

REGIONAL INTERNATIONALIZATION OF TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION:  
TURKEY'S HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES TOWARDS  
KOSOVO, MACEDONIA AND BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **REGIONAL INTERNATIONALIZATION OF TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION: TURKEY'S HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES TOWARDS KOSOVO, MACEDONIA AND BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

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This study aimed to investigate the scope of the educational relations between Turkey and the three Balkan countries, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to identify the expectations of these countries from Turkey and the rationales behind Turkey's practices realized towards these countries in a comparative perspective. In this regard, cross-border higher educational activities of Turkey were investigated under the concept of internationalization. The study was designed as a general qualitative study. Interviews, fieldnotes and document analysis were implemented as data collection techniques. Purposeful sampling was used for the selection of the participants. A total of 53 participants were interviewed from government, non-government and academic institutions.

In this context, the study displayed the level of cooperation between Turkey and the countries concerned as insufficient and the educational relations to be in slow progress. In addition, it was identified that the expectations were mainly related to the aspects of internationalization (mutual recognition of the education systems, facilitating the student mobility etc.). Finally, analysis of the data revealed that the higher education policies of Turkey were not pioneered by academic rationales only, but also were motivated by various political, economic and social/cultural rationales. Based on these findings, it is concluded that Turkey and these countries build their internationalization policy and practices on different rationales, they attribute different meanings to their relationships in education.

Keywords: qualitative study, internationalization in higher education, rationales of internationalization, Balkan countries

## ÖZ

### **TÜRK YÜKSEKÖĞRETİMİN BÖLGESEL ULUSLARARASILAŞMASI: TÜRKİYE'NİN KOSOVA, MAKEDONYA VE BOSNA HERSEK'E YÖNELİK YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM POLİTİKALARI**

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Bu çalışma, Türkiye ve üç Balkan ülkesi olan Kosova, Makedonya ve Bosna Hersek arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerin kapsamını araştırmayı, bu ülkelerin Türkiye'den beklentilerini ve Türkiye'nin bu ülkelere yönelik gerçekleştirdiği uygulamalarının ardındaki gerekçeleri karşılaştırmalı bir bakış açısıyla belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu bağlamda, Türkiye'nin sınır ötesi yükseköğretim faaliyetleri, uluslararasılaşma kavramı altında incelemeye alınmıştır. Çalışma genel nitel çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Veri toplamak amacıyla mülakatlar ve saha ziyaretleri gerçekleştirilmiş ve doküman analizi uygulanmıştır. Katılımcıların seçimini teminen “amaçlı örneklem” yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Devlet kurumları, sivil toplum örgütleri ile üniversite öğretim üyelerinden oluşan toplam 53 kişi ile görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmada, Türkiye ile ilgili ülkeler arasındaki işbirliği seviyesinin yetersiz olduğu ve eğitim ilişkilerinin yavaş ilerlediği belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca, bu ülkelerin Türkiye'den beklentilerinin genellikle uluslararasılaşmanın boyutları (karşılıklı eğitim sistemlerinin tanınması, öğrenci hareketliliğinin kolaylaştırılması gibi) ile ilgili olduğu görülmüştür. Son olarak, çalışmada elde edilen verilerin analizi, Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik yükseköğretim alanındaki faaliyetlerinde sadece akademik gerekçelerin öne çıkmadığı, çeşitli siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal ve kültürel gerekçelerin de etkili olduğunu açığa çıkarmıştır. Bu bulgulara dayanılarak şu sonuca varılmıştır, Türkiye ve Balkan ülkeleri uluslararasılaşma politikalarını ve uygulamalarını farklı gerekçelerle oluşturmakta ve eğitim alanındaki ilişkilerine farklı anlamlar yüklemekteler.

Anahtar kelimeler: nitel çalışma, yükseköğretimde uluslararasılaşma, uluslararasılaşma gerekçeleri, Balkan ülkeleri.

I dedicate this work to my son Özgür

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM .....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
ÖZ .....	v
DEDICATION .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	xv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xx
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	xxi
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.1.1 Internationalization in Higher Education .....	5
1.1.2 Internationalization of Higher Education of Turkey .....	6
1.1.3 Regionalization in Higher Education .....	11
1.1.3.1 Regionalization Schemes for Turkey .....	14
1.2 Purpose of the Study .....	17
1.3 Significance of the Study .....	19
1.4 Definitions of Terms .....	20
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	22
2.1 The concept of Internationalization .....	22
2.1.1 Definitions of Internationalization in Higher Education .....	23
2.1.2 Rationales of Internationalization .....	24
2.1.3 Benefits vs. Risk of the Internationalization .....	27
2.1.4 The Role of Foreign Language in Internationalization .....	27
2.2 Recent Developments in the Balkans .....	29
2.2.1 Republic of Kosovo .....	34
2.2.2 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina .....	37
2.2.3 Republic of Macedonia .....	39
2.3 Islamic Higher Education in the Balkans .....	42
3. METHOD .....	45

3.1 Design of the Study .....	45
3.2 Research Questions .....	45
3.3 Research Context .....	46
3.4 Sampling and Participants .....	47
3.5 Data Collection Instruments .....	49
3.5.1 Interview Schedules .....	51
3.5.2 Document Reviews (Second Source of Data) .....	52
3.5.3 Fieldnotes .....	53
3.6 Data Collection Procedures .....	54
3.6.1 Data Collection in Kosovo .....	58
3.6.2 Data Collection in Macedonia .....	62
3.6.3 Data Collection in Bosnia and Herzegovina .....	65
3.6.4 Data Collection in Turkey .....	68
3.7 Data Analysis Procedures .....	70
3.8 Trustworthiness .....	72
3.8.1 Researcher Role and Bias .....	74
3.8.2 Ethical Considerations .....	76
3.9. Delimitations and Limitations of the Study .....	77
3.9.1 Delimitations .....	77
3.9.2 Limitations .....	78
4. RESULTS .....	79
4.1 Republic of Kosovo .....	79
4.1.1 The Current State of the Relations between Turkey and Kosovo .....	79
4.1.1.1 Opinions of Kosovar Government Officials .....	79
4.1.1.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	86
4.1.1.3 Opinions of the Kosovar Association Representatives .....	93
4.1.1.4 Opinions of the Turkish Government Officials in Kosovo .....	94
4.1.2 The Practices Undertaken by Turkey Towards Kosovo .....	99
4.1.2.1 Opinions of the Kosovo's Governmental Officials .....	99
4.1.2.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	103
4.1.2.3 Opinions of the Representatives of the Kosovo Associations .....	105
4.1.2.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	107
4.1.3 Rationales behind Turkey's Practices in Higher Education Towards Kosovo .....	110
4.1.3.1 Opinions of the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	110
4.1.3.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	113

4.1.3.3 Opinions of the Kosovar Association Representatives .....	115
4.1.3.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	116
4.1.4 Expectations of the Balkans from Turkey .....	120
4.1.4.1 Opinions of the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	120
4.1.4.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	124
4.1.4.3 Opinion of the Representative of the Associations in Kosovo .....	128
4.1.4.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	129
4.1.5 Practices of Kosovo in Order to Enhance Cooperation with Turkey .....	131
4.1.5.1 Opinions of the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	131
4.1.5.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	133
4.1.5.3 Opinions of the Representative of Kosovar Associations .....	134
4.1.5.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	136
4.1.6 The Rationales behind Balkan Countries' Practices to Realize Cooperation in Higher Education with Turkey .....	137
4.1.6.1 Opinions of the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	137
4.1.6.2 Opinions of the Kosovar Academicians .....	139
4.1.6.3 Opinions of the Representatives of the Kosovar Associations.....	142
4.1.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	144
4.1.7 Discussion Republic of Kosovo (Summary) .....	146
4.2 Republic of Macedonia .....	161
4.2.1 The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and Macedonia in the Field of Higher Education .....	162
4.2.1.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	162
4.2.1.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academicians .....	166
4.2.1.3 Opinions of the Macedonian Association Representatives in Macedonia .....	169
4.2.1.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	172
4.2.1.5 Opinions of the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia .....	174
4.2.1.6 Opinions of the Representative of Turkish Associations in Macedonia .....	178

4.2.2 The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia .....	179
4.2.2.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	179
4.2.2.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academicians .....	182
4.2.2.3 Opinions of the Macedonian Association Representatives in Macedonia .....	184
4.2.2.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	186
4.2.2.5 Opinions of the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia .....	189
4.2.2.6 Opinions of the Representative of Turkish Association in Macedonia (Yunus Emre Cultural Center) .....	191
4.2.3 The Rationales behind Turkey’s Practices Towards Macedonia .....	192
4.2.3.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	192
4.2.3.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academician .....	193
4.2.3.3 Opinions of the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations in Macedonia .....	194
4.2.3.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	195
4.2.3.5 Opinions of the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia .....	197
4.2.3.6 Opinions of the Turkish Associations Officials in Macedonia (Yunus Emre Cultural Center) .....	199
4.2.4 The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in Macedonia from Turkey .....	200
4.2.4.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	200
4.2.4.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academicians .....	202
4.2.4.3 Opinions of the Macedonian Association Representatives in Macedonia .....	203
4.2.4.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia....	205
4.2.5 The Practices Undertaken by Macedonia in Order to Enhance Cooperation in Higher Education with Turkey .....	206
4.2.5.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	206
4.2.5.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academicians .....	207
4.2.5.3 Opinions of the Representatives of the Macedonian	

Associations .....	208
4.2.5.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	208
4.2.6 The Rationales Behind Macedonia’s Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey .....	208
4.2.6.1 Opinions of the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	208
4.2.6.2 Opinions of the Macedonian Academicians .....	210
4.2.6.3 Opinions of the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations .....	213
4.2.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	214
4.2.7 Discussion Republic of Macedonia (Summary) .....	216
4.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) .....	233
4.3.1 The Current State of the Relations between Turkey and BiH .....	234
4.3.1.1 Opinions of BiH Governmental Officials .....	234
4.3.1.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians .....	236
4.3.1.3 Opinions of Turkish Governmental Officials' in BiH .....	237
4.3.1.4 Opinions of Turkish Academicians in BiH .....	240
4.3.1.5 Opinion of the Representative of Turkish Assosiation in BiH (Yunus Emre Cultural Center) .....	244
4.3.2 The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards the BiH .....	244
4.3.2.1 Opinions of BiH's Governmental Officials .....	244
4.3.2.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians .....	246
4.3.2.3 Opinions of Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	247
4.3.2.4 Opinions of Turkish Academicians in BiH .....	251
4.3.2.5 Opinion of the Representative of Turkish Association in BiH (Yunus Emre Cultural Center) .....	253
4.3.3 The Rationales behind Turkey’s Practices toward the BiH .....	254
4.3.3.1 Opinions of BiH Governmental Officials .....	254
4.3.3.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians .....	255
4.3.3.3 Opinions of Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	257
4.3.3.4 Opinions of Turkish Academicians in BiH .....	258

4.3.3.5 Opinion of Turkish Association Representative in BiH (Yunus Emre Cultural Center) .....	261
4.3.4 The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina from Turkey .....	262
4.3.4.1 Opinions of BiH Governmental Officials .....	262
4.3.4.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians.....	263
4.3.4.3 Opinions of Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	264
4.3.4.4 Opinions of Turkish Academicians in BiH .....	265
4.3.5 The Practices Undertaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina in Order to Enhance Cooperation with Turkey .....	267
4.3.5.1 Opinions of BiH Governmental Officials .....	267
4.3.5.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians .....	268
4.3.5.3 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	268
4.3.6 The Rationales Behind Bosnia and Herzegovina' Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey .....	269
4.3.6.1 Opinions of BiH Governmental Officials .....	269
4.3.6.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians.....	269
4.3.6.3 Opinions of the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH.....	271
4.3.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish Academicians in BiH .....	272
4.3.7 Discussion Bosnia and Herzegovina (Summary) .....	273
4.4 Republic of Turkey .....	288
4.4.1. The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and the Balkan Countries .....	288
4.4.1.1 The Opinions of the Governmental Officials .....	288
4.4.1.2 The Opinions of the Academicians .....	291
4.4.1.3 The Opinion of the Representative of the Associations (Türkiye Diyanet Foundation) .....	294
4.4.2 The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan Countries in the Field of Higher Education .....	296
4.4.2.1 The Opinions of the Governmental Officials .....	296
4.4.2.2 The Opinions of the Academicians .....	301
4.4.2.3 The Opinion of the Representative of Association Turkiye Diyanet Foundation) .....	304
4.4.3 The Rationales behind Turkey's Practices towards the Balkan Countries .....	306
4.4.3.1 Opinions of the Governmental Officials .....	306

4.4.3.2 The Opinions of the Academicians .....	311
4.4.3.3 The Opinion of the Representative of the Associations (Türkiye Diyanet Foundation) .....	313
4.4.4 The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in the Balkan Countries from Turkey .....	314
4.4.4.1 The Opinions of the Governmental Officials .....	314
4.4.4.2 The Opinions of the Academicians .....	315
4.4.4.3 The Opinion of the Representative of the Associations (Türkiye Diyanet Foundation) .....	315
4.4.7 Discussion on Republic of Turkey (Summary).....	316
5. DISCUSSION .....	325
5.1 Discussion .....	325
5.2 Implications .....	348
5.3 Recommendations for Future Studies .....	351
REFERENCES .....	353
APPENDICES	
A. MUSLIM POPULATION IN THE BALKAN COUNTRIES .....	365
B. INTERVIEW SCHEDULES/MÜLAKAT REHBERİ .....	366
C. DOCUMENTS COLLECTED AS SECOND SOURCE OF DATA .....	378
D. METU ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL .....	384
E. INFORMED CONSENT FORM .....	385
F. INFORMED CONSENT FORM / GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU.....	387
G. DEBRIEFING FORM .....	389
H. DEBRIEFING FORM / KATILIM SONRASI BİLGİ FORMU .....	390
I. EXAMPLE OF INITIAL CODING AND CATEGORIES .....	391
K. CODING A PAGE FROM A SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	392
L. ILLUSTRATION OF CODING (ASSEMBLED SHEET) .....	394
M. TURKISH SUMMARY .....	396
N. CURRICULUM VITAE .....	420
O. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU .....	421

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLES

Table 3.1 The Number of the Interview Participants According to the Subgroups.....	49
Table 3.2 Data Collection Instrument and Data Sources .....	50
Table 3.3 Timeline for the Overall Research Process .....	56
Table 3.4 Interview Participants and Their Positions in Kosovo .....	59
Table 3.5 Interview Participants and Their Positions in Macedonia .....	62
Table 3.6 Interview Participants and Their Positions in Bosnia and Herzegovina .....	66
Table 3.7 Interview Participants and Their Positions in Turkey .....	69
Table 4.1 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Government Officials ....	80
Table 4.2 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians .....	87
Table 4.3 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Associations.....	93
Table 4.4 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials ...	95
Table 4.5 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar governmental Officials ...	99
Table 4.6 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians .....	103
Table 4.7 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Associations .....	105
Table 4.8 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials ...	107
Table 4.9 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	111
Table 4.10 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians...	114
Table 4.11 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Association Representatives .....	115
Table 4.12 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo .....	116
Table 4.13 Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovar Governmental Officials..	121
Table 4.14 Themes Identified Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovar Academicians .	124
Table 4.15 Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Representatives of Kosovar Associations .....	128
Table 4.16 Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovars from the Point of the Turkish Governmental Officials .....	129
Table 4.17 Themes Emphasized by Kosovar Governmental Officials Regarding the Practices .....	131

Table 4.18 Theme Identified by Kosovar Academicians on Enhancing the Cooperation with Turkey .....	133
Table 4.19 Theme Identified by the Representatives of Kosovar Associations .....	135
Table 4.20 Theme Identified by the Turkish Governmental Officials .....	136
Table 4.21 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Governmental Officials .....	137
Table 4.22 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians...	140
Table 4.23 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Representatives of the Kosovar Associations .....	142
Table 4.24 The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials .....	144
Table 4.25 Themes Presented by Groups .....	146
Table 4.26 Themes Presented by Groups .....	151
Table 4.27 Rationales Emerged in the Interviews by Groups .....	153
Table 4.28 Themes Emerged Regarding the Expectations of Different Groups .....	155
Table 4.29 Themes Emerged Regarding the Practices Undertaken by Different Groups for Enhancing the Cooperation with Turkey.....	157
Table 4.30 Rationales Behind Balkan Countries' Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey .....	159
Table 4.31 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Government Officials .....	162
Table 4.32 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Academicians .....	166
Table 4.33 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with Representatives of the Macedonian Associations .....	170
Table 4.34 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	172
Table 4.35 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia .....	175
Table 4.36 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Rresentative of the Turkish Association in Macedonia .....	178
Table 4.37 Themes Emerged in the interview with the Macedonian Governmental Officials.....	179
Table 4.38 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Academicians .....	182
Table 4.39 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations .....	185
Table 4.40 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials...	187

Table 4.41 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Academicians .....	189
Table 4.42 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association .....	191
Table 4.43 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	192
Table 4.44 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians .....	193
Table 4.45 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representatives of the Macedonian Association .....	194
Table 4.46 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	195
Table 4.47 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia .....	198
Table 4.48 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association in Macedonia .....	199
Table 4.49 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	200
Table 4.50 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians .....	202
Table 4.51 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations .....	204
Table 4.52 Theme emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials.....	205
Table 4.53 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	206
Table 4.54 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians .....	207
Table 4.55 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials .....	208
Table 4.56 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians .....	210
Table 4.57 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations .....	213
Table 4.58 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia .....	214
Table 4.59 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	217
Table 4.60 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	222
Table 4.61 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	225
Table 4.62 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	227
Table 4.63 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	229
Table 4.64 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	230

Table 4.65 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials of BiH...	234
Table 4.66 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian academicians.....	236
Table 4.67 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	237
Table 4.68 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians .....	241
Table 4.69 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association in BiH .....	244
Table 4.70 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials...	245
Table 4.71 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians.....	246
Table 4.72 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	248
Table 4.73 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH.....	251
Table 4.74 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association in BiH .....	253
Table 4.75 Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials...	255
Table 4.76 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians .....	256
Table 4.77 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH .....	257
Table 4.78 Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with Turkish Academicians .....	259
Table 4.79 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association .....	261
Table 4.80 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials ...	262
Table 4.81 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians .....	263
Table 4.82 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials.....	265
Table 4.83 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with Turkish Academicians .....	266
Table 4.84 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Governmental Officials .....	267
Table 4.85 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Academicians .....	268
Table 4.86 Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH.....	268
Table 4.87 Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the BiH Governmental Officials.	269
Table 4.88 Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Academicians .....	270
Table 4.89 Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials .....	271
Table 4.90 Rationale Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH.	272
Table 4.91 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	274
Table 4.92 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	278
Table 4.93 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	281

Table 4.94 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	284
Table 4.95 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	285
Table 4.96 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	286
Table 4.97 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials .....	289
Table 4.98 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Academicians .....	292
Table 4.99 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association .....	294
Table 4.100 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Governmental Officials .....	297
Table 4.101 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Academicians .....	302
Table 4.102 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Representative of Turkish Association .....	304
Table 4.103 Themes Identified in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials .....	307
Table 4.104 Themes Identified in the Interviews with the Academicians .....	311
Table 4.105 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Association .....	313
Table 4.106 Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials.....	314
Table 4.107 Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Academicians .....	315
Table 4.108 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	317
Table 4.109 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	319
Table 4.110 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	321
Table 4.111 Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups .....	324

## LIST OF FIGURES

### FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Example of Initial Coding and Categories .....	391
Figure 3.2 Coding a Page from a Sample Interview Transcript .....	392
Figure 3.3 Illustration of Coding (Assembled Sheet) .....	394

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEKSAM	Abdülhakim Hikmet Doğan Education, Culture and Art Center
BALTAM	Balkan Turcology Research Center (Balkan Araştırmaları Merkezi)
BiH	Abbreviation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BLK	Balkans
BÖP	Büyük Öğrenci Projesi (Great Student Project)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
HE	Higher Education
HEC	Higher Educational Council
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DSL	Diploma Supplement Label
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENKA	Construction & Industry Co. Inc
ENQA	European Network of the Quality Assurance Agencies
EU	European Union
EUA	European Union of Accreditation
EUFOR	European Union Force
EULEX	The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EUPOL	European Union Police Mission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GSP	Great Student Project
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IRCICA	Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture
IUS	International University in Sarajevo
KEDP	Kosovo Educator Development Program
KDTP	Kosovo Democratic Turkish Party
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KS	Abbreviation of the Republic of Kosovo
KTTO	Kosovo Turkey Chamber of Commerce (Kosova Türkiye Ticaret Odası)
MATUSITEB	Union of Turkish NGO's in Republic of Macedonia
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

METU	Middle East Technical University
MEB	Ministry of National Education
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MK	Abbreviation of the Republic of Macedonia
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHR	Office of the Higher Representative
OSCE	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
ÖSS	Student Selection Examination
ÖSYM	Assessment, Selection and Placement Center
SEEU	South Eastern European University
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SWOT	Strong Weak Opportunities Threats
TCS	The exam for Turkish Republics and Relative Communities
THY	Turkish Airlines
TIKA	Turkish International and Development Agency
TOBB	The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
TÖMER	Turkish Teaching Center
TR	Abbreviation of the Republic of Turkey
TUBITAK	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey
TÜMED	Turkey Alumni Association
TURKSOY	Joint Administration of Turkic Culture and Art
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USA	United States
USAID	United States Agency of International Development
YÖK	Higher Education Council
YÖS	Examination for Foreign Students
YTGB	Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

**“Education is the most powerful weapon  
which you can use to change the world.”**

Nelson Mandela  
Former president of South Africa,  
**1993 Nobel Peace Prize laureate**

The study aimed to investigate educational policies of Turkey towards the Balkan countries, namely Republic of Kosovo (henceforth referred to as Kosovo and abbreviated as KS), Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (henceforth referred to as Bosnia and abbreviated as BiH) and Republic of Macedonia (due to name dispute and objection of Greece, United Nations (UN) recognized Macedonia in April 1993 (UN web site, 2014) under the name of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), while Turkey recognizes this country by its constitutional name the Republic of Macedonia (hence hereafter referred to as Macedonia and abbreviated as MK) (Özlem, 2013; Gangloff, 2001).

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Social, economic and political changes at the end of 1980s (e.g., the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of socialist regimes in Europe, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union) caused ethnic conflicts and extreme nationalist movements. Several scholars argued that the Balkan nations were the ones to be most affected by these developments (e.g., Akman, 2006; Demirtaş 2013; Ramet, 2013; Simic, 2013). In addition, these scholars argued that these developments directly threatened the stability of the Balkan Peninsula and transformed the region into a very fragile structure. In the aftermath of these radical political developments, a disintegration process took place in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and new states began to emerge in the region (Çağ, 2012). In 1990s, Turkey's interest towards the Balkans gradually increased in the course of the formation of these new states following the disintegration of the SFRY (Türbedar, 2011). Turkey was among the first countries to recognize these newly independent states.

The Balkans constitute a great importance for Turkey for several reasons. First, as the successor of the Ottoman Empire that reigned in the Balkans for about four centuries, Turkey

shares a longstanding common history with these nations and have close ethnic, sociocultural and religious ties in the region (Alp, 2004; Türbedar, 2011).

Second, the presence of migrants from the Balkans who at one time or another, migrated to Turkey for various reasons forms another reason for Turkey's interest in the Balkans. After the Balkan Wars in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, local people even from different ethnic or religious backgrounds developed this perception that Turkey was a safe harbor during any political, social and economic turmoil (Gangloff, 2001). The tendency to see Turkey as a safe harbor in the face of political, economic and social turmoil continued during the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well.

Third, in relation to the second reason, a great number of Turkish citizens have had relatives and they have maintained their contact with the people in the region. Perceiving Turkey as a safe destination for refugees was prevalent during the recent conflicts as well. The conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo during the 1990s caused a massive humanitarian emergency. The Turkish government naturally did not remain indifferent to the pressure and demands of these masses at that time (Sancaktar, 2010). For example, during the Bosnian crisis, Turkey advocated for an international military intervention, in which it later participated (Akman, 2006; Bechev, 2012).

In addition, the presence of Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkans is another core reason which compels Turkey to closely follow the developments in the Balkan region (Türbedar, 2011). This also accounts for the intensive and lively relations and connections between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Turkish and Muslim communities living in the Balkans are extremely sentimental about their connection with Turkey. In this context, especially during crises, conflicts and the times of oppression, Turkey displays its interest in these communities to the greatest extent (Akman, 2006).

Fourth, Turkey attaches great importance to the existing political and economic relations with the Balkan countries as well. As Türbedar (2011) stated, "since the beginning of the 1990s, Turkish foreign policy is showing increased efforts for improving relations with all Balkan countries" (p.155) by engaging in many political and economic formations in the region. For example, Turkey is a founding member of the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP), which was established in 1996 as a forum for diplomatic and political dialogue (Bechev, 2012). The main priorities among the objectives of this forum is regional cooperation in Southeast Europe and promoting the integration of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures (Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South East Europe official web site, 2014; Turkish MFA, 2014). As Bechev (2012) stated "the SEECP established the foundations of multilateralism and functional cooperation in the Balkans and further institutionalized Turkey's prominent role in regional diplomacy" (p. 136).

Finally, the Balkan region has a strategic geopolitical location. It is a gateway to European and Western nations with whom Turkey maintains intensive economic and political relations. Turkey is sensitive to instability in the Balkans, because it would instantly raise concerns for the fate of Turkish minorities in the region and would cause fear that a conflict might block Turkey's physical access to Europe (Bilman, 1998).

Radical changes following the fall of communist regimes caused new economic and political problems and laid the foundations of civil wars that erupted in 1990s. Some of these countries like Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo were deeply affected by these civil wars. Lack of security severely damaged the basis of their economic activity (Bezemer, 2006).

In this context, Turkey following an active policy towards the region, has attached a special importance to investing in the Balkans and has been assisting these countries in every domain. Turkey has begun to assume a pivotal role in the settlement of the still unresolved disputes between the countries in the region, specifically in Bosnia and Kosovo (Ruma, 2010; Sancaktar, 2010). For example, Turkey's military presence in the region was established through international initiatives located in Bosnia and Kosovo in the form of military and security staff contributions to UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo), EULEX (The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo) and EUPOL (European Union Police Mission) and military mission to KFOR (Kosovo Force) and EUFOR (European Union Force) (Ekinici, 2013; Official website of the Turkish MFA, 2014). Besides reciprocated high level visits, Turkey also signed bilateral agreements in various areas such as infrastructure, transport, trade, tourism, culture and education in order to foster and strengthen Turkey's economic, historical and cultural relations with the region (Bechev, 2012; Ekinici, 2013). However, the growing role of Turkish policy in the region has brought to mind the question regarding “the true intentions” of Turkey with the Balkan countries. The debate on the alleged revival of imperial aspirations, or the so-called neo-Ottomanism on the part of Turkey, created concerns and reactions in some circles, questioning whether Turkey carries ambitions to restore its former power in the region and recover the Ottoman nostalgia (Somun, 2011; Türbedar, 2011). It is said that even some expressions in the speeches of the current Turkish Foreign Minister, Turkish Prime Minister and Turkish President during high level visits to the countries of the region caused uneasiness and reinforced these concerns (Somun, 2011; Türbedar, 2011; Bechev, 2012). Türbedar (2011) stated that “there were even regional nationalistic circles who developed rhetoric of “neo-Ottomanism” with the arguments that Turkish involvement in the Balkans is of an ideological nature and that it has historical and religious roots” (p.140).

During the literature review, the researcher was not able to come across a concise and clear definition of neo-Ottomanism. Furthermore, the researcher was also not able to come

across consensus among academicians as to whether the relevant chapters in the history of Turkish foreign policy should be termed neo-Ottomanism. Alternative terms, such as re-Ottomanization and re-Islamization were also offered (Constantinides, 2002; p.392-5). Whatever one might call this specific foreign policy objective, there is still dispute as to when it really started. Some claim that the concept has been around for a very long time, even in the early Republican years (Constantinides, 2002; p. 392). Yet others claim that it was coined for the first time in 1990's during Turgut Özal's presidency (Laçiner, 2003; Sözen, 2010; Uzgel & Yaramış, 2010; Ünsal, 2013). In retrospect, the concept of Ottomanism was first introduced by the Ottoman government as a policy to create an “Ottoman identity” across all ethnic and religious elements within the Empire in order to prevent its breakup (Ünsal, 2013; p.196). As to the neo-Ottomanism many columnists and writers have made different comments (Boravali, 1998). Laçiner (2003) argued that,

“despite its name, neo-Ottomanism is not an aggressive foreign policy.... it looks to the imperial Ottoman past but it is a product of a very different economic and social structure and it is a reaction to the traditional isolationist foreign policy, ... neo-Ottomanism does not suggest a renewed interest in the former territories and people of Ottoman Empire ...., but it aimed at a certain organic geopolitical, cultural and economic relationship that had been absent during the Cold War and the early Republican years could re-emerge in the new suitable international and regional environment (p.199).

Further, he argued that, Turgut Özal brought a new approach to Turkish foreign policy and “the economic, social and cultural tools became more important in the foreign policy” (p.202). Turgut Özal indeed showed the willpower to make an expansion into Eurasia at large and the former Ottoman territories, but this remained only at the rhetorical level (Tüysüzoğlu, 2013). The discussions on neo-Ottomanism have been intensified also when Justice and Development Party (AK Party) came to power in 2002 (Sözen, 2010; Ünsal, 2013, p.197). Ahmet Davutoglu's book called “Strategic Depth” and certain speeches of government officials during the high level visits were effective on this matter (Ünsal, 2013).

In response to the neo-Ottomanist discussions mentioned above, Turkish authorities repeatedly expressed that the concerns for neo-Ottomanist ambitions of Turkey are unfounded (Ekinçi, 2013). Ruma (2010) in his evaluation of Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans also argued that “in the economic sense, what can be achieved through neo-Ottomanist policy can be important for Turkey, but Turkey is still far from being a dominant economic power in the region”. He further stated that “the discussion on neo-Ottomanism seems groundless, for there is neither a demand for this type of outreach by the Turks/Muslims in the Balkans or by Turkish society, nor a concrete base for the implementation of such a policy” (p.140). Apart from these concerns, there is also appreciation for Turkey's recent active policy and involvement in the region. For example, Bechev (2012) in his article stated that “Ankara’s

mediation between Serbia and the Bosniak leadership in Sarajevo has been applauded as a positive contribution to stability and reconciliation” (p.132). He also denoted a certain change in Turkish foreign policy upon the coming to power of the Justice and Development Party, by saying that the Justice and Development Party leadership caused a revival in the relations between Turkey and the countries in the region. Bechev further stated that the integration of a number of Balkan countries with the EU was another reason for the improved relations between Turkey and Southeast Europe. He argued that the accelerated EU accession negotiations of a number of Balkan countries have provided a strong incentive for Turkey to strengthen its links with the region. As expressed in the official statements mutual respect for independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs forms the ground of developing intensive bilateral relations and communication between Turkey and the Balkans (Turkish MFA, 2014). In this framework, there is a tendency between these countries and Turkey to build ties in every sphere of life including education. Needless to say, these nations view Turkey as an economic and political role model and have certain expectations from Turkey.

This study focuses on three Balkan countries located in Southeastern Europe namely Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo, where the majority of Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkans are living. As Bezemer (2006, p.13) indicated these countries are considered as “countries in transition,” or “countries supposed to be in transition from socialism to capitalism”, where “transition implied the dismantling of this socialist system and a move towards a market economy.”

The phenomenon covered in this study is related to the international dimension of educational policy development. Therefore cross-border educational activities undertaken by Turkey regarding higher education were investigated under the framework of internationalization of (higher) education, which forms the theoretical framework of this study. Knight (2004) examined the concept of internationalization in the context of the higher education and described it in a very broad meaning as the process of integrating an international dimension into the research, teaching and community services roles of higher education.

Since internationalization in higher education forms the theoretical framework of this study it is of use to explain in detail the meaning of this concept from different points of view.

### **1.1.1 Internationalization in Higher Education**

Many scholars developed different definitions of internationalization focusing on different levels and functions of education. According to Yang (2003) the term “internationalization refers to the reciprocal exchange of people, ideas, goods, and services

between two or more nations or cultures” (p.288), while Van der Wende (1997) described internationalization as “a systematic, sustained effort aimed at making higher education (more) responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labor markets” (p. 19). The most comprehensive definition of internationalization was advanced by Knight (2004). She stated that internationalization refers to “the process of integrating an international and inter-cultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of higher education” (p. 9). This definition suggests that the concept of internationalization in higher education covers a variety of practices. These practices, expressed by Knight (2008) can be listed as academic mobility for students and teachers, international networks, partnerships and projects, new international academic programs and research initiatives, delivery of education to other countries through new arrangements such as branch campuses or franchises using a variety of face-to face and distance techniques, inclusion of an international inter-cultural and or global dimension into the curriculum and teaching learning process improvement of national or world ranking of their institution and to recruit the best and brightest of international students and scholars. The explanations above help to define the variety of higher education practices to be covered in this study. These practices are equally valid for Turkey as well.

### **1.1.2 Internationalization of Higher Education in Turkey**

In recent years, Turkey's higher education internationalization has started to be articulated very frequently. Although it is not common to come across many studies published on this issue, there has been a few. Generally accepted as an exclusive concept for the developed countries, internationalization can be regarded as a novelty for a developing country like Turkey.

Kondakci (2010) described “Turkey's higher education internationalization as a distinctive process” (p.52). He defined four major factors that are contributing to Turkey's distinctive position in internationalization of higher education: first, “the geopolitical position of Turkey, one of the important factors defining its role in internationalization, being a natural bridge between East and West, a gateway for neighbors seeking access to advanced industrialized European economies, ...Turkey’s political atmosphere ... attracting foreign students and institutions; second, “the capacity and diversity of Turkey’s higher education system, specifying that most of the universities are established according to Anglo-Saxon type system”; third, “Turkey's historical and cultural characteristics, which make it attractive especially for the students from the Balkans, Caucasia, Central Asia and Middle East”; and fourth, “Turkey’s macro-economic performance, its engagement to Western economy which attracted foreign students who are hoping to find employment opportunities in Turkey and as

well creating an opportunity to the foreign institutions for collaboration with Turkish educational higher institutions” (p.53). In addition to the major factors contributing to Turkey's higher education internationalization, he identified three main features of Turkey’s higher education internationalization: first, in terms of student mobility he specifies Turkey generally as a sending country, although the slight increase of inbound students since 2000. The same feature of Turkey being a sending country was defined in the work of Akar (2010) also. As a second feature Kondakci emphasized the support given by the government to the higher education institutions for their efforts of establishment of partnerships or joint programs. To illustrate, there were a broad range of actors supporting both domestic and overseas educational opportunities such as the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education Council, TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) and higher education institutions in Turkey. A number of Ministries such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and the Ministry of Economy of Turkey have their own regulations on study abroad scholarship opportunities for their staff. In addition, the implementation of Faculty Development Program (OYP) contributed to meeting the needs regarding faculty shortages in the educational institutions (Akar, 2010). As the third characteristic, Kondakci underlined the active role of the government in the internationalization process (development of scholarship policy, students exchange etc.). For example, Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities and Turkish National Agency under the Center for EU Education and Youth Programs within the Ministry for European Union Affairs are some of the competent national authorities in Turkey for the development of scholarship and student exchange programs.

Study abroad programs can be cited as another practice of the internationalization of higher education. In order to increase student mobility, Turkey began to participate as a full member in student exchange programs of the European Union such as Erasmus, Socrates, Youth and Leonardo da Vinci as of 2004-2005 academic year (Arslan, 2013). Turkey demonstrates a successful performance in participating in these programs. Another newly implemented student exchange program in Turkey is Mevlana students and academic exchange program sponsored by Higher Education Council of Turkey (YÖK, 2014). According to the announcement made by Higher Education Council of Turkey, all higher education institutions throughout the world have the right to apply for Mevlana exchange program except the higher education institutions of EU countries which are benefiting from the Erasmus program (European Union student exchanges program). Through the Mevlana program, students are able to study abroad for one or two terms and academicians are able to give lectures abroad from one week to three months (YÖK, 2014).

It is also worth mentioning that Turkey has recently made significant progress in its higher education internationalization. According to Akar (2010), one of the significant reasons

for these developments is “Turkey's efforts to fulfill the criteria for EU membership”, which had found reflection on educational policy (p.452). She drew attention to the reforms undertaken by educational institutions in line with the Bologna Declaration of 1999. This is very similar to the point that Crosier and Parveva (2013) made by stating that “Bologna Process stands out as a highly significant reform that has triggered a chain of national-level reforms in higher education” (p.10). They defined the main intentions of the Bologna Declaration, implemented nowadays in 47 countries, as follows:

1. to adopt a system of easily readable and comparable degrees,
2. to implement a system based essentially on two main cycles,
3. to establish a system of credits (such as ECTS),
4. to support the mobility of students, researchers, and administrative staff,
5. to promote European cooperation in quality assurance,
6. to promote the European dimensions in higher education (in terms of curricular development and inter-institutional cooperation) (p. 23).

Objectives introduced in the 2001 Prague Communiqué (Terry, 2008) as:

1. lifelong learning
  2. the partnership of higher education institutions and students
  3. promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA);
- and objective introduced in the 2003 Berlin Communiqué as

4. doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA) (p.116)

It is evident that one of the objectives of the Bologna Process is to promote student mobility. For this purpose, European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was developed by the EU to facilitate student mobility, and to guarantee the transfer of credits earned during study abroad trips. Having signed the Bologna Declaration, Turkey has been a full member of the Bologna Process since May 2001 (YÖK, 2014). Special focus was given by many universities in Turkey on how to adapt their credit and grading systems to ECTS principles. The Higher Education Council of Turkey announced for the year 2013 that among 25 applications evaluated by the European Commission 15 Turkish universities have been entitled to “ECTS Label” and 29 Turkish universities out of 90 higher education institutions were awarded with a Diploma Supplement Label (DSL) (YÖK, 2014). DSL is a document attached to higher education, “containing a description of the nature, level, context, content, and status of the studies completed by the individual holding the original diploma” (Grosier & Parveva, 2013, p.39).

Turkey has recently invested intensively in its higher education. As a result of these investments, the number of universities in Turkey increased to 179 as of year 2013. This number includes 109 state universities and 70 Foundation universities. By this way the access to higher education also increased. It is very important to note the fact that there are several flagship universities in the country and their quality has been recognized in international rankings. For example, according to the performance indicators of the universities across the world for the academic year 2012-2013, the Times Higher Education University Rankings ranked Middle East Technical University (METU) among 201-225, Ihsan Dogramaci Bilkent University and Koc University among 225-250 and Bogazici University and Istanbul Technical University among 276-300 tiers in the world (THE World University Rankings, 2014). These flagship universities are making a significant contribution to the positive perception of the academic programs. A review of the official web sites of Turkish universities reveals that many universities in Turkey have international offices in charge of providing coordination and advisory support to foreign students and for monitoring the different extra-curricular activities and social events for international students. These activities can be regarded as stimulus for internationalization. The use of foreign language is known to have an important role in internationalization. Many universities in Turkey, including the flagship universities such as METU, Ihsan Doğramacı Bilkent University and Boğaziçi University, have long adopted English as the medium of instruction.

More importantly the schooling in higher education has been in an upward trend. The student enrollment number for the academic year 2010-2011 was 3.817.086, and it increased to 4.353.542 in the academic year 2011-2012, while it further increased to 4.975.690 in the academic year 2012-2013 (ÖSYM, 2014). Parallel to these increases, the number of incoming foreign students to Turkey has been steadily increasing as well. The foreign student enrollment is one of the indicators of internationalization. In this view, the number of the foreign students in the academic year 2010-2011 was 7.273 (new admissions), increasing to 8.627 (new admissions) in the academic year 2011-2012 and finally reaching 13.082 (new admissions) in the academic year 2012-2013 (ÖSYM, 2014). The figure in the academic year 2012-2013 indicates that the overall number of international students has almost doubled in comparison to the figure in 2010-2011. According to the statistics published for the academic year 2012-2013 by ÖSYM (Student Selection and Placement Center) the majority of international students coming to Turkey for education are from the Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Balkan countries (ÖSYM, 2014). Turkmenistan with 2609 students is ranked in the first place followed by Afghanistan with 729 students. This shows that Turkey has recently become an attractive destination for education. However, it is useful to remember that the prominent rationales of internationalization in the case of traditional destinations for international

students such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada differ for other countries. In other words, the prevalent rationale for internationalization may not be evident in the case of Turkey. For example, Kondakci (2011) stated that the prominent rationales of the international students that choose Turkey as a destination for study abroad also differ according to their country of origin. In his study, Kondakci asserts that the students from Western and economically developed countries have private reasons, whereas for the students coming from the Eastern and economically backward countries, the economic and academic rationales are more prominent. He further proposes a classification of the rationales influencing the students' decisions in two categories: first, pre-departure public rationales (wage differences, job opportunities, political developments, environmental calamities), and pre-departure private rationales (academic, climate and food preferences, urban/rural context, language skills, familial relation and affection towards the host country and people) that influence the student mobility and second, the post-departure public rationales (emergence in networking, institutionalization of organization, cumulative causation or causes of changing the nature of initial migration, migration system) and post-departure private rationales (satisfaction with academic, cultural, social and management related experiences that maintain the continuity of the mobility) (p.575). In this context, according to the above-mentioned statistical results and the Kondakci's findings, it is understood that the economic and academic rationales are more prominent for the students coming from Central Asia and the Balkans. Another evidence of internationalization in Turkish higher education is the exchange of foreign teaching staff between Turkish educational institutions and universities abroad. It is expected that foreign teaching staff would bring new international perspectives in teaching and research to the educational institutions in Turkey. Thus, in terms of the number of the foreign teaching staff, the following results were observed: there were 1332 foreign teaching staff employed in the universities in Turkey in the academic year 2010-2011, while increasing to 1460 in 2011-2012 and finally reaching 1703 in 2012-2013 (ÖSYM, 2014). Ihsan Doğramacı Bilkent University is in the first place having the highest number with 189 foreign staff, followed by Istanbul University with 180 foreign staff (ÖSYM, 2014).

As it is stated above, internationalization of higher education covers a variety of practices from student mobility to recognition of degrees across borders, transfer of knowledge across borders, transnational education, a form of transforming study programs across borders, organization of different orientation programs for foreign students, implementation of Bologna Process as a means for facilitating student mobility and making reforms to reach the international educational standards and to increase the quality of education. The enhancement of higher education capacity enables Turkey to incorporate higher education activities as a foreign policy instrument. In that sense, Turkey uses education

as a means of strengthening its relations with Balkan countries. It is believed that a great number of people in the Balkans can be reached through education, which in turn will provide the opportunity to connect with the Balkans. So, developing the educational connection can be seen as the reinforcement of closer ties with these people. In other words, education can be regarded as an important tool for increasing Turkey's effectiveness in that region. In the larger course of events, it is possible to conclude that Turkey's engagement in intensive relations with the region in the area of education can help protect security and stability in the Balkans.

In a different tone, Turkey's internationalization can also be defined as bilateral or regional cooperation (Mızıkacı, 2005). This could be attributed to the historical and cultural ties of Turkey with the countries in that region. Therefore, Turkey can be considered as the forerunner of regional higher education. General information about the regionalization in higher education and the regional cooperation initiatives of Turkey towards the Balkan countries are explicated in the following section.

### **1.1.3 Regionalization in Higher Education**

In the context of globalization and internationalization the trend of regionalization has started to appear virtually almost in many parts of the world (Kuroda, Yuki & Kang, 2010). According to Knight (2012), “internationalization and regionalization processes have a symbiotic relationship that they co-exist, can be complementary or competitive” (p.17). She further stated that both of these processes involve almost the same activities, actors and outcomes, with the mere difference that regionalization emphasizes intra-regional initiatives. Similarly Phanell (2011) in his study expressed that the projects for the regionalization of higher education are the driving forces for internationalization, that “regions are increasingly becoming important political actors in the higher education field and the regional scale is becoming a more recurring space to deal with higher education issues” (p.81). Yang (2012) also claimed that “the regionalization could contribute to internationalization if a variety of factors are combined properly” (p.488). In addition, the author stated that such regionalization movements are raising the competitiveness among the member countries in the face of external dynamics, and naturally are encouraging inter-regional interactions. Recently in many countries educational institutions are involved in joint projects, collaborations, partnerships and exchange programs at the regional level. In this sense, the European Union is referred to as one of the most significant regional agreements supporting regionalism and Europe was cited as a stimulus and model for regionalization initiatives (Knight, 2012; Yang, 2012). On the other hand, it is a very frequent situation that terms like collaboration, harmonization and integration are used interchangeably with regionalization. From this point of view, regionalization emerges as a term that can be examined from multiple perspectives (Verger &

Hermo, 2010). For example, Knight (2012) drew attention to the commonly used terms as regionalism, regionalness, regionality, regionalization, regional integration, inter-regional cooperation... etc. According to her, the suffix “ism” relates more to an ideology or set of beliefs, and “ization” focuses on the process of becoming, and “tion” reflections of a condition (p. 2). She also clarified the meaning of these terms along four different lines on how they related to the higher education sector: the first one is the impact of regionalism on higher education, which focuses on how the changing idea and increasing the importance of the region is affecting the higher education; the second, higher education regionalization, which refers to intentional establishment of collaborations, connections among the higher education actors and systems within the region; third, higher education as a means for regional integration, or some tactical approaches on how to use higher education to achieve regional integration and the fourth, inter-regional cooperation in higher education, which involves interaction between two regions. Moreover, Knight added that “cooperation, integration, harmonization, convergence, collaboration, community, coherence, partnership, and alignment” are the terms very commonly linked to regionalization, notwithstanding the differences that do exist amongst them. She further advanced three approaches (functional, organizational and political) and explained in detail the relationships and intersection between the three as the following:

1) the functional approach focuses on the practical activities of the educational institutions and can be divided into two distinct groups: the first one is related to the strategies facilitating the alignment and in some cases the harmonization among regional higher education institutions, and the second one includes the programs like student mobility schemes, cross-border collaborative education programs, pan-regional universities and centers of excellence. The relationship between them is so critical that the system/policies in one group are needed to facilitate and expedite the programs in group two;

2) the second one refers to organizational architecture that evolves to develop and guide the regionalization initiatives in a more systematic manner. It includes a diversity of government and non-government bodies, professional organizations, foundations, and networks, which assume different responsibilities as policy-making, funding, research, capacity building, regulation, and advocacy among others;

3) the political approach, characterized with having top down, formal and intentional orientation, encompasses the political will and strategies that put higher education initiatives on the agenda of decision making bodies. It helps launch major programs or funding schemes to formalize the initiatives. Declarations of intent, binding conventions, treaties, agreements, and special meetings like summits or policy dialogues are instruments for generating political support and visibility in order to make regionalization of higher education a priority (Knight, 2012, pp. 118-120).

Nelson (2013) added a fourth perspective by arguing that “regionalization in higher education and development occurred at both national and international levels simultaneously”, or more precisely, “regionalization at the national level facilitated regionalization at the

international level” and he finally comes to a final observation that “regional collaborations in higher education and development could not be separated from the broader diplomatic –and geostrategic – interests of the different nations involved” (p.247).

In the framework of these ideas, it is useful to provide brief information on regionalization initiatives from around the world. For example, Knight (2012) drew attention to Bologna Process and defined it as an inter-regional mobility program, policy dialogues and networks, on which European Union spent so much effort. Akin to this, Planells (2011) stated that “the Bologna process has become so popular all over the world, that numerous countries and regions are showing interest in the process and are even considering emulating it, i.e. implementing Bologna-style reforms” (p.83). Nelson (2013) in his study on the regional collaborations of American universities stated that the early signs of regionalization movements were encountered in the post-World War II era and in the beginning of the Cold War. As the main reason for these movements, he indicated the increase in the student enrollment numbers, expansion in research and the strong push to internationalize, which created budgetary difficulties for the universities. He further argued that in response to this situation, American universities were compelled to make a number of changes, one of which was engaging in collaborative activities. Thus, he pointed out that these collaborations primarily started with the creation of a domestic university network, which later expanded to include collaborations abroad. Nelson expressed that these collaborations were primarily composed of signing agreements between the universities for cooperation, the development of joint programs or sharing the library resources. He cited Southern Regional Educational Board as one of the first regional university collaboration formed in 1949 with the participation of 16 public universities in Southern States in United States. Additionally, Nelson also made reference to a few earlier collaboration examples of the American universities, explaining how these academic collaborations sometimes evolved from athletic conferences or as a response to dropping female enrollment numbers in higher education or with the aim of overcoming racial segregation. He provided the example of “Big Ten” (the Universities of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, as well as Indiana University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Northwestern University and Purdue), which was founded in 1940 and the example of “Seven Sisters Colleges” (encompassing Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar and Wellesley) which was established in 1920s; and the example of Atlanta Consortium – a group of institutions for African American students in the City of Atlanta (Clark, Spelman, Morehouse, Morris Brown and Atlanta University) etc.

In addition to the regionalization examples mentioned above, Knight (2012) also indicated some initiatives in higher education regionalization in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbeans. By defining the situation in Asia as much more complex and developing,

she listed some of the key players illustrating various regional initiative efforts in the Southeast Asian subcontinent as the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Network, which was established in 2004 for dealing with the issues of capacity-building among nations, establishment of national quality assurance systems and greater mutual recognition and collaboration among member countries; the University Mobility in Asia Pacific (UMAP), which is a student mobility project; the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN) that carries the objective to strengthen the relations and activities among higher education institutions through the establishment of the ASEAN University Network (AUN) comprising of 26 leading universities in Southeast Asia; the South East Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), which is yet another regional initiative in Asia dealing with specific aspects of education; the Regional Centre for Higher Education Development (RIHED), which engages in various projects in order to create a powerful framework for collaboration between the member countries. For Africa, she listed the African Quality Rating Mechanism, the Nyerere African Scholarship scheme, AfriQAN-network of quality assurance agencies, regional centers of excellence, updated Regional UNESCO Arusha Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications, a Pan-African University, and the new Open Education Africa project. Further, Knight listed ENLACES (the Latin America and the Caribbean Area for Higher Education) as the major regional initiative in Latin America and the Caribbeans as a regional platform for the implementation of projects and studies that support academic collaboration and knowledge sharing in the region.

#### ***1.1.3.1 Regionalization schemes for Turkey***

There are several regionalization initiatives in higher education identified in European continent in which Balkan countries and Turkey also took part. Some of them are explained below. For instance, the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies (CEEPUS) is one of the first multilateral university networks, formed as of 1993 with signing of agreement by the founding states in Budapest, entered into force in 1995, is operating mainly joint program leading to joint degrees (CEEPUS, 2014). The main objective is to develop academic cooperation in and with Central and Eastern Europe and South Eastern Europe, to contribute to building Europe and the European Higher Education Area, and to use regional academic mobility as a strategic tool to implement Bologna objectives (EACEA, 2011). Many Balkan countries including BiH, Macedonia, Kosovo were a member of this network as of 2007. Apart from this, Balkan countries are involved in the Bologna Process also, which currently is implemented in a voluntary basis. Turkey involves in the Process since 2001, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2003, while Kosovo still did not officially signed the Bologna Declaration due to “its still disputed statehood” (Vukasovic, 2012, p.14). Bologna Process is adopted in the education system of Kosovo and it become a national

strategy (EACEA, 2012). Knight (2012) defined Bologna process as an inter-regional mobility program and as a policy dialogue and network, which is assumed to be a driving force for the Balkan countries for establishing and developing different kinds of relations, partnerships and cooperation between higher education institutions in a variety of regions in the world. Another program from which the European countries benefited is Erasmus program (European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students), one of the most important program for stimulating short term student exchange within Europe, launched in the 1987 (Teichler, 2012). It is implemented as part of a policy to achieve regional integration in the region. Balkan countries and Turkey have been involved in Erasmus as of 2004. As Terry (2008) described Erasmus is one of the key initiatives of EU that overlap Bologna Process, influence it in many ways. Further, she stated that “Erasmus is a more than student exchange program.... it is important because it shaped some of the thinking underlined in Bologna Process and because it remains a vehicle for improved mobility within Europe” (p.123). Other than the above mentioned regionalization movements there is a cooperation and mobility program named Erasmus Mundus which is also operating in the field of higher education through the following three actions: 1) Erasmus Mundus Joint Program (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates); 2) Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) and 3) Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects. It is noteworthy that Middle East Technical University (METU) is the only university in Turkey participating in this program with a scheme named Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window. In this context, METU has taken part in a 6 different consortia including West Balkans (Daloğlu & Bulut Şahin, 2011). EU another cooperation program designed to help the transition and the reform processes in higher education in the partner countries is Tempus program initially covering Central and Eastern Europe countries, aiming to support the improvement of the higher education systems especially of EU's neighboring countries (EACEA, 2011). Participation of BiH and Macedonia in Tempus program is since 1996, while Kosovo participated in 2001. Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programs are intended to support the modernization of the higher education of the partnership countries (EACEA, 2011).

Diversity of actors in Turkey, contributing to regionalization, spent considerable efforts for establishment of cooperation and partnerships with the educational institutions from different regions in the world. Among them, TİKA, Yunus Emre Cultural Centers within the Yunus Emre Institute, Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities, and Higher Education Council are the institutes that were promoting the regionalization initiatives especially with the countries having common historical background with Turkey and with the institutions willing to cooperate.

Positive steps were taken by Turkey towards the Turkic Republic after 1992. Turkey

especially after the end of the Cold War has added three important elements to its foreign cultural policy towards Turkic Republic in Central Asia, Middle East and the Balkans: the first one is regarding the expansion of Turkish language (Turk & Ergin, 2010). In this sense a lot of Turkish Cultural Centers were opened for teaching Turkish language. Creation of common language regarding the relation with the countries in the region is considered to be one of the basic activities followed by Turkey. The second element was certain activities carried out by the educational institutions established in Turkic Republics by Turkish government and Turkish NGOs (Doğan, 2013). Some of them are known for their proximity to the Gulen Movement (Ebaugh, 2011; p.144). Considerable tolerance was given to Gulen's followers for opening educational institutions at different levels in different parts of the world, initially during Turgut Özal's presidency and later in the early years of consecutive AK Party governments and for some, Gulen movement is a Turkish-Islamic organization exercising its soft power, especially in spreading Turkish language and culture (Balci, 2014). However, others argue that entrepreneurs attached to the Gulen Movement usually provide the lump sum to jump start these schools and otherwise these schools are mere private tuition schools that seek high admission standards and follow the local curricula with only a modest amount of Turkish language supplement (Ebaugh, 2011; p.144-5). It is difficult to assess whether one school has become more popular than others because of its political or religious affinity. It is also difficult to distinguish which educational institution owes how much of its dependency to the Gulen Movement. In other words, seeking any correspondence between the success of a school and the political or religious affinity of its managers is beyond the abilities and objectives of this research.

On a different note, the investigation confirmed that the schools and universities that were mentioned in this thesis were on high demand by the local population, even to the extent that a majority of the high level bureaucrats preferred to send their children to these institutions. However, this conclusion must be treated independent of the degree to which these institutions might or might not be affiliated with the Gulen Movement.

The schooling process after the collapse of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) is assessed “as a correct response of Turkey to globalisation” (Turk & Ergin, 2010, p.36). In addition to opening of Turkish Culture Centers for teaching Turkish, and apart from the schools opened by Gulen movement there were also many secondary schools and faculties opened in Central Asia (Turk and Ergin, 2010) which can be listed as follows: Turkish World Faculty of Business opened by Turkish World Research Foundation in 1991 in Baku, Faculty of Theology open in 1992 by Turkish Religious Affairs Foundation; Çağ Educational Enterprises Company along side with the primary and secondary schools founded Kafkas university. In the framework of development of cooperation with Turkic

Republic Turkey opened two universities one in Kazakhstan (International Hoca Ahmet Yesevi University) and the other in Kirgizistan (Turkey Manas University) (Kavak & Baskan, 2001). Apart from this, there were universities established by NGOs in the Balkans as well. As an example some of them can be listed as followings: in BiH the private Bosnia-Sema Educational institution - International Burch University established in 2008 by the support of Turkish entrepreneurs (Petrovic & Reljic, 2011). In addition to this universities there were 15 educational institutions (schools at various levels) opened by Bosna Sema Educational Institution in different cities in BiH, respectively in Sarajevo, Bihac, Tuzla, Mostar and Zenica. Another university founded by the Foundation for Education Development Sarajevo (SEDEF) is International University of Sarajevo, inaugurated in the academic year of 2004-2005 (IUS, 2014). In Kosovo Gulistan Education Institutions was established in 1999 in the framework of an agreement signed with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo (KTTO, 2014). This agreement was a basis for opening of private schools in Kosovo at different levels, among them “Mehmet Akif College” in Prishtina was the most popular one. In Macedonia, International Balkan university founded by Foundation for Education and Culture “Uskup” in 2006 with the contribution of group of intellectuals and Turkish academicians (IBU, 2014) and Tefeyyüz secondary school, in which the medium of instruction is in Turkish language.

As the third and the most important elements was pointed out the Great Student Project. It was launched in 1992 with aim to increase the dialogue and communication with Turkic Republics in Central Asia that were formed after the collapse of Soviet Union in 1990. This project later was expanded to the Balkans countries. It is assumed to be a first attempt for regionalism and one of the most important part of the Turkish foreign cultural policy (Ergin & Turk, 2010). It is evident that, this project took a significant place in the development plans of Turkey since 1992 and as well cooperation in the field of education and science has been taken an important part within the policy towards these countries (Kavak & Baskan, 2001). It is evident that during this period a great efforts were spent to attract foreign students to Turkish universities in the scope of this project. Despite the problems encountered during the implementation of this project one of the main objective was to train Turkey-friendly generation (Kavak, Baskan, 2001). By engagement in various regional affairs in the field of education it is expected that Turkey with its constructive policy towards the Balkans will contribute to stabilization in the region.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

Based on the arguments stated above, this study aimed at investigating educational policies of Turkey towards the Balkan countries located in South-Eastern Europe (viz.,

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia), that are considered as “countries in transition”. These countries are newly founded during the 1990's, after the disintegration of former Yugoslavia. They are still experiencing deep political, social and economic transformations. Zmas (2012) claimed that the transition in education of the Balkan countries occurs in three ways: first, by development of educational networks through European Union program; second, by adopting of common aims and objectives in line with the Bologna Process; and third, by economic assistance received through European Union funding for reforming of their educational systems. Further, he discussed that the national policy of the country is the prominent factors in this transformation. In addition he stated that their education systems at the same time contributed to the formation of these countries.

Thanks to the ongoing international assistance, social, political and economic situation in these countries are under control. Turkey is among the group of countries that provide support to social, political and economic transformation processes in these countries. Turkey is also providing support to transforming the educational systems in these countries. Thus, education emerges as a key tool contributing to the social, economic and political transition of these countries. However, it is a phenomenon affected by the transition process itself. In other words, education plays an interactive role in the transitions of these countries. There is a strong conviction that education can play a pivotal role in solving the thorny issues of the region.

In the framework of the comments above, the purpose of this study was to identify the scope of the educational relations and the rationales for the bilateral (higher) educational relationships between Turkey and three Balkan countries in a comparative approach. In other words, higher education policies and practices developed and delivered by Turkey and the expectations of the Balkan countries were investigated from the perspective of key stakeholders in Turkey and in the Balkans. In addition, the study aimed to specify political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind the practices developed by Turkey in order to meet those expectations.

The specific research questions and sub questions covered by the study are as the followings:

1. What is the current state of the relationships between Turkey and the Balkan countries in the field of higher education?
  - a. What are the practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries in the field of higher education?
  - b. What are the political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education toward the Balkan countries?

2. What are the expectations of different stakeholders in the Balkan countries from Turkey in relation to higher education?
  - a. What are the practices undertaken by the Balkan countries in order to enhance cooperation in higher education with Turkey?
  - b. What are the political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Reviewing the current educational policies of Turkey and analyzing expectations of these countries from Turkey have helped to identify the gap between the reality and expectations regarding relationships between Turkey and the Balkans in relation to higher education. Besides examining and identifying the present situation of the educational institutions, focus was given primarily on investigating the rationales of internationalization of higher education in Turkey and Balkan countries. Such comparison is likely to facilitate comparing internationalization practices of Balkan countries, on the one hand, and of Turkey, on the other. From this point it can be concluded that the internationalization in higher education should be included as the priority plans in educational policies of Turkey towards Balkan countries. In this context, it becomes the duty of the educators to assess the outcomes of internationalization in order to determine how to meet the expectations of these communities living therein and by this way to contribute to the security of the region. Thus, this study, by exploring the educational policies of Turkey towards Balkan countries may bring new insights into the process of internationalization in higher education in the selected countries and contribute to the theory, methodology and practice as well.

First, the study is expected to contribute to theory or particularly to the internationalization in higher education discussions. It contributes to the development of a framework for understanding different rationales that motivate Turkey and Balkan countries toward internationalization. Besides, the study is an investigation of internationalization in a particular region, perhaps can be considered as one of the first investigations of internationalization in higher education in the Balkan region, since there has been no any other study regarding Turkey's regional internationalization in higher education towards Balkans after 90's. Therefore, this study helps to understand better the internationalization in higher education, which is peculiar to the developing countries. It is also a subsidiary to ascertain the role of the traditional actors in the development of the regionalization, to see the real consequences as a result of regionalization, to determine the obstacles in collaborations and naturally give an opportunity to monitor the regional competitiveness and the growth in the

region. By this study an attempt was made to provide a general picture of internationalization policies of Turkey from a comparative perspective.

Second, this study methodologically also contributes to the field. The study is expected to guide future studies on internationalization at macro level (inter-country level). This study was one of the first studies on internationalization bringing two different perspectives on the phenomena in the same study: awareness and developing a framework that will produce a method of measurement for the concept of internationalization in higher education.

Third, this study contributes to practice as well. By the study relevant data on universities and Ministries of Education in the region were collected, which could provide references and guidelines for the Ministry of Education of Turkey, Higher Education Council (HEC) and other institutions of higher education. The results of the study contribute to enriching the existing body of knowledge on education in the Balkan countries and may assist the educators in enhancing the partnership between the Turkish education institutions and their counterparts in the Balkans. As it is known the development of mutual cooperation requires improvement in the quality of the education provided which in turn will result in increasing the reputation of these institutions both in Turkey and in the Balkans. Therefore, the more international students or academic staff are attracted by these institutions the more they will require to implement or involve new programs for the foreign students or staff and by this way to facilitate or stimulate the internationalization process in the higher education in the region. Furthermore, the diversity of the foreign students in the institutions will be of an advantage in gaining an intercultural experience both by local or foreign students. It is thought that this diversity will also contribute to creating a cultural awareness and respect for other nations in the region.

Finally, improving the educational relations with the countries in the Balkans contribute to social and economic development of the region. Conducting peaceful social activities in the area of education helps Turkey keep alive its historical and cultural relations with the nations living in the Balkans as well.

#### **1.4 Definition of Terms**

**Internationalization:** refers to “the process of integrating an international and intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of higher education” Knight (2004, p.9)

**Regionalization:** refers to collaboration between two or more countries formed with the idea of sharing collective actions and increasing competitiveness of member countries towards the outside world as well as encouraging inter-regional interactions.

**Regionalization of higher education:** refers to the process of building closer

collaboration and alignment among higher education actors and systems within a defined area or framework called a region. (Knight, 2012).

**Rationales of internationalization:** can be described as motivations for integrating an international dimension into higher education (Wit, 2002).

**Political rationales:** links the education in the first place with the foreign policy, national security, technical assistance, peace and mutual understanding, national and regional identity.

**Economic rationales:** refers actually to the objectives related to direct or indirect economic benefits of the institutions.

**Academic rationales:** the desire of the institutions to achieve international academic standards.

**Cultural and social rationales:** related to preservation and promotion of national culture as way of respect and understanding of other cultures.

**Qualitative study:** Research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situation or materials. As Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) indicated, in qualitative studies, researchers are concentrated usually on understanding the situations and events from the perspectives of the persons participated in the researches.

**Balkans / Balkan countries:** It is believed that the term Balkans which is still used for naming of this region comes from the Turkish word Balkan which means a “mountain chain” (Zgaga, 2011). However, which countries fall in the scope of the Balkans is still controversial (Akman, 2006). Simic (2013) also stated that the geographical boundaries of this region have not been precisely defined and depending on some sources, it covers the entire region of Southeast Europe or only the region between the Danube River and the Aegean Sea, sometimes without Greece (p.116). Further he argued that sometimes scientists used the phrase the Balkan Peninsula to describe this areas. After 1990 the term “South Eastern Europe” has become more popular instead of using the term Balkans (Akman, 2006), due to negative connotations of this word. As Simic (2013) stated some countries are trying to avoid being named as the Balkan countries.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

This chapter consists of three parts. Since internationalization in higher education concept constructed the theoretical framework of this study, in the first part, a comprehensive discussion is provided on the internationalization concept in higher education. In other words, for better understanding of this concept, various definitions proposed by different scholars, the rationales for internationalization, the benefits and risks of internationalization and the role of foreign language in internationalization are discussed in detail. The second part presents information on the recent international developments in the area of education that affects Balkan countries, such as the integration of their educational systems to the Bologna Process, as well as student mobility. In addition it covers the relationships of the Balkan countries with Turkey in the field of education, especially in higher education. Within this framework, the background of the educational systems of Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia Herzegovina are explicated respectively and information is provided on the efforts of the international organizations regarding the educational reforms to be implemented in these countries. Finally, the last part includes review of the related studies on Islamic higher education in the Balkans, followed by some examples on institutions.

#### **2.1 The Concept of Internationalization**

Currently internationalization is one of the top concerns for higher education scholars and practitioners. Recently this concept has become almost a priority concept widely used in determining the characteristics of the universities and the experiences of their faculty and graduates (Enders, 2004). As Enders (2004) stated that internationalization helps institutions to review their roles in the way of finding a place in their national systems of higher education. As a result, internationalization can be considered as a basis for implementing some reform, as a reason for competing or cooperation with other institutions, as a force for adapting new technology or creating new units etc. In this context, as a consequence or impact of the internationalization process, rapid changes and developments can be observed in every sphere (political, social/cultural, economic, and educational) of life. But, having in mind that the internationalization constitute the framework of this study the concept of internationalization will be examined and presented generally from the perspectives of education with regard to higher education. Therefore, to be able to gain a more comprehensive understanding on the

concept of internationalization various definitions of the term in advance, reasons/rationales and aspects of internationalization will be covered under the next headlines. In addition, information on the benefits and risks of internationalization, importance of the foreign language in the process of internationalization, the background history of the educational systems of the Balkan countries and the relations of those countries with Turkey in the area of education will be presented after the aforementioned headlines as well.

### **2.1.1 Definitions of internationalization in Higher Education**

There are many studies conducted on internationalization, all of which have tried to shed light on this concept. Different scholars proposed different kinds of definitions for internationalization. For example, in the work of Knight (1999), internationalization in higher education is defined “as integrating an international/ intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” (p.16). In this definition it is indicated that internationalization is a dynamic process with multipurpose orientation. On the other hand, Callan (2000) stated that “internationalization is a subject to continuing definition and redefinition over decade”, implying that definition of internationalization evolves as new developments in cross-border education that have accomplished (p.16). The author made a compelling point that the interpretations on the concept of internationalization have shifted according to the varying rationales, incentives, activities, political and economic circumstances in which the process is situated. Further, the author mentioned that there is a significant distinction between the concepts of internationalization, Europeanization and globalization, concepts that could be considered as a triad of constructs. He defined Europeanization as “a special case of internationalization: internationalization within a geopolitical Europe”, bringing some European dimensions of higher education in line with the European Union objectives (Callan, 2000, p.19).

However, there are arguments that the globalization is the synonym of internationalization, which implies that both can be used interchangeably or internationalization and globalization are two interrelated concepts. Therefore, trying to understand better the concept of internationalization one should not overlook importance of distinguishing these two concepts. For example, Knight (1999) confirms the existence of such distinction between globalization and internationalization. She defines globalization as

the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas... across borders. Globalization affects each country in a different ways due to a nation's individual history, traditions, culture and priorities (Knight, 1999, p.14).

As for the internationalization of higher education, Knight (1999) indicated that, “it is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation” (p. 14). In addition, internationalization is “a subtle response

that affects not only the academic programs, faculty, and students but also creates new administrative structure and privileges” (Stromquist, 2007, p.81). Institutions are expanding their internationalization by responding to globalization. On the other hand, according to Enders (2004) internationalization is a process of building strategic international relations based on mutual cooperation between states and realizing activities across state borders, while globalization refers to the processes of improving the interdependency and integration of the economies of the institutions by eliminating the legal and financial controls with the aim to increase the competition and efficiency. Nonetheless, he interpreted the concept of Europeanisation as a form of regionalization or as a process of development of mutual regional cooperation and horizontal interaction at all levels. Barely, once the internationalization process is decided to put into practice other factors as economic and political power of a country, its size and geographic location, its dominant culture, the quality and typical features of its higher education system, the role its language plays internationally and previous internationalization policies” should have all be taken into consideration (Enders, 2004, p.369).

In accordance with the discussion above it can be concluded that these concepts (internationalization, globalization and Europeanization) are associated with each other and the realization of one is as a result of the cause of other or vice versa. To give an example, globalization could be the main force for the universities to internationalize, but the rationales or reasons for internationalization could differ; it depends on purpose of the institutions and countries whether their aim is to gain economic independence, to increase their efficiency and effectiveness in the world of rivalry or in the line of the governmental policies of its country to contribute to the political influence in a given region etc. Therefore the success of the internationalization process mainly depends on the accurate determination of the rationales or reasons for internationalization.

### **2.1.2 Rationales for internationalization**

Internationalization of higher education has become a key issue in the world during the 1990's (Teichler, 2004). The reasons for that can be cited as: primarily, the advances in technology; and secondly, regional schemes of cooperation (e.g., ERASMUS). Zolfaghari, Sabran and Zolfaghari (2009) mentioned various closely linked reasons for internationalization; either complementary or contradictory, which are especially varied between and within countries because of the diverse interests of the stakeholders. But, in order to be able to evaluate their internationalization efforts, the institutions must define clearly what internationalization means for them, as the concept of internationalization may refer to different meanings. Knight (1999) argued that, alongside with the different definitions about

the internationalization, a number of different rationales or motivations for incorporating an international aspect into higher education exist. She categorized the rationales into four basic interrelated groups listed namely as political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales. Then she offered further discussion and elaboration on rationales of internationalization according to the different levels (national policy, sectoral level, organizational level and individual level). Knight (1999) associated the political rationales mostly with the national policy level, the economic rationales both with the national and organizational level, academic rationales both to the organizational and individual levels, while social and cultural rationales to all levels. These rationales for internationalization of higher education are expected to provide countries, institutions, and individuals the means to understand the internationalization of higher education in a more analytical and comprehensive way (Yiyun, 2007). Likewise, de Wit (2002) indicates that these “rationales can be described as motivations for integrating an international dimension into higher education. They address the “why” of internationalization” (p.84). Further, Wit explained in detail these four groups of the rationales advanced by Knight. De Wit (2002) in his explanation linked the political rationales directly with foreign policy, national security, technical assistance, peace and mutual understanding, national and regional identity. For example, “the political rationale links education in the first place to foreign policy, the educational cooperation can be considered as a form of diplomatic investment in the future political relations and that the cultural and academic agreements signed between countries can contribute to the strengthening and advancement of the political and economic relations of the nations” (p.85). Furthermore, de Wit (2002) related the economic rationales with “the economic growth and competitiveness, the labor market, national education demand and financial incentives for institutions and governments” (p.223). To clarify, economic rationales refers actually to the objectives related to direct or indirect economic benefits of the institutions. To illustrate, in order to meet the national demands for higher education the governments may encourage mobility of students and faculty instead of investing in their own institutions or by attracting foreign students it can be generated an income for the universities itself. The academic rationales refers to improving “the teaching and learning process and achieving excellence in research and scholarly activities” (Zolfaghari, Sabran & Zolfaghari, 2009, p.3). In other words, this set of rationales includes providing an international dimension to research and teaching (as curriculum innovation, cross cultural training, foreign language study, joint research initiatives etc), extension of the academic horizon (by study abroad, faculty and scholars mobility, research cooperation), institution-building, increasing the profile status (international ranking of the institution), raising the quality and international academic standards (as a means of recognition in international arena) (de Wit, 2002). From the

explanations above on the academic rationales it is understood that, an extremely important reason for internationalization in higher education can be the desire of the institutions to achieve international academic standards, which is a primary motivating factor for investing in higher education. Finally, de Wit (2002) related the cultural and social rationales to the preservation and promotion of national culture as way of respect and understanding of other cultures. For instance, raising skilled and knowledgeable students can facilitate and contribute to the developments of the bilateral relationship between countries.

