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within the scope of the
Organization of Turkic States

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PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF TURKIC STATES

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Abstract

The Organization of Turkic States is evolving into a pivotal union with a growing impact on the Eurasian landscape. The ever-changing structure of the international system increases the importance of regional integration initiatives on a daily basis. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, relations between the Turkic World commenced with modest beginnings. However, in the intervening years, these relations have gained considerable momentum. Since its inception, the Organization has taken numerous economic measures and has endeavored to enhance economic collaboration. The objective of this study is to provide an assessment of the economic relations and cooperation within the Organization of Turkic States.

Keywords: Organization of Turkic States, Economic Cooperation, Turkic World

Introduce

One of the principal forces that is gaining increasing influence in the realm of international relations is the growing impact of international organizations and institutions within the global system. While these organizations play a critical role in ensuring stability, prosperity, peace, and security, they also seek to strengthen cooperation by pursuing the common interests of member countries. These organizations have become a principal instrument for resolving regional and global issues, facilitating enhanced collaboration and solidarity among nations. This dynamic has also had a significant impact on the Turkic World.

In this context, countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, which gained their independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, played a pivotal role in the resurgence of the concept of the "Turkic World" and the pursuit of enhanced collaboration among Turkic states. This process commenced with the inaugural [Summit Meeting in 1992](#) and was subsequently institutionalized with the formal establishment of the [Organization of Turkic States in 2009](#).

The objective of this organization is to enhance economic, political, and strategic collaboration by transcending the limitations of a mere cultural union. In the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkic states have sought to reinforce their



collaborative efforts within the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), with the objective of assuming a more prominent role within the global system and augmenting their regional influence. The organization is taking significant measures to enhance the prominence of the Turkic World as a regional and global actor. The objective of this study is to evaluate the economic relations and cooperation within the Organization of Turkic States.

The Development Process of the OTS

The Organization of Turkic States (OST) was formed in response to the challenges encountered by the Turkic states that achieved independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the necessity for regional collaboration. The organization was established with the objective of fortifying the institutional frameworks of member states, guaranteeing their security, and integrating them into the global system. In addressing fundamental challenges such as energy and food security, Turkic states have pursued a multifaceted approach to regional stability, economic advancement, and cultural integration through various forms of cooperation. From Ankara to Astana, the OTS has concentrated its efforts on regional integration and the establishment of institutional structures, with the goal of fostering cooperation among member states. The resolutions adopted and initiatives launched at each summit contributed to the establishment of a comprehensive and efficacious structure for the organization, thereby facilitating the unification of the Turkic world around shared objectives.

In the wake of their newly-won independence, the Turkic states joined together to establish a platform of solidarity, built upon their shared history, cultural heritage, and linguistic ties. The [1992 Ankara Summit](#) established the foundations for diplomatic relations and regional cooperation among the Turkic States. Türkiye offered diplomatic and economic support for the international recognition of the independent Turkic states and the stabilization of the region. During this period, cultural and economic partnerships were reinforced, and a legal and political infrastructure was established to address the issues that arose following independence. With the backing of Türkiye, Turgut Özal (President of Türkiye from 1989 to 1993) encouraged Turkish investors, while [TİKA](#) (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency), established in 1992, played a pivotal role in the process through its regional development projects.

[TİKA](#) was established in 1992 with the objective of advancing Türkiye's foreign policy objectives and facilitating the social, cultural, and economic advancement of the Turkic Republics. TİKA has played a significant role in the formation of national identity and the development of technical infrastructure in the newly independent Turkic Republics. In addition to providing material assistance to Turkic states in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Türkiye has pursued a cultural policy that includes the transition to the Latin alphabet, student exchange programs, and efforts to increase cultural interaction through the media.



In 2009, the leaders of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan convened in Nakhchivan to sign [the Nakhchivan Declaration](#), which outlined plans for political, economic, and cultural cooperation. This declaration served as the foundation for the Turkic Council. The structure of the Council was established to comprise the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Council of Elders, the Committee of Senior Officials, and the Secretariat. The structure was designed to facilitate the establishment of common foreign policy objectives, the advancement of economic growth, and the preservation of regional stability among [member states](#).

