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**CHINA'S "BELT AND ROAD" INITIATIVE AS A DRIVER OF  
TÜRKIYE'S "ASIA ANEW" INITIATIVE  
IN A MULTIPOLAR CONTEXT**

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**Abstract.** This article examines the relationship between China's "Belt and Road" Initiative and Türkiye's "Asia Anew" Initiative in the context of multipolarity. Changes in the global economic order and the growing role of Asia are creating new conditions for the reorientation of Türkiye's foreign policy. The purpose of the study is to analyze the impact of China's economic growth and the implementation of projects within the framework of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, including the development of the Middle Corridor, on Türkiye's foreign policy strategy and its interactions with Asian countries, including ASEAN member states. The methodological basis of the research includes the analysis of official documents, comparative analysis, and the use of statistical data on trade and economic cooperation between Türkiye and China for the period 2000–2024, as well as selected ASEAN countries for 2019–2025. The findings demonstrate that Türkiye's cooperation with China and Asian countries has gradually expanded, particularly in the spheres of trade, infrastructure, energy, and investment. Türkiye's participation in projects related to the "Belt and Road" Initiative strengthens its role as a transit, logistics, and infrastructure link between Asia and Europe. At the same time, the study identifies structural imbalances, including a persistent trade deficit in favor of China and a relatively low level of investment interaction. The research contributes to the study of Türkiye's trade, economic, and foreign policy interactions with China and ASEAN countries. The study concludes that cooperation with China and other Asian countries creates new opportunities, but also requires consideration of existing imbalances and the development of a sustainable long-term strategy.

**Keywords:** Türkiye, China, Belt and Road, Middle Corridor, Asia Anew, ASEAN, multipolarity, foreign policy, trade and economic cooperation

**Introduction**

The transitional period between the 1990s and the early 21st century was marked by the intensification of economic initiatives aimed at expanding trade relations and increasing investment flows. Nevertheless, the aftermath of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis prompted many states to adopt policies prioritizing national economic interests. One of the instruments employed to support domestic economies was the imposition of tariffs on selected countries. In this

context, the economic confrontation between the United States and the Peoples' Republic of China in the 2010s, often referred to as the "Trade War," stands out. It can be argued that the measures undertaken by the United States were intended to contain China's rapidly growing economic influence. More broadly, developments since the 2010s, including geopolitical instability in various regions and global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have clearly demonstrated the interdependence between geopolitical dynamics and global economic performance [1, p. 39-40].

The 2010s are particularly noteworthy as a period during which interregional interactions increasingly developed within a multipolar framework. The gradual shift away from unipolarity and bipolarity is a characteristic of the Cold War era, which created conditions for a wide range of economically and technologically advancing countries, particularly in Asia, to develop models of multilateral cooperation aimed at sustaining economic growth. Among the most prominent global initiatives emerging during this period is China's "Belt and Road" Initiative (BRI), which has attracted participation from over one hundred countries. A defining feature of this Initiative is its emphasis on mutually beneficial, or "Win-Win" Cooperation [2, p. 54-61; 3].

China's growing economic advantage relative to developed countries, along with the active promotion of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, has raised concerns among some states, particularly developed economies. At the same time, many developing countries view the initiative as a practical instrument for achieving national development objectives. Türkiye is among the countries that have supported this Initiative. Within the broader context of developments in the 2010s, Türkiye's rapprochement with China can be interpreted as a logical outcome of evolving international conditions. This period was marked by a series of tensions in Türkiye's relations with its traditional Western partners, including disagreements with the United States over the Syrian conflict, the 2016 coup attempt, strained relations with the European Union in connection with the Cyprus issue and human rights concerns, debates over the suspension of EU accession negotiations, as well as tensions related to the Mediterranean energy developments and the procurement of the S-400 system. These factors contributed to Türkiye's gradual strategic reorientation toward the East. The deepening of ties with China during the 2010s provided Türkiye with an opportunity to diversify its foreign policy partnerships. Engagement with Asia also plays an important role in preserving Türkiye's strategic autonomy by enabling greater flexibility in pursuing its foreign policy objectives and reducing the risk of isolation. Türkiye's participation in the BRI was subsequently complemented by the launch of the "Asia Anew" Initiative in 2019. This development reflects both the shifting balance of power in the global system and the expansion of Türkiye's foreign policy interests [4].