Consequently, all rationales can be assumed as the guiding factors for the institutions while taking decision on internationalizing. But, the most important thing one has to keep in mind when analyzing the rationales for internationalization is that there might be a strong overlap or shift in rationales or they may differ between and within stakeholder groups (the government, the private sector and the educational sector), stakeholders may have a combination of rationales for internationalization with a hierarchy in priorities, these priorities may change over time and by country or region (de Wit, 2002). According to Khalideen (2008), “the result of internationalization is to have a diverse student population living and working in campuses characterized by cultural diversity” (p.267). In this case cultural rationale has gained precedence. Furthermore, he stated that “having more international students on campus can result in significant financial gains for the university” itself (p.268). This time economic rationale has gained an importance. However, for Knight (2003), the most frequently cited benefits are the development of students, staff and teachers, the increase in the quality of academic standards (teaching, learning), and the attainment of cultural awareness. According to this view academic rationales is gaining priority.

Although the role of the education in social change is undeniable, some practices showed that the educators sometimes become helpless in resolving social conflicts (e.g. conflicts between ethnic groups) due to the implications of the political developments on education (Tahirsylaj, 2008). In this view, it is worth explaining briefly the history of the higher education system of those countries under investigation (Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia). As various researches and survey studies done by international institutions reported that constantly changing political conditions influenced the formation of the educational policies and many difficulties are likely to occur during the educational reform processes.

The educational institutions are constantly challenged by rapid changes in every sphere of the life. Therefore, the internationalization process is becoming somehow inevitable for them. But, when institutions are deciding on setting the priorities of the rationales, it is always worth to take into consideration the benefits and risks they may have as a result of internationalization.

### **2.1.3 Benefits vs. risks of the internationalization**

The ultimate targeted positive outcome may rest with the study abroad programs. However, it is not always possible to get positive results from the internationalization efforts in education. Difficulties may be encountered during the internationalization process and they may have unfavorable effects on the educational developments and reforms to be implemented. For example, in her research Knight (2003) cited brain drain (the tendency of students and scholars to leave their country of origin in search of better living and learning conditions elsewhere) as the main risk of internationalization. Erosion of cultural identity and increase in the costs were other risk factors referred in the same study. The study further elaborates on the obstacles that suppress the realization or implementation of internationalization. Some of these obstacles listed are lack of policies or strategies to facilitate the process, lack of financial support, administrative inertia or difficulties, competing priorities, lack of opportunities, insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process, lack of reliable and comprehensive information etc.

Nowadays, many institutions of higher education expand their scope by adding the element of internationalization to their programs. In their parlance, institutional advancement in internationalization yields an upgraded status among the league of international universities, which in turn leads to easier recruitment of talented international staff and students (Jenkis-Deas, 2009). Determination of rankings in higher education necessitates ways of measuring internationalization. Therefore it is primarily appropriate to define the characteristics by which internationalization can be measured and to develop a comprehensive instrument to measure those characteristics. For example, as Mahroum (1999) indicated, internationalization can be measured by many characteristics: "the proportion of the overseas students in the higher education system, international orientation of the curricula, the intensity of foreign exchange programs, the extent of participation in overseas collaborative activities etc." (p.121).

When determining the benefits and risks of internationalization it is necessary also to take into account the role of foreign language in the internationalization process itself.

### **2.1.4 The role of foreign language in internationalization**

The use of foreign language as a medium of instructions has played an important role in internationalization process. Vogel (2001) stated that "universities without a foreign language component will find it difficult to establish international relations with universities the majority of students of which do not speak the language of the country of the institution" (p. 384). Further, he argued that the integration of foreign language into the curriculum has an

impact not only on the educational institution itself, but it also contributes to the international atmosphere by attracting foreign students and facilitate the integration of the foreign academic staff into the community. In addition, he indicated that making specific languages compulsory may result in negative consequences, as was in the history with mandatory teaching of Russian language in Central and Eastern European countries. So, Vogel (2001) underlined the motivation of the students as determining factor that should be taken into consideration during the process of integration of foreign language into the curriculum. Naturally it will be useful to have in mind the above mentioned issues during integrating a foreign language into curriculum, otherwise failure will be inevitable

Recently, English as a foreign language is becoming the most popular and preferred language of communication in technology, trade, culture, science and education. The use of English language, especially in higher education, is increasing day by day. As de Wit (2002) stated, English language is one of the required languages in publishing of written scientific materials in the area of researches and teaching. Further he indicated that “as a result of the European mobility programs and the emergence of the competitiveness rationale, institutions of higher education started to develop courses and programs in English” (p.229).

Nowadays there is a number of universities in Turkey in which the language of instruction is English (Bilkent University, Boğaziçi University, Koç University, Middle East Technical University, Sabancı University, Yeditepe University). One of purposes of English medium instruction is actually to attract more international students and to improve their international profile. The same concern is evident in the Balkans as well. For example, in Kosovo, the situation is very much the same as in Turkey: the American University, European Vision University and Iliria University are offering degrees in English. Furthermore, the International Sarajevo University of Bosnia Herzegovina is also teaching in English just like its counterpart in Macedonia and Kosovo.

Lately, Turkish language has become very popular language in the Balkans. There is ever-increasing widespread desire to learn Turkish language among the communities living in the Balkans, who have close family ties or business relationship with Turkey. In response to these demands, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) in 2000 has conducted a “Turcology Project” which was undertaken in September 2011 by Yunus Emre Institute Foundation (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü web site, 2013). This project was the basis for the establishment of Turcology Centers or on the framework of the signed protocols and cooperation agreements for opening of Turkish Language and Literature Departments or programs to the various Universities in many countries including those in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Tuzla University, Mostar Cemal Bijedich University, Zenica University and Saraybosna University), Macedonia (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Istip Gotse Delcev University

and Tetovo State University) and Kosovo (Prishtina University) (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2013). The main aim of this project was to provide every kind of support to the institutions by appointing an academic staff, organizing Turkish language for general public, arranging summer work experience courses in Turkey for students who wants to learn Turkish language and supplying the institutions with the required technological and educational aids (TIKA, 2010).

Based on the views above, it comes to mind, to what extent Turkish language contributes to the internationalization higher education of Turkey. Çetiner (2011) claimed that the internationalization should not be limited only to foreign language as English, but it would be achieved with Turkish also. As an example he pointed out Turkish schools and universities opened in various part of the world, where Turkish language is thought intensively. According to him through these educational institutions Turkish language was spreading all over the world. The international Turkish Language Olympics, held almost every year in Turkey, are an indication of success and one of the best proofs of widely usage of the Turkish language by thousands of foreign students. He emphasized also the contribution and the role of key actors such as Yunus Emre Institute and TIKA in teaching Turkish language. He found that the internationalization through Turkish is much more convenient in terms of Turkey. Therefore he advanced that it has to be much more heeded than all other methods of internationalization.

Alongside of the information given above on the benefits and the role of the foreign language it is worth to display also the recent developments and practices undertaken by the educational institutions in the Balkans.

## **2.2 Recent Developments in the Balkans**

Currently, there are several international developments in the area of education affecting Balkan countries. The first development in the region was the increase of the number of the universities in these countries as a rapid reaction to the demand for higher education. Having only one or two public universities during the period of Former Yugoslavia in which the medium of instruction was in Serbian, today in Kosovo more than 3 public and more than 5 either in Albanian an English, in Macedonia more then 5 public and 15 private universities giving education either in Macedonian, Albanian and English, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina 9 public and more then 15 private studying in Bosnian and in English.

Second development is the efforts for integration of the Balkan countries into the European Union (EU). An important catalyst in this movement towards the EU was the integration of educational systems - a process popularly known as the Bologna Process, launched in 1999. For the Balkan countries, this process is perceived as “a key driver for

rebuilding and keeping reinvigorating higher education systems that all share a common heritage from their Yugoslav past” (Crosier, Purser & Smidt, 2007, p.70). The general aim of the Bologna Process was the creation of a common European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010 in order to facilitate mobility of students and staff and professional mobility of graduates, promote internationalization and global competitiveness, raise quality and contribute to economic development and growth, enhance European Integration (Heitmann, 2005). By emphasizing the importance of the Bologna Process, Zmas (2012) indicated that “the Bologna Process is an indicative example which leads to accession to the European Union” (p.368). In addition he argued that for the Balkan countries European Union is one of the driving forces for reforming their educational system. Zmas further underlined that reforming the education system is affected by the Bologna Process, which facilitates “the governments of the Post-Communist countries to strengthen the autonomy of their public universities, establish evaluation mechanisms, and permit the operation of private universities” (p.369). Alongside the Bologna Process, Trans-European Mobility Program for University Studies (TEMPUS) program can be regarded as another driving force for reform in the education systems of the Balkan countries, as it enables universities from member countries (including Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia Herzegovina joined the program as of 1996) to cooperate with those in Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Mediterranean partner countries. TEMPUS is one of the European Community programs, which was primarily established to facilitate the processes of transition and reform in partner countries’ higher education systems (EACEA, 2011). This program has, to a large extent, paved the way for modernization of higher education systems in Balkan countries and it has contributed to the professional development of the academic staff by giving them the opportunity to gain experience in their academic fields while working together with program experts in other countries (EACEA, 2013).

Third, the establishment of partnerships and collaboration among the Balkan universities and with other European universities is significant for the development of higher education systems in Balkan countries. Following the nomination of these countries as EU candidates, the Balkan universities have initiated intense relations with universities in the EU and with those in neighboring countries through the above mentioned projects. The Balkan Universities Network, which was established in 2006, is a good example to these intensified relations. It is a regional information network which carries the purposes of promoting the exchange of knowledge and experience in research and education, establishing a system for the mutual recognition of diplomas, increasing student and staff mobility between the member universities and organizing conferences (University of Novi Sad, 2014).

Fourth, the rise in student mobility is another challenge to be addressed. Student

mobility can be explained as students leaving their country of origin for to study abroad in a foreign higher education or for to participate in any academic activities for a period of time. As Kehm (2005) denoted, international student mobility (i.e. reception of foreign students and sending students abroad) is an important indicator for the degree of internationalization in higher education and it is as an issue of economic competitiveness in the areas of attracting talent, wealth creation and brain drain. But what is the situation in those newly founded countries at present in terms of student mobility? Having in mind that these countries are still in a process of reforming and rebuilding their economy and they are still trying to restructure their education systems in order to adjust to the new social and political conditions it can be concluded that they are more likely to be higher education countries sending students and academic staff abroad rather than receiving foreign students or staff. So, great efforts are made to meet the demands of higher education and to come closer to the Western European democratic countries and to come into line with the obligations of the Bologna process. For this purpose the Balkan countries need to develop close cooperation with the all countries in the world. It is observed that many countries like USA, Canada, Germany and various international organization are giving every kind of support. The support and assistance of Turkey could not be underestimated either. In this context, through literature review the following preliminary information was obtained on the latest development in the relations between Turkey and the concerned three Balkan countries in the field of higher education.

Nowadays, there has been a significant growth in the number of students from the Balkans seeking access to Turkish Higher Education. The flow of the students' from one country to another can be attributed to the various reasons. As Wier-Jenssen (2003) stated, the student flow is a consequence of a poor economy or a result from government policy, demands for certain skills or demands for people with international experience, with professional qualifications, language proficiency and cross-cultural understandings. It is obvious that all these motives could be reasons for the flow of the students from Balkans to Turkey as well. For instance, among the various compelling reasons to study in Turkey is granting a bursary for students who succeed in the TCS (Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Akraba Toplulukları Sınavı) (The exam of Turkish Republics and Relative Communities) and YÖS (Yabancı Uyruklu Öğrenci Sınavı) (Examination for Foreign Students) exams organized in cooperation by Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM), Ministry of National Education (MEB) and Higher Education Council (YÖK). Beside the allocation of the scholarships, other major reasons or motives for preferring Turkey for study can be cited as high quality of the educational practices in Turkey, the desire to learn or experience different culture, having relatives in Turkey, liking Turkish people and being familiar to traditions and values of Turkish culture, having relatives in Turkey, distance of the origin country to Turkey, employment

possibilities after graduation (Kondakci, Cetinkaya, & Cakir, 2009). Yet, knowing Turkish language or desire to improve or learn Turkish, the international recognition of the diplomas granted from the Turkish educational institutions, historical ties, ease in visa procedures could also be listed as an important determinant for foreign students in choosing to study in Turkey as well. To illustrate, the number of the new students admitted to Turkish Universities from Bosnia and Herzegovina for the 2006-2007 academic year was 80, for the 2007-2008 academic year was 89, for the 2008-2009 academic year was 110, for 2009-2010 academic year it reached 130, for academic year 2010-2011 it was 258, for 2011-2012 academic year was 151, while this number for 2012-2013 academic year was decreased to 77 (ÖSYM, 2014). As one of the reasons for the drop of the figures regarding the students number as started from the academic year 2010-2011 to 2012-2013 could be cited the opening of two Turkish universities in BiH opened by Turkish entrepreneurs. International Sarajevo University is one of these universities which was enlisted at the OSYM booklet (ÖSYM, 2014). Increase in the number of the students was observed in the number of students coming from Macedonia. The number of the Macedonian students admitted for the 2006-2007 academic year was 57, this number for the 2008-2009 academic year raised to 63 and for the academic year 2009-2010 it reached 83, for academic year 2010-2011 it was 80, for academic year 2011-2012 it was 119 and for academic year it increased to 180. In the same manner the increase in the number of the Kosovar students were also observed. For example, the new admitted Kosovar students to Turkish universities for the academic year 2011-202 was 73, which number in the academic year of 2012-2013 was increased to 309. This growth in the number of the students requires the management of the students mobility, one of the aspects of the internationalization processes which naturally causes a need for more empirical knowledge in this field in order to support the internationalization process in a selected countries.

Another noteworthy activity to be mentioned was TCS (Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Akraba Toplulukları Sınavı) (The exam for Turkish Republics and Relative Communities) and YÖS (The Examination for Foreign Students) exams stated above and scholarships offered by the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı) for students who want to study in Faculties of Theology in Turkey. Information relating to these examination and scholarships are summarized below.

In cooperation with TİKA and Ministry of National Education (MONE) in the framework of the 5-year development plan, a “Great Student Project” is launched in 1992-1993. The aim of this Project was to help Turkic Republics and Relative Communities meet their need of trained human resources and to develop fraternal relations with Turkey and to establish friendship bridges, as well as to teach Turkish and to introduce Turkish culture (Kılıçlar, Sarı, & Seçilmiş, 2012). In the framework of this project TCS (Türk Cumhuriyetleri

ve Akriba Toplulukları Sınavı) (The exam of Turkish Republics and Relative Communities) was held by a commission composed of representatives from Turkish Agencies such as ÖSYM, MONE and HEC. Beside the Turkic Republics, this exam was held in the Balkan countries, mainly in Macedonia, Kosovo, BiH and Albania. The number of students taking this exam was increased every year. There was also a certain number of scholarships allocated each year for the students coming from the Balkans. Students who have no knowledge of the Turkish language are involved in a one-year Turkish language preparation course in TOMER (MEB, 2009).

YÖS (The Examination for Foreign Students) was another exam organized by ÖSYM for foreign students who want to study in Turkish Higher Education Institutions. Although the main center for this exam is Ankara, there are several other centers in Middle Eastern, African and Asian countries. The students in the Balkans region can take this exam in one of the centers located in Tiran (Albania) and Skopje (Macedonia). YÖS was generally held in April of every year. But, there are some special conditions to be fulfilled by those who wish to take YÖS: primarily, the students must hold the nationality of a country other than Turkey; and secondly, they must be in their last year of secondary education in Turkey or must have successfully completed their secondary education in Turkey or in a school equivalent to Turkish lycée and lastly they must meet the requirements of the institution they wish to enroll (ÖSYM, 2006).

Diyanet is very important for Turkish Muslim communities in the Balkans. “The Turkish government uses the Diyanet as an instrument of foreign policy, revealing a continuity in Turkish foreign policy, since the early 1980s, regarding the use of religion as a policy tool” (Çitak, 2009, p.2). Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı) is another institution which offers scholarship to foreign students who wish to enroll in Faculties of Theology. Based on common religious identity, Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) established a series of official links with Muslim Communities in the Balkans. It also paved the way for cooperation with religious leaders, organizations of Islamic Assemblies and carried out a variety of services such as religious education, aid and publications towards perceived dindaş (co-religionists) and soydaş (of common descent) (Bulut, 2004). There is no doubt that these examinations and scholarships allocated by the competent Turkish authorities to the students from the Balkans will have great impact on keeping alive the friendly relations between Turkey and the countries in the region.

The next part will provide picture and background into the changing educational environment, the impact of the changing political conditions on the education system, the efforts of the international organizations to accelerate and implement educational reforms in Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia especially after 1990's.

### **2.2.1 Republic of Kosovo**

Kosovo is a small country located in the mountainous part of former Yugoslavia, with approximately 2.100.000 population, 92% of which are Albanians (1.932.000 inhabitants), and the rests respectively 5, 3% (111.300) Serbs, 0,4% (8.400) Turks, 1,1 % (23.512) Romas, and 1,2 % (24.788) others (PISG, 2006).

Prior to 1990, the Serbian government allowed a certain degree of provincial autonomy in Kosovo, but this situation was soon to be changed by the introduction of Serbian centric constitution, approved by the government in Belgrade. According to this new constitution “Serbia annulled the autonomy of Kosovo and put pressure on the Albanians who formed the majority in the region” (Mumlu, 2010, p.9). In order to control the schools, education system and curriculum in Kosovo, Belgrade put into practice the so called “temporary measures” in 1990 and imposed compliance with the new Serbian curriculum and laws, implemented through the appointment of administrators who were loyal to Belgrade that had absolute powers to dismiss or employ subordinates (Pupovci, 2009). Pupovci further indicated that shortly after the expulsion of the Albanian students from the University of Prishtina –the only bilingual university in Kosovo that had served Albanian and Serbian communities prior to 1991 – the institution was shut down by the regime in Belgrade and the assets of the university and the Serbian academic staff were transferred to Mitrovica (a city with divided loyalties in north Kosovo). During this time, many Kosovar teachers were fired and were forced to follow a unified Serbian curriculum. Closing down Albanian language institutions resulted in the creation of an underground system that posed as a source of alternative education in order to preserve the Albanian heritage and language. Albanian academic community started underground education and resettled in the abandoned buildings of the university in Prishtina (Anderson & Breca, 2005). The only university in Kosovo was split into two, one located in Prishtina following medium of instruction in Albanian language and the other one teaching in Serbian language in Mitrovica. Mitrovica is one of Kosovo's largest Serbian residential districts where many ethnic clashes took place during and after the war, following the declaration of Kosovo's independence in 2008. The political developments and the situation in Kosovo were not supported nor approved by Belgrade. So, the civil war which erupted in 1999 made schooling impossible for Albanian Kosovars (Anderson & Breca, 2005). At the end of this war, Kosovo emerged as a United Nations protectorate and began to be administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). When UNMIK took over the administration of Kosovo from Serbia and gradually passed the control over to Kosovo Provisional Institution of Self Government (PISG), the new government received recognition only from Kosovo's Albanians, while Serbian Kosovars,

following the advice and directions of the Serbian authorities, refused to participate in any educational reform put into practice by international or local administrations (Pupovci, 2009).

Serbian communities in Mitrovica, who descended to a minority status in that part of the country, decided that the institute in Mitrovica was of vital importance for them. However, Kosovo's Ministry of Education did not recognize this institution for a long time, considering it illegal since they had no access to it (Tahirsylaj, 2008). Previously located in Prishtina, then moved to Kosovska Mitrovica in 2002, the university in Mitrovica was granted an accreditation license by UNMIK and it was renamed the University of Mitrovica – a move that aimed at calming the tension over the name. But the debate continued over the recognition of the university in Northern Mitrovica, dominated by former Serbian faculty and administrators (Sommers & Buckland, 2004). After the war, significant and positive changes have been identified in the area of higher education toward alignment with the Bologna process (Vula & Saqipi, 2009). Both universities in Kosovo (University of Prishtina and Mitrovica) have signed the Bologna declaration. In the framework of the Bologna reform it is seen that the University of Mitrovica is included in Serbian Bologna process, while Kosovo Higher Education Bologna process includes both universities and this is the first common ground (to work towards European higher education goals) the universities shared since the institution was divided into two. As stated above, the University of Mitrovica “falls into an overlap of Kosovo's and Serbia's Bologna process” (Heath, 2009, p.155). As Heath (2009) noted, higher education in Kosovo is very important and its complex political history had an impact on educational provisions, reforms and developments implemented in the postwar period. Despite the goodwill of the international organizations, each and every radical change was met with opposition, while those international organizations received lessons on the complex political and multi-ethnic situation in Kosovo (Heath, 2009).

One of the significant projects implemented right after the war in the area of education was the Kosovo Educator Development Program (KEDP) sponsored by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (Popovci, 2009). According to this program, efforts were spent to help Kosovo's authorities in building a new Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), courses were organized to train the ministerial officials in management and leadership techniques, to train the school directors and teachers in learner-centered curriculum methods. These courses were held with the intentions to lead the teacher education reform and support new policies in this sector.

“Parallel worlds. Rebuilding the education system in Kosovo” is another fairly comprehensive research conducted in 2002 by Sommers and Buckland (2004). By analyzing the education system in Kosovo after the post-war period, the researchers expressed their perspectives, concerns and diverse experiences on education with the aim to highlight the

social and political issues related to educational planning and management in Kosovo. In their study, they pointed out the significant contribution of the UNESCO-IIEP (International Institute for Educational Planning) (with the partnership of World Bank Human Development Network-Education) in the area of education in the post-war situation in Kosovo. They mention also about the difficulties, complexity and conflicts that had broke out between the educators and officials from different groups. Being aware of the weight of the situation in Kosovo at that period, Sommers and Buckland (2004) denoted that it is not easy to reconstruct the education system while it is in the middle of the conflict. They pointed out the financial difficulties faced by teachers and emphasized that low wages means low quality in education. In addition to these comments, they said that “inequities caused by United Nations rate scales established early by UNMIK era are appeared to be unintentional as well” (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p.54). Problems they noticed are listed as followings: low salaries, \$100 per month, decentralized university system (e.g. university of Prishtina has 14 faculties, 6 higher schools and more than 19000 students, each faculty has its own entrance examinations). Need to raise the academic standards to meet those of Europe (reference to Bologna process). Movements towards establishing of a “Central Administration” and European standards (3 years to attain bachelors degree, 5 years for Masters degree and 8 years for a Doctorate). Other reforms are underway. (p.62).

Reform efforts encompassed all aspects in education system in Kosovo (Vula & Saqipi, 2009). The establishment of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in 2002 was the most notable development realized during this period of reforms. Responsible for the advancement of education in Kosovo, the above-mentioned Ministry's primary “aim is integrating society into regional, European and global developments and trends” (Vula & Saqipi, 2009, p.24). Several international donors such as UNESCO, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), European Union (EU) and Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) contributed to the formulation of educational policies especially in the areas of teacher education and curriculum developments. Wide efforts are spent to struggle with the resistance to change and several enduring issues concerning the budgeting process, recruitment and compensation of teachers are being attempted to be resolved (Anderson & Breca, 2005). But, Zmas (2012) claimed that despite the international aids provided to Kosovo for the improvement of textbooks and curricula, educational inequalities remain, particularly against minorities (p.371).

In addition to the public Universities (University of Prishtina and Mitrovica), university in Prizren the activity of the private universities, established in the postwar period, have also had some positive effect on the improvement of education in Kosovo. Some of these universities can be listed as American University, University of Business and Technology in

Prishtina, ILIRIA Royal University and European Vision University.

Another important development in Kosovo is the establishment of a Center of Research for Turcology in the Balkans in 2000 (BALTAM). Located in Prizren, the main aim of this research center is to investigate the Turkish culture in the Balkans throughout history, to determine the impact of Turkish culture on the lifestyles of other indigenous people, to be able to provide assistance to all kinds of social and cultural developments of the nations and to contribute to the research made in this directions (BALTAM, 2011).

After proclamation of its sovereignty, Kosovo has attracted the attention of Turkish universities as well. According to media reports, there was an initiative to open a satellite campus on the part of Middle East Technical University (METU) in Kosovo. Preliminary negotiations between local authorities and METU representatives were held in July 2008 (KTTO, web site, 2011).

In order to better understand the historical development of teaching Turkish in Kosovo one should go back to the time when Ottoman Turks conquered Kosovo in 1455 and extended its rule over Kosovo for approximately five hundred years. Sofuoğlu and Topsakal (2007) refer to the information obtained from the Ottoman Archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry and they report that establishment of new educational institutions (such as Faculty of Education and Faculty of Law), arrangement of prep classes for teaching Turkish language, the switch from day schools to boarding schools, increases in wages of the teachers, and the administration of community schools are a few examples of some of the administrative regulations within Kosovo's educational system introduced by the Ottomans at that time.

Although Kosovo gained independence on February in 2008, its status has not been finalized yet at international level. Like other international organizations, EU is still seeking a diplomatic solution to settle this problem by mobilizing all of its efforts to provide help Kosovo in the area of economy, politics, education and etc. (Europa, 2010). Olli Rehn (2007), European Commissioner for Enlargement, in his speech on the future of Kosovo and the role of the European Union (EU), underlined the need of supporting the report and proposal of the UN Special Envoy President Ahtisaari, “designed to foster building of a democratic multi-ethnic society in Kosovo based on the rule of law” (Europa, 2010, p.2). By recalling the special responsibility of Europe to Kosovo, he indicated that, in cooperation with other international communities, EU must continue to assist Kosovo in achieving economic development and political stability.

### **2.2.2 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The days of bloody battle started after the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) proclamation of independence in March 1992. This decision of BH was opposed by Serbian representatives

and led to conflict which lasted up to intervention of the United Nations and NATO forces. After all, with the contribution of the United States the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed in 1995 which ended the war and resulted in establishing of a Federation hosting within the three ethnic groups so called “constituent peoples” with population approximately 4.5 million, %48 of them are Bosniak, %37 Serb, 14.3% Croat, (acc. to the estimates in 2008) (MFA of BiH, 2011). The state is politically decentralized, consist of two governing entities, namely the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (%51) and Republika Srpska (%49), both of which have separate governments and Parliaments and the third region which is under arbitration, the Brčko District, a separate district under the authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (MFA of BiH, 2011).

Following the Dayton Accords, significant efforts have been made by the international communities (e.g., the leading international civil agency is the Office of the Higher Representative (OHR)) to restore the peace and stability in BiH (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2009). Still regarded as transition economy, the country, besides the needs to take urgent steps on revitalization of its economy, meaningful progress should be done in education sectors as well.

BiH does not have a central Ministry of Education. Education system is highly decentralized because BiH is a Federation divided into 10 cantons, each of which has its own Ministry of Education, carrying high levels of authority over educational polices. In his work Sabic-El-Rayess (2009) describes the major changes that took place during the post war period in Bosnian higher education and he reports how Bosnian Croats in the Herzegovina region tend to distance their educational system from that of the Bosnians. The study gives the example of the University of Mostar, which is divided into two universities: one belonging to the Bosnians and the other to the Croats. The research gives further information on how the politicians from Croatian and Serbian communities are trying to preserve their ethnic domination over the educational system in Bosnia and the efforts of the international institutions to bring Bosnia's higher education in line with the Bologna obligations. Finally, Sabic-El-Rayess claimed that

Should higher education system in Bosnia continue to exist without unifying, intercultural and tolerant educational identity, the question of Bosnia's survival as a political entity will remain open, continuing to destabilize the region of the Balkans and beyond (p.427).

The contribution of Turkey to developments in the field of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be underestimated. Turkish Language and Literature Department in the Faculty of Philosophy in Tuzla University was established in the framework of a protocol signed between Tuzla University and TIKA in 2001 for a period of 6 years. According to this protocol, the academic staff are appointed by TIKA from among the ranks of faculty members in Turkish universities, especially from Ankara University (College of Linguistics, History

and Geography) and Sakarya University. In addition, books, teaching material and other tools needed by the department are also covered in the framework of the aforementioned protocol (Yunus Emre Bülteni, 2009). Beside TIKA, institutions such as Turkish Battalion in Zenica, Sakarya University, Anadolu Kalkınma Vakfi and some others are also providing support to the department (TIKA, 2010).

There is another Turkish Department within the Oriental Institute of the University of Sarajevo. In this Department, scientific research is done on Ottoman Empire and BiH's general and cultural history. But regrettably, the unfortunate events of May 1992 led to the destruction of certain documents of value including Ottoman archives, books, journals and manuscripts existing in the Institute's library. With the help of Turkish State Archives, BiH Science and Arts Academy and Foundations Archive, and the Cadastre and Land Registry Records were able to obtain parts of certain documents of primary importance for the BiH history as photocopies or in the form of microfilms and CDs.

International University in Sarajevo (IUS) established by the Foundation of Educational Development in Sarajevo is one of the most important strategic educational projects monitored and supported by various senior managers and investors in Turkey. The University signed international cooperation agreements with various universities in the world, among which are a number of Turkish universities (e.g. Marmara University, Istanbul Commerce University, Karabuk University, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Istanbul University, Yalova University and Yıldız Technical University)(IUS web site).

Another important educational institution in BiH is the Faculty of Theology. It is a unique faculty, accepted by the BiH Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as a legal part of the state university intended to make Islamic researches.

### **2.2.3 Republic of Macedonia**

The Ministry of Education and Science is the governmental body responsible for educational policies and issues at every level in the Republic of Macedonia.

Before 1989, Macedonia had a uniform system of education, which meant that all inputs were strictly controlled by the state. But after independence, Macedonia followed intensive educational reforms like the other former Yugoslavian Republics, in an attempt to compensate for the shortcomings of the past: liberalization policies, using different types of teaching methods and curricula and attempts to restructure the teacher education. Resistance from the academic staff (hierarchy between professors in teaching some courses, mandatory courses etc.) opposed the successful implementation of the reforms. In comparison to the other two countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo), Macedonia achieved its independence with a lesser number of problems, experiencing a long period of time away from unrest and

bloodshed. But the situation later deteriorated from one of a peaceful co-existence to times of peril. Macedonia became a scene of ethnic conflict between Albanians and Macedonians, each fighting for status and government participation (OECD, 2004). Meanwhile, Albanians are the largest non-Macedonian group, who demanded the establishment of Albanian language schools, while reminiscing the distant memories in which they had had access to the University of Prishtina before the autonomous status of Kosovo was abolished. The refusal of this demand (on the grounds that this would provide a special treatment for the Albanians over other minorities in Macedonia) did not prevent the ethnic Albanians from establishing the Albanian University in Tetovo in 1994-1995 – a move declared as illegal by the governmental authorities who reacted to the situation by forcibly closing down the university (Poulton, 2000, Gangloff, 2001). Struggle for power was inevitably reflected in the educational system and affected the university structure at large (Clarkson, 2005).

The first political solution to the problem of higher education in the Albanian language was the Law on Higher Education in 2000 (Higher Education Act) – a basis to reform the universities and higher education, providing rights to higher education in the communities' own languages, albeit at non-state institutions. Prior to 2000, higher education in Macedonia was delivered exclusively in Macedonian language, except some language courses and training courses in Albanian in Pedagogical Faculty of the state university Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (Soptrajanov & Thomas, 2001). In accordance with this new act the South Eastern University (SEEU) was established in 2001 with the support of the international organizations (the largest donation from USA and the Kingdom of Netherlands). This University, located in the western part of Macedonia, was founded as a response to the demands for recognizing the higher education in Albanian language (Farrington, 2006). As it is known, the western region of Macedonia is dominantly inhabited by Albanian-speakers who have close historical family ties with the Albanian dominated Kosovo. Thus, SEE University is the first legally constituted and formally recognized university that aimed at contributing to the solution of the problem of Albanian language in higher education (OECD, 2004).

The second political solution with attempt to stabilize the situation just after the conflict in 2001, in the framework of the Ohrid Agreement, resulted in amending the act of 2000 and producing a new law on higher education in 2003, giving rights to higher education in communities' own languages in state founded institutions, provided that the Macedonian language is also taught. According to this new law, Tetovo State University was created as a new state institution by the Macedonian Parliament since the former one was not recognized.

Despite the difficult economic situations negative effects on educational system (leading to restriction and preventing it from development), there are various reforms implemented among which the reform is supported by Education Modernization Project and

funded by World Bank and Government of the Netherlands. This project includes providing in-service training for teachers.

In the line of Bologna process the Law on Amending the Law on higher education was adopted in 2003. Tempus Phare Program of European Union was applied as well. This program stimulated the change from tight control of the curriculum and dominance of a theory to a more autonomous learning and school partnership in practice (Clarkson, 2005).

In 2005, the Parliament adopted a National Strategy for the Development of Education, which envisages many reforms at all levels of education, such as promoting social partnership, lifelong learning, increasing the opportunities for student's mobility etc.

Another significant development in the domain of education is foundation of the institutions such as National Agency for Evaluation of Higher Education and the National Accreditation Board, which are responsible for the quality assurances in education.

In addition to the two states universities established in the period of the former Yugoslavia, the most attractive state and private universities founded after the liberalization policies in the area of education are listed below:

1. Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje – the first and the oldest university established in 1949.

2. St. Clement of Ohrid University of Bitola – the second state university founded in 1979 in Bitola.

3. Goce Delchev University of Stip – founded after independence in 2007.

4. University for Information Science and Technology “St.Paul the Apostle” in Ohrid – newly founded in 2009, the medium of instruction is in English.

5. State University of Tetovo – established previously in 1994, but not recognized by the government of Macedonia until 2004. Currently the lectures in this university are held mostly in Albanian, also in Macedonian and English.

Private universities and faculties in Macedonia:

1. South East European University – the biggest and first private university founded in 2001 by an agreement between international donors and government of the Republic of Macedonia. It offers program in Albanian, Macedonian and English.

2. International University of Struga – with two campuses based in Struga and Gostivar, established in 2005, with program in Albanian, Macedonian, English and Turkish.

3. FON University – the second private university founded in 2002. It is the first university in Macedonia to implement the Bologna requirements and European Credit Transfer System. This university signed a protocol with the TOBB university of Economics and Technology from Ankara in 2009 (FON university web site).

4. University American College Skopje - established in 2005.

5. European University - Republic of Macedonia - received accreditation in 2005.

6. International Balkan University – founded by Skopje Education and Culture Development Foundation in 2006 and recognized by the Turkish High Education Institution (YÖK). This university cooperated with many universities in Turkey such as Sabancı University, Yalova University, Trakya University, Kırklareli University, Istanbul University, Istanbul Commerce University, Istanbul Kültür University, Yıldız Teknik University and Boğaziçi University (IBU, 2011). A number of Turkish students are studying in this university. Trakya University is the contract part of this university.

In the line of the discussions above it can be concluded that all three countries undergone many reforms in order to restructure and rebuild their education systems. They have been given an assistance by international communities including Turkey. Turkey still is giving every kind of support by establishing cooperation or partnerships with the universities in the region, by quota allocation for the students or carrying out some cross-cultural activities in terms of joint project, conferences or in form of donation for educational equipments etc. Therefore, Turkey is assumed to be a country of interest for many reasons.

### **2.3 Islamic Higher Education in the Balkans**

As it is known, Balkan countries are multi-ethnic and multi-religious in structure. The ethnic and religious differences of the internal and external powers during the radical changes of the late 1980s caused ethnic crises, which led to the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia (Mitrovic, 2007). According to Mitrović, one of the reasons for these crises was “the culturological paradigm or the conflict of different cultural and religious orientations” (p.17). Kagioglidis (2009), by emphasizing the importance of religious education, cited the contribution of religious education in the struggle against Islamic extremism. According to Darko Tanaskovic (2008), Islam in the Balkans is a very complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon that “it exists not only in the Balkans but also deep within the Balkans” (p.9). He argued that the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia has an impact on the Islamic social component. He further argues that the civil wars and fighting in Kosovo and Macedonia were the driving forces behind the changes in Muslim communities in their relations with non-Muslim communities. Barisic (2007) also stated that these changes in the Balkans affected to a great extent the Islamic communities' reorganization (p.35). In addition, he indicated that the “Balkan Muslims, after the independence of the countries in this region became an integral part of the Balkans and as well significant actors in the history of the modern Balkans creation” (p.29). Abazovic (2007) also mentioned the influence of religion on politics and the emergence of Muslims as an important political actor during the ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, while Machacek (2009) stated that the enlargement of the European Union towards South

Eastern European countries would contribute and change the understanding of the reality of Islam.

Although the impact of religious education is acknowledged today, it did not always receive the attention it deserved. Alibasic (2010) stated that Islamic higher education underwent a recession period during the communist period. The only institution of Islamic higher education in the region – the Higher Islamic Theological School in Sarajevo, was closed in 1946. But after reconciling with the Muslim world, the Yugoslav regime allowed Islamic higher education to be re-established in 1977. He further indicated that the radical changes in late 1980s in South Eastern Europe influenced Islamic higher education as well. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Islamic Institutions were re-opened in many Balkan countries, including BiH, Macedonia and Kosovo. As Tanaskovic (2008) argued, the period of democratization brought a “boom” of Islamic religious schooling in all Balkan countries, especially where Muslims were great in numbers (p.13). The major Islamic higher education institutions in the Balkan countries under research presented in the study of Alibasic (2010) are as follows:

1. Faculty of Islamic Studies Sarajevo/BiH established in 1977. According to Barisic (2007) it is the oldest, the most prestigious and important institution in South Eastern Europe. This Faculty had many graduates who occupied different positions as politicians, academicians and intellectuals etc. In 2004 this faculty was attached to the University of Sarajevo and it offers graduate and undergraduate programs and undertakes academic researches in the field of Islamic studies and related disciplines.

2. Faculty of Islamic Studies of Prishtina, Kosovo was established in 1992 after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. It is Kosovo's first Faculty of Islamic Studies, which attracts Albanian speaking students. Teachers are Albanian. The Faculty offers a four-year program. On the other hand there is one Islamic High School that is called Alauddin Medrasa in Prishtina. Both of these institutions are under the administration of the Islamic Community of Kosovo.

3. The Faculty of Islamic Education in Zenica of BiH, was established in 1993 to meet the need of training public school teachers of religious education. It offers a two-year vocational program.

4. The Faculty of Islamic Education in Bihach of BiH was founded in 1996. Although it had the best building and dormitory facilities, it was the smallest one in terms of its student population. It was initially established to offer a two-year program, but later became a faculty with a three-year program.

5. Faculty of Islamic Studies in Skopje of Macedonia was established in 1997. It is the main Islamic higher education institution in Macedonia and the language of instruction is

Albanian. In addition to this institution, there is also the Isa Bey Madrasa, which is run by the Islamic Community in Macedonia as a religious secondary school, which was established in 1984.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

In this chapter the research design of the study is presented. Next, information about the relevant topics including research questions that guided the study, research context, data sources and data collection instruments are given. In addition data collection procedures and data analysis are explained in detail. The limitation and delimitation of the study are described. Finally, trustworthiness of the study (validity and reliability issues) is discussed.

#### 3.1 Design of the Study

The qualitative study is a type of educational research in which the researchers are focusing mainly on understanding the situations and events from the point of the participants involved in the study. In contrast to quantitative research in qualitative studies data are collected in the form of words rather than numbers (Punch, 2009). Thus, one of the strengths of the qualitative studies is to provide complex textual information. There are varieties of definitions on qualitative study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) “research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials are frequently referred to as qualitative research” (p.430). Merriam (1998) defined the qualitative study as “an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with a little disruption of the natural setting as possible” (p.5). Similarly, Bogdan & Biklen (1998) argued that they use the qualitative research “as an umbrella term to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics” (p.2).

This study was constructed on the qualitative research tradition and basic or generic qualitative study design was employed. According to Merriam the term basic or generic qualitative study “refers to studies that exemplify the characteristics of the qualitative research” (p.11).

#### 3.2 Research Questions

The specific research questions and sub questions covered by the study were as the followings:

1. What is the current state of the relationships between Turkey and the Balkan countries in the field of higher education?

- a. What are the practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries in the field of higher education?
  - b. What are the political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education toward the Balkan countries?
2. What are the expectations of different stakeholders in the Balkan countries from Turkey in relation to higher education?
  - a. What are the practices undertaken by the Balkan countries in order to enhance cooperation in higher education with Turkey?
  - b. What are the political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey?

### **3.3 Research Context**

Data collection was carried out between February 2011 and May 2012. Gathering of data for this study were restricted to Balkan countries located in the South East of Europe namely Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo including Turkey.

Different social, political, cultural, economic, and academic reasons justify the selection of these countries. Firstly, these countries are newly founded, "countries in transition" formed after 1990's following the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Hence, they needed extensive foreign supports in their economic, social and political transformation. Secondly, the largest number of Turkish communities and the majority of the Muslim population are found to be in these countries in compare to other countries (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro), which are also established as a result of dissolution of former Yugoslavia. From the estimates of the Muslim population in the Balkan countries (Kettani, 2010) (Appendix A), it is seen that the majority of the Muslim population was in Kosovo, that is approximately %93,52, thereafter in Bosnia Herzegovina %43,80 and lastly in Macedonia %33,33. Thirdly, these countries are the most damaged, due to the war occurred in their territories. Lastly, these countries are having deep historical and cultural ties with Turkey, inherited from common history with the Ottoman era.

Considering the unique political, economic, historical, and cultural characteristics of these countries and the dynamics of the ties between these countries and Turkey it can be argued that they offer a unique perspective on higher education internationalization. Hence, the Balkans on the one hand, offer a way of internationalization in higher education and on the other, the same context illustrate how higher education can be used as a tool beyond its declared function, namely academic function. In that sense, cooperation in higher education in the Balkans potentially extends our understanding of regionalization and internationalization.

### **3.4 Sampling and Participants**

This study focused on formal higher educational policies and informal practices of Turkey toward three Balkan countries and expectations of these three countries from Turkey. The formulation of the research questions and the purpose of the study have given an idea about where to conduct and whom to include as participants in the study. Four criteria are considered in selecting the participants. Keeping in mind the purpose of the study, the first criterion was to select the participants who are directly or indirectly involved in the education processes, closely related and knowledgeable about the subject of study. The second criterion was providing diversity of the participants. So, different stakeholders from various governmental institutions, academic environments and education research centers or non-governmental organizations were involved in the study. The third criterion was to select participants that could be accessed easily and the fourth that were willing to participate. The process of selecting the individuals or events to be involved in the study is defined as sampling, which constitute one of the important stages in the research study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

In qualitative educational studies the often used type of sampling is purposeful sampling (deliberate sampling). In this type of sampling the idea of the researchers is to select deliberately the individuals, who can provide an information for the explaining of the research problem or phenomenon (Creswell, 2005). As Patton (2002) stated, the logic and power of purposeful sampling derive from the emphasis on in-depth understanding. In other words, in this type of sampling in searching contextual understanding of a phenomenon the researchers intentionally select the individuals with particular characteristics, who can provide a useful detailed information regarding the subject to be investigated by which the researcher be able to answer the research questions of the study. In line with the statements above, in this study, since the aim is to study in-depth information-rich cases, purposeful sampling was used for the selection of participants.

There are variety of qualitative purposeful sampling strategies identified in the literature that differ among themselves in terms of whether they are applied before or after data collection, or have a different intent, regarding the research problem, question or the phenomenon to be studied (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 1990; Punch, 2009 ).

However, Punch (2009) pointed that the sampling strategies to be chosen “need to line up with the research purposes and the research questions” (p.165). Patton (1990) also emphasized the importance of careful selection of the sampling strategy by saying that it “must be selected to fit the purpose of the study, the resources available, the questions being asked, and the constraints being faced” (p.181).

In this sense, some decisions about the sampling strategies were made before initiation of the study. For example, in the context of the research questions, there is a need to gain a

greater understanding of the educational practices undertaken by Turkey in higher education from different perspectives. In this study maximal variation sampling strategy was utilized (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 1990). It is a type of purposeful sampling strategy for the selection of the participants applied before data collection in which the researcher is looking for participants who have a common experience but differ on some characteristics or traits (Langdrige, 2007). According to Punch (2009) maximal variation sampling strategy documents divers' variations and identifies important common patterns (p.163). Having in mind the purpose of the study it was sampled the individuals directly or indirectly involved in the education process or working in the field of education. By this way three subgroups were identified. First subgroup consist of key decision makers from governmental institutions, the second, of the faculty members from academic environments and third, of other persons from institutions such as association or educational research centers, who were invited to take part in the study. Besides, after some interviews snowball sampling strategy was also implemented to identify additional participants for the sample. This type of sampling method is used during or after the data collection especially to reach a group or individuals that are not easily accessible through other types of sampling strategies (Creswell, 2005; Patton, 1990). Accordingly, in this study, at the end of the interview or during the informal conversations a request was conveyed to the participants for recommendation of other information rich individuals, who might be usefully interviewed.

In qualitative studies, deciding about the sample size of the participants is very difficult, because there are no definite rules to be followed (Boeije, 2010; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Patton 1990). The sample size always depends on the questions to be asked or what is to be learned, the purpose of the research, the data to be collected, what can be done with available resources and etc. (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). According to the interpretations of Creswell (2005) "in qualitative research it is typical to study a few individuals or a few cases, because the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site" (p.207). He proposed a sample size ranging from 1 or 2 to 30 or 40. On the other hand, Mason (2010) indicated that among various factors (purpose, method and sampling strategies, time, resources etc.) that can affect the sample size in a qualitative research, the concept of "data saturation" should be taken as guiding principle. In other words, "data-collection interviews continued until the topic was exhausted or saturated, that is when interviewees (subjects or informants) introduced no new perspectives on the topic"(Groenewald, 2004, p.11).

In this respect, at the beginning of the study it was planned to interview about 30 participants. But as the need to obtain more data and information snowball effect was applied, which increased the number of the interviewees totally to 53. Consequently, the sample of

the study is composed of 53 interviewees, 24 governmental of which 11 from Balkan (BLK) countries and 13 from Turkey (TR), 22 academicians of which 14 from BLK countries and 8 from Turkey and 7 association of which 4 from BLK countries and 3 from Turkey. The distribution of the interview participants according to the various stakeholder subgroups are presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1.

*The Number of the Interview Participants According to the Subgroups*

<b>Subgroups</b>	<b>Kosovo</b>	<b>Macedonia</b>	<b>Bosnia</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Total number</b>
Balkan governmental officials	6	4	1		11
Turkish governmental officials in the Balkan countries	3	3	2		8
Governmental officials in Turkey				5	5
Balkan academicians in the Balkan countries	6	5	3		14
Turkish Academicians in the Balkan countries		2	4		6
Turkish Academicians in Turkey				2	2
Balkan Representative of the Associations	2	2			4
Turkish Representative of the Associations in the Balkans		1	1		2
Turkish Representatives of the Associations in Turkey				1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>53</b>

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

One of the important aspects of the qualitative studies is identifying the data collection instruments. As Patton (2002) stated interviews, observations of the participants (taking field notes) and document analysis are the primary sources of qualitative data. By taking into account the purpose of the study, these three basic qualitative data collection techniques were utilized for collecting the data of this study: interviews (semi-structured in-depth interview), field notes taken during the site visits and document analysis.

First, interviews were conducted with key participants from different groups of stakeholder organizations (e.g., governmental institutions, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations). Interviews are the most frequently used forms which allows the researcher to explore deeply the perspectives, perceptions and feelings of the persons

interviewed on the subjects or things that are not always possible to observe. As Merriam (1998) stated “the main purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information” (p.71). Accordingly, Patton (1990) indicated that, “the data obtained from interviews consist of direct quotations from participants about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge” (p.10).

Second, written documents were collected during or after the interviews. Documents provide valuable information in helping researcher to confirm the data obtained from the participants in order to understand the subject better (Creswell, 2006). In accordance with the purpose of this study written text such as agreements copies, books, booklets, brochures, web sites of the institutions were analyzed to support the interview data and field notes.

Finally, based on observations during site visits, field notes (descriptive and reflective) were also taken. These notes help and ease the researcher to organize the data in a logical way (Patton, 2002). Reflective notes as comments on emerging themes were also taken for using in later analysis.

One important way to strengthen the study design of the study can be provided through triangulation, which means cross-checking the consistency of the findings by using of multiple methodologies or strategies (Patton, 1990). Four types of triangulation were suggested by Patton (1990): data triangulation, which means the use of different data sources; investigator triangulation, in which different researchers or evaluators were employed; theory triangulation, which means applying of multiple perspectives in interpretation of single set of data and methodological triangulation, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program ( p.187). In this study, triangulating data source, or a combination of multiple way of data collection (using of interviews, document analysis and field notes) was used in order to validate the data obtained in the study.

Summary of data collection instrument and data sources are presented in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2

*Data Collection Instrument and Data Sources*

<b>Data Collection Instrument</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>
Interview	Governmental officials Faculty Members Representatives of Associations
Documents	Institutions web sites Books Booklets Brochures Others (agreements copy, protocols)
Field notes	Descriptive and Reflective Notes

In the next part the information about the development of the interview schedules, documents review and the documents collected during the interview process in each countries including Turkey and explanation on field notes taken during the site visits.

### **3.5.1 Interview schedules**

In qualitative studies the interview is accepted as the most convenient method for data collection when researchers want to obtain in-depth information or want to understand fully the impressions, experiences or opinions of the persons about the particular events (Lichtman, 2010; Punch, 2009). Therefore in interviews the focus is mainly on the participant's own point of view, because the aim is to obtain rich and detailed information about the topic studied. In this sense, different kinds of interviews were suggested in the literature, depending on the form of the interviewing and the structure of the questions asked during the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Cresswell, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Punch, 2009). In the light of the explanations above, in this study one-on-one interviews alongside with the semi-structured interviews were employed to interview different stakeholder groups indicated in the section above. Flexibility is the main advantage of this type of interview, the questions may not be asked exactly as they are outlined in the interview guide, and additional follow up questions may be asked regarding the things participants said (Merriam, 1998). Having in mind the purpose of the study different interview guides (a set of questions on the topic) were developed by the researcher for different participant groups on the basis of the literature review on a related subject and the research questions at hand. Since it was not possible to follow the same interview guides for different stakeholders, the semi-structured interview schedules was slightly modified to address the different stakeholders. The questions were formulated in a way that researcher can answer the research questions in the study. In addition the questions are ordered in a way that can be altered during the interview. Examples of different interview guides are presented in the attachment (see Appendix B). The interview guides was developed in Turkish originally, then translated into English. It was checked by the expert in the educational sciences for the scope, the depth of the questions, theoretical framework, the ordering and length.

As it is mentioned earlier, by theorizing on the concept of internationalization in higher education, the phenomenon to be covered in this study is related to investigating higher education policies and practices of Turkey towards Balkan countries and the rationales behind these policies in a comparative perspective. Therefore, prior to the interview, having in mind that the internationalization forms the framework of this study, special attention was given to ensure that all participants in the Balkans region and Turkey would understand correctly the

concept of internationalization defined in the interview protocol. As it is known the purpose of gathering responses to open-ended questions was to enable the researcher to understand and capture the points of view of other people (Patton, 2002). Thus, a series of semi-structured open ended questions were implemented in order to be able to investigate the current state of the relationship between Turkey and the Balkan nations and to determine the expectations of the Balkan countries from Turkey. Semi-structured open-ended questions were also implemented in seeking an answer to the importance, reasons and priorities of the practices undertaken by the institution in the field of higher education from the perspectives of the different groups of stakeholders (administrators from governmental institutions, academic institutions, and various specialized agencies such as association or educational research centers). Additionally, the interview contained items on the profile (as mission and vision) of the institution that participants are employed. The responses received from the participants on these items helped the researcher to interpret better the findings of the study from different points. The interview guide also contained open-ended questions (requiring narrative responses) requesting some detailed explanations of problems faced while implementing educational activities, questions about the benefits of investing in the activities such as joint projects, institutional agreements, intercultural activities, student mobility, recognition of diplomas, credit transfers, and learning Turkish language. The participants were asked as well to indicate what measures have been taken in order to enhance and strengthen the international collaboration and partnership between the institutions of Turkey and related countries. In addition they were requested to specify which area needs special attention and to consider the causes or the driving forces behind these international efforts. By this way it was possible to explore the rationales behind the practices in efforts to realize the cooperation between Turkey and Balkan countries in regard to higher education. The interviews were employed face-to-face, and sometimes additional follow up questions were asked to participants in order to clarify and describe further in detail the topic found relevant to the research questions. In order to reduce the impact of the researcher's role on the responses the researcher take care of not asking leading questions during the interview.

### **3.5.2 Document reviews (second source of data)**

Collecting documents supply the researcher with valuable information that can ensure a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2005).

In this context, other sources of data in the form of documents, such as written materials, books, booklets, agreement copies etc. which provide information on higher education and educational activities of Turkey, were collected during the interviews in each country under investigation. These documents are deemed extremely valuable in the sense that

they provided cross-checks for the interviews and confirmation of the statements of the participants. By applying triangulating data source strategy (employing of multiple data collection methods), the researcher aimed to reduce the biases in the data obtained and to enhance the reliability of the findings. For example, one of the emerging themes in interviews with the governmental officials in Kosovo was the western orientation of the education system of Kosovo. This situation is confirmed in the book named “Strategy for Development of Pre-university Education in Kosovo”, which was collected during the interview with the Kosovar authorities. This book further provided testament to the above mentioned phenomenon in a section that addresses the need to align the education system of Kosovo with the European trends. Another example can be illustrated from the book published by Kosovo Turkish Teachers Association named “Turkish Education in Kosovo, Problems and Solutions”, which provides information on Turkish language teaching in Kosovo. The information given in this book strengthens the theme on “the multiethnic structure in Kosovo”. By drawing attention to the problems encountered with regards to Turkish language training in Kosovo, the publication emphasizes the need to support the Turkish minority in order to raise their level of education and to level the playing field with other communities in Kosovo. In conclusion, the documents collected during the site visits confirm the information obtained from the participants and provided further information on the institutions, organizations and participants that helped the researcher understand more comprehensively the relations in the field of education between Turkey and the Balkan countries.

Documents used as second source of data collected from each countries are included in Appendix C.

### **3.5.3 Fieldnotes**

While the interview is recorded by using audio-recorder device, taking fieldnotes (in form of phrases, key points etc.) based on the observations was applied concurrently. Bogdan & Biklen (1998) defined fieldnotes as “written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in qualitative study” (p.108). According to them field notes can be divided into two types: first, descriptive in which the observer effort objectively to record the details of the participants, settings actions, while the second is reflective in which the researcher records thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns based on the observations and interviews. To clarify, taking fieldnotes is a way of recording data by the side of the researcher, including description on what is being experienced, observed and containing views, interpretations and thinks about the processes occurred during the data collection (Patton, 1990; Groenewald, 2004). As Creswell (2005) suggested for taking fieldnotes observational protocol can be used. He describe this protocol as a kind of form in which the researcher records two kinds of data: a description of the

activities (in a chronological way the events happened during the observation) and a reflection (comments about the results or insights) about themes, quotes and personnel experience of the researcher for later analysis. Thus, in this study descriptive notes were taken by the researcher in the form of observational protocol during the interviews and immediately documented after the interviews to remember and record accurately in a chronology the factual data in detail such as time, date, behaviors, activities, events, and other features happened in the interview setting. By taking fieldnotes it was aimed to clarify interview procedures and specify the context of the study. In this study descriptive fieldnotes taken during the interviews were helpful in categorizing of the transcribed text of the interviews according to the stakeholders subgroups in order to follow logical sequence before the preparation of the data for analysis. On the other hand fieldnotes were taken also during the content analysis of the transcribed data in form of some comments, phrases regarding the emerging themes and expressions of the participants interviewed which facilitated the researcher work during analyzing of the data and gave clues for discussion. Fieldnotes taken during the interviews and immediately after the interview held in each countries served a guide for the researcher to describe the interview procedures in detail (duration of the interview, the attitudes of the participants on the request for interview, the issues mainly emphasized). In addition, fieldnotes helped the researcher in creation of the list of the written materials collected during the interview process. Through field notes it was provided a thick description of the data collection procedures which contributed to enhancing of the trustworthiness of the study.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

The study was conducted in four different countries (Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkey) and it required a careful planning of data collection procedures. The study followed a strict timeline, which is summarized in Table 3. 4 below.

The study was carried out through the following stages indicated below.

In the first stage an approval was formally requested for the study from the Human Subjects Ethics Committee in METU in January 2011 (see Appendix.D) and then an action plan was prepared for the site visits in order to carry out the interviews in the institutions in Turkey and the Balkan countries.

With this purpose, preliminary research on websites were done to highlight the contents of the interview that needed to be focused upon. Before the actual field interview, a pilot interview was conducted on January 2011 to pre-test the research instrument (interview guide) developed by the researcher herself based on the literature review on the relevant subject. The first interview done with the representative of Diplomatic Academy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey served as a pilot study, which proved that it works

properly. The researcher were able to get answers to all questions. In order to form the sample of the study by using purposeful sampling method and maximum-variation sampling strategy, key persons from various stakeholder groups within different institutions (governmental institutions, educational institutions and associations) were determined.

In the second stage, site visits were organized to the relevant institutions both in Turkey and countries of research to implement the interview with different stakeholders. Since the timing of the interviews and site visits depend on the availability of the participants to be interviewed, prior to the actual visits to research sites, contacts were established via e-mail or telephone with the relevant authorities in Turkey and the Balkan countries in order to introduce the researcher's aim, give brief information on the study and arrange the interview date, time and place.

After performing these arrangements the first interview was held with the TIKA representative and then with the representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Ankara in January 2011 and then after visits to Kosovo and Macedonia in February 2011 and visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2012 were arranged. Separate meetings were held with the representatives in the institutions and organizations in Turkey during this period. Consequently the data gathering process was carried out from January 2011 to May 2012 (see Table 3.3 below).

The interviews took place at a time appropriate for the interviewees, usually in the buildings where they worked. The interviews were conducted as face-to-face dialogues. Prior to the interview through informed consent, approved by the Ethical Board of METU, information was given about the content of the study, the purpose of the interview, recording of the interview, length of time and form of the interview. Furthermore, information on the confidentiality and anonymity of the study was given and the participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

The interviews were recorded by an audio recording device. At the beginning of each interview, written permission of the participants for the audio recording and for use of direct quotations were requested. All participants agreed to have the interview voice recorded in order to catch the exact words, except one person in Macedonia who did not agree, with whom the interview was conducted in an informal manner of taking only some field notes. The informed consent of the interviewees was received before recording the interviews.

Semi-structured interview was conducted in a such manner that “all of the questions were flexibly ordered” (Merriam,1998). The questions were slightly variable according to institutional contexts, which helped the researcher better understand the responses of the participants in different institutions. During the interview process, several follow-up supplementary questions were asked to clarify some issues.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, all digitally recorded voice files of the interviews were transcribed and written interview texts were delivered to the participants for member check, to confirm that their views are accurately presented.

Table 3.3

*Timeline for the Overall Research Process*

<b>Date / action</b>	<b>June 2010</b>	<b>July -November2010</b>	<b>December 2010</b>	<b>January 2011</b>	<b>February 2011</b>	<b>May 2012</b>	<b>June 2012 - May 2013</b>	<b>May 2013 -August 2014</b>
Identifying research topic	X							
Literature review		X						
Proposal defense			X					
Preliminary research on web sites				X				
Developing of interview guide				X				
Ethical Permission from Ethical Board of METU				X				
Pilot interview to pre-test the interview guide				X				
Collecting data Turkey				X				
Collecting data / Kosovo and Macedonia					X			
Collecting data BiH						X		
Collecting of written materials				X	X	X		
Data transcription / Member check				X	X	X		
Data analysis (Coding, Content analysis)							X	
Composing of data in a written report								X

Three of the interview texts were excluded from the study because one of the

participant requested the cancellation of the interview text after sending the transcribed texts for member check and two interview texts were not used in interpretation of the data since they do not contain any valuable information. Therefore the results part of the study does not cover the data obtained from these participants. Upon the request of one participant, the transcribed interview text along with the audio voice recording was sent for member check. The participants were asked to review the transcripts of their interviews for accuracy and authenticity. Their feedback and new additions were incorporated into further analysis of the transcribed data.

The interviewees were closely related to the subject, knowledgeable and able to provide sufficient information. The duration of each interview was modified according to different stakeholder groups and the interviewees' specific situation. The durations of the interviews were scattered between 34 minutes at the very least and 180 minutes at most. Moreover, the number of the interview questions varied for different stakeholder groups as well. As the interviews proceeded, it was seen that some categories reached saturation. In other words, when more repetitions have started to come out, the interview with these categories were ceased.

The interviews ended by completing for every interviewee an observation protocol (Creswell, 2003), which is a form of taking field notes that involves demographic information about the name of the interviewee, place the interview was conducted, date, time, length of the interview and some descriptive and reflective notes, remarks etc. In addition, it also includes information about major points of view of the interviewee, and summaries of some issues or problems covered.

In the countries concerned, Turkish language was widely used and there was no problem occurred during conducting the interview with the participants in terms of language. Thus, interviews were done mainly in Turkish and with those who did not know Turkish, they were done in English. Those with whom interviews were done in English had a good command of English and no communication difficulty was encountered. However there was a non – native Turkish speaker in Kosovo (in Kosovo Islamic Union) who asked for a translator for the sake of accurate information. The interview was done with the help of an Albanian-Turkish translator, since the only language participant was able to speak was Albanian. The translator had a good command of Turkish, as he had studied in Turkey and was a graduate of one of the faculties of theology in Turkey. To ensure the confidence in the participants the researcher was open to all kinds of questions and tried to give convincing information regarding the study. At the end of the interview the researcher had the possibility for a little chat with the participants especially with those from the Balkans. Some of them even presented the researcher to other administrative authorities in their institutions and at the

same time they provided an opportunity for the researcher to observe the facilities of the institution. A pleasant conversation took place with some of the academicians, who expressed their satisfaction of having been selected for the interview and being able to participate in this study on behalf of their country. Some of them noted having done an internet search before coming to the interview to see whether this topic had ever been studied earlier, but they further noted that no other study similar to this one came up in the internet search and they congratulated the researcher for investigating this topic. Although students are not involved in the scope of this study, meetings were arranged with students from some Students Associations. Views and opinions were exchanged and problems that are generally faced by students going to Turkey or elsewhere on study abroad semesters were explained during these meetings.

The third stage involved the collection of all kinds of written documents and materials (mentioned in the part above), which took place simultaneously with stage two. These materials have been very useful for the confirmation of the findings, because the aim was to reduce the systematic bias of the data obtained. In this study the documents were used in the form of triangulating data sources to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. Triangulation means to compare and cross-check the consistency of the information derived from using different sources.

In the last stage, all data was transcribed into text materials and then these texts were sent for member check by the participants. Afterwards, all text materials were analyzed through utilizing Content Analysis and composed in a written report. Detailed information about the procedures involved in the last stage (transcription of the interview texts, member checking, coding processes and etc.) were displayed in the Data Analysis part.

The researcher was directly involved in the data collection procedure. The interview data collection lasted more than one year, from January 2011 to May 2012, because of the researcher's heavy workload as a government employee and because of her subsequent diplomatic appointment overseas.

Data collection processes carried out respectively in Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was disclosed in detail according to the countries respectively in the next part.

### **3.6.1 Data collection in Kosovo**

Data collection in Kosovo started as of 26 January 2011. The first interview was conducted in Ankara with the Embassy of Kosovo on the said date, and subsequently continued between 7- 19 February 2011 after the researcher visited the country. The contact information of the participants were obtained from the Embassy of Kosovo in Ankara. All of the

participants were selected by snowball sampling method. With the help of the staff in the Embassy of Turkey in Prishtina, the interview dates and times were arranged by phone or e-mail. The list of the institutions and the status of person's participated in the interview are presented in the Table 3.4 below.

Interviews were carried out in Kosovo with 17 different participants from the public sector, academic circles and associations. 9 of the participants were government officers, 6 being Kosovar and 3 being Turkish. There were further 6 Kosovar academicians and 2 representatives from the Kosovo Associations. For the selection of the participants maximum variation sampling strategy was employed. As it is presented in the table the interviews were done with the individuals working at various organizations and institutions at different ranks or who had received education in Turkey or were dealing or working in the area of education in various institutions in Kosovo, with Turkish officials appointed to Turkish governmental institutions in Kosovo, persons directly involved in education process of Kosovo and the academicians working in the various departments in the universities of Kosovo. All of the contacted persons accepted the researcher's request for interview. The interviews were performed in the place and time according to the participants' preferences.

Table 3.4

*Interview Participants and Their Positions in Kosovo*

<b>Person's position</b>	<b>Name of the institution/organization</b>
Kosovo governmental officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Embassy of Kosovo in Ankara</li> <li>- Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology</li> <li>- Kosovo Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development</li> <li>- Kosovo Islamic Union</li> <li>- Parliament (Representative of Kosovo Democratic Turkish Party)</li> <li>- Kosovo State Archives</li> </ul>
Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Embassy of Turkey in Prishtina</li> <li>- Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) in Prishtina</li> <li>- Religious Affairs Coordination within Turkish Embassy in Prishtina</li> </ul>
Kosovo academicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- University of Prishtina (3 persons)</li> <li>- Prishtina Sami Frasheri High School</li> <li>- Prizren Education Inspectorate</li> <li>- Prizren Municipality (Education Coordination)</li> </ul>
Kosovo association representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovo Turkish Teachers Association</li> <li>- Balkan Turcology Research Center (BALTAM)</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL – 17 participants</b>	

If more information to be given, three interviews were conducted with the Turkish government officials who were appointed from Turkey working in the missions of Turkey in Prishtina. Firstly the interview was done with the Counselor of the Religious Affairs of Turkey. The conversation was held in the office of the Counsellor accompanied by his assistant. The interview lasted 2 hours and 32 minutes, and was the longest one. The researcher attached great importance to this interview. From the information presented by the participants, the researcher tried to understand the reflection of the religious education on the general educational policy of Turkey towards Kosovo, or in other words, to understand whether the religious education is the basis for the educational relations with Kosovo, as it was claimed by some circles. As a former official in the Presidency of the Religious Affairs in Turkey, he provided with great sincerity useful and detailed information about the existing relations between Kosovo and Turkey in the field of religious education.

The representative of TIKA emphasized the assistance given for the infrastructure of the educational institutions in Kosovo. Despite his busy schedule, he gave a positive response to the request of the researcher for interview, which took place in TIKA office and lasted 1 hour and 31 minutes.

The interview with the third governmental official was held in the building of the Embassy of Turkey in Prishtina. The official warmly welcomed the researcher and the information obtained contributed greatly to the research. The interview lasted 1 hour and 21 minutes.

On the other hand, six Kosovar governmental officials were interviewed. Firstly the interview was done in the building of the Embassy of Kosovo in Ankara with the Counsellor of the Embassy. As a person who graduated from the universities of Turkey, he shared valuable information with the researcher on the educational relation between the two countries and helped in detecting the persons dealing with education or working in the field of education in Kosovo. Interview lasted 1 hour and 58 minutes.

During the visit to Kosovo, a contact was arranged with the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development of Kosovo. He was also a graduate from Turkey. During the interview, emphasis was put on the fact that Turkey gave educational support not only in the field of education, but also in other sectors in Kosovo, such as the sector of agriculture by giving example in detail. The interview was conducted in the building of the aforementioned Ministry, and it lasted 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Another interview that is of great importance is the interview done with the President of the Kosovo Islamic Union. The relations in the field of religious education was expressed

to be at a satisfactory level. Expressions of gratitude for granted scholarships and the wishes for the continuation of support were conveyed. Since the president did not know Turkish, the interview was conducted through a Turkish-Albanian interpreter, who was a graduate from the Faculty of Theology in Turkey, working in the aforesaid Union and who was an excellent Turkish speaker. Prior to the interview the translator also signed the confidentiality consent form. The interview took place in the building of the Union and lasted 31 minutes. On this occasion, the researcher had the opportunity to meet with the Dean of the Department of Theology in Prishtina and to observe the classrooms, conference rooms, libraries and other facilities of the faculty.

An interview was held also with an official from the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, who mentioned the ongoing reform processes in the HE of Kosovo. The interview which took nearly 1 hour was conducted in English.

The next interviewee was a member of the Parliament and representative of the Kosovo Democratic Turkish Party (KDTP). The deputy drew attention to the activities offered by Turkey especially to the benefit of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo. Additionally he mentioned the contribution of Turkey for the increased level of educational in the Turkish community. The interview was done in the building of the KDTP and lasted 1 hour and 18 minutes.

An interview with the representative from the Kosovo State Archives was also conducted. During the interview, an information was obtained about the efforts of the Kosovo State Archives in supplying the copy of the documents from Turkey's Archives which were damaged during the war. The interview lasted 42 minutes and 12 seconds.

Another interview was conducted with 6 academicians, actively engaged in education in Kosovo. The interviews with 3 of the academicians were conducted in one of the restaurants in Prizren, 2 interviews were done in the breakfast room of the hotel in Prishtina where researcher stayed and one in the Bahar Cultural Center, where cultural and educational activities were provided for the Turkish children in Kosovo. The minimum duration of the interviews was 26 minutes and 32 seconds whereas the maximum duration was 1 hour 31 minutes. The focus in the interviews was mainly on the problems faced in the education system of Kosovo.

Lastly, the interviews with the representatives of the associations in Kosovo were conducted in the building of Turkish Teacher Association in Prizren and the other was conducted in one of the restaurants in Prizren. The minimum duration of the interviews was 46 minutes 10 seconds whereas the maximum duration was 59 minutes 28 seconds. All of the participants showed great interest in the subject and responded to the questions with great sincerity.

### 3.6.2 Data collection in Macedonia

Data collection in Macedonia started as of 14 February 2011 to 18 February 2011. The contact information of the participants were obtained with the help of the staff in the Embassy of Turkey in Macedonia. The interview dates and times were arranged by phone or e-mail. The list of the institutions and the status of persons participated in the interview are presented in the Table 3.5 below.

As it is seen from the Table in Macedonia 17 interviews were conducted: seven government officials (four of which were Macedonian and three Turkish), seven academicians (five of which were Macedonian and two Turkish), three Association representatives (two Macedonian and one Turkish).