Table 1. Member and Observer of OTS

Status	Country	Notes
Member	Azerbaijan	Founding member, joined in 2009
Member	Kazakhstan	Founding member, joined in 2009
Member	Kyrgyzstan	Founding member, joined in 2009
Member	Türkiye	Founding member, joined in 2009
Member	Uzbekistan	Joined in 2019
Observer	Hungary	Observer status since 2018
Observer	Turkmenistan	Observer status since 2021
Observer	Northern Cyprus (TRNC)	Observer status since 2022

Source: <https://www.turkicstates.org/en/turk-konseyyi-hakkinda>

In the period between 2009 and 2019, the Turkic Council convened a series of summits with the objective of establishing a more effective institutional structure. At the inaugural summit in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the Turkic Business Council was established in 2011 with the theme "[Economic and Trade Cooperation](#)." In 2012, the Turkic Academy and the [Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation](#) were established at the Bishkek Summit. At [the Bodrum Summit](#) in 2014, resolutions were reached concerning matters pertaining to tourism. The 2018 [Cholpan-Ata Summit](#) broadened the scope of the Council's activities by establishing collaborative initiatives in areas such as youth and national sports. The aforementioned summits resulted in significant advancements in the process of institutionalizing the Turkic Council and establishing a more integrated structure within the Turkic world.



The 2019 Baku Summit was of significant consequence, occurring as it did in conjunction with [the 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement](#) and Uzbekistan's ascension to the status of a full member. The primary focus was on economic cooperation, which manifested in the launch of several projects, including initiatives pertaining to trade development and the establishment of the Turkish Business Portal. Additionally, significant progress was made with regard to customs cooperation and the implementation of the Modern Silk Road projects. The establishment of the Joint Turkic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TTSO) at this summit constituted a significant advancement in the enhancement of trade relations within the Turkic world. The TTSO initiated the organization of business forums and information-sharing events with the objective of expanding trade between member countries to sectors other than natural resources.

[In 2020](#), the extraordinary summit was held via videoconference due to the global pandemic of the novel coronavirus. The primary focus was on cooperation in the field of health and crisis management. The summit, which was attended by the Director-General of the World Health Organization, was recorded as an example of the efficacy of collaborative action in the context of a crisis.

At the 2021 Turkistan Summit, the city of Turkistan was designated as the "[Spiritual Capital of the Turkic World](#)." At this summit, a proposal was put forth to change the name of the organization to the "[Organization of Turkic States](#)." The process of institutionalization was advanced with the drafting of the "[Turkic World 2040 Vision Document](#)" and the "2020-2025 Strategic Plan."

[The 8th Turkic Council Summit](#), convened in Istanbul on November 12, 2021, represented a significant juncture in the organization's institutionalization process. At the summit, which was held with the theme of "[Green Technologies and Smart Cities in the Digital Age](#)," the organization's name was changed to the Organization of Turkic States, and Turkmenistan was accepted as an observer member. [The 2040 Vision Document](#), which was unveiled at the summit, sought to foster collaboration in a range of domains, including economic advancement, environmentally conscious technologies, and sustainable urbanization, while delineating the long-term objectives of the member countries.

In addition, the [TURANSEZ](#) (Turkish Special Economic Zone) project in Turkestan was introduced, and measures to enhance trade among member countries were highlighted. President Erdoğan posited that the OTS will serve as a model for regional prosperity, security, and resilience, and aspires to become an efficacious structure for addressing global challenges.

The summit, held on November 11, 2022, [in Samarkand](#), addressed economic and transport issues under the overarching theme of "[New Era for Turkic Civilization](#)." The meeting, entitled "Towards Common Development and Prosperity," addressed economic and transport issues. The OTS members reached a consensus on the necessity of digitalizing transport and transit trade, and agreed on a series of measures, including the abolition of quotas and the increase of transit permits in



these sectors. The Zangezur Corridor was identified as a promising conduit for direct transportation between Azerbaijan and Türkiye. The digitalization of transportation was identified as a priority through initiatives such as the e-TIR and e-Permit projects.

On March 16, 2023, the main theme of the extraordinary summit held in Ankara was "[Disaster-Emergency Management and Humanitarian Aid](#)," in response to the earthquakes that occurred in Türkiye in February 2023. While member countries expressed their support to Türkiye, the significance of solidarity among Turkic States was underscored. Additionally, the summit addressed energy efficiency and sustainable development. Agreements were concluded regarding the establishment of the Turkic Investment Fund, with the objective of reinforcing economic collaboration.