Within the framework of the BRI, particular attention is given to the potential benefits, limitations, and challenges of bilateral cooperation. Among the key

strengths underpinning Türkiye's role in the initiative is its geostrategic location between major energy hubs and centers of consumption, creating conditions for its emergence as an important transit zone. At the same time, several structural constraints persist, including a persistent trade imbalance in favor of China and relatively low Turkish investment in the Chinese economy. Meanwhile, China has strengthened its position in Türkiye's import structure. At the same time, China's significant economic capacity creates opportunities for attracting investment aimed at modernizing and diversifying transport and logistics routes. In this regard, Türkiye is increasingly positioned as a potential participant in key economic processes across Eurasia. Among the main challenges affecting the implementation of projects within the BRI framework, including the Middle Corridor, are regional geopolitical instability, competition among transport routes, and risks associated with growing dependence on Chinese capital [5].

As for the "Asia Anew" Initiative, introduced in 2019, it is commonly interpreted as an attempt by Türkiye to adapt to the shifting center of global economic and political activity. The Initiative is comprehensive in nature and aims to expand Türkiye's engagement with a wide range of Asian countries, including both major regional economies and Southeast Asian states. Importantly, it aligns with the principles of Türkiye's multi-vector foreign policy, which prioritizes diversifying external economic and political relations. Within this framework, the economic dimension remains dominant. Similar to the BRI, the "Asia Anew" Initiative emphasizes expanding trade, attracting investment, and Türkiye's active participation in regional infrastructure, transport, and logistics projects. Therefore, a parallel can be drawn between the Chinese and the Turkish Initiatives, as both can be interpreted as adaptations to the evolving conditions of a multipolar international system [6].

From a European perspective, Türkiye–China relations are often interpreted in the context of intensifying strategic competition between the United States and China, as well as within Türkiye–EU dynamics. Türkiye is generally seen as pursuing a balancing strategy between the West and China, as reflected in its pragmatic, multi-vector foreign policy. About the Chinese dimension, cooperation is primarily driven by economic considerations, including efforts to expand trade, increase investment flows, and participate in infrastructure and connectivity projects across Eurasia. At the same time, both European and Turkish analysts emphasize the persistent trade imbalance, with Türkiye remaining in a structurally weaker position. Moreover, despite the gradual deepening of ties with China, the Western vector remains a priority in Türkiye's foreign policy. Consequently, Türkiye is expected to maintain a multi-vector approach, simultaneously engaging with both Western and Eastern partners in line with its national interests [7].

Overall, the transformation of the global economic order in the post-bipolar period has been accompanied by the gradual weakening of the Western-centric model and the strengthening of developing economies, particularly in Asia. China's economic rise and its expanding role in the global economy have been

key drivers behind the emergence of a more complex and multipolar system of international economic relations. In this context, the “Belt and Road” Initiative represents one of the most significant frameworks for economic cooperation, reflecting China’s efforts to expand its role in global affairs. For Türkiye, participation in these processes is shaped by a combination of foreign policy and economic considerations. Changes in relations with traditional Western partners during the 2010s encouraged the search for alternative directions of cooperation, including engagement with Asia. In this regard, the “Asia Anew” Initiative reflects Türkiye’s intention to broaden the geographical scope of its foreign policy and economic relations. Thus, Türkiye’s rapprochement with China and its participation in the BRI can be understood as a logical continuation of broader structural transformations in the global economic system and the consolidation of a multipolar order. The analysis demonstrates that Türkiye–China cooperation within the framework of the “Belt and Road” Initiative and the “Asia Anew” Initiative is shaped by both systemic changes in the international environment and Türkiye’s pragmatic foreign policy interests. Increasing interdependence, the growing importance of non-traditional security, and the shift of the global economic center toward Asia contribute to the deepening of bilateral engagement. Türkiye’s geostrategic position enhances its role as a potential transit and logistics hub in Eurasia. However, this cooperation is accompanied by several constraints, including a persistent trade imbalance and the uneven distribution of investment in favor of China, which may generate risks of economic dependency. At the same time, the “Asia Anew” Initiative reflects Türkiye’s intention to diversify its external relations and adapt to changing global conditions while maintaining its Western orientation, thereby confirming its balancing foreign policy approach. Despite the growing body of research, several gaps remain. The “Asia Anew” Initiative, relatively new, has not yet achieved widespread development, which may be partly attributed to constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, its practical outcomes remain insufficiently examined. Moreover, Türkiye is often portrayed primarily as a transit country, while its broader and more active role in economic processes remains underexplored.