Table 3.5

#### *Interview Participants and their Positions in Macedonia*

<b>Participant's position</b>	<b>Name of the institution/organization</b>
Macedonian governmental officials	- Embassy of the Republic of Macedonia in Ankara - Ministry of Education and Science of Macedonia - Directorate of Higher Education - Ministry of Education and Science of Macedonia - Department of International Science - State Ministry of Macedonia (Undersecretariat Unit in charge of Turkish Minorities)
Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia	- Embassy of Turkey in Skopje - Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) in Skopje - Religious Affairs Coordination within Turkish Embassy in Skopje
Macedonian academicians	- Ss. Cyril and Methodius University International Office - Tetovo State University Eastern Languages Oriental Studies Department - South East European University - Ss. Cyril and Methodius University Turkish Language and Literature Department - Goce Delcev University
Turkish academicians in Macedonia	- Ss. Cyril and Methodius University Turkish Language and Literature Department - International Balkan University in Skopje
Macedonian association representatives	- MATUSITEB Association - ADEKSAM Abdülhakim Hikmet Doğan Education, Culture and Art Center
Turkish association representatives in Macedonia	- Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Skopje
<b>TOTAL – 17 participants</b>	

The interviews with the stakeholders at different positions in various organizations and institutions in Macedonia were conducted between February 14 and 18, 2011. The contact information of the participants were obtained through the Embassy of Turkey in Skopje. The interview date and times were arranged by phone and e-mail. All of the persons responded positively to the request of the researcher for interview. The interviews were performed in places where participants preferred. By this way the researcher had an opportunity to observe personally the institutions for which the participants worked, i.e. educational institutions, their location, university campuses, building facilities, laboratories, libraries etc. Before the interviews, each participant was reminded of their rights to withdraw from the interview at any point they wanted. It was observed that each of the participants was eager to be interviewed and they tried to answer the questions seriously and as much in detail as possible.

The interview with the coordinator of TIKA proceeded very positively. Despite his busy agenda, the coordinator immediately responded to the request of the researcher for an interview. The interview lasted 55 minutes and 28 seconds. TIKA's contributions in the education sector as well as the other sectors were discussed. Face to face interview was conducted with the representative of Yunus Emre Cultural Center. It was reported that the Center had been newly opened and the representative was engaged in promotional activities, covering visits to universities. The interview lasted 23 minutes.

On the other hand, an interview was also conducted with the Religious Services Coordinator within the Embassy of Turkey in Macedonia. He provided valuable information about the relations between Turkey and Macedonia in the field of religious education. This interview was done at the office of the Religious Services Coordination Office and lasted 43 minutes and 5 seconds.

The interview with the Director of the Directorate of the Higher Education at the Ministry of Education and Science was done at the Ministry's building, which lasted 39 minutes and 28 seconds. During the interview first – hand information was obtained on higher education of Macedonia. This information was quite useful in the interpretation and analysis of the data. The following interview was done with the representative of the Department of the International Science within the same Ministry. The participants drew attention to the importance of the cooperation on scientific issues with TUBITAK in Turkey. This interview lasted 29 minutes and 25 seconds.

One of the longest interviews, which lasted 1 hour and 42 minutes, was done with the representative of the Undersecretariat established in 2008 in charge of Turkish Minorities within the State Ministry of Macedonia. It was understood that this Unit's primary responsibility was to deal and search for solutions to the Turkish community's problems

regarding education, culture, economic and others problems, aiming to protect their rights existing in the constitution of Macedonia. At the same time among the Unit's responsibilities was the follow-up and coordination of the activities with regards to Turkish-Macedonian relations.

The contribution of the diplomatic missions on the relations between Turkey and Macedonia cannot be underestimated. Taking into consideration the coordination role of the Embassies in all kinds of activities, the opinions of the Turkish governmental officials working in the Turkish Embassy in Skopje and the governmental officials in the Macedonian Embassy in Ankara were also requested. The interview with the Turkish governmental official lasted 50 minutes and 19 seconds, while it lasted 53 minutes and 13 seconds with the Macedonian governmental officials from the Embassy in Ankara. The information obtained from these officials helped the researcher better display the relations between Turkey and Macedonia in the field of education.

The interviews carried out with the academicians were as follows:

The first interview carried out with the academicians in Ss. Cyril and Methodius University was done with the representative of the International Office. From the expression of the participant, it was learned that there were approximately 150 students coming from Turkey to study in the faculty of medicine and other faculties of this university. The interview lasted 21 minutes and six seconds and was carried out in English. The other interviews were done with three academicians from the Turkish Language and Literature Department of the same university, two of whom were the lecturers appointed to this department by the Turkish side in the framework of Interministerial Joint Cultural Commission. In the interview with the lecturer, emphasis was given to the shortcomings of this department. The interview took place in the premises of the university and lasted 30 minutes and 9 seconds. The other interview with the chairman of this department took place in the university canteen, where the researcher had the opportunity to observe the relationship between student and academicians. This interview also left a positive impression on the researcher. The participant candidly answered all of the questions and maintained a cooperating approach to Turkish universities. This interview lasted 30 minutes. During the visit of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, the researcher participated in the promotional activities of Yunus Emre Cultural Center, newly opened in Skopje. The researcher had a chance to address the students in the conference hall and give information about her research. The visit to the university was welcomed by the academicians and the researcher was even presented to the Dean of the University's Faculty of Arts – an opportunity that was presented to the researcher to have an informal talk about the activities carried out by Turkey in Macedonia.

Another interview worth mentioning was the interview done with the Rector of the

International Balkan University. Information was obtained on the issues faced by Turkish students and academicians coming from Turkey to this University. This University was established with the initiatives of the Turkish entrepreneurs. This interview was very fruitful and it took place in the Rector's Office in the university building and lasted one hour and 9 seconds.

The interview with the Vice Rector of the South East European University in Tetovo was impressive. He accepted the request of the researcher for interview with great pleasure. Information about the foundation story of the university was received. In his own words, this university “was founded in 2001 as a conflict resolution case” in Macedonia. The interview was held in English in the participant's office in the university building and lasted 39 minutes and 56 seconds.

Another interview was done with the academician from the Oriental Studies Department of the State University of Tetovo. This university was the first state university with its medium of instruction in Albanian language. The participant emphasized the positive impact and repercussions of the visits of high level officials to their university. The interview with this academician lasted one hour and 24 seconds.

Apart from the above stakeholder groups, an interview was conducted with the representatives of the associations in Macedonia as well. The representatives of MATUSITEB and ADEKSAM Abdülhakim Hikmet Doğan Education, Culture and Art Center accepted the request of the researcher for interview with great enthusiasm. As it was stated by the representatives, the main responsibility of these associations were to deal and find solutions to the educational, cultural, social and other problems of the Turkish communities living in Macedonia. The interview with these associations lasted approximately 59 minutes.

### **3.6.3 Data collection in BiH**

Data collection regarding BiH started as of 21 July 2011 with the first interview conducted in the Embassy of BiH in Ankara. Then the researcher visited the country and continued the interviews in separate meeting between 21-25 May 2012. Interviews were done with the representatives in various agencies and organizations appointed from Turkey to BiH, or with persons directly involved in the education processes of BiH or with the academicians working in various departments of the universities in BiH. All of the participants were selected by snowball sampling method. With the help of the staff in the Embassy of Turkey in Sarajevo, the interview dates and times were arranged by phone or e-mail. The interviews were conducted in the place and time determined by the participants.

As it is seen in the table below, the total number of interviews conducted is 12, including one Bosnian and two Turkish government officials, four Bosnian and four Turkish

academicians, and one Turkish association representative. The list of the institutions and the status of the persons who participated in the interviews are presented in the Table 3.6 below:

Table 3.6

*Interview Participants and Their Positions in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

<b>Participant's position</b>	<b>Name of the institution/organization</b>
Bosnian governmental officials	- Embassy of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Ankara
Turkish governmental officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina	- Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) in Sarajevo - Religious Affairs Coordination within Turkish Embassy in Sarajevo
Bosnian academicians	- Sarajevo University – Middle Eastern Languages Department - Zenica University – Turkish Language and Literature Section - Tuzla University – Turkish Language and Literature Section - Oriental Institute in Sarajevo
Turkish academicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina	- Sarajevo University (2 persons) - International Sarajevo University - International Burch University
Turkish association representatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina	- Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Sarajevo
TOTAL – 12 participants	

The instructor from the Zenica University renounced the transcribed text which was sent for member check after the interview, therefore the information obtained from this instructor was not included in the results section of this study. Consequently, the results part of this study only covers the data obtained from 11 persons. The contact information of the participants to be interviewed was obtained from the Embassy of Turkey in Sarajevo. Interview dates and times were arranged through phone calls, during which information about the study was also provided.

It was not possible to interview the officials of the Turkish Embassy on account of their abstention. One embassy personnel was invited to a coffee shop near the Embassy for a small chat of about 10-15 minutes. This person was very reluctant to be interviewed, thus she referred the researcher to another officer who was in charge of consular affairs, and therefore the meeting was terminated without further ado. Furthermore, it was unfortunately not possible to meet with this consular officer due to time constraints.

Before each and every interview, the participants were reminded of their right to withdraw from the interview at any point they saw fit. Additionally, the anonymity and

confidentiality of the end results were reaffirmed in the consent form. All interviews were voice-recorded with the permission of the interviewee. Digitally recorded voice files were transcribed and then the transcribed texts were sent to the participants for member check. All interviews were conducted in Turkish language except for the interview conducted with the representative of the Embassy of BiH in Turkey, which was held in English.

Interviews were carried out in sites of the participants' choosing. The TIKa representative immediately responded to the request of an appointment and the interview was held in TIKa Coordination Office. He was expert in his field and was very knowledgeable about the situation in BiH. Furthermore, he was very polite to the researcher and was punctual to the appointment. The interview with the TIKa representative took 42 minutes and 17 seconds. At the end of the interview, he submitted 2 brochures that contained detail information regarding the activities of TIKa in the Balkans – the information, which he had already mentioned during the interview. The first brochure was related to the activities of TIKa in the Balkans and Western Europe and the other was on the Turcology project.

Religious Services Coordinator of Turkey was another Turkish government official with whom an interview was conducted. He also enthusiastically accepted the request of an interview. He answered the researcher's questions with great sincerity and provided information on the bilateral relations between the two countries in the field of religion, as well as the problems faced in this field. The interview was conducted in a cafe near the Turkish Embassy. It lasted 15 minutes and 50 seconds.

As to the academicians working in the universities in BiH, interviews were conducted with lecturers in Sarajevo University appointed by Turkey via Interministerial Joint Cultural Commission. The lecturers have all responded positively to the interview requests. Prior to the interview the researcher had an opportunity to visit the university and to observe the space allocated for the Turkish instructors and the faculty members of the Turcology Department in Sarajevo University. As far as the academicians revealed during the interview, the researcher had the opportunity to identify insufficient physical conditions, under which they had to work. And yet, they all seemed to be very proud and satisfied from teaching in the Turkish Language and Literature Department of Sarajevo University and were certainly very pleased to be contributing to teaching Turkish language. The interviews with the Turkish lecturers were conducted in a place called Viennese Cafe & Restaurant – the most famous facility of the Europe Hotel in Sarajevo. The interview with the first lecturer lasted 27 minutes and 5 seconds, while with the second lecturer it took 38 minutes and 47 seconds. The expressions of the lecturers left the impression that they were doing their tasks with a great sense of responsibility and were very attentive. It was also noted that they even made initiatives to establish cooperation links between Sarajevo University and many Turkish universities.

The interviews with the other Turkish academicians were done in the facilities of the International University of Sarajevo and International Burch University, the campuses of which were located in Ilidza District of Sarajevo. The academicians from both universities were very enthusiastic and gave detailed information about the objectives of their universities. They talked about the contribution of these universities to the economic development of the Ilidza District. Apart from the Bosnian, Croatian and the Serbian students attending these schools, there were also students of different nationalities, including those from the neighboring countries and Turkey, pursuing the same curriculum. It was remarkable that these universities were designed and built in a very modern style including the facilities that the students needed (canteen, sports fields, labs, libraries etc.). It was noted that the instruction of language in these universities was English and teaching process was adapted according to the Bologna Process. It was also found out that International Burch University in Sarajevo was founded in 2008 as a member of a Private Bosnia Sema Educational Institutions Group. The interview with the academician in International University of Sarajevo lasted 39 minutes and 20 seconds, while the duration of the interview in International Burch University was 1 hour and 2 minutes.

The representative from associations was another stakeholders group interviewed. The interview was conducted with the representative of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center opened in October 2009. Despite her busy schedule, the Representative accepted the request of the researcher for an interview. She drew attention to the post-war trauma that the Bosnian people experienced. She emphasized the need of providing support for them, especially women and children in all areas including education. The interview lasted 25 minutes and 61 seconds.

A face to face interview with the Bosnian government official was conducted in the BiH Embassy premises in Ankara. The interview lasted 43 minutes and 52 seconds. The interviews with the Bosnian academicians were also done face to face on May 25, 2012 in Hollywood Hotel Congress Center in Ilidza district of Sarajevo, coinciding with the “Meeting of the Balkan Turcologists” that was held between May 24-29, 2012 under the sponsorship of Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Sarajevo. The researcher also attended this event and the interviews were done during the lunch break. The shortest interview with the Bosnian academicians lasted six minutes and 40 seconds, while the longest was 21 minutes and 38 seconds.

#### **3.6.4 Data collection in Turkey**

Data collection part in Turkey continued from 20 January 2011 to 22 July 2011. In Turkey, interviews were conducted with a total of 10 persons: five of them government officials, three academicians and two persons from NGOs. The interviews done with one

academician and one representative of NGO were excluded from the study, since the data obtained from these interviews were found to be insignificant, not relevant to topic, more precisely since there were no any educational activities performed by this NGO towards the countries concerned in this study, and that the expertise of the academician was not those three countries in the Balkans. As a result only 8 interviews were taken into account during the analysis of the findings of this study. The interviews were done with the representatives of the following institutions presented in Table 3.7 below.

The participants were contacted via phone for arranging an interview date. The interviews took place in the buildings of the participants and done face to face and one-on-one. The shortest interview was 32 minutes while the longest was one hour and 14 minutes. A consent form was signed by all of the participant, while a copy was submitted to them also (see in Appendices B and C - English and Turkish version of the form). By this consent form all of the participants were reassured about the process of the interview about their rights to be able to withdraw at any time whenever they want, about the anonymity and confidentiality of the results.

Table 3.7

*Interview Participants and Their Positions in Turkey*

<b>Participant's position</b>	<b>Name of the institution/organization</b>
TR governmental officials	- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Diplomacy Academy - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Department of Cultural Affairs - Ministry of National Education of Turkey Directorate General for External Relations -TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency) in Turkey - Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relatives Community - Department of Foreign Student
TR academicians	- METU, International Cooperation Office - Trakya University - Edirne School of Social Sciences
Turkish association representatives	- Religious Foundation of Turkey Foreign Relations Directorate
TOTAL – 8 persons	

No any difficulties encountered during the arranging of the interviews with the above institutions except of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Foremost the researcher through the acquaintance reached the Director in Higher Education Department of MoNE. It was only about 5 minutes talk in which researcher gave information about her study and conveyed her request for an interview. The Director appeared willing to interviewed, but since

he was just to leave for a meeting he ordered his secretary to set an appointment for interview for the following days. Although the researcher's efforts to fix the interview appointment, after several times phone call to the Director of Higher Education Department's secretary of the said Ministry, the researcher was not able to get positive response for as long as nearly two months, therefore the interview was abandoned without insisting anymore. Because one of the strategies followed by the researcher in this study was to carry out the interviews on voluntary basis as written in the informed consent. Later the appointment from the Directorate General for Foreign Affairs of the same Ministry was arranged. Despite her heavy work schedule she was eager to talk with the researcher. The interview was performed in MoNE in the office of the Directorate General and lasted 35 minutes and 48 seconds. But to be realistic the interview was interrupted several times due to phone calls or persons entering for signature. In the meantime the researcher had to stop the recording. When the transcribed interview text was sent for member check, the participant expressed her concerns on publication of the interview text as it is. In response a debriefing form was delivered to participant, and assured that all answers will be kept strictly confidential, no name or any information that may reveal the identity of the participant would be released and that all data will serve as a reference and be used only for scientific purposes.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedures**

Data analysis is a systematic process of organizing, categorizing and synthesizing the data that researcher collected from various sources (interview transcripts, observations in for of taking field notes and other written materials) into a logical parts in order to present what he or she observed or discovered (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Bogdan & Biklen (1998) mention about two types of data analysis: data analysis done simultaneously with data collection – an approach generally used by experienced researcher and data analysis done after completion of data collection, which requires theoretical knowledge especially for those doing it for the first time. In this study data was analyzed after completing data collection. The data was analyzed through utilizing Content Analysis. It is defined as “the process of identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data” (Patton, 1990, p.381). This process uses “inductive reasoning, which means moving from the specific to the general”, in other words in this study themes and categories emerged from the data as a result of the researcher's rigorous examination and constant comparison (Lichtman, 2010, p.5). It is applicable when a large set of data or interview transcripts is analyzed in order to expose the participants' thoughts (Grbich, 2007). Nevertheless, one of the major disadvantage of the Content Analysis as cited by Fraenkel & Wallen (2006) is that “it is usually limited to recorded information” (p.494).

In the current study, in accordance with the information given above, the following procedures were applied with a view to organize and prepare the data for analysis. Firstly, verbatim transcription was made. In line of the comments of Creswell (2005), transcription means “converting the audiotape recordings or field notes into text data” (p.233). It is “time consuming and quite difficult” (Lichtman, 2010, p.193). The interview data was transcribed literally by the researcher herself. All interview transcripts and field notes were typed and the data was organized and indexed into different subgroups depending on the sources of information. The verbatim texts were classified into subgroups as presented in Table 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5. The transcription of the data was highly challenging and lasted a long period between January 2011 and May 2012. The researcher transcribed 53 interviews from the recording device which ended up having approximately 600 pages before and after member checking reduced to totally 552 pages. Then, in the second step, the data was read several times in order to understand what is being said. By doing so, it was aimed to become familiar with the text and get a general sense of the data (Creswell, 2003). As the third step, the transcribed interviews were sent to the participants for their member checking. Member checking means that the findings were presented to the participants for them to verify the transcribed interviews (Boeije, 2010). In the fourth step, after completing member checking, the coding process was applied. Coding is the process that enables the researcher to organize the data, identify key topic, themes and issues within the interview, documents and observations (Creswell, 2005). Initial codes (short phrases or abbreviations of the words) (see Appendix I) were created for different stakeholder groups through literature review and taking into account the questions in the interview guide employed during the interviews. Separate coding sheets (scheme) were developed for each different stakeholder groups (the governmental officials, academicians and representative of associations). The coding list was examined by an expert in the field, and after necessary adjustment it was revised and codes with common roots were combined to form the coding categories. International dimensions of internationalization was also considered while deciding the coding categories. Later, one of the interview texts was picked and coded by two different coders. The codings were compared, the differences and deficiencies were discussed. In line with the discussions, the rest of the encoding process for each interview text was performed by the researcher herself. A sample of the coding scheme is presented in Figure 3.1 (see Appendix G).

The encoded interview texts were labeled A, B, C, D et cetera and grouped by different stakeholders to assemble the data according to the categories in a scale. Example of a coding page from a Sample Interview Transcript is presented in Figure 3.2 (see Appendix K) and an example of encoded Interview Transcript assembled in a table is given in Figure 3.3 (see Appendix L).

Based on these categories generated, the themes explaining the relationships between Turkey and the Balkan countries concerned were determined. As Creswell (2005) stated “the use of the themes is another way to analyze qualitative data, because the themes are similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database, they form a core element in qualitative data analysis” (p.243). In this context, the main points related to the themes were described, the themes were interrelated, interpreted and presented in a report encompassing the responses of the participants from the three Balkan countries and Turkey. Finally, these explanations were sorted according to each country visited and stakeholder group interviewed in order to understand the relations in the field of education and the rationales from different perspectives. In reporting of the findings of the study, thematic approach was taken into account, in other words the researcher included a broad discussions on the themes that emerged from analyzing of the data and provided details and direct quotations from the interviews to support the themes (Creswell, 2005).

### **3.8 Trustworthiness**

This part presents the measures taken to guarantee the trustworthiness or more concretely the validity and reliability of the data obtained. Additionally, the researcher role and ethical considerations were also commented.

Recently the term trustworthiness of the qualitative studies has been an issue very frequently discussed by different scholars (Shenton, 2004). Many scholars used this term to refer to the quality difference of the qualitative findings in compare to other studies (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). As Krefting (1991) claimed that “the models used to evaluate the quantitative studies are seldom relevant to qualitative research”, and additionally “not all qualitative research can be assessed with the same strategies” (p.214). Therefore, he further advised that in order to increase the quality of the findings the trustworthiness of the qualitative studies should be ensured. Shenton (2004) advocated Guba's model which is based on four issues: credibility (in preference to internal validity), transferability (in preference to external validity/generalisability), dependability (in preference to reliability) and confirmability (in preference to objectivity) (p.64). Guba's model is assumed to be comparatively well developed conceptually” and have been preferred by many qualitative researchers (Krefting, 1991, p.215; Shenton 2004). In this context, the credibility or internal validity is defined as one the most important factors in determining the trustworthiness of the study (Shenton, 2004).

Validity is used to determine the accuracy of the findings of the research from different perspectives, for instance from the point of the researcher, participants or the readers (Creswell, 2003). There are some strategies that can be applied to check on or enhance the

validity and reliability of the research. As Creswell (2003) recommended triangulation of different data sources of information, using member checking, clarifying the bias brought by the researcher to the study, using external auditor or peer debriefing, providing rich, thick and detail description of the findings, presenting negative or discrepant information to the themes are among the strategies that can be used to increase accuracy of the findings. Another strategy stated by Boeije (2010) is that in peer debriefing researcher conducts a discussion about the findings or investigations with an impartial peer or colleagues that are not involved in the research team. It is concluded that by this way it will be possible to avoid the biases in the interpretation of the results.

A review of literature suggests several verification procedures for improving the validity and reliability issues and accuracy of the findings in qualitative research such as prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, clarifying research bias, member checks, rich thick description and external audits which are explained below (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Shenton 2004).

In this study, trustworthiness was enhanced through the following strategies explained below.

a) This study is not longitudinal. Though in a short time, the researcher as the only person performing all data collection of this study were able to access to all research sites and had managed to establish a good rapport with the participants interviewed and succeed gathering of additional data from other sources.

b) To increase the trustworthiness of the results and produce deeper understanding in the research, triangulation strategy was applied. In this study, triangulating data sources was used. According to Patton (1999) “it means validating information obtained through interviews by checking program documents and other written evidence that can corroborate what the interview respondents report” (p.1195). In other words, triangulating data sources strategy was used to compare and cross-check the consistency of the information expressed by different stakeholders taking part in the interview. By this way it was aimed to reduce the systematic bias in the data obtained. Therefore, multiple data collection methods was employed to enhance the confidence in the findings, in other words the data was gathered through interview, document analysis and fieldnotes taken during and after the interviews. In addition to the analysis of the data obtained through interview, documents were collected such as written materials, books, booklets, brochures, and university catalogs etc, which related institutions were willing to share were analyzed as well.

c) Besides, in all phases of the study the researcher's advisor in the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Education in the Middle East Technical University served as the peer debriefer. He assisted the researcher from the beginning of the research to

the end.

d) The researcher's bias was clarified in detail in the sections 3.8.1 Researcher Role and Bias presented below. The researcher explain in detail what kind of measures were taken for reducing the researcher role and bias in the study.

e) Naturally, special care was taken to apply data collection procedures in the most accurate and appropriate form. Thus, member checking was applied to ensure construct validity. The point in applying this strategy is to give an opportunity to the participants by submitting to them a copy of the interview protocol at the end of the interview to confirm and review that their responses are correctly recorded. Therefore, all the interviews were transcribed by the researcher herself and transcribed text were sent to participants for their confirmation.

f) To increase the external validity, a detailed and thick description was provided on the purpose and design of the study, the participants selection, data collection procedures, analysis of the collected data, as well as about the findings on the current state of the relationships between Turkey and Balkan countries and the expectations of these countries from Turkey, so that the information documented will serve as a guide in policy development for decision makers or any others interested in this subject.

g) In addition interviews were held with different stakeholders groups (governmental officials, academicians, representatives of the associations). For different stakeholders group different semi-structured interview guides were used to grasp the phenomenon from different points of view. The interview questions were prepared in Turkish then translated in English. Most of the interviews were held in Turkish, several in English and one was done via translator from Turkish to Albanian and vice versa.

h) Purposeful sampling was used for identifying the key persons from different stakeholders groups. Most of the participants invited to participate in the interview responded positively.

i) All interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants, which helps the researcher to grasp every expression during the interviews. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher itself. The recording of the interview has helped the researcher not to lose any information while transcribing the data and as well eased the analysis of the data.

### **3.8.1 Researcher role and bias**

The researcher role and bias is one of the most frequently discussed issues in qualitative studies. According to Lichtman (2010), in qualitative studies the role of the researcher is very critical and almost "it is imperative, that the researcher has experience and

understanding about the problem, issues and procedures” (p.20). As it is stated in the “Design of the Study” section, one of the main features of the qualitative studies is that the researcher is the main instrument responsible for the context of the study. In this view, it is apparent that the qualitative studies are so dependent on the researcher in both collecting and interpretation of the data collected that this creates a threat against the objectivity of the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Therefore, limiting the researcher’s biases becomes an important consideration in the qualitative studies. For this purpose, since the researcher was present in every phase of the study from the design of the study to writing of the report, and from the implementation of the interview to the preparation of the collected data for analysis and the interpretation of the findings, the following precautions were taken in order to minimize the effects of the researcher's own ideas, background and role.

Foremost, during the data collection the researcher was a Ph. D student with more than 20 years work experience in the government. Besides taking several research classes at the doctoral level, she was simultaneously involved in a few research project, through which she was able to gain experience in data collection and analysis of the data collected. Apart from this, she was also acquainted with different types of data collection during the preparation of her Master's thesis, in which she applied survey to the teachers working in the secondary schools in Turkey. Additionally, having been appointed abroad as a government official in administrative positions, she was often involved in the task of recruiting new staff. In this context, she utilized her professional experiences in establishing rapport with the participants while interviewing. In this context, the researcher spent almost one week in each country (Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia) including the visits in Turkey and gained satisfactory working interaction with the participants. The researcher thereby notes the very pleasant conversations that took place with the participants on the side of the interviews. It was observed that being an official in the government had no impact on the data collection process.

Details of the data collection processes in each country including Turkey were given in the previous sections. In general, no difficulties were encountered in accessing the participants or interviewing them, except for a few cases in Turkey (explained in the “Data Collection in Turkey” section), which were reflected in the fieldnotes taken daily on data collection procedures and the participants interviewed. These notes facilitate the work of the researcher in providing long descriptions of the methods employed and findings reported in this study. Having in mind that the interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis, the researcher paid attention not to insist when the participants were abstaining from answering some questions. The criteria for the selection of the participants were displayed in the “Sampling and participants” section. The purpose was to select persons with direct or indirect involvement in the educational processes and the chosen ones were willing to participate and

easily accessed who were from various governmental institutions, academic environments and non-governmental organizations. No accessible candidate that carried the necessary criteria was excluded on purpose. In this sense, during the interviews the researcher was polite to all participants, tried to maintain the same distance with all of them, did not ask any leading questions in order not to influence their perspectives. Additionally, all interviews were audio recorded, which helped the researcher listen to the recordings several times in order to better understand the views of the participants. No interview text was left unanalyzed intentionally, except for three texts: one of them was excluded upon the request of the participant, and other two were excluded on account of the conclusion that the participants' fields of studies were not directly related to the countries concerned. Finally, during the analysis of data, the researcher carefully read and reread the transcripts several times in order not to miss an important point of view. The researcher reflected all data obtained objectively with the aim of minimizing the influence of her potential bias.

The interviews were done mainly in Turkish, except seven interviews (one in Kosovo, five in Macedonia and one in Bosnia), which were performed in English. One in Kosovo was conducted with the help of an Albanian-Turkish translator. As for the interviews in English, the participants had a good command of English, therefore no difficulties in communication were encountered. As to the translation from Albanian to Turkish, the translator was a graduate of a Theology Department of a university in Turkey and his Turkish abilities were superb. Thus, the language barrier did not have an impact on either the data collection process or the data analysis.

All kinds of efforts were spent to find the relevant documents. In view of the documents found, the researcher provided an extensive literature review on the topic to reflect the different perspective. The precautions taken regarding the ethical procedures have been explained in detail in the section below.

### **3.8.2 Ethical considerations**

Establishing good relations between the researcher and the participants was very important in gaining in-depth information. Therefore, the research was guided by three core ethical principles: principle of respect for persons, beneficence and justice (Lindorff, 2010). First, ethics approval was obtained from the Human Subjects Ethics Committee at the Middle East Technical University (METU)(Appendix D). The protection of the participants was provided by the use of informed consent procedure – one of the important ethical requirements for the researcher (Boeije, 2010). In accordance with this informed consent, at the beginning of the interview, the nature of the data collection and the purpose for which this data will be used, the procedures, the benefits that might occur as a result of their participation, duration

and the voluntary nature of the study were explained to the key stakeholders in an understandable way. The participants were informed of their right to decide freely whether to participate, to decline to answer all or part of the questions or withdraw completely from the study once it started or in the case of unintended consequences. In addition, the anonymity relating to the participant's involvement in the study and anonymity associated to the information collected in the interview was assured by the informed consent as well. The procedures to protect the confidentiality was also followed (e.g. the name of the interviewed was not listed). Extra attention was paid by the researcher to be courteous so that the participants would not feel exploited or abused during the interview. During the interview the researcher tried not to intrude or offend the participants by asking personal or irrelevant questions. The interviews were conducted in English and in Turkish language, except for one that was conducted with the help of an Albanian-Turkish translator.

All collected documents and field notes were kept in a safe place in the apartment of the researcher. The data, voice files, transcriptions and e-mail correspondence with the participants are stored in a password-protected computer file (the researcher's own laptop) that nobody else has access.

### **3.9 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

#### **3.9.1 Delimitations**

In order to narrow the scope of the study, the following delimitations were made: First, the frame of this study was limited to the Balkan Countries located in Southeastern Europe, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo. These countries are also considered as “countries in transition”.

Second, in this study, emphasis was given only to the developments in the educational policies of the sample countries after 1990s or the proclamations of their independence. Focus was mainly placed on the developments in the area of education in the post-war period.

Third delimitation is that the study covers only the educational practices of Turkey towards the countries concerned only at higher education level.

Fourth delimitation is related to the data collection methods used by the researcher. In this study, semi-structured interviews and document analysis were applied as well as the field notes taken during the interviews.

Lastly, this study is delimited only to stakeholders from various governmental institutions, faculty members from academic environments and other persons from institutions such as association or educational research centers. It is acknowledged that the results of the study would be more meaningful if data was obtained from the point of the students as well. And as such, it would help policymakers in determining the needs and the problems of the

students. But, taking into account the difficulties in reaching the foreign student masses studying in the Balkan countries and Turkey, students were not included in the scope of this study.

### **3.9.2 Limitations**

The potential weaknesses in the design of the study could be cited as follows:

The primary limitations of the study come from the sampling procedure chosen or from the use of purposeful sampling itself. Therefore, data obtained was limited only to the sample countries mentioned above and the findings of the study can not be generalized to other countries in the Balkans, which were not included in the sample. However, this study could be a basis for performing similar or further studies for other countries in the region.

The second limitation is related to the participants' biases. It is presumed that because of their professional positions, the participants may refrain from reflecting their personal views. Therefore a certain level of diversification in terms of stakeholder's institutional affiliations and positions was aimed in order to minimize these biases. In addition to that, documents were collected to clarify, validate and support the interview data.

Third limitation is the researcher's biases. The findings of the study may be subjected to the researcher's potential biases, since the researcher is the only person doing all the work from data collection to assessing the results of the study. The measures taken to overcome the researcher's biases were explained in detail in the section above.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This study aimed at investigating the relationships at the higher education level between Turkey and three Balkan countries in a comparative understanding. Parallel to this purpose, the study first documented the current state of the relationships between Turkey and the Balkans, the expectations of Balkan countries from Turkey and provisions of Turkey to Balkan countries in higher education. Second, the study depicted the rationales of the relationship in higher education from both Turkey's and Balkan countries' perspectives. Holding a comparative perspective enabled documenting political, social, cultural and academic underpinning of these discrepancies, which has helped to identify policy options for all four countries in their higher education. The qualitative data collection techniques employed in this study enabled generation of a rich volume of qualitative data. In order to accomplish the organization of the data and present a manageable text, the results were presented country-wise and a synthesis was made at the end of the results section.

#### 4.1 Republic of Kosovo

##### 4.1.1 The current state of the relations between Turkey and Kosovo

###### 4.1.1.1 *Opinions of Kosovar government officials*

In this study, six governmental officials, who are involved in education sector in their country and/or educated in Turkey, were interviewed. The content analysis of these interviews with the participants highlighted five main themes, regarding the current state and issues of education in Kosovo and the relationship between Turkey and Kosovo in the field of higher education, which are listed as follows: change climate, western orientation in education system of Kosovo, futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey, the rationales behind internationalization and multiethnic structure of Kosovo. These themes were presented in Table 4.1.

The first theme was identified as the *change climate*. The qualitative data suggested that a *change climate* was prevalent in the higher education system in Kosovo. The change climate in the higher education can be considered as a natural consequence of the change and development in the political and economic life of Kosovo. Hence, parallel to this change movement, in higher education a paradigm of change was also prevalent in Kosovo.

Table 4.1

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Government Officials*

No	Themes
1	Change climate Major factors: internal and external forces - internal forces: the emergent need for reconstruction and reform in education - external forces: active role of the international players engagement of Kosovo in cooperative activities involving in Bologna Process
2	Western Orientation in Education System of Kosovo - English as a medium of instruction - inclination to western countries
3	Futile and Slowly Growing Relations with Turkey Reasons: western orientation of Kosovo's education structural differences between the two countries' educational systems limited financial resources the existence of Western actors in Kosovo brain drain risk lack of coordination : due to internal dynamics in Kosovo financial difficulties lack of strategies bureaucratic obstacles language barriers
4	The rationale behind internationalization - quality of education in Turkey - scholarship opportunities - employment opportunities - cultural common ground - hospitality of the Turkish people
5	Multiethnic structure of Kosovo - Turkish communities education

This theme revealed that success of the reforms in the country is related to the success in transforming its higher education as well. In other words, the general perception that the success of the change in the political and economic spheres can only be achieved if only a parallel change takes place in the higher education system as well, and *vice versa*. From the opinions of the governmental officials, it is clearly understood that the ultimate intention with this change movement in Kosovo was to establish a quality oriented higher education system, which can reinforce the economic and social development of Kosovo.

The data obtained from the interviews with the governmental officials revealed several major factors which can be described as internal and external driving forces affecting the change climate in the education system of Kosovo. First, the emergent need for reconstruction and reform of the war torn education system of Kosovo. Information provided by the participants on the education system of Kosovo revealed that throughout the 90's the political

situation in Kosovo affected the higher education system drastically. Complex political conflicts between Albanians and Serbian parts during that period resulted in demolition of basic educational institutions including the ones providing education in Albanian language. These developments motivated the development of hidden or underground education system operating under inappropriate circumstances and in unprofessional places, such as homes or mosques. Analysis of various documents revealed that during this period the education system of Kosovo nearly collapsed and many of the educational institutions were destructed. The governmental officials stated that during this period education in Kosovo passed through an arduous process. Therefore, a reformation in the education system after the 90's was inevitable. Second, international players in the reforming process or external force which push up the reforms in higher education in Kosovo. The governmental officials noted that with the contribution of many international entities, foreign non-governmental organizations and educational volunteers still present in Kosovo, serious efforts were made to improve the education system. Participants emphasized that the NATO intervention in 1999 was a turning point for change and transformation in the education system of Kosovo. They stated that, a new process in higher education, as in others areas, was initiated after the NATO intervention. In addition to the NATO intervention, a major contribution to the change of climate in the country came from the European Union (EU). The participants stated that the EU has been the most effective organization in this regard: many local educational projects were supported and managed directly by the institutions of the EU; the local actors have been increasingly more inclined to cooperate with the EU countries; and in fact, these actors were a bit forced to cooperate with the EU countries in the absence of a better alternative. From this point, Kosovo has turned to seek greater access and to use international resources in order to change and transform its education system. Third major factor is the engagement of Kosovo in cooperative activities with neighboring countries. The participants stated that Kosovo is engaged in cooperation with neighboring Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Albania, Bulgaria, Italy and Austria; in fact Kosovo has generally benefited in its own studies on education from the legislation and experiences of these countries. Kosovo has formed the legal framework of these cooperative activities by signing bilateral agreements with these countries. In the interviews with the government officials, it was identified that in the post-independence era, Kosovo has signed many agreements in the area of education and that Kosovo's diplomats have played an important role in the development of these agreements. In other words, the need for change and development in higher education, as well as in other spheres of life, was recognized by statesmen who are not directly working in the education sector of the country. Apart from their duties of coordinating and sustaining healthy bilateral political and economic relations, guiding prospective investors interested in Kosovo and handling the consular affairs, these

diplomatic representatives pay a great amount of time to establish good relations with local authorities in the education sector in order to solve issues that students from Kosovo might encounter in the receiving country and developing agreements between Kosovo and other countries. The pervasive climate of change was not only visible in the development of bilateral agreements and improved student mobility, but was also visible in the development of higher education programs and specification of the language of instruction in higher education.

Involving of Kosovo in Bologna Process is *the fourth and the last major factor* affecting climate change in higher education of Kosovo. The Bologna Declaration is expected to serve as a guiding tool for the newly established countries like Kosovo, which aspire to reform their education system. The interview results clearly give the impression that adoption of the Bologna Declaration is one steps towards reconstructing Kosovo's higher education system and gradual accreditation of the higher education institutions in accordance with the criteria determined by the European Network of the Quality Assurance Agencies (ENQA). The results further provide evidence for the great effort paid by many universities established in Kosovo in order to be eligible for accreditation as per ENQA criteria. A number of private universities have merged and some have been restructured in order to meet the criteria. It was noted however that the University of Mitrovica in the north of Kosovo has not been fully accredited on account of political reasons.

In line with the comments above, considering the current state of the education system in Kosovo, the participants stated that the quality of education in Kosovo has increased, and that the need for professional cadres in Kosovo's education system are being met by employing individuals who have completed their master's and doctoral degrees abroad. Despite these positive developments, the participants drew attention to the lack of discipline, which is said to be continuing in the educational institutions, possibly due to not being able to comply with the system during this transition.

*The second theme* emerging in the interviews is the *Western orientation in the education system of Kosovo*. Western orientation is related to the asymmetric nature of Kosovo's foreign relations established with Turkey and Western countries that find reflection in education sector as well. The participants all emphasized the fact that Kosovo pursues Western oriented policies in the field of education. The following statement is an example of this tendency:

Albanians have a Europeanization or a Westernization policy - so as to say - because of their pre-war status. Since English is the lingua franca here, in certain fields, students find it easier to adapt in universities in Austria, Germany, Switzerland or Italy.

Kosovar students' demonstrate an inclination toward Western countries for higher education is yet another evidence to this Western orientation. The comments of the

interviewees suggest that Western orientation for higher education is a result of two basic reasons. First reason is that Kosovar students prefer Western educational institutions where the medium of instruction is English. They believe that this will help them adapt better to the educational requirements of the country they study in. In this context, the government officials reported that around 1500 students were pursuing degrees in European countries – especially Austria being the top destination. On the other hand, the inclination toward Western countries implies the prevalence of other rationales among Kosovar students in their choice of destination for study abroad.

Another relevant theme on educational relationships between Turkey and Kosovo was that *these relationships are futile and slowly growing*. As stated, one probable reason is related to the previous theme, the Western orientation of different educational constituencies in Kosovo. However, although there is a clear Western orientation in selection of a destination for study abroad, the participants claimed that nowadays there has been an increased interest towards Turkey in Kosovo in the field of education. Document reviews, interview results and observations in the field suggest several different reasons for the rising orientation towards Turkey.

Particularly following the promotion initiatives made by Turkish universities, more Kosovar students, academics and institutions have developed interest in education in Turkey and collaboration with Turkish scholars and/or institutions. However, the participants warned that although there is a growing interest in strengthening the relationships between Turkey and Kosovo, these relationships can be considered in their infancy. The participants indicated the need for a thorough investigation in order to explore why Kosovo's educational institutions have not been fully benefiting from the opportunities provided by Turkish universities, and why student exchange still remained to be a difficult issue despite the fact that both countries are parties to the Bologna Process. The participants commented that the communities living in Kosovo and NGOs acting in Kosovo play a crucial role in the relations between the two countries as well as the Ministries of Education, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the newly established Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities. These actors have influenced to a great extent the relationships between the two countries. However, the participants added that, despite the existence of high level relationships between Turkey and Kosovo, they witnessed certain disconnectedness between the Ministries of Education, and they pointed to different educational conditions in both countries and hence reminded that they are not equal partners in this collaboration.

There are different reasons, behind stagnating relationships in the field of education between Turkey and Kosovo, suggested by the interview data. First of all, primarily, it was stated that the *“structural differences between the two countries' educational system”* could

be the underlying cause for this situation. It was underlined that there were problems arising due to *these differences*; therefore, it was claimed that the structural differences affect the relationships between the two countries. Therefore the level of cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo is evaluated as insufficient. This is also given as one of the reasons why colleges in Kosovo cannot match METU in Turkey. Additionally, it was mentioned that due to the curriculum differences in educational systems of both countries, problems were encountered in 2008 regarding the associate diplomas given by Turkey. The issue was solved by Kosovo authorities in a short time by putting into force a new regulation. As the official from the Ministry of Education Technology and Science of Kosovo stressed the fact that the differences in curricula of educational systems in both countries was not confined to the relationships, but also affected the student and faculty mobility. He said that, “there is also a need to have comparable curricula in order to facilitate the mobility of the students and the teaching staff”.

From the interviews, it was identified that due to these differences in the curriculum, it was not possible to utilize efficiently the textbooks sent from Turkey for Turkish language education. Therefore it is admitted that these textbooks were used only as supplementary books. It is advisable that the educational authorities of both countries consider and review these factors in order to contribute to the reconstruction of the education system in Kosovo.

Another issue behind the stagnating educational relationships between Turkey and Kosovo was related to *limited financial resources*. The participants indicated the centrality of monetary resources to build and maintain educational relationships. Third, as indicated above, *the existence of Western actors* in Kosovo provide a better alternative to Kosovar actors in education. The intensity of the programs and the projects of Western origin provide a better alternative to the country. The Western oriented programs and schemes of collaboration originate from individual countries (e.g., actions or programs of Austria) and the EU itself. For example, while the Bologna process in itself is a program that affects the whole continent, it is unthinkable to envisage another alternative for the academic embodiment of Kosovo. Besides the programs mentioned, the individualistic initiatives of the Western countries to assist also contribute to the asymmetric structure of Kosovo-Turkey relationships in education. Many countries are developing and implementing projects in Kosovo in economic, political and social fields as well as in the field of education.

Finally, *“the lack of coordination between the two countries.”* can be shown as another reason for the asymmetric structure of Kosovo's relations. Although there are different coordination bodies on both sides, the resulting quality of the relationships between the two countries highlight the failing nature of these bodies in accomplishing their mission. In the interviews, it was indicated that during the cooperation between the two countries, although there were not any problems overt to the Turkish institutions, difficulties in coordination can

sometimes be experienced on account of Kosovo's being a newly established country, *due to the internal dynamics in Kosovo, current financial difficulties, lack of strategy and bureaucratic obstacles* that may produce belated responses to Turkish institutions. It was stressed that there were communication problems among the institutions of both countries due to the *language barrier*, therefore it was stated that the communication with the English speaking institution is much easier.

Furthermore, the participants expressed that although they did not see any risk or threat which could affect the educational cooperation between the two countries, they asserted that Kosovo's relations with Turkey in the field of education give rise to *brain drain* stemming from domestic family reasons or limited employment opportunities in Kosovo. The interviews revealed that possible solutions to that problem was evaluated in various party or civil society gatherings and that students were being informed about the kind of professions that would gain importance in Kosovo in the future. The participants were of the thought that it was imperative to create incentives, such as employment opportunities, for Kosovar students studying in Turkey, so that they may return home after graduation and contribute to Kosovo's developmental goals. Some participants also offered views that prevention of brain drain in both the moral and material sense would be possible by concentrating efforts on the area of student exchange with Turkey and in the event of establishing a university in the region that would carry a specific interest toward the Balkan countries.

Another theme that emerged in the interviews with public officials was labeled as *"the rationale behind internationalization"* of Kosovo's higher education system. The statements of the participants, document reviews, and field notes during site visits suggest that *the quality of education in Turkey, scholarships, employment opportunities, cultural common ground and the hospitality of the Turkish people* have made Turkey an attractive destination for study abroad. First of all, the quality of Turkish education was indicated as very competitive with respect to its equivalents in other European countries and the scholarship grants were reported as a major attractive factor. Furthermore, the students that studied in Turkey and reinforce the educational relationships between Kosovo and Turkey after returning home. The participants stated that students who graduated from Turkey are coming back to Kosovo with modern, high quality knowledge and valuable experiences. Hence, one can talk about the chain effect of these students in strengthening the relationships. In addition, Turkish economy was also indicated as another factor for choosing Turkey, especially in terms of employment opportunities it offered for graduates. In addition, the existing kinship and family connections with Turkey, common values, the influence of warm human relations encountered in Turkey and feelings of admiration on the part of Kosovar students towards Turkey's cosmopolitan nature have been listed as stimulating factors. Historical and social ties form a rationale of

internationalization for these countries.

Apart from this, especially Turkey's image in the region, Turkey's foreign policy and Turkey's pursuance of zero-problem policy with its neighbors were emphasized to be effective in bilateral educational relationships.

The final theme that emerged from the interviews with Kosovar governmental representatives was “*the multiethnic structure of Kosovo,*” which explains the relations between Turkey and Kosovo. Apart from the Albanians who constitute the majority, there were also other minority groups living in Kosovo such as Turks, Bosniaks, Gorani, Ashkali, Egyptians and Serbs. An important point to be emphasized is that Kosovar legislation recognize the rights of these minorities to have education in their mother tongue. As it is stated in the introduction part of the study Turkish communities living in Kosovo are of great importance for Turkey. In this sense, focus was given to identify the educational status and needs of Turkish communities. The interview data revealed that the leaders of the Turkish society were active in facilitating the access of the Turkish communities in Kosovo to educational opportunities and in advancing the Turkish communities’ level of education. Some of the participants commented that Turkey’s Great Student Project contributed extremely to the Turkish communities’ education by providing the opportunity to study in Turkish universities in their mother tongue. Moreover, they argued that thanks to this project, the level of education of the Turkish communities has increased. In addition, Turkey offers educational opportunities towards all ethnic groups without any discrimination. The best proof of this is the enlargement of the Great Student Project by incorporating it to the other ethnic communities living in Kosovo. By this way, the Albanian and Bosniak students have been given the opportunity to study in Turkey, and thus through this Project the political process of change was initiated inevitably. The participants emphasized that these activities carried out by Turkey in Kosovo had positive reflections and at the same time contributed to the development of the Turkish education in Kosovo.

#### ***4.1.1.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians***

Six academicians, who were directly involved in the education sector in Kosovo were interviewed. The results of the interviews with academicians confirmed the main themes drawn from the interviews with Kosovar government officials and provided further evidence to strengthen these themes. The themes presented in Table 4.2 are: change of climate, western orientation in the education system of Kosovo, futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey, the rationales behind internationalization and multiethnic structure of Kosovo.

Table 4.2

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Change climate - contribution of Turkey's educational activities - difficulties encountered during the change
2	Western Orientation in Education System of Kosovo - collaboration with western educational institutions - limited realization of the collaboration between Turkey and Kosovo educational institutions within the sheme of Bologna Process
3	Futile and Slowly Growing Relations with Turkey Reasons:- western orientation of Kosovo's education - structural differences in educational systems (not equal partners) - attitudes of polititions and bureaucrats towards the relationships between Turkey and Kosovo (contribute to the asymmetrical relations) due to Kosovo legislations - limited promotion
4	Multiethnic structure of Kosovo - the importance and the role of Turkish presence in Kosovo - language teaching (both Turkish and Albanian), concerns of the changing of the Turkish dialect in Kosovo - lack of teacher cadre in Turkish education in Kosovo - shortages of textbook in Turkish education
5	The rationale behind internationalization - student mobility (Great Student Project) and brain drain risk - scholarship opportunities

Firstly, *the change climate* theme was also emerged in the interviews with the academicians. In the expressions of the academicians the change climate in higher education is presented as the extension of the changes conducted in political, social and economic areas. In compare to explanations given by the government officials regarding the change climate theme in the explanations of the academician's different aspects have gained importance. In creation of this theme *the contribution of Turkey's policy* was emphasized. Academicians indicated that Turkey did not apply any special policy towards Kosovo, according to them contribution of Turkey is a part of the policy carried out towards the all Balkan countries. In addition they stressed that Turkey's contribution caused positive and significant accomplishment in education and these contributions were embraced by the population in Kosovo. Nonetheless, academicians pointed out *the difficulties encountered in the change climate of Kosovo's higher education system*. By mentioning about the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the current higher education law and the educational legislation in Kosovo, academicians complained from the structural functioning of the

universities, the impacts of the politics on education, lack of financial resources, lack of educational strategies, problems arising from the implementation of the Bologna process, aged and unskilled personnel to serve in the universities and financial difficulties of the faculty members. In addition, the academicians complained also that there were no any works done aiming to improve the history curriculum for correcting some prejudices occurred about the Ottoman history since the information given in the history textbooks and in the references. The participants stressed that education system of Kosovo including the Turcology departments of the universities should be restructured.

***The Western orientation*** is emerged to be a strong theme in the interviews with the academicians. As in the governmental officials, in the interviews done with the academicians the asymmetric structure of the educational relations observed between Turkey and Kosovo was confirmed also. The following statements from one academician confirms Western orientation in Kosovar education system.

They are much more desirous to be in close cooperation with European universities. So, they do not want to turn their faces to much to Turkey, to east.... But in curriculum development, I have been involved in curriculum development committee, here always experts were brought from Finland, Canada, Slovenia, their education system, let me not call their education systems, the studies were done under the guidance of the experts coming from these countries.

Like governmental officials, the academicians stated that the Kosovar higher educational institutions were western-oriented and Kosovo educators usually ***prefer the cooperation with universities in European countries***. Furthermore, it was explained that experts were brought from the countries such as Finland, Canada, Slovenia for the development of the curricula of Kosovo's education system and under the guidance of these experts various studies were conducted, even in the case of need for in-service training courses the first country to be applied was from the European countries. Another evidence for western orientation in Kosovo was the ***limited realization of collaboration within the scheme of Bologna Process***. Although Bologna process was expected to accelerate the collaboration between two countries, the collaboration has not been lifted to a desired level yet. Like the government officials academicians also pointed out that although the Turkey and Kosovo are involved in Bologna process, the student exchange program between the educational institutions of the two countries has not been realized yet.

The theme regarding ***futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and Kosovo*** appear in the interview with the academicians also. The academicians stated several reasons why educational relationships between Turkey and Kosovo are limited. First, the participants implied that the mindsets of Kosovar higher education constituencies is still ***western oriented***. It was stressed that despite the good intentions and the assistance of Turkey, Kosovars constituencies in higher education avoid of the establishment of some binding

relations with Turkey. Further, academicians expressed that continental Europe, the UK and the USA form the main reference for Kosovar academics in their conception of higher education. A second reason behind Western orientation of academics is related to ***structural differences between education systems of these two countries***. Academicians drew attention to the relations between Kosovo and Turkey especially after the war in 1999 and they stated that these relations are developed a lot also in the education area as in every sphere, but there are differences observed in the education systems of both countries, therefore, apart from the Turkish community in Kosovo the other ethnic groups in Kosovo were not showing much interest to higher education institutions of Turkey, because within these collaborative relationships the position of the partners were not equivalent, they were involved in a very different status, so Turkish education system would not be possible to be implemented as a model in Kosovo. On the other hand, these structural differences were reflected on the Turkish education in Kosovo as well. There were statements made that due to these differences in the education systems it was not be able to benefit enough from the textbooks sent from Turkey, therefore they were used as help textbooks. Apart from this, an information was obtained about the problems that were still faced in diploma equivalency process since the differences observed between the education system and the curriculum of both countries.

A third reason behind, Western orientation is related to ***the attitudes of politicians and bureaucrats toward Kosovo-Turkey relationship in general***. The participants indicated the recent growing trend in educational relationships between two different countries and before anything else they expressed their gratitude for Turkey's contributions to Kosovo during and after the war. However, they admitted also that the official authorities at different levels have not adequately appreciated the Turkey's contribution to the Kosovo, which shows the asymmetric relationships in higher education. Hence, political and bureaucratic indifference on the part of Kosovar authorities is another contribution to the asymmetrical relationships in higher education between Turkey and Kosovo. The participants stressed that Turkish Ministry of National Education declared its will to extend and strengthen the relationships, but this will did not find an equivalence on Kosovar part. It was explained that this situation was caused by Kosovo's own legislation and the problems arising from the operations of these legislations, therefore as it was claimed the facilities offered by Turkey were not be able to use as required.

According to academicians' views the level of the cooperation in the field of education between the two countries was found to be insufficient. It was mentioned about the signed bilateral agreement that was not implemented yet, although the attempts made in good faith. Therefore they said that the Kosovo's educational institutions were not willing so much for the improvement of these relations, due to the lack of interest and relevance. For example, it was noted that there were no any studies done for the improvement of the history curriculum, and

also that the student and faculty exchange programs were still not be able to implement.

According to the academicians a final reason behind Western orientation and stagnated relationships between Turkey and Kosovo is related to *limited promotion*. Although the benefits, the educational policy of Turkey was evaluated as incomplete because Turkey have not adequately reach all groups in Kosovo. Academicians expressed that Kosovars were not informed sufficiently about the possibilities owned by Turkey, and that Turkish education system and the Turkish universities have not been introduced adequately in Kosovo by the Turkish authorities. It was complained that although hundreds of Kosovar students studying in Turkey, this event was not announced in the press. It was expressed that despite the services provided, the help and the support given by Turkey, they were never advertised, whereas there were opinions that it should be done.

*The multiethnic structure of Kosovo* as a theme denoting educational relationships between Turkey and Kosovo was confirmed also by academic participants. Different dimensions of this theme were highlighted. Firstly, an emphasis was placed *on the importance and the role of Turkish presence in Kosovo* in the relationships between the two countries. As the academicians proposed Turkey's educational activities towards Kosovo in higher education should be evaluated from multiple perspectives, in terms of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo, from the perspectives of the Albanians and other ethnic groups living in Kosovo. This is essential for the fact that each of these communities may hold a slightly different perspective toward the provisions of Turkey in higher education. For example, the granted positive attitude of Turkish community towards whatever comes from Turkey it is welcomed may not be evident among other communities. Another example is related to the language used in the country. The academicians stated that during the pre-war period, according to the Kosovo's 1974 Constitution and the 1977 Language Use Act, in Kosovo the Albanian, Serbian and Turkish languages were equally entitled to use. They expressed that during this period, even the names of the institutions, organizations and the streets in the municipalities where the Turkish communities lived, have been written in Turkish alongside with the other languages. Therefore they complained that nowadays the use of the Turkish language is not formally widespread used as before. There were some implications of concerns about the ethnic identity and survival of the Turks in Kosovo, fear of assimilation and efforts to preserve the Turkish identity therein. Like the governmental officials the academicians also placed a great importance to the education status of the Turkish communities and teaching Turkish language. It is seen that “multiethnic” structure of Kosovo causes unique demands on the curricula to be employed at different levels of education, including higher education. Secondly, *language teaching emerged as an important dimension* to be incorporated into curricula at different levels. The university of Prishtina is pointed out as the only institution in

Kosovo, having Turkish Language and Literature Department, which main purpose as it is emphasized by the participants is to prepare teachers for the primary and secondary schools that are following Turkish education curriculum in Kosovo, to train the staffs needed for certain institutions and organizations in Kosovo and as well as to meet the needs of interpreter for the Turkish entrepreneurs who invested in Kosovo. Academicians indicated that within the framework of the recognized minority rights in Kosovo and thanks to the graduates of this Department it has been able to meet the cadre needs in terms of speaker and program makers for the Turkish media organizations serving for the Turkish communities living in Kosovo.

Academicians indicated that in addition to the problems regarding the native language the Turkish communities in Kosovo do not know very well the Albanian language, for example this situation has emerged more significantly especially in Prizren and Mamusha region. Further they stated that since Kosovo's multiethnic structure Albanians, Bosniaks and Turks have to live all together, therefore these groups have to know each others languages either. By taking into account all these, according to the Language Law enacted in 2002-2003 academic year it has been started teaching Albanian language to Turkish students in Turkish education. It was suggested that the Albanian language should be a requirement for the students who wish to study in Turkey, only by this way it could be possible to encourage learning this language. Moreover, it was emphasized that in order to overcome the problems of unemployment regarding foreign language, it would be useful that Turkish students also should be redirected to the European universities.

The academicians stressed that the Great Students Project did not have any influence to the extinction of the local language, but they expressed *their concerns in relation to the changes occurring in the Turkish dialect in Kosovo* by adding some words from Turkey Turkish learned from Turkish television, which may lead even to deterioration of some Turkish dialects in Kosovo, namely Prishtina dialect, Prizren dialect or Mamusha dialect. Third, *the lack of teaching staff in Turkish education* is emerged to be an important problem to be solved urgently. By addressing the teacher cadre problems in Turkish education, academicians stated that a decrease was observed in the number of the students studying in Turkish Language and Literature Department of Prishtina University and as well in the classes of the primary and secondary level schools where the medium of instruction is Turkish. Further they emphasized that this decline in the number of the students need to be analyzed seriously and they expressed their concerns that if the immediate solution was not found then the incline towards Albanian language would be inevitable. Fourth, *the shortages of textbook in Turkish education* is another problem waiting solution. Academicians complained that since 1951 they faced with the shortages of textbook in Turkish education, they stated that during the period of Former Yugoslaviya these textbooks were brought from Macedonia, later starting in 1987 until 1999,

when the war broke out, the books were provided from the Kosovo Textbooks Publication Institution, but it was never possible to provide the all necessary textbooks, they have thought that the interest and the contribution of the Kosovo Educational Ministry in this regard is insufficient.

As in the case of governmental official, *the internationalization theme* was emerged to be an important theme among academicians as well. First, the participants indicated *student mobility, as an important dimension of the theme*. One of the best indicators of student mobility is the Great Student Project (GSP) developed by Turkey aiming at strengthening the historical and cultural ties with the countries formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. In the framework of this project many students from Turkic Republics and Balkans were studied in Turkey. Considered as one of the most successful projects conducted by Turkey in Kosovo, the participants stressed that the inclusion of other ethnic minorities, such as Albanian and Bosniak students makes GSP a more significant project, contributing to the relationships between Turkey and Kosovo. However, although it is considered as a successful project it is worth to note some problems encountered in practice regarding its application in Kosovo. Academicians criticized Turkish authorities of being not cooperating with Kosovar authorities during the implementation of the GSP, specifically with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. They expressed their concerns of not being sufficiently benefited from this project due to different regulations applied for the enrollment of foreign student in Turkish educational institutions.

The academicians stressed that this mobility of the student in the framework of GSP caused a *“brain drain” risk for Kosovo*. Brain drain, generally is defined as the outflow or migration movements of highly skilled professionals and trained persons mostly taken place between countries with different level of development. It is the common encountered risks of the internationalization, which occurs due to different reasons. The academicians explained that the young people's without any hope for finding job, were not coming back to Kosovo after their graduation abroad. They pointed out that brain drain causes labor defects in Kosovo's labor force. Therefore they indicated the need to develop certain measures to encourage their return to Kosovo. For example, they thought that charging the students in case of not coming back after graduation to Kosovo would be one of the measures to ensure their return to their home country. Besides, the academicians emphasized the need for raising an awareness in the students on the fact that Kosovo needs their skills and expertise after they finish their study in Turkey. In addition, the participants highlighted also the need to examine the lives of the students traveling to Turkey in order to be able to understand the academic and social needs.

Secondly, *granting the scholarships by Turkey* is another significant dimension of the

internationalization theme. It was expressed that allocation of scholarships and student quota have affected in a large scale the educational relations between Turkey and Kosovo. Hence, Turkey becomes an attractive destination for study for Kosovar students. In this regard, the academicians conveyed their demands for increasing the student quota by Turkey while it is found to be sufficient.

#### ***4.1.1.3 Opinions of the Kosovar association representatives***

In this study two Kosovar Associations (Balkan Research Center - BALTAM and Association of Kosovo Teachers) were visited and interviews were conducted with their representatives. It was observed that these associations are generally performing activities related to the dissemination of Turkish education in Kosovo. The analysis of the observations, documents and interview results suggest three themes compared to the themes generated for the data collected from governmental representatives and academicians. These themes (multiethnic structure of Kosovo, western-orientation of Kosovo education system and futile nature of educational relations between Turkey and Kosovo) are presented in Table 4.3. Unlike the other participant groups, regarding the education, the interviewed persons in this group suggested that the relations between Turkey and Kosovo should be intensified on Turkish education.

Table 4.3

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Associations*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Multiethnic structure of Kosovo - The importance of Turkish language and Turkish education - Efforts to overcome the problems in Turkish education
2	Western-orientation of Kosovo education system - reasons: discomfort from Turkey's activities
3	The futile nature of educational relations between Turkey and Kosovo - limited support to the Turkish Associations in Kosovo

Hence, the main theme that emerged from the interviews with the executives of the Associations was called as ***multiethnic structure of Kosovo***. This theme was denoting the development of the cultural relations between the two countries. The focus was given on the importance of teaching Turkish language and Turkish education in Kosovo. Both of the participants emphasized that the relations between Turkey and Kosovo carried its own unique features, especially regarding Turkish education. The concerns about Turkish language created some unique features for internationalization of the higher education of Kosovo. In this context, BALTAM representative stated that the main purpose of the research center is to ensure the collaboration of the Turcologists from the Balkans and the Turcologists from Turkey

in a symposium. The representative further indicated their beliefs that such activities will result in concrete materials such as publishing books on Turkish dialects and revealing the Ottoman monuments ensuring their publication.

The data revealed that the priority agenda of the Association of Kosovo Teachers is to follow the developments in Turkish education, to search for solutions aiming to overcome the problems encountered in Turkish education in the panels and conferences organized in this context. Additionally, to provide the textbooks needed in teaching Turkish, to publish journals for the benefit of the students and the teachers, and naturally in order to protect the interests of the teachers to organize seminars for them. In short, the participants stated their discomfort with position (cadre) problems in Turkish education, the low salaries of the teachers, and textbooks shortages as well. All of these problems, indicate the gap between the ideal and real performance in educational relationships between two countries.

On the other hand, Western-orientation theme also emerged in the interviews with the representatives of Kosovar associations. As the government officials and academicians the Association representatives clearly expressed the *Western-orientation of Kosovo's education system*, and confirmed that the Canadian educational curriculum was implemented in many schools in Kosovo. Moreover, the existence of some groups who are feeling discomfort from the activities of Turkey in Kosovo was asserted as one of the reasons for Westernization of the Kosovar education system. Namely, the investments of Turkey in the Balkans disturbed some groups, it was stated that even concerns were voiced about the Neo-Ottomanism.

The theme regarding *the futile nature of educational relationships* between Turkey and Kosovo was evidenced by the statements of Association representatives as well. Although participants emphasized that Turkey is very active in Kosovo, opinions emerged also expressing that Turkey's support to the Turkish Associations was very limited. There were complaints that many of them could not get the necessary support by the side of Turkey or sometimes the contribution was not provided by the Turkish institutions they have applied for. In the interview, it was mentioned that the Associations were trying to carry out the above said activities usually with their own facilities and resources. Therefore, it was stated that due to financial difficulties these activities planned in advance have to be postponed or delayed for a while. It was indicated that, despite all of this, a wide participation was provided and positive feedbacks are received from the activities organized by these Associations.

#### ***4.1.1.4 Opinions of the Turkish government officials in Kosovo***

Interviews were conducted on Turkey's educational activities carried out towards Kosovo with the diplomats in the Embassy of Turkey in Prishtina, Counselor of the Religion and Social Office and TIKA Coordinator. The data analysis suggested

some fundamental differences between the themes emerged from Kosovar representatives and the themes emerge from Turkish representatives. The themes were presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Slow progress in the relations between Turkey and Kosovo western-orientation of the Kosovo education system insufficient educational activities difficulties encountered during the educational activities
2	Inadequate infrastructure of Kosovo education system - physical infrastructure inadequacy - lack of academic and teaching staff - teaching material shortages
3	Western-orientation of the Kosovo education system Reasons: differences existed between the educational systems of both countries active role of the western institutions misinterpretations resulting from the past common history
4	The rationale behind the internationalization - negative sides of students mobility resulting in brain drain - cultural ties
5	Multiethnic structure of Kosovo - emphasis on the status of Turkish communities in Kosovo
6	Religious education - differences between the religion education systems - financial difficulties of the Kosovar religion education institution - student quota allocated by Turkey

First of all, Turkish government representatives confirmed the theme regarding *the slow progress in the relationship between Kosovo and Turkey*. Hence, the rationalization of Turkey's presence in Kosovo has not been fully crystallized yet. This finding confirms the Western orientation and futile educational relationships between Kosovo and Turkey, which was stated above. The studies done in the field of education in Kosovo by Turkey is found to be insufficient by the governmental officials. The officials noted that during the activities and services carried out by Turkey in Kosovo sometimes difficulties could be encountered, but they could be solved through the bilateral negotiations.

Other theme that the data revealed is *the inadequate infrastructure of the Kosovo's education system*. In the interview it is expressed that currently in Kosovo there is one public university, the latter is in the way of establishment and some of the existing private universities due to accreditation issues have united with each other or were closed down. It was stressed

that the Kosovo educational institutions, for example the University of Prishtina, were also inadequate in terms of academic staff. Governmental officials stated that during the former Yugoslavia and after the war in terms of education Kosovo have been defined as the most backward region in Balkan geography. In addition, after the period of the intervention of NATO in 1999, although Kosovo was under the supervision of the international forces, in the intervening of 10 years, there were no any progress accomplished in any field (including education) for the Kosovo's development and for the resolving of the issues. Further, it has been argued that during this period in Kosovo the existing problems were frozen rather finding solutions to them. The most important problems in the education system in Kosovo are listed as: physical infrastructure inadequacy, lack of academic staff, needs for teaching materials, and shortage of teaching staff was identified as a priority. Besides, the participants highlighted the limited infrastructure of the universities. It was explained that it is insufficient to meet the student capacity in the universities in Kosovo, although each year great effort were exerted in order to meet as possible increase in the demands for student quota.

Another theme emerged from the data collected from Turkish officials is related to ***Western orientation theme***. The interviews with Turkish officials have not only confirmed the Western orientation of Kosovo but also documented several other reasons behind Western orientation of Kosovo's education system. The first reason was related to ***the differences existing between the educational systems of both countries***. However, despite these differences, Turkish officials stated that there were no any other problems or obstacles encountered apart of slow processing of the relations between the Kosovo and Turkey. No difficulties also experienced by the side of Turkey in terms of diploma recognition between the educational institutions of the two countries, except the complaints on the finalization of the diploma equivalency process by the side of Kosovar authorities, which was lasting so long.

Another reason for the western orientation can be shown the ***active status of the western institutions existing in Kosovo***. From the interviews it was learned that the EULEX institution governing the process of integration of Kosovo to EU have a serious impact, that the budget for the development of Kosovo is met by foreign aids also, and that many international organization acting in Kosovo were realizing some infrastructure investments therein. All of the above actually have confirmed Kosovo's western oriented educational policy, turning its direction towards European Union. In addition to these, Turkish officials denoted as the main reason for distance stance of Kosovo against Turkey and for its western oriented policy ***the misinterpretations resulting from the common historical past*** with Kosovo. For example, one of the point that distressed the Turkish governmental officials is that despite nearly 100 years shared historical past, the knowledge about the Ottoman heritage and Turkey was not transferred correctly to the communities in Kosovo or since that the

historical past was not politically evaluated in correct way, in people's mind there were some prejudices and misinterpretations made regarding the past period. It was emphasized that these prejudices should be broken.

As in the interviews done with the other groups, in the interviews conducted with the Turkish governmental officials *the rationales behind the internationalization* also emerged as a theme. It is understood that the relations between Kosovo and Turkey is structured around this theme or phenomenon. In the interview with the officials about the internationalization two dimensions come to the fore. Differently from the expressions of Kosovar participants above, it has been pointed out *the negative sides of the student mobility from Kosovo to Turkey*. There were some interpretations that the problems are stemmed from the instability in the political situation of Kosovo. It was reported that due to the unemployment issues and the living conditions in Kosovo, some of the young people going for education to Turkey after their education were not coming back to Kosovo. Thus, a *“brain drain”* is occurred, which naturally affected the situation in the country negatively. The officials expressed the need of trained and skilled workforce in Kosovo. It was reported about the meetings done with the students, who prefer Turkey for study, aiming to prevent the brain drain and to assure the returns to Kosovo after graduation. The officials asserted that positive consequences were obtained from the meetings in this regard. Apart from this, another reason for preferring Turkey by Kosovar students was pointed *the cultural ties*. As it is known, there are deep cultural ties between Turkey and Kosovo stemmed from the past. In this view, the participants stated that the Kosovar students were advantageous in this regard and were easily adapting to the living conditions in Turkey. In addition, it was indicated that no any discipline problems reported about Kosovar students while studying in Turkey, except some issues in relation to the student visa or residence permits, which were resolved by mutual negotiations with relevant institutions. It is noteworthy to say that the finalizing of the visa and the residence permit procedures in short time is an indication of the positive reflections of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

As in the interviews with the other groups in the interview with Turkish governmental officials *the multiethnic structure* has emerged as a theme also. Unlike these groups Turkish governmental officials have revealed different perspectives about the multiethnic structure theme. As it is stated above Kosovo is hosting various ethnic groups. The existence of these ethnic groups or minority groups may influence the foreign policy and affect the bilateral relations of the countries, even sometimes play a constructive role in interstate relations. Therefore, it is expected that such countries hosting minority groups should recognize and respect their basic minority rights. Having in mind this view, Turks living in Kosovo constitute a great importance for Turkey. In this respect, Turkish officials drew attention to the

educational status of the Turkish communities in Kosovo. They complained that no any efforts were made by local authorities in order to meet the needs of the Turkish communities in higher education. It was stated also that due to the language inabilities, namely not knowing sufficiently the Albanian language, Turkish communities in Kosovo were exposed to the unemployment problems, therefore a majority of them studying in abroad were not returning to Kosovo after graduation.

As distinct from the interviews done with other participating groups, in the interviews done with the Turkish governmental officials *the religious education* emerged as a strong theme. The religion education in Kosovo deserves special attention. The level of the cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo in the field of religion education was identified as insufficient. It was expressed that this situation is due to the differences existed between the educational systems of both countries in the field of religion also. Moreover, it was explained that in Kosovo there were madrasah at various level, corresponding to Religion High Schools (Imam Hatip Lisesi) and Faculty of Theologies in Turkey. However, these institutions were not bound to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Institutions as in Turkey, and they have been operating directly depending on the Kosovo Islamic Union. The following information regarding the current status of the Kosovo's Religion Authority is remarkable.