On November 3, 2023, the summit was convened in Kazakhstan under the slogan "[TURKTIME](#)," which references the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye. The OTS sought to reinforce traditional values, foster unity, encourage innovation, facilitate experience-sharing, enhance trust, promote investment, facilitate mediation, and develop energy resources. In order to enhance the financial capabilities of the region, Astana was designated as the 2024 Turkic World Financial Center. The summit sought to foster closer collaboration in the security and defense sector and underscored a unified stance on the Palestinian issue, particularly with regard to the situation in Gaza. It was resolved that transportation routes should be developed and that regional cooperation should be deepened.

On November 6, 2024, the Summit of the OTS in Bishkek convened to address the theme of "[Empowering the Turkic World](#)." The meeting saw discussions on a number of key issues, including economic integration, sustainable development, digitalization, and security matters. Among the principal items on the agenda were discussions of cooperation with Kazakhstan's "TURKTIME!" leadership and the Garabagh Declaration, which was signed in Shusha and serves as a foundation for regional connectivity and climate action. The Kyrgyz leadership advocated for the reinforcement of trade and transportation networks between member states, with particular emphasis on the promotion of sustainable development and security. Furthermore, the meeting underscored the role of observer members (e.g., Hungary) in the OTS and the importance of unity based on shared cultural values within the Turkic world.

Bishkek Summit

On November 6, 2024, at the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States in Bishkek, the theme "Strengthening the Turkic World: Economic Integration, Sustainable Development, Digital Future and Security". The meeting, chaired by the President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Japarov, was attended by the Heads of State and Government of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan,



Uzbekistan, Hungary, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Secretary General of the [OTS](#).

During the meeting, it was emphasized that Kazakhstan successfully held the Chairmanship under the slogan "Turkic Time" and strengthened solidarity within the framework of the Vision of the Turkic World 2040 and the OTS Strategy Document. Attention was drawn to the opportunities of multilateral cooperation with the support of the Karabakh Declaration held in Azerbaijan and the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the [Nagorno-Karabakh Treaty](#).

The meeting emphasized the spirit of solidarity among the Turkic states, strengthened by historical, cultural and social ties, and reaffirmed the commitment to security cooperation within the framework of respect for sovereignty and integrity of borders. In the field of economic cooperation, the importance of joint work in trade, tourism, transport and investment was [underlined](#).

Within the framework of the green economy, an agreement was reached on the establishment of the Turkish Green Finance Council, while the new OTS flag symbolizing Turkish unity was adopted. In addition, Hungary's efforts to strengthen relations between the EU and the OTS were [supported](#).

Table 2. Main Decisions and Areas of Cooperation

Main Title	Decisions and Implementations
Digital Trade and Economy	-In order to promote the digital economy and trade, Member States signed a joint Digital Economy Pact (DEPA). -The assembled parties expressed their appreciation for the 2023 Report on Digital Trade and Investment and indicated their intention to provide support for its ongoing work.
Standardization and Quality Infrastructure	-At the suggestion of Kyrgyzstan, the participants agreed to enhance collaboration in the domain of national quality infrastructure and standardization.
Development Of Sectors	-A new document was proposed with the objective of stimulating capital investment and accelerating modernization. -The establishment of unified markets in sectors such as e-commerce, finance, agriculture, industry, health, and education was proposed as a means of fostering economic collaboration.
Finance and Banking Cooperation	-In accordance with the proposal put forth by Kazakhstan, it was resolved to establish a council with the objective of fostering enhanced collaboration between the central banks of the member states.
Competition and Social Policies	-The inaugural meeting was convened in 2024 with the objective of fostering collaboration between competition institutions. -It was resolved that collaboration in the realms of social protection, employment, and social services should be enhanced.