### **Description of Materials and Methods**

The research is based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study’s methodological framework includes document analysis, comparative analysis, and statistical data on trade and economic cooperation between Türkiye and China. Particular attention is devoted to the analysis of official policy documents, government statements, institutional reports, and academic literature concerning China’s “Belt and Road” Initiative and Türkiye’s “Asia Anew” Initiative. The study also examines analytical materials on the development of the Middle Corridor, infrastructure connectivity, investment and energy cooperation, renewable energy projects, and regional economic integration in Eurasia and Southeast Asia. To provide a more comprehensive assessment

of bilateral relations, the research incorporates statistical data on trade and economic cooperation between Türkiye and China for the period 2000-2024, as well as selected ASEAN countries for 2019-2025. The use of long-term statistical indicators enables tracing the dynamics of trade relations, identifying structural asymmetries, and evaluating changes in the scale of economic interaction between the countries under examination. The empirical basis of the research includes data from official state institutions, international reports, and trade statistics databases. A comparative approach is applied to identify similarities, differences, and interconnections between the "Belt and Road" Initiative and the "Asia Anew" Initiative, as well as Türkiye's economic relations with China and selected ASEAN countries. In this context, particular attention is devoted to connectivity, transport infrastructure, regional cooperation, energy interactions, and foreign policy diversification. The study also adopts a multipolarity perspective, enabling an analysis of the transformation of Türkiye's foreign policy in the context of the changing global economic order and the growing role of Asia in international relations. Such an approach enables a more comprehensive examination of the relationship between the "Belt and Road" Initiative and Türkiye's "Asia Anew" Initiative. It also helps identify the main trends and features of Türkiye's trade and economic cooperation with China and ASEAN countries.

## **Results**

The examination of the development and significance of the strategy appears justified in light of the trends that preceded the establishment of closer contacts and, consequently, its subsequent announcement. Overall, at the beginning of the 21st century, Türkiye-China relations cannot be characterized as steadily developing or productive. On the contrary, in the initial stage, bilateral relations were shaped by divergences on several issues, which limited the depth and scope of cooperation. These constraints were reflected in the relatively low intensity of political dialogue and the absence of a stable institutional framework for interaction. However, a tendency toward improvement became evident in 2010, when a Strategic Partnership Agreement was concluded between the two states. This Agreement can be regarded as an important foundation for the subsequent expansion of cooperation, as it formalized the transition of bilateral relations to a more structured and long-term format. In particular, it contributed to strengthening political dialogue, expanding intergovernmental contacts, and developing mechanisms for regular consultations. Notably, its signing had a positive impact on intergovernmental dialogue, creating conditions for more consistent and coordinated interaction between the parties. In the following years, bilateral engagement intensified, as reflected in regular visits by Cabinet members and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to China. This increase in high-level contacts indicates a growing mutual interest in deepening cooperation and institutionalizing political ties. Against this backdrop of rapprochement, economic cooperation also showed positive dynamics. In particular, between

2000 and 2015, the volume of trade increased from approximately \$1 billion to \$15 billion. This substantial growth reflects the gradual integration of Türkiye into China-oriented trade flows, as well as the increasing importance of economic factors in shaping bilateral relations. These emerging trends contributed to the perception that relations with China complemented Türkiye's broader foreign policy trajectory rather than contradicting it. In this regard, cooperation with China came to be viewed as a means for Türkiye to diversify its external economic and political engagements [8].

A turning point in the subsequent formation of Türkiye's "Asia Anew" Initiative was undoubtedly the announcement by the Chairman of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping, of the global Economic Cooperation Initiative "Belt and Road" in the autumn of 2013. Within the framework of this initiative, cooperation across Eurasia is envisaged through several economic corridors to enhance connectivity and facilitate trade flows. One of these routes is the Middle Corridor, which passes directly through Türkiye. As a land-based route, it comprises a network of road and railway connections linking China, Central Asia, and the South Caucasus to Türkiye. The implementation of this project is particularly attractive for Türkiye, as it reflects the long-standing idea of the "Modern Silk Road," an economic vision that emerged on the agenda in the late 1990s. The core objective of this Initiative, later pursued by China, was to facilitate connections between East and West, particularly through engagement with the resource-rich Caspian region. Under current conditions, the Middle Corridor continues to be regarded as one of the key routes connecting not only the Asian economic center, but also Central Asia with Europe via Türkiye. In this context, Türkiye is interested in deriving benefits from cooperation not only in terms of energy security but also by enhancing its transport and logistics capacity and strengthening its position as a strategic link between East and West [9].