Despite these common ties Kosovo; 40-50 years ago, may be due to the pressure of the administration existed or on the ground that the Theological education is not sufficient in Turkey, the students wishing to study religious education generally were sent to Egypt or other Arab countries. During this process fewer students has come to Turkey. Therefore today, a large part of the religious officials in Kosovo consist of persons who have studied in Arab countries.

In the interviews it was also stated that, the student quota regarding the religious education was determined according to the characteristics of the countries, and the selection of the students was done by a delegation sent from Turkey. Further, it was mentioned about the facilities provided by Turkey during the training of these students such as organizing of Turkish courses by TÖMER for the students who do not know Turkish language and who will be sent to Koran courses, or will study in Religious High Schools (Imam Hatip Lisesi) and in the faculties of Theologies in Turkey. Apart from, this arranging of dormitories, and allocation of scholarships in amounts of ranging from 100 to 700 Turkish Liras are the contributions provided for the students during their training process in Turkey.

During the interview there were also comments on the budget constraints of the Kosovo Islamic Union. It was emphasized that due to these financial difficulties the salaries of around 2000 chaplain working for this Union, wages of mufti working in the cities and the controllers sometimes have not been able to paid, and that the services are being usually executed by the income obtained from the Islamic Union Foundation and meshrutas, which naturally affect the activities of this institutions in the field of religious education.

#### 4.1.2 The Practices undertaken by Turkey towards Kosovo

In this section, the contributions of Turkey to Kosovo were documented from the perspective of different participant groups. These contributions take different forms including agreements, cooperation, visits, in-service training, courses, scholarships, student quota etc. However, this section is not limited with documentation of the activities. In this section different themes underlining these activities were also identified and reported.

##### 4.1.2.1 Opinions of the Kosovo's governmental officials

Four main themes emerged in the interviews with the Kosovar governmental officials regarding the question about the practices undertaken by Turkey in Kosovo in the field of education. These themes were presented in the Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Effectiveness of the international development agencies in Kosovo - EU, FAO, USAID, DANIDA etc.
2	Active role of the Turkish government institutions in Kosovo - TIKA, State Archives of Turkey, Statistical Institute of Turkey, Turkey's General Directorate Foundations, Turkish Task Force, Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Universities - the military dimensions of the relations
3	Internationalization - student mobility in the framework of the GSP - more emphasis on collaboration between the educational institutions (change in the dimension of internationalization)
4	Religious education - student mobility - scholarships

The first theme is the *effectiveness of the international development agencies in Kosovo. In this context, EU itself, other European based institution and the American institutions are carried out a wide range of activities in Kosovo.* For example, institutions such as European Union, FAO, USAID, and DANIDA are the main institutions providing support to Kosovo. The support provided by this institutions has been intensified especially in the education area as well.

The second theme emerged is *the active role of the Turkish governmental institutions* in supporting the development of Kosovo. Like other countries Turkey also is giving support and carried out an activities for the development of Kosovo not only in the field of higher

education, but also in all areas where training is needed. It is noteworthy that this support has been provided by different government institutions and organizations of Turkey, which can be listed as naturally in the first place TIKA, and then respectively General Directorate of the State Archives of the Prime Ministry of the Republic of Turkey, Statistical Institute of Turkey, Turkey's General Directorate of Foundations, Turkish Battalion in Prizren, Ministry of National Education of Turkey (MoNE) and many universities in Turkey etc. The protocols signed with various Kosovar institutions constitute the legal basis for the support given by Turkey. The support was provided in the form of human resources training, sharing of the experience regarding innovations in technology such as e-government projects, development of knowledge transfer and infrastructure building of the educational institutions. To illustrate, from the interviews it was learned that in the framework of the protocol signed between the Ministry of Agriculture of Kosovo and TIKA besides the activities carried out in the field of agriculture, trainings were given to the farmers regarding the operation of greenhouse, fruit and plant breeding, the establishment of the gardens etc. Additionally, it was stated that actually nearly 30 farmers were subjected training for one week in Mersin Alachati Alata Garden Culture and Research Center, which will be continued periodically. The negotiations on giving support to Kosovo for implementing e-government project carried out by Statistical Institute of Turkey and TIKA is another example of support given by Turkey. Apart from this, within the protocol signed for cooperation between the General Directorate of the State Archives of the Prime Ministry of the Republic of Turkey and the Kosovo State Archives the land register copies from the Ottoman period were transferred digitally to the Kosovo Archives, also the copies of land register belonging to Kosovo province were procured digitally in the framework of cooperation with Turkey's General Directorate of Foundations. It was reported that in 2006, in the context of the need of Ottoman experts, Ottoman courses were organized in order to read the documents from the Ottoman period. In the continuation of the interviews it was stated that for endearing the archival profession to the Kosovar youths, it is thought to open a master program in this regard in the University of Prishtina, and in order to be opened this program as soon as possible an initiatives has been made within the Marmara and Istanbul Universities. From the interview it was understood that the universities officials have promised their support with academic staff to the foreseen archival education program. Further, it was mentioned about the contribution of TIKA in supporting the symposium named "Kosovo Province and Ottoman Empire" held between 14 -15 April 2009 in Prizren, organized by Kosovo State Archives. It was reported that with Turkish institutions contribution was not only in the field of education but also the support was given to the institutions infrastructure. For example the contribution of Turkish Batallion in Prizren in this context was said to be admirable. It was explained that with the initiative of Battalio Kosovo State Archives

Building's fire extinguishers and alarm system were installed. Other examples of support given by Turkey were listed as follows: saving of the newspaper TAN with 30 year history, Albanian newspaper Rilindja and Serbian-Croat newspaper Jedinstvo by TIKA, also overtaking by TIKA the restoration of the mosque, a monument from Ottoman period, and in addition carrying out the project of building the religious high school (imam hatip lisesi) in the Kosovar city Gilan.

Turkey has contributed also actively in the infrastructure building of the newly founded university in Prizren where the Turkish community inhabited heavily. Kosovar governmental officials expressed their satisfaction particularly for the responds given quickly to the demands at the right time, in accordance to the needs without waiting any compensation. It is stressed that the university in Prizren should be subjected in separate evaluation from the point of Turkish students.

On the other hand, some of the participants highlighted *the military dimension* of relations. By analyzing closely the military dimension it was seen that it is closely related to the other support areas particularly with education. It was explained that in the context of dissemination of Turkish language, in cooperation with TIKA, some none-governmental organizations and some Association from Turkish origin, Turkish Battalion Task Force, aiming to support Turkish education, has organized Turkish courses for the Turkish communities in Kosovo. Apart from this, an information was obtained about Turkish courses organized for the other communities living in Kosovo, for example in Gora region.

In addition to above mentioned institutions the Ministry of National Education of Turkey (MoNE) also plays very active role in the improvement of the educational relations between the two countries. The participants noted that the quality of Turkish language education has been brought to a higher level by successive activities such as seminars symposiums, in service trainings organized by MoNE for the teachers employed in Turkish education in Kosovo. These activities were evaluated as very efficient and successful. It was mentioned that positive feedbacks were received, and that there were demands for the repeating of these activities. The participants also indicated that the Kosovar teachers' study visits to Turkey were beneficial in strengthening friendships and consolidated the existing cooperation. They also stated that the introduction of methods that were originally utilized in Turkey has nurtured a new understanding in education and has transformed Kosovo into a mini model of Turkey. It was highlighted also that in the success of these activities without doubt the financial contribution of TIKA is of great importance for them. Thanks to the support of Turkey there were developments observed also in the economy sectors as in the field of education. As the participants indicated these contributions have found a positive response.

Moreover, it was expressed that a cooperation has been foreseen to be started between

the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Agriculture in Isparta Suleyman Demirel University and the Ministry of Agriculture of Kosovo on giving training for the cultivation of stunted tree and provide support with plant in this regard.

The *internationalization* is another significant theme prominent in the interviews with the Kosovar governmental officials. Especially the student mobility realized towards Turkey, constitute as one of the important fact in the cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo. Kosovar governmental officials have pronounced the implementation of the Great Student Project as one of the most important activities of Turkey towards the region was, started as of 1992. Thus, through this project many students from Kosovo have achieved an opportunity to benefit from the educational facilities of Turkey. As it is known, this project firstly was applied only to the students from Turkish communities living in Kosovo. The political factors in the country was pointed out as the main reason for this implementation. The participants expressed that at that period Serbian authorities did not accepted the Albanian documents, therefore problems with the diploma recognition were faced. Due to these obstacles Kosovar Albanians did not show much interest to this project. But later on, in 1999-2000, with including to the project the Albanians and the Bosniaks students this project has gained a tremendous importance.

Nevertheless, according to the views of the participants it is seen that *the internationalization has changed dimensions* in recent years. The Turkish universities have begun to show a special interest to Kosovo educational institutions and their attempts to initiate cooperation with Kosovar educational institutions has been remarkable. As it is known after the decision dated 17 March 2010 taken at the General Assembly of Higher Education Council of Turkey, the Foreign Student Examination (Turkish acronym YÖS) was abolished and the placement of the foreign student was left to the discretion of the universities with intention to involve them more actively in the process. In accordance with this new implementation, apart from the Great Student Project (GSP), it has been started allocation of the quota for the foreign students by the Turkish universities itself. In this context, thanks to the quota provided by Nigde University opportunities for master degree have been given to Kosovar students who were graduated from the University of Prishtina. It was stated also that studying possibilities were offered by Trakya University especially for the students from the Balkans coming apart from the GSP project. In this way, the collaboration among the Turkish and Kosovar universities was intensified, which in turn affected student mobility in positive way as well.

In this section, *the religious education theme* appeared as in the interviews with Turkish governmental officials in the previous section. In compare to Turkish government officials views Kosovar officials focused on different aspects of this theme, especially on student mobility from Kosovo to Turkey. According to the participants, through the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey, approximately 1000 Kosovar students have been studying

in the universities and faculty of theologies located in various cities in Turkey. The participants stated also that Turkey has allocated nearly 120 scholarships yearly to Kosovo. It was emphasized that none of the European countries were provided scholarships to Kosovo student in such number, while this was done only by the side of Turkey.

#### ***4.1.2.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians***

Two main theme emerged in the interviews with the Kosovar academicians. These themes were presented in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Types of Assistance Given by Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- physical infrastructure</li> <li>- human resources</li> <li>- teaching Turkish language</li> <li>- curriculum support</li> </ul>
2	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation protocols signed between educational institutions</li> <li>- capacity problems – internationalization policy needs planning</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged from the interviews done with the Kosovar academicians is ***different kinds of assistance given by Turkey in various areas***. The first type is ***the support for physical capacity expansion of the Kosovar institutions***. It is understood that the important part of contributions of Turkey were in relation to developing of the physical infrastructure of the educational institutions. Especially the contributions of TIKA in this regard is noteworthy. As the Kosovar government officials Kosovar academicians also mentioned gratefully about the help given by TIKA three years ago for the establishment of the heating system of five elementary schools in Kosovo: Motrad Qiriazhi primary school, Matilla Goreci primary school, and Emin Durak, Fadil Lisarey and Lider Prizren schools. Other than this, it was learned that the heating system of Meto Bayraktar primary school in Bosniaks village in Jupa region were established also by TIKA. Academicians pointed that, this support was given by TIKA without any discrimination, support given to all ethnic groups.

***Besides assistance for physical capacity expansion content human resources support*** is also provided. For example, through TIKA until 2007 a guest lecturer were brought from Turkey to the Turkish Language and Literature Department opened in 2001 within the University of Prishtina. Furthermore, support was given also in ***teaching Turkish language***. Preliminary Turkish courses, weekly 6 hours, were organized for the Bosniaks students from Jupa region in the Rechane village, who wishes to study in Turkey. These courses were actually

an indicator that the activities carried out by Turkey were in benefit of all ethnic groups, rather than to promote Turkey and Turkey's existing wealth. The participants noted that Turkish courses organized in Kosovo are very demanding and that the interest of learning Turkish is increasing every day. It was noted that previously for the Turkish course were applying the students who failed the compulsory Turkish course in the Turkish departments of the universities and the students from the department of oriental studies taking it as an additional coursework, while now doctors, engineers, architects and peoples from different professions, due to various purposes are coming to these courses, which is an indication of increasing the quality of the participant. In terms of expansion and teaching Turkish language the courses that were organized in different cities and villages in the regions of Kosovo were assessed as successful by the academicians. Despite that there were also comments that the Turkish courses organized were not enough to meet the expectations of the Kosovars.

Apart from the assistance mentioned above support was given for *improving the curriculum of Turkish education in Kosovo*. In this sense, the support given by the Turkish Battalion Task Force in Prizren for bringing the helping textbooks from Turkey, that were needed for Turkish education in the schools located in the villages especially around Prizren has been remarkable.

The second theme was identified as internationalization. Each passing day different dimensions of the *internationalization were becoming increasingly important*. As it is known, the internationalization is very often referred by student mobility. However, Kosovar academicians evaluated the internationalization from different perspectives. They related the internationalization with the growing cooperation and bilateral relations established between higher educations of both countries and defined it at the institutional level. According to the opinion of the Kosovar academicians nowadays more frequently collaboration between the educational institutions of both countries have started to appear. It was noted that within the framework of the protocols signed, a cooperation was launched in various fields between the University of Prishtina and some higher educational institutions in Turkey. As an example was given the protocols signed for cooperation with Sakarya, Nigde and Eskisehir Osmangazi Universities in Turkey. The content of the protocol signed with the Sakarya University involves organizing of the symposiums, conferences, exchange of student and faculty, creation of joint programs. Moreover, it was expressed that an intention was declared between the authorities of both institutions to sign an additional protocol to given an opportunities for the students from the University of Prishtina to participate master or doctoral degree programs in Sakarya University. With the same purpose a contact was established also with the Gazi and Trakya universities. Even from Gazi University a faculty member was brought for a duration of one year. According to the opinions of the academicians within these protocols, so far,

Sakarya university haven been accepted nearly 25 students for master and doctoral degree and 92 student quota have been allocated by Nigde University. Unfortunately there were comments that this quota was not been able to fulfill completely by Kosovar students.

There is second state university newly founded in Prizren city. Cooperation protocols were signed between the Prizren University and many universities in Turkey such as Giresun, Sakarya, Trakya and Anadolu universities. It is obvious that these protocols would encourage the contact between the faculty members, the students and promote further the development of the research in areas of mutual interest between these educational institutions, specifically such as exchange of students and faculty, organization of seminars, joint research as well as raising of the academic staff for the said university. The cooperation with Turkish university will surely increase the quality of higher education in Kosovo.

Some participants used phrases showing that the relationship established in the field of education leads to *capacity problems*. Although the student quota allocated for Kosovo is found to be sufficient, the quota policy had been found to be wrong. This situation was explained as follows: there were students who could not complete their education or their graduation was a long lasting. Also, it is claimed that many students after returning back to Kosovo faced with unemployment. It is argued that this situation is stemmed from the incorrect application of the student quota policies. The inspection of these issues is said to be very superficial. Therefore academicians advised to revise the criterion for the allocation of the student quotas for Kosovo. ***These expressions demonstrated that the internationalization policy carried out towards Kosovo needs planning.***

#### ***4.1.2.3 Opinions of the representatives of the Kosovo associations***

In the interviews with the Kosovar Associations representatives two main themes appeared: civil society that plays an important role in the relation between the two countries and the internationalization theme which has gained a different meaning in Turkey. The themes were presented in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Kosovar Associations*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Civil Society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enhancing their dialogue with other institutions or organizations</li> <li>- support in terms of infrastructure or capacity building</li> <li>- moral and financial support by different institutions</li> </ul>
2	Internationalization – gained different meanings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- research (organizing seminars, supporting with academic staff)</li> </ul>

From the interviews with the representatives of the Kosovo associations it was understood that *civil society* emerges as a theme shaping the bilateral relations between both countries. The civil society is playing an active role in the reform and reconciliation processes taking place within the countries. Therefore support was given by Turkey for the development of the civil society in Kosovo. Special attention was given in *enhancing their dialogue with other institutions and organizations* in the world with aim to facilitate networking and partnerships building. For example, it was stated that Kosovo Teacher Association was made a member to the International Eurasia Education Syndicate Union established by the mediation of the Turkish Education Sen. Further, by the initiative of the Education Sen in the year of 2011 a meeting was held in Kosovo. Another way of support given to civil society is *in terms of infrastructure or capacity building*. Ensuring space for the association, supplying the required fuel for the heating of the association buildings etc. are some of the help provided in this regard by the Turkish Troops Battalion operated within the KFOR deployed in Prizren.

Other cases that emerge in the interviews with the representatives of the associations is that the aids for Kosovo were provided by various public institutions and foundations in Turkey including universities. For example, it was reported that *moral and financial supports* were received from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Turkey and the Mission of the Republic of Turkey acting in Kosovo. The participants emphasized that through these links they found the possibilities for transferring their problems verbatim.

On the other hand, in the interviews with the association representatives the *internationalization theme has gained a different meanings*. Accordingly, it is understood that the relations between the Turkish universities and the universities in Kosovo covers *the research also*. Cooperation made with many association and universities from Turkey, primarily with Balkan Turks Solidarity Association, Turkish World Research Foundation established by Prof. Dr. Turan Yazgan and Samsun 19 Mayıs University can be cited as an example. In this context, each year nearly 20 Kosovar teachers were sent to *seminars* in Turkey and immediately, after the war, in the year of 2000 from Bilkent university upon the proposal of this university, about 7-8 faculty members came to Kosovo for giving seminars to teachers. These seminars were assessed as very positive and productive. TIKA also has given help to many issues, even in terms of support with *academic staff*. However there have been complaints that since the personnel assigned were not having doctoral degree or having Ph. D degree but absence of academic experience do not met the needs, therefore unfavorable situation were occurred rather than contribution.

This situation indicates *different meanings that were aiming the internationalization*. In Turkey the internationalization carried different meanings according to the other advanced countries in this regard.

#### 4.1.2.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo

The themes identified in the interviews with Kosovar authorities were confirmed in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials. These themes were presented in the Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8

#### *Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Intensified intergovernmental relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- high level visits, agreements signed</li><li>- multi-contextual and multi-level of the relations</li><li>- relationships between municipalities</li><li>- collaboration between universities</li><li>- contribution to EULEX and KFOR</li><li>- collaboration with international and national institutions</li></ul>
2	Increasing the physical capacity of the educational institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- infrastructure building</li><li>- faculty member support (in - service training, support with training materials etc.)</li><li>- contributions of TIKA</li></ul>
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- meeting the workforce need of Kosovo</li></ul>
4	Religious education <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the means for transmission of the values, rituals and the norms</li><li>- through historical symbols (restoration of the Ottoman monuments)</li></ul>

First, *intensified intergovernmental relationships* emerged as an important theme. This theme reveals the will of the two governments to take forward the relations in the field of education. According to the information obtained from the interviews, during the high level visit to Kosovo from Turkey in May 2010, the contractual legal basis of the relations has been laid by signing *an agreement between the educational institutions* of the Republic of Kosovo and the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey. Thus, it has an importance in terms of determining the legislation of these relations, especially the legislation in the educational aspects.

Turkish governmental officials confirmed *the multi-contextual and multi-level of these relations*. They stated that apart from the institutions mentioned above contributions in various field including education have been made also by the municipalities of Turkey. For example, it was learned that “sister city” relationships were established among the municipalities of Kosovo and Turkey and in the framework of the “overseas sister city project,” many activities and events were organized, particularly by Antalya, Istanbul Kucukcekmece, Istanbul Buyukcekmece and Bursa Osmangazi municipalities in Kosovo.

Additionally, it was indicated that various kinds of supports were given by these municipalities for the Kosovar students with financial difficulties, who wish to study in Turkey.

The relationships between the universities of Kosovo and Turkey also attract attention. It can be noted that through allocation of student quota for Kosovo Trakya University, Uludag University, 19 Mayıs University, Anadolu University and Istanbul University are also contributing for the development of the educational policies of Turkey towards Kosovo.

On the other hand, Turkey contributed to EULEX mission, located within the European Union in Kosovo, with 95 Police from the General Directorate of Security of Turkey. Apart from this, also a judge is providing a consulting services to Kosovo institutions. Further within the KFOR (Kosovo Force) in Prizren in Sultan Murat barracks nearly 450 Turkish soldiers were contributed for providing the peace and stability in Kosovo.

It is evident that during the activities and services realized in Kosovo Turkish institutions were acting jointly in collaboration with various national or international institutions and organizations. To illustrate, in collaboration with EULEX, KFOR, Presidency of the Religious Affairs, Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Turkish Higher Education Council, also with some voluntary organizations such as Religious Foundation, and Religious and Social Service Foundation supporting the domestic and overseas services.

Second, *increasing of the physical capacity* has emerged as a theme herein. Turkish governmental officials have sampled the aids made by Turkey for the educational infrastructure in Kosovo. It was indicated a belief that this infrastructure support will improve the quality of the education in Kosovo. Beside the contribution made for the physical infrastructure there was no doubt that the human resource support will also contribute to the quality of the education. For this reason, the faculty member support has been also made from Turkey to Kosovo. The supports in the physical and human resources are outstanding the headlines such as dissemination of learning Turkish, giving in-service training for the teachers working in teaching Turkish, the books needed for Turkish education, supporting with training materials.

As in other participants groups according to Turkish governmental officials the most visible support almost in every area was provided by TIKA. The main objective of the project and activities carried out by TIKA in various sectors is to support all ethnic groups living in Kosovo without any discrimination, including as well as previously mentioned, to meet the demands of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo. Alongside the organization of Turkish language courses, TIKA has been giving support for the protection of the rights of Turkish communities regarding Turkish language education. Education in mother tongue is one of the important factors to be addressed in multiethnic structure societies such as Kosovo. The rights

for education in mother tongue of minority groups are guaranteed by the constitution of Kosovo. According to the constitution of Kosovo Turkish language is recognized as an official language at the municipality level. The activities conducted for solving the existing problems in Turkish education are in terms of physical capacity expansion content and human resources support. In this way many projects were realized for the alteration of the buildings of the schools, and supporting the universities with academic staff. For example, renovation of the heating system of Alaaddin Lycee in Prizren and in many other schools in Prizren, supply of teaching materials. If more concrete example to be given, in the interview it was expressed that within the Turcology project in terms of supporting the higher education, for example the faculty of education in Prizren University, where 3 sections are giving education in Turkish, which are preschool education, classroom teaching and mathematics – informatics sections, 3 lecturers were appointed from universities in Turkey. Teaching material support was also provided and studies are carried out for the development of the physical infrastructure of the said university.

In the interviews done with Turkish governmental officials the activities carried out have contributed to clarify the previously determined theme *internationalization*. The participants stated that in various areas in Kosovo the need of workforce has been met thanks to the persons who completed their education in Turkey. It is emphasized that many graduates from Turkey were employed and taking an active role (as a concrete example can be given) in the municipalities, educational institutions, different non-governmental organizations, hospitals and companies opened by Turkish investors (for example ENKA) in Kosovo. Thus, an important dimension was added to the rationales of the internationalization. The participants expressed that the education received in Turkey by Kosovar students has provided contribution to the development of Kosovo.

As it is determined with the other participant groups, in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials *the religious education* emerged as a theme also. The expressions of the participants are that religious education is not limited to the religious education in reality, they used the statements showing that the identity, values, rituals and the transmission of the norms are the means of this education. The participants stated that they gave services at the request of the kinships on primarily faith, religion, worship, morals, customs, national identity, culture and religious education, and in this context, religious wall calendars, the Holy Quran and catechism books published by the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey were distributed free of charge to those who want them. Moreover, it was expressed that the publications prepared on matter of faith and worship translated in Albanian were given to those who requested. In addition, in coordination of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs, education opportunities were provided for those who would like to attend Quran courses,

theology courses organized by various municipalities in Turkey, for example Üsküdar municipality, Bursa municipality and for those who want to educate themselves in this field. Further it was explained that these individuals later after returning to Kosovo were involved or served in various religious organizations. It was expressed also that all of the expenses of the students coming for study in Turkey are met by the Presidency of the Religious Affairs, as well as the expenses of the delegations coming with in-service training purposes and financial aid was provided to the religious content programs held in Kosovo. Since the year of 2000, within the framework of the ongoing exchange of services in the field of religious education with Kosovo, in under the leadership of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey was established the “Eurasian Islamic Council” to which the religious authorities in the Balkan countries and the religious authorities in the Turkic Republics are also members, and it was stressed that in this way the sharing of the experiences in the field of religion, knowledge and common practices were ensured. On the other hand, with the participation of the President of the Religious Affairs of Turkey in person, in 2010 in Prishtina was held a meeting of the Balkan countries religious administration representative in order to support Kosovo Islamic Union, and it was emphasized that the meeting had resulted very efficiently with the support given at government level. Besides, it was emphasized the importance of the joint actions in the celebrations regarding the Ramadan month, religious holidays, religious days and nights.

The relations between Kosovo and Turkey have been carried out also through *the historical symbols*. These relations carried out by symbols can be seen as a part of the studies transferring the religious education, culture and identity. The best example for these relations are the activities done in the framework of the restoration of the Ottoman monuments. It was mentioned that the studies on the restoration of the historical monuments such as mosque, madrasah and the lodge were still continued. To illustrate, under the leadership of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs and Religious Foundation of Turkey, was repaired also the tomb of “Sultan Murad Hüdavendiger”, who was killed and buried in Kosovo. It is observed that, again TIKA in Kosovo with its conservation and restoration efforts for such valuable structures as mosques and Turkish baths inherited from Ottoman period aiming to transfer these cultural heritages on to future generations has come to the fore.

#### **4.1.3 Rationales behind Turkey’s practices towards Kosovo**

##### ***4.1.3.1 Opinions of the Kosovar governmental officials***

The main rationales identified in the interviews with Kosovar governmental officials were presented in the Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Governmental Officials*

No	Rationales
1	Political Rationale - foreign policy - agreements signed - multi-ethnic structure of Kosovo - presence of Turkish communities in Kosovo
2	Cultural and Social Rationale - historical and cultural ties - religion factor
3	Economic Rationale - upbringing of the cadre (contribution to human resources- opportunity for the investment in Kosovo) - key to trade relations

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Kosovar governmental officials was the *political rationales*. Political rationales are closely related to the *foreign policy* of the countries. Therefore, it can be said that Turkey's foreign policy in this meaning, after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, was primarily based on reconstruction of the relationship with the newly established states in the Balkans. In this context, Turkey has provided great support for the recognition of Kosovo in the international platform since its declaration of independence. The participants emphasized the importance of support during the stage of setting up the new Kosovo state. They expressed their satisfaction from Turkey of being one of the first country recognizing the independence of Kosovo. In addition, it was mentioned about the Turkish people's warm relations which played a decisive role especially during the wartime. Turkey's warm welcome to Kosovars who left Kosovo and took refuge in the Turkish territory was adopted by the younger generation in Turkey, by transferring of this positive features to the younger generation of Kosovo. It is claimed that by this way, the destruction of some prejudices formed during the communism has begun. This was an instrumental for the construction of a bridge of friendships between the two countries and in terms of further strengthening the bilateral relations it was encouraging as well. Therefore, Turkey was assumed as a friend and indicated as a good model for Kosovo. Further, it was stated that the support given in the field of education and the *agreements* signed in various areas contributes to the strengthening and advancement of the political relations between Kosovo and Turkey.

Further, *Kosovo's multi-ethnic structure* is another factor that can be closely related to the political rationales, having an impact on the activities carried out by Turkey in Kosovo. Kosovo is the intersection of different nationalities where Albanians and the Slavs, where Muslims and orthodox were living all together. All participants agreed that creating intercultural understanding and dialogue between these ethnic groups is of vital importance

for the peace in the Balkans and creating an environment where people could embrace each other. It is emphasized that especially the *presence of Turkish communities* living in Kosovo is playing an important role in the bilateral educational relations between the two countries. The participants stated that for the survival of Turks and Turkish language education in Kosovo the support of Turkey is needed. It was stressed that with the activities carried out Turkey is undertaking a role of protecting the Turkish communities in Kosovo. From the statements of the participants it is understood that the main aim of Turkey in establishing relation with Kosovo is based on political consideration, aiming to preserve the national identity, culture and ensure the peace and security in the region.

*Cultural and social rationales* form another theme emerged as strongly in the interview with the Kosovar government officials. The data obtained from the interview revealed that cultural and social rationale can be linked to *the historical and cultural ties and the religion factor*. Special emphasis was given by the participants on the *historical and cultural ties*. According to the comments of one of the participants it is expressed that the nations in the Balkan countries are looking at Turkey as if “they look at a sun”. They see Turkey as close to themselves due to the religious and common historical life. The participants expressed their sadness about the periods of the World War I occurred in the Balkans after the year of 1912, World War II and unfortunately the war in 1999, the periods in which the Ottoman documents and the Ottoman monuments were the most damaged, many mosque were destroyed and madrasas were burned. Especially completely burning of the library of the Mufti building in Prishtina and moving of the many historic document existing in the archives of Kosovo to Belgrade, were proved to be the most depressing events for Kosovar governmental officials. In this context, it was explained that the studies have been launched to examine the real history of Kosovo. For this purpose close cooperation was established in the area of archives with Turkey. According to the views of the participants the history of the Balkans was stored in the archives of Turkey, in the Ottoman archives. The participants claimed that there were a lot of materials from the communist period, which contain negative thoughts and prejudices about Turkey. The desire to break these stereotypes and to reveal the truth was expressed. In this context the situation was interpreted from different point of view, that the Ottomans were not seen as an occupying but as a savior state. They even admitted that only during the Ottoman period the Albanian peoples have been able to be a society and to gain an identity, to have their own created alphabet, to have opened Albanian schools and to achieve their social rights. It was indicated that many Albanian scholars were grown at that period, some of whom were studied in Istanbul. Therefore, they claimed that Turkey has a moral rights in the Balkans. It was mentioned about the studies trying to prove this situation to the Albanians based on documents. The efforts spent to preserve these cultural values emerged as

an important motivation for the activities carried out by Turkey.

On the other hand, it was evident that *the religion factor* is playing an important role in the organization of the activities by Turkey. As in national meaning in religious sense also Kosovar governmental officials have been seeing Turkey as the country that is closest to them. They defined Turkey as suitable for their sect, and since there is no radicalism and fundamentalism in Turkey it is acceptable country for religious education by Kosovar students. For example, it was stated that thanks to the graduates from the faculties of theologies in Turkey it was able to meet the need of staff in Kosovo Islamic Union. Additionally, during the interview it was emphasized that religion, language and historical relations were facilitator for obtaining of the economic benefits.

In other words, it stems from the togetherness of the language, religion, history, and I am able to tell you. Such factors are also important, but such factors bring together, yet economic interests, to obtain these economic interests, they are creating the facilitating sub-elements.

The third rationale emerged in the interview was *the economic rationale*. Economic rationales can be defined as a long term benefits obtained as a result of the activities carried out by Turkey in Kosovo. For example, according to the participants' perspectives, Turkey is providing an opportunities for Kosovo's institutions to benefit from the knowledge and experiences of Turkey. It is assumed that *upbringing of the staff* needed in the Kosovo's institutions and organizations in Turkey would have also reflections in the economic area. It is believed that the common activities carried out in the field of economy will have created an opportunities for the investment in Kosovo, and naturally be a reason for further improve in the bilateral trade relations. Even it is stressed that Turkish investor should see Kosovo as the industrial arena and that special tax reliefs offered for the development of Kosovo was an issue that should be utilized by the Turkish businessmen also. Further the participants emphasized that the geopolitical position of Kosovo is very important, it is located in the heart of the Southeast Europe, therefore Kosovo can be as the opening gate to European Union countries for Turkey. In other words, Kosovo can be a *key point for Turkey in developing of trade relations with other countries* in the region and Europe.

#### ***4.1.3.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians***

The main rationales identified in the interviews with Kosovar academicians were presented in the Table 4.10.

In the interview with the Kosovar academicians *the political rationales* emerged strongly as in the interview with Kosovar governmental officials. Kosovar academicians also emphasized the importance of Turkey being the first country to recognize Kosovo's declaration of independence.

Table 4.10

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians*

No	Rationales
1	Political Rationale - foreign policy - multi-ethnic structure of Kosovo - presence of Turkish communities in Kosovo - student mobility as investment in the future relations
2	Academic Rationale - increasing the quality and the prestige of the Turkish education - improving the curriculum of Turkish education

An opinions have prevailed that they have been all absolutely sure that Turkey will extend its hands to support Kosovo. As stated above the political rationales can be linked to *the foreign policy of Turkey*. The participants expressed their thankfulness regarding the foreign policies produced by Turkey during the war, with accepting of thousands of Kosovars refugees who fled from Kosovo. In the interview it was emphasized that with its involving in UN Security Force in Kosovo (KFOR) which is responsible for the security of Kosovo, and within the UN Police Forces, with its own police and military quotas Turkey plays an active and respective role in ensuring the security in Kosovo.

On the other hand, it was expressed that the Ministries of Educations play an important role in the educational relations between the two countries, thus the factors such as common history, traditions and customs and cultural heritage, existing kinship relations of Kosovars in Turkey, the foreign policy of Turkey conducted towards Kosovo, migration, industry and economy were pointed out that as the more effective in the bilateral relations.

Another prominent element related to the political rationale as mentioned previously is *the multi-ethnic structure of Kosovo*. In this context, the participants pointed out that Turkey in assessing of its activities carried out towards Kosovo, it will be useful to take into consideration also *the presence of Turkish communities* living in Kosovo. It is said that, being very effective in the international scene, with its active foreign policy towards Kosovo either in pre or in the post-war period Turkey created a confidence in Turkish community. In the interview academicians like the Kosovar governmental officials expressed that the Turkish communities are an important element in the cooperation between the two countries. Further, their love to Turkey has been defined as a “sealed trust”. Additionally the comments were made that Turkey is a source of pride for the Turkish community in Kosovo. It has been stated that the contribution of the activities carried out by Turkey with aim to provide unity and solidarity among the Turkish communities in Kosovo cannot be overestimated.

**Student mobility**, in this sense the Great Student Project (GSP) can be interpreted as a **diplomatic investment in the future relations between both countries**. This project has been extremely useful in dissemination of Turkish education in Kosovo and as well for keeping the presence of Turkish communities in Kosovo and in order not to forget their mother tongue. Therefore the project was very significant in means of upbringing the teaching staff, who will take part in Turkish education also. The interview data revealed that thanks to GSP the needs of workforce especially executive and management staff, in different institutions in Kosovo were met. For example in Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs there were working 2 or 3 graduates from METU, the former Ambassador of Kosovo is a graduate of Bilkent university, also the President of the Constitutional Court has a master and doctoral degree from Bilkent university, in Prime Ministry of Kosovo there is a person having post of Undersecretary who has a master degree from Marmara university.

The second important rationale emerged in the interview with the academicians was the **academic rationale**. It was stated that the quality of education in Turkey was evaluated positively by Kosovar teachers working for Turkish education, by this way the course **quality and the prestige of the Turkish education system have been increased**, and with the help of the experts from Turkey the **curriculum in Turkish education was improved**. It has been ensured the restructuring of such unique courses as Turkish language, history, art and music. Dominating opinions among the academicians were that the students from Turkish communities living in Kosovo were choosing for study Turkey because of the opportunities for having education in their mother tongue and economic reasons, in other words, due to scholarship opportunities.

#### **4.1.3.3 Opinions of the Kosovar association representatives**

Unlike the Kosovar Academicians in the interview with the Kosovar Association representatives two different rationales were prevalent: **cultural - social and economic rationales**, which are presented in the Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Association Representatives*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Cultural and social rationale - historical and cultural ties between the two countries
2	Economic rationale - economic development of Kosovo - employment opportunities

The participants linked the cultural and social rationale with *historical and cultural ties between the two countries*. The participants indicated that Turkey is perceived as a true friend of Kosovo. According to them this interest of Turkey towards Kosovo stemmed primarily from 600 years shared common culture, language and traditions.

On the other hand, *the economic rationale* is regarded as income-generating factor contributing to the development of the country. The representatives commented that the educational relation between the two countries contributed to the *economic development of Kosovo*, therefore these relations can be assumed as means for strengthening of the relations also in the field of economy. Thanks to the investments made by the Turkish businessmen in Kosovo, it was provided *employment opportunities* for the younger Kosovars. Naturally, this situation requires knowing of Turkish very well, therefore a great importance is given for learning Turkish language.

#### 4.1.3.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo

Turkish governmental official justified three main rationales: *political, economic and cultural and social rationales*, which are presented in the Table 4.12. As can be seen, in comparison to other groups Turkish governmental officials emphasized different aspects of these rationales.

Table 4.12

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Kosovo*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the contribution of the governmental officials serving in Kosovo</li> <li>- raising manpower as a kind of investment in future relations</li> <li>- increasing the image and the influence of Turkey in the region</li> <li>- increase of the level of the relationships</li> <li>- ensuring the peaceful and steadily development of Kosovo</li> <li>- to eliminate the prejudices</li> </ul>
2	Economic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project and activities for the economic development of Kosovo</li> </ul>
3	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- religion factor</li> <li>- historical ties</li> <li>- Muslim population structure of Kosovo</li> <li>- cultural heritage of the Ottomans</li> </ul>

The statements of the participants proved that the rationales cannot be ranked according to their priorities, but an overlap or sometimes shift among them were seen. For

instance, in the interviews, almost all groups are putting forward the historical and cultural ties as important between the two countries while expressing the political rationales. Although there were no clear distinction made between the rationales, *the political rationale* was emphasized frequently in a strong manner. As it is stated previously, the political rationale is related mostly to the foreign policy, keeping communication and developing active diplomatic relations among relevant institutions. In this respect *the contribution of the governmental officials* serving in Kosovo cannot be overestimated. It was stated that the reasons for their presence in Kosovo is actually to ensure the coordination between various institutions. It was emphasized that Kosovo is currently passing through a rapid transformation process; therefore, for realizing of a cooperation between the two countries institutions there is a need of healthy legislation, hierarchical bureaucracy, healthy public administration and most importantly trained manpower. Thus, it was pointed the necessity of raising human elements acting in accordance with the needs and development of Kosovo.

When we look at our orientations towards Kosovo in the field of education, it is required to be done more efficient planning in terms of raising the human elements who would be acting as an actor of the need and the development here.

Therefore, the students who completed their education in Turkey and when they returned to Kosovo are intended to contribute to the development of Kosovo. Naturally, the connection is maintained with them and it is assumed that they will become a volunteer ambassadors of Turkey in Kosovo. One of the participants expressed that, “they are almost experiencing an excitement of serving as honorary ambassadors for our country and they lay claim to the values of our country” (O10). In this sense, Turkey's contribution in *raising manpower* is enormous. Especially the cooperation in the field of education was considered as a *kind of investment in the future political relations*. The following statements in this regard is very striking.

Politically, I have already always told, education is an important thing, and here the people, adults, who completed the highest level of education and coming from Turkey as equipped, both in political and economic manner taking an important tasks position in various organizations, it shows, it outlines the concrete contribution of our educational policy that can be presented here, that it is.

Additionally, it was mentioned that with the withdrawal of the Ottomans in 1912 from the Balkans the relations with the countries in that region were seriously interrupted, but starting as of 90's Turkey's interest to this region begun to increase and all kinds of support in various areas as in the political, economic, cultural and educational field were provided and naturally it will be continued increasingly. It was stressed that the people in Turkey were behaving incredibly responsive to all kinds of events happened in Kosovo, therefore Turkey's support to Kosovo is very important. It was remarked that this support at the same time

***increases the image and the influence of Turkey in the region.***

May be in the coming periods this interest will continue to increase and as Turkey's influence in the Balkans, its influence in the world politics and its position become stronger the effects of it here will also increase.

Moreover, the aim of the various activities carried out by Turkey towards Kosovo is ***moving the bilateral relations into higher level*** with all institutions and organizations in Kosovo, maximizing the relationships and contributing to the development of the ties between the two countries. Thus, in this way to contribute to the peace in the region by helping Kosovo to gain a respected position in the international arena and ***ensuring the peaceful and steadily development of Kosovo*** as an element of stability and prosperity.

A prosperous Kosovo, our main aim is to give assistance and contribute to the studies of Kosovo's young Republic both in international recognition and acquiring a place of self-esteem, integration of it with Euro-Atlantic institutions and other areas, and in this context Turkey Kosovo relations, to contribute, to further develop the already excellent relations, our basic aim is this.

On the other hand, it is believed that this image will also help ***to eliminate the prejudices*** in the minds of the people in Kosovo in the twentieth century against Ottomans in accordance with the historical facts.

Another main rationale emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials is ***the economic rationale***. The economic rationale refers mainly to the contributions made for the development of the economies of the nations and the education given in this regard in various areas is used as a tool for the improving of the nations' economies. In this sense, the foreign policy actors of Turkey in the Balkans have been diversified especially after the cold war and the collapse of the eastern bloc. Among the institutional actors operating in the region, that are involving in its hinterland historical, cultural and kinship ties, TIKA also took its place. As the participants stated the primary reason for the presence of TIKA in Kosovo is ***to conduct studies on the execution of the project and activities for the development of Kosovo in the field of economy.***

The economy of Kosovo is extremely in need of development. The production possibilities are limited, we are supporting the development of the education policies as an instrument for developing of the production, increasing and diversifying the investment opportunities in areas such as industry and trade here. The other areas that you told are among the factors that are shaping the education policy. These are the most basic things before us.

***Cultural and social rationale*** emerged as another important rationale defined by Turkish governmental officials. They linked this rationale to the several facts such as the religion factor, common historical ties that are existed between the two countries and the historical symbols in Kosovo. ***The religion factor*** was emphasized as one of the driving forces for the activities in different fields implemented by Turkey in Kosovo. The following statement

support this view.

Because, there is an infrastructure in Kosovo, it is European country and almost the population is Muslim. Thus, “Turkish model of religious service” being effective in this country is extremely important.

According to the participants the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey with its services offered constitutes an important model among the Islamic countries. All of the Balkan countries were giving special importance to religious education, therefore the contribution of Turkey to the Kosovo's religion education cannot be overestimated. As it is obvious these religious services provided by Turkey are under the state auspices. In this context, Turkey has been provided an opportunity to study in the religious high schools (İmam Hatip Lisesi) and in the faculties of theology in Turkey for the students at every level and from various regions of Kosovo. In fact the aim of these educational activities that have both financial and human dimensions is to reach wider mass of people. In the interviews there were interpretations that through the religious education could be possible to balance the relations between the different ethnic groups living in Kosovo. It was claimed also that Turkey is the one of the most important actors that can provide the ethnic and religious peace in Kosovo, even as the only country that will form the basis for development of healthy relations. As one of the governmental officials expressed “it is very important to share and live together with the neighboring countries this experience and richness coming from our common history. In this context, Kosovo is a specific place”.

Naturally, *the Muslim population structure of Kosovo* cannot be underestimated. In Kosovo, particularly in Prizren, there were Turkish communities inhabiting in intense. There are also Kosovar Albanians having relatives in Turkey. This constitute a reason for building a strong bridge between Turkey and Kosovo. Therefore historical and kinship ties comes as first main factors shaping the relations with Kosovo. Further, the officials noted that it have to be taken more rational steps regarding Kosovo.

*Historical ties* existing between the two countries is another important driving forces binding Turkey to Kosovo. Turkish governmental officials stated that, Kosovo has a deep multi-dimensional historical ties with Turkey. As they expressed as a result of long year living together it was formed a unity of faith. In addition, there were masses in Kosovo with whom Turkey has ties of kinship and brotherhood, cultural and social ties. According to the Turkish governmental officials the faith, customs, traditions, history, culture and cultural values are defined as the main factors affecting the educational relations between the two countries. All of these were the most important facts in ensuring the cooperation between the two countries and maximizing the contribution that is required to be done. In this regard, the expression of the one of the governmental officials has been remarkable. He said that “essentially, all

established states are protecting the states that were having historical ties with them”.

Finally, it is apparent that *cultural heritage of the Ottomans* is another factor also playing an important role in motivating Turkey to implement various activities in Kosovo. There were a lot of historical and cultural monuments remained from Ottoman period. The vivid and widespread Ottoman traces make Kosovo very privileged. In this sense, especially in Prizren there were many historical richness, for example, nearly 30 mosques, inns, baths, madrassas, bridges and dervish lodges. More importantly, Kosovo is a geography where the Turkish martyrs were buried. In the interview it was stressed that, builded with the permission of the Ottoman rulers, there were mosques, which are still opened for worship. Additionally, in this region there were church which added distinctive beauty and richness as well. All of them were an indicator that in the past this region were dominated by a tolerance and pluralism of cultures, the atmosphere of tolerance which is a crucial for the entire Balkans.

#### **4.1.4 Expectations of Kosovo from Turkey**

##### ***4.1.4.1 Opinions of the Kosovar governmental officials***

The participants expressed their satisfaction from the will and enthusiasm of Turkey to continue its support in the field of education. One responded expressed this satisfaction with the following statement, “I can better express it as we are satisfied with Turkish support and their readiness to continue this support”. Although some of the expectations were not be able to meet due to reasons caused by the side of Kosovar authorities, the participants stated that the educational activities realized by Turkey have been largely met the educational expectations of the Turkish communities in Kosovo and those of Kosovo in general.

Interview results revealed four main themes regarding the expectations of the Kosovar governmental officials from Turkey in relation to higher education are: assistance to be provided in various forms such as support with projects, establishment of universities and partnerships among universities, technology transfer, cultural and social support and restoration, maintenance and preservation of the historical symbols. These themes were presented in Table 4.13.

Regarding the expectations from Turkey the first theme emerged was *the assistance to be provided to various institution in different forms*. In this sense, firstly, the importance of providing *assistance in forms of project* was emphasized. According to Kosovar governmental officials the projects conducted in the field of education by Turkey are insufficient in terms of the number and content. It was mentioned that this insufficiency of the projects were observed in other areas as well. Therefore demands to increase the implementation of the projects were expressed. Especially implementation of the project

implemented not only in the field of education but as well in other areas, which will contribute to the economic development of Kosovo.

Table 4.13

*Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovar Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Assistance to be provided in form of - projects - establishment of universities and partnerships among universities - technology transfer
2	Aspects of Internationalization - student mobility - raising staff for the institutions - diploma recognition
3	Cultural and social support -Turkish education , learning Turkish language, Turkish culture
4	Historical symbols (restoration, maintenance preservation)

To illustrate projects on cold storage operation, the construction of a common market places and some sample projects relating to the cultivation of a certain products, or giving a special training to farmers on greenhouses and fruit cultivation are some of the project requested to be realized. It is obvious that economic development will contribute to improving of the education system as well. It should be accepted that the largest contribution in this regard was done by TIKA. Desirability on the continuation of the projects carried out by TIKA has been expressed by the following statement;

Then, since the economic power, political power, culture is much more over of all countries in the region in every field, in every sense, all our expectations are from the Republic of Turkey.

Another expectation stated by the Kosovar officials was *the establishment of universities in Kosovo by Turkish entrepreneurs and providing support through partnerships and cooperation among the educational institutions between Turkey and Kosovo*. For example an emphasis was made on the need of establishment of a university in Kosovo as Turkey's Middle East Technical University (METU) that will serve to entire region. Also, there were demands for supporting the University of Prishtina and the Turkish Language and Literature Department in the newly established university in Prizren. It is demanded mostly support for opening of master's and doctoral degree programs, and as well support with academic staff. It was advised that within the cooperation among the universities, a Turkish Language and Literature Departments should be opened, strengthened and made attractive not only to Turkish communities but also to all ethnic groups in Kosovo. In addition, it was stated that in the framework of the protocol signed on cooperation between Kosovo State Archives

and the General Directorate of State Archives of Turkey a request was made for arranging of Ottoman courses, since in Kosovo there were a need of more expert on Ottoman.

On the other hand, the data from the interviews reveal that an educational support was expected in areas other than education as well. As it is known Kosovo is an agricultural country. Therefore, it was noted that, there is a need to establish a sister relationship between the only Agricultural Institute of Kosovo with the certain Agricultural Institutes in Turkey. This is very important not only in terms of keeping pace with the emerging technologies, but also for the improving of this Institute. Because only through this collaboration many agriculture expert from Kosovo or Kosovar expert having doctoral degree in the field of agriculture can have an opportunity to be trained for a certain time in the Agriculture Institutes in Turkey.

The governmental officials emphasized the importance of *the technology transfer*. The attention was drawn on sharing technology information, and support in this regard was requested. Besides that, it was expressed the need for directing of the students to technical fields, especially to be able to follow new technological developments in the fields of electronics and mechanical engineering, in the field of law and medicine, and specifically for professional academic staff trained with new understandings. Moreover, Kosovar governmental officials, stressed that the cooperation with Turkey in technology transfer in the field of higher education and industry is demanded to be better connection oriented. Additionally, it was stated that with educational cooperation protocol signed between the Ministries of Education of the two countries the educational cooperation between the two countries is desired to be institutionalized in order to make it closer to the labor market, industry and entrepreneurship rather than to increase extremely the level of the educational relations. Some of the participants wanted that the said protocol signed between the two countries be revised according to the present conditions and enter into force very soon.

The second theme emerged regarding expectations was *internationalization*. Some *aspects of the internationalization* as student mobility, academic staff support and diploma recognition have been prominent. Special attention was given to the importance of *student mobility*. There were comments that the student quota allocated in the framework of Great Student Project by Turkey would be useful to increase although it was found to be sufficient. Furthermore, it was advised that a change to be done in the examination and preference application of the Great Student Project, that the determination of the students quota be done according to the scores that students will obtained in the exams, and that it will be more appropriate that the students make their university preferences based on the score they obtained in these exams. By this way it is thought that the students will have an opportunity to choose consciously the faculty they desire to study. May be by this way it will possible to prevent

vacancies due to not filled quota.

Other than increasing student mobility, there were expectations for *raising of staff* also. Mostly, support with academic staff to educational institutions, organization of activities for teachers, giving in-service trainings and conferences were among the demands of the participants. In addition, the participants mentioned about the expert deficiencies that Kosovo State Archives have in all areas, and in this sense the demands for training of the young personnel on archival matters (such as the restoration of the documents, classification and transferring of them into digital media) were conveyed in the interviews as well.

As another important aspect of internationalization that was mentioned by the participants was regarding the expectation on *diploma recognition* between the two countries. The demands were expressed for joint work on diploma degree equivalence, or to make studies on recognition of diplomas in both countries, to bring together the experts for the preparation of the educational curricula and determination of the shortcomings in education system of Kosovo and studies to be made on harmonization of the curricula of the two countries education systems.

Third theme emerged regarding expectation was *cultural and social support*. This theme was linked to the Turkish education, learning Turkish language and Turkish culture. During the interview governmental officials expressed the usefulness of opening in Kosovo Yunus Emre Cultural Center, just like British Council, Goethe Institute or American Cultural Center, where will be carried out an activities for learning Turkish language, Turkish traditions, Turkish culture and history. Also it was stated that there is a need of cooperation in the fields including the common cultural heritage. There were also request for providing of the textbooks from Turkey for the need of primary and high schools in Turkish education, particularly textbooks about the principles and the revolutions of Ataturk, additional lessons books describing Turkey's culture, traditions, customs and history, and as well as brochures and some journals.

The last theme regarding expectation expressed by the Kosovar governmental officials was related to the *historical symbols*, more precisely restoration, maintenance and preservation of the historical monuments inherited from Ottoman period. In Kosovo there were a lot of historical monuments such as baths, mosques, that were in the worst situation, nearly to be destroyed, some of them were closed to worship for years. For example, it was stated that beside the support for the restoration of the Mustafa Pasha mosque all kind of support is needed to be provided for the imams, teachers and preachers in madrasah also.

#### 4.1.4.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians

In compare to Kosovar governmental officials Kosovar academician's expectations from Turkey were intensified mainly on the problems in Turkish language education, some aspects regarding the internationalization and cultural and social support. The themes identified in the interviews regarding the expectations of the Kosovar academicians were presented in the Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14

#### *Themes Identified Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovar Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Current problems in Turkish education <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- curriculum</li><li>- textbooks, school materials and supplies</li><li>- teacher shortages (inservice training)</li></ul>
2	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- brain drain</li><li>- student quota</li><li>- student and faculty mobility</li><li>- raising of skilled and academic staff for various institutions</li><li>- financial support to academic activities</li><li>- organization of seminars, in-service training</li></ul>
3	Cultural and social support <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Turkish education and cultural events</li></ul>

As it is stated in the previous sections Kosovo has a multi-ethnic structure and Turkish minorities are one of the groups in minority statutes in Kosovo. This group play an important role in the bilateral relations of both countries. Kosovar academicians expressed their expectations by taking into consideration this group. In this context, the first theme emerged in the interview with Kosovar academicians was ***the current problems in Turkish language education***. In order to ensure the restructuring of the education system of Kosovo academicians have requested that meetings be held for addressing the current problems in Turkish education system in Kosovo and commission to be formed by the experts from Turkey aiming to find solutions regarding the issues related to curriculum, textbooks and teacher shortages in Turkish education. It was suggested that within the cooperation to be established between the Ministries of Education of both countries, Turkish education expert should be appointed in the Minorities Department within the Ministry of Education of Kosovo. It is believed that by such way a help could be provided by Turkish educational experts for the restructuring and solution of ***the curriculum problems*** in Turkish education in Kosovo. For example, according to the views of the academicians, the information taught in the history textbooks and additional resources, there were some prejudices existing against the Ottoman

history, therefore it is advised that history curriculum be revised and urgent measures should be taken for the elimination of these prejudices. It was expressed that a help is expected from Turkey in this regard.

On the other hand, the need of *textbooks* is another problem faced in Turkish language education. It is believed that this problem can be solved by pressing the textbooks prepared by Kosovo authors in Turkey. Further, the interview data revealed that there were expectation also for providing support by *school materials and supplies* not only to schools where the medium of instruction is Turkish, but also for the school where the teaching is in Albanian. The school materials and supplies needed can be listed as follows: atlas for geography courses, world maps, atomic models for chemistry courses, periodic element charts, live or dead specimens, preserved in specific glass containers needed for biology courses, thermometer and scales for physic courses etc.

*Teacher shortages* appeared to be also an important problem faced in Turkish education. As the academicians stated, teacher profession in Kosovo has not been seen as an attractive profession. It was stressed that this profession should be encouraged in order to become one of the preferred both from the side of Turkish community and Kosovar Albanians. It is thought that guaranteeing the social security of the teaching staff, the possibility of health and social insurance will encourage the new generation to prefer this profession. In addition, academicians recommended that, in order to guaranty the social security of the teaching staff who play a great role in upholding the education level of the Turkish community in Kosovo the legal arrangements and projects should be implemented with aim to find solution for the teacher shortages in Turkish education.

Beside that, the academicians have referred to the importance of *in-service trainings for the teachers involved in Turkish education*. They stated that Turkish communities living in Kosovo could not be isolated from the other communities in Kosovo. They should also take an advantage of the services offered to general public in Kosovo. Therefore they asserted that the in-service training courses given to the Albanian teachers by the Kosovo Education Center on behalf of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology of Kosovo should be also given to the teachers in Turkish education in coordination with the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. Additionally, it was requested that the seminars or courses be given separately according to the branches of the teachers, for example separately for the English teacher, separately for the physics teachers and separately for those teachers working in Turkish education. They express their will of taking an advantage of using the teacher houses in Turkey, guest hosting facilities in the campuses of the universities in Turkey, and holiday villages to be open their doors to Kosovars teachers. Consequently, it was commented that, in

order to sustain the Turkish community, to increase their self-confidence, and to protect their “Turkishness”, Turkey need to review its foreign policy towards Kosovo.

The second theme emerged in the interviews with the Kosovar academicians regarding their expectation was *internationalization*. Compared to Kosovar governmental officials Kosovar academicians referred to different aspects of internationalization as brain drain, students quota allocated by Turkey in the framework of Great Student Project, financial support to academic activities, organization of seminars, in-service trainings etc. As it is known *brain drain* in internationalization remains as one of the potential risk especially for the developing countries. Kosovo is not exception of this. The academicians complained that some of the students after completing their education in Turkey have did not return to Kosovo. As the main reasons for this situation was indicated language difficulties faced generally by the students from Turkish communities, in other words not knowing Albanian language created concerns among the students from Turkish population for not being able to integrate to Kosovo society and contribute to the development of Kosovo. In this sense, Turkey's educational policy towards Kosovo was criticized and evaluated as insufficient. The academicians expressed their expectation for reversing brain drain. To solve this problem some suggestions were made, as expecting from Turkey to put forward some supporting measures like: requirements for passing of the Albanian qualifying exam as prerequisite for the students of Turkish communities from Kosovo, who wish to study in Turkey. In addition, it was advised that instead of student quota, by determining of the threshold score implementation of the point system would be more appropriate. Furthermore, there were comments that the students completing their undergraduate studies in Turkey should be encouraged to do master degree in Kosovo. They emphasized that it would be useful to allocate even scholarships for example for the students provided that they will study in the University of Prishtina. Thus, by this way they would have learned the Albanian language, since the education in Kosovo is in Albanian. Additionally, at the same time would have an advantage of the experiences of Kosovo and will not be limited only with knowledge acquired from Turkey. Thus, the students after their graduation in Turkey can be attracted to return to Kosovo and by involving in the competitive force to contribute to the development of their home country. The majority of the academicians believed that only by this way brain drain can be transformed into brain gain.

As the Kosovar governmental officials Kosovar academicians referred to *student and faculty mobility* as an important issue among Turkey and Kosovo. They expressed their expectation of finding solution for the *exchange of student and faculty* among the educational institutions of both countries. The academicians pointed out that there were no students coming from Turkey to study in Kosovo. They expressed their desire of having students from Turkey studying in Kosovar educational institutions as well. Therefore, they emphasized that

particularly priority should be given to the issue of the student exchange.

Another important issue frequently raised in the interviews was the need of *skilled and academic staff*. In this context, it was stated that in Kosovo in the coming period, in order to meet the needs of administrators and managerial staff in the fields of sociology, psychology, history, philosophy, law, political science and other social science as well as in the technical areas such as electric-electronics, to raise competitive workforce especially at the master or doctorate level, it is very important and necessary that Kosovar students be educated in Turkey. In addition, it was expressed that there in the coming period there would be teacher shortages at elementary and high school level in Turkish education mainly in the field of sciences such as mathematics, physics, and chemistry due to retirements of the existing teachers. Therefore, in order to close this gap of teacher shortages in Turkish education in Kosovo it would be also useful students be educated in Turkey. To this end, they suggested that for raising awareness in teachers and student educational fairs should be arranged for promoting Turkish educational institutions. In addition, for enhancing professional development of the teachers and academic staff, they continuously should be encouraged to enroll for advanced study in their fields in order to be more knowledgeable, equipped with up to date information. For this purpose seminars and conferences should be organized for the teachers and academic staff in Kosovo, even some persons effective in this regard in Kosovo should be invited to these conferences and seminars. Further, by mentioning about the limited financial resources of the educational institutions in Kosovo, there were demands for *financial support* to be given for the Kosovar academicians to be able to participate to these conferences organized by the educational institutions in Turkey.

It was indicated that Kosovo State Archives is another institutions where support should be given for training an experts knowing Ottoman for dissolving of the documents which are in Ottoman. During the interviews, concerns were expressed about the deletion of the facts related to the cultural values inherited from the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo. Therefore, academicians stated that for the examination of the historical, cultural and architectural monuments belonging to this period, for their protection and bringing them to the world heritage the cooperation between the relevant institutions should be encouraged.

The third main theme emerged regarding the expectations of the Kosovar academicians was *cultural and social support*. Unlike the Kosovar governmental officials academicians have mostly focused on the cultural event and religion education of Turkish communities. It was stated that during the evaluation of the social political situation of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo, the needs of this community for *Turkish education* and *cultural events* rights should be analyzed in compare to their prewar situation.

#### 4.1.4.3 Opinion of the representative of the associations in Kosovo

Interview results revealed two main themes regarding the expectations of the representatives of Kosovar Associations internationalization and cultural and social support. These themes were presented in Table 4.15 below.

In the interview with the representatives of Kosovar associations the internationalization appeared as an important theme. As in the interview with the academicians in the interview with the representatives of Associations the internationalization was discussed in terms of raising academic staff and student quota. In the interviews, it was expressed that the priority should be given for **training of the academic staff** needed in physics and chemistry teaching fields. Since the retirements of the teachers in these branches, or as they will retire in the coming period in these positions will occur openness, therefore the **student quota** should be allocated by taking into account the need of these cadres.

Table 4.15

*Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Representatives of Kosovar Associations*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization - raising academic staff/training personnel - student quota
2	Cultural and social support - Turkish education - Turkish language

In addition, according to the participants the geodesy and archeology were indicated as the field that need to be develop in Kosovo. The need of **training personnel** who be able to function in these areas was emphasized. To this end, they have requested help from Turkey in this respect, perhaps in the context of the Great Student Project, that the students be directed to these areas. In the interview, the representatives of the associations expressed that although Turkey has met the expectations of Kosovo in terms of the number of **the students quota** allocated by Turkey in the field of education, they would be grateful if this quota be increased for example to 100.

The second theme emerged in the interview with the representatives of the Kosovar associations was **cultural and social support**. Regarding this theme the interview data reveal that Turkish education and teaching Turkish language is of great importance. During the interview, it was stressed that the support should be given absolutely to **Turkish education** in Kosovo. As it is known Kosovo is a multi-ethnic country. Alongside Turkish communities in Kosovo there were other communities like Bosnians and Albanians who were also interested in learning **Turkish language**. Therefore, the participants demanded that Turkish course be held regularly.

#### 4.1.4.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo

Turkish governmental officials expressed that the senior Kosovar authorities were desired more intensive support during the negotiations done with them. There were also comments that through the activities carried out by Turkey the expectations of the Kosovars were met in a limited extent. It was mentioned that great efforts were spent by the side of Turkey in order to meet the demands of Kosovars at highest level. For this purpose, it was indicated the need of planning for the determination of the needs of Kosovo at macro level and the need for good analysis to be done also about the groups other than the Turkish communities in Kosovo. In the light of these information two main themes were identified regarding the expectations of Kosovars from Turkey from the interview with the Turkish governmental officials: internationalization and cultural and social support. These themes and the content of these themes were presented in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16

*Themes Regarding the Expectations of the Kosovars from the Point of the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization - raising managerial / teaching staff - student mobility - student quota/scholarships - cooperation between the educational institutions
2	Cultural and social support - teaching Turkish language - religion education - infrastructural support for religious institutions buildings and historical monuments (restoration, maintenance)

The first theme emerged in the interviews with Turkish governmental official was **internationalization**. The participants were focused mainly on the following features of the internationalization: raising managerial staff, student mobility, student quota and cooperation between educational institutions. The emphasis was given to the needs of Turkish communities as well. For example, with purpose to determine the needs of the Turkish communities in Kosovo in higher education a consultant was desired to be appointed by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey within the Embassy of Turkey in Prishtina. In addition, other topics discussed in the interviews were **upbringing the teaching staff** in Turkish education, meeting the needs of Turkish education, opening of different departments within the Kosovar universities, and of course increasing the **student mobility**, or sending the most qualified students to Turkey for training and as well as the attention was drawn to importance of bringing

students from Turkey to Kosovo. As it is obvious the students who went to study in Turkey were at the undergraduate level, it was indicated that it would be more appropriate if the level be raised to doctoral degree, even it was proposed that those working in the public sector be accepted for doctoral degree in Turkey. As to the student quota, some of the governmental officials found the number sufficient, others stated that this quota should be revised and to increase to a rational level especially in terms of the Turkish community, while some others emphasized that the number of this quota should be reduced and instead the granted *scholarships* should be made more qualified. It was advised that priority be given to technical fields such engineering. It is believed that people who were trained in this area would have much more opportunities for finding job. It is believed that the support given to physical infrastructure of the newly established university in Prizren, transferring the experiences of the Turkish universities by supporting this university with teaching staff, would increase the opportunities for *cooperation among the educational institutions* of both countries.

The second main theme emerged in the interview with the Turkish governmental officials regarding the expectations of Kosovars was the *cultural and social support theme*. As the representative of Kosovar Association Turkish governmental officials also emphasized the importance of *teaching Turkish language and religion education* taking into consideration Turkish communities in Kosovo. In the interview, it was explained that the Turkish communities in Kosovo knew Turkish, but the level of their Turkish was not enough to be able to follow courses in the universities where the medium of instruction is in Turkish. Therefore, as a possible solution for that problem, it was indicated that there were demands conveyed to them by Kosovars for founding of Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Kosovo as that of Goethe Institute, Cervantes and British Council. According to them Yunus Emre Cultural Center may undertake the responsibility of *teaching Turkish language*. By this way it could be also possible to contribute for the dissemination of Turkish language in Kosovo.

Another important component related to this theme is *religion education*. As it is known in Kosovo there are three major religions: Islam, Orthodoxy and Catholicism. It is thought that religion education might serve as a means to encourage establishment of dialogue between the conflicting ethnic groups living in Kosovo. Therefore, in order to avoid a misuse of the religion for political reasons a big responsibility falls to Religious Institutions in Kosovo. In this respect, the support of the international communities is of great importance also. The participants confirmed that within the scope of its tasks the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey is acting jointly with the Kosovo Islamic Union by giving services on religious matters in accordance with the needs of the Muslim communities in Kosovo. Further, in this regard, Turkish governmental officials expressed the desire of Kosovo Islamic Union for organizing symposium in Kosovo concerning the major figures of the Ottoman Empire. In

addition, they conveyed the demands of Kosovar Religious authorities for improving of the infrastructure of the religion educational buildings belonging to the religious institutions in Kosovo, and the reparation of the historical monuments inherited from Ottomans.

#### **4.1.5 Practices of Kosovo in order to enhance cooperation with Turkey**

##### ***4.1.5.1 Opinions of the Kosovar governmental officials***

Interview data revealed two main themes: *activities for identifying the problems in Turkish education in Kosovo and activities regarding the aspects of the internationalization*, which explain the efforts spent by the authorities in Kosovo for enhancing the cooperation in higher education with Turkey. These themes were presented in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17

*Themes Emphasized by Kosovar Governmental Officials Regarding the Practices*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Identifying and finding solutions the problems in Turkish education - organization of conferences
2	Internationalization - establishment of partnerships - measures taken to prevent brain drain - initiatives made for solving the problems of the students studying in Turkey

Kosovar governmental officials stated that in order to identify and find solution to the problems in Turkish education in Kosovo four separate *conferences* have been organized and according to the results obtained from these conferences, the shortages in teaching staff in Turkish education and the need for Turkish textbooks were the problems emerged as most important. As it is known, Turkey attaches great importance to Turkish education in Kosovo and provides support in all aspects.

Establishment of partnerships between the educational institutions, measures taken to prevent brain drain and efforts to solve the problems of the students studying in Turkey were the other practices undertaken by the Kosovar governmental officials that can be associated with the internationalization theme.

It was reported that Kosovar authorities have also initiated dialogues on establishment of cooperation with the educational institutions in Turkey. The cooperation with the Suleyman Demirel University and Trakya University were some of the concrete examples which is believed to contribute to the development of the educational relations between Turkey and Kosovo. The role of the Tradesman and Businessmen's Associations in this respect cannot be underestimated. TIKA also has got a great contribution in this regard. Other than that, it was

stressed that Kosovar authorities are in close cooperation with the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities. The officials expressed their satisfaction of this newly founded institution by always finding a remedy for any kind of requests and problems.

On the other hand, for *the prevention of brain drain*, which occurred to be one of the risks for Kosovo, it was stated that there were meetings held aiming to raise an awareness among the students about the profession that were needed in Kosovo and that will be needed in the near future. As it is stated before, the brain drain was seen usually among the students from Turkish community, and the main reason for that was unemployment concerns due to not knowing very well Albanian language. It is known that a large part of these students did not want to return to Kosovo and to be able to remain in Turkey they refer to many different ways such as marriages, or prefer working in Turkey. Therefore, in order to bring the students after their graduation back to Kosovo, especially those who do not know Albanian language enough, Kosovar governmental officials reported that an attempts were made before the Albanian Language and Literature rostrum opened within the Trakya university in Edirne. Thus, by this way it has been provided an opportunity for 13 students from Turkish communities in Kosovo studying in Edirne Trakya University to attend the Albanian courses.

In order to minimize *the problems of the students* such as students visa, residence permit, health, diploma equivalency and poverty faced by Kosovar students during their study in Turkey it was reported that an initiatives were made before the relevant institutions and organizations in Turkey with aim to help the students in resolving of these problems. In addition, it was expressed that orientation programs were arranged for those who will go for study to Turkey, talks or meetings were arranged with the members of the Turkey Alumni Association (TÜMED), an association founded in Kosovo. It was mentioned that in these orientation programs and meetings information were given to the students about Turkey, how to overcome the communication problems stemmed from the language. In addition, each of the students were directed to contact with the student representatives of the cities where they will go to study and to whom they could apply in case of facing such problems. In the interview it was emphasized that those experienced representatives were leading and helping the students regarding matters such as dormitory registration, bank transactions and residence permit procedures. It was stated that this is an important fact greatly contributed for the adaptation of the student to local language, country and the relevant institutions and the university where he will study. It was learned that some of the problems were also solved in a short time thanks to the help of the Turkish Embassy in Prishtina and the Embassy of Kosovo in Turkey.

#### 4.1.5.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians

**Internationalization** is the only theme emerged in the interview with the Kosovar academicians. The aspect elaborated by the Kosovar academicians regarding this theme were presented in Table 4.18 below.

As it is stated in the previous sections, the level of the cooperation in the field of education between Turkey and Kosovo is determined as insufficient either by Kosovar governmental officials and Kosovar academicians. As one of the reason for that was pointed out the structural differences between the educational systems of both countries. Thus, studies were carried out to further develop and improve the educational system of Kosovo.

Table 4.18

*Theme Identified by Kosovar Academicians on Enhancing the Cooperation with Turkey*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - improving and developing of the curriculum of education system of Kosovo - joint conferences - supporting Kosovar universities with academic staff

The interview data reveal that the Kosovar academicians were concentrated mainly on **improving and developing of the curriculum of the education system of Kosovo**, especially regarding the curriculum of Turkish education, exchange of knowledge and information through organization of **joint conferences** and the need of **academic support to the Kosovar universities** from Turkish universities. To this end, it was reported that visits were realized to the educational institutions in Ankara and Edirne aiming the exchange of information regarding the curriculum of educational systems of both countries and the development of educational programs for Turkish education in Kosovo. The academicians asserted that during these visits they had the possibility of getting closely acquainted with the Turkish educational system also. Further, academicians mentioned about another visit by a delegation consisting of faculty and students from the University of Prishtina to Sakarya University. It was stated that in the scope of the visit to this university the faculty members and the students have a chance to observe personally differences among educational systems of both countries. They admitted that at the end of this visit they have noticed the mistakes done so far as a result of incorrect applications in the educational curriculum of the University of Prishtina. Yet, although it is unlikely to exit from the framework of the rules and regulations set out by the Kosovar universities, the academicians stated that in developing the undergraduate programs of the university of Prishtina Turkish universities were taken as a model, for example the degree programs of the universities like Baskent university and Yıldız Technical University in Turkey. During the interview, it was stated also the benefits are seen

as a result of taking in some respects the applications in Turkish educational system. The academicians mentioned that, firstly in the year of 2003 during the exams for the 9. classes, latter during the central examinations held throughout Kosovo, the examination system applied for the high school by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey, namely Directorate General of Educational Technology were used in Kosovar high schools. Further they admitted that even the optical readers for reading the answer sheets were imported from Turkey. The contribution of Turkey in this regard was indicated.