Main Title	Decisions and Implementations
Metrology and Transportation Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A draft memorandum was prepared with the objective of enhancing cooperation in the field of metrology. -It was agreed that connectivity in the field of transportation should be strengthened through the integration of digital platforms.
Logistics and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The network between logistics centers and carriers in the region will undergo an expansion, with the objective of enhancing the potential of transport corridors. -In order to encourage innovation and enhance efficiency in transportation, efforts will be made in collaboration with the private sector.
Transportation and Customs Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It is recommended that favorable conditions for multimodal transportation be created and that cooperation with neighboring countries be increased. -Block train arrangements will be established along the Central Corridor. -The ePermit and eTIR projects are designed to facilitate the digitalization and automation of customs processes in the context of international transportation.
Digitalization and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The implementation of the Digital Silk Road project and the improvement of IT infrastructure are both supported. -A new action plan has been devised in the realms of industry, science, and innovation. -In addition, initiatives such as the Turkic Metaverse and the Turkic States Venture Fund facilitate digital integration.
Health and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The experience will be shared in the following fields: digitalization in health, artificial intelligence, telemedicine, and electronic recording systems. -In addition, environmentally friendly health solutions and the use of green technology will be encouraged, and training programs for vulnerable groups will be supported.
Food Security and Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A system of agricultural insurance will be established on a national scale. -In order to enhance the resilience of farmers and to reinforce the agricultural sector, projects that foster resilience and reports that reinforce resilience in the agricultural sector will be supported.
Tourism and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural integration will be facilitated through the implementation of joint tourism initiatives, including the introduction of a unified museum card and the establishment of a union of Turkic ski resorts. -Jalalabad was designated the "Tourism Capital of the Turkic World."
Environment and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In terms of project prioritization, renewable energy, sustainable water management, and nature conservation initiatives were accorded the highest level of importance. -In addition, collaborative initiatives such as the OTS Drought Prevention Institute were provided with support in order to mitigate the impact of drought and environmental threats.

Source: <https://www.turkicstates.org/assets/pdf/haberler/biskek-bildirisi-3476-290.pdf>



The OTS reached a series of resolutions with the objective of intensifying collaboration in the realms of culture, society, and education, with the intention of fortifying connections between the peoples. While prioritizing the preservation of Turkish culture and the formulation of strategies for the advancement of diaspora affairs, the OTS underscored the significance of Turkish-Islamic solidarity and facilitated collaboration among Muslim religious institutions. In addition, internship programs for diaspora experts and the provision of supplementary quotas for young people within the framework of Türkiye Scholarships were also endorsed in alignment with these objectives. In this context, the Azerbaijani city of Lankaran was designated as the "2024 Youth Capital of the [Turkic World](#)."

In recognition of the capacity of cultural events to foster greater understanding and connection between peoples, the OTS has elected to extend its support to the "Thousand Breaths One Voice" Theater Festival, scheduled to take place in Konya, Türkiye in 2025, and the 6th World Nomad Games, which is set to occur in Kyrgyzstan in 2026. The OTS expressed its support for the organisation of a conference on the Jadid movement in Tashkent and events commemorating the 300th anniversary of the birth of Turkmen poet Magtumguly Pyragy. Additionally, the summit addressed the critical issues of irregular migration and the advancement of collaborative approaches to family [policies](#).

The recent OTS summit placed particular emphasis on the necessity of enhancing collaboration with TURKPA, TURKSOY, the Turkic Academy, and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation. Notable outcomes included the designation of Turkmenistan's Anev as the 2024 Cultural Capital of the Turkic World, the reinforcement of the Turkic Investment Fund's role in economic integration, and the implementation of initiatives aimed at safeguarding Turkic cultural heritage, including the establishment of a Turkic World Film Fund. Additionally, UNESCO will commemorate the 950th anniversary of [Divânu Lugâti't-Türk](#).

At the international level, members emphasised the importance of zero-waste initiatives, climate action and the advancement of OTS observer status in organisations such as the UN and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. Plans were formulated to enhance collaboration with the FAO, WHO, and ICESCO in domains such as health, food safety, and cultural heritage [preservation](#).

The next summits were scheduled to take place in Azerbaijan and Hungary in 2025, with Kyrgyzstan assuming the role of Chair for the forthcoming [period](#).

Economic Partnership and Cooperation

The OTS has as its primary objective the strengthening of regional development and global trade relations, with a particular focus on economic cooperation among member countries. Economic cooperation constitutes the bedrock of the OTS, with a multitude of mechanisms and initiatives currently under development with the objective of enhancing trade, increasing investment volumes, and promoting the



development of SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) among member [countries](#).

The objective of OTS is to facilitate the effective utilisation of economic capacity amongst its members through the implementation of targeted projects:

The Turkish Investment Fund (TIF): is a financial mechanism established by the Turkish governments with the objective of facilitating investment opportunities among member countries, supporting entrepreneurship, and providing financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This fund represents the inaugural joint financial mechanism with the objective of enhancing investment prospects among member countries, fostering entrepreneurship, and facilitating financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The fund was established at the Samarkand Summit with the objective of accelerating economic and social development in member [countries](#).