The implementation of large-scale economic objectives requires substantial financial resources. In this context, particular attention should be given to foreign direct investment (FDI), especially Chinese investment. As a result of its economic growth, China emerged as one of the leading sources of global capital by 2019. Between 2000 and 2019, China's outward foreign direct investment increased significantly, rising from \$28 billion to \$120 billion. In the case of Türkiye, Chinese investment inflows began to grow following the launch of the BRI, reaching \$30 million in 2014 and increasing to \$451 million in 2015. By 2019, the total stock of Chinese investment in Türkiye ranged between \$1.18 billion and \$2.77 billion. In 2013–2020, Türkiye accounted for 1.31% of China's total investments, representing approximately 0.8% of the BRI projects involving Turkish participation. Despite these relatively modest figures, Türkiye ranked among the top 40 countries for participation in the Initiative and among the top 30 recipients of BRI-related investments. Notable projects involving Chinese participation include the Ankara–Istanbul high-speed railway, the acquisition of the Turkish e-commerce platform Trendyol by Alibaba, and the purchase of

controlling stakes in major infrastructure assets such as the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, the Marmaray rail tunnel, Tekstilbank, and the Northern Marmara Motorway [10].

Overall, the distribution of investments under the BRI shows significant fluctuations. Due to the impact of COVID-19, total investment volumes declined by 54% compared to 2019, reaching \$47 billion. During the pandemic, the main recipients of BRI investments were Vietnam, Pakistan, Indonesia, Chile, Thailand, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Poland, Serbia, and Bulgaria. At the same time, most participating countries experienced a substantial reduction in investment inflows, including Türkiye, where the decline reached 100% [11]. The post-pandemic period (2022–2023) was marked by a noticeable recovery compared to 2019–2020. The total value of investment deals increased from \$74.5 billion to \$92.4 billion, with 61 countries involved in financing and investment activities. The largest recipients of construction-related financing were countries in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa, including Saudi Arabia (\$5.6 billion), the United Arab Emirates (\$2 billion), Sri Lanka (\$4.5 billion), and Tanzania (\$3.1 billion). Investment flows were primarily directed to Indonesia (\$7.3 billion), Hungary (\$4.5 billion), and Peru (\$2.9 billion). Nevertheless, 19 countries, including Türkiye, recorded a complete (100%) decline in project participation [12]. Overall, the available data indicate that the distribution of capital within the BRI framework remains uneven. While investment flows are concentrated in a limited number of countries, a significant share of participants demonstrates declining or minimal engagement, reflecting the selective nature of China's investment strategy. In this context, despite its geostrategic importance, Türkiye does not rank among the primary recipients of investment and exhibits an unstable pattern of participation, including periods of significant decline.

China's participation is also evident in multilateral development institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which serves as a key channel for financing projects across different countries. Established in 2015 following an initiative proposed in 2009, the AIIB aims to promote multilateral cooperation in infrastructure development and support sustainable economic growth. The Bank functions as a complementary mechanism aligned with the objectives of the BRI, particularly in the implementation of infrastructure projects. The relationship between the BRI and the AIIB is primarily functional. While the BRI provides the strategic framework for infrastructure and connectivity development, the AIIB provides the financial resources necessary to implement it [13].