Another aspect focused by Kosovar academicians was organization of *joint the conferences* between the educational institutions. In this regard, it was mentioned about the series of language and cultural conferences organized by Turcology department within the University of Prishtina in partnerships with the Sakarya and Gazi University. It was admitted that, in these conferences, Kosovar academicians and the academicians from Turkey have the opportunity to know each other and as well to transfer the experiences to each other.

The Kosovar academicians underlined the need of *supporting Kosovar universities with academic staff*. In this context, at the request in 2007 it was reported that a guest lecturer was brought from Turkey with the contribution of TIKA to the Turkish Language and Literature Department opened in 2001 within the University of Prishtina. Through this faculty member a contact was established with the Sakarya University and Osmangazi University in Eskisehir. It was mentioned also about the cooperation in organizing joint symposiums and conferences with Sakarya University as well as signing of a protocol covering many activities including exchange of students. In addition, it was stated that a contact was initiated with the Gazi University in Ankara and in this sense a faculty members from the Gazi University were appointed for a period of one year to the Turcology department of university of Prishtina. Academicians emphasized the need of in-service training for the teachers employed in Turkish education in order to increase their knowledge on Turkish language.

Lastly, the academicians expressed that in the framework of the collaboration between the educational institutions of Turkey and Kosovo, the visits organized by Turkish universities to industrial organizations were very useful that it gave an opportunity to Kosovar educators to observe closely the economic power of Turkey.

#### ***4.1.5.3 Opinions of the representative of Kosovar associations***

Likewise in the interviews with the Kosovar governmental officials and academicians in the interview with the representatives of Kosovar associations *internationalization* theme has gained importance. This time the practices such as finding financial resources for the organization of the joint conferences, visits to Turkey's educational institutions with purpose to solve the problems in Turkish education and improving working and living conditions of

teachers employed in Turkish education in Kosovo have been priority agenda of the representatives of Kosovar Associations. These features of internationalization theme were presented in the Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19

*Theme Identified by the Representatives of Kosovar Associations*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - financial resources for organization of conferences - visits to Turkish educational institutions for seeking solutions to the problems in Turkish education - financial support to teachers employed in Turkish education (for improving of their working and living conditions)

The Associations in Kosovo were faced with financial difficulties, therefore for the arrangements of the symposiums financial assistance were requested from various institutions and organizations. In this context, it was reported that, albeit in small quantities institutions such as Turkish Language Institution, as TURKSOY, Turkish Airlines, Promotion Fund Board of the Prime Ministry and Ministry of Culture and Tourism have financially contributed to Turcology symposium held by the Kosovar Association.

On the other hand, initiatives were made before Turkish educational institutions aiming to solve the problems existing in Turkish education in Kosovar. For example, it was mentioned that, in order to examine and benefit from the latest developments in Turkish educational institutions, upon the invitation of the authorities in the Ministry of Education of Turkey, in 2011 a high level delegation composed of Kosovar educators have realized a visit to Turkey. It was explained that, at the meeting with the Turkish educators organized on the occasion of this visit the *problems regarding the textbooks in Turkish education* have been discussed, and at the end of the meeting parties were agreed on the preparation of the textbooks needed in Turkish education in cooperation with the Kosovar authorities. In addition, it was expressed that through this initiative it was ensured the printing and publishing of these textbooks by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. The representative of the Kosovar Association emphasized that they used all kind of opportunities to solve the problem regarding the textbooks in Turkish education.

Another important issue that has been a major concern to the representatives of the Kosovar associations was the situation of the teachers employed in Turkish education. They pointed out that in general the salaries of the teachers in Kosovo are too low, many teachers have financial troubles, and even teachers due to these financial difficulties were unable to attend to the seminars held in Turkey. In this respect, as a result of the initiative made by the president of Turkish Democratic Party in Kosovo, it was learned that since the last few years

Turkish Embassy in Prishtina has been giving *financial support to teachers* who are actively working in the Turkish education in Kosovo. It was stated that although of the small amounts this contribution relieved the teachers.

#### **4.1.5.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo**

During the interview it was requested that the practices carried out by Kosovar educational authorities for increasing the cooperation with Turkish educational institutions be assessed by Turkish governmental officials. The interview data obtained reveal that the Kosovar authorities were concentrated mainly on the aspects of the internationalization theme. The features of this theme were presented in Table 4.20 below.

From the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials it was understood that the attempts of Kosovar educators for cooperation with Turkish educational institutions were mainly aiming to overcome *the teacher shortages* in Turkish education, covering the requests for provision of *teaching materials* and books in Turkish education, in sense of eliminating the deficiencies. In addition, it was stated that priority has been given to the development and training of human factor as well. In order to get education in modern and contemporary environment, the activities were realized in terms of getting support for the development of the *physical infrastructure of the educational institutions in Kosovo*.

Table 4.20

*Theme Identified by the Turkish Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1	Internationalization - initiatives done for overcoming the teachers shortages - requests for provision of teaching materials and books needed in Turkish education - support in developing of the physical infrastructure of the educational institutions - prevention of brain drain - solving students problems while studying in Turkey

On the other hand, Turkish officials expressed that, regarding *the prevention of the brain drain*, various meetings were held by the Kosovar civil society organization and in these meeting a strong emphasis was made that Kosovar students should be encouraged to return back to Kosovo after their graduation.

As it is known, diploma equivalency, language difficulties of the students, adaptation problems, residence permit issues that Kosovar students encountered during their education in Turkey were important pillar that affecting the bilateral relations between the two countries. From the interviews it was understood that such *problems of the Kosovar students* were resolved mutually in consultation with relevant authorities. Especially the diploma

equivalency issues of the students coming to Turkey for study in the field of religion were tried to be overcome in consultation with the Ministry of National Education and General Directorate of Religious Education.

#### **4.1.6 The Rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation with Turkey**

##### ***4.1.6.1 Opinions of the Kosovar governmental officials***

The interview data revealed three main rationales: political, economic and academic. The details regarding these rationales were presented in Table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- donor countries insistence on their own project whereas Turkey's support was given according to the need of entire communities living in Kosovo</li> <li>- the importance of Turkish community in Kosovo</li> <li>- to increase the image and reputation of Turkey in the Balkans</li> </ul>
2	<p>Economic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transferring Turkey's experience to Kosovo</li> <li>- training personnel</li> <li>- increased the productivity of the employment</li> <li>- contribution in meeting the manpower needs</li> </ul>
3	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in the quality of education</li> <li>- be able to become competitive in job market</li> <li>- gain a different perspective</li> <li>- benefits from the in-service training for teachers</li> <li>- positive impact of allocation of student quota by Turkey</li> <li>- the increase in the enrollment rate of the students in Kosovo</li> </ul>

The first rationale emerged was *political* one. One of the governmental officials stated that the authorities from donor countries, supporting Kosovo in the field of education were *insisted on their own projects*, without taking into account the priorities of Kosovo, whereas the educational support of Turkey is in the direction of the needs to the entire communities, without any discrimination, completely unconditional, which is of mutual interests of both countries. The following quotation exemplify this opinion.

It happened to us sometimes that some of the donors or partners simple choose or insist in something to support regardless if this is top priority, middle or whatever else. For the Turkish side and related to Turkey I can say that it is oriented and it is discussed and addressed in the needs.

It is believed that such cooperation would strengthen the friendship between the

peoples of the two countries. It is also of great importance in terms of the *Turkish community living in Kosovo*. As it is stated in the previous sections Turkey attaches great importance to Turkish community in Kosovo. It is thought that the good relations existing between the two countries, and the support given by Turkey in every field including education will make Turkish communities to feel themselves better.

During the interview it was highlighted also that despite the shortcomings, even the Great Student Project implemented by Turkey has been very important in terms of the international influence, prestige and Turkey's respectability. It has been an instrumental for increasing its the image in the Balkans, to make the people of the region be acquainted with Turkey and to benefit from Turkey's experiences.

Further, the second theme emerged from the interview with the Kosovar governmental officials was *economic rationale*. As it is known Kosovo is a country in transition. It suffers from a lack of real capital, technology and limited inward investment. Therefore, it was stressed that by transferring *Turkey's experiences* to Kosovo it has been provided an opportunity for investing and establishment of businesses in Kosovo. It was stated that by this way Turkey contributed to the development of the Kosovo. Another key determinant of the development of Kosovo is *training a personnel* needed in the economic market. Indeed, it was reported that there were a lot of persons having made their bachelor's, master and doctoral degree in Turkey, who have proven themselves by engaging high level positions in various organizations and institutions contributing to the development of Kosovo. It was reminded that, in this regard President of the Kosovo Constitutional Court, Deputy Prime minister, former rector of the University of Prishtina, former Ambassador of Kosovo in Ankara can be shown as an example.

In addition, during the interview, it was stated that the students graduated from Turkey were transferring valuable experiences, that they were able to use very well the knowledge obtained during their training in Turkey, which in term have *increased the productivity of the employment*. As an example was given the graduate students from the anesthesia department who have been said to be very successful in the hospitals they were employed. It was mentioned also about the performance of the dentist graduated from Turkey, and about the achievements reached in telecommunication field as well. Kosovar governmental officials admitted that thanks to the graduates from Turkey, the gap which existed regarding the educational staff in Turkish education was minimized, and it was able to close substantially the gap in some branches. One of the participants expressed that “people going for studying in Turkey and coming back really bring a valuable experience (A1)”. It was stated that, all of this is very important for the economic development of Kosovo.

The third rationale emerged from the interview was *academic rationale*. It was noted

that, as a result of cooperation between the educational institutions and support given by Turkey in various educational institutions some courses started to be given using new technology, which have **increased the quality of the education** in Kosovo. Beside that, the universities in Turkey, are good example for the newly established or to be established universities in Kosovo. For example, it was expressed that TOBB University in Turkey has been taken as a model for the newly established international college in Prishtina. It is asserted that in order to meet the expectations in the field of education the purpose actually is having an education system accessing the level of being able to become **competitive and comparable in the job market outside of the Kosovo**. It is seen that one of the motivating factor for cooperation with Turkey could be achieving international academic standards in education. Therefore, it was emphasized that the development of the relations in the academic level and the cooperation between the professional academic staff is extremely important for improving the quality of the education in Kosovo. Through the organization of the mutual visits it is believed that the students would be able to **gain a different perspective**.

Moreover, it was indicated that through the in-service **trainings** organized by various universities have raised awareness of the Kosovar teachers, they were empowered with new scientific information, and by this way they were able to renew themselves in terms of course description and repetition.

There were comments that the allocation of **student quota** in the framework of the Great Student Project by Turkey have **positive impact in Kosovo**. Kosovo has a young population, but despite that the participation to higher education in Kosovo is still remaining at a low level. Therefore, it is thought that giving opportunity for Kosovar students to study in Turkey would **contribute to increase the enrollment rate** and meet the need of training these young population.

#### **4.1.6.2 Opinions of the Kosovar academicians**

In the interview with the Kosovar academicians four rationales emerged: political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationale. There were no any priority but sometimes an overlap is seen among them. The details about the rationales were presented in Table 4.22 below.

Table 4.22

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Kosovar Academicians*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale - destruction of prejudices about the Ottomans - to uncover the true history of Kosovo
2	Economic rationale - meeting the manpower need in Kosovo - to benefit from each other experience and expertise
3	Academic rationale - personnel development of the academicians - the benefits from faculty and student exchange
4	Cultural and social rationale - socializing of the students - strengthening of intercultural dialogue

The first rationale emerged in the interview with the Kosovar Academicians was the political rationale. The data revealed that the Kosovar academicians were focused mainly on the destruction of the prejudices about the Ottomans and in this respect uncovering the real history of Kosovo.

According to the opinions of the Kosovar academicians Turkey's Great Student Project (GSP) has played an important role in the destruction of these biases. As it is known at the beginning GSP was applied only for the students from Turkish communities living in Kosovo. But then after, Albanian and Bosniak students were also included in the project. Turkey's decision for opening the doors of the Turkish universities for the Albanians and Bosniaks living in Kosovo was evaluated as a correct approach. In this sense Turkey's practices carried out through the Great Student Project have a positive impact on the bilateral relations between the two countries. According to the opinion of the Kosovar academicians, those studying in Turkey will find an opportunities to get acquainted closely with the Turkish culture, customs and traditions and when they return to Kosovo these students would be able to transfer their knowledge and experience to other students. The academicians believed that, in case of transfer those knowledge and experiences especially to historian candidates it would be possible *destruction of certain prejudices* still existed about the Ottomans in the history of Kosovo. One of the academicians expressed it in the followings way "... the feelings of the xenophobia that were transferred from the past up today in the heart of the citizens from Albanian origin against the Ottomans, and meanwhile against Turks have began to change".

In this sense, the studies regarding the history of Kosovo has gained importance. Kosovar academicians mentioned the studies made by Turcology department within the University of Prishtina, especially to the studies related to examination of the Turkish words

existing in the Balkan languages, the impact of Turkish to the local languages, the investigation of the cultural heritage of the Ottoman period. According to them, transferring all findings to the world literature will help *to uncover the true history of Kosovo* and that of the Balkans.

The second rationale appeared in the interview with the Kosovar academicians was *economic rationale*. As the governmental officials, academicians stressed that the students graduated from Turkey have greatly contributed to the economic development of Kosovo. It was expressed that thanks to those students the needs of the personnel in different positions and areas in various institute and organizations and *the manpower needs* in the labor market of Kosovo were met. It was stated that in this sense Turkey's facilities offered for training of the personnel needed in Kosovo can never be ignored. It was emphasized that those individuals and their counterparts would serve as a bridge for establishment and consolidation of the relations with Turkey. Additionally, it was reported that the cooperation in vocational areas will also create an opportunities for the parties of both countries *to benefit from each other's experience and expertise*.

The third rationale emerged in the interview with the Kosovar academician was *academic rationale*. Academicians emphasized the importance of the personnel development of the educators. They admitted that, through the conferences and seminars organized by Turcology department within the University of Prishtina jointly with the Sakarya and Gazi universities contributed to *the personnel development* of the educators from both countries. Through these conferences they had an opportunities to know each other and be able to transfer the information at first hand about Turkey and Turkish culture to the Albanian academicians, who are representing the majority in Kosovo. Yet, dialogue was provided between the academicians as well. Kosovar academicians expressed that these activities increased the prestige of the Turcology department within the University of Prishtina. Kosovar academicians ones again stressed the positive impact of Turkey in Kosovo in this regard.

As we know, *the student and faculty exchange* was the most desired activity to be applied between the educational institutions of the two countries. It is expected to contribute for further strengthening of the relations in education, to raise the quality of the education system of Kosovo. Kosovar academicians agreed that it would affect the educators in positive way especially in terms of sharing experience and expertise.

The fourth rationale emerged in the interview was *social and cultural rationale*. Kosovar academicians admitted that the visit realized by the group composed of Albanian and Turkish faculty and students from the University of Prishtina to Sakarya University has contributed in *socializing of the Albanian and Turkish students*, which in turn provoke *strengthening of the intercultural dialogue*. It was emphasized that as a multi-ethnic country there is a need for it in Kosovo.

#### ***4.1.6.3 Opinions of the representatives of the Kosovar associations***

As in the interview with the Kosovar Academicians four rationales were identified in the interviews with the representatives of the Kosovar Associations also: political, social and cultural, economic and academic. Details about these rationales were presented in Table 4.23 below.

The first rationale appeared in the interview with the representative of Kosovar association was the political rationale. The representatives linked the political rationale with the ***foreign policy and feeling of confidence***. It was expressed that Turkey was seen as a real friend, without any interest in Kosovo. It was asserted that all kinds of the visits official or in high level done to Kosovo from various institutions and organizations from Turkey were a big proud source for them. Additionally, it was emphasized that the meetings made within the framework of these visits have been strengthen the confidence feelings of Turkish community in Kosovo. For example, it was expressed that, during the visit of the current Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey in 2010, his addressing to Kosovo prime minister as "my brother" and arranging a meeting with the representatives of the non-governmental organizations and leading intellectuals in Kosovo create a great satisfaction among the Kosovo society. It was stated that this case have been affected them terrifically.

Table 4.23

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Representatives of the Kosovar Associations*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Political rationale - foreign policy - confidence feeling in Turkish communities
2	Cultural and social rationale - intercultural understanding
3	Economic rationale - economic growth and labor market
4	Academic rationale - problems in Turkish education (textbooks, teaching staff shortages)

Another rationale emerged in the interview with the representatives of the Kosovar associations was ***cultural and social rationale***. This rationale was related to the ***intercultural understanding***. It was stated that after 600 years togetherness in the past, has been resulted in formation of common historical, cultural and traditional ties with Turkey. As a Turkish cognate living and serving in Kosovo, they would like that Turkey also take an advantage of this.

The third rationale emerged in the interviews with the representatives of the Kosovar associations was economic rationale. This rationale was linked to *economic growth and labor market*. It was noted that the latest two years Turkey has been implementing an opening policy to Kosovo. To illustrate, there were many large and small Turkish companies in Kosovo, the airport construction tender was received by Turkish companies, the highway construction is also done by Turkish companies. The representatives asserted that there were also other foreign companies that invested in Kosovo, but the biggest investment was made by Turkey. In this sense, the contribution of Turkey to development of Kosovo cannot be overestimated. Additionally, Turkish companies provided employment opportunities to the Kosovar youths. Therefore it is pointed out that Turkish cognate should learn Turkish very well. By analyzing the situation it is seen that economic relations requires learning of Turkish language. During the interview the representatives of the associations mentioned about some of the groups that were felt discomfort from the investments of Turkey to the Balkans, that there were fear and concerns that Ottomans may come to the region and invade again. Further it was stated that Kosovo has deep ties with Turkey and that no one can deny it.

The fourth rationale emerged in the interview was *academic rationale*. It was associated generally with *the problems in Turkish education*. The representatives of the Kosovar associations emphasized the need of finding solution to *the textbook shortages* in Turkish education. As it is known in accordance with the constitution of Kosovo Turkish communities have the rights for education in their mother tongue. It is mentioned that, although their obligations the local governments were not able provide textbooks needed due to low number of students involved in Turkish education. Turkey's support in this matter is very important. Therefore, the cooperation with Turkey in this regard is assumed to be inevitable.

Another serious problem in Turkish education was indicated *the shortages in teaching staff*. It was expressed that thanks to Turkey, this problem was resolved in a large scale. It was noted that approximately 200 students graduated yearly from high school in Kosovo and each year at least 60-80 or sometimes 80-90 of them through the Great Student Project have the opportunity to study in Turkey. According to the opinion of the representatives of the Kosovar associations, this project has provided a huge benefit to Turkish education. It seriously affect the ability to fill the teacher's position. It has been noted that by recruiting the students who were graduated from Turkey the shortages in the teaching staff in Turkish education have been able to fulfill. In this sense, the cooperation with Turkey was evaluated as very useful in terms of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo.

#### 4.1.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo

The following results were obtained regarding the rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey. In the interviews emphasis was made mainly on political, cultural and social and academic rationales. The details on these rationales were presented in Table 4.24 below.

Table 4.24

*The Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- national security</li> <li>- recognition of Kosovo in the international arena</li> </ul>
2	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the religious factors in forming the bilateral relations</li> <li>- minimizing the risk of harmful religious currents such as Wahhabism</li> <li>- cultural interaction between the various minority groups</li> </ul>
3	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to fulfill the shortages of academic staff</li> <li>- increasing the academic standards in education in Kosovo</li> <li>- main factors attracting Kosovar students to study in Turkey</li> </ul>

The first rationale that was stressed by Turkish governmental officials was *political rationale*. They linked the political rationale directly to *the national security* of Kosovo. The stable structure that will be formed in Kosovo means stabilization of the Balkans, which is very important for Turkey also. The support given by Turkey in all areas including education has ensured the mutual trust between Turkey and Kosovo. It is believed that further strengthening of the bilateral relations with Turkey will facilitate *the recognition of Kosovo in the international arena*. Turkey being a NATO member and a candidate for EU membership is considered to be effective in this regard.

The second rationale emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was *cultural and social rationale*. It was drawn an attention to the importance of *the religious factors in forming the bilateral relations* with Kosovo. As it is known the religious education has an impact on the construction of national identity. There is no doubt also that the religious education is a very sensitive issue. Therefore, it is indicated that Turkey need to bring a quality difference in religious education, otherwise, Kosovar students could be possibly directed to the Middle Eastern countries for having religious education, which in a long term is believed to pose a risk in Kosovo. As stated by one of the participants, those students who studied in the Arab countries and remained there for a long time could be affected by the “Wahhabism Current” and when they returned back to Kosovo, with the perspective gained

during their study in the Arab countries they could influence their surroundings and sects. The following quotations exemplify this perception.

If we do not bring this distinction in quality, it is possible that these students might go to other Middle Eastern countries. In the long run, the risks involved in this instance are far greater, because at least a part of those that receive education in Arab countries remain under the influence of the 'Wahhabi Movement' during the period of their stay there. Now consider that these kids returned to Kosovo or assume that they went to a different country, they will in all likelihood affect their own entourage and community.

In this regard, as one of the participants indicated that “Kosovo Islamic Union thanks to the sincere cooperation with Turkey has minimized this risk to minimum level”.

Apart from the above, the governmental officials indicated that the educational activities conducted by Turkey, especially providing an opportunity to study in Turkey, were contributed to *the cultural interactions between the various minority groups* as Bosniaks, Ashkali, Roma, and Gorani living in Kosovo. One of the governmental officials confirms this situation by saying that “there were certainly gaining a perspective and horizon. When they returned here, of course, in terms of Kosovo's ethnic mosaics, they were carrying a different perspective”.

*Academic rationale* was indicated as another important motivation behind the Kosovo's intention to cooperate with Turkey in the field of education. Turkey with the educational opportunities that have offered to Kosovo, in other words by raising skilled and knowledgeable pupils contributed for the *increasing of the quality and academic standards of educational system in Kosovo* and to *fulfill the shortages of academic staff, especially teacher shortages in Turkish education*. According to the comments of the governmental officials, despite the risk for brain drain, with its educational activities Turkey have been imparted to Kosovo trained, Turkish and English speaking individuals. It was stated that these individuals can serve as a means for establishment of good dialogue in the cooperation between the two countries.

It is a good example for us, because, after they have trained and returned to Kosovo, they were serving here as an individuals having good Turkish as well were very well understanding on the relations between Kosovo and the Republic of Turkey, which allows us to open many doors.

It was mentioned that the quality of education, the developed academic life in the universities, successful studies made by many universities were the *main factors attracting Kosovar students for study in Turkey*.

#### 4.1.7 Discussion Republic of Kosovo (Summary)

##### The Current state of the relations between Turkey and Kosovo

In this study totally 17 persons were interviewed regarding the research question written above, of which six Kosovar governmental official, three Turkish governmental officials, six Kosovar academicians and two Kosovar representative of Associations. Seven main themes emerged in the interviews, which are presented in Table 4.25 below.

Table 4.25

##### Themes Presented by Groups

No	Themes	Groups
1	Change climate (internal and external forces) -internal forces: the emergent need for reconstruction and reform in education -external forces: active role of the international players, engagement of Kosovo in cooperative activities, involving in Bologna Process  -contributions of Turkish education and difficulties encountered during the change	- Kosovar governmental officials    - Kosovar academicians
2	Western Orientation in Education System of Kosovo -English, inclination to Western countries  -collaboration with western educational institutions, limited realization of the collaboration between Turkey and Kosovo educational institutions within the scheme of Bologna Process  - reasons: discomfort from Turkey's activities  -Reasons: differences existed between the educational systems of both countries, active role of the western institutions, misinterpretations resulting from the past common history	- Kosovar governmental officials   - Kosovar academicians  - Representatives of Kosovar Association   - Turkish governmental officials
3	Futile and Slowly Growing Relations with Turkey -western orientation, structural differences, existence of westerns actors, lack of coordination  - reasons: western orientation of Kosovo's education, structural differences in educational systems (not equal partners), attitudes of politicians and bureaucrats towards the relationships between Turkey and Kosovo due to Kosovo legislations, limited promotion  - limited support to the Turkish Associations in Kosovo  - western-orientation of the Kosovo education system, insufficient educational activities, difficulties encountered during the educational activities	Kosovar governmental officials   - Kosovar academicians  - Representatives of Kosovar Associations   - Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.25 (continued)

4	The rationale behind internationalization - quality of education in Turkey, scholarship opportunities, common culture, employment opportunities, hospitality of Turkish people  - the importance and the role of Turkish presence in Kosovo, language teaching (both Turkish and Albanian), concerns of the changing of the Turkish dialect in Kosovo, lack of teacher cadre in Turkish education in Kosovo, shortages of textbook in Turkish education  - negative sides of students mobility resulting in brain drain, cultural ties	-Kosovar governmental officials  - Kosovar academicians  - Turkish governmental officials
5	Multiethnic structure of Kosovo - Turkish community education  - student mobility (Great Student Project) and brain drain risk, scholarship opportunities  - emphasis on the status of Turkish communities in Kosovo  The importance of Turkish language and Turkish education, efforts to overcome the problems in Turkish education	- Kosovar governmental officials  - Kosovar academicians  - Turkish governmental officials  - Representatives of Kosovar Associations
6	Inadequate infrastructure of Kosovo education system - physical infrastructure inadequacy, lack of academic and teaching staff, teaching material shortages	- Turkish governmental officials
7	Religious education - differences between the religion education systems, financial difficulties of the Kosovar religion education institution, student quota allocated by Turkey	- Turkish governmental officials

The first five themes (change climate, western orientation of the Kosovar education systems, futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey, multiethnic structure of Kosovo and the rationales behind internationalization) appeared in the interviews with the Kosovar governmental officials which were confirmed by the Kosovar academicians also. Both groups defined this theme as a part and continuation of the changes conducted in political, social and economic areas. The data obtained from government official and academicians revealed the same themes, yet with slight difference in the context. Unlike the Kosovar governmental officials Kosovar academicians provided different additional evidence to highlight the importance of these themes. For example, Kosovar governmental officials linked the climate change theme with the need for reconstruction and reform of the war torn education of Kosovo, the affect of the many international players acting in Kosovo and the engagement of Kosovo in cooperative activities and its involving in Bologna Process, while Kosovar academicians

referred to different aspects of this theme as contributions of Turkey's policy as a part of its general policy to all Balkan states and difficulties encountered during the implementation of the higher education law and educational legislations in Kosovo. Thus, both groups' discussions helps to explain different aspects of this theme. This situation confirms the necessity of the change movement in Kosovo education system.

The western orientation in educational system of Kosovo theme has emerged in the interviews made with each groups. Similarly to previous theme each groups emphasized different reasons for the westernization policy of the education system of Kosovo. Kosovar governmental officials highlighted the importance of the English as one of the reasons for the inclination of the Kosovar students to western country universities, Kosovar academicians pointed as the main reason collaboration with the western educational institutions due to limited realization of the collaboration between Turkey and Kosovo educational institutions within the scheme of Bologna Process, while the representative of the Kosovar Associations indicated the discomfort felt from Turkey's activities carried out in Kosovo, whereas Turkish governmental officials pointed out as an evidence the differences existed between the educational systems of both countries, the active role of the western institutions, in Kosovo and misinterpretations resulting from the past common history. As to the theme regarding the futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey according to the opinion of Kosovar governmental officials, Kosovar academicians and Turkish governmental officials the main reason were the structural differences existing between the educational systems of both countries and the western orientation of Kosovo's education, while the representative of Kosovar associations highlighted the limited support to the Turkish Associations in Kosovo.

Kosovar governmental officials expressed the quality of education in Turkey, scholarship opportunities, common culture, employment opportunities and hospitality of Turkish people as the rationales behind internationalization. Kosovar academicians indicated the importance and the role of Turkish presence in Kosovo as determining factor for the cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo, as well as the need to meet the teacher and textbook shortages in Turkish education in Kosovo. Whereas Turkish governmental officials were concentrated on the negative side of internationalization as brain drain and cultural ties existing between the two countries.

In the interview with the four groups (Kosovar governmental officials, Kosovar academicians, the representatives of Kosovar Associations and Turkish governmental officials) the multi-ethnic structure of Kosovo was identified as another important theme. Each group expressed this theme in a different way. Kosovar governmental officials highlighted the importance of the Turkish community education, Kosovar academicians the expansion of the student quota within the Great Student Project to other ethnic groups in Kosovo and the

scholarship opportunities, the representative of Kosovar academicians focused on the importance of teaching Turkish language in Turkish education and efforts to overcome the problems in Turkish education, while Turkish governmental official were giving emphasis on the status of Turkish communities in Kosovo.

The last two themes (inadequate infrastructure of Kosovo education system and religious education) emerged only in the interview with the Turkish governmental officials which respectively referred to physical infrastructure inadequacy, lack of academic and teaching staff and teaching material shortages, and religious education theme with the differences between the religion education systems of both countries, financial difficulties of the Kosovar religion education institution and student quota allocated by Turkey for the Kosovar students wishing to study in the faculties of theologies in Turkey.

In summary, Kosovar governmental officials stated that the educational policies of Turkey towards Kosovo was considered as very positive by the side of Kosovo, they claimed that it is a reflection of the Turkey's perspective to Kosovo, therefore they were thankful for the self-sacrificing behavior of Turkey. In addition, they found this support as very meaningful and significant, they were appreciated from this and wished that the increase of the support to be continued.

The relations between Turkey and Kosovo are multi-contextual and multi-level relations. Whatever is the level or area of these relations, they have been reflected absolutely to the education and vice versa. The relations in the field of education have been reflected to other areas or have influenced them. In determining the educational relations between the two countries it is necessary to examine the basis of the political relations also.

In the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials it is observed that different themes have been emerged or different emphasis has been made under the same themes, which indicates that the synchronization in the relations was not be caught. For example, the religious education was emphasized as a theme by the state officials of Turkey, while it was not highlighted in the same manner by Kosovar authorities. This constitute a clear example of the synchronization problem.

On the other hand, the excess of the number of the foreign aid and assistance organizations in Kosovo indicates the fact that Kosovo in the international arena is an area of power, activity or influence for the foreign countries. The contributions for the physical infrastructure of Kosovo are too precious as that cannot be rejected. However, the thoughts of Kosovo for accepting these contributions were not same with the idea of Turkey for making these helps. Especially the Western orientation of Kosovo, synchronization in the relations and the activities of the western organizations in Kosovo confirms this situation. The interview data revealed that Kosovo education system is multiple oriented, it is not only Turkey oriented

but also western oriented.

In the interviews it was emphasized that Kosovo and Turkey can not be an equal partners in cooperation since the differences existed in the education systems of both countries. The results revealed that educational institutions in Kosovo are not be able to respond adequately to the opportunities offered by Turkey. The educational authorities of Turkey are aware of this situation and therefore by many institutions and organizations in the cooperation with Kosovo in the field of education has been given unrequited support. The support of Turkey in the field of education is need oriented without any discrimination to others communities living in Kosovo. Turkey has a potential that increases its “soft power” in Kosovo.

However, it has been observed that the problems encountered in the recognition of the diplomas of the student graduated from Turkey stemmed from the differences in the educational system of the two countries.

It can be argued that for the protecting of the cultural heritage in Kosovo, considering the importance of the communities belonging to various ethnic groups living in Kosovo, the cooperation between the two countries will be reason for the development of the sense of belongingness of the Turkish community in Kosovo and to increase their motivation and morale. The comments further revealed that the political and military relations, such as the NATO intervention and the intensive structured educational relations such as the integration in the Bologna Process, have undermined Turkey’s influence in Kosovo.

In the interviews they stated that the education in Kosovo is quality oriented. In the mission and vision of the institutions it was mentioned about some of the aspects of the internationalization as quality assurance, full accreditation under the criteria and procedures of the European Network of the Quality Assurances Agencies etc. The primary motivating factor for investing in education, raising the quality and reaching international academic standards was recovering of the warn torn education system, to overcome the difficulties and problems faced in pre-war and after war period.. It is obvious that internationalization was influenced by the economic level and stage of the development of higher education. Additionally it is affected by academic factors as well. Thus, faculty and staff development have important role for the future sustainability of higher education.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards Kosovo**

Eight themes emerged in the interview with each group regarding the research question written above, which are presented in Table 4.26 below.

Table 4.26

*Themes Presented by Groups*

<b>No:</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Groups</b>
1	Effectiveness of the international development agencies in Kosovo - EU, FAO, USAID, DANIDA etc.	- Kosovar Governmental officials
2	Active role of the Turkish government institutions in Kosovo - TIKA, State Archives of Turkey, Statistical Institute of Turkey, Turkey's General Directorate Foundations, Turkish Task Force, Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Universities and the military dimensions of the relations	- Kosovar Governmental officials
3	Internationalization - student mobility in the framework of the GSP, more emphasis on collaboration between the educational institutions (change in the dimension of internationalization)  - cooperation protocols signed between educational institutions, capacity problems (internationalization policy needs planning)  - research (organizing seminars, supporting with academic staff)  - meeting the workforce need of Kosovo	- Kosovar Governmental officials  - Kosovar Academicians  - Representative of Kosovar Associations  - Turkish governmental officials
4	Religious education - student mobility, scholarships  - the means for transmission of the values, rituals and the norms, through historical symbols (restoration of the Ottoman monuments)	- Kosovar Governmental officials  - Turkish governmental officials
5	Types of Assistance Given by Turkey - physical infrastructure, human resources, teaching Turkish language, curriculum support	- Kosovar Academicians
6	Civil Society - enhancing their dialogue with other institutions or organizations, support in terms of infrastructure or capacity building, moral and financial support by different institutions	- Representatives of Kosovar Associations
7	Intensified intergovernmental relations - high level visits, agreements signed, multi-contextual and multi-level of the relations, relationships between municipalities, collaboration between universities, contribution to EULEX and KFOR, collaboration with international and national institutions	- Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.26 (continued)

8	Increasing the physical capacity of the educational institutions - infrastructure building, faculty member support, (in-service training, support with training materials etc.), contributions of TIKA	-Turkish governmental officials
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As seen in the table only the theme internationalization was emerged in the interviews with each group. According to the opinion of the Kosovar governmental officials the practices carried out by Turkey towards Kosovo were focused mainly on student mobility in the framework of the Great Student Project and more emphasis on collaboration between the educational institutions, Kosovar academicians determined these practices as cooperation protocols signed between educational institutions and solving capacity problems, the representative of the Kosovar association expressed the practices in terms of organizing seminars, and supporting with academic staff, while Turkish governmental officials emphasized the contribution of Turkey in raising the workforce needed in Kosovo.

On the other hand, Kosovar governmental officials stressed the effectiveness of the international organizations in Kosovo and the active role of the Turkish government in the activities implemented in Kosovo. Additionally Kosovar academicians identified the types of assistance given by Turkey as support given for the improvement of the physical infrastructure of the educational institutions, support in terms of human resources, teaching Turkish language, and support for innovation and development of the educational curriculum.

Moreover, the data revealed that the Civil Society plays an active role in shaping the bilateral relations among the two countries. As the representative of the Kosovar association stated they contributed by enhancing the dialogue among the educational institutions, giving support in terms of infrastructure or capacity building and as well moral and financial support given by different institutions. The interview results with the Turkish governmental officials revealed that the main aim of Turkey's educational policy in Kosovo was generally directed towards increasing physical capacity of educational institutions as the infrastructure building as well as support with academic staff including in-service training and providing training materials. In this sense, the contribution of TIKA cannot be overestimated. Turkish governmental officials emphasized the intensified intergovernmental relations. The data confirmed the multi-contextual and multi-level of the relations between Kosovo and Turkey. High level visits, agreements signed during these visits, relationships established between municipalities of both countries, collaboration between universities of Kosovo and Turkey, collaboration with international and national institutions are some of the practices listed by them.

Regarding the practices carried out by Turkey in Kosovo religious education theme emerged as an important one. Kosovar governmental officials approached this theme in terms of student mobility and scholarships allocated by Turkey for the students wishing to study in the faculties of theologies in Turkey, while Turkish governmental officials address this theme from another point of view, using education as a means for transmission of the values, rituals and the norms as well as through historical symbols such as restoration of the Ottoman monuments.

**The Political, Economic, Academic, Cultural and Social Rationales behind Turkey’s Practices in Higher Education towards Kosovo**

The interview data revealed four main rationales regarding the research question written above. These rationales are presented in Table 4.27 below. Each group put forward different rationales. There is no rank order between these rationales. Sometimes the rationales were shifted and overlap among themselves. The political rationale was emphasized in a strong manner by the Kosovar governmental officials, Kosovar academicians and Turkish governmental officials. They related the political rational with the foreign policy, the recognition of Kosovo, keeping communication and developing active diplomatic relations among the two countries. The presence of Turkish community in Kosovo has played an important role in these relations as well as the stability of the region and peaceful development of Kosovo.

Table 4.27

*Rationales Emerged in the Interviews by Groups*

<b>No:</b>	<b>Rationales</b>	<b>Groups</b>
1	Political Rationale - foreign policy, agreements signed, multi - ethnic structure of Kosovo, presence of Turkish communities in Kosovo	- Kosovar governmental officials
	- foreign policy, multi-ethnic structure of Kosovo, presence of Turkish communities in Kosovo, student mobility as investment in the future relations	- Kosovar academicians
	-the contribution of the governmental officials serving in Kosovo, raising manpower as a kind of investment in future relations, increasing the image and the influence of Turkey in the region, increase of the level of the relationships, ensuring the peaceful and steadily development of Kosovo, to eliminate the prejudices	- Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.27 (continued)

2	Cultural and Social Rationale - historical and cultural ties, religion factor	- Kosovar governmental officials
	- historical and cultural ties between the two countries	- Representative of Kosovar Association
	- religion factor, historical ties, Muslim population structure of Kosovo, historical symbols	- Turkish governmental officials
3	Academic Rationale - increasing the quality of Turkish education in Kosovo	- Kosovar academicians
4	Economic Rationale - upbringing of the cadre (contribution to human resources, opportunity for the investment in Kosovo), key to trade relations	- Kosovar governmental officials
	- economic development of Kosovo, employment opportunities	- Representative of Kosovar Association
	- project and activities for the economic development of Kosovo	- Turkish governmental officials

Additionally the image and the influence of Turkey in the region, as well as the elimination of the prejudices inherited from the past against Ottomans were considered as another important factor by Turkish governmental officials affecting the Turkey's practices towards Kosovo.

Kosovar governmental officials, representatives of Kosovar associations and Turkish governmental officials emphasized the importance of the cultural and social rationale. They linked this rationale to the historical and cultural ties existing between the two countries and the religious factor. Additionally Turkish governmental officials remarked the importance of the historical symbols and Muslim population in Kosovo. It is assumed that the presence of Turkish minorities and the importance of the protection of cultural heritage might be the one of the reasons for cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo.

On the other hand, regarding the economic rationale Kosovar governmental officials, the representative of the Kosovar association and the Turkish governmental officials highlighted the development of Kosovo as another aspect that is of great importance for further improving the relations between Turkey and Kosovo.

Increasing the quality of Turkish education in Kosovo was emphasized only by the Kosovar academicians. In sense of upgrading the educational status of the Turkish communities living in Kosovo by the help of Turkish expert the curriculum of Turkish education was improved.

The data revealed that one of the reasons for internationalization in higher education take the form of both cooperation between the educational institutions and mobility of the students. It can be regarded as a force for implementing some strategic plans as well for further developing of the educational system of Kosovo. Both sides have bilateral interest to increase the cooperation between the educational institutions. Turkey is trying to support Kosovo during the process of its transition. In this regard internationalization can serve as a means for increasing the mobility of student and academic staff, cooperation between the educational organizations. Internationalization process is affected by diverse driving forces, closely related to the domestic socio-economic background of Kosovo. As a result of the impact of internationalization process rapid changes and developments in every sphere were identified, for example in the field of health and economy of Kosovo.

### **The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in Kosovo from Turkey in Relation to Higher Education**

Five main themes emerged from the interviews regarding the expectations of different stakeholders from turkey in relation to higher education. These themes were presented in summary in Table 4.28 below.

Table 4.28

*Themes Emerged Regarding the Expectations of Different Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Expectation Themes</b>	<b>Groups</b>
1	Assistance to be provided in form of - projects, establishment of universities and partnerships among universities, technology transfer	- Kosovar governmental officials
2	Aspects of Internationalization - student mobility, raising staff for the institutions, diploma recognition	- Kosovar governmental officials
	- brain drain, student quota, student and faculty mobility, raising of skilled and academic staff for various institutions, financial support to academic activities, organization of seminars, in-service training	- Kosovar academicians
	- raising academic staff/training personnel, student quota	- Representative of the Kosovar Association
	- raising managerial / teaching staff, student mobility, student quota/scholarships, cooperation between the educational institutions	- Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.28 (continued)

3	Cultural and social support - Turkish education, learning Turkish language, Turkish culture  - Turkish education and cultural events, religion education  - Turkish education, Turkish language  - teaching Turkish language, religion education, infrastructural support for religious institutions buildings and historical monuments (restoration, maintenance)	- Kosovar governmental officials  - Kosovar academicians  - Representative of the Kosovar Association  - Turkish governmental officials
4	Historical symbols - restoration, maintenance preservation	- Kosovar governmental officials
5	Current problems in Turkish education - curriculum, textbooks, school materials and supplies, teacher shortages (in-service training)	- Kosovar academicians

The assistance provided by Turkey in forms of projects were found to be insufficient in number and content by the Kosovar governmental officials. Therefore, they expressed their expectations on increasing the number of these projects not only in the field of education but also in other areas in order to contribute for the economic development of Kosovo.

Another expectations was regarding the aspects of the internationalization. Almost all groups had expressed the same expectations from Turkey. Increasing the student mobility between the two countries, in order to overcome the academic and managerial staff shortages raising/upbringing staff for the institutions and training the personnel were primarily indicated as prominent aspects of internationalization in the interviews. In addition, increasing the student quota and scholarships, providing financial support for some academic activities such as seminars and as well establishment of cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries.

There were also demands expressed regarding the social and cultural support given by Turkey. For example, almost four groups have requested support to be given for Turkish education, particularly in providing textbooks and teaching Turkish language. Kosovar academicians by addressing the current problems in Turkish education emphasized the importance of giving assistance to Kosovar educators in solving the problems related to the curriculum, textbooks and teacher shortages in Turkish education.

The need of supporting the religion education in Kosovo and organization of cultural events were another demands conveyed by Kosovar academicians and Turkish governmental officials. Beside that an emphasis was given also on the historical symbols in meaning of

restoration, preservation and maintenance of the historical monuments inherited from Ottomans.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Kosovo in Order to Enhance Cooperation in Higher Education with Turkey**

The data revealed two main theme regarding the practices undertaken by the side of Kosovo authorities in order to enhance the cooperation in higher education with Turkey. These themes were presented in Table 4.28 below. As it is seen from the table one of the practices undertaken by the side of Kosovar governmental officials was identifying and finding solution to the problems in Turkish education through organization of conferences.

Table 4.29

*Themes Emerged Regarding the Practices Undertaken by Different Groups for Enhancing the Cooperation with Turkey*

<b>No:</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Groups</b>
1	Identifying and finding solution to the problems in Turkish education trough - organization of conferences	- Kosovar governmental officials
2	Internationalization - establishment of partnerships, measures taken to prevent brain drain, initiatives made for solving the problems of the students studying in Turkey  - improving and developing of the curriculum of education system of Kosovo, joint conferences, supporting Kosovar universities with academic staff  -financial resources for organization of conferences, visits to Turkish educational institutions for seeking solutions to the problems in Turkish education, financial support to teachers employed in Turkish education (for improving of their working and living conditions)  -initiatives done for overcoming the teachers shortages, requests for provision of teaching materials and books needed in Turkish education, support in developing of the physical infrastructure of the educational institutions, prevention of brain drain, solving students problems while studying in Turkey	- Kosovar governmental officials  - Kosovar academicians  - Representatives of Kosovar Associations  - Turkish governmental officials

Apart from the practice mentioned above all groups mentioned about the practices carried out in relation to different aspects of internationalization. Kosovar governmental officials' initiatives were mainly intensified on establishment of partnerships between the

educational institutions, measures to be taken to prevent brain drain and solving the problems faced by student studying in Turkey, while Kosovar academicians trends were generally on improving and developing of the curriculum of education system of Kosovo, organization of joint conferences and supporting Kosovar universities with academic staff. On the other hand, it has been identified that representatives of the Kosovar association initiatives were mostly intended to find financial resources for the organization of conferences and financial support for the teachers employed in Turkish education as well as organization of visits to Turkish educational institutions aiming to find solutions for the problems in Turkish education. The data obtained in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials confirmed the initiatives made by the groups mentioned above.

### **The Rationales behind Balkan Countries' Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey**

Four main rationales appeared regarding Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation with Turkey, political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationales, which are presented in Table 4.30 below. Each of the four rationales were emerged in the interview with the Kosovar academicians and the representatives of the Kosovo Associations, but each under different content.

Each stakeholder groups expressed the political rationale in a different way. Kosovar governmental officials described donor countries insistence on their own projects and the existence of Turkish community in Kosovo as main factors affecting Kosovo's intention to realize cooperation with Turkey by. They believed that this cooperation in turn will contribute for increasing the image and respectability of Turkey in the Balkans. Whereas the Kosovar academicians were focused mainly on the destruction of the prejudices about the Ottomans. In this sense, it was emphasized the need for cooperation with Turkey in order to eliminate these stereotypes. Additionally, the necessity for cooperation with Turkey is expressed in order to uncover also the actual history of Kosovo by mutual examination of the archives of both countries.

On the other hand, the representatives of the Kosovar associations have stressed the role of Turkey's foreign policy in providing sense of confidence in Turkish communities living in Kosovo, while the issues such as ensuring the national security and the recognition of Kosovo in the international arena were indicated as the main political rationale behind Kosovo's practices to realize cooperation with Turkey by Turkish governmental officials.

Table 4.30

*Rationales behind Balkan Countries' Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey*

No	Rationales	Groups
1	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- donor countries' insistence on their own project whereas Turkey's support was given according to the need of entire communities living in Kosovo, the importance of Turkish community in Kosovo, to increase the image and respectability of Turkey in the Balkans</li> <li>- destruction of prejudices about the Ottomans, to uncover the true history of Kosovo</li> <li>- foreign policy, confidence feeling in Turkish communities</li> <li>- national security, recognition of Kosovo in the international arena</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovar governmental officials</li> <li>- Kosovar academicians</li> <li>- Representatives of Kosovar Associations</li> <li>- Turkish governmental Officials</li> </ul>
2	<p>Economic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transferring Turkey's experience to Kosovo, training personnel, increased the productivity of the employment, contribution in meeting the manpower needs</li> <li>- meeting the manpower need in Kosovo, to benefit from each other experience and expertise</li> <li>- economic growth and labor market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovar governmental officials</li> <li>- Kosovar academicians</li> <li>- Representatives of Kosovar Associations</li> </ul>
3	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in the quality of education , be able to become competitive in job market, gain a different perspective, benefits from the in-service training for teachers, positive impact of allocation of student quota by Turkey, the increase in the enrollment rate of the students in Kosovo</li> <li>- personnel development of the academicians, the benefits from faculty and student exchange</li> <li>- problems in Turkish education (textbooks, teaching staff shortages)</li> <li>- to fulfill the shortages of academic staff, increasing the academic standards in education in Kosovo, main factors attracting Kosovar students to study in Turkey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovar governmental officials</li> <li>- Kosovar academicians</li> <li>- Representatives of Kosovar Associations</li> <li>- Turkish governmental officials</li> </ul>

Table 4.30 (continued)

4	<p>Cultural and social rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- socializing of the students, strengthening of intercultural dialogue</li> <li>- intercultural understanding</li> <li>- the religious factors in forming the bilateral relations, minimizing the risk of harmful religious currents such as Wahhabism, cultural interaction between the various minority groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovar academicians</li> <li>- Representatives of Kosovar Associations</li> <li>- Turkish governmental officials</li> </ul>
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Economic rationales also were described in different ways by different groups. Governmental officials have given importance to transferring Turkey's experience to Kosovo, training of the managerial and administrative personnel needed for various institutions and by this way to contribute in meeting the manpower needs in Kosovo and increase the productivity. Kosovar academicians also emphasized the significance of meeting the manpower needs in Kosovo through the students who were graduated from Turkey. Additionally, they expressed the benefits obtained through exchange of experience and expertise among the educational institutions, while the representatives of Kosovar associations pointed the contribution of cooperation with Turkey in economic growth and labor market of Kosovo.

Regarding the academic rationale, each stakeholder groups have put forward different interpretations. Kosovar governmental officials believed that cooperation with Turkey contributed to increasing the quality of education in Kosovo, and help Kosovo to be able to become competitive in job market, as well as to gain a different perspectives in higher education. In this context, there were benefits obtained from in-service trainings provided for the teachers employed in Turkish education and there were positive impact as a result of allocation of student quota by Turkey within the Great Student Project which resulted in increasing the enrollment rate of the students in Kosovo. In contrast to this views Kosovar academicians stated that the cooperation with Turkey in the field of education contributed to the personnel development of the academicians, and as well revival has been identified in the exchange of faculty and students. The representatives of the Kosovar associations have evaluated the rationales behind Kosovo's practices to realize cooperation with Turkey from different perspective. According to them through this cooperation the problems in Turkish education have been solved, teaching staff shortages was overcame thanks to the students who graduated from Turkey and the textbooks needed in Turkish education was provided within the framework of the cooperation with Turkey. Turkish governmental officials indicated as the main motivation of Kosovo's cooperation with Turkey fulfilling the academic staff shortages through appointment of academicians from Turkish universities within the protocols signed between the educational institutions, by this way helping to increase the academic standards

in education in Kosovo. Additionally, they expressed the main factors attracting Kosovar students to study in Turkey as the quality of education, the developed academic life in the universities, successful studies made by many universities etc.

Finally, each stakeholder groups referred to different features of the cultural and social rationales. Kosovar academicians pointed socializing of the students and strengthening of the intercultural dialogue among the ethnic groups as an important motivation for cooperation with Turkey, while representatives of the Kosovar associations emphasized the contribution of this cooperation to the intercultural understanding. In contrast to the views displayed above Turkish governmental officials have stressed the religious education as one of the factors shaping the bilateral relations between the both countries, its contribution to cultural interaction between the various minority groups and as well is asserted as a measure in minimizing the risk of harmful religious currents such as Wahhabism.

If SWOT analysis is performed for internationalization of the higher education in Kosovo the conclusion could be as follows:

The strong sides can be defined as a great deal of developments since the independence. In addition, there were willingness to increase mobility of the students, orientation for revitalizing of the economy of Kosovo (it is expected that students after their graduation from Turkey or abroad will return to Kosovo to meet the labor needs and will bring valuable international experience), participating in accreditation and credit transfer system;

As to the weak sides it can be listed the strong dependence on foreign support and lack of trained qualified academic staff; while as an opportunities can be cited the partnership opportunities (have a chance for cooperation with various universities in Turkey) and by this way to improve its curriculum of the educational system, to increase the quality of the education or to be able to meet the international standards in education, to increase the prestige of the Turcology departments and the international visibility of Kosovar universities, infrastructure support from various institutions. Finally, the most important threats were identified as brain drain, insufficient financial funds and political instability.

#### **4.2 Republic of Macedonia**

In this study, in order to collect data on the relationship between Turkey and Macedonia, 17 participants were interviewed. Four Macedonian government officials, who were involved in education sector in their country and/or educated in Turkey, three Turkish governmental officials, who were working in Turkish representative missions in Skopje, five Macedonian academicians, serving in various universities in Macedonia, two Turkish academicians, one from Ss. Cyril and Methodius University and the other one from International Balkan University, two representatives of Macedonian associations and one

representative of Turkish association in Skopje were interviewed.

#### 4.2.1 The current state of the relationships between Turkey and Macedonia in the field of Higher Education

##### 4.2.1.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials

The content analysis of the interviews with the four Macedonian government officials highlighted four main themes, regarding the current state and issues of education in Macedonia and the relationship between Turkey and Kosovo in the field of higher education.

Table 4.31

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Government Officials*

No	Themes
1	System's rationales for internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving the quality of the education system of Macedonia</li> <li>- positive and supportive approach towards the collaborative activities</li> </ul>
2	Change climate (External and Internal Driving Forces) Major factors External factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reforms in line with the European Processes</li> <li>- implementation of the Bologna process</li> </ul> Internal factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inadequacies in the Macedonian educational system (requires benefiting from the educational experiences of the other countries)</li> <li>- the role of the local municipalities in education (strengthening of their tasks of the local municipalities )</li> </ul>
3	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the significance of Turkish education</li> <li>- the problems in Turkish education (teacher shortages)</li> </ul>
4	Futile and slowly growing relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- economic sanctions and some local legal practices applied</li> <li>- human factor (lack of interest and relevance)</li> <li>- financial difficulties</li> </ul>

These themes are listed as follows: system's rationales for internationalization, change climate in education system of Macedonia, multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia, futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey. The themes are presented in Table 4.31 above.

The first theme suggested by the qualitative data is the Macedonian educational *system's rationale for internationalization*. It was stated that a lot of importance is given to the internationalization of higher education.

So, my opinion is that we are developing in the good way, recently we adopted new changes of law of education and science, where we strength the internationalization

by prescribing that each universities has to have such a programs in English of third cycle of education than quality of teaching, quality of science and quality of competency of lecture and so on. We make a change recently in the law of higher education in which we may prescribe that each university has to use 40% of incomes for science and for the research project if you mean in that field.

The main mission of the higher education of the Republic of Macedonia has been described as to strengthen and contribute to the development of educational process and sciences. It was expressed that great efforts has been spent *to improve the quality of the education*. Macedonian officials stated that the higher education of Macedonia is autonomous, therefore the Ministry of education cannot interfere with or force the collaboration activities of the universities, but there is a *positive and supportive approach towards all kind of collaborative activities between the universities*. The following statement confirms this situation:

Yes, I told you that as a Ministry we cannot, because of the autonomy of higher education, we cannot influence or force them in such way, but we just support such activities and force them, stress them on that collaboration ...Yes, when it is about our Ministry, we will support them in any kind of collaboration.

The second theme was identified as *change climate*. The data revealed that a change climate was prevalent in Macedonia also as in Kosovo. From the expressions of the participants it is clearly understood that the country is involved in renewing its educational system. The data suggested several major factors (external and internal driving forces) affecting the change climate. *Westernization policy* in Macedonian education system can be defined as one of the external driving forces affecting this change climate. Information was provided about the *reforms done in line with the European Union processes*, which confirms at the same time the western orientation of the Macedonian higher education. The officials mentioned about the implication of the *Bologna process* in Macedonian higher education, which can be asserted as another evidence affecting the change climate in Macedonian higher education. In compare to previous periods in education system the implementation of the Bologna process was assessed as useful one. Macedonian officials emphasized its contribution to the prevention of the discrimination in education.

However, this in the Bologna process is at least encrypted, no name surname, on the other hand the nationality is important, for example, in the university where the Macedonians are in a majority, if it is seen Turkish or I don't know Muslim name surname, they have immediately behave differently.

But, the data from the interviews revealed that this process was not successfully applied in Macedonia. The main reason for that was explained as follows: teaching staff in the faculties are currently assigned from the previous period, who are aged, narrow-minded, and unadaptable to the innovation and new technologies. Therefore it was suggested that the

problems existing in the education should be read very carefully. *The inadequacies of the Macedonian education system* inherited from the past period have been necessitated *benefiting from the educational experiences of the other countries*. Therefore, the inadequacies of the Macedonian education system were identified as a major internal factor having impact on the change climate. The following sentence confirms this situation.

Then, in my opinion we are weak in the field of innovation and having foresight the progress in Turkey in that field which are good results we have to force our higher education to use that Turkish experience and the main activity should be focused on taking mutual part in different European international projects with China, United States of America, Russia or other countries depending on the interests.

From the statements of the officials it was understood that the local municipalities play decisive role in Macedonian education. Therefore, *strengthening of the tasks of the local municipalities* was defined as the second internal driving force affecting the change climate. It was noted that efforts were spent in this regard.

Another important theme suggested by the data was *the multi-ethnic structure* of Macedonia. As in the other Balkan countries in Macedonia there were also various ethnic groups like Albanian, Turks, and Roma etc. Among them the ethnic Turks appears to play significant role in shaping the current educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia. In this view, this theme was related to the Turkish education and the problems in Turkish education in Macedonia. As it is known, for the protection of the minority rights Ohrid Framework Agreement accepted in 2001 was one of the important documents, which secure the educational rights of all ethnic groups in Macedonia. In this context it was stressed *the significance of the continuity of the Turkish education* for Turkish minorities. It was asserted that owed to the Turkish education provided in Macedonia the Turkish minorities were protected from being assimilated. It was understood that for the preservation of the ethnic identity of the Turks in Macedonia the continuity of the Turkish education is necessary. In this context, satisfaction was expressed about the progresses made in Turkish education thanks to contributions made in this regard by various governmental and non-governmental institutions in Turkey.

Additionally, the attention has been drawn on the problems existing in Turkish education, mainly on *the shortages of Turkish teacher staff in Turkish language education*. It was discussed that the shortages of the Turkish teacher cadre is one of the reasons for decreasing the number of the students in Turkish education. Another problem highlighted by officials is that the ethnic groups are not represented in the educational institutions in Macedonia. The main complaint was related to not having Turkish representative in Macedonian governmental institutions to whom to refer for solving some issues in case of need.

Another important theme suggested by the data on educational relationships between Turkey and Macedonia was that *these relationships are futile and slowly growing*. Indeed, Macedonian officials also like Kosovar officials presented in the previous section complained about this situation. The level of the educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia was found to be insufficient. One of the participants explained this situation by saying “I think having foresight the capacity of Turkish side such a large country, such a big experience such a deep friendship between, we still have not reached good level of collaboration and we have to work on that to make that collaboration much better”.

It was understood that this situation was due to the following several main reasons. *Economic sanctions and some local legal practices* applied were referred as the first reason for these futile and slowly growing relations. It was expressed that due to this reason even Turkish businessmen were refrained from investing in Macedonia. Therefore, the level of the economic relations was also said to be insufficient, which in turn have an impact on the bilateral educational relations.

As the second reason for the slowly growing relations was pointed *the human factor*. Despite Turkey's positive approach, interest and relevance, there were lack of interest and relevance seen from the Macedonian side. The following sentence summarizes this situation.

First they could be occurred since the human factor we still face with the lecturer that are not open for collaboration, because of lack of their knowledge or their competencies and so on. So, they keep their limits as something not reachable.

Finally, the biggest problem affecting further development of the relations was identified as *financial difficulties* faced. It was noted that since these financial problems the participation to the educational activities organized by Turkey were appeared to be in limited manner or sometimes there were even no attendance. The participants believed that, if the above mentioned main problems were overcome there would be no obstacles for development of the collaboration, bilateral relations. Additionally, if the bilateral educational relations be evaluated from the point of Turkish communities it could not be difficult to detect the serious lack of educational strategies and financial difficulties existed in Turkish education also. There were consensus of the opinion of the officials on that for to protect of the constitutional rights of this group the Turkish education should be supported by Turkey.

According to the officials the main factors affecting the educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia were described as economy, job recruitment, and culture, in addition scholarship, distance to Turkey, the quality of the education in Turkey provide an advantage.

#### 4.2.1.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians

Five Macedonian academicians, who were directly involved in the education sector in Macedonia were interviewed. The results of the interviews with academicians confirmed some of themes drawn from the interviews with Macedonian government officials and provided further different evidence to explain these themes. The themes presented in Table 4.32 are: change of climate, western orientation in the education system of Macedonia, internationalization and multiethnic structure of Macedonia.

Table 4.32

#### *Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Change climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- difficulties due to multiculturalism</li><li>- problems caused by implementation of the legislations related to education</li></ul>
2	Western orientation of the education system <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- active role of western institutions</li><li>- multiple orientation/collaboration with the neighboring countries educational institutions and the institutions in Turkey</li></ul>
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the quality of the Turkish education system of preference</li><li>- the impact of the visits to higher educational institutions by Turkish high-level officials</li><li>- brain drain (negative side of the relations)</li><li>- student mobility (reverse – from Turkey to Macedonia)</li></ul>
4	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the presence of Turkish communities</li><li>- the problems in Turkish education</li></ul>

The *change climate theme* emerged as the first theme in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians. Compared to governmental officials, academicians explained different aspects of this theme. Information was provided on the structure of the Macedonian higher education and the difficulties encountered in transforming its education. *Multiculturalism* in Macedonia was cited as one of the internal factors having impact on successfully transforming its education, which sometimes lead to identity conflict. Therefore, the academicians have drawn attention to the political dimensions of this situation and as well to the difficulties stemmed from the legislation implemented in the field of education in Macedonia after its independence. As a concrete example was indicated particularly the difficulties in establishment of the first Albanian language University in Tetovo. Founded in 1994, this university was not officially accepted by Macedonian educational authorities nearly about 11 years. This problem was described in the following manner:

So, in short, our university is international university, founded in 2001 as a one conflict prevention, conflict resolution case, because of the problem of Albanian language in higher education within the years in Macedonia. .... After the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991 the biggest problem was now where and how to study Albanian students from Macedonia. In 1994 group of Albanian professor established university of Tetovo, which was not recognized by Macedonian government and created a problem clash between Albanian and Macedonian. As you know in 1995, in the opening ceremony one Albanian students was killed by Macedonian police and this problem became a catalizator of an interesting tension.

Due to a great efforts, currently this university is continuing to operate as a private university, alongside with the State University in Tetovo. It was indicated that a positive reports on the performances of these two universities are announced by European Union of Accreditation (EUA). The foundation of first Albanian language university can be assumed as a turning point for the change and transformation in the education system of Macedonia.

*Problems caused by the local legislations* in Macedonian higher education was indicated as another factor affecting the change climate. For example, it was expressed that the changes made in laws related to education resulted in problems with the Ministry of Education especially in hiring new staff or foreign professors, which in turn have reflection to the Turcology departments. It was stated that despite the agreements signed between the educational institutions they did not work in the practice and difficulties have been experienced in student mobility, particularly in the framework of Erasmus program.

It was reported that after the collapse of the communism the education system in Macedonia was weakened and that even the implementation of Bologna process was not able to strengthen it. Academicians believed that the Bologna process has not been fully implemented yet in Macedonia, there were some gaps existing in education, which could be fulfilled only with the support of Turkey.

The second theme emerged in the interviews with the academicians was *western orientation of the education system of Macedonia*. One of the reason for western orientation can be cited *the active role of the western institutions*, which is a typical phenomenon for the countries in transition. This fact is valid for Macedonia also. The following sentence confirms the western orientation policy of Macedonia in the field of education. One participant stated “The main donors were USA, Norway, OCSE, Switzerland, European countries. (B7)”

Additionally, it was noted that the Soros institution was very active in Macedonia since 1999, that after the collapse of the communism in Easter Europe it has greatly contributed Macedonia's education system to be integrated into European education system. It is mentioned even about the attempts made by World Bank and European Funds especially regarding the textbooks. Besides, there were information that some European associations like Caritas, Christian based Italian origin association, has tried to be effective in gathering students for study in Italy tuition free. It is claimed that this association are doing some ideological

work with aim to spread Christianity.

There were common views that the higher education in Macedonia is not only western oriented, but at the same time it is *multiple oriented*. Macedonian academicians reported about the efforts made to establish cooperation and signed agreements with the universities in neighboring countries. Consequently, Macedonian universities attract foreign students from many countries like Greece, Serbia, Germany, Albania, and Bulgaria. In addition, by taking into account the historical ties with Turkey, it was reported about the close relations established with the universities in Turkey as well. It was emphasized the importance given to the students coming from Turkey. For example, the academicians in Stip University admitted that all kind of efforts was done to ease and to organize their life in Macedonia. It is evident that Macedonia in attempt to compensate its shortcomings from the past in the field of education is intensified on collaboration activities with other countries' educational institutions aiming to improve its education system.

The third theme emerged from the interviews with the academicians was the *rationales behind internationalization*. It is understood that the relations and collaborations in the field of education between Turkey and Macedonia were intensified on this theme. *The quality of the Turkish education system* was of preference. Positive opinions are expressed about the Turkish educational system, which can be exemplified by the following quotation.

You know what happened in Kosovo and Macedonia, Yahya Kemal or another college are investing here, so if they are very successful with our pupil who go to Turkish school in the region it means that they have developed one successful model of education, that's why we have to rely on Turkish model of educational cooperation.

It is believed that Turkey is a good model for the Balkan countries and Turkish universities are more advanced to be able to compete with the European universities.

So, I think always Balkan country have to build on new partnership with Turkey. All countries since 1991, either Macedonia, Albania Kosovo, Bosnia, were in this post conflict and postcommunist transition and how could Turkey now offer not only advice and consultancy, but also some models of transitional building of new liberal democracy in the region.

In general, the level of cooperation in the field of education between both countries was evaluated as very good, and *the high-level official visits to educational institutions of Macedonia* was emphasized to be very effective and motivating. This has been expressed by the following sentences:

Clearly, I'm saying again, but it is very good, it is moving fast of course, today, as I said again, starting collaboration with several universities ....., visits of our Mr. Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey to Tetovo State university ..., last year during the visit of the Foreign Minister to Macedonia... the visit of Davutoğlu to Tetovo State university, ....., gave a very special importance, really gave a separate feeling, his half-hour visit has changed a lot of the minds.

In addition, it was notified that educational activities carried out by Turkey affected the functional characteristics of the educational institutions, but just only in conceptual level. As the negative side of the relations was cited “*brain drain*”. It is accepted that the brain drain is the most encountered problem in the educational relations between the two countries.

Another important point worth to be discussed regarding the internationalization theme was *the student mobility*. Recently many students from Turkey are attending the universities in Macedonia. It is assumed that this increase in the number of the Turkish students in Macedonia was due to accreditation given to the Macedonian universities by the Higher Education Council (YÖK) in Turkey. In addition, the recognition of the diplomas from both side is thought to be effective in this regard. An attention was drawn on the impact of the Turkish students on Macedonian education system. It is asserted that they play an important role in building bridges between the two countries. These students can be seen as a driving force in the exchange of experiences as well.

The last theme emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians was the *multi-ethnic structure of the Macedonia*. As in the other Balkan countries in Macedonia there are living various ethnic groups like Albanian, Turks, Vlachs, Serbs, Roma and others. These groups differ among themselves according to their size. For example Albanians constitutes the majority of the ethnic groups in compare to the Turks and others. Although the Macedonian legislations did not allow any distinction between the minority groups the Ohrid Framework Agreement was highlighted to be as one of the important documents for the protection of rights of these ethnic groups, including their educational rights. In this sense, *the presence of Turkish communities* and their access to the educational opportunities in Macedonia constitutes a great importance for Turkey. It was expressed that the educational level of the ethnic Turks living in Macedonia is varied. Among them the lowest level was that of the Turks living in Eastern Macedonia. An attention was drawn to increase the educational level of those groups to the level of the other ethnic groups. Therefore, the identification of the problems in Turkish education emerged as a priority issue. The current problems in education of the Turkish communities were listed as follows: teaching staff and Turkish textbooks shortages, financial problems in printing of these textbooks since limited circulation, insufficiencies in education of Turkish history etc.

#### ***4.2.1.3 Opinions of the Macedonian association representatives in Macedonia***

As it is stated before there are several ethnic groups living in Macedonia. Among them Turkish minority group is the most influential factor affecting the relations between the two countries. In order to understand the impact of this group on the bilateral relations interviews were conducted with the representatives of the two associations in Macedonia. The first one is

an association established in line of the need of the Turkish community living in Macedonia, focusing especially on education. The main mission of this association is spreading and protection of the Turkish education and increasing the number of Turkish cultural actors in Macedonia. The second one is a Union of the Turkish NGO's in Republic of Macedonia, MATUSITEB. There were about 54 associations registered to this Union. The main mission of the Union primarily is to solve the problems of the Turkish minorities in the areas of education, culture, arts and social sphere as well as to ensure the coordination between the associations registered. At this point an importance is given to build consciousness, and to support the unity and solidarity of the Turkish people living in Macedonia.

From the interviews with the representatives four theme emerged, they are: multiethnic structure of Macedonia, western orientation of its education system, internationalization and religious education. These theme were presented in Table 4.33

Table 4.33

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with Representatives of the Macedonian Associations*

No	Themes
1	Western orientation of the Macedonian education system Reasons: - the activities of western institutions in Macedonia - the need for restructuring education system - differences between the educational system of both countries
2	Internationalization - brain drain
3	Multiethnic structure of Macedonia - the presence of Turkish communities - the importance of teaching Turkish language
4	Religious education - support to be given in the field of religious education for the Muslims living in the eastern Macedonia

The first theme identified was *the western orientation* of the Macedonian education system. As the academicians the representatives confirmed the western policy of the Macedonian education and documented three main reasons behind the westernization. First, the attention was drawn to the *activities carried out by the western institutions in Macedonia*. This was expressed in the following way:

But, this is gradually, what should I say, the projects is it from the European Union, from United States, the projects within the Ministry of Education, and since the last 10 years, we have participated to seminars and projects such as USIAD.

As the second reason was indicated the *need of rebuilding and reconstructing the education system in Macedonia*. Criticisms have been made to the educational system by referring to the shortcomings inherited from the communist period. The efforts of the

Macedonian authorities to complete this shortcomings in education was emphasized. The third reason was related to *structural differences* between the educational systems of both countries. In this sense, it was stated that the desired acceleration in the bilateral relations between the two countries has still not been caught.

*The internationalization* emerged as a theme in the interviews with the representatives of the Associations. Negative aspects of the internationalization was emphasized. Concerns about *brain drain* were expressed, which affected negatively the situation in Macedonia. Job recruitments and social environment were shown as the main reasons for brain drain in the country.

But, I think that the students also have no desire so that to stay in Turkey, since of necessity, so the things here are slightly more pessimistic, for this economy, for this policy, for this social environment, since that they look slightly more pessimistic to this state.

*The multiethnic structure of Macedonia* as a theme denoting educational relationships between Turkey and Kosovo was confirmed also by representatives of the associations. Two main dimensions of this theme were highlighted. Firstly, the importance of *Turkish communities* was emphasized and their role in the relationships between the two countries. One of the issues regarding this community was their access to the educational opportunities in Macedonia. Concerns were expressed particularly on those ethnic Turks and Muslims minorities living in the West and East Macedonia. Secondly, *Turkish language teaching* emerged as an important dimension. It was stated that the Turkish minorities in the Eastern part are almost to forget the Turkish language. In this respect, it was expressed the need for giving assistance in terms of enhancing their Turkish language.

*Religious education* theme was another important theme suggested by the data. It is a common view that the religious education and religious organizations influence the relationships between the states and the societies. There were opinions that special attention should be given especially to the settlements in eastern Macedonia as Radovich, Stip, Behchevo, and Berovo. It was stated that these areas are not only economically but also educationally and religiously backward. Therefore, Turkish minorities living in this region should be supported in terms of religious education also. According to the opinions of the representatives of the associations, people having been graduated from Arab countries can cause serious problems in understanding of Islam among Turkish minorities. Therefore it was emphasized that religious education in these regions should be intensified.