Turkish Trade Houses: is a relatively recent phenomenon, yet it has already attracted considerable attention within the international business community. In accordance with the Azerbaijani model, the Turkish Trade Houses will serve as a conduit for augmenting trade volume among OTS countries, streamlining exports, and expanding the market share of [member countries](#).

The Common Economic Space (CES) and the Turkestan Regional Economic Area (TURANSEZ): represent two distinct yet interrelated initiatives. The CES, which encompasses the entire Eurasian continent, is designed to facilitate economic integration among member countries. In contrast, the TURANSEZ, which is planned to be established in the Turkestan region of Kazakhstan, is a more narrowly focused regional economic area. Its objective is to deepen economic integration among member [countries](#).

The OTS regularly convenes ministerial and working group meetings, which are attended by ministers of economy and trade from member [countries](#). In 2022, the Trade Facilitation Strategy, which was adopted at the [Samarkand Summit](#), includes significant measures designed to enhance trade between member countries and align trade and customs procedures. Furthermore, multilateral agreements such as the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement on Services and Investments are designed to facilitate closer cooperation in the digital economy and trade.

In 2023, [the Turkic World Business Forum](#) was held in Istanbul, bringing together hundreds of business professionals with the objective of promoting economic integration and creating new opportunities for cooperation. Such events contribute to economic growth by facilitating regional development and business interaction.

In order to provide support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), research and development ([R&D](#)) and innovation support programs are organized in cooperation with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye



([TUBITAK](#)) and the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye ([KOSGEB](#)). Information is shared among member countries. The objective of the R&D and Innovation Support Program is to enhance the capacity for innovation among OTS member countries, while simultaneously providing technological and industrial assistance. The program is based on the model of TEKMER, Türkiye's technology development center, and aims to facilitate the industrialization processes of member countries through the creation of added value.

In light of the accelerated proliferation of the digital economy, joint initiatives to cultivate e-commerce ecosystems and digital infrastructure to facilitate digital trade among OTS member countries are gaining prominence. To illustrate, the "Turkish Green Finance Council" and the "Digital Economy Partnership Agreement" seek to enhance sustainable development and facilitate environmentally conscious financing for member countries.

The total area of the [OTS](#) exceeds 4.8 million square kilometers, while the population of member and observer countries is 173.8 million. [By 2022](#), the aggregate gross domestic product (GDP) of these countries is estimated to be approximately USD 1.5 trillion. The economic strength of the OTS accounts for 2.4% of the global trade volume. The OTS's economic growth strategy is centered on the objective of increasing the volume of trade and encouraging investments among member countries.

In this context, the economic potential of the Organization of Turkic States is oriented towards the creation of additional economic opportunities through the reinforcement of cooperation among member countries. The OTS's economic projects and integration efforts are designed to bolster growth among member countries, advance sustainable development, and enhance the organization's economic standing on the global stage.

Counclusion

Following the name change in 2021, the Organization of Turkic States has concentrated its efforts on becoming a regional power, taking significant steps in key areas such as economic integration, energy cooperation, and increasing trade among member states. In this process, global issues such as the digital economy, environmental concerns, and security have also emerged as pivotal focal points of regional cooperation.

The economic strategies of the OTS are designed to reinforce integration through the establishment of unified markets, the reduction of trade restrictions, and the harmonization of economic policies. In recent years, the volume of trade has increased in conjunction with the growth of OTS economic cooperation activities. Nevertheless, research indicates that member countries continue to engage in trade with one another to a limited extent, demonstrating a preference for forming



partnerships with other countries in foreign trade. In order to overcome this situation, the OTS is promoting regional integration through the implementation of projects such as the Turkish Investment Fund and the establishment of Special Economic Zones. In accordance with the OTS's economic development policies, the 2040 Vision Document places an emphasis on the digital economy, the green economy, and technology transformation.

The implementation of measures such as the reduction of trade barriers, the expansion of investment opportunities, and the harmonization of economic policies in accordance with the OTS Vision 2040 will facilitate the long-term growth and strengthening of the organization as a significant economic actor within the region. The prospect of enhanced trade and investment collaboration in the future will serve to reinforce economic ties among the OTS member states, thereby establishing a regional economic solidarity platform. In this regard, the OTS is emerging as a significant actor in the support of the collective economic interests of Turkic states and the consolidation of their position within the global economy.