As a member of the Board of Governors of the AIIB, Türkiye acts not only as a participant in the institution but also as a recipient of financing within its projects. Owing to its strategic location at the intersection of major transport and energy routes, Türkiye is regarded by the AIIB as a promising platform for implementing infrastructure initiatives to support sustainable economic development. In 2019, Türkiye ranked among the top three recipients of AIIB

financing, with three approved projects totaling approximately \$900 million. For Türkiye, cooperation with the AIIB is an important source of funding for both the BRI-related projects and national infrastructure programs, with particular emphasis on the energy and logistics sectors. Among the key projects is the expansion of the Tuz Gölü underground gas storage facility, designed to enhance the reliability of gas supply. Another important instrument is a credit line of up to \$200 million provided to the Industrial Development Bank of Türkiye (TSKB) to support sustainable energy and infrastructure projects. The majority of these funds are directed toward renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives. A third significant project involves a \$100 million loan to expand the Efeler geothermal power plant, intended to increase electricity generation from renewable sources. In addition, the AIIB participates in financing the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), which connects the Caspian region to European markets via Türkiye, thereby strengthening Türkiye's role in the regional energy system [14]. It was reported that in 2025, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Türkiye and the AIIB, providing \$5 billion in financing for 2025–2027 to support state-led energy and transport infrastructure projects [15].

In recent years, the development of renewable energy has gained increasing importance. According to the TSKB, renewable energy projects account for approximately 30% of the total project portfolio, with 476 projects financed [16]. It is evident that the importance of developing renewable energy sources continues to grow each year, driven by the need to ensure a reliable energy supply and support sustainable economic development. This trend is reflected in Türkiye's National Energy Plan published in 2022. According to the Plan, electricity consumption is projected to increase between 2020 and 2035. In response, the government has set a series of objectives to expand electricity generation from solar and wind energy sources [17]. It is reported that solar power generation increased by 39% in 2024 compared to 2023. In contrast, wind power generation declined by up to 5% over the period 2022–2024, following earlier growth of 24% in 2018–2020 and 41% in 2020–2022. As for hydropower, its generation rose by 17% in 2024. Moreover, during this period, Türkiye ranked 3rd, after Poland and the Czech Republic, in terms of coal's share of electricity generation. Overall, these data indicate that the country is increasingly focused on developing alternative energy sources that serve its national interests [18]. Currently, Türkiye ranks 14th in solar power generation, 15th in wind power generation, and 16th in total electricity production from renewable sources among 24 European countries [19].

Since 2017, China has been promoting the “Green Belt and Road” Initiative within the framework of the BRI, aimed at environmental protection, the development of a sustainable ecosystem, and the advancement of sustainable development [20]. As part of advancing the “Green” Initiative, the necessary infrastructure is envisaged, including in renewable energy. Cooperation among participating countries in this area, in turn, creates new opportunities for collaboration, particularly to increase the number of investment projects [21].

Taken together, the prevention of energy-related and associated economic risks falls within the domain of non-traditional security (NTS). In particular, the concept of NTS encompasses a wide range of challenges, including not only economic and energy-related risks but also migration, natural disasters, environmental protection, terrorism, drug trafficking, cybersecurity, and epidemics. As a result, NTS implies enhanced cooperation across a wide range of critical issues, facilitating closer interaction among states irrespective of geographical boundaries. In this context, Türkiye–China cooperation is viewed as a promising and promising area for engagement. The expansion of international trade and investment flows provides a foundation for developing constructive dialogue on these challenges, which, in turn, aligns with the economic and energy interests of both countries within the framework of the BRI [22].

An analysis of Sino–Turkish cooperation in renewable energy reveals a positive trend. Between 2005 and 2020, 21.9% of Chinese investment in Türkiye's energy sector was directed toward renewable energy, while 73.5% was allocated to coal-based power generation [23]. In 2024–2025, Chinese involvement was observed in projects related to the construction of onshore wind farms in Balıkesir and Edirne, as well as a solar panel manufacturing plant in Istanbul [24, 25, 26]. In addition, in autumn 2025, Türkiye and China held negotiations to construct a 2 GW wind turbine manufacturing plant with an estimated cost of approximately \$250 million [27]. At the same time, the largest project in the energy sector, both in energy development and within the framework of the BRI, is the construction of the coal-fired Hunutlu thermal power plant [28].

Thus, energy cooperation between Türkiye and China is gradually expanding, particularly in renewable energy. Meanwhile, coal-based power generation continues to play a significant role, indicating that the transition to green energy remains incomplete. Overall, this cooperation can be regarded as a promising avenue for further engagement.