#### 4.2.1.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia

In this study three Turkish governmental officials were interviewed. The data suggested two main theme: futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and Macedonia and multiethnic structure of Macedonia. These themes were presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.34.

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia*

No	Themes
1	Futile and slowly growing relationships Reasons: - structural differences among the educational systems - brain drain - growing interest in strengthening the relationships - the major role of the Turkish institutions
2	Multiethnic structure of Macedonia - problems in Turkish education - education level of the ethnic Turks in Eastern Macedonia - the role of the religion education on the relationships between Turkey and Macedonia

The first theme regarding the educational relationships between Turkey and Macedonia was that Turkish governmental officials determined *these relationships as futile and slowly growing*. Therefore, the level of the educational relations was indicated as insufficient and that an efforts should be spent in order to increase it. One probable reason for the futile and slowly growing relations between Turkey and Macedonia is related to *the structural differences* existing in the educational systems of both countries. For example, one of the significant points mentioned in the interviews was regarding the recognition of the religious high school diplomas issued in Turkey. It is expressed that due to the differences in the educational systems of both countries, additionally, despite the agreement signed in the field of education between the two countries, due to the different interpretations of this agreement the diplomas of the students graduated from the religious schools (imam hatip high school) in Turkey were not recognized by Macedonian authorities. Thus, the desire to find an urgent solution for the misinterpretation of the agreement was highlighted by one of the participants. He said that “based on this agreement, of course our expectation is in recognition of all diplomas issued by the schools operating under the Ministry of National Education of Turkey”.

Another reason for the futile educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia was cited *brain drain*. Officials reported that only brain drain is seen as a risk in the bilateral

cooperation with Turkey, and that measures are taken to eliminate this risk.

On the other hand, despite the opinions above, Turkish officials emphasized the *growing interest in strengthening the relationships* between Turkey and Macedonia. Positive developments has been reported in this regard. It is admitted that there were no any difficulties or bureaucratic problems encountered during the cooperation. Culture, economy as well as the quality of the education in Turkey were determined as the main factors contributing to the further development of these relations. The data revealed that the implementation of joint projects, giving training to teachers employed in Turkish education, cooperation established between educational institutions were the areas increasingly gaining importance in the bilateral relations recently. It is indicated that, although the multicultural, multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia, Turkey is carried out the education activities in an atmosphere of tolerance and harmony. It was expressed that thanks to the valuable support of the local municipalities and non-governmental organizations educational activities carried out by Turkey are contributed to the increase of the quality of the education in Macedonia.

By the scholarships given to students it is provided an opportunity to study in the section which are not existed in Macedonia. It could be said that giving opportunity to study in schools which gives better education in Turkey, provide benefits for raising the quality of the education. Apart from this, it can be possible sharing of school supply between sister schools. This also makes a significant contribution to the quality of education.

On the other hand, *the major role of the Turkish institutions* as the Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities and the Turkish Embassy in Skopje in improving the educational relations between the two countries has been stressed also.

Another theme emerged from the interviews with Turkish governmental officials was *“the multiethnic structure of Macedonia”* which also find reflection on the relations between Turkey and Macedonia. As it is known in 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement was signed. According to this Agreement if it is requested by the ethnic groups classes or schools can be opened and education can be given in mother tongue. In this context there have been many Turkish classes opened. Turkish officials expressed the *main problems and difficulties* encountered in supplying of Turkish textbooks or translation of the textbooks in Turkish and teacher shortages in Turkish education. It is stated that this problems is existed throughout all Macedonia. Officials drew attention to the low *educational level of the ethnic Turks living especially in the Eastern part of Macedonia*.

But, as I said, having disadvantage of being educated in a foreign language, the level of the Turkish students is lower in compare to Macedonian and Albanian students. Here especially the level of the Turks in Easter Macedonia is very low. Other, whether it is West Macedonia, Skopje and vicinity, there were no much trouble, but people living in the regions of Eastern Macedonia, especially in places where Turkish education is not in intense are experiencing problems.

Further, attention was given to the internal political situation in Macedonia. It is stated that the balance between the ethnic groups in Macedonia is still very fragile. This situation was reflected in the following sentences.

Of course, throughout the Balkans, here from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and to Greece, there are powers who want to disrupt this unity, togetherness, this atmosphere of tolerance. For example, in the past days, they tried to build a church in this castle and and clashes erupted. But it should be prevented somehow by the state.

Maintaining of this balance between the ethnic groups is very important. It is known that, historical symbols can be seen as a part of transferring the religious education, culture and identity. Therefore, the participants indicated that such kind of activities can be implemented in consultation with the ethnic groups, by taking into account the local conditions, particularly activities regarding religious values. Otherwise it can be resulted in a deterioration of the stability in Macedonia. As an example is given demolition of the Burmali mosque. Great responsibility in this respect falls on to the educators. It is believed that the higher the level of the education the longer lasting will be the stability in Macedonia. To this end, the primary goal behind all activities performed in the field of education should be creation of mutual understanding between the ethnic groups, increasing the contacts among them as well as bringing new generations without any prejudices. In this context, *the role of the religion education* on the relationships between Turkey and Macedonia cannot be overestimated. In the area of religion relations, officials stated that there are good relations and joint work executed between the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and the Islamic Union of Macedonia. It is expressed that the Religious Consultancy within the Embassy of Turkey in Skopje is acting as a bridge between these two institutions. The traditions remaining from the Ottoman period seems to be still quite effective in Macedonia. Therefore Turkey's Faculty of Theologies are seems to be very attractive for the Macedonian students. Currently in Macedonia there are 5 madrasas, in which, there are teachers who graduated from the Faculty of Theology in Turkey. Officials said that by this way Turkey contributed to improve of the relations between the two countries and besides that to foster intercultural dialogue among the young people.

#### ***4.2.1.5 Opinions of the Turkish academicians in Macedonia***

In this study two Turkish academicians were interviewed, who were serving in the universities in Macedonia. From the interview it is understood that in the framework of the Ministerial Joint Cultural Commission lecturers were appointed to Ss. Cyril and Methodius University with aim to teach Turkish language to foreigners and to support the Turkish Language and Literature department academically. It is learned that this support of lecturer is

given since many years. On the other hand, there were International Balkan university established by the support of the Turkish entrepreneurs. Data revealed two main themes: internationalization and the inadequate infrastructure of the Macedonia's education system, the details of which are presented in the Table 4.35 below.

Table 4.35

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia*

No	Themes
1	<p>Internationalization</p> <p>Aim: - increasing exchange of students (to attract the students from the Balkans and Turkic Republic)</p> <p>- to ensure the development of cultural interaction</p> <p>Difficulties encountered:</p> <p>- different grading system</p> <p>- the structural differences between the two countries educational system (diploma recognition of religious schools)</p> <p>- heavy bureaucratic procedures</p>
2	<p>The inadequate infrastructure of the Macedonia's education system</p> <p>- faculty shortages</p> <p>- inadequacies of Turcology departments (the needs of educational equipments, textbooks, dictionaries)</p>

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians was ***internationalization***. It was mentioned about the progresses recently made in Turkey's higher education internationalization. Beside that under the heading of this theme Turkish academicians evaluated the educational policies of Turkey towards Balkans. Further it was explained that this is not a policy specifically towards the Balkans that it is at the same time policy towards the Turkic Republic. The main aim of this policy was defined as ***to increase the exchange of student and faculty mobility***. In other words ***to attract the students from these countries***, to give them opportunity to study in Turkey by providing them scholarships and by this way ***to ensure the development of cultural interaction*** between them. Further, it was stated that this policy appeals to all groups living in Macedonia without any ethnic discrimination, including the Christian Macedonian also.

Turkey's policy is not based on narrow ethnic basis educational policy. It encompassed the relative communities also who are somehow in relations with the Turks, it is not a policy highlighting the ethnic identity, it is a policy looking from a broader perspective. Turkey as a voice, in desire to improve the relations with the countries in the Balkans, it has not closed the door for the Christian Macedonian also.

Academics reported about also about the new implementation put into force by the Higher Education Council (HEC). According to this implementation, HEC handed in the responsibility for admission of foreign student to the universities. In this context, many Turkish universities have set their own quota for foreign students. A lot of students from the Balkans

benefited from this opportunity.

Another important fact is that in formation of the educational policies, the developments achieved in the international area should be taken into account. In that sense, academicians, by referring to the implementation of the Bologna process in Europe, and the expansion of the American education in the world, highlighted the situation that, not only relative and kin communities but also all communities in the world, from which country they are, or whatever nation and race they are, they have to know and understand each other more than ever in order to benefit from each other's experiences. Therefore, in order to sit around the table with all groups as an equal partner, to understand them better or to be understood better, within the process of internationalization as one of the actors in the world the educational policies of Turkey towards Balkan should be restructured. In this regard academics criticized the Turkish educational policy saying that there is a delay in the educational policies of Turkey for opening educational institutions and cultural centers in the Balkans. It was stated that in terms of opening to outward Turkey acted negligently. For example, in Macedonia Yunus Emre Cultural Center was newly opened in 2011.

Some of the difficulties encountered during the internationalization process were highlighted. *The structural differences between the two countries' educational system* was indicated as the most prominent issue. It is claimed that these differences affect the relationships between the two countries. For example, one of the significant problems faced by Turkish students studying in Macedonian universities is the recognition of the diplomas, especially the diplomas of the students who were graduated from the religious schools (imam hatip high schools) in Turkey. Upon investigation made, it is learned that the religious schools in Macedonia are not under the administration of the Ministry of Education of Macedonia, while in Turkey it is. For this reason, the education given by Islamic Union in Macedonia are not recognized by Macedonian authorities. Therefore, in Macedonia problems occur concerning the recognition of the diplomas of these schools, whereas in Turkey there is no problem in this regard, since the religious schools are under the administration of the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. It is emphasized that this application is contrary to the agreement on the recognition of diplomas among both countries which was signed in 1998. In this agreement it is said that "Ministries of Education mutually recognize the diploma that has given". Under this agreement the Ministries of Education of both countries should recognize diplomas mutually. Another important issue cited the academicians was regarding the *different grading systems* used by Turkey and Macedonia. For example in Macedonia Bologna criterion system is being implemented, whereas in Turkey Grade Point Average system is being implemented. For this reason, academicians advised that universities in Macedonia should take into account both of these methods. The participants were highlighted the need of

implementation of a common grading system was emphasized as well.

On the other hand, it has been stated that Turkish students coming to study in Macedonian universities have encountered with some other problems that are also worth mentioning. Some of the problems reported by academics are as follows: as too much **bureaucratic procedures** in getting residence permit, problems that arose as a result of cumbersome bureaucracy, the fees collecting for high school equivalency and a large number of documents requested in this regard like sample population register, residence permit, diploma Apostille attestation, transcript, Macedonian translation of all of these documents and notarization etc. It was reported that recently these problems were dealt with by the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and Turkish Embassy in Skopje. Therefore, in order to make Macedonian education system attractive Macedonian authorities should find urgent solution for the above mentioned problems. The participants suggested that both countries institutions responsible from education should act in a coordination and harmony. Despite the problems listed above, academics emphasized that, Turkey through the educational activities carried out towards Macedonia had contributed to the internationalization process. The main factors affecting the educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia were listed as foreign policy, politics, culture, student mobility, and migration and employment problems of the ethnic Turks living in Macedonia.

Another theme that the data revealed is **the inadequate infrastructure of the Macedonia's education system**. During the interviews it is expressed that recently as a result of opening of many universities in Macedonia **faculty shortages** and problems with the specialization occurred. It was emphasized the need and importance of supporting the Macedonian universities in this regard by **appointment of lecturers or academic staffs**. As it is known, the appointment of the faculty members and lecturer abroad is realized according to the article 39 of the regulation issued by Higher Education Council and the principles set by the Directorate General for External Relations in the Ministry of National Education of Turkey and as well the Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities. Academicians advised that in order to improve the educational system of Macedonia and make it attractive Turkey should revise its policy. As another solution it is suggested that students speaking with Skopje dialect should be sent to do master or doctoral degree to Turkey, then later on for example in order to strengthen the Turcology department and fulfill the shortages of academic staff in this department they have to come back to Macedonia. Additionally, according to Turkish academicians, Turcology department have to be supported also in terms of educational equipment, Turkish textbooks and Turkish-Macedonian dictionary. It is noted that the books sent from Turkey sometime did not meet the needs of the department. Therefore

as a solution, opening of books sale centers was proposed. It was learned that initiative in this regard was made before Yunus Emre Cultural Center.

**4.2.1.6 Opinion of the representative of Turkish associations in Macedonia**

The interview was conducted with the representative of the Turkish association in Macedonia (Yunus Emre Cultural Center). The main theme emerged in the interview was the active role of the Turkish institutions in improving the relationships between Turkey and Macedonia. The details of this theme were presented in Table 4.36.

Table 4.36

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association in Macedonia*

No	Theme
1	The active role of the Turkish institutions in Macedonia - the importance of teaching Turkish language

The theme emerged in the interview with the representative of the Turkish association in Macedonia was labeled as *the active role of the Turkish institutions in the field of education in Macedonia*. It was stated that special care was given to act in coordination with the foundations and local authorities and non-governmental organizations in Macedonia which were playing also significant role in determining the activities organized by Turkey. For example, it was noted that the activities carried out by Yunus Emre Cultural Center, which was newly opened in Skopje, were need oriented, aimed to reach all groups living in Macedonia without any discrimination. In this context, the Center, in organization of some activities is in cooperation not only with the Turkish institutions such as Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, TIKA and many other governmental and non-governmental institutions but also with some Macedonian local institutions.

Furthermore, it was emphasized that the Center's main activity is *teaching Turkish language*. According to the representative opinion, from economic perspective, recently Turkey is a “rising star” in the region and a career opportunity for many people. During the interview the representative underlined that Turkey was described as a model country in this geography, especially in the field of health and education. One of the participants stated, “For this geography, Turkey is a model country in many areas, but particularly in health and education”. Therefore everyone in Macedonia is so concerned to learn Turkish. In this sense, it was learned that positive impressions and feedbacks were obtained from its activities.

## 4.2.2 The practices undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia

### 4.2.2.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials

First of all, according to the opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials it is worth mentioning the fact that the educational activities carried out by Turkey were intended to all groups regardless of their ethnic origin. The data suggested two main themes regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia in the field of higher education: internationalization and multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of Macedonia. These themes were presented in the Table 4.37.

Table 4.37

*Themes Emerged in the interview with the Macedonian Governmental Officials.*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization - cooperation between educational institutions - student mobility - difficulties stemmed from the structural differences of the educational systems of both countries (credit system, recognition of the diplomas issued by religious high schools) - brain drain
2	Multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of Macedonia - teaching Turkish language - religion education

The first theme emerged was *internationalization*. As it is stated in the previous sections, the internationalization covers variety of practices. One of the most important practices is *the cooperation established between the educational institutions of both countries*. Interview data revealed that Macedonian educational institutions and universities have initiated close relationships and signed agreements on different areas not only with the Turkish universities but also with the scientific organization in Turkey. For example, during the interviews the participants highlighted the memorandum signed between Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) and the Ministry of Education and Science of Macedonia. It was expressed that in the framework of this memorandum professors from both countries have opportunity to work on joint projects, among them the seismic project was cited as very important one. It was mentioned also about productive cooperation existing between Goce Delcev University in Stip and TUBITAK, on the exchange of scientists and students. Additionally, it was reported that in the framework of TUBITAK projects many students have chance to visit Turkey. The exchange of scientists and the visits of the students have been emphasized as very useful. In this regard, there were comments about the efforts

spent to increase this cooperation in the field of education between Turkey and Macedonia. Other examples of collaborations between Macedonian and Turkish universities were listed as follows: effective cooperation established between Tetovo University and Trakya University in Edirne, the cooperation between Bitola University and Trakya University and Çanakkale 18 Mart University. Also Stip University signed protocol with some Turkish universities. Among them Trakya University is the leading university located in the Thrace region, Eastern European part of Turkey, having relationships nearly with all Balkan Universities within the Balkan University Network. Even it would not be wrong to say that the majority of the students from the Balkans have been studying in this university.

As it is known *student mobility* is important indicator of the internationalization process. Thanks to the opportunities provided by Turkey there were many Macedonian students studying in Turkish universities. It was reported that each year, in accordance with the quota allocated to Macedonia approximately 25 students, 10 of whom were Albanians, were sent to study in Turkey. But recently, it was seen that the process regarding student mobility has begun to reverse. There has been an increase in the number of the students from Turkey, who are studying in Macedonian universities. Turkish students have begun to show special interest to the universities in Macedonia. Following question comes to mind what makes Macedonian higher education attractive. Literature sources, field notes revealed several reasons for explaining this situation which can be listed as the agreement signed on recognition of the degrees and diplomas between the two countries, cooperation between the universities of both countries, establishment of International Balkan University by the initiatives of the Turkish entrepreneurs, the destination of Macedonia to Turkey, low tuition in compare to other universities in Europe or Turkey, common culture and etc.

On the other hand, there were comments on the *difficulties encountered during the internationalization process*, which is said to have unfavorable effects on the educational relations between the two countries. It is claimed that these difficulties were as a result of *the structural differences existing in the educational systems of both countries*, which should not be ignored. For example, it was emphasized that there were problems faced in credit transfer, which naturally is a major obstacle for student mobility. As to the problems regarding the recognition of the diplomas of the students graduated from the religious high schools in Turkey Macedonian governmental officials reaffirmed the opinions of the Turkish academicians. They explained that the status of the religious schools in Macedonia have not been determined yet. These schools were affiliated to the Islam Unity of Macedonia, while in Turkey the religious schools are under the administration of the Ministry of National Education.

Our expectation is that the diplomas issued by schools attached to the Turkish

Ministry of Education are recognized as per this agreement. However, there is a difference of opinion between the parties in terms of the interpretation of the agreement.

In contrast to our system, the schools that offer religious education in Macedonia are governed under the auspices of competent authorities related to religious affairs and not the Ministry of Education. We explain [to them] that the system in Turkey is different, and that the religious vocational high schools and divinity colleges are educational institutions, the curricula and diplomas of which are administered by the relevant public institutions.

One of the negative aspects of the internationalization is *the brain drain*, which troubles mainly the developing countries. Macedonia is not exception of this risk. There were concerns about the possible increase of brain drain. Governmental officials pointed out that it should be worked hard towards converting brain drain into the brain gain. They agreed that, in order to eliminate this risk, it should be taken some supporting measures such as: encouraging returns, bettering working conditions and teaching facilities, making teacher profession more attractive by providing additional compensation except salary, raising awareness of the students by motivating them etc.

The second theme was labeled as *multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of Macedonia*. Different ethnic groups constitute the Muslim Macedonian community. Among them Macedonians of Albanian origins were the majority and the others were Turks, Bosniaks, Torbesh, Gorani and Romans. Naturally, Turkish communities are of great importance for Turkey. In this sense teaching of *Turkish language* becomes priority in the activities of Turkey towards Macedonia. Main reasons for teaching Turkish language were listed as historical ties, understanding while watching Turkish series, scholarship opportunities and studying in Turkey. Recently there has been seen an increased interest for learning Turkish from the side of Macedonian and Albanian students also.

On the other hand, as it is known Macedonia is a secular state with religious tolerance. When it comes to *the religion education* of these Muslims in comparison to other Balkan countries, there were no any problems encountered during the communist era, local reverends met this requirements. But concerns have been expressed about the activities of various religious movements of Arab origin causing discomfort among Muslim communities. Yet, it doesn't make any trouble for the time, and it is believed that this situation is temporary and will be overcome soon. In this sense, Turkey is trying to give support in the field of religion education as well. Turkey through the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey is accepting students for study in the Faculties of Theology and also provides support with religious publications, gives all kind of support to celebrate some religious days together with the Macedonian Muslims. Satisfaction was expressed from the activities carried out by Turkey, positive feedback and desire for the repetition of these activities was reported.

#### 4.2.2.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians

Analysis of the data collected from Macedonian academicians suggested two main themes: internationalization and multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia. These themes were presented in the Table 4.38.

Table 4.38

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization - credit transfer issues - diploma recognition problems - concrete cooperation examples between educational institutions - complaints of the academicians (no access to the libraries in Turkey, cadre problems, problems in appointment of foreign staff etc.)
2	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia - teaching Turkish language

**Internationalization** was labeled as the first theme in the interview with the Macedonian academicians regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia in the field of education. The academicians focused especially on the problems faced during the internationalization process. These problems were documented and detailed. Academicians drawn attention to one of the new problems emerged in the area of education between Turkey and Macedonia that is **the credit transfer issue**. Structural differences existing between the educational systems of both countries were indicated as the main reason for that situation. For example, in Turkey there is an associate diploma degree while in Macedonia there is no. For this reason, problems occurred in **recognition of the diplomas** of students who for example have graduated from the two-year engineering sections of the higher education institutions in Turkey. In this sense, concerns were expressed in this regard, because if the number of the students with such a degree increases it will turn into a problem not in short but in long term. It was emphasized that there is a need of signing an agreement for recognition of credits.

Additionally, the bilateral educational relations were criticized. For example, it was indicated that although both countries are member of the Bologna process, and despite the agreement signed for recognition of diplomas by the educational institutions of both sides, the exchange of faculty and student has not been possible to perform yet. There were several reasons cited by the academicians. As it is stated by them due to some reasons caused by the side of Macedonian authorities, these agreements in fact did not work in practice, they remained only on paper. Therefore, according to the academicians the recognition of the diplomas has not been still fully resolved. Many of them underlined that it is not a problem of

bureaucracy, it must have a political background. On the other hand, it is reported that there is no problem encountered in recognition of the university diplomas in undergraduate and graduate level.

Despite these complaints a criticism made above, an importance was given to *the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries*, which have been described in the following way.

We have standard form for all memorandum of our university, which is more general framework, which means institutional cooperation, which means capacity building, which means recognizing diploma, which means exchange of students, which means exchange of professors, research activities between institutes.

Some information on cooperation with Turkish universities performed by the Macedonian universities are as follows:

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University is one of the oldest university in Macedonia with the highest number of students and academics staff. The said university has signed a cooperation agreements with the following universities in Turkey: Trakya, Kırıkclareli, Gazi, 19 Mayıs Universities. But this agreement are observed to be generally interdepartmental especially for the accreditation of the Turcology department. Besides that, it is reported that in Ss. Cyril and Methodius University there were approximately 150 students from Turkey usually studying medicine and Turkish language and literature.

It was learned that Tetovo University also signed a cooperation agreement with some Turkish universities. In the framework of these agreements visits are done to for example to Kırıkclareli University with aim to observe the local education system in Turkey. In addition various courses and seminars are organized together with Samsun, Ondokuz Mayıs and Yıldız Technical universities in order to develop Turkish language and spread the knowledge on Turkish history.

There were cooperation initiatives made with Istanbul Technical University and universities in Izmir as well. There is a joint projects in the field of medicine with Kırıkclareli University for training students in a period of 2 months in Turkey and for appointment of faculty members from Turkey. Good links with Hacettepe University and Bursa Uludağ University are identified also.

Student and expert exchange was specified as top priority in cooperation between the universities. Despite the agreements existed between the educational institutions it is pointed that the Erasmus student exchange program between Turkey and Macedonia has not been working, because of the fact that Macedonia is not a member of EU. As one of the participants stated “The only issue is, like I was saying, stemming from the fact that we are not a member of the European Union”.

Additionally, academicians have made the following complaints: having no access to

the libraries of the universities in Turkey and no opportunity to use the library materials and publications and as well cadre problems, distress in salary payments of the staff, problems of appointment of foreign academics and the cumbersome bureaucracy in Macedonia. It was claimed that there were no attempt made by Macedonian educational institutions in order to enhance the cooperation with Turkey in the area of higher education, due to legislation in higher education of Ministry of Education.

No, we have obstacles here in our country in the Ministry of Education. We have to work, it is a problem, just now we have a new law for higher education, which is not according to wishes of the university and there are troubles.

Besides, the academicians stated that there were no any political or diplomatic problems encountered between the educational institutions except some bureaucratic case of late responding. Further, academicians noted that they were satisfied with the knowledge gained by students during their study in the universities in Turkey.

Yes, we have several master degree students from our academic staff who finished in Turkey and we are very satisfied, we are very satisfied with the qualification and competence which they take with this master degree from Turkish university. We still have in Bursa, in Bilkent, several our master students, who will finish maybe next year and will be back, it added value for us to have this experience and they are very good in improving academic job with this master degree of Turkey. We are very satisfied with this Masters degree.

Therefore it was advised that this cooperation between the educational institutions of Turkey and Macedonia should be institutionalized.

*Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia* has also been identified as an important theme in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians. They associated this theme with *teaching Turkish language* to the Turkish communities. Academicians stressed that, Turkish language should be thought very well, provided that the local Turkish should not be forgotten.

#### ***4.2.2.3 Opinions of the Macedonian association representatives in Macedonia***

The only theme emerged in the interview with the representatives of the Macedonian association was multi-ethnic structure of Macedonian with main emphasis on Turkish education. In compare to Macedonian academicians the representatives documented different evidence regarding this theme, mainly emphasis has been put forward on Turkish education, Turkish language, problems in Turkish education, and support given to religious education of the Muslim communities in Macedonia. The details of this theme were presented in the Table 4.39 below.

Table 4.39

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations*

No	Theme
1	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the importance of Turkish education and Turkish language</li> <li>- problems in Turkish education (Turkish textbooks, teaching staff shortages)</li> <li>- cooperation between the Turkish and Macedonian associations</li> <li>- the support to religious education in Macedonia</li> </ul>

In the interview with the representatives of the Macedonian associations the prominent theme was *multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia*. As it is stated in the previous section among the ethnic groups Turkish communities are of great importance for Turkey, which was confirmed by the representatives also. There is a point to keep in mind that for Turkish minorities in Macedonia, Turkish education is a constitutional right under the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Therefore nearly all Turkish associations are so concerned with Turkish education in Macedonia. So, under the multi-ethnic structure theme improving and dissemination of *Turkish education* in Macedonia emerges as an important issue. It was reported that in this framework more than 100 conferences on Turkish history, Turkish and Ottoman culture, and various seminars for teachers were organized, scholarships were allocated for those studying in Turcology departments of the universities. It has been found that ethnic Turks living especially in Eastern Macedonia has forgotten Turkish language skills. Therefore, initiatives were made to help this ethnic group regain the *Turkish language skills*.

Other than the above-mentioned activities it has been reported that educational workshop was organized in 2009 in Skopje in collaboration with TIKA and International Balkan University. Support was given to this workshop by Turkish educational institutions in Turkey also. It is stated that this workshop provided opportunity to discuss the *problems in Turkish education*. It was indicated that during the workshop the attention was drawn on the need to promote Turkish education especially in the Eastern Macedonia, to find solutions for supplying of Turkish textbooks and to ensure the support with training staff. It was expressed that this workshop ended with foundation of Educational Committee for Turkish Education in Macedonia under the auspices of MATUSITEB (Union of Turkish NGO's in Republic of Macedonia), an umbrella organization for the associations in Macedonia. It is learned that until now eight meetings were held by this Committee. It was stated the studies of this Committee have been carried out mainly on two categories, education and culture. As the representative of the Association expressed these studies covers “in education, the point of the removal of the

existing problems in Turkish Education in Macedonia, and in the field of culture, the point of the protection and preservation of the works of Turkestan and their restoration”.

For example, in terms of culture, it is stated that an attempt were made for restoration of many Ottoman cultural monuments like Mustafa Pasha Mosque in Skopje. It was expressed that all these activities were having positive impact on the public, there have been also positive feedbacks and that there were demands for organizing of new activities. The following sentence confirms the interest shown by the public.

Yes there is a considerable amount of interest and in case there is a 1-2 month gap between conferences, we receive encouragement from the public to re-organize any specific conference...in that sense, yes, there is a serious amount of interest from the public.

On the other hand a *cooperation between the Macedonian and Turkish associations were encouraged*. For example, it was mentioned about the cooperation with the associations and foundations in Turkey like Rumeli Turkleri Vakfi in Istanbul and Izmir Turk Kultur Sanat Dernegi. Additionally, it was indicated that the Macedonian associations are in cooperation also with many Turkish governmental institutions like Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Board of Education, TICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey, and that joint projects were carried out with Ataturk Cultural Center, Language and History Research Center. Feelings of gratitude was expressed for TICA's support in organizing Turkish courses. The role of MATUSITEB in this regard is undeniable as well. Satisfaction was expressed also about the support given by the Turkish associations in terms of stationary aid to schools in Turkish education. It was noted that in the scope of these cooperation, scientific trips have been organizing to İzmir and Manisa at the end of each academic year for the students who successfully completed the Turkish courses.

In terms of *religious education* it is emphasized that the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey is giving the necessary support to Turkish minorities in the eastern part of Macedonia. For this purpose by the Religious Foundation of Turkey 5 religious persons (chaplain) in eastern Macedonia and one in Ohrid were appointed. In addition since 2000, with the organization of the Turkish Religious Consultancy, students are sent to study in religious schools in Turkey. In 2011, 5 female students were sent to study theology in Kayseri Turkey. Activities held in the field of religion have been found successful.

#### ***4.2.2.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia***

The data revealed three main them from the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia. These themes are multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia, the active role of the Turkey's institutions in Macedonia and internationalization. The details of the themes were presented in Table 4.40.

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was *multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia*. This theme was linked with *the religious education of the Muslim groups*. The religion can be cited as one of the determinant of the ethnic identity. As it is stated in the previous sections in Macedonia there were five ethnic groups: Albanians, Turks, Roma, and Muslim Macedonian known as Torbeshi or Pomaks and Bosnians. They constitute approximately %33 of the population of Macedonia. The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia has brought different dimensions to these ethnic groups. Among them the ethnic Turks were desired special attention. They were the second largest minority group in Macedonia.

Table 4.40

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the importance of the religion education for the Muslims in Macedonia</li> <li>- assistance given by Turkey in the field of religion education</li> <li>- joint projects</li> <li>- scholarships</li> <li>- active role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey</li> </ul>
2	Active role of the governmental institutions of Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- activities of TIKA and other institutions</li> </ul>
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scholarships</li> <li>- recognition of diplomas</li> <li>- student exchange</li> </ul>

The interviewed governmental officials indicated that the religious practices were allowed and not prohibited by the Macedonian state. The Macedonian Constitution guarantees the religious freedom. In this context, *Turkey is giving assistance* on the request of the Islamic Union of Macedonia to Muslim groups in the field of religion in various form. It was reported that this support was provided in form of appointment of chaplains to the regions where Muslims inhabited in dense, organization of religious conferences, distribution of religious books, some religious services as fatwa, organization of religious cultural events and programs, restoration of historical monuments etc. As an example the following activities can be cited: 8 chaplains appointed in the regions where majority of ethnic Turks or Muslims live. Additionally, religious books and publications were distributed to the ethnic Turks and minorities in order to help them learn the religious principle with its original version. Support was given in organization of some religious theaters especially in Valondava region, organization of approximately 20 religious conferences, giving religious fatwa, providing

support to historical religious institutions inherited from the period of Ottoman Empire, their restoration, for example restoration of the Dukancik mosque, Mustafa pasha mosque etc. Beside religious education and giving religious information some cultural events were held like concerts and religious programs.

Apart from the activities listed above, there were *joint projects done in the area of religion* also. The meeting organized by the Balkan Macedonian Eurasian Islamic Council, which brought together the heads of the religions administrations of the Balkan countries was pointed as one of the most striking examples. It was highlighted that this meeting contributed in detecting the common religious ideas of the religious leaders in the Balkans. This found expression in the statement of one of the governmental officials. He said that “[Our primary objective is] to bring together the heads of religious administrations in the Balkans and to produce collective ideas and joint projects”.

On the other hand, Turkey also contributes in a great deal in *training the clergy* (din hocası, imam, müezzın) needed in Macedonia. It is reported that with this purpose every year nearly 5 to 10 scholarships are allocated for those who wants to be educated in the Faculty of Theologies in Turkey. In this context, it was reported that there were many students from Macedonia studying in Kayseri Germirli religious school. The active role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey in this regard cannot be under estimated. It is evident that the support and assistance given to Macedonia in the field of education is through the governmental agencies.

The second theme identified was *the active role of the governmental institutions of Turkey in Macedonia*. There were several governmental institutions assisting the reforms in Macedonia and foster the collaboration between the two countries. Among them TİKA is an institution which carried out a number of cooperation projects in a countries where Turks and relative communities live. The services provided by TİKA are generally need oriented in line with the demands of the non-governmental organizations, related to the infrastructure building project based work, improving the physical conditions of the schools, reparation and supply of the equipment (desks and chairs) needed. The success of projects realized by TİKA in terms of support for local producers outside of the field of education is remarkable. For example some of them are: in regard to honey production and apple breeding (the shortage of cold storage), there are studies of TİKA on some problems occurred during the honey production since the negligence of the local administration units of the Ministry of Agriculture. The difficulties are as follows: marketing, packaging, patenting, export and establishment of laboratory. The educational activities carried out by Turkey in Macedonia are done in coordination with other national institutions of Turkey such as Ministry of National Education, Student Selection and Placement Center, Higher Education Council and etc. There are

contributions of some foundations and non-governmental organizations in providing scholarships and creation of housing facilities for the students also. It is reported that there were expert visits and in-service training organized between the institutions apart the area of education as well, for example between Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, and Court of Auditors.

The third theme was labeled *internationalization*. Different aspects of internationalization was expressed. Attention was drawn especially to the *scholarships granted by Turkey* to Macedonia. The number of these scholarships were considered as sufficient. Additionally, there were comments on not having any strategies determining the allocation of the scholarships. It was noted that there were scholarships given to the Macedonian students by some non-governmental Turkish organizations also. Further, it was expressed the importance of *the recognition of the diplomas* issued by the educational institutions of both countries. In this context, it was emphasized that the agreement signed in 1998 between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia on recognition of diplomas given at associate, bachelors, masters and doctorate degree, at primary to doctorate level, constitute the legal basis of the cooperation. There were complaints regarding the problems in implementation of *student exchange programs* between the two countries. Most of them agreed on the need of finding solution to this problem. Nevertheless, it was reported that there were nearly 450 students from Turkey studying in different Macedonian universities, who made material and moral contribution to Macedonian higher education.

#### ***4.2.2.5 Opinions of the Turkish academicians in Macedonia***

The main theme revealed by the data from the interviews with the Turkish academicians in Macedonia was named internationalization, which was presented in Table 4.41 below.

Table 4.41

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Academicians*

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1	Internationalization - scholarships - the agreements signed between the educational institutions - student exchange problems

The main theme emerged in the interview with the Turkish academicians serving in the universities in Macedonia was *internationalization*. As the Turkish governmental officials the academicians also evaluated allocation of scholarships, implementation of student exchange, signing of cooperation agreements between the educational institutions of both countries, but from different points. For example Turkish academicians expressed their wishes

that Turkey provide *scholarships* not only to the students who are studying in Turkey, but also for those who are studying in Macedonia. It is believed that such procedure could be a solution for preventing the brain drain. Further, academicians gave some detailed information about the students who came from Turkey to study in Macedonia. According to their opinion students coming from Turkey are generally students with low level of achievement (who obtained low university entrance examination score), their aim is just to get a diploma and to postpone the military service rather than to recognize the Balkans.

When we look at the level of attainment of the students that come to this country, it is possible to deduce that a large proportion of these students are either below the level of aptitude in the student selection examination or they do not have any proper exam results. I have to stress that this applies to a majority, albeit the exceptions, they come to this country with the mere thought of getting a diploma. This certainly lowers the quality of education and a lower quality reflects upon other areas in a negative way.

Academicians have emphasized the importance of *the agreements signed between the educational institutions* of both countries. It was reported that cooperation agreements are signed approximately with 6 universities in Turkey, among them are Kırıkclareli University, Istanbul University, Sakarya University, Ankara University, Gazi University, and Trakya University. It was stated that the main purpose of these cooperation is primarily provision of faculty members (according to the regulation of Higher Education Council article 39). In fact, it is expressed that Turkey have supported Macedonian universities with faculty members also. For example, in accordance to Joint Cultural Commission Decision of the Ministry of National Education of Turkey there were two lecturers appointed in Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Turcology department.

Besides that some of the academicians criticized that Macedonian universities are acting passively in establishing cooperation with Turkish universities. Despite that, academicians agreed that the bilateral agreements signed with Turkish educational institutions, have an impact on the structural and functional characteristics of the Macedonian universities. In this regard, they admitted that some of the Macedonian universities take as a model some programs of the Turkish universities or spent efforts to make necessary arrangements for accreditation by Higher Education Council of Turkey.

On the other hand, due to structural differences among the educational systems of both countries, it was highlighted that, *student exchange programs* in the framework of Erasmus could not be implemented, instead trips to Turkey were organized.

In the context of the Erasmus program, the students are required to study abroad or at least 1 semester. In order for us to execute this 1 semester abroad requirement, the reciprocal departments in the receiving universities ought to be offering the relevant subjects in English. We have not been able to find the corresponding subjects offered in English since these are state universities. Thus our visits to these universities remained as mere excursions.

Academicians reported that due to these differences in the educational system the protocol signed between the two countries could not be applied in practice.

**4.2.2.6 Opinion of the representative of Turkish association in Macedonia (Yunus Emre Cultural Center)**

The interview was conducted with the representative of the Turkish association in Skopje. The theme emerged in this interview was labeled **internationalization**, which was presented in Table 4.42 below. From the interview it was understood that Yunus Emre Cultural Center has been playing a significant role and contributed to the process of internationalization.

Table 4.42

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- collaboration activities</li> <li>- emphasis on research</li> <li>- translation of some books</li> <li>- scholarship opportunities</li> </ul>

Compared to Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians, the representative of Turkish association drew attention to the **collaboration activities** of the Cultural Center with the various universities in Macedonia. It was reported that within the framework of the task of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center, a contact was established with different departments of the Macedonian universities. **Academic communication** emerged as another form of internationalization. It was stated that there were a close cooperation on continuous exchange of ideas and opinions between the Cultural Center and the educational institutions. Further, it was highlighted **the importance of research activities**. It was expressed that, Cultural Center provides a rich library with diversified scientific publications, books and promotional materials for the use of those who are closely interested in research. It was indicated that in the library there are also first-hand reachable videos on Turkey, Turkish language and Turkish culture also. Additionally it was expressed that all kinds of efforts will be spent to ensure the necessary needs of the researchers.

Even support was given for **the translation of some books** about Turkey and by making them available for the use of those who are interested. Also, supports were given to ensure the delivery of some books by the request of the interested parties.

Of course this support is largely done in a direct way, for example we did not give financial support for the publication of a book, because, this is a very long and

complicated process, but what is doing our Center, a printed book, related to Turkey, Turkish or Turkish culture, for example, the books of our authors are translated into local languages in the country, we buy them and place into our library or we make sure to deliver them to those who are interested.

Additionally, support was given to the students or academicians who wants to study or do researches on Turkey. In this regard, by contacting with the related universities in Turkey an opportunities were provided to the students to live in Turkey approximately 6 months or to study at least one semester in Turkish universities.

Besides, allocation of *scholarship* was another important activity mentioned in the interview. It was stated that a monthly scholarships of 50 Euro are awarded to 5 college students who are studying in the universities' Turcology departments or Turkish language and literature departments and need financial support.

Apart from this, the scholarship support you mentioned is a responsibility fully bestowed upon us – a duty. We are obliged to provide monthly stipend of 50 Euros to 5 students each chosen from among those that study in Turcology departments of these universities.

#### **4.2.3 The rationales behind Turkey’s practices in Higher Education towards Macedonia**

##### ***4.2.3.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials***

In order to bring a better description on the rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education towards Macedonia the opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials were also sought. In the interviews with this group two main themes were prominent, which are listed as political and academic rationales, each presented in Table 4.43.

Table 4.43

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Political rationales - to eliminate some prejudices against Turkey - the promotion of Turkey in the region
2	Academic rationales - mutual visits to educational institutions - promoting Turkish language

The first theme was identified as *political rationales*. Macedonian governmental officials related this rationale with strengthening and promoting the national identity. Recent developments in the bilateral relations between the two countries found reflection on the educational activities between the two countries. It was emphasized that the activities carried out by Turkey helped *to eliminate some prejudices existed about Turkey*, due to its Ottoman

past. It was stated that all these efforts and activities in the field of education served as an effective tool which enable people living in Macedonia to change their perceptions about Turkey. Additionally, the Macedonian governmental officials expressed that these educational activities at the same time contributed to ***the promotion of Turkey in the region***. It was stated that through these educational activities, Turkey has become more active in the Balkans. This opinion was confirmed by the following statements.

...it probably effects in a positive way, because all these events enables Turkey to be more active in the Balkans and the fact that Macedonia is an actor in Turkey constituted an advantage and it laid down the groundwork. This situation is reflected in the area of education, higher education and on the basis of universities, it is both beneficial for the staff and providing expertise as a result of in-service-training on the one hand and on the other the students are also able to go on excursions and follow different programs.

The second theme highlighted in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials was labeled ***as academic rationales***. This rationale was associated with the ***mutual visits of the academicians and students***, organized in the framework of the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries. It was expressed that these visits have positive effect on Macedonian educational system, form a basis Macedonia to be an actor in the mutual relations, provide an advantage for to improve the academic cadres in the universities, and helps students to gain an experience. The participants admitted that Turkey has an important role in ***promoting Turkish language*** in Macedonia as well.

In order to improve the Turkish language [education], at least Turkey is being familiarized... you know, Turkey was introduced in a different and rather negative manner by the former communist regime. The conditions are different today, but in any case, the students that go and study in Turkey, view Turkey differently.

#### ***4.2.3.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians***

The main theme emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians was defined as political rationales, which was presented in Table 4.44. The data from the interview revealed that the academicians as the governmental officials thought that the main reason behind Turkey's educational activities in Macedonia was ***political one***.

Table 4.44

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1	Political rationales - to eliminate the existing prejudices against Turkey - promotion of Turkey and Turkish language in the region

Academicians also linked political rationale with the prejudices existing against Turkey. As it is stated in the introduction part of this study Turkey attaches great importance

to the Balkans countries for variety of reasons. For this purpose, it initiated variety of activities for assisting these countries in different fields. Turkey in that sense uses the educational activities for strengthening its relations with the Balkans. Naturally, the growing role of Turkey's policy in the region would annoy some circles, which in turn would cause some biases. Education can be assumed as an effective instrument in combating with the prejudices in this respect. Thus, it was observed that most of academicians indicated that as a result of the educational activities carried out by Turkey it has been possible *to eliminate these prejudices*. They admitted that these activities have positive influence in creating of awareness, which led to change in public opinion towards Turkey. Academicians assumed that at the same time Turkey through these educational activities has been transferring its experiences gained in the field of education to Macedonia. They believed that thanks to these educational activities there have been a lot of things to learn from Turkey. Academicians expressed this view in the following sentence.

We have to learn from Turkey and not only Macedonia, Turkey help too much in Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina to build this state capacity in military forces, diplomacy in economy, in education, everything, why not to use this model, we could not rely to Mexico or to Brazil, because there is nothing to bring from Brazil or Mexico, but we could rely to Turkey, because we were a part of this Empire by centuries and why not now in new fashion in twenty first century to have a good relation, not as a let say Empire, colonial relation, but with very good partnership relations, so I think always Balkan country have to build on new partnership with Turkey.

Academicians said that besides the benefits provided to the Macedonian education system, the educational activities carried out by Turkey contributed to the *promotion of Turkey and Turkish language* in the region as well.

#### ***4.2.3.3 Opinions of the representatives of the Macedonian associations in Macedonia***

The representatives of the Macedonian association, like the other groups: the governmental officials and academicians emphasized that the *political rationale* was behind the activities carried out by Turkey towards Macedonia. This rationale was presented in Table 4.45 below.

Table 4.45

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the representatives of the Macedonian Association*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1	Political rationale - to ensure the peace in the Balkans

In the interview it was stressed that Turkey is the only country that offers unconditional support in every sphere to Balkan countries, as long as they live in peace, in brotherhood, in a deserved living conditions. The reflections of these opinions were seen in all kin communities in surrounding countries. *The peace in the region* is very important. This opinion is exemplified by the following quotations.

The political relations are important at this point. Turkey's view on Macedonia is well-known, it is the first country that recognized its independence and is the only country that gratuitously offers its support in every way and under any condition. Other countries also invest in Macedonia, support it, but they invariable do these in seek of reciprocation. Whenever or whatever support Turkey gives to Macedonia, that is without the expectation of reciprocation. Turkey says 'it is enough that you should live here in calm, in brotherhood and at a standard of living that is becoming of our brothers. That is what Turkey expects and overt politics is important. That is what we observe in the recent past. This has important repercussions before other communities of our kinship and Macedonians, and not just Turks. We can observe these very repercussions in the neighboring countries and not just in Macedonia.

#### 4.2.3.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia

The interview data revealed three main themes, which are political rationale, social and cultural and academic rationale. These themes were presented in Table 4.46 below.

Table 4.46

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish governmental Officials in Macedonia*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy</li> <li>- multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia / existence of ethnic Turks</li> <li>- to ensure the rights of ethnic Turks</li> <li>- elimination of the available prejudices</li> <li>- increasing the prestige and the image of Turkey in the region</li> </ul>
2	Social and cultural rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical ties</li> <li>- religious education</li> <li>- contribution of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey</li> <li>- cultural interaction</li> </ul>
3	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- infrastructure support for better educational conditions</li> <li>- mutual visits/gaining experience</li> <li>- support to Turkish education</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged in the interview with the Turkish governmental officials was *the political rationale*. This rationale was associated with *the foreign policy*. For example, governmental officials described their main presence in Macedonia as foremost coordinating the political, economic and trade relations, arranging at all level the bilateral official visits between the two countries.

***Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia*** is a factor that is closely related to the political rationale. As it is stated in the previous parts, in Macedonia there were different ethnic groups like Albanians, Bosnians, Turks, Roma, living all together. It is expressed that the ethnic Turks living in Macedonia are seen as decisive factors affecting the bilateral relations between the two countries. It is evident also that their presence have a great impact on the educational activities carried out by Turkey. In this regard, especially the activities as organizing of Turkish courses by TIKA cannot be underestimated. The main aim was cited as the expansion of Turkish, opening of Turkish classes in the schools and by this way ***to ensure the rights of ethnic Turks*** for having education in their mother tongue.

But the main goal here is to endear Turkish, at least to raise Turkish to the level to be able to speak and write, after that to be instrumental to open Turkish classes in the schools. In other words, as the number of the students increase, as the number of the learning Turkish increase, giving Turkish courses in the schools came to the agenda of the schools and the parents were requesting from the schools board's, and they according to the law are forced to open Turkish classes.

Another factor closely related to the political rationale affecting the educational activities is supposed to be the ***elimination of the available prejudices***.

So, in the first plan the educational activities are very important, then cultural activities, for instance for years here in the Balkans in Macedonia the history was taught in a distorted way, that Ottomans have come here as a colony, barbarians, that they occupied the people and the places here, the history books were written with very different understandings.

Additionally, it was stated that teaching Turkish, TV series broadcasting in Macedonian channels, trips or official visits done at all levels, various conferences held etc., all of these activities contributed for increasing ***the prestige of Turkey in the region***. Further, it was indicated also that the cooperation in the field of education were adding something to the ***rising image of Turkey*** in the Balkans.

As the second important theme revealed by the data was ***the social and cultural rationales***. Governmental officials stated that education is a significant tool for reinforcing the relations between the two countries. Further, they underlined that having ***historical ties*** with Macedonia makes it more attractive.

Macedonia, as being former Ottoman land, the existence of the high school that Ataturk graduated from, many other valuable authors, poets and statesman, in terms of being ancestral land is a very attractive place.

Moreover, the officials linked this rationale to the ***religion education***. The religion education was highlighted as a driving force for the activities implemented in Macedonia. According to them, the main reason for giving religion education in Macedonia are the Muslims, especially the Muslims living in the villages in some region of East Macedonia, who were deprived from religion education for a long time. It was emphasized that ***the contribution***

*of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey* in form of appointment of chaplain, support with religious publications (Holy Quran, Prophet's life, the basic religious knowledge, religious calendar etc), realizing sacrifice of animals by proxy, organizing religious conferences, religious theaters and etc were worth mentioning.

Naturally it is obvious that these educational activities carried out by Turkey contributed to the **cultural interaction**. This was expressed by the following sentences.

The diversity in educational programs, contributes primarily to the increase in the cultural dialogue. Through mutual visits the students have an opportunity to know each other and to get information about the sister school' country.

The participation of the Macedonian students in a variety of cultural events held in Turkey like 23 April (Children's Day) and 19 May (Youth and Sport Day), provide mutual benefits for both countries in terms of cultural sharing. It gives an opportunity for gaining cultural interaction and experience as well.

The students studying in Turkey having information about Turkey, when they returned to their country knowing Turkey in a positive way is an important gain. On the other hand, the students coming to visit the sister school, going abroad at a young age and they get the opportunity to know a different culture directly.

The third theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was labeled as **academic rationales**. Actually, it was claimed that the educational activities carried by Turkey are with aim to support the education system of Macedonia. For example, it was indicated that the support given for the **infrastructure building** of the educational institutions resulted in **better educational conditions** for the students in the school buildings. This situation is illustrated by the following expression.

So support is given in order to have education in much healthier, more favorable environment, towards ensuring the physical conditions in order to students to do lessons in better and hot conditions.

Additionally, it was highlighted that the **mutual visits** organized by sister schools have given opportunities to Macedonian students to **gain an experience**. As it was noted in the previous section there were crucial problems faced in Turkish education in Macedonia. In the interviews it was pointed out that one of the reasons for giving **support to Turkish education** in Macedonia is not only providing Turkish textbooks to schools, but also because of the need to introduce Turkish language in accurate and better way.

#### **4.2.3.5 Opinions of the Turkish academicians in Macedonia**

Regarding the rationales behind the educational activities carried out by Turkey **political rationale** theme was one of the most prominent theme suggested by the data from the interviews done with the Turkish academicians who were working in the universities in Macedonia. This theme was detailed in Table 4.47.

Table 4.47

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in Macedonia*

No	Rationale
1	Political rationale - multiethnic structure of Macedonia / existence of the ethnic Turks - education as an instrument for strengthening the relations and ensuring the peace in the Balkans - increasing the image and prestige of Turkey, cultural promotion

Turkish academicians as the Turkish governmental officials associated the political rationale with the foreign policy. In this respect, they drew attention to the *multiethnic structure of Macedonia*. As it was stated in the introduction part of this study, one of reasons of Turkey to attach great importance to the Balkan countries was the existence of the ethnic Turks therein, which fact was valid for Macedonia also. Thus, academicians indicated that *the existence of the ethnic Turks* in Macedonia was one of the motives behind Turkey's educational policies organized in Macedonia. According to their opinion the education in Macedonia should be supported at least due to those cognates. The data obtained emphasized that the education can be used as an effective *instrument for strengthening the relations* between the two countries and to serve for ensuring further development of the *peace in the Balkans*. The following expressions of the academicians regarding the main mission of their institutions was noteworthy in this regard.

Its mission and vision are to strengthen the relations between Turkey and other Balkan countries, improve and expand the cultural richness, and coach the activities of education, science, culture, research and publication that will serve to improve democracy and peace in the Balkans, and that will enable the Balkan communities to reach more advanced levels. This is our mission. Basically it is to be able to appeal to the peoples of the Balkan countries.

From the above expression can be concluded that the purpose is to plan and develop bilateral cooperation and contribute to the development of the Balkans.

Besides that, academicians stated that another intention of Turkey for initiation of bilateral cooperation in the field of education with Macedonia was also increasing *the image and prestige of Turkey*, as well as to contribute for *the cultural pomotion of Turkey in the Balkans*. This was expressed in the following way:

Turkey's contribution is firstly in terms of recognition, the atmosphere of Turkey is as if different than when look it from here. You see Macedonian students were talking about Turkey, there is a great image of a country. Thus, there is a promotion in both prestige and cultural meanings.

**4.2.3.6 Opinion of the Turkish association official in Macedonia (Yunus Emre Cultural Center)**

The main themes identified in the interview with the representative of the Turkish association were *political and academic rationales*. These rationales were displayed in the Table 4.48 below.

Table 4.48

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association in Macedonia*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale - foreign policy of Turkey - existence of the Turkish minorities
2	Academic rationale - scientific activities - scholarships

As the Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians according to the representative of Turkish association in Macedonia the rationale behind Turkey's educational activities carried out in Macedonia was *political rationale*. This rationale as the other stakeholders group was linked with the foreign policy that Turkey pursues to the Balkans. In the interview the attention was drawn to the multiethnic structure of Macedonia. In this sense *the existence of the Turkish minorities* living in Macedonia were cited as the main factor affecting the bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia. The representative of Turkish association stated that “primarily, the Turkish community here are a minority group according to Macedonian laws, and that is why I use the term. This group is a group that we should cherish”.

In the interview, the representative emphasized the importance of teaching *Turkish language, Turkish culture and promotion of Turkey*. This opinion of the representative has been displayed in description of the main mission of the newly established Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Skopje. The purpose of the said Center was expressed by the following statement:

The authority and responsibility vested by law to these Cultural Centers are as the following: introducing the Turkish language and Turkish culture, strengthening the cultural relations in the local country, accelerating cultural exchange and following all scientific works that involve the concept of Turkey and thereby forming a bridge between Turkey and the host countries. The main purpose is to follow and support the scientific activities, publications and the state of Turkish language teaching – this is the main basis.

It was explained that, all activities were carried out within the framework of the mission defined above. In this context, the key objectives identified in the interview was the activities aiming strengthening of the cultural relations between the two countries, to promote Turkish language and culture and art, to follow all scientific activities related to Turkey and the concept Turkey with purpose to build a bridge between the two countries and of course to support and perform scientific activities. The above-mentioned activities can be associated both with *the political and academic rationales*. Political rationales are closely related to the foreign policy, while academic rationales as in this case mentioned above have much more inclination on call for more attention *to scientific activities*. In the interview strong emphasis was given on the scholarships also. The representative of the Cultural Center stated that the main rationales for giving the scholarships were firstly academic, then social-cultural, and of course economic. Further he commented that many students in Macedonia need financial support and explained that “naturally, the most important aspect is the academic and sociocultural facts that pertain to these...apart from this, the students are in need of much economic support that is what we observe”.

#### 4.2.4 The expectations of different stakeholders in Macedonia from Turkey

##### 4.2.4.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials

The main theme emerged regarding the expectations of the Balkan countries in relation to higher education was the theme named *internationalization*. This theme was detailed in Table 4.49 below. The participants stated that the Turkey's educational activities met the expectations of Macedonian side at large.

Table 4.49

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- diploma recognition (diplomas from religious high schools)</li> <li>- mobility of the students (promotion of Turkey and Turkish universities, teaching Turkish)</li> <li>- demands for increase of the number and the amount of the scholarships</li> <li>- support with academic staff and training materials</li> <li>- mutual exchange of information between the two countries</li> </ul>

In the interview with the Macedonian governmental officials some aspects of the internationalization such as diploma recognition, student mobility, support with academic staff and training materials have been prominent.

Complaints have been expressed regarding the diplomas of the students graduated from the religious high schools (imam hatip lisesi) in Turkey. It is said that these diplomas are not recognized by Macedonian education authorities. This situation was interpreted as a main

problem, which should be addressed immediately, since there were many students graduated from religious schools in Turkey willing to study in Macedonia. For example, it was reported that currently, there were many students from Turkey who are studying in Balkan university in Skopje, in the university in Stip, in the University of Tetovo etc. Therefore, ***resolving the problem related to the recognition of the diplomas of the religious schools*** (imam hatip liseleri) came to the fore as one of the major expectations. There were comments that the first attempt for solving this issue should come from Turkish side, Turkish Ministry of National Education. As one of the participants argued “this personally should be discussed with a team between the Turkish Ministry of Education and Macedonian Ministry of Education”. Further, he emphasized the importance of this issue to be addressed very urgently since it may also cause a problem for the Macedonian students studying in Turkey.

It need to be urgently addressed, but this can do only by the Ministry of Education, because we can not do anything more here. And this is consequently Turkey's problem, we are here Turks, but we are taking place under the Macedonian Government, it is not our responsibility to bring up so much the Turkey's problem, of course we are ready to give support when needed, we will give whatever need, but this initiative should be done by Turkey's Ministry of Education. This causes problems to the Turkish citizens, and for our students studying in Turkey.

The second important aspect of internationalization focused on the interviews was ***student mobility***. As it is known the purpose in student mobility is to provide an opportunity for the students at graduate or undergraduate level to study in the universities abroad for a certain period of time, one or more semesters. The expectations were expressed for giving priority on increasing the mobility of the students between the two countries and to work on ***developing and strengthening the collaboration between the educational institutions***. The expressions on this regard were as followings:

I think that priority could be increasing the mobility of the students between our countries, because not on the programs that we have on Turkish here, but on the technical programs and we have to work to strength that collaboration and make good base for developing such cooperation. In the first stage increasing mobility between two countries, then working with the third part on mutual project and find such financial sources for developing such collaboration.

From the interview it is understood that not only ethnic Turks, but also Macedonian and Albanian students were also eager to study in Turkey. In this respect, it was requested that a conferences be held on ***promoting Turkey and Turkish universities*** and organization of ***Turkish courses***. Students quota allocated by Turkey to Macedonia and scholarships were identified as prominent factors affecting the student mobility between the two countries. The student quota allocated to Macedonia by Turkey is found to be sufficient, while the number of the scholarship is found to be insufficient. Thus, an increase in the number and in the amount of the scholarship was requested.

Besides the expectations on increasing the mobility of the students, there were expectation on giving *support with academic teaching staff and training materials*. All participants emphasized the importance of giving in-service training and seminars for the teachers including also those involved in Turkish education. There have been demands for support on training materials such as Turkish-Macedonian and Macedonian -Turkish dictionary also.

Additionally, it was emphasized that *the mutual exchange of information* between the educational institutions of both countries *should be encouraged*. Thus, it was demanded that the educational authorities of both countries mutually inform each other about the developments and implementations in the field of education in their own countries.

#### 4.2.4.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians

As the Macedonian governmental officials Macedonian academicians also stated that the educational activities carried out by Turkey met the expectations of the Macedonian side at large extent. Thus, they expressed their satisfaction in this regard. The data obtained from the interview with the Macedonian academicians suggested two main theme, these were labeled as the expectations regarding the aspects of the internationalization and the assistance to be provided to Macedonian educational institutions in various forms. These themes were presented in Table 4.50 below.

Table 4.50

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Aspects of internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- exchange of students and academic staff</li> <li>- mutual recognition of the educational systems</li> </ul>
2	Different form of assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- human resource support</li> <li>- support in form of teaching materials</li> <li>- provision of guidance for the elimination of the prejudices</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians was named as *the aspects of internationalization*. During the internationalization process the objectives of the educational institutions are establishment of international linkages. Among the purposes for such linkages was cited the academic mobility. As it is stated in the previous sections, academicians determined *the exchange of students and academic staff* as top priority in cooperation between the educational institutions. Academicians complained of not being able to realize the exchange programs between the educational institutions due to several reasons as structural difference of the educational systems, differences in grading system etc.

It was desired that some measures be taken for eliminating these differences in order to initiate the exchange process. In this respect, there were expectations expressed on *mutual recognition of the educational systems* of both countries and consequently the realization of the *exchange of students and academic staff* as soon as possible. There were a desire to have much more students from Turkey. It was emphasized that in order to attract more students from Turkey accreditation of the Macedonian universities to YÖK is required. One of the participants stated that “recognition of diplomas, this YÖK accreditation is precondition”.

The second theme emerged was named *different form of assistance* to be given to Macedonia educational institutions. The interview data revealed different forms of assistance expected by the Macedonian academicians. The first one stated by them was the assistance expected for providing of *human resource support*. Concrete demands in this respect were expressed. For example, especially for the students in the departments of medicine, it was requested to be organized summer practice in the faculties of medicine in Turkey. Additionally, the support was expected also to fulfill the teacher shortages in Turkish education in Macedonia. It was emphasized that this problem could be solved in cooperation by the Ministries of Education of both countries. The demands were conveyed for appointment of teachers for a period of five years in various branches from Turkey to the schools providing Turkish education in Macedonia in order to improve the Turkish language of the students in the underdeveloped regions of Macedonia.

The second form of assistance that was requested by the academicians was the support provided in form of *teaching materials*. The expectations from Turkey regarding the needs of Turkish Language and Literature Departments of the universities were expressed, to illustrate, providing of Turkish dictionary.

The third form of assistance was named *provision of guidance for the elimination of the prejudices* existing in the textbooks against Ottomans and Turkish people. There were serious expectations by the Macedonian educators for taking concrete serious steps by Turkey in this regard. According to them these prejudices should be removed from the textbooks, since that this situation was annoying ethnic Turks living in the region.

#### ***4.2.4.3 Opinions of the Macedonian association representatives in Macedonia***

The representatives of the Macedonian associations as the other stakeholder groups (Macedonian governmental officials and the Macedonian academicians) stated that the activities organized by Turkish side in the field of education meet the expectations of the Macedonian side. The themes emerged regarding the expectations of them were determined as *cultural and social support and problems in Turkish education*. These themes were detailed in the Table 4.51 below.

Table 4.51

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations*

No	Themes
1	Cultural and social support - religious education - teaching Turkish language and Turkish culture
2	Problems in Turkish education - shortages in teacher training branches

The representatives linked the cultural and social support theme to the religious education and learning Turkish language. As noted in the previous section, Macedonia has multiethnic structure. Securing the unity and solidarity between the ethnic groups in Macedonia is very important. The people in Macedonia had experienced serious problems in the past, therefore chaos and turmoil was not desirable anymore. The representatives emphasized the role of *the religious education* in ensuring the unity and solidarity between different religious groups. They conveyed their demand for increasing the quota allocated to Macedonia for studying in the religious school and faculties of theology in Turkey. It was the greatest desire of the Muslims students in Macedonia. The following sentence was the expression of this expectation.

An important study, useful study, increasing the quota, and within taking into account the female students, being studied as imam preaches and having theological education in Turkey is one of the most important expectation of the Macedonian Turks and Macedonian Muslims.

It has been expected that quota for study in the faculties of theology would be allocated for the other communities living in Macedonia such as Albanians and Bosniaks. They believed that providing opportunities for the Albanians students would contribute to the unity and solidarity between the different Muslim groups.

Apart from the religious education, the representatives of Macedonian associations drawn attention to the importance of *teaching Turkish language*. They explained that there were areas in Macedonia for example in Kircova region, Radika, Struga and villages around it, where Turkish compatriots, Pomaks, Torbesh, have forgotten their Mother tongue, Turkish language. Therefore, organizing of Turkish courses in this region would be useful. The following sentences confirm this opinion.

But what we are suggesting is that it is beneficial and necessary to increase the number of Turkish language courses intended to educate the people of our kinship who have long forgotten Turkish, called Pomaks, Torbeshi who numbered over 30 thousand living mainly in this region, in West Macedonia, in Kirchova and in its environment, then in 15-17 villages across Radika, then in Struga and in the vilages around Struga, these are our kinsmen who have forgotten Turkish, and in the vilages nearby where Turks live.

Another theme suggested by the data from the interview with the representatives was ***the problems related to Turkish education***. It was stated that a serious shortages were faced in Teacher Training branches like matematik, fizik, chemistry, biology, geography. There were opinions that the students should be directed mainly to these branches. It is expected that, by appointing of the students graduated from Turkey in the above mentioned branches to the schools in Eastern Macedonia could be possible to overcome the teacher shortages in these branches.

#### ***4.2.4.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia***

The Turkish governmental officials were asked to evaluate the expectations of the Macedonian side in the field of education. According to their opinions the educational activities provided by Turkey were satisfied and meet the expectations in the Macedonia. ***Current problems in Turkish education*** was the main theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials regarding the expectations of the Macedonia in the field of education from Turkey. This theme was presented in the Table 4.52 below.

Table 4.52

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1	Current problems in Turkish education - dissemination of Turkish language - providing teaching materials and textbooks - teacher shortages

The expectations were expressed for finding solution for the problems faced in Turkish education. It is advised that priority be given for expanding of Turkish language in the areas where ethnic Turks doesn't know very well Turkish. In this context, it was requested that support be given to the schools in these regions in form of ***providing teaching materials and textbooks***.

The most urgent thing to do in Turkey or the most urgent need is to register in our school textbooks the fact that in the Balkans, there are Turks and Muslim brothers' still living in these lands, especially from which the Ottomans withdrew long ago.

Another problem faced in Turkish education that was indicated in the interviews was ***teacher shortages***. By taking into account this situation governmental officials emphasized that the student who were graduated from high schools in Macedonia and who want to study in Turkish universities or wishing to study in the universities in Macedonia should be directed to the branches where the shortages were evident such as mathematics, physics, geography and Turkish language. Additionally, it was requested that priority to be given for teaching the vocational courses in Turkish education, and support to be given especially by bringing some experts from Turkey in this regard.

## 4.2.5 The practices undertaken by Macedonia in order to enhance cooperation in Higher Education with Turkey

### 4.2.5.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials

*Activities for solving the problems in Turkish education* was the main theme revealed by the interview data. This theme was presented in the Table 4.53 below.

Table 4.53

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	Activities for solving the problems in Turkish education - Unit established within the Ministry for Minorities of Macedonia for solving the problems of the ethnic Turks

Although there were opinions that Macedonian side was acting a little bit slowly, it was noted that there were some efforts spent by Macedonian side to enhance the relations and cooperation among the educational institutions. This situation was illustrated by the following expression:

In order to enhance, I think, both sides in my opinion we have to promote that collaboration and maybe force Turkish side, because Turkey is such a big country and so many other countries has interest to collaborate with Turkey. So, we have to be so more demanding as a country and to promote developing of such collaboration with Turkey. In my opinion we are a bit passive in that way of promoting that collaboration.

As it is stated in the previous parts of this study, Macedonia like Kosovo is a multi-ethnic state. It was mentioned also that the existence of the ethnic Turks in Macedonia is an important factor affecting not only the political relations but also the relations in the field of education between the two countries. In the interviews, it was expressed that there were studies made aiming to solve the educational, cultural and economic problems of the ethnic groups and to provide an opportunities for using their rights stemming from the constitution of Macedonia. In this sense, giving emphasis on the Turkish education it was indicated that an efforts were spent also to *solve the problems in Turkish education*. It was explained that, *a unit within the Ministry of State was established* in this regard and that all issues concerning Turkish minorities were carried out via this unit. Among the activities of this Ministry was the organization of a large-scale Macedonia-Turkey business forums, of which the first one was organized in May 2009 in Ohrid. The main purpose of these forums was described as to solve the educational problems and to improve the economic situation of the Turks living in Macedonia. It was stated also that the Ministry for Minorities of Macedonia contributes not only to the development of the relations between the two countries, but at the same time plays an important role in strengthening the educational relations with Turkey.

#### 4.2.5.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians

The theme emerged in the interview with the Macedonian academicians was named *internationalization*. This theme was presented in the Table 4.54 below.

Table 4.54

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - student mobility - accommodation of the foreign students - accreditation of the Macedonian universities to YOK

This theme was associated with the student mobility and the accreditation of the universities. *Student mobility* can be analyzed from two points: first, attracting international students and second, encouraging of the students to study abroad. In the interviews the opinions were concentrated mainly on sending students to study in Turkey and the emphasis was given on the efforts spent for increasing the number of the students quota allocated by Turkey to Macedonia. The academicians mentioned about the initiatives made within the Ministry of National Education of Turkey for increasing this quota. It was reported that as a result of these initiatives the quota has been increased. This situation was evaluated as a serious and a long term step, which was believed to affect positively the relations between the two countries in the field of education.

Apart from the above, it was stated that a great importance was given to the foreign students coming to study in Macedonia also. Academicians expressed their will to have more international students in their universities. It was reported that measures were taken for solving the problems that foreign students face with during their studies in Macedonia. For example, *the accommodation of the foreign students* was determined as one of the problems faced by the universities in Macedonia. The academicians explained that studies were made in this regard to solve this problems by providing some facilities for accommodation of the foreign students, who were studying in the universities in Macedonia.

On the other hand, attention was drawn also about *the accreditation* of the Macedonian universities to Higher Education Council of Turkey. For example, it was reported that Tetovo University in Macedonia was applied to Higher Education Council for accreditation. It is believed that by this it will be possible to attract much more students from Turkey.

#### ***4.2.5.3 Opinions of the representatives of the Macedonian associations***

In the interviews it was mentioned about some attempts for determining the needs and problems in the field of Turkish education, but these attempts were not specified.

#### ***4.2.5.4. Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia***

The data revealed that Turkish governmental officials working in various Turkish institutions acting in Macedonia have played a decisive role in shaping the educational relations between the two countries. Officials stated that they intermediate between the Ministry of National Education of Turkey and the schools and the universities in Macedonia, which requested assistance for example in supplying of textbooks and school materials.

### **4.2.6 The rationales behind Macedonia's practices to realize cooperation in Higher Education with Turkey**

#### ***4.2.6.1 Opinions of the Macedonian governmental officials***

Regarding the research question written above in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials two main themes emerged, which academic and economic rationales are presented in Table 4.55 below.

Table 4.55

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Macedonian Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Academic rationales - the quality of the education in Turkey - joint study programs - improving teaching methods
2	Economic rationales - transfer experiences - positive impact of the economic relations on educational relations - training personnel

Interview data revealed as the first theme the ***academic rationales***. The governmental officials expressed the academic rationale as one of the main rationales for realizing the cooperation with Turkey in the field of higher education. The educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia were positively evaluated. The Turkish education system was considered as very successful. It was emphasized that Turkey was preferable country for education by the Macedonian students, namely since ***the quality of education in Turkey***.

Turkey has a very good education system, the quality of the education is much better than the average people thinking in Macedonia and I was privately really surprised how good is the quality and how strict it is, how good it is.

The following sentences explained why the collaboration between the educational institutions between Turkey and Macedonia was so important for the Macedonian educators.

As I know till now we don't have any joint programs with Turkey at any level, so may be that will be the first step to start such collaboration between our universities and some universities in Turkey, especially with those that are estimated by world ranking list as best universities. So, taking the experience from them with such joint study programs will help to attract students from abroad from both side, who will graduate from such study programs.

The governmental officials believed that the educational relations between Macedonia and Turkey will contribute to the development of the *joint study programs* between the educational institutions of both countries.

Ministry has benefits that higher education is developing by such collaboration. It is important that they are supported and included in such cooperation that have big influence to their development..... In my opinion it's very important fact that they work on mutual activities and they could learn from each other and that they developed each other.

Additionally, it was emphasized that the developments of the curriculum have created a great advantage for mutual interaction and *improving the teaching methods in the universities* also.

The second theme emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials was *economic rationale*. Parallel to the educational relations the improvement of the economic relations between Turkey and Macedonia is desirable as well. According to the participants Turkish businessman should be encouraged to invest in Macedonia. It was indicated that by this way it will be possible to transfer Turkey's experiences to Macedonia, which will contribute to the development of Macedonia. Macedonian authorities expressed their desire to benefit from the experience of Turkey. In that sense, it was emphasized that the economic relations with Turkey have a positive reflection on the educational relations.

