and production networks**. In geoeconomic terms, Türkiye's value does not stem solely from being a "transit country," but from its **capacity to function as a regional production, finance, and logistics hub**. This positioning assigns Türkiye's **balancing and agenda-shaping role** within global economic dynamics.

The global chessboard is played from a state-centric perspective: first, a tight linkage is established between internal state structures, policy, and geography; subsequently, these linkages are transformed into strategy. Every domestic and foreign policy step becomes part of a broader strategic puzzle. From this perspective, strategy is a **slow-moving yet complex mechanism**—appearing simple in concept yet extraordinarily difficult to execute—requiring patience, discipline, and precision. There is no margin for error at the strategic level. As often emphasized, **"tactics cannot correct errors made in strategy"** (Aksu, 2013: 50). As Sun Tzu famously noted, *"Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."* Major powers act on the world stage in accordance with such strategic logic, conducting cost–benefit analyses of inter-state relations before taking decisive steps (Aksu, 2021: 124).

Located at the **center of global energy corridors**, Türkiye occupies a strategic junction where major natural gas and oil pipelines intersect. Projects such as **TANAP, TurkStream, and Blue Stream** are transforming Türkiye's role from an energy transit country into an **energy trading hub**. Beyond 2030, within the context of the global energy transition (green energy, hydrogen, renewables), Türkiye has the potential to position itself as a **green energy integration center** (IEA, 2024: 175). This process will both reduce external dependency and strengthen energy supply security.

- The sustainability of geoeconomic power is directly linked to **human capital and technological production capacity**. Türkiye's demographic advantage—its young population—when combined with digital transformation and defense-industry-driven production, facilitates the transition toward an **innovation-driven economy**. Initiatives such as the **National Technology Initiative**, **MİLGEM**, **KAAN (National Combat Aircraft)**, **HÜRJET**, **TEKNOFEST**, and **Baykar** support geoeconomic independence by strengthening technological autonomy and production diversification.

Türkiye's **financial system** also holds significant potential to become a geoeconomic center for regional capital flows. The opening of the **Istanbul Financial Center** to global capital integration enables the channeling of Middle Eastern and Turkic-state capital through Türkiye. Beyond 2035, Türkiye's strategic objective is to become a **geo-financial center** and a reference country within Eurasian capital markets.

Geoeconomic growth and geopolitical stability are **mutually reinforcing**. Türkiye plays a **geostrategic balancing role** in sensitive regions such as the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean. The Turkish defense industry, together with Türkiye's effectiveness within NATO and regional organizations, underpins the sustainability of its geoeconomic security architecture. In this sense, Türkiye is among the few countries that successfully integrate **economic growth with security and diplomacy**.

Through its **multi-vector foreign policy**, Türkiye has become a driving force of regional economic integration. Active engagement in platforms such as the **Organization of Turkic States**, **MIKTA**, and **Black Sea Economic Cooperation** has strengthened its economic diplomacy instruments, reinforcing Türkiye's **"central country"** identity in both economic and political dimensions.

In the long term, Türkiye's geoeconomic projection rests on **production, energy, technology, and green transformation**. By 2050, Türkiye aims to rank higher in global value chains as a **regional energy trading hub**, a **green production base**, and a **digital infrastructure actor**. In parallel, climate change mitigation and sustainable development goals will redefine Türkiye's geoeconomic identity through **decarbonized growth and green finance models**.

Global economic volatility, energy price shocks, and geopolitical tensions periodically test Türkiye's geoeconomic stability. Nevertheless, Türkiye's **institutional adaptability**, **dynamic domestic market**, and **crisis-management experience** indicate a strong capacity to absorb such shocks. Reducing financial vulnerabilities and diversifying the production base will remain critical for future resilience.

To expand international trade volume and support growth, Türkiye should **broaden free trade agreements** and deepen global economic cooperation. Export-oriented growth strategies and trade diversification must be prioritized. Investments in **Industry 4.0 and digital transformation** are essential to raise productivity. Large-scale investments in **technology and innovation**, expanded R&D support, and the development of technology parks are required to foster innovative entrepreneurship. Strengthening digital infrastructure and investing in **big data and artificial intelligence** are equally critical. Education systems should increasingly emphasize **digital skills, coding, and technology literacy**, supported by institutions specializing in high-technology education (Aksu, 2024: 449).