**Table 1. Bilateral Trade between Türkiye and China (2000–2025)**

No	Year	Import (Türkiye from China, \$ billion)	Export (Türkiye to China, \$ billion)
1	2000	1.34	0.10
2	2001	0.93	0.20
3	2002	1.37	0.27
4	2003	2.6	0.50
5	2004	4.48	0.39
6	2005	6.89	0.55
7	2006	9.67	0.69
8	2007	13.23	1.04
9	2008	15.66	1.44
10	2009	12.68	1.60
11	2010	17.18	2.27
12	2011	21.69	2.47
13	2012	21.30	2.83

14	2013	25.26	3.76
15	2014	25.73	2.97
16	2015	25.28	2.50
17	2016	24.85	2.38
18	2017	23.75	3.04
19	2018	21.05	3.08
20	2019	19.13	2.73
21	2020	23.04	2.87
22	2021	32.34	3.66
23	2022	41.35	3.28
24	2023	45.05	3.31
25	2024	44.93	3.39
26	2025	49.57	3.3

Source: UN Comtrade Database.

The data indicate that bilateral trade between Türkiye and China grew significantly from 2000 to 2025, primarily driven by rising imports from China. While the gap between imports and exports was relatively modest at the beginning of the period, it widened substantially in recent years, with imports reaching nearly \$50 billion. In contrast, exports remained at approximately \$3–4 billion. So, despite the expansion of trade and economic ties, the structure of bilateral trade remains asymmetric, resulting in a persistent and growing trade deficit for Türkiye with China.

China's dominance in Türkiye's import structure is also evident from a regional perspective. In 2024–2025, China maintained its position as Türkiye's leading import partner, accounting for 13.1% and 13.6% of total imports, respectively. This trend continued into early 2026, when China's share reached 14.9%, surpassing those of other major partners, including Russia, the United States, Germany, and Switzerland. Furthermore, according to official reports for 2025–2026, priority areas of cooperation include North and South America, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region. The designation of the Asia-Pacific as a key area of engagement reflects and reinforces the objectives of the "Asia Anew" Initiative, which aims to strengthen ties with both developed and developing economies in East and South Asia [29, 30]. In this regard, the adoption of the 2019 Initiative can be interpreted as a shift toward a more pronounced eastern orientation in Türkiye's foreign policy, with a focus on expanding cooperation with Asian countries across multiple sectors [31, p. 209-228].

### Discussion

Thus, the gradual shift toward the dominance of Asian countries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, in the global economy, together with the announcement of the "Asia Anew" Initiative, has created new opportunities to establish and expand existing forms of cooperation with the region. In this context, ASEAN has gained particular importance, given China's strong position within the organization. The aforementioned region holds significant potential for trade and economic cooperation [32].

**Table 2. Table 1. Bilateral Trade between Türkiye and Selected ASEAN Countries (2019–2025)**

№	Year	Export (\$ billion)			Import (\$ billion)		
		Indonesia	Malaysia	Thailand	Indonesia	Malaysia	Thailand
1	2019	0.29	0.35	0.27	1.35	1.85	1.14
2	2020	0.21	0.38	0.18	1.19	1.99	1.21
3	2021	0.31	0.44	0.24	1.85	3.10	1.65
4	2022	0.37	0.48	0.28	2.78	4.29	1.93
5	2023	0.41	0.49	0.28	1.89	4.14	2.17
6	2024	0.39	0.45	0.29	2.44	4.67	1.68
7	2025	0.48	0.63	0.31	2.10	5.03	1.99

Source: UN Comtrade.

The data presented in *Table 2* demonstrate the expansion of trade and economic relations between Türkiye and selected ASEAN countries during 2019–2025. Among the examined states, Malaysia remained Türkiye's largest trading partner, recording the highest export and import figures throughout the period under review. Despite the temporary decline in trade volumes in 2020, the subsequent years witnessed a gradual recovery and further growth in bilateral trade turnover. At the same time, import volumes considerably exceeded export volumes across all three countries, indicating the persistence of an asymmetric trade structure. Overall, the dynamics reflect the strengthening of Türkiye's economic interactions and trade cooperation with Southeast Asian countries. It should also be noted that these ASEAN member states were selected as examples due to Türkiye's particularly dynamic trade and economic cooperation with them.

Since Malaysia remains the dominant partner among the ASEAN countries, it is appropriate to highlight the main trends in Turkish–Malaysian economic relations. According to 2024 data, the TOP-3 categories of Turkish exports to Malaysia consisted of jewelry products, agricultural products, and chemical substances and chemical products. Turkish imports from Malaysia, in turn, were mainly represented by steel, agricultural products, electronics, and electrical equipment [33]. For comparison, the TOP-3 export-import categories between Türkiye and China in 2025 consisted of mining products/mineral resources, chemical products, textiles and textile raw materials (Türkiye's exports), as well as electronics and electrical equipment, chemical products, machinery and components (Türkiye's imports) [34].

An important development at the beginning of 2026 was the announcement of a strategic upgrade in interstate relations between Türkiye and Malaysia. Within the framework of establishing the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council, the parties emphasized their intention to further deepen cooperation not only in trade and investment but also in technology, the defense industry, education, scientific research, and Islamic finance. Particular attention was also devoted to the development of institutional mechanisms of cooperation, the expansion of investment interactions, and the strengthening of ties in the

spheres of information and communication technologies and higher education. In addition, Turkish–Malaysian cooperation in the defense sector was identified as a priority area of bilateral cooperation [35].

So, the strengthening role of Asian countries in the global economy, together with the implementation of Türkiye’s “Asia Anew” Initiative, contributes to the expansion of Türkiye’s cooperation not only with China but also with ASEAN countries. The presented data demonstrate the gradual growth of Türkiye’s trade and economic relations with Southeast Asian states, among which Malaysia remains the most significant partner. The elevation of Turkish–Malaysian relations to strategic cooperation in 2026 indicates the parties’ intent to deepen cooperation in trade, economic, technological, educational, and defense spheres.

### **Conclusion**

The study demonstrates that transformations in the global economic order and the growing importance of Asia, particularly China, have influenced Türkiye’s foreign policy orientation and contributed to the expansion of its engagement with Asian countries. In this context, the development of cooperation with China and participation in the “Belt and Road” Initiative have become important elements of Türkiye’s adaptation to evolving international conditions. The analysis indicates that Türkiye–China relations have gradually expanded, particularly in the spheres of trade, infrastructure, energy, and investment. Türkiye’s participation in BRI-related projects has also strengthened its role as a transit and logistics link between Asia and Europe. At the same time, the findings reveal that economic cooperation remains uneven. A persistent trade imbalance in favor of China continues to characterize bilateral relations, while investment cooperation remains relatively limited in scale and unevenly distributed.

The study further demonstrates that the formation of the “Asia Anew” Initiative can be understood as the result of both structural changes in the international system and the expansion of Türkiye’s cooperation not only with China but also with the broader Asian region, including ASEAN countries. In this regard, the Initiative reflects Türkiye’s intention to diversify its foreign policy and economic relations, strengthen engagement with Asian economies, and adapt to the evolving multipolar order. The growing importance of Malaysia in Türkiye’s relations with Southeast Asia and the elevation of Turkish–Malaysian relations to strategic cooperation in 2026 further demonstrate the widening geographical and institutional scope of Türkiye’s Asian engagement.

Overall, cooperation with China and Asian countries provides additional opportunities for Türkiye’s economic and strategic positioning. At the same time, its long-term effectiveness will depend on maintaining a balanced approach that addresses structural trade asymmetries, strengthens sustainable investment cooperation, and preserves strategic flexibility across multiple foreign policy directions. At the same time, its long-term effectiveness will depend on maintaining a balanced approach that accounts for structural trade imbalances,

the development of investment cooperation, and the preservation of strategic balance across multiple foreign policy directions.

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## ҚЫТАЙДЫҢ «БІР БЕЛДЕУ - БІР ЖОЛ» БАСТАМАСЫ ЖӘНЕ ТҮРКИЯ: КӨППОЛЯРЛЫ ЖАҒДАЙДА «ҚАЙТАДАН АЗИЯ» БАСТАМАСЫНЫҢ ҚАЛЫПТАСУЫ

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**Аңдатпа.** Мақалада Қытайдың «Бір белдеу – Бір жол» Бастамасы мен Түркияның «Қайтадан Азия» Бастамасының көпполярлық жағдайындағы өзара байланысы қарастырылады. Жаһандық экономикалық тәртіптің өзгеруі және Азия рөлінің артуы Түркияның сыртқы саясатын қайта бағдарлау үшін жаңа жағдайлар қалыптастыруда. Зерттеудің мақсаты – Қытайдың экономикалық өсуі мен «Бір белдеу – Бір жол» Бастамасы аясындағы жобалардың, соның ішінде Орта дәліздің дамуының, Түркияның сыртқы саяси стратегиясына және оның Азия елдерімен, соның ішінде ASEAN мемлекеттерімен өзара іс-қимылына ықпалын талдау. Зерттеудің әдіснамалық негізі ресми құжаттарды талдауды, салыстырмалы талдауды, сондай-ақ 2000–2024 жылдар аралығындағы Түркия мен Қытай арасындағы сауда-экономикалық ынтымақтастыққа және 2019–2025 жылдардағы АСЕАН-ның жекелеген елдеріне қатысты статистикалық деректерді пайдалануды қамтиды. Зерттеу нәтижелері Түркияның Қытаймен және Азия елдерімен ынтымақтастығының, әсіресе сауда, инфрақұрылым, энергетика және инвестициялар салаларында біртіндеп кеңейіп келе жатқанын көрсетеді. Түркияның «Бір белдеу – Бір жол» Бастамасы жобаларына

қатысуы оның Азия мен Еуропа арасындағы транзиттік, логистикалық және инфрақұрылымдық буын ретіндегі рөлін нығайтуға ықпал етеді. Сонымен бірге, зерттеу Қытай пайдасына тұрақты сауда тапшылығы мен инвестициялық өзара іс-қимыл деңгейінің салыстырмалы түрде төмен болуы сияқты құрылымдық теңгерімсіздіктерді анықтайды. Зерттеу Түркияның Қытаймен және АСЕАН елдерімен сауда-экономикалық және сыртқы саяси өзара іс-қимылын зерттеуге үлес қосады. Зерттеу Қытаймен және басқа Азия елдерімен ынтымақтастық жаңа мүмкіндіктер ашатынын, алайда қолданыстағы теңгерімсіздіктерді ескеруді және ұзақ мерзімді тұрақты стратегияны қалыптастыруды талап ететінін көрсетеді.

**Тірек сөздер:** Түркия, Қытай, Бір белдеу - Бір жол, Орта дәліз, Қайтадан Азия, АСЕАН, көпполярлық, сыртқы саясат, сауда-экономикалық ынтымақтастық

## **ИНИЦИАТИВА КИТАЯ «ПОЯС И ПУТЬ» КАК ФАКТОР ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ ИНИЦИАТИВЫ ТУРЦИИ «СНОВА АЗИЯ» В УСЛОВИЯХ МНОГОПОЛЯРНОСТИ**

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**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается взаимосвязь китайской Инициативы «Пояс и Путь» и турецкой Инициативы «Снова Азия» в условиях многополярности. Изменения в глобальном экономическом порядке и усиление роли Азии создают новые условия для переориентации внешней политики Турции. Цель исследования заключается в анализе влияния экономического роста Китая и реализации проектов в рамках Инициативы «Пояс и Путь», включая развитие Среднего коридора, на внешнеполитическую стратегию Турции и её взаимодействие со странами Азии, включая государства АСЕАН. Методологическая основа исследования включает анализ официальных документов, сравнительный анализ, а также использование статистических данных по торгово-экономическому сотрудничеству Турции и Китая за период 2000–2024 гг. и отдельными странами АСЕАН за 2019–2025 гг. Результаты исследования показывают, что сотрудничество Турции с Китаем и азиатскими странами постепенно расширяется, прежде всего в сферах торговли, инфраструктуры, энергетики и инвестиций. Участие Турции в проектах Инициативы «Пояс и Путь» способствует укреплению её роли как транзитного, логистического и инфраструктурного звена между Азией и Европой. Вместе с тем выявлены структурные дисбалансы, включая устойчивый торговый дефицит в пользу Китая и относительно низкий уровень инвестиционного взаимодействия. Исследование способствует изучению торгово-экономического и внешнеполитического взаимодействия Турции с Китаем и странами АСЕАН. Сделан вывод о том, что сотрудничество с Китаем и другими

азиатскими странами открывает новые возможности, однако требует учёта существующих дисбалансов и выработки устойчивой долгосрочной стратегии.

**Ключевые слова:** Турция, Китай, Пояс и Путь, Срединный коридор, Снова Азия, АСЕАН, многополярность, внешняя политика, торгово-экономическое сотрудничество

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