May be not state models but there are very big number of experts whose experience we could use and than to work over exchanging experience in the process of evaluation and accreditation of study programs, and there are continually improvements according to the market, because here we face with some interesting phenomenon that higher education by themselves find that they are those who has to be primary creators of the study programs and they don't like willingly to other factors from society to be part of creation of that study programs like employers, like authorities, like communities. That is very important in our times because their competence should be like that which would fit the society requirements and provide each individual for personal development.

It has been reported that, one of the key determinants in the development of Macedonia was *training of a personnel* needed in the labor market. The governmental officials emphasized that students studying in Turkey have greatly contributed to the development of Macedonia. They expressed their graduates to Turkey for supporting them in raising of skilled

and knowledgeable workforce. They expressed that the knowledge acquired by the students during their study in Turkey was seen to be sufficient in terms of job recruitment and enough to meet the manpower needs in Macedonia. It is claimed that students studying in Turkey were coming back with high level of competence. This comments further were strengthened by the following expression: “so it is very beneficial for Macedonia to have such students back in Macedonia, it is very good”.

#### ***4.2.6.2 Opinions of the Macedonian academicians***

In the interviews with the Macedonian academicians three themes emerged. These themes were identified as academic, political, cultural and social rationales, which are presented in Table 4.56 below.

Table 4.56

#### *Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Macedonian Academicians*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the cooperation between the educational institutions</li> <li>- opportunities for interaction between the students and faculty</li> <li>- student mobility in opposite direction from Turkey to Macedonia</li> </ul>
2	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy</li> <li>- elimination of prejudices</li> <li>- Ethnic Turks/prevention of assimilation</li> </ul>
3	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the historical and cultural ties</li> <li>- the presence of ethnic Turks</li> <li>- teaching Turkish language</li> </ul>

There were no any priority specified among the rationales emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians, But some of them cited the academic rationale as the most important rationale and ranked it in the first place while others gave priority to cultural and social rationale. The following sentences strengthen this opinion.

I think that education should come first, because development in a nation starts with education, and this is why education should be listed first and then history and culture can follow. You can observe that historical artifacts are abundant here, in fact you could say that the Turkish culture is maintained better here compared to Turkey. I believe we conserve the Turkish culture better here than Turkey since Turkey has started to modernize and to draw a different destiny for itself. But here, we cherish the Turkish culture in a different way, and perhaps what we refer to as “Ottoman” is originally kept here, as in its purest form.

As it was illustrated in the sentences above academic and cultural and social rationales were interrelated. There were no clear distinction made by the academicians between these

two rationales. The academicians linked the academic rationale to *the cooperation between the educational institutions*. They described the benefits obtained through the cooperation between the educational institutions in the following way:

Yes, of course we need that cooperation in order the students to have opportunity to finish their studies, because we are really short of staff...Well we are not sure, but there are more and more students interested each year from abroad. I think that it is increasing the popularity of the university.

Additionally they stated that this cooperation provide *opportunities for interaction between the students and faculty* from both countries. Academicians admitted that, the cooperation between universities provided opportunities for establishment of friendships between the students and connections with academicians from Turkey. In this sense it was stated that the interest towards Turkish education system has been increased recently. Academicians emphasized that the educational relations between the two countries have contributed for enhancing the quality of education in Macedonia and due to various reasons Turkish students also began to prefer the Macedonian universities. They drew attention to *the student mobility* which took place also in opposite direction, from Turkey to Macedonia. It was reported that there were a significant number of Turkish student studying in Macedonia. Academicians, aiming to strengthen the educational relations between the two countries, expressed their will to attract much more students from Turkey to study in Macedonia. In this respect, the importance of the accreditation by YÖK of the Macedonian universities were emphasized otherwise it is thought that the student mobility might be affected negatively. The following quotation exemplified this opinion.

...but negatively affect is not accreditation, because how could we provide that we have 240 European transfer credit ECTS if our diploma will not be recognized in Turkey, how we could do something more, so I told you, I'm sorry to be bad, but I think that this accreditation of YOK is very very important, if we solve this problem I'm very sure to say we will have more improvement, more intensive links, more intensive exchange of students and staff, without this we have no precondition to do all this.

Another theme emerged in the interviews regarding the research question stated above was the theme named *political rationale*. This rationale was strongly associated with *the foreign policy*. In the interviews Macedonian academicians stressed that the foreign policy followed by Turkey recently was very impressive. They reminded that Turkey was the first country to recognize the independence of Macedonia. Some of the academicians placed the political reasons as top priority. The following sentences confirms these opinions.

I told you, Ahmet Davutoğlu has one very good strategy, this is zero problems with the neighbors, which is the philosophy and the second part of his strategy is to get back to Balkans, of course not as Ottoman Empire, but in more modern fashion, as regional leading factor in Balkans and I don't see any other biggest power in the Balkans apart from Turkey...Rationale why, because we are two candidate country for

European Union, two cases, Turkey even started negotiation in 2005, we still not started. We could learn much more from Turkey as a negotiation country, Turkey is a member of NATO, we are still not, you know of course of the problem with Greece on name.

The academicians indicated positive opinions about Turkey, they mentioned about very friendly and brother relationships. According to them Turkey was as a great power in the region. They believed that Turkey can contribute in closing the deficiencies existed in Macedonian education. In addition, academicians stated that during the period of communism the relations between Turkey and Balkan countries were completely closed or interrupted. But, after the visits to Turkey, collaborations established between universities of both countries, recently have led to a change in the ideas and in the thinking of some groups about Turkey. It was expressed that *the prejudices* of these groups began to disappear. For example, it was noted that even Turkish films played in Macedonian TV channels have caused changing in the views of the people in Macedonia. It was indicated also that, thanks to the educational support given by Turkey to *Nomadic ethnic Turks* living in Eastern part of Macedonia, it has been able to *prevent them from assimilation*. It was emphasized that Turkey's strong policies towards Balkans increased the self-confidence of this group.

The data suggested as a third theme *cultural and social rationale*. Academicians linked this rationale with *the historical and cultural ties* existed between Turkey and Macedonia. Most of the academicians denoted historical ties and cultural and social relations as the main factors affecting positively the development of the cooperation between Macedonia and Turkey. They mentioned about the traditional links with Turkey stemming from the past and having common heritage from the history which affected the bilateral relations. Of of the participants expressed that “all of this I have already stress in my respond, tradition, culture, history they affect for sure”.

Migration, job opportunities and family ties were listed as another factors having an impact on the educational relations between the two countries. The following expression can be illustrated to confirm this view.

I think that immigration has great impact, because we have Turkish people that left Macedonia in 50's, so we have some students who came back to study here in Macedonia and learn Turkish, they know Macedonia from their homes. Business impacts is very little, but it is showing last years we have some students that are connected with some business here in Macedonia and they want to study because their parents work here and it is not direct but indirect.

*The presence of ethnic Turks* in Macedonia was cited also as an important factor affecting the relations between the two countries. It was indicated that special attention should be given to the ethnic Turks living in Eastern Macedonia who were tended to forget Turkish language. Therefore, the need of support of Turkey for *teaching Turkish language* to this

group was highlighted. It was mentioned that even Turkish films played in Macedonian TV channels contributed to learn Turkish language. In addition, Turkish courses organized by Yunus Emre Cultural Center and TIKA are seen as great opportunity for learning Turkish language.

#### ***4.2.6.3 Opinions of the representatives of the Macedonian associations***

Two main themes emerged in the interviews with the representatives of the Macedonian associations, which are cultural and social rationale and economic rationale. These themes were presented in Table 4.57 below.

Table 4.57

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Representatives of the Macedonian Associations*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
1	Cultural and social rationale - the presence of ethnic Turks - religious education
2	Economic rationale - raising skillful workforce for labor market in Macedonia

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the representatives of the Macedonian association was labeled as ***cultural and social rationale***. As in the interview with the Macedonian academicians ***the presence of the ethnic Turks*** in Macedonia gained importance. Ethnic Turks were indicated as one of the factors for cooperation with Turkey. It was stressed that the situation of the ethnic Turks living especially in Eastern part of Macedonia, in the rural villages and in the mountains, the number of which have been approximately 30 thousands, were deplorable, that they were illiterate and uneducated. In this context, the need of Turkey's support was emphasized. Besides that, it was expressed that the ethnic Turkish politicians involved in Macedonian government also have to take greater responsibility in terms of helping these peoples in that region. The importance of cooperation with Turkey in this regard was expressed as follows:

The tranquility of the entire region is important. If the Balkans are in tranquility and Macedonia is in tranquility, Turkey will be in tranquility much in the same way. We have a metaphor that suggests “if Ankara sneezes, Macedonia will cough”. Therefore, we need to have a common outlook and a common political understanding.

According to the representatives of the Macedonian associations cultural and social rationales come to fore in bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia. They emphasized the importance of the unity in mentality, tolerance and lifestyle outlook which have been brought by Ottomans to this region. Also, it was mentioned that especially teachers of theology, imams, preachers and orators graduated from

Turkey have very high reputation among the public in Macedonia.

As you have very well stated in your previous question, cultural ties, historical ties, common understanding and mindset are very important. In other words, the tolerance and flexible outlook on life, which were brought to this region by the Ottomans, are very important and people here cherish and yearn for these values. Therefore, receiving education from Turkey, and not only in the field of Divinity, makes a difference. In Macedonia, I reckon, the clergymen, the imams, the clerics and the preachers that studied Divinity are dearly respected by the public.

It was stated that to study theology in Turkey was a greatest expectation and appreciation among the people in Macedonia. Because, on this occasion they will have the opportunity to receive education in Turkish language also. This situation provides a great advantage for the Macedonian students who wants to receive religion education. In this meaning, the representatives of the Macedonian association attaches great importance to the *religious education in Macedonia*.

The second theme suggested by the data was named *economic rationale*. This rationale was associated with *raising of skillful workforce* needed in the labor market. In this context, it was expressed that Turkey contributed to the development of the Macedonian economy by giving opportunity for Macedonian students to study in Turkish universities. It was stated that Macedonia will surely benefit from the experiences gained by the students who graduated from Turkey. It was reported that the students graduated from Turkey are quite successful in finding job.

#### 4.2.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia

The research question on what are the rationales behind Macedonia's practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey was investigated from the point of the Turkish governmental officials working in Macedonia also. The interview data revealed two main themes which are cultural and social rationale and political rationale. These themes were detailed in Table 4.58.

Table 4.58

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in Macedonia*

No	Themes
1	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longstanding common history/the role of Turkish TV series</li> <li>- curiosity to learn Turkish language</li> <li>- the presence of ethnic Turks living in Macedonia/education level of the ethnic Turks</li> <li>- religious education/ historical symbols</li> </ul>
2	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy/recognition of the independence of Macedonia</li> <li>- the presence of ethnic Turks as an element of balance</li> </ul>

The first theme gained importance in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was *the cultural and social rationale*. Turkish governmental official cited several factors that impelled the Macedonia to cooperate with Turkey. Firstly, *longstanding common history* was indicated as one of these factors. It was emphasized that even *Turkish TV series* have been playing an important role in the relations between the two countries. It was expressed that Turkish TV series not only fostered the relations between Turkey and Macedonia, but also were managed to bring together the people by recalling the common shared past history. In this sense, the appreciation of the *Turkish TV series* was shown as one of the reason for interest towards Turkey. According to the participants these series aroused sympathy towards Turkey and curiosity to learn *Turkish language*. This issue was considered as an opportunity for Macedonian students to study in Turkey. The expressions below confirms the opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in this regard.

The Turkish language courses have become more popular as the high achieving students in these courses are awarded with field trips, including Turkey and even because of the increased scholarship opportunities in Turkish universities. This is why the demand and willingness to learn Turkish have multiplied in recent years.

The focus was given also on the *presence of the ethnic Turks* in the region. As the Macedonian academicians Turkish governmental officials also gave emphasis on the *education level of the ethnic Turks living in Macedonia*. It was expressed that the educational activities carried out by Turkey contributed to the increase of the educational level of these ethnic Turks and thus increased their self- confidence.

In the recent years, the number of visits are increasing both from here to Turkey and vice-versa. The foundations there are showing increased interest; the associations and businessmen are opening up new business venues here. Therefore, these relations are giving more confidence to Turks living here. Previously, they felt like they were left all by themselves, doomed to solitude and forgotten. In the recent past, however, the level of cooperation and education is further increasing in parallel to the rising prestige of Turkey, due to the services accomplished by TIKA hereabouts, and because of the intensified social and cultural activities, including the incoming businessmen and students traveling to Turkey.

Additionally, as the Macedonian academicians Turkish governmental officials emphasized the importance of the *religious education in Macedonia*. They stated that at the present times in Turkey, in the religious schools and in the faculties of theologies, the Islam and the Prophet's life have been taught in a universal manner with a healthy understanding by using original sources. It was stated that Turkey has rich original religious literature sources and therefore it has been a focus of attention. In this regard, the *religious education in Turkey* was seem to be another factor attracting the Muslims living in Macedonia. It was reported that, especially ethnic Turks living in the eastern part of Macedonia need to be supported in religious education. Most of the people living in this region are showing much more interests to madrasa

education. Therefore, it is worthwhile to notice that the Macedonian Muslims need to maintain the religious ties with Turkey. It was learned that in this region the education in madrasa was given in Turkish language. In this respect, the governmental officials drew attention to the role of the madrasas in *dissemination of Turkish language* in that area.

Apart from the above, Turkish governmental officials indicated the importance of the *historical symbols*. It was highlighted that Macedonia needs assistance and support not only in restoration of the monuments from the Ottoman era, but also for the protection and maintenance of the heritage left by our ancestors. In this sense, it was stated that Macedonia have an interest in boosting the bilateral ties with Turkey.

The second theme suggested by the data was *the political rationale*. Turkish governmental officials associated this rationale with the foreign policy. They stated that the cooperation between the two countries is very important in terms of politics. As the Macedonian academicians Turkish governmental officials reminded that Turkey was one of the first country to recognize the independence of the Macedonia with its constitutional name. Turkey have been actively involved in all international spheres to support the independence and territorial integrity of Macedonia. It was emphasized that the presence of the ethnic Turks in Macedonia was the factor affecting the relations between Turkey and Macedonia. In this sense the ethnic Turks were considered as an element of balance.

#### **4.2.7 Discussion Republic of Macedonia (Summary)**

##### **The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and Macedonia**

In this study, totally 17 participants were interviewed, four Macedonian government officials, who were involved in education sector in their country and/or educated in Turkey, three Turkish governmental officials, who were working in Turkish representative missions in Skopje, five Macedonian academicians, serving in various universities in Macedonia, two Turkish academicians, one from Ss. Cyril and Methodius university and the other one from International Balkan university, two representatives of Macedonian associations and one representative of Turkish association in Skopje were interviewed. The stakeholders were divided into six groups, whose opinions and the theme emerged from the data were presented separately under each headings. Regarding the first research question nine main themes emerged in the interviews, which are presented in Table 4.59 below.

*System's rationales for internationalization* was the first theme identified in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials. It was understood that great importance was given to internationalization in higher education of Macedonia. In this context, it was prescribed to each university to have English programs. It was mentioned about the

efforts spent in improving the quality of education and as well the positive and supportive approach to all kinds of collaborative activities between the universities of both countries. As it is stated in the literature review with aim to restructure and rebuilt its education system Macedonia followed intensive educational reforms.

To this end, during this transition process Macedonia has been given assistance by international communities. These initiatives were determined as primary motives for taking some steps towards internationalization of the Macedonian higher education.

Table 4.59

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	System's rationales for internationalization - English programs - improving the quality of the education system - positive and supportive approach towards the collaborative activities	- Macedonian governmental officials
2	Internationalization - the quality of the Turkish education system - the impact of the visits to higher educational institutions by Turkish high-level officials - brain drain (negative side of the relations) - student mobility (reverse – from Turkey  - brain drain Aim: - increasing exchange of students (to attract the students from the Balkans and Turkic Republic) - to ensure the development of cultural interaction	- Macedonian academicians     -Representatives of the Macedonian Associations
	Difficulties encountered: - different grading system - the structural differences between the two countries educational system (diploma recognition of religious schools) - heavy bureaucratic procedures	- Turkish academicians in Macedonia
3	Change climate (External and Internal Driving Forces) Major factors External factors: - reforms in line with the European Processes - implementation of the Bologna process Internal factors: - inadequacies in the Macedonian educational system (requires benefiting from the educational experiences of the other countries) - the role of the local municipalities in education (strengthening of their tasks)  - difficulties due to multiculturalism - problems caused by implementation of the legislation's related to education	- Macedonian governmental officials          - Macedonian academicians

Table 4.59 (continued)

4	<p>The inadequate infrastructure of the Macedonia's education system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- faculty shortages</li> <li>- inadequacies of Turcology departments (the needs of educational equipment, textbooks, dictionaries)</li> </ul>	<p>- Turkish academicians in Macedonia</p>
5	<p>Western orientation of the education system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- active role of western institutions</li> <li>- multiple orientation/collaboration with the neighboring countries educational institutions and the institutions in Turkey</li> <li>- the activities of western institutions in Macedonia</li> <li>- the need for rebuilding and reconstructing of the education system</li> <li>- differences between the educational system of both countries</li> </ul>	<p>- Macedonian academicians</p> <p>-Representatives of the Macedonian Associations</p>
6	<p>Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the significance of Turkish education</li> <li>- the problems in Turkish education (teacher shortages)</li> <li>- the presence of Turkish communities</li> <li>- the problems in Turkish education</li> <li>- the presence of Turkish communities</li> <li>- the importance of teaching Turkish language</li> <li>- problems in Turkish education</li> <li>- education level of the ethnic Turks in Eastern Macedonia, the role of the religion education on the relationships between Turkey and Macedonia</li> </ul>	<p>- Macedonian governmental officials</p> <p>- Macedonian academicians</p> <p>- Representatives of the Macedonian Associations</p> <p>- Turkish governmental officials</p>
7	<p>Futile and slowly growing relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- economic sanctions and some local legal practices applied</li> <li>- human factor (lack of interest and relevance)</li> <li>- financial difficulties</li> <li>- structural differences among the educational systems</li> <li>- brain drain</li> <li>- growing interest in strengthening the relationships</li> <li>- the major role of the Turkish institutions</li> </ul>	<p>- Macedonian governmental officials</p> <p>- Turkish governmental officials</p>

Table 4.59 (continued)

8	The active role of the Turkish institutions in Macedonia - the importance of teaching Turkish language	- Representative of Turkish association
9	Religious education - support to be given in the field of religious education for the Muslims living in the eastern Macedonia	- Representatives of the Macedonian Associations

The second theme was identified as *internationalization*. Only three groups; Macedonian academicians, representatives of Macedonian association and Turkish academicians were intensified on this theme.

Macedonian academicians emphasized the quality of the Turkish education system as a reason for preference, the impact of the visits to higher educational institutions by Turkish high-level officials to be motivating, as well as they mentioned about the brain drain as one of negative side the relations between the two countries, but the reverse student mobility from Turkey to Macedonia was expressed as one of the positive development of the bilateral educational relations. Regarding the theme internationalization, the representatives of the Macedonian associations expressed their concerns about the brain drain by indicating the job recruitment and social environment as a main reason for that, while Turkish academicians concentrated much more on the difficulties encountered due to the different grading system, the structural differences between the two countries educational system (for example problems in recognition of diplomas of the religious schools) and as complained about the heavy bureaucratic procedures applied during the diploma recognition procedures.

The third theme was *change climate*. It is considered that change climate in higher education is a consequence of the change movements in the political and economic life in Macedonia. This theme was emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials and Macedonian academicians only. As reforms done in line with the European Process and implementation of the Bologna process was determined as the external forces, while inadequacies in Macedonian educational system, the role of the local municipalities in education was referred as internal forces for the change climate, while Macedonian academicians indicated the difficulties encountered due to multiculturalism and the problems caused by implementation of the legislation's affecting the change climate or transformation process the education system of Macedonia.

The fourth theme was named as *the inadequate infrastructure of the Macedonia's education system*. This theme was identified only by Turkish academicians. They indicated the existence of the faculty shortages and inadequacies of Turcology departments in terms of educational equipment, textbooks and dictionaries. They emphasized the need and importance

of supporting Macedonian educational institutions in this regard.

The fifth theme was *western orientation of the Macedonian education system*. This theme was identified in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians and the representatives of the Macedonian associations. Macedonian academicians cited as the main reason for the westernization of the education system of Macedonia the active role of the western institutions and the efforts spent for collaboration with the neighboring countries educational institutions. The representatives of the Macedonian associated also cited the activities of western institutions in Macedonia as one of the reasons. Beside that they indicated as another reason the need for rebuilding and reconstructing of the education system in order to complete the shortcomings from the past period and as well the differences between the educational system of Turkey and Macedonia.

The sixth theme was labeled as *multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia*. This theme emerged in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians, representatives of the Macedonian association and Turkish governmental officials. Each group detailed different aspect of this theme. Macedonian governmental officials emphasized the significance of the Turkish education and pointed the problems in Turkish education by referring to the teacher shortages. Macedonian academician and Turkish governmental officials also cited the problems existed in Turkish education. Beside teacher shortages they denoted the problems encountered in supplying of textbooks. On the other hand the Macedonian academicians and the representatives of Macedonian associations pointed the role of the Turkish communities living in Macedonia in the relationships between the two countries. Additionally the representatives of the Macedonian association indicated the importance of teaching Turkish language, especially for the ethnic Turks living in the eastern part of Macedonia, who were almost to forget this language. In this respect they emphasized the need of giving support for improving their Turkish language. In connection with this situation Turkish governmental officials drew attention to the education level of this community and the balance that should be maintained between the ethnic groups. Beside, they expressed the role of the religion education in fostering the intercultural dialogue among different ethnic groups.

*Futile and slowly growing relations* was the seventh theme revealed by the data regarding the first research question. This theme was identified in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials and Turkish governmental officials. Macedonian governmental officials cited three main reasons for the futile and slowly growing relations: first, the economic sanctions and some local legal practices applied, second, the impact of the human factor, lack of interest and relevance and third the financial difficulties. Whereas, structural differences existing among the educational systems of both countries, brain drain,

which is seen as a risk in the bilateral relations were indicated as the main reasons by the Turkish governmental officials. Therefore they advised that measures be taken for the elimination of this risk. Despite this situation, Turkish governmental officials emphasized that there was a growing interest in strengthening the relationship between the two countries. The attention was drawn to the role of the Turkish institutions such as the Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities and the Turkish Embassy in Skopje. Efforts were exerted for further development of the relations between the two countries in every sphere.

The eighth theme was *the active role of the Turkish institutions in Macedonia*. The representative of the Turkish association cited the importance of teaching Turkish language and the contribution of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center in this regard.

*Religious education* was the ninth theme identified by the representative of the Macedonian associations. They emphasized the need of support to be given in the field of religious education for the Muslims living in the eastern Macedonia.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia**

Three main theme emerged in the interviews with the different stakeholders regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey toward Macedonia in the field of higher education, which can be listed as internalization, multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia and the active role of the governmental institutions of Turkey in Macedonia. These theme were detailed in Table 4.60 below.

Regarding the research question stated above *internationalization* theme has been identified as the most prevalent theme. This theme was highlighted by Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians, Turkish government officials, Turkish academicians and the representative of the Turkish association in Macedonia. Each groups detailed different aspects of this theme. Macedonian governmental officials gave more importance to the bilateral relationships and cooperation developed between the educational institutions of both countries. Trakya University, having relationships nearly with all Balkan universities was indicated as a concrete example of this cooperation. In addition referring to reverse student mobility, they expressed their gratitude of hosting students from Turkey. In this context, they drew attention to the difficulties encountered as a result of the structural difference existed between the educational systems of both countries. Recognition of diplomas issued by the religious high schools in Turkey, credit transfer which is considered as a major problem for student mobility were documented as a concrete examples regarding the problems aroused due to the difference between the educational system of Turkey and Macedonia.

Macedonian governmental officials brainstormed how to prevent and eliminate the possible increase of brain drain, which troubles mainly developing countries including

Macedonia. As the Macedonian governmental officials Macedonian academicians also gave importance on the cooperation between the educational institution of both countries and they also expressed the problems related to the credit transfer, diploma recognition.

Table 4.60

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation between educational institutions</li> <li>- student mobility/brain drain</li> <li>- difficulties stemmed from the structural differences of the educational systems of both countries (credit system, recognition of the diplomas issued by religious high schools)</li> </ul>	<p>- Macedonian governmental officials</p>
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- credit transfer issues</li> <li>- diploma recognition problems</li> <li>- concrete cooperation examples between educational institutions</li> <li>- complaints of the academicians (no access to the libraries in Turkey, cadre problems, problems in appointment of foreign staff etc)</li> </ul>	<p>- Macedonian academicians</p>
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scholarships/recognition of diplomas</li> <li>- student exchange</li> </ul>	<p>- Turkish governmental officials</p>
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scholarships</li> <li>- the agreements signed between the educational institutions</li> <li>- student exchange problems</li> </ul>	<p>- Turkish academicians in Macedonia</p>
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- collaboration activities/emphasis on research</li> <li>- translation of some books</li> <li>- scholarship opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>- Representative of Turkish association</p>

Table 4.60 (continued)

2	Multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of Macedonia - teaching Turkish language - religion education	- Macedonian governmental officials
	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia - teaching Turkish language	- Macedonian academicians
	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia - the importance of Turkish education and Turkish language - problems in Turkish education (Turkish textbooks, teaching staff shortages) - cooperation between the Turkish and Macedonian associations - the support to religious education in Macedonia	-Representatives of the Macedonian associations
	Multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia - the importance of the religion education for the Muslims in Macedonia - assistance given by Turkey in the field of religion education - joint projects - scholarships - active role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey	- Turkish governmental officials
3	Active role of the governmental institutions of Turkey - activities of TIKA and other institutions	- Turkish governmental officials

Unlike the governmental officials Macedonian academicians gave as a concrete example the problems faced during the recognition of the associate diplomas issued by the two-year engineering sections of the universities in Turkey. Macedonian academician's opinions were mainly concentrated on the agreements signed between various universities of both countries, the area that these agreements covers and as well some complaints regarding the cumbersome bureaucracy in Macedonia, slowing down the bilateral relations.

On the other hand, Turkish governmental officials as the Turkish academicians focused on the scholarships granted by Turkey, gave importance on the diploma recognition and the problems encountered in implementation of student exchange programs. Unlike the Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians the representative of the Turkish association drew attention to the collaborative activities jointly organized with the universities in Macedonia. They emphasized the importance of the research activities, contribution in translation of some books and scholarship allocated for the students studying in Turcology departments of the universities in Macedonia.

Another prominent theme emerged regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey

towards Macedonia in the field of higher education was processed under the name *multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia*. Four groups have comments on this issue. For the Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians and the representatives of the Macedonian associations teaching Turkish language becomes priority. Historical ties between the two countries, improving and dissemination of the Turkish education, Turkish TV series, scholarship opportunities and studying in Turkey were indicated as the main reasons for learning Turkish language by these groups. Beside that Macedonian governmental officials and the representatives of the Macedonian association expressed their concerns about the activities of the various Arab origin religious movements. In this scope, they emphasized the need of the support of Turkey in the field of religion education. They mentioned about the religious persons (chaplain) appointed by Turkey in eastern Macedonia and in Ohrid where Muslims inhabited in dense, as well as about the opportunities given to Muslim Macedonian students including female students to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey. Turkish governmental officials also confirmed the importance of the religious education in Macedonia. It was emphasized the assistance of Turkey given on the request of the Islamic Union of Macedonia, provided in a various form from appointment of religious persons, training the clergy needed in Macedonia, allocation of scholarships to Macedonia, organization of religious conferences and joint projects, religious events, distribution of religious books to restoration of historical monuments etc. Reference were made on the active role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in this regard.

The last theme regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards Macedonia in the field of higher education was named as *active role of the governmental institutions of Turkey*. Several governmental institutions assisting the reforms in Macedonia and fostering the collaboration between the two countries were listed, among which the activities of TIKA were worth mentioning. The services provided by TIKA in the field of education were related mainly to the infrastructure building of the educational institutions, improving the physical conditions of the schools, reparation and supply of the equipment (desks and chairs) needed in the educational institutions etc.

### **The Rationales behind Turkey's Practices towards Macedonia**

Three main themes emerged regarding the research question on the rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education towards Macedonia. These themes were political, academic and cultural and social rationales, which are presented in Table 4.61 below.

Table 4.61

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	<p>Political rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to eliminate some prejudices against Turkey</li> <li>- the promotion of Turkey in the region</li> </ul>	- Macedonian governmental officials
	<p>Political rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to eliminate the existing prejudices against Turkey</li> <li>- promotion of Turkey and Turkish language in the region</li> </ul>	- Macedonian academicians
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure the peace in the Balkans</li> </ul>	-Representatives of the Macedonian associations
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy</li> <li>- multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia / existence of ethnic Turks</li> <li>- to ensure the rights of ethnic Turks</li> <li>- elimination of the available prejudices</li> <li>- increasing the prestige and the image of Turkey in the region</li> </ul>	- Turkish governmental officials
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- multiethnic structure of Macedonia / existence of the ethnic Turks</li> <li>- education as an instrument for strengthening the relations and ensuring the peace in the Balkans</li> <li>- increasing the image and prestige of Turkey, cultural promotion</li> </ul>	- Turkish academicians
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy of Turkey</li> <li>- existence of the Turkish minorities</li> </ul>	- Representative of the Turkish association
2	<p>Academic rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mutual visits to educational institutions</li> <li>- promoting Turkish language</li> </ul>	- Macedonian governmental officials
	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- infrastructure support for better educational conditions</li> <li>- mutual visits/gaining experience</li> <li>- support to Turkish education</li> </ul>	- Turkish governmental officials
	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scientific activities/ scholarships</li> </ul>	- Representative of the Turkish association
3	<p>Social and cultural rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical ties/religious education</li> <li>- contribution of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey</li> <li>- cultural interaction</li> </ul>	- Turkish governmental officials

The first theme suggested by the data was *political rationale*. This rationale was referred by all groups; Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians, representatives of the Macedonian associations, Turkish governmental officials, Turkish academicians and the representative of the Turkish association. Study results revealed that the political rationale was prominent. Different groups detailed different features of this rationale. According to the Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians and Turkish governmental officials one of motivation behind Turkey's practices towards Macedonia in the field of education was to eliminate the existing prejudices against Turkey, due to its Ottoman past. It was considered that the educational activities held by Turkey created awareness among Macedonian, which led to change in their opinions towards Turkey. In this sense, the educational activities assumed to have positive influence on the bilateral relations between the two countries. Macedonian governmental officials, Macedonian academicians, Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians determined promotion of Turkey and Turkish language, increasing the prestige and the image of Turkey in the region as other reasons behind Turkey's implementation of the activities in Macedonia. It was emphasized that through these activities Turkey has become more active in the Balkans and that these activities were contributed to the prestige and the image of Turkey in the region. Further, the representatives of the Macedonian association and Turkish academicians cited ensuring the peace in the Balkans as another rationale behind of Turkey's educational activities. It was emphasized that education can be used as an instrument for strengthening the relations between Turkey and Macedonia and as well to serve for the further preservation of the peace in the region. On the other hand Turkish governmental officials, Turkish academicians and the representative of the Turkish association in Macedonia linked this theme to the foreign policy and drew attention to the multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia by giving emphasis on the presence of Turkish minorities aiming to support their educational rights. In other words, the presence of Turkish minorities were determined as another factor affecting the bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia.

The second theme revealed by the data was labeled *academic rationale*. According to the Macedonian governmental, Turkish governmental officials and the representative of the Turkish association determined academic rationales were also effective as the political rationale. The Macedonian governmental officials associated this rationale with the mutual visits to educational institutions and promoting Turkish language, Turkish governmental official to infrastructure support for better educational conditions and as well focus was given on mutual visits for gaining experience and supporting Turkish education, while the representative of the Turkish association indicated the importance of the scientific activities

and scholarships. Additionally as it was identified by these groups the key objective is to strengthen the cultural relations between the two countries.

The last theme was labeled *cultural and social rationale*. This theme was addressed only by the Turkish governmental officials. They underlined the historical ties with Macedonia as very important. In addition, they linked this rationale with the religious education. As one of the reason for religious education was indicated the presence of the Muslims, who were deprived from religion education for a long time. In this respect the contribution of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs was emphasized. Further, it was expressed that the activities undertaken by Turkey in this regard contributed to the cultural interaction as well.

### **The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in Macedonia from Turkey**

The data revealed four main themes regarding the expectations of the different stakeholders in Macedonia from Turkey. These themes were presented in Table 4.62 below.

Table 4.62

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	Internationalization - diploma recognition (diplomas from religious high schools) mobility of the students (promotion of Turkey and Turkish universities, teaching Turkish) - demands for increase of the number and the amount of the scholarships - support with academic staff and training materials - mutual exchange of information between the two countries  Aspects of internationalization - exchange of students and academic staff - mutual recognition of the educational Systems	Macedonian governmental officials           - Macedonian academicians
2	Assistance given in form of: - human resource support - support in form of teaching materials - provision of guidance for the elimination of the prejudices	- Macedonian academicians
3	Cultural and social support - religious education - teaching Turkish language and Turkish culture	- Representatives of the Macedonian associations

Table 4.62 (continued)

4	Problems in Turkish education - shortages in teacher training branches	- Representatives of the Macedonian associations
	Current problems in Turkish education - dissemination of Turkish language - providing teaching materials and textbooks - teacher shortages	-Turkish governmental officials

The first theme was named internationalization. This theme emerged only in the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials and the Macedonian academicians. In the interviews with the Macedonian governmental officials resolving the problems related to the recognition of the diplomas issued by the religious high schools in Turkey, giving priority on promoting the mobility of the students, increasing the number and the amount of the scholarships, supporting the educational institutions with academic staff and training materials and encouraging the mutual exchange of information between the educational institutions of Turkey and Macedonia were expressed as major expectations from Turkey. Whereas Macedonian academicians indicated as a top priority the exchange of the students and academic staff and for realization of this exchange the requirement of mutual recognition of the educational systems of both countries were emphasized.

*Different forms of assistance* was the second theme identified in the interviews with the Macedonian academicians. The expectations were mainly for providing of human resource support, support in form of teaching materials regarding the needs of Turkish Language and Literature Departments of the universities and providing guidance for the elimination of the prejudices existing in the textbooks against Ottomans and Turkish people. There were serious expectations in this regard.

The third theme was related to the *cultural and social support* expressed only by the representatives of the Macedonian associations. This theme was associated with the religious education and teaching Turkish language and Turkish culture. In this regard, expectations were mainly on supporting the religious education by increasing the quota for the students wishing to study in religious schools or faculty of theology in Turkey. In addition expectations were conveyed on teaching Turkish language and Turkish culture to the Turkish compatriots who have forgotten their Mother tongue Turkish language.

The last theme was identified as the *problems in Turkish education*. Regarding the teacher shortages problems in Turkish education the representatives of the Macedonian associations expressed their demands on directing the students to study in teacher training branches like mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and geography, where serious teacher shortages were faced.

On the other hand, regarding the expectations of Macedonia from Turkey, the opinions

of the Turkish governmental officials have been quite useful. As the representatives of the Macedonian association stated, they also confirm the expectation of Macedonia on finding solution for the problems faced in Turkish education, especially to overcome the teacher shortages. Further, Turkish governmental officials expressed that Macedonian expectations were mainly for teaching Turkish language to the ethnic Turks whose Turkish is not very well and providing teaching materials and textbooks to the schools in the areas where education is in Turkish.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Macedonia in Order to Enhance Cooperation with Turkey**

The data results suggested two main themes regarding the practices undertaken by Macedonia in order to enhance the cooperation in higher education with Turkey. These themes were firstly the activities for solving the problems in Turkish education and practices in relation to internationalization. These themes were presented in Table 4.63 below.

Table 4.63

#### *Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	Activities for solving the problems in Turkish education - Unit established within the Ministry for Minorities of Macedonia for solving the problems of the ethnic Turks	- Macedonian governmental officials
2	Internationalization - student mobility - accommodation of the foreign students - accreditation of the Macedonian universities to YOK	- Macedonian academicians

The first theme was related to the *activities implemented for solving the problems faced in Turkish education*. Macedonian governmental officials emphasized the importance of solving the problems existing in Turkish education. In this context it was learned that a unit was established within the Ministry for Minorities of Macedonia for solving the issues concerning the ethnic Turks. As it is stated in the interviews among the activities of this unit was organization of a large-scale Macedonia-Turkey business forums aiming to solve the educational problems and to improve the economic situation of the ethnic Turks.

*Internationalization* was the second theme suggested by the interview data. This theme was addressed only by the Macedonian academicians. They linked this theme to the student mobility, accommodation of the foreign students and accreditation of the Macedonian universities to Higher Education Council (YOK). Macedonian academicians reported that efforts were spent to increase the number of the students quota allocated by Turkey for

Macedonia. In this regard the initiatives were made before the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. Also there were measures taken for solving the accommodation problems of the students coming from Turkey for study in Macedonia. It was reported about the application of some universities as concrete example was given Tetovo University for accreditation to Higher Education Council YOK. By this way it is believed that more students can be attracted.

### **The Rationales behind Macedonia's Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey**

There were four themes identified regarding the rationales behind Macedonia's practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey. These themes were named as academic, political, economic and cultural and social rationales, which are presented in Table 4.64 below. The stakeholder groups were not able to identify any priority among the rationales. But, there were some comments expressed for example by some Macedonian academicians who asserted the political and cultural and social rationales as more dominant, while others proposed academic rationale as a top priority. Even shifting from one rationale to another was observed.

Table 4.64

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	<p>Academic rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quality of the education in Turkey</li> <li>- joint study programs/ improving teaching methods</li> </ul>	- Macedonian governmental officials
	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the cooperation between the educational institutions</li> <li>- opportunities for interaction between the students and faculty</li> <li>- student mobility in opposite direction from Turkey to Macedonia</li> </ul>	- Macedonian academicians
2	<p>Economic rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transfer experiences</li> <li>- positive impact of the economic relations on educational relations</li> <li>- training personnel</li> </ul>	- Macedonian governmental officials
	<p>Economic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- raising skillful workforce for labor market in Macedonia</li> </ul>	- Representatives of the Macedonian associations

Table 4.64 (continued)

3	Political rationale - foreign policy - elimination of prejudices - prevention of assimilation	- Macedonian academicians
	Political rationale - foreign policy/recognition of the independence of Macedonia - the presence of ethnic Turks as an element of balance	- Turkish governmental officials
4	Cultural and social rationale - the historical and cultural ties - the presence of ethnic Turks - teaching Turkish language	- Macedonian academicians
	Cultural and social rationale - the presence of ethnic Turks/ religious education	- Representatives of the Macedonian associations
	Cultural and social rationale - Longstanding common history/the role of Turkish TV series - curiosity to learn Turkish language - the presence of ethnic Turks living in Macedonia/education level of the ethnic Turks - religious education - historical symbols	- Turkish governmental officials

For example, Macedonian academicians related the presence of the ethnic Turks to the political rationale. It was indicated that thanks to Turkey's support for the Turkish education the ethnic Turks inhabited in the Eastern part of the Macedonia were protected from assimilation. Then after they associated the presence of the ethnic Turks with the cultural and social rationale. They emphasized that their presence in Macedonia caused an interest towards Turkey, Turkish language and created a curiosity on Turkish TV series and Turkish culture.

The first rationale emerged was *the academic rationale*. This rationale was addressed by Macedonian governmental officials and Macedonian academicians. According to the Macedonian governmental officials Turkey was a preferable country for study by Macedonian students since the quality of the education in Turkey. The relation between the two countries was considered as very successful. It was emphasized that these relations will contribute to the improving of the teaching methods in Macedonian education and as well will create an opportunity for joint study programs between the educational institutions of both countries. Unlike the Macedonian governmental officials Macedonian academician focused on different aspects of this rationale. Most of them claimed that this rationale was the most important one and that should be given priority and ranked in the first place. Regarding this rationale

Macedonian academicians focused on the cooperation established between the educational institutions. According to them the benefits obtain from the cooperation were worth mentioning. They indicated that these cooperation provided an opportunity for interaction between the students and faculty from both countries. Additionally, the cooperation between the institutions encouraged the reverse student mobility, this time in opposite direction from Turkey to Macedonia. Further, cooperation contributed for enhancing the quality of the education in Macedonia as well.

***Economic rationale*** was the second theme revealed by the interview data related to the research question on the rationales behind Macedonia's practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey. This rationale emerged only in the interviews with Macedonian governmental officials and the representatives of the Macedonian associations. Macedonian governmental officials stated that beside the educational relations importance was given also to improving of the economic relations. They indicated that these relations encouraged the investments in Macedonia, which created an opportunity to transfer Turkey's experiences to Macedonia. Macedonian governmental officials expressed that the economic relations have found positive reflection on the educational relations, especially in terms of training personnel needed in labor market. They emphasized the contribution of Turkey in raising of skilled and knowledgeable workforce needed in Macedonian economy. In this context, the representatives of the Macedonian associations also expressed that Turkey contributed to the development of the Macedonian economy by giving opportunity for Macedonian students to study in Turkish universities.

The third theme was named as ***political rationale***. Regarding this rationale there were comments made by Macedonian academicians and Turkish governmental officials. Macedonian academicians related this rationale to the foreign policy. They emphasized the political support of Turkey to recognition of independence of Macedonia in international arena. Some of the academicians indicated this rationale as a top priority. According to them Turkey is a great power in the region. They believed that Turkey with the quality of its education system contributed in closing the gap existing in Macedonian education system. Additionally, they expressed that by continuous development of the relationships between the educational institutions of both countries the negative stereotypes existed in the minds of the persons belonging to some groups in Macedonia began to disappear. Further, they stated that thanks to the educational support of Turkey, the ethnic Turks living in the Eastern part of Macedonia were prevented from assimilation. Turkish governmental officials shared the opinions of the academicians. They drew attention especially to the presence of the ethnic Turks, who were emphasized as the factor affecting the relations between the two countries, by considering them as an element of balance.

The last theme was related to *the cultural and social rationale*. This rationale has been interpreted by three groups: Macedonian academicians, representatives of the Macedonian academicians and Turkish governmental officials. Macedonian academicians gave importance on the historical and cultural ties stemmed from the shared common past. According to them historical and cultural ties and the presence of the ethnic Turks were cited as a main factors affecting positively the development of the relations in each area between the two countries. Therefore, it was highlighted the importance of teaching Turkish language especially to the ethnic Turks who were deprived many years from Turkish education. The representatives of the Macedonian associations also drew attention to the presence of the ethnic Turks, assumed as a factor for cooperation with Turkey. It was advocated that, in addition to the efforts made for increasing the educational level of this ethnic group, the support of Turkey is necessary also in the field of religious education. All these opinions were confirmed by the Turkish governmental officials. Besides that, they cited several other factors that impelled Macedonia to cooperate with Turkey. For example they pointed that Turkish TV series not only fostered the relations between Turkey and Macedonia but also created an interest towards Turkey and curiosity to learn Turkish language. It was considered that this situation triggered the wishes of the Macedonian students to use the advantage of studying in Turkey. Further, Turkish governmental officials emphasized the need of the support of Turkey in the religious education not only because of the ethnic Turks but also because of the other Muslim minorities existing in Macedonia. Therefore it was noted that Macedonia have to maintain religious ties with Turkey in this regard as well. Apart from the above, Turkish governmental officials indicated the importance of the historical symbols. It was stated that Macedonia have an interest in boosting the bilateral relations with Turkey in terms of the restoration and maintenance of the monuments inherited from the Ottoman era.

#### **4.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)**

In this study, totally 11 participants were interviewed, one Bosnian government officials, two Turkish governmental officials, who were working in Turkish representative missions in Sarajevo, four Bosnian academicians, serving in various universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), four Turkish academicians, two from Sarajevo university, one from International Sarajevo university and the other one from International Burch university and one representative of Turkish association in Sarajevo. The stakeholders were divided into five groups, whose opinions and the theme emerged from the data were presented separately under each headings.

### 4.3.1 The current state of the relations between Turkey and BiH

#### 4.3.1.1 Opinions of BiH governmental officials

The content analysis of the interviews with the Bosnian governmental official highlighted three main themes, regarding the current state and issues of education in BiH and the relationship between Turkey and BiH in the field of higher education. These themes are as follows: western orientation of BiH higher education, futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and BiH and internationalization, which are presented in Table 4.65 below.

Table 4.65

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials of BiH*

No	Themes
1	Western orientation of BiH higher education <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- impact of the past history being under the rule of Austria-Hungarian Empire</li><li>- joining the Bologna Process</li><li>- the structural differences in the education system of both countries</li></ul>
2	Futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and BiH <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- complex internal structure and regulations of the education system of BiH</li><li>- the existing effort to improve these relations</li></ul>
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- student mobility/reverse student mobility</li></ul>

The first theme revealed by the data is the fact that the education system of the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is *western oriented*. There were several reasons identified for the western orientation of the education system of BiH. The first reason was the impact of *historical past of BiH, being under the rule of Austria – Hungarian Empire in the recent past*, a century ago. It was noted that within the framework of a long-term agreement signed with the government of Austria Bosnian students have the right to study in Austria without paying any tuition fees in the context of this special relationship. Therefore it was indicated that this was one of the factors affecting Bosnian students preferences for study abroad or or choosing Austria for education.

As another evidence of western orientation was indicated joining of BiH in *Bologna Process*, which was an impetus for the realization of the various reforms in BiH's higher education in accordance with the Bologna principles.

As a third reason was pointed *the structural differences in the education system* existed between Turkey and BiH. It was acknowledged that some managerial problems caused by the administrative structure of the BiH have prevented the development of relations with Turkey in the field of education. Indeed, it was stated that BiH's higher educational system has a complex structure, because there were two ethnic communities that have separate ministries

of education. It was expressed that the Federation of BiH consisted of ten cantons, that each canton have its own Ministry of Education. Apparently, these Ministries of Education are separate from one another and they have their own links and obligations to provide their interior layouts. It was emphasized that this situation complicated the relationship between Turkey and BiH.

The second theme revealed by the data was named *as futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and BiH*. It was asserted that Bosnian authorities did not realize the possibilities offered to them by Turkey in the field of higher education due to above mentioned *complex internal structure and regulations of the education system of BiH* and therefore they have not been able to respond on time to the opportunities provided to them by Turkey. For this reason they found the level of educational relations between the two countries as insufficient. But, at the same time they did not deny *the existing efforts to improve these relations*. By indicating BiH's emotional and traditional ties with Turkey gratitude was expressed on Turkey's support of BiH in many areas during the war and after the war, including in the field of education. Additionally, it was stated that the support given by Turkey increased the interest of the Bosnian students towards Turkish universities. The high level of quality in Turkish universities was commended, especially that of TOBB university, and the universities in Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul. In this sense, positive opinions were expressed about the educational opportunities provided by Turkey.

The third theme emerged in the interview was named *internationalization*. *The mobility of the students* was indicated as an important dimension of this theme. It was stated that there were many Bosnian students going to study in Turkey. It was highlighted that the creation of such opportunities by Turkey was of great importance for BiH, considering the fact that many Bosnian students did benefit from such opportunities, especially after the War. It was expressed that the students studying in Turkey were very happy and pleased to study in Turkey. It was also noted that Turkish authorities are very helpful and Bosnian students are very successful during their trainings in Turkey. The officials declared that they have not received any reports of problems encountered by the Bosnian students during their stay in Turkey. Additionally, it was commented that the brain drain, in terms of educational relations between the two countries did not cause a serious threat for BiH. The officials informed that the problems encountered in recognition of diplomas were resolved in a short time by mutual consultation.

On the other hand, it was expressed that the foundation of two universities in Sarajevo (International Sarajevo University and International Burch University) by Turkish entrepreneurs was a major contribution to education in BiH. These universities have encouraged *the reverse student mobility*. Many students from Turkey were studying in BiH.

#### 4.3.1.2 Opinions of BiH academicians

Three academicians, who were directly involved in the education sector in BiH were interviewed. The results of the interviews with academicians confirmed some of the themes drawn from the interviews with BiH governmental officials and provided further evidence to strengthen these themes. These themes were presented in Table 4.66: western orientation of BiH education system, internationalization, the inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system and futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey.

Table 4.66

#### *Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Western-orientation of the BiH education system - implementation of Bologna process
2	Internationalization - cooperation activities / increase in the number of the students in Turkish Language and Literature Department
3	The inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system - difficult working conditions - destroyed building/demolishing of the documents during the war
4	Futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and BiH - the level of the relations – insufficient - reason: western orientation of BiH's education system

As in the interview with the Bosnian governmental officials in the interview with the Bosnian academicians the theme that the education system of the BiH is *western oriented* came to the fore once again. *Bologna process* was an incentive for the reforming the education system of BiH. The academicians informed that BiH formally joined the Bologna process in 2003 and in this context the undergraduate period was determined as 3 years, master's degree 2 years and doctoral degree 3 years. In the interview, it was emphasized that in terms of the quality of the courses and curriculum, although the efforts the compliance with the Bologna process has not been fully provided yet.

The second theme suggested by the data from the interviews with the Bosnian academicians was named *internationalization*. The academicians associated this theme with the *cooperation activities* among the educational institutions. It was learned that a protocol was signed between the University of Tuzla in BiH and Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) in Sarajevo, and that within the framework of this cooperation the number of students in the Turkish Language and Literature Department opened within the Faculty of Philosophy of this university have been gradually increased since 2002-2003 academic year. Additionally it was noted that in the 2011-2012 academic year there were approximately 120

students actively studying in this department.

Another theme revealed by the data is *the inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system*. There were complaints about *the difficult working conditions* and insufficient space allocated for the Turkish Language and Literature Chair within the Department of the Middle Eastern Languages of the University of Sarajevo. Additionally, it was indicated that the Oriental Institute of the University of Sarajevo has been destroyed completely during the bombing of the Serbs in 1992 and many documents were demolished. Even so, the Institute continued its work based on the documents and the records retained.

Theme labeled as *futile and slowly growing relationships between Turkey and BiH* emerged in the interviews with the academicians also as in the interview with the Bosnian governmental officials. Although Turkey's educational policy was perceived as positive it was expressed that the level of educational relations between the two countries were found to be insufficient. One of the possible reasons for that situation can be cited *the western-orientation of the BiH's education system*.

#### 4.3.1.3 Opinions of Turkish governmental officials in BiH

Interviews were conducted with Coordinator of the Religion and Social Affairs Office and Coordinator of TIKA on Turkey's educational activities carried out towards BiH. The data analysis suggested some fundamental differences between the themes emerged from BiH representatives and the themes emerged from Turkish representatives. These themes were presented in Table 4.67 below.

Table 4.67

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental officials in BiH*

No	Themes
1	Religious education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the role of the Islam Union of BiH</li> <li>- financial difficulties of the madrasas</li> <li>- the support of Turkey by appointment of chaplain</li> </ul>
2	Multiethnic structure of BiH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the division of the ethnic groups in BiH as an important factor affecting the education system</li> </ul>
3	Inadequate infrastructure of BiH's educational system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on the ethnic structure fragmentation, limited educational opportunities, and the economic inability</li> <li>- inability of the state to catch up to all these problems</li> <li>- low salaries of the teachers</li> <li>- Need oriented support in accordance with the demands of the relevant authorities and in cooperation with the local municipalities</li> </ul>
4	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- brain drain</li> </ul>

The first theme strongly emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was named *religious education*. BiH is a multi-ethnic country and at the same time multi-religious. In BiH there are Bosniaks who are Muslims, Bosnian Croats who are Catholic and Bosnian Serbs who are Orthodox. In this sense, the importance of the religious factors and religious education in BiH was emphasized. The attention was drawn to the role of the religion in formation of the national identity. Particularly, *the Islam Union of BiH* was described as one of the most powerful civil society in BiH. This situation was explained in a very striking way with the following statements:

I would like to mention the fact that religious [and] cultural education is very important here. The union of Islam here is somewhat different from ours, namely it is necessary to understand the historical conditions. When you try to read Bosnia and Herzegovina through Turkey's mentality or the lenses of the 200 year history of modernization in Turkey, you would encounter difficulties in understanding. The Bosniaks in Bosnia Herzegovina did not have a state of their own from 1978. When you look at it, there was the Austro-Hungarians when the Ottomans withdrew, and then came the Sloven-Serbian-Croatian Kingdom. The Yugoslavian Socialist [State] was the period when they felt a sense of belonging. And the period of Tito must be emphasized especially because it produced an identity through the socialist patriotism, with which the Bosniaks did not feel estranged and were able to participate in public processes. This is the first time when Bosniaks can more or less have a state with which they can identify themselves. The Bosniak identity operates in very civilian ways and the civil society is very strong among the Bosniaks and therefore it would be wise to say that the union of Islam is the most powerful civil societal structure. This is my humble opinion.

Another governmental official said that "the thing that determines the margins of identity here is religious [and] cultural perception. History is very important for example. Cultural and literary reading is very important in terms of construction of the identity".

Turkish officials gave a brief information about the religion education. It was reported that in BH there were 6 madrasas and 1 faculty of theology, among the madrasas, mainly in Gazi Hüsrev Bey Madrasas and in the madrasa Elçi İbrahim Pasha in Travnik have a very strong education. It was indicated that in the said madrasas beside the religious courses students were taught modern sciences also. In addition, it was expressed that in these madrasas they have been also taught the Bosnian communities' good manners, customs and traditions. Thus, by this way, the students have found a common opportunity to socialize and to obtain information about the essence on the identity. It was stated that the students graduated from these madrasas in BiH are not facing any problems with the equivalency of the diplomas. After their graduation they can apply to any university they want. For example, it has been emphasized that very successful and distinguished students were graduated from Gazi Hüsrev Bey Madrasas, which is one of the oldest educational institution in BH and where very important personalities have been educated. In the interview it was stated that the middle

region of BH is more conservative, therefore the Bosniak families living in that region were sending their children preferably to such religious schools.

On the other hand, it was expressed that the madrasas were *facing some financial difficulties* that no any supports were given by the government, therefore they have been trying to survive with the money collected in form of annual religious taxes. During the interview it was noted that, in the field of religion education, *Turkey is contributing directly by appointment of a chaplain to BiH*, but due to the language problems these assigned religious persons were not able to be useful, because of the difficulties in finding chaplain who knows Bosnian language. In this context, it was stated that if the number of the chaplain knowing Bosnian language will be increased the relations between the two countries in the field of religious education would be further developed. Additionally, although the level of the cooperation in the field of religious education was found to be sufficient, desire was expressed to enhance this cooperation to a higher level.

The second theme emerged was labeled as *multi-ethnic structure of BiH*. As it is stated above in BiH there were three main ethnic groups: Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. Unlike the other stakeholder groups Bosnian governmental officials and Bosnian academicians Turkish governmental officials emphasized *the division of the ethnic groups in BiH* as an important factor affecting the education system in BiH. For example, it was mentioned about the debates emerged regarding the request for giving the name of a saint to one school in Srebrenica, where Bosniak children were also studying. Such cases probably could create some problems in the curriculum that was taught in the schools. Additionally, it has been mentioned about the ethnic tensions between the Bosniak and Croat population, living especially in Mostar region, the attention was taken on the reflection of these tensions into the social life and the education and the existing unseen parallel institutionalisation. Thus, the ethnic discrimination in education was indicated as one of the main problems in BiH, which have reflection on the education system.

Let me put it this way: the root cause of all these problems lays with the divided structure, which is the most important problem. And I reiterate that the state which belongs to everybody, is in fact belongs to nobody.

The fourth theme that the data revealed was named *inadequate infrastructure of BiH's educational system*. Examples about the incompetencies of the BH's educational institutions were given. It was expressed that in Mostar region for example by the support given to the Croats by Croatia their universities were established in a modern way, while the Bosniaks's single and the most important higher education institution, Cemal Bijedic University, which has been used in the past and during the war as a military quarter was facing by infrastructure difficulties. In this regard, there has been criticism about the BiH education

system. The comments were made firstly *on the ethnic structure fragmentation, limited educational opportunities, and the economic inability* that has been spread to all areas of the life in BiH, and secondly that the state was not be able *to catch up to all these problems*. In this sense, the support given by Turkey to BiH in this regard can not be underestimated. Governmental officials emphasized that the *support given by Turkey is need oriented*. Further, they stated that understanding of the local mentality is of great importance in terms of the services to be provided in accordance with the needs of BiH. Therefore, in order to determine the real needs of the local community, it is imperative to be able to speak the same language with the people living in this geography.

It is important to catch an accord with the people and find out their real needs as opposed to assuming a position that uses an imposing language to determine their needs. People only pen up to you only when you behave like one of them, understand their needs and provide relief for their pain rather than establishing an unequal relationship.

It was stressed that positive feedbacks were received from the projects that were carried out by TIKA. TIKA was greatly appreciated as an institution. The governmental officials stated that neither bureaucratic obstacles nor other problems were encountered during the educational activities implemented in BiH, since that the activities were carried out *in accordance with the demands of the relevant authorities* or in cooperation with the administration of the cantons. In such cases, the counterparties were *usually municipalities*.

The last theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was *internationalization* theme. This theme was associated with the “*brain drain*”. Concerns were expressed about the brain drain, which is said to affect the situation in the country negatively. There were statements that due to the living conditions in the BH, the young people who have been abroad for education were not coming back following their graduation.

#### ***4.3.1.4 Opinions of Turkish academicians in BiH***

Four Turkish academicians, who were directly involved in the education sector in BiH were interviewed. The results of the interviews with academicians confirmed some of the themes drawn from the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials and provided further evidence to strengthen these themes. These themes were presented in Table 4.68 below.

Table 4.68

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local regulations or reluctance of the local authorities</li> <li>- the western orientation of BiH's education system/the impact of the Austria, Hungary, Slovenia and Germany</li> <li>- the differences between the educational systems of Turkey and BiH /the differences seen in grading systems of the both countries</li> </ul>
2	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation activities among the educational institutions</li> <li>- student mobility</li> <li>- the scholarships granted, common culture and opportunities for learning Turkish language made Turkey an attractive destination</li> </ul>
3	Inadequate infrastructure of BiH's educational system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- uncertainty still existing throughout the country</li> <li>- accreditation problems of the universities</li> <li>- due to the structure of the educational system of BiH</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged in the interview was named *futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey*. The academicians indicated several reasons for the stagnation relations between the two countries. As one of the reasons the academicians cited the *local regulations or reluctance of the local authorities*, which causes the works to process very slowly. It was stated that because of the reflections of the Communist period the local administration may insist or impose compulsory implementations of some sanctions. Academicians emphasized that despite the good intentions and Turkey's declaring of its readiness for giving all kind of assistance for meeting all kinds of demands, from time to time there could be problems occurred actually caused by the side of BiH authorities itself, the conclusion of the formal proceedings sometimes could take a long time which created a tremendous hardship. According to academicians as second reason for stagnation relations with the BiH is related to *the western orientation of BiH's education system*. They implied that in BiH there were significant impact of the Austria, Hungary, Slovenia and Germany not only in the field of economy but also in the field of education. Further, Bologna process was also identified as one of the reasons for the slowly progressing relations between the two countries. It was expressed that although both countries were involved in the Bologna process, there were difficulties in the relations arising from the implementation of Bologna in different way. For example, it was indicated that sometimes BiH's authorities were insisting to impose such sanctions that firstly to be subjected to the old system and afterwards to comply with Bologna.

Further, it was stated that because of some impossibilities BiH could not respond to the offerings of Turkey. The academicians commented that, although there were no obstacles

encountered during the activities organized by Turkey, due to BiH's political structure difficulties can be experienced during the cooperation between the educational institutions. In this context, they found that the level of the cooperation between Turkey and BiH is not enough and that this level should be upgraded. As a third reason behind the futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey was related to *the differences between the educational systems of Turkey and BiH*. In this sense, academicians emphasized for example *the differences seen in grading systems of the both countries*. As it is indicated above this difference stemmed from the local structure of BiH, which sometimes may cause problems. Academicians emphasized their worries that these problems related to the differences between the educational system of both countries may have a reflection on the students, which may resulted in a despondency and feeling of an anxiety about the future. Despite the opinions stated above Turkish academicians evaluated the relations between the two countries in the field of education as positively. They expressed that during the Yugoslavian period there was a break in the relations, but after the war a momentum have been gained towards the development of the relations, and in this respect an investments were made in the field of education in BiH. The academicians mentioned about the two Turkish universities in BiH, which are providing education in accordance with the provision of the Educational Ministries at cantonal level in BiH and at the same time were accredited by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) in Turkey. Academicians expressed that in the name of giving a high quality of education in these universities some of the programs having richer contents were not approved by the educational authorities in BiH.

The second theme revealed by the data was *internationalization*. Like the Bosnian academicians Turkish academicians associated this theme with the *cooperation activities among the educational institutions*. They expressed that Turkey is giving great importance to BiH, in this respect within the framework of the Common Cultural Agreement signed between the two countries, since 1950 the Turcology department within the University of Sarajevo were supported with academic staff in form of appointment of lecturers. Further, academicians emphasized that the educational institutions opened in BiH by the Turkish entrepreneur's constitutes a good model in BiH. The following statement justify this opinion "an educational model has been created here through private initiatives and this model, which admits the best students in Bosnia, sets an example right now".

Academicians also indicated the importance of *the student mobility*. They stated that due to the problems caused by the political structure of the BiH it was not be able to reach the sufficient level in the field of the student exchange. Despite this situation, the participants stated that *the scholarships granted, common culture and opportunities for learning Turkish language* made Turkey an attractive destination for the study. In addition it was expressed that

there are no any prominent cultural differences between the two countries, thus, the students were easily adapting to the life in the cities in Turkey they were studying. Besides, it was indicated that many of the students have some relatives in Turkey or they have some friends settled in Turkey during the war, therefore they were not feeling themselves as foreigner while studying in Turkey. However, as in other developing countries *the brain drain* constitute a risk for BiH also. It was indicated that the most significant factor is that the Bosnian youths could not find a job after graduation, that there were no so much job possibilities in BiH. It was stated that the unemployment rate in BiH is approximately %24. Therefore, the students studying in Turkey or other countries abroad usually preferred to stay in the countries creating job opportunities for them, and in this respect the brain drain emerged as inevitable event for BiH.

Turkish Universities established in BiH, Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Sarajevo and the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey were determined as the stakeholders affecting the educational relations between the two countries.

The last theme suggested in the interview with the Turkish academicians was named as *inadequate infrastructure of BiH's educational system*. Turkish academicians mentioned about the inefficiency of the BiH's education system. They drew attention to the problems faced in the field of education at a various times in the former Yugoslavia and during the war period. It was stated that **the uncertainty is still existing throughout the country**. Academicians have also criticized the BiH's educational institutions. They stated that the universities in BiH are still trying to cross *the accreditation process*, many of which are against with the threat of closure. Academicians expressed that according to the Bosniaks opinion this situation was *due to the structure of the educational system in BiH*, that there was a different education system in every canton in Bosnia, that changes were made too frequently, therefore the system has not been yet fully adopted.

The situation in Bosnia is such that there are 10 cantons and each canton has its own Ministry of National Education with exclusive rules and laws. This creates a hardship obviously, namely because there may be discrepancies between educational systems of different cantons or a decision in one canton may be invalid in another.

According to the Turkish academicians' main problems of the educational system of BiH are determined as the followings: the education system is disconnected from the life, the departments within the universities were not established in accordance with the needs of the country, and for example, although BiH is an agricultural country, there were no agricultural departments in higher education. During the interview academicians drew attention to another issue: the nationalist sentiments which are still dominated in the country. It was explained with the following statement "in fact, if an international school was established, [n]either the Bosniaks [n]or the Croats would attend, neither would go".

#### **4.3.1.5 Opinion of the representative of Turkish association in BiH**

The data from the interview with representative of Turkish Association in BiH revealed only one theme which was presented in Table 4.69.

Table 4.69

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association in BiH*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Cultural and social support <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- organization of cultural and social events</li><li>- well-attended cultural events</li><li>- interest to Turkey and Turkish language</li></ul>

Differently from the other stakeholder groups the ***cultural and social support*** theme was the only theme emerged in the interview with the representative of the Turkish Association in BiH, Yunus Emre Cultural Center. This theme was linked to the ***cultural activities and the events*** which are organized for all ethnic groups living in BiH. As the representative explained the main operational activity of the Center is organization of activities and events at the request of different ethnic groups, even granting the facilities of the Cultural Center to these groups to arrange cultural events without any charge. It was emphasized that there cultural events were very successful regarding the level of participation. It was expressed that there were a significant participation to the activities organized by the Center, that the Bosnians are very keen, showing much interest ***to Turkey and Turkish language***. It was indicated that during the arrangement of the activities, except of the minor bureaucratic obstacles, it was not encountered any serious obstacles.

### **4.3.2 The practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan Countries**

#### **4.3.2.1 Opinions of BiH's governmental officials**

In the interview with the Bosnian governmental officials regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey two themes come to fore: internationalization and active role of the Turkish government institutions in BiH, details of which are presented in Table 4.70 below.

Table 4.70

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization - no agreements signed between Turkey and BiH - reason: the structural difference in the educational system of both countries - the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries
2	Active role of the Turkish government institutions in BiH - the role and the activities carried out by TIKA - support of TIKA for physical capacity expansion of the educational institutions

*The internationalization* was one of the prominent theme emerged in the interview with the Bosnian governmental officials. During the interview it was mentioned that here were no any official agreement signed in the field of education at the state or ministerial level between the educational Ministries of the two countries. As the reasons for that was pointed *the structural difference in the educational system of both countries*. Essentially the political structure of BiH complicated signing of an agreement between the two countries. BiH is consist of two entities: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (which is divided into ten cantons) and Republika Srpska. Thus, the education system of BiH is under the responsibility of the Ministries of Education of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. It was indicated that in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina there were 10 cantons each having its own Ministry of Education. Further, it was indicated that although the differences between the educational systems of both countries Bosnian educational institutions are very open to cooperation. In this regard *the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries* were emphasized. It was expressed that the collaboration established by some universities in Sarajevo with the universities in Turkey were very useful, for example, especially the collaboration with TOBB University in Ankara in the area of exchange of student and faculty.

The second theme revealed from the interview was named *as active role of the Turkish government institutions in BiH*. Particular emphasis was given to the *activities carried out by TIKA*. It was expressed that the contribution of TIKA both in education and other fields was worth mentioning. In terms of education it was stated that this contribution was usually in form of *support for physical capacity expansion of the educational institutions*, in other words the restoration of the war damaged educational buildings and the development of the infrastructure of the educational institutions.

#### 4.3.2.2 Opinions of BiH academicians

In the interviews it was indicated that Turkey has given a lot of help in different areas including education. The main theme emerged from the interviews with the Bosnian academicians was named as internationalization, which was presented in Table 4.71 below.

Table 4.71

##### *Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- cooperation established between the educational institutions</li><li>- support given to the Turkish Language and Literature departments with faculty teaching staff and technical assistance</li><li>- research studies among the related institutions</li><li>- joint projects</li><li>- student mobility</li><li>- summer courses for improving Turkish language of the students</li></ul>

In the interviews with the academicians various dimensions of the internationalization were addressed, detailed and clarified. Academicians have given emphasis *on cooperation established between the educational institutions*. For example it was expressed that in the framework of the protocol signed between Tuzla university and TIKA in 2001 within the Faculty of Literature of the said university was established a Turkish Language and Literature department, operating as of the academic year 2002-2003. In the interviews also, it was stated that the support was given to the Turkish Language and Literature departments in the universities in Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica not only with *the faculty teaching staff* but also in form of a *technical assistance*. Additionally, it was indicated that within a cooperation protocol signed between the Oriental Institute of BiH and Prime Ministry State Archives of Turkey, Bosnian historians have a chance to procure samples of the documents related to the BiH, thereby many important documents are obtained in this regard. Within the framework of the cooperation between the institutions of Turkey and BiH *research studies* have been taken an important place. It was stated that from the Ottoman Archives within the Prime Ministry State Archives of Turkey a research permit was granted for the Bosnian researchers who were interested in history of BiH. It was indicated that by this way collection of the documents on the history of Bosnia has begun. Beside that, it was highlighted that contacts were provided with many libraries in order to find the works of the Bosniaks poets and writers. For example, a copies of many valuable works were obtained in a contacts with Suleymaniye library, Ataturk Library, Istanbul University Manuscripts Library, Nuruosmaniye Library and from many other libraries. Academicians highlighted also that the research permit was given by the Turkish authorities in Suleymaniye Manuscripts Library and in the first library of the Republican

period Ataturk library for research purposes. It was expressed that in this way were supplied the copies of many documents and manuscripts by transferring them to CD's. In addition, it was learned that the above mentioned libraries have posted their publications to the Oriental Institute of BiH, and the Bosnian academicians' own publications were sent to IRCICA and to the libraries and various universities in Turkey. Also, it has been indicated that after the war through book campaign organized in the sponsorship of the Children's Foundation of Turkey a lot of valuable works were gained to Institute of Oriental Studies.

On the other hand, from the interview data it was understood that the cooperation relations between the institution of Turkey and BiH includes the *conduction of joint projects* also. Academicians expressed that the Oriental Institute of BiH was implementing some joint projects with Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA). As an illustration was given the book named "History of the Ottoman Empire and Civilization" published by IRCICA, which has been translated in Bosnian language and as a scientific resource has been presented in the use of the researchers.

Another important issue raised by the academicians in the interviews was the *student mobility*. It was mentioned that within the protocol for cooperation signed in 2004 between Sakarya University and Tuzla University an opportunity was given to the students of Tuzla University for master degree and an opportunity was provided to the students from Sakarya University to study in Tuzla University. Apart from the above, an attention was drawn to the importance of *learning Turkish language*. It was stated that, *15-day summer courses* were organized in Turkey for the students of Tuzla University in order *to improve their Turkish language*. As it was learned, these summer schools held in Turkey were terminated since that this task was undertaken by the Yunus Emre Cultural Center newly opened in Sarajevo.

#### ***4.3.2.3 Opinions of Turkish governmental officials in BiH***

Cultural and social support and internationalization were the themes emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey in BiH in the field of higher education. These themes were presented in Table 4.72 below.

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials in BiH was named as *the cultural and social support*. During the interviews the officials mostly concentrated on the historical symbols, project based hardware support of TIKA and the activities held in the field of religion.

Table 4.72

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH*

No	Themes
1	Cultural and social support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the impact of the historical symbols in BiH / restoration, reparation of the cultural monuments inherited from the Ottoman period</li> <li>- project-based hardware support of TIKA/social dimensions of the projects</li> <li>- activities in the field of religion</li> </ul>
2	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving of the physical capacity of the educational institutions</li> <li>- Human resources support/supporting the universities with academic staff</li> <li>- training of the human resources in other areas</li> <li>- organization of academic conferences and symposia</li> <li>- scholarships</li> </ul>

*Historical symbols* were identified as one of the important aspects of this theme stated above. It is understood that the historical symbols affected the relations between Turkey and BiH. Especially the activities regarding the restoration and reparation of the cultural monuments inherited from the Ottoman period were worth mentioning. It was stated that TIKA have greatly contributed in this regard. There were numerous activities implemented by this institution in cooperation either with local, Turkish or international institutions. For example, the officials pointed out the restoration of the Ferhadiye mosque in Banja Luka, which have been damaged during the war. Additionally, the reparation of the Konjic bridge and Drina Sokullu Mehmet Pasha bridge, the restoration of the Kurshunlu Pasha Mosque in Maklaj were the others important historical monuments being repaired by TIKA. The data revealed that *project-based work* of TIKA come to the fore. In interview, it is expressed that, in the context of the 100 school project within Sarajevo canton, in 100 targeted educational institutions within the Religious Affairs of BiH has been given a *hardware support*. For example, in Gorajde village in the scope of dormitory construction project all equipment needed for the construction of the dormitory such as desks, chairs, beds, kitchen materials were provided by TIKA, by this way *the social dimensions of the projects was emphasized*.

Now that these are children from the villages and you see, they mingle with each other, there is a cultural dimension to this, there is really a social class dimension, these are poor children and they need this kind of an opportunity to continue their education.

It is worth examining the activities held in *the field of religious* also. The attention was drawn by the participants to the cooperation between the religious authorities of Turkey and BiH. It was stated that very often a negotiations were realized between the Presidency of

the Religious Affairs of Turkey and BiH Islamic Union within the framework of some joint studies regarding the services in the mosques and financial support to be given for the renovation of the mosques.

Additionally, it was expressed that a contribution in the field of religious education was provided also in form of appointment of the religious officials to BiH by the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey. Further, it was stated that upon the request of the BiH religious authorities during the Ramadan mounts hafizs from Turkey were also temporary appointed, for example in the past years in this way 3 hafizs were appointed, which number was expected to be increased to 10. It was reported that financial support was given for the national public radio channel “Radyo 1” in BiH broadcasting variety of programs. Additionally initiatives were made for the placement of the students who are studying theology in BiH and wish to continue their education in the faculties of theologies in Turkey or religious high schools (imam hatip lisesi).

In summary, the contributions in the field of religious education can be classified as follows: generally contribution provided in form of **infrastructure building, restoration of mosques**, that is to be restored the mosques inherited from the Ottoman period according to their original image, **sending Bosnian students to Turkey wishing to study theology, the appointment of the religious officials** by the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey upon the requests of the BiH Islamic Union, the appointment also of hafiz in different regions during the religious holidays and mounths, supporting the religious educational institutions with **training materials**, additionally **the distribution of Quran** and the distribution of some **religious materials** such as calender and religious publications by translating them into Bosnian language.

The second theme revealed by the data from the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was labeled as **internationalization**. This theme was linked with the support given for the improving of the physical capacity of the educational institutions in BiH, human resource support and scholarships. During the interviews governmental officials concentrated mostly on the **improving of the physical capacity of the educational institutions** of BiH. In this context, it was expressed that there were two projects implemented by TIKA in collaboration with the Bihach University in Krajina region for the establishment of two laboratories with purpose to contribute especially the underdeveloped areas and disadvantages groups in BiH, regardles of the ethnic groups and not bearing any commercial purposes. The first laboratory was regarding the analysis of the wood products aiming to assess the quality of the wood materials in the forestry sector developed in this region. The second one is microbiology laboratory aiming to contribute to animal husbandry and dairy products in the food industry, also developed in the region. Apart from the above mentioned laboratories

another that was indicated by the participants was mechatronics laboratory, constructed in Mostar Machinery and Traffic High School. Further, it was expressed that within the context of infrastructure building, the Rectorat office of Tuzla University was also build by TIKA. Additionally, it was stated that support was given by TIKA in accordance to the protocol signed with the Cemal Bijedich University, which is the only educational institution of the Bosniaks living in Mostar region, for the construction of civil engineering faculty building and for the establishment of a biotechnology laboratory within the said university.

There is a stream that flows around the school and there was no bridge, so to speak, or there was but a ramshackle of a wooden bridge. There was a life threatening danger for the kids. We launched a project concerning that place and we built the classrooms there. We repaired it and we also repaired the bridge. At least we have been able to achieve the opportunity to organize a healthy rotational education twice a day. Now that we have fixed the physical aspects of the education for one and for two, we were able to let produce, as a matter of fact, something that has consequences pertaining to the cultural identity. In other words, we have tried to contribute to that victimized and disadvantaged fraction in the Bosniak society.

*Human resources support*, more precisely, *supporting the universities with academic staff* was identified as another effort, internationalization initiative undertaken by Turkey towards BiH in the field of higher education. It was stated that within the Turcology project, Zenica and Tuzla universities were supported by lecturers, whose monthly salaries were paid by TIKA, the organization of this service is now being undertaken by Yunus Emre Foundation. The latter includes also activities such as *training of the human resources in other areas* as well. It was reported that TIKA in cooperation with the Turkey's General Directorate of Security Police Academy and Police Academy of the Ministry of Interior of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the framework of international police education cooperation, have carried out joint vocational training project. Additionally, in the interview was indicated that the Ministry of Forestry of Turkey in cooperation with BiH Forestry Engineering Union (Bosna Hersek Orman Mühendisliği Birliği) were conducted various educational cooperation project studies in area of forestry also. Apart from this, some activities and services were provided for those who are outside of the production process, for example for the most disadvantaged groups. Further, it was stated that support was provided for the establishment of the visually impaired library, contribution was made for the construction of the BiH's state museum, a reference to national identity and culture of BiH.

Another area of educational support provided was the organization of *academic conferences and symposia*, in which the common culture and history of Turkey with the Balkans was emphasized. For example, it was expressed that a contribution was provided to the international conference named “The Ottomans in the Balkans” and “Bosnia in Ottoman period”, organized in Tuzla in 2009. In the scope of the series initiated by the Turkish Studies Project at the university of UTAH in USA, the conference on “The First World War and the

Ottoman Empire” organized with the contribution of TIKA in cooperation with Yildiz Technical University in Turkey and the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Philosophy can also be added to the chain of the activities that TIKA carried out in the field of education in BiH.

*Scholarships* are one of the important aspects of the internationalization, which facilitate the mobility of the students. During the interviews an information was given about the scholarships granted by the Religious Foundation of Turkey for the students who want to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey. As it was reported, Turkey has been trying to meet all of the scholarships demands as far as possible. In this sense, it was informed that the scholarships allocated by Religious Foundation of Turkey were covering all cost of the students, including dormitory expences. In the last period it was announced that scholarships under the name of “Turkey Scholarships” given jointly by the Religious Affairs of Turkey and the Presidency of the Turks Abroad and Relative Communités.

The information above confirms the situation that “soft power” is one of the methods used by Turkey as a priority in its educational policies. This policy have been strongly reflected in the activities of TIKA.

#### ***4.3.2.4 Opinions of Turkish academicians in BiH***

*Internationalization and teaching Turkish language* were the themes emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey in BiH in the field of higher education. These themes were presented in Table 4.73 below.

Table 4.73

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appointment of the instructors and lecturers to the educational institutions in BiH</li> <li>- student mobility / internships, student quota, difficulties in applying of Erasmus program</li> <li>- cooperative initiatives between the educational institutions</li> </ul>
2	Dissemination of Turkish language in BiH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teaching Turkish language as a compulsory elective in three cantons in BiH</li> </ul>

*Internationalization* was the most prominent theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians. This theme was explained from several aspects. First, academicians linked this theme with the faculty mobility. According to them the *appointment of the instructors and lecturers to the educational institutions in BiH* constitutes an important part in the cooperation between Turkey and BiH. It was informed that in the framework of the Interministerial Joint Cultural Commission, through the Ministry of National Education of

Turkey or Yunus Emre Cultural Center, in accordance to the agreements signed with the universities in Turkey, lecturers were appointed in the Turcology departments within the universities in Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla. Further, it was stated that, according to these agreements, faculties from the BiH were also assigned for a period of 5 years in the Turcology departments of the universities in Turkey to gain experience. It was expressed that even some of faculty members from the universities in BiH have master or doctoral degree from Turkey for example from Bilkent University or conducted postdoctoral research in Turkey. Despite the appointment of lecturers, it was said that unfortunately the exchange of faculty among the educational institutions of both countries is still not possible. Another important contribution appreciated by the educational authorities in BiH are the activities conducted by Turkey aiming the development of the infrastructure of the educational institutions in BiH since many of them were demolished during the war.

However, as it is known another important aspect of internationalization was *student mobility*. Academicians stated that within the cooperation established between the universities of Turkey and BiH, for example in the year of 2012 approximately 25-30 students were sent to Turkey for *internships*. Among the academicians there were opinions that *the student quota* allocated in the framework of Great Student Project by Turkey for BiH was found to be insufficient, and the attention was drawn on the fact that this quota should be increased not only by numbers, but also to increase it qualitatively. Apart from this, academicians stated that it would be useful to expand the number and the amount of the master and doctorate scholarships allocated by Turkey to the Balkan countries, by taking into consideration the marital status, housing conditions and the travel expences from the country of origin to Turkey. It was learned that a study is carried out by the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities in this regard. But, despite all of these, the academicians have noted the fact that since BiH is not a candidate to the European Union *the Erasmus program can not be applied* between the two countries.

On the other hand, the academicians drew attention to the importance of the *cooperative initiatives between the educational institutions of both countries*. It was expressed that with the contributions of the Turkish entrepreneurs two universities were established in BiH, which are Burch University and International Sarajevo University. Within the Burch University there is a Turkish Language and Literature Teaching department. It was learned that these universities were in cooperation with the Bulent Ecevit university in Zonguldak, Akdeniz University in Antalya and Suleyman Demirel University in Isparta, Turkey. Additionally, it was indicated that the Burch University in Sarajevo has signed a partnership agreement with one of the Croatia universities in Croatia for performing mutual visits. It was learned that these Turkish universities in BiH signed partnership agreement with

the Sarajevo University, Cemal Bijedich University in Mostar, Eyup Ganis University in Sarajevo and with the Pula University in Croatia and many other universities.

The second theme revealed by the data from the interviews with the Turkish academicians was named *as dissemination of Turkish language in BiH*. This theme was associated with *teaching Turkish language* in BiH. Academicians emphasized the importance of teaching Turkish language in BiH. They noted that the Turkish language was accepted as *compulsory elective course in three cantons in BiH* and there were initiatives reported in this respect in other cantons. It was expressed that support was given also by the Ministry of Culture of Turkey for example for the translation of the books needed in the Turcology departments of the universities in BiH. It was acknowledged that owing to the activities of Turkey in the field of education and the support given for teaching Turkish language in BiH, the relations between the two countries, which were extremely weak in the past years were recently started to strengthen in all areas.

#### ***4.3.2.5 Opinion of the representative of Turkish association in BiH (Yunus Emre Cultural Center)***

The main theme emphasized in the interviews with the representative of the Turkish association regarding the activities undertaken by Turkey in BiH in the field of education was labeled as dissemination of Turkish language in BiH. This theme was presented in Table 4.74 below.

Table 4.74

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Turkish Association in BiH*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Dissemination of Turkish Language/ variety of activities - appointment of the lecturers to the Turkish Language and Literature departments of the Universities/organization of Turkish courses - scholarships for the students from Turcology sections - different cultural events/Turkish poetry contests, folklore groups to promote Turkish culture, workshops for Turcologists

*Dissemination of Turkish language* was the prominent theme that emerged in the interviews with the representative of the Turkish association. Data revealed a variety of activities which were held in this regard, some of which can be listed as follows: appointment of the lecturers to the Turkish Language and literature departments of the universities, opened by TIKA, organization of Turkish courses, seminars and different cultural activities in accordance with the local needs.

In the interview, the representative of Turkish association in BiH (the Yunus Emre Cultural Center) expressed that within the Turcology project, TIKA signed a protocols with

the universities in Zenica and Tuzla. In accordance with these protocols support was given to the Turkish Language and Literature departments in these universities by *appointment of the lecturers*, and as well as support given in form of providing educational materials and textbooks.

Another activity worth mentioning regarding the dissemination of Turkish language was the *organization of Turkish courses* in the Cultural Centers, operating in Sarajevo and Foynica city. It was stated that the main purpose of these Centers is to promote and teach the Turkish language, as well as to promote the Turkish culture, art and traditions. In this context, it has been reported that Turkish language courses were organized in three of 10 cantons of BiH. Additionally it has been managed to include the Turkish in the curriculum, and as of the 2011-2012 academic year the 6. Grade students have started to choose the Turkish language as a second foreign elective language. It was noted that up to now approximately 990 students attended Turkish language course. There were studies to increase this number and to expand this implementation within the high school level.

Other than above, the participant indicated that there were seminars organized either in Turkey or in BiH for the students studying in Turcology sections. It was reported that in terms of financial contribution and encouraging the Bosnian students for studying in Turcology sections, certain amount of *scholarships* were given yearly to the successful students in Turcology sections. Alongside the activities mentioned above, it was stated that *different cultural events* were conducted as reading *Turkish poetry contests*, and that the winner of the contests were rewarded with travel to Turkey, and that the plane tickets were afforded by Turkish Airlines (THY). Additionally, it was expressed that in the framework of the 23 April Festival, *folklore groups* have been brought from Turkey aiming to promote Turkish culture. Another important activity worth mentioning was the *Workshop* organized in Sarajevo under the name “Balkan Turcologist Workshop in the Balkans”. In this workshop were hosted Turcologist from Turkey, from the Balkans and even from Egypt.

### **4.3.3 The rationales behind Turkey’s practices towards BiH**

#### **4.3.3.1 Opinions of BiH governmental officials**

The themes emphasized in the interviews with the Bosnian governmental officials regarding the rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education towards BiH were determined as cultural and social and political rationales. These themes were presented in Table 4.75 below.

Table 4.75

*Themes Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Cultural and social rationale Factors: historical and cultural ties Bosnian origin citizens living in Turkey
2	Political rationale - Bosnian students studying in Turkey – bridge between the two countries - an investment in the future diplomatic relations

First rationale, which was prominent in the interview with the Bosnian governmental official was named ***cultural and social rationale***. This rationale was associated to several factors that were strongly influencing Turkey's practices in higher education towards the Balkans. In terms of BiH, the first factor was actually related to the close ***historical and emotional ties*** existing between the two countries due to the common past history. Additionally, existing of ***Bosnian origin citizens living in Turkey*** was identified as another significant factor affecting the motivation of Turkey in development of bilateral relations with BiH not only in the field of education but also in other areas.

The second rationale emerged in the interview regarding Turkey's practices in higher education toward BiH was labeled as ***political rationale***. Turkey was pointed as a historically and traditionally very important country for the Bosnians. In this context it was cited as a country having strong foreign policy, especially as a country that recently has been using more soft power. Governmental official stated that students studying in Turkey play an important role in motivation of Turkey for establishing of bilateral relations between the two countries. They stressed that these ***students formed the bridge between Turkey and BiH***. It was commented that these students were ***an investment in the future diplomatic relations*** between the two countries. Therefore, in this regard it was stated that for further strengthening the educational, cultural and emotional ties between Turkey and BiH, more students should be sent for study to Turkey.

#### ***4.3.3.2 Opinions of BiH academicians***

In the interviews with the Bosnian academicians two rationales were emerged. They were economic and political rationales, which are presented in Table 4.76 below.

Table 4.76

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Economic rationale - teaching Turkish language - job recruitments/contribution to the development of the economy of BiH
2	Political rationale - foreign policy - Bosnian students studying in Turkey/investing in the future relations

In the interviews the opinions of the Bosnian academicians concentrated on *the economic rationale*. This rationale was linked mainly to the benefits obtained as a results of the investments made by Turkey in the field of education in BiH. Academicians stated that the cooperation in the field of education with Turkey provided an opportunities for job recruitments. *Teaching Turkish language* was indicated as an important factor in this sense. It was stated that in recent years the interest towards Turkish has been increased. The Turkish series published in BiH have been found to be quite effective in dissemination of Turkish language also. It was emphasized that this situation was in the interests of both countries.

The fact that Turkish or the Turkish language and literature are in use in Tuzla has created a reciprocal benefits for the Turkish businessmen investing in the region. This benefit is a reciprocal one. Employment, indeed, has been very beneficial, I think, because Bosnia's economic situation is not very bright as you know. Therefore, opening new businesses is a beautiful opportunity for Bosnia and for the youngsters here.

Further, it was mentioned that, especially with the opening of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center in BiH, serious studies have been carried out in terms of dissemination of Turkish, for example in the cantons as Zenica and Mostar. In this respect, Turkish language has began to be taught in primary and secondary schools as an elective course. It was emphasized that through the investments made by Turkey for example for dissemination of Turkish language in BiH at have been created an employment opportunities for the Bosnian youths and by this way it was contributed to the developing of trade relations with BiH.

The second significant rationale emerged in the interviews with the Bosnian academicians was labeled as *political rationale*. This rationale was associated with *the foreign policy*. It was stated that, those students who are studying in Turkey or those students who are studying in the Turkish Language and Literature Departments will serve as a bridge in terms of the development of the bilateral relations among both countries. In this sense, it was said that Turkey has been *investing in its future relations with BiH*. One of the academicians expressed that "every individual that learns Turkish in Tuzla eventually becomes a part of the dynamic that exists between our two countries as volunteer cultural ambassadors".

According to the comments in the interviews, the foreign policy of Turkey, common culture, immigration and employment are the factors that came to the fore affecting the educational cooperation between the both countries.

The most important factor that affects the relations in the field of education is directly related to the economic synergy and cultural convergence. In all likelihood, it is supposed to be important for the quality of education and the sustainable efficiency that Turkey maintains the constructive stance it has pursued towards the unity and integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### ***4.3.3.3 Opinions of Turkish governmental officials in BiH***

In the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials three main theme were prominent. They were cultural and social rationale, political rationale and economic rationale, which were presented in Table 4.77 below.

Table 4.77

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials in BiH*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Cultural and social rationale - historical ties affecting the bilateral relations - the importance of the religion factor
2	Political rationale - Turkey as a power indicator for Bosnians - promotion of Turkey, Turkish language and Turkish culture
3	Economic rationale - to contribute to the development of the economy of BiH

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was identified as ***cultural and social rationale***. The officials linked this theme with the ***historical ties*** existed between Turkey and BiH, due to the common history stemmed from Ottoman era. According to them the common history was ***significantly affecting*** the educational activities carried out by Turkey in BiH. In this meaning the participants drawn attention to the traces of the Ottoman Empire in the territory of the Balkans. Emphasis has been placed on ***the importance of the religion factor***. The following comments explained in a better way the impact of the religion factor motivating Turkey's practices in the field of education in BiH.

The underlying cause is the fact that we are brothers in faith, which is the primary reason. The secondary reason is the fact that we are able to help them where they may be deficient, because we are slightly better off in terms of religious education. It would be wrong to look for other reasons and we cannot look for some other reason apart from the mere fact that we are brothers in religion.

Bosnians feelings of excessive love towards Turkey is very understandable. Turkish governmental officials confirmed this situation by saying that “they know that the Ottomans came here to spread the religion and with no other agenda. They know that they [Ottomans]

did not exploit them. That is why they have this love towards Turkey”:

The second theme that took place in the interviews was *named political rationale*. It was indicated that Turkey was perceived as a *power indicator* by Bosnians. By providing services to every area and each region of BiH actually it was intended to increase the visibility of TIKA and the Republic of Turkey in BiH. Thanks to the soft power used recently in the foreign policy of Turkey, it was emphasized that a contribution was made for *the promotion of Turkey in the region*. It was stated that all activities were carried out surely associating with *Turkey, Turkish language and Turkish culture*. The following evaluation made in the interviews is extremely noteworthy:

However, we have the means to reach from the capital to the countryside and even to the most remote places without discrimination. That is we have the means to fly our flag from Bihaç to Sanski Most or Ustikolina, which has a symbolic meaning, or when you build a school, that is something concrete and visible, and you have the possibility to put up your signboard.

From the interpretation of the governmental officials it was understood that the primary purpose of the construction of rector's office the University of Tuzla was to strengthen the Turkish Language and Literature department, to enhance the prestige of this department and to highlight its importance.

The third theme determined by the data from the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was named as *economic rationale*. This theme was related to the activities carried out by Turkey aiming to contribute not only *to the development of the economy* of BiH, but also to the process of democratization. The main purpose of the activities held were expressed by the following sentences.

...we have a large space for maneuver in increasing the country's capacity for education, health, infrastructure, agriculture, stockbreeding and the like, and in reinforcing the societal organizations, and in contributing to the democratic processes..... I mean, you create something that is going to contribute to the economic life and the agricultural sector. And thirdly, we produce something that will help level the playing field, support the disadvantaged group. I am trying to say that there are multiple consequences.

#### ***4.3.3.4 Opinions of Turkish academicians in BiH***

Academicians stressed that primarily BiH's political, economic and bureaucratic structure and the historical symbols are very important factors affecting the educational relations between the two countries. There were four rationales revealed by the data from the interviews with Turkish academicians: political, academic, cultural and social and economic. These rationales were presented in Table 4.78 below.

Table 4.78

*Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with Turkish Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- efforts to contribute for peace and the stability in the Balkans</li> <li>- to provide interaction between different ethnic groups</li> <li>- elumination of the prejudices about Turks and Ottomans</li> <li>- dissemination of Turkish language</li> </ul>
2	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing of the interest in Turkish universities</li> <li>- strengthen the bilateral relations in the field of education</li> <li>- through education to establish a bridge of friendship between the two countries</li> </ul>
3	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the impact of the historical ties between Turkey and BiH</li> </ul>
4	Economic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- job opportunities</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians was determined as ***political rationale***. Academicians by referring to the right of each country to live in peace with its neighbours expressed that Turkey has done every effort for the formation of ***the stability in the Balkans*** by the activities and services offered to all ethnic groups; Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, in all areas and regions of BiH. It was noted that Turkey's educational activities aimed to establish cooperative relations with all ethnic groups without any discrimination, to provide opportunity for all ethnic groups to be educated all together, to interact with each other, to establish friendship and companionship, intending to prevent potential nationalist conflicts. It is emphasized that in this regard Turkey's activities realized not only in the field of education but also in all areas will ***contribute for ensuring the peace and stability in the region***. It was noted that the efforts spent by Turkish institutions for the creation of peaceful atmosphere in the region can not be underestimated. In fact, the Turkish academicians expressed the purpose of the Turkish educational institutions with the following remarkable sentence "and this is why these organizations are founded here, the Turkish nation granted these as an endowment to the Bosniaks in order to be able to act in unison, in other words, to see what we can do together.

Further, the academicians emphasized that one of the purposes of the international educational institutions established by Turkish entrepreneurs in BiH is to provide an ***environment for interaction of the different ethnic groups*** with each others before some prejudices occurs. Apart from above, academicians stated that ***teaching Turkish language in BiH contributed for the elimination of the prejudices about Turks, Ottomans*** and facilitated for the integration of the two communities in BiH. Additionally, it was emphasized that the cooperation between the two countries led to promotion of Turkey, Turkish culture and

increased the interest to Turkish universities. In this context, it was stated that the cooperation between Turkey and BiH has been extremely useful in terms of *dissemination of Turkish language*. Therefore, Turkish language was pointed as one of the reasons for being active in the region. It is seen that Turkish language has been used as an instrument in the bilateral relations between the two countries. Academicians explained its importance in the following way.

The instrument of any country desirous of being influential is language. Only if you can teach your native language to other countries, you can be culturally influential. In this respect, the increased popularity of Turkish and its extensive reach to more regions is not only prestigious for the language, but also for Turkey as well. Becoming more influential is only possible through language and culture.

In fact, according to the opinion of the academicians, Turkey, with the activities made in the field of education is aiming to pay its historical debt and at the same time to strengthen her status politically in BiH.

The second rationale emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians was named *academic rationale*. Regarding this rationale academicians concentrated mainly on the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries, increasing the level of the educational relations and the desire to search for the possibilities of applying the Erasmus programs between Turkey and BiH. During the interviews the participants highlighted that the cooperation between the two countries in the field of education resulted not only in dissemination of the Turkish language in BiH, but at the same time has given an opportunity to learn Turkish culture very closely, which in turn have increased the *interest in Turkish universities*. Academicians expressed their desire for applying of the Erasmus programs between the educational institutions of both countries. They thought that by this way it can be *strengthen the bilateral relations in the field of education between Turkey and BiH*, and also to ensure Bosnian students to prefer studying in Turkey. Further academicians stated that by the contributions of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center opened in 2009 Turkish language gained a great prestige in BiH, that Turkish language have began to be implemented as an elective course in the three cantons, in other words in 47 schools, from 6.th grade to 9.th grade, which lead to an increase in the interest in Turcology sections of the universities. It was expressed that Turkey pursued a very positive policy in this regard.

According to the opinion of the academicians the main objectives of the activities held by Turkey in the field of education in BiH is to increase the level of the educational relations between the two countries and at the same time through education *to establish a bridge of friendship* between two countries.

Third rationale identified by the data from the interviews with the Turkish academicians regarding rationales behind Turkey's practices undertaken in the field of

education in BiH was labeled as *cultural and social rationale*. Turkish academicians like Turkish governmental officials linked this theme with the *historical ties stemmed from Ottoman period*. It was pointed out that having more than 500 years long common historical association and culture, unity of history, customs, traditions, the closeness of the life styles of Turkey and BiH were decisive factors for preferring Turkey's cooperation in compare to Europe. Academicians stated that there were a sympathy about Turkey, therefore, they commented that Turkey should invest more and be more active in BiH.

Fourth rationale emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians was named as *economic rationale*. This theme was associated with *the job opportunities in BiH*. The data revealed that the main reason for learning Turkish or choosing to study in Turkoloji section is for economic reasons. According to the views of the academicians, the young people are learning Turkish in order to make good trading, to study in Turkey, to guide tourists, or to become a teacher in Turkish education, therefore they have been diverted to the Turkish language sections of the universities in BiH or they were going to study in Turkey. It was stated that thanks to Turkish language, many students following their graduation would not have any concerns for finding job.

#### **4.3.3.5 Opinion of Turkish association representative in BiH (Yunus Emre Cultural Center)**

In the interview with the representative of Turkish Association in BiH two different rationales were prevalent: *cultural - social and political rationales*, which are presented in the Table 4.79 below.

Table 4.79

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1	Cultural and social rationales - historical symbols - aim: preservation and maintenance of historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period
2	Political rationale - to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey, against the Ottomans

The first theme appeared in the interview with the representative of the Turkish Association in BiH was determined as *cultural and social rationale*. This rationale was linked to the historical symbols. It was noted that the relations between Turkey and BiH have been carried out through *the historical symbols*. It was indicated that one of the reasons for the activities undertaken by Turkey in BiH was *preservation and maintenance of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period*. In the scope of these activities there were

various projects held on restoration of cultural heritage in the Balkans, in other words, studies done to identify the places, the institutions and the positions of the manuscripts dating to Ottoman time, if needed to make the restoration or to provide their restorations or to teach them or to provide support by equipment or training of the staff.

The second important theme strongly emphasized in the interview with the representative of the Turkish association was named as *political rationale*. The data revealed that the representative was mainly concentrated on *the elimination of the prejudices occurred in the minds of the people in BiH against the Ottomans* in accordance with the historical facts. It was indicated that thanks to the promotion of the Turkish language, art and culture and Turkey, it has been possible to break down these prejudices about Turkey occurred the minds of the people from various groups living in BiH. It was stated that as a consequence of the promotion activities provided by Turkish institutions Bosnian people begun to feel sympathy for Turkey and to express their desire to visit Turkey. It was expressed that these visits in turn have created different opportunities for establishing of relationships not only between in the field of education but also in other areas, for example efforts spent for improving the trade relations between the two countries. It was emphasized that thanks to these activities, such benefits have been generated.

#### 4.3.4 The expectations of different stakeholders in the Balkan countries from Turkey

##### 4.3.4.1 Opinions of BiH governmental Officials

The theme emerged in the interviews with the BiH governmental officials was named as internationalization which was presented in Table 4.80 below.

Table 4.80

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Bosnian Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- students and faculty exchange</li> <li>- recognition of the educational systems of both countries</li> <li>- expert exchange</li> <li>- signing of an agreements in the field of education</li> <li>- joint conferences/opening chairs of the countries languages</li> <li>- raising staff</li> </ul>

The main theme emerged regarding the expectations of the Bosnian governmental officials was *internationalization*. Special attention was drawn to some of the aspects of the internationalization as desire to realize more *students and faculty exchange* between the educational institutions, *the recognition of the educational systems* and *the exchange of*

*experts* for examining of the educational systems of both countries. In this respect there was an expectation of increasing the scholarships and the student quota allocated for BiH by Turkey and as well as for further development of the relations between the two countries it was mentioned about *the importance of the signing of an agreements in the field of education*. Furthermore, the request for the organization of *join conferences*, mutually *recognition of the countries languages and to opening the chairs of the countries languages* were conveyed. As it is known BiH is a developing country. In this context, there were also expectations for raising staff. *The need of trained personnel* in the field of education was emphasized.

#### 4.3.4.2 Opinions of BiH academicians

The theme revealed by the data from the interviews regarding the expectations of the Bosnian academicians from Turkey was *internationalization*, which was presented in Table 4.81 below.

Table 4.81

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Bosnian Academicians*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation and protocols signed between the educational institutions</li> <li>- increase in the student quota</li> <li>- support to be given in form of teaching materials and textbooks</li> <li>- engaging of lecturers and faculty members in the Turkish language and literature departments</li> <li>- providing access to library on-line resource and bibliography (references) in libraries of Turkish universities</li> </ul>

Different aspects of the internationalization was detailed. The attention was drawn to *the cooperation and protocols* signed between the educational institutions of both countries, *student quota* allocated by Turkey, support by *teaching materials and textbooks*. For example, they expressed that within the Turcology projects, a cooperation protocol was signed between Yunus Emre Cultural Center and Sarajevo University, aiming to further development of the existing relations between Turkey and BiH. In this sense, it was stated that in order to improve the quality of the education at the Turkish Language and Literature departments in BiH support was expected by engaging of *lecturers or faculty members from Turkey to these departments*. Further, it was explained that those who will be appointed should have the following qualifications:

Our priority is faculty members with PhDs, qualified to teach Turkish to foreigners and affluent socially and culturally. Additionally, appointments of faculty members in Bosnia-Herzegovina will be healthier if they are arranged mindful of the academic terms and the dates of repeat examinations.

Additionally, academicians emphasized that duration of the assignment of the faculty members coming from Turkey should be at least 5 years.

The department's appointments of faculty members from Turkey for 1-2 years cause problems in terms of continuity and quality of education. This situation does not take the faculty member beyond the point of being a visiting scholar, and may fall far from the desired efficiency, as it causes the faculty members to think 'here I come, but soon I will go'. Our expectation is to receive departmental appointments from Turkey for 5 years, if possible.

It was advised that it would be appropriate if the assigned faculty members prior their coming to BiH have been well informed on the educational system of BiH, the general trends related to education, socio-cultural and ethical norms of the country.

Attention was drawn to the number of the student quota allocated by Turkey. Some academicians assessed *the number of the student quota* allocated by Turkey as sufficient, while some others stated that it should be useful to increase this quota considering the increase in the enrollment rate in BiH. The academicians emphasized that it is necessary especially from the point of learning and teaching Turkish language in BiH.

On the other hand, the attention was drawn by the academicians also to the need of *teaching materials* and to difficulties faced in *supplying of textbooks*. It was stated that the books needed during the education frequently were provided by their own means, that sometimes they have been able to distribute only the photocopies of the books. It was indicated that occasionally, none of the books donated by Turkey were meeting the needs, therefore they have requested assistance for the elimination of the shortages of textbooks.

Apart from that, Bosnian academicians requested that certain conditions be facilitated for *providing access to library on-line resource and bibliography (references) in the libraries of Turkish universities*, as well to given an assistance for the projects, printing and publication of the academic works of the faculty members from the universities in BiH.

In addition, academicians have attributed importance to another issue. It was expressed that the Bosniaks are emotional and proud people, they see themselves as a part of the Ottoman Empire, but for the sake of to research their own history they did not have any intention to beg anyone or tilt their heads. Therefore, it was requested that the projects be supported in case they were found to be eligible.

#### ***4.3.4.3 Opinions of Turkish governmental officials in BiH***

In the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials *cultural and social support* theme appeared to be prevalent regarding the expectations of the Bosnian stakeholders from Turkey. This theme was presented in Table 4.82 below.

Table 4.82

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	Cultural and social support - historical symbols: restoration of the historical monuments repairment of the mosques. - support to be given in the field of religious education

Cultural and social support theme was related to *the historical symbols and support to be given in the field of religion*. The officials come up with the opinion that the demands of the Bosnian stakeholders were mostly about the *restoration of the historical monuments*, repairment of the demolished or destroyed mosques during the war.

Furthermore, it was noted that support was expected also for different *religious activities*. For example, it was expressed that during the month of Ramadan or religious occasions there were demands for hafiz (mem), religious books, and requests for Quran from Turkey. Apart from that it was explained that Religion Union of BiH was having financial difficulties and that it was trying to carry out its activities completely by money collected from the public under the name of religion tax. Therefore, taking into account limited budget of the Bosnian Religious Union, Turkish governmental officials stated that, studies should be done in order to support the religious education in BiH. During the interview, it was emphasized that if the support be given for the construction of madrasas in BiH, then the number of the students can be increased.

In the interview, the religious and cultural education were interpreted as one of the factors playing an important role in the formation of the national identity of the Bosnians living in BiH.

#### **4.3.4.4 Opinions of Turkish academicians in BiH**

In the interviews with the Turkish academicians regarding the expectations from Turkey in the field of education *internationalization* appeared as an important theme. This theme was presented in Table 4.83 below.

Some aspects of internationalization such as increasing the student quota and scholarships, student and faculty mobility, shortages of trained personnel, support to be given in form of teaching materials and textbooks and support expected to be given for the mass media.

Table 4.83

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with Turkish Academicians*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demands for increasing the number of student quota and scholarships allocated by Turkey</li> <li>- encouraging the student and faculty mobility</li> <li>- support for participation to the various symposia/continuation of the summer seminars for the educators</li> <li>- providing of dictionaries and course guidelines</li> <li>- the need of raising staff</li> <li>- the support of the mass media</li> </ul>

Turkish academicians described the Bosnian stakeholder's expectations as followings: firstly ***increasing the number of student quota and scholarships*** allocated by Turkey. In this respect they indicated the importance of giving an opportunity to faculty members for doing masters or doctoral degree in Turkey. The academicians emphasized that by this way ***the student and faculty mobility*** between Turkey and BiH can be encouraged. It has been pointed out that with aim to disseminate teaching Turkish language in BiH and to support the educational activities in BiH, the realization of exchange of faculty member is necessary even if it is for short time. Secondly, the academicians stated that the support was requested by Bosnian academicians for their ***participation in various symposia*** organized by Turkey, it was conveyed especially the demands of the Bosnian academicians for continuity of ***the summer seminars*** organized for the educators. Academicians believed that all of these activities mentioned above will have a positive impact on the increasing the level of the cooperation in the field of education between the two countries.

Turkish academicians indicated that ***assistance in printing the textbooks*** needed for the Turkish Language and Literature departments of the universities, ***providing of dictionaries and course guidelines*** were the other expectations frequently demanded by Bosnian stakeholders. Apart from these, during the interview another important issue that was frequently raised was the need of skilled trained personnel in every field. It was stated that due to the political structure of the country the people in BiH were desperate and hopeless. In this respect it was emphasized ***the need of raising staff***, who can resolve this hopelessness and desparation, who can be leaders and administrators with vision.

Additionally, considering the countries source of income, from the economic point of view, it was stated that serious studies should be made in the areas such as agriculture, furniture sector, and tourism and entertainment sector. As to the occupational groups, it was indicated that the sectors such as law, economics, psychology and foreign languages recently have become very popular in BiH, whereas in health sectors serious problems have been

encountered. Thus, it was emphasized that training of personnel in this field was also required.

Apart from the above, the academicians stated that if the aids were delivered to *mass media* such as *Turkish radio and television broadcasting*, the integration of the peoples between both countries would be achieved more easily and thus by appealing to more people it would be possible to influence the environment in a positive way.

#### 4.3.5 The practices undertaken by the Balkan countries in order to enhance cooperation with Turkey

##### 4.3.5.1 Opinions of BiH governmental officials

The theme emerged in the interviews with the BiH governmental officials was named as *internationalization*, which was presented in Table 4.84 below.

Table 4.84

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - cooperation initiatives - initiatives for encouraging the exchange of student and faculty - initiatives for opening of Bosnian language section in Turkish universities

The data from the interviews with the BiH governmental officials revealed that *internationalization* was the prominent theme. This theme was related to the *cooperation initiatives* of the Bosnian educational institutions, efforts made for realizing *the exchange of student and faculty* between the educational institutions and *opening of Bosnian language sections in Turkish universities*. In this context, Bosnian governmental officials reported about some practices undertaken by Bosnian stakeholders in order to enhance the cooperation with Turkey in the field of education. For example, they indicated that with each passing day the universities of both countries have started to do more cooperation. Furthermore, it was stated that in order to implement some joint projects an initiatives were made oftenly with Turkish universities. It was mentioned that a meeting with the president of TOBB University was made in this regard.

Apart from the above, Bosnian governmental official expressed that in order *to encourage student and faculty exchange* between the two countries the meetings were held with many universities, one of which was the meeting held with the Bahceshehir University in Istanbul. In addition, it was explained that initiative also was made before Ankara University for opening of *Bosnian language section*.

#### 4.3.5.2 Opinions of BiH Academicians

As in the interviews with the governmental officials in the interviews with the Bosnian academicians *internationalization* was the prominent theme emerged regarding the practices undertaken in order to enhance the cooperation in higher education with Turkey. This theme was presented in Table 4.85 below.

Table 4.85

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Academicians*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - support requested for the publication of book on Turkish literature history

Academicians associated this theme with the *teaching materials*. They indicated that a specific requests was conveyed for the publication of a book related to the Turkish literature history. Academicians explained that an initiatives were made before the newly established Yunus Emre Cultural Center in BiH for requesting support for the publication of the book on the Turkish Literature history written by Bosnian academics Fehim Nametak.

#### 4.3.5.3 Opinions of the Turkish academicians in BiH

Turkish academicians explained that aiming to enhance the cooperation with Turkey in the field of education Bosnian stakeholders were concentrated mainly on the initiatives related to *internationalization* theme, which was presented in Table 4.86 below.

Table 4.86

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - attempts for accelerating the student and faculty mobility - initiatives for implementation of Erasmus program

It was mentioned about the attempts for *accelerating the student and faculty mobility* between the educational institutions among both countris, for example studies made for exchange of faculty members with Trakya University.

Attention was drawn also on the initiatives for realizing the student exchange and *implemation of the Erasmus program* between the university in Sarajevo and the universities in Turkey. It was reported about the correspondence made for coming of the students from Turkey to university of Sarajevo through the Erasmus.

### 4.3.6 The rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation with Turkey

#### 4.3.6.1 Opinions of BiH governmental officials

The interview data revealed two main rationales: political and cultural and social rationales. The details of these rationales were presented in Table 4.87 below.

Table 4.87

*Rationales Identified in the Interviews with the BiH Governmental Officials*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale - change in the prejudices against Ottomans and Turks - the impact of the Turkish series and Turkish language
2	Cultural and social rationale - the impact of the Turkish universities on the cultural integrity in BiH/ intercultural communication and intercultural understanding in BiH

The first rationale identified was *political rationale*. It was expressed that thanks to the educational policy of Turkey some of the *prejudices* of the Ottoman period existing in Bosnia against Turkey has been started to change. It was stated that the Turkish series published in BiH and the efforts for the promotion of Turkish language were effective in this regard also.

Further, the second theme emerged in the interview was *cultural and social rationale*. An attention was drawn to *the impact of the universities* established in Sarajevo with the initiatives of the Turkish entrepreneurs, International Sarajevo university and Burch university, on *the cultural integrity in BiH*. In these universities there were students from various ethnic groups and from different regions of the Balkans, studying all together, for example from Sandcak region, Serbia and other neighboring countries, as well as from Turkey. It was expressed that thanks to the education given in these universities a contribution has been made to the mutual *intercultural communication and intercultural understanding in BiH*, there is so much need in this regard. Therefore, it has been stated that a great importance was attached to the bilateral relations with Turkey in every domain.

#### 4.3.6.2 Opinions of BiH academicians

In the interviews with the Bosnian academicians four rationales were identified: political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationales. These rationales are presented in the Table 4.88 below.

Table 4.88

*Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with the BiH Academicians*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale - Turkey as a politically and economically very important power - importance of the cooperation with Turkey
2	Economic rationale - meeting the manpower needs in BiH thanks to the students studying in Turkey
3	Academic rationales - positive impact of the cooperation on the students and faculty
4	Cultural and social rationale - formation of national identity and culture in BiH

The first rationale emphasized by the academicians was labeled as *political rationale*. The academicians evaluated Turkey from the political point of view and defined it as a very important power and economically advancing country. In this sense, it was stated that a great importance was attached to the cooperation with Turkey in every domain including education.

The second theme underlined by the academicians was *economic rationale*. This rationale was associated with *the man power needs in BiH*. It was expressed that the thanks to the students studying in Turkey, the needs of trained personnel in different positions and institutions were met. It was stated that students following their graduation, when return to BiH have been employed particularly in the diplomatic missions, as translators in the businesses opened by Turkish investors, some of them in the Yunus Emre Cultural Center, and some others as assistant in Tuzla and Zenica universities.

The third rationale that was prevalent in the interviews with the academicians was *academic rationale*. The theme was related to the impact of the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries on the students and faculty members. It was stated that the most important *contribution of the cooperation with the universities in Turkey for the students* was that by visits organized for the students in the framework of these cooperations it has been given an opportunity to be closely acquainted with Turkey and get at first hand information about Turkey and Turkish educational system, and as well herewith to improve their Turkish language. The positive impact of these activities were summarized in the following expressions:

Our students go there for a 15 day summer course, in other words they attend classes, and also they travel to several locations in Turkey in a touristic manner and they return in state of satisfaction. As you will appreciate, the students' motivation is seriously increased when they travel to the country, the language and literature of which they are studying.

In the interviews, it was stressed also that within the framework of the cooperation academicians were invited to various symposiums and seminars which were held in Turkey. In the seminars attended they have an opportunity to learn about the innovations in Turkish literature and as well to include in the curricula of their department the new publications.

As in the interviews with the Bosnian governmental officials in the interviews with Bosnian academicians an emphasis was given on *the cultural and social rationale* also. Bosnian academicians linked this rationale with the formation of *the national identity*. Therefore, they expressed the studies of the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo as very important. According to their views the main purpose of this Institute is to explore the culture and the history of the BiH in the Ottoman period. It was explained that by collecting the archival documents and written works from the Ottoman period it is aimed to be acquainted with that period and to introduce all these documents not only to the Turcologist, but also assuming it as a sacred duty to share all these information with those who do not know Turkish in BiH. Hence, it was emphasized that with these studies that have been done and will be done, the aim is to contribute to the *formation of the national identity and culture in BiH*. Thus the cooperation with Turkey in this regard was assumed to be very important.

In addition, historical ties, customs and traditions are very important, even vacation opportunities in Turkey, the search for jobs in the tourism sector caused an increased interest in Turkey, which in turn lead to perceive the Turks as their brothers

#### ***4.3.6.3 Opinions of the Turkish governmental officials in BiH***

The rationales emerged in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials can be summarized under two main headings: economic and cultural and social rationales. These rationales were presented in details in Table 4.89 below.

Table 4.89

*Rationales Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Governmental Officials*

<b>No</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1	Economic rationale - employment opportunity for the students graduated from Turkey - Turkey contributed in raising and training the manpower needed in BiH
2	Cultural and social rationale - the role of the religion factor in formation of national identity

The first rationale come to the fore was *economic rationale*. *This rationale was closely related to the labour market in BiH*. It was indicated that receiving education in Turkey has contributed in many ways to the economic developments of BiH. Firstly, it was indicated that it provides an *employment opportunity for the students* who were graduated

from the universities in Turkey. Secondly, Turkey *contributed in raising and training of the manpower* needed in the labour market of of BiH. For example, it was stated that students graduated from the faculties of theology in Turkey were assigned in many institutions and organizations acting in the field of religion in BiH in different positions such as mufti, district mufti, chief imam or scripture lesson teachers. Jablanica mufti, who graduated from the Faculty of Theology in Samsun and the Olaca mufti who graduated from the Faculty of Theology of the Erciyes University in Kayseri were some of them that can support the statement the above.

The second rationale identified in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials was labeled as *cultural and social rationale*. The participants linked this rationale with the *religion factor*. The attention was drawn to the role of the religion factor on the formation of the national identity in BiH. It was stated that a great importance was attached to the religious education in BiH, therefore the contribution of the Islamic Union of BiH in this respect can not be underestimated. One of the officials stated that “the Bosniak identity manifests itself in a very civilian manner and civil society is strong among Bosniaks. In this context, I think the Islamic association is the most durable civil society platform...this is my humble opinion.

#### 4.3.6.4 Opinions of the Turkish academicians in BiH

*Academic rationale* was the prominent theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians. This theme was presented in Table 4.90 below.

Table 4.90

*Rationale Emerged in the Interviews with the Turkish Academicians in BiH*

No	Rationale
1	<p>Academic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- triggering the cooperation established among the educational institutions</li> <li>- increasing the efficacy of the Turkish language and literature department</li> <li>- positive impact on the students</li> <li>- establishment of intercultural dialogue and friendships</li> </ul>

Academicians related this rationale to *the cooperation established among the educational institutions of both countries*. It was indicated that the activities carried out by Turkey in BiH increased the interest towards Turkish universities and upgraded Turkish to more important language status, which in turn *increased the efficacy of the Turkish language and literature departments* within the Turkish universities in BiH and as well triggered closer cooperation with the universites in Turkey. The cooperation between the two countries have a

*positive impact on the students in BiH.* It was expressed that the visits of the Bosnian students to Turkey have been very useful, the students were hosted several weeks free of charge, during these visits the students have an opportunities to acknowledge Turkish culture, to improve their Turkish language by making practice as well to *make friendships*. Additionally, these visits were a means for *establishment of an intercultural dialogue* between the students of BiH and Turkey. For example, mutual visits realized by the students from Bosnian section opened within the Trakya University and the students of the Turcology departments in BiH gave chance to these students to learn the cultures of each countries.

#### **4.3.7 Discussion Bosnia and Herzegovina (Summary)**

##### **The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina**

In this study, totally 11 participants were interviewed, one Bosnian government officials, who is working in the Embassy of BiH in Turkey, two Turkish governmental officials, who were working in Turkish representative missions in Sarajevo, three Bosnian academicians, serving in various universities in BiH, four Turkish academicians, two from university of Sarajevo and the other two from International Sarajevo university and Burch university, one representatives of Turkish association in Sarajevo were interviewed. The stakeholders were divided into five groups, whose opinions and the theme emerged from the data were presented separately under each headings. Regarding the first research question seven main themes emerged in the interviews, which are presented in Table 4.91 below.

*Western orientation of the BiH higher education* was the first theme identified in the interviews with the Bosnian governmental official and Bosnian academicians. BiH is pursuing western oriented educational policy. Several reasons were cited for the westernization of the BiH's education system. First, BiH has educational relationship with Austria due to its common historical past with this country, being under the rule of Austria-Hungarian Empire in the past. There was a long-term agreement signed between the government of Austria and BiH. In this context, Bosnian students were studying in Austria without paying any tuition, which affected Bosnian students in preferring Austria for study abroad. Involving of BiH in Bologna process and implementation of the Bologna process was a driving force for reforming the war-torn education system of BiH was another reason for westernization policy of BiH education system. As another evidence for westernization of the BiH's higher education was cited the structural differences between the education system of Turkey and BiH, the complex structure of BiH's education system, which complicated the educational relations with Turkey.

Table 4.91

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	Western orientation of BiH higher education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- impact of the past history</li> <li>- joining the Bologna Process</li> <li>- the structural differences in the education system of both countries</li> </ul>	-Bosnian governmental officials
	Western-orientation of the BiH education system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implementation of Bologna process</li> </ul>	-Bosnian academicians
2	Futile and slowly growing relationships with Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complex internal structure and regulations of the education system of BiH</li> <li>- the existing effort to improve these relations</li> </ul>	-Bosnian governmental officials
	Futile and slowly growing relationships with Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the level of the relations /insufficient</li> <li>- the western orientation of BiH's education system</li> </ul>	-Bosnian academicians
	Futile and slowly growing relationships with Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local regulations or reluctance of the local authorities</li> <li>- the western orientation</li> <li>- the differences between the educational systems</li> <li>the differences in grading systems</li> </ul>	-Turkish academicians
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student mobility/reverse student mobility</li> </ul>	-Bosnian governmental officials
	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation activities / increase in the number of the students in the Turkish Language and Literature Department</li> </ul>	- Bosnian academicians
	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- brain drain</li> </ul>	-Turkish governmental officials
	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation activities of educational inst.</li> <li>- student mobility/the scholarships</li> <li>common culture/ opportunities for learning</li> <li>Turkish language made Turkey an attractive destination</li> </ul>	-Turkish academicians

Table 4.91 (continued)

4	Inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system - difficult working conditions - destroyed building/demolishing of the documents during the war	-Bosnian academicians
	Inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system - on the ethnic structure fragmentation, limited educational opportunities, and the economic inability - inability of the state to catch up to all these problems/ low salaries of the teachers - Need oriented support in accordance with the demands of the relevant authorities and in cooperation with the local municipalities	-Turkish governmental officials
	Inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system - uncertainty still existing throughout the country/ accreditation problems of the universities due to the structure of the educational system of BiH	-Turkish academicians
5	Multiethnic structure of BiH - the division of the ethnic groups in BiH as an important factor affecting the education system	Turkish governmental officials
6	Religion education - the role of the Islam Union of BiH - financial difficulties of the madrasas - the support of Turkey by appointment of chaplain	Turkish governmental officials
7	Cultural and social support - organization of cultural and social events - well-attended cultural events - interest to Turkey and Turkish language	Representative of Turkish Association

This issue or the complex structure of the BiH's education system affected bilateral relations between Turkey and BiH, which found reflection in the opinions of the stakeholders while expressing the current situation of the relationships and the level of the interaction between Turkey and BiH in the field of higher education. In this respect, according to the Bosnian governmental officials, Bosnian and Turkish academicians the current state of the relationships between the two countries was defined as futile and *slowly growing*, which constituted the second important theme. These three groups evaluated the level of the educational relations as insufficient. Bosnian governmental official cited as possible reason for that the complex internal structure and regulations of the education system in BiH although the efforts to improve these relations, Bosnian academicians indicated as another possible reason the western orientation of the BiH's education system, while Turkish academicians,

added to the above mentioned reasons the local regulations or reluctance of the local authorities and the differences existed between the educational systems and grading systems of both countries.

Another important theme that was prominent in the interviews with the four groups of five was named *internationalization*. Regarding this theme the participants were mostly concentrated on the student mobility, cooperation activities established between the educational institutions of both countries, brain drain issues, scholarships granted by Turkey, the opportunities for learning Turkish language, which makes Turkey an attractive destination for study. The importance of engaging the academic staff from Turkey to the Turcology departments within the Common Cultural agreements signed between Turkey and BiH and the protocols signed between TIKA and universities in BiH was emphasized. This cooperative activities have led to increase of the popularity of the Turkish language departments, which in turn have increased the number of the students in this departments of the universities. Turkish governmental officials drew attention to one of the negative aspect of the internationalization brain drain. They stated that some of the students due to still uncertain living conditions in BiH were not returned back following their graduation abroad. While BiH governmental officials admitted that although the brain drain, in terms of educational relations between the two countries it did not cause a serious threat for BiH. On the other hand, BiH governmental officials expressed the contribution of the establishment of the universities by the Turkish entrepreneurs; International Sarajevo University and International Burch University. According to their opinion these universities encourage the mobility of the students, especially the reverse student mobility. In these universities there were many students from the neighboring countries as well as from Turkey. Turkish academicians emphasized that scholarships granted by Turkey make it an attractive destination for study and also provided an opportunity for the Bosnian students to learn Turkish language, Turkish culture and make friendships with Turkish students.

The fourth theme emerged in the interviews was labeled as *inadequate infrastructure of the BiH's education system*. Three of the five groups have commented the current situation of the BiH's education system. Bosnian academicians complained from the difficult working conditions, mentioned about the educational buildings destroyed during the war and demolished historical documents. They asserted that all these have affected negatively the education in BiH. On the other hand, Turkish governmental officials drew attention to the ethnic structure fragmentation, limited educational opportunities, economic inability of the state to catch up to all these problems and additionally, they stressed the financial problems that the teachers faced. According to the comments of the Turkish academicians the inefficiencies of the BiH's education system was due to uncertainty still existing throughout

the country, the complex structure of the educational system of BiH and the accreditation problems of the universities. Therefore, for reforming and reconstructing the BiH's education system the support of the international organization including that of Turkey was inevitable. Turkish governmental officials emphasized that the support given by Turkey was need oriented in accordance with the demands of the relevant authorities in BiH and in cooperation with the local municipalities which were very effective in this regard.

The fifth theme emerged in the interviews regarding the first research question was labeled as *multi-ethnic structure of BiH*. This theme was commented only by the Turkish governmental officials. Unlike the other stakeholder groups Turkish governmental officials emphasized the division of the ethnic groups in BiH as an important factor affecting the education system. There were three main groups: Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs living in BiH. It is asserted that the ethnic tensions still existed between them have found reflection in the social life and education system. In this sense, Turkish governmental officials emphasized the importance of the *religious factor* on the education in BiH. They indicated the role of the religion in the formation of the national identity. Additionally, they pointed the Islam Union of BiH as one of the powerful civil society. In this respect, Turkey was contributing to the religion education in BiH by appointment of religious persons.

The last theme was named *cultural and social support* given by Turkey to BiH. This theme was addressed by the representative of the Turkish association and related to the cultural and social event organized for all ethnic groups by Yunus Emre Cultural Center operating in BiH. Among the activities were teaching of Turkish language also.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Four main themes emerged in the interviews regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards BiH in the field of higher education, which are presented in Table 4.92 below.

As it is seen in the Table the prominent theme emerged in the interviews with different stakeholder groups was *internationalization*. This theme was addressed by the following four groups: BiH's governmental officials, BiH's academicians, Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians. BiH's governmental officials emphasized that the political structure of BiH complicated signing of the agreements between the two countries at ministerial level, but the educational institutions were very open to cooperation. They indicated that the cooperation was mainly for accelerating the student mobility among the educational institutions. Therefore, Bosnian academicians emphasized the importance of the cooperations between the educational institutions and as well the support given by engaging faculty and technical assistance provided to the Turkish language and literature departments.

Table 4.92

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Groups</b>
1	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no agreements between Turkey and BiH</li> <li>- reason: the structural difference in the educational system of both countries</li> <li>- the cooperation between the educational institutions of both countries</li> </ul>	-BiH Governmental Officials
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation established between the educational institutions</li> <li>- support given to the Turkish Language and Literature departments with faculty teaching staff and technical assistance</li> <li>- research studies among the related institutions/ joint projects/student mobility</li> <li>summer courses for improving Turkish language</li> </ul>	-BiH academicians
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving of the physical capacity of the educational institutions / scholarships</li> <li>- Human resources support/supporting the universities with academic staff</li> <li>- training of the human resources in other areas</li> <li>- organization of academic conferences and symposia</li> </ul>	-Turkish governmental officials
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appointment of the instructors and lecturers to the educational institutions in BiH</li> <li>- student mobility / internships, student quota, difficulties in applying of Erasmus Program</li> <li>- cooperative initiatives between the educational institutions</li> </ul>	-Turkish academicians
2	<p>Active role of the Turkish government institutions in BiH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the role and the activities carried out by TIKA</li> <li>- support of TIKA for physical capacity expansion of the educational institutions</li> </ul>	-BiH Governmental Officials
3	<p>Cultural and social support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the impact of the historical symbols in BiH / restoration, reparation of the cultural monuments inherited from the Ottoman period</li> <li>- project-based hardware support of TIKA/social dimensions of the projects</li> <li>- activities in the field of religion</li> </ul>	-Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.92 (continued)

4	Dissemination of Turkish language in BiH - Teaching Turkish language as a compulsory elective in three cantons in BiH	Turkish academicians
	Dissemination of Turkish Language/ variety of activities - appointment of the lecturers to the Turkish Language and Literature departments of the Universities - organization of Turkish courses - scholarships for the students from Turcology sections - different cultural events/Turkish poetry contests, folklor groups to promote Turkish culture, workshops for Turcologists	Representative of Turkish Association

They indicated that this cooperation was mainly related to the research studies among the related institutions and as well the implementation of the joint projects. Additionally, Bosnian academicians highlighted that this cooperation increased the student mobility and the interest towards learning Turkish language.

Unlike the other groups Turkish governmental officials linked the theme internationalization with the improving of the physical capacity of the educational institutions, human resource support or supporting the universities with academic staff and scholarships granted especially for the students wishing to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey. In addition, they mentioned that the practices undertaken by Turkey in the field of education in BiH includes also the academic conferences and symposia related to the common culture and history of Turkey with the Balkans. On the other hand, Turkish academicians explained the theme internationalization from several point. According to them the educational activities of Turkey in BiH were mainly concentrated on engaging of instructors and lecturer to educational institutions on the framework of the agreement signed. Additionally, they indicated the importance of the cooperation initiatives between the educational institutions which affected the student mobility positively. In this respect, many students were sent for internship to Turkey.

The second theme emerged only in the interview with the BiH's governmental official was labeled *as active role of the Turkish governmental institutions in BiH*. Especially the information was given on the activities carried out by TIKA, mainly in form of support for physical capacity expansion of the educational institutions.

*Cultural and social support* theme emerged only in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials. They associated this theme with the historical symbols in BiH. It was expressed that the activities regarding this theme were concentrated mainly on the restoration, reparation of the cultural monuments inherited from the Ottoman period. The contribution of

TIKA in this regard was emphasized. The works of TIKA were project based hardware supports. Beside the infrastructure building and restoration of the mosques, there were also activities carried out in the field of religion education as sending of students to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey, appointment of religious persons and as well as supporting the religious institutions with training materials.

The last theme prominent in the interviews regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey in BiH in the field of education was studies done for *dissemination of Turkish language in BiH*. This theme was addressed by two groups: Turkish academicians and the representative of the Turkish Association. Variety of activities were implemented for the dissemination of Turkish language which can be listed as appointment of the lecturers to the Turkish language departments of the universities, organization of Turkish courses, giving scholarships to the successful students studying in the Turcology departments, and as well different cultural events covering Turkish poetry contests, promotion of Turkish culture and workshops for the Turcologists. All these activities increased the interest towards Turkish language, which led to accepting of Turkish language as a compulsory elective in three cantons.

#### **The Rationales behind Turkey's Practices towards the Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The main rationales identified in the interviews with the different stakeholder groups regarding the research question above were political, cultural and social, economic and academic rationales, which are presented in Table 4.93 below.

As it is seen from the Table *the political rationale* was emphasized in a strong manner by each group. Most of the groups related this rationale to *the foreign policy*. According to the opinions of the participants the foreign policy of Turkey was an important factor that was affecting the educational relations of BiH with Turkey. For example BiH governmental officials and Bosnian academicians stated that Bosnian students studying in Turkey were serving as a bridge in terms of the development of the bilateral relations among Turkey and BiH, they were assumed as an *investment in the future diplomatic relations* of both countries. On the other hand, Turkish governmental officials indicated that Turkey was perceived as a power indicator for Bosnians, and in this respect, the main purpose of Turkey's practices undertaken in BiH was to increase its visibility in the region, more precisely to *promote Turkey, Turkish culture and Turkish language*.

While according to the Turkish academicians by the educational activities offered for all ethnic groups in BiH Turkey has spent all kinds of efforts to create an environment for interaction of these groups with each other, and as well as to eliminate the prejudices about Turks and Ottomans. In this sense it was reported that teaching Turkish language was an

instrumental in the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Table 4.93

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bosnian students studying in Turkey – bridge between the two countries</li> <li>- an investment in the future diplomatic relations</li> </ul>	-BiH governmental officials
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foreign policy</li> <li>- Bosnian students studying in Turkey/investing in the future relations</li> </ul>	-Bosnian academicians
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Turkey as a power indicator for Bosnians</li> <li>- promotion of Turkey, Turkish language and Turkish culture</li> </ul>	-Turkish governmental officials
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- efforts to contribute for peace and the stability in the Balkans</li> <li>- to provide interaction between different ethnic groups</li> <li>- elimination of the prejudices about Turks and Ottomans</li> <li>- dissemination of Turkish language</li> </ul>	-Turkish academicians
	<p>Political rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey, against the Ottomans</li> </ul>	-Representative of the Turkish association
2	<p>Cultural and social rationale</p> <p>Factors: historical and cultural ties Bosnian origin citizens living in Turkey</p>	-BiH governmental officials
	<p>Cultural and social rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical ties affecting the bilateral relations</li> <li>- the importance of the religion factor</li> </ul>	-Turkish governmental officials
	<p>Cultural and social rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the impact of the historical ties between Turkey and BiH</li> </ul>	-Turkish academicians
	<p>Cultural and social rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical symbols</li> <li>- aim: preservation and maintenance of historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period</li> </ul>	-Representative of Turkish association

Table 4.93 (continued)

3	Economic rationale - teaching Turkish language - job recruitments/contribution to the development of the economy of BiH	-Bosnian academicians
	Economic rationale - to contribute to the development of the economy of BiH	-Turkish governmental officials
	Economic rationale - job opportunities	-Turkish academicians
4	Academic rationale - increasing of the interest in Turkish universities - strengthen the bilateral relations in the field of education - through education to establish a bridge of friendship between the two countries	-Turkish academicians

Thus, Turkish academicians stated that through the activities performed in various fields including education Turkey is aiming to pay its historical liability and at the same time to strengthen her status politically in BiH. As the Turkish academicians the representative of Turkish association also confirms the situation regarding the elimination of the prejudices about Turks and Ottomans. It was expressed that as a result of the promotion of Turkish language, Turkish culture and Turkey it has been able *to break down these prejudices* occurred in the minds of peoples in BiH. It was indicated that thanks to these promotion activities Bosnian people begun to feel sympathy towards Turkey.

The second theme that was prominent regarding Turkey's practices in higher education towards BiH was named *cultural and social rationale*. This theme was cited by four of the stakeholder groups; BiH governmental officials, Turkish governmental officials, Turkish academicians and the representative of the Turkish association. There were several factors strongly affecting Turkey's practices in higher education towards BiH. Firstly, *historical and cultural ties* existed between the two countries stemmed from the Ottoman period due to the common historical past was indicated by the BiH governmental officials, Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians as one of the factors closely related to the motivation of Turkey in developing of bilateral relations with BiH not only in the field of education but also in other areas. Common history, traditions, culture, life style were cited as decisive factors in preferring cooperation with Turkey in compare to European countries. Turkish governmental officials pointed about the importance of *the religion factor* in this regard also. On the other hand, representative of the Turkish association expressed *the historical symbols* as another significant driving force that motivated Turkey in its bilateral relations with BiH. It was reported about various project aiming preservation and maintenance of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period.

The third theme regarding the rationales behind Turkey's practices undertaken towards BiH was identified as *economic rationale*. This rationale was associated with the benefits obtained as a result of the investment made by Turkey in the field of education. This rationale was appeared in the interviews with the three of the stakeholder groups: Bosnian academicians, Turkish governmental officials and Turkish academicians. This rationale was linked with the employment opportunities created for the Bosnian youths a result of teaching Turkish language in BiH. Additionally it was indicated that dissemination of teaching Turkish language in BiH in turn contributed for the development of the economy of BiH and improving the bilateral trade relations among Turkey and BiH as well. In this respect education can be defined an important indicator for the economic development of BiH.

*Academic rationale* was the only theme emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians in relation to the reasons behind Turkey's practices undertaken in BiH. Academicians associated this rationale mainly with the importance of the *establishment and strengthening the cooperation* between the educational institutions of both countries as a result of which the interest towards Turkish universities was increased. According to the academicians, the main objective of Turkey was through the educational activities carried out to increase the level of the educational relations among Turkey and BiH and at the same time through these activities *to contribute in establishing of Friendship Bridge* between the two countries.

### **The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina from Turkey**

Two main themes emerged regarding the question on the expectations of the different stakeholder groups from Turkey. These themes were classified under the following headings: *internationalization and cultural and social support*. The details of these themes were summarized in Table 4.94 below.

This theme was identified in the interviews with the BiH governmental officials, BiH academicians and Turkish academicians. The expectations of the Bosnian governmental officials and Bosnian academicians were concentrated mainly on students and faculty exchange, recognition of the educational systems of both countries, in this respect exchange of experts, signing of an agreements or protocols among the educational institution, engaging of lecturers and faculty members in the Turkish language and literature departments as well as supports given in form of teaching materials and textbooks, providing access to library on-line resource and bibliography (references) in libraries of Turkish universities, joint conferences/opening chairs of the countries languages and raising academic staff and finally increase in the student quota allocated by Turkey for BiH. Turkish academicians confirmed

the above written demands of the BiH's stakeholders.

Table 4.94

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Groups
1	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- students and faculty exchange</li> <li>- recognition of the educational systems</li> <li>- expert exchange/signing of an agreements</li> <li>- joint conferences/opening chairs of the countries languages/ raising staff</li> </ul>	BiH governmental officials
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperation and protocols signed between the educational institutions</li> <li>- increase in the student quota</li> <li>- support to be given in form of teaching materials and textbooks</li> <li>- engaging of lecturers and faculty members in the Turkish language and literature departments</li> <li>- providing access to library on-line resource and bibliography (references) in libraries of Turkish universities</li> </ul>	BiH academicians
	<p>Internationalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demands for increasing the number of student quota and scholarships</li> <li>- encouraging the student and faculty mobility</li> <li>- support for participation to the various symposia/continuation of the summer seminars for the educators</li> <li>- providing of dictionaries and course guidelines/the need of raising staff</li> <li>- the support of the mass media</li> </ul>	Turkish academicians
2	<p>Cultural and social support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical symbols: restoration of the historical monuments repairment of the mosques/ support in the field of religion</li> </ul>	Turkish governmental officials

The second theme that was prominent only in the interviews with the Turkish governmental officials regarding the expectations of the BiH's stakeholders was named as ***cultural and social support***. The officials indicated that there were also demands conveyed by Bosnian stakeholders related to ***the historical symbols***, mainly restoration of the historical monuments, repairment of the demolished or destroyed mosques. It was expressed that supports were expected to be given in the field of ***religious education*** as well.

## The Practices Undertaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina in Order to Enhance Cooperation with Turkey

The practices undertaken by BiH in order to enhance the cooperation in higher education with Turkey were concentrated mainly on the theme named *internationalization*. The details of this theme by groups are presented in Table 4.95 below.

As it is seen from the Table this theme was prominent in the interviews with the BiH governmental officials, BiH academicians and Turkish academicians. BiH governmental officials reported about the initiatives regarding the enhancement of the bilateral relations with Turkey in the field of education.

Table 4.95

*Theme Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Theme	Stakeholder Groups
1	Internationalization - cooperation initiatives - initiatives for encouraging the exchange of student and faculty - initiatives for opening of Bosnian language section in Turkish universities	BiH governmental officials
	Internationalization - support requested for the publication of book on Turkish literature history	BiH academicians
	Internationalization - attempts for accelerating the student and faculty mobility/initiatives for implementation of the Erasmus Program	Turkish academicians

These initiatives were concentrated mainly on the encouraging of the cooperative activities between the educational institutions, accelerating the students and faculty mobility and initiatives made for opening of Bosnian language sections within the faculties in Turkish universities, while Bosnian academicians have been intensified on initiatives made for requesting support in form of teaching materials namely publication of books on Turkish literature. The initiatives of the stakeholders groups mentioned above for acceleration of the student and faculty mobility and the efforts for implementation of Erasmus program between the university of Sarajevo and Turkish universities were confirmed by Turkish academicians.

## The Rationales behind Bosnia and Herzegovina's Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey

Four main rationales appeared regarding BiH's practices to realize cooperation with Turkey. These rationales were political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationales,

each presented under different content in Table 4.96 below. The first rationale was *political rationale* cited by BiH's governmental officials and BiH's academicians. BiH's governmental officials pointed out the role of Turkey's educational activities in *eliminating the prejudices against Turks and Ottomans*. They emphasized the contribution of Turkish series published in BiH and teaching of Turkish language in this regard. On the other hand, Bosnian academicians attached great importance to Turkey by defining it as an *important political power and economically developed country that BiH should cooperate with*.

The second rationale was *cultural and social rationale* defined by BiH's governmental officials, BiH academicians and Turkish governmental officials. Each group. Each group described this rationale under different context. BiH's governmental officials emphasized the impact of the Turkish universities established by Turkish entrepreneurs in BiH, on the cultural integrity of the various ethnic groups living in BiH, the contribution of these universities on creation of the mutual intercultural understanding and intercultural communication in BiH. Whereas Bosnian academicians mentioned about the studies of the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo made for exploring the history and culture of BiH in the Ottoman period, which studies is believed to contribute in the formation of the national identity and culture in BiH. On the other hand Turkish governmental officials drew attention to the role of the religion factor in formation of the national identity, and the contribution of the Islamic Union in this respect. Therefore, the cooperation with Turkey in this sense was commented as necessary.

Table 4.96

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	Political rationale - change in the prejudices against Ottomans and Turks/the impact of the Turkish series and Turkish language	BiH governmental officials
	Political rationale - Turkey as a politically and economically very important power - importance of the cooperation with Turkey	BiH academicians
2	Cultural and social rationale - the impact of the Turkish universities on the cultural integrity in BiH/ intercultural communication and intercultural understanding in BiH	BiH governmental officials
	Cultural and social rationale - formation of national identity and culture in BiH	BiH academicians
	Cultural and social rationale - the role of the religion factor in formation of national identity	Turkish governmental officials

Table 4.96 (continued)

3	Economic rationale - meeting the manpower needs in BiH thanks to the students studying in Turkey	BiH academicians
	Economic rationale - employment opportunity for the students graduated from Turkey - Turkey contributed in raising and training the manpower needed in BiH	Turkish governmental officials
4	Academic rationales - positive impact of the cooperation on the students and faculty	BiH academicians
	Academic rationale - triggering the cooperation established among the educational institutions - increasing the efficacy of the Turkish language and literature department - positive impact on the students - establishment of intercultural dialogue and friendships	Turkish academicians

The third rationale emerged regarding the rationales behind BiH's practices to realize cooperation with Turkey in the field of education was *economic rationale*. This rationale was identified in the interviews with the BiH academicians and Turkish governmental officials. BiH academicians associated this rationale with the manpower needs in BiH. They indicated that thanks to the students graduated from Turkish universities the needs of trained personnel in different organization and positions were met. Turkish governmental officials also confirmed the contribution of Turkey on creating opportunities for raising and training the manpower needed in the labour market of BiH and the employment opportunities provided for the students graduated from Turkey. In this sense, the above mentioned factors were cited as main reasons for cooperation with Turkey.

The fourth rationale was named as *academic rationale*. This rationale emerged in the interviews with Bosnian academicians and Turkish academicians. The BiH academicians highlighted the positive impact of the educational cooperation with Turkey on the students and faculty personnel developments. Turkish academicians confirmed the opinion of the Bosnian academicians on the positive impact of the cooperation on the students in terms of making friendships and establishment of intercultural dialogue between the students between Turkey and BiH. They commented that triggering the cooperation among the educational institutions increased the efficacy of the Turkish language and literature departments in the universities in BiH.

## 4.4 Republic of Turkey

### 4.4.1 The current state of the relationships between Turkey and the Balkan countries

In this study the participants were categorized into three main stakeholder groups: government officials, academicians and representative of Turkish association. In this context, five governmental officials, two academicians and one representative of association from Turkey were interviewed.