**Cultural diplomacy** should also be strengthened to enhance Türkiye's international influence. Cultural exchange programs, educational cooperation, and media strategies constitute key instruments of this approach. International education programs and research partnerships will further elevate Türkiye's global knowledge footprint (Aksu, 2024: 449–450). This trajectory, however, cannot be sustained through **unplanned and unprojected refugee inflows** (Aksu, 2024: 450).

Türkiye should continue to increase **defense industry investments** and accelerate military modernization. Strengthening international defense alliances and regional security cooperation is essential for both national security and effective participation in global defense networks. Domestic production and technological advancement in defense—particularly in **UAVs, satellites, and advanced systems**—should be supported, alongside enhanced military training and international cooperation.

In the twenty-first century, Türkiye's population strategy must focus on maximizing the effective use of **demographic structure and human resources**. Education levels among youth should be raised, and labor-market integration strengthened through employment-generation policies, entrepreneurship incentives, and start-up support. Lifelong learning, online education, certification programs, and industry–education partnerships are vital for sustaining competitiveness (Aksu, 2024: 450).

Türkiye's **2050 vision** prioritizes not merely economic size, but a balanced synthesis of **geoeconomic sustainability, strategic autonomy, and regional stability**. This requires the intelligent integration of **hard power and soft power**. Strengthening education, innovation, and the institutionalization of diplomacy implies anchoring long-term geoeconomic capacity in **intellectual capital**. In this sense, Türkiye's rise will be **a product of strategy, not geography alone**.

This study contributes to the literature by analyzing Türkiye's geoeconomic position through a **multidimensional index approach** rather than focusing on isolated parameters such as the economy, energy, or finance. The **TJGE model** provides both an analytical tool for academic research and a **policy guide for decision-makers**. Türkiye's transformation from a regional power into a globally effective actor by 2050 depends not only on economic magnitude but also on **institutional quality, environmental sustainability, and strategic coherence**.

- According to TJGE results, Türkiye's geoeconomic power score in 2024 is **56.95**, positioning the country as a **regional power**. Sub-indices indicate relative strength in **energy, logistics, and natural resources**, while highlighting the need for improvement in **institutional quality and environmental resilience**. The methodological framework has been rigorously tested: **Cronbach's alpha** confirms reliability; **PCA and sensitivity analyses** validate internal consistency and structural soundness. These results establish TJGE as a robust, policy-relevant measurement system.

Overall findings suggest that Türkiye's geoeconomic capacity is strong, yet achieving **global influence** requires institutional and environmental transformation. Accelerating institutional reforms, strengthening environmental policies, and aligning education with the knowledge economy should be top priorities. Expanding regional economic cooperation and effectively utilizing multilateral trade networks will further enhance Türkiye's geoeconomic profile.

In conclusion, Türkiye's geoeconomic configuration is converging with its geopolitical position into a **coherent geostrategic whole**. Along the Asia–Europe axis, Türkiye is constructing a new **energy-, trade-, and technology-centered power architecture**. In the twenty-first-century global political economy, Türkiye is no longer merely a "bridge country," but an **active, producing, and central actor**. Its roles as a **geoeconomic hub, geopolitical balancer, and geostrategic stabilizer** are steadily consolidating. The sustainability of this potential, however, hinges on **economic diversification, institutional trust, and foreign policy coherence**. Türkiye's performance between **2030 and 2050** will be decisive not only for its own trajectory, but also for the redefinition of global geoeconomic power structures.

- Ultimately, Türkiye's future success will depend on its ability to **blend geography's opportunities with reason, science, and institutional capacity**. Within the framework of geoeconomic restructuring, Türkiye has transformed itself into a **geoeconomic center of gravity** at the heart of regional power architecture. Sustained progress toward 2050 will require **policy-driven, long-term, and interdisciplinary strategies**. In this process, **TJGE serves as both a measurement instrument and a strategic policy compass**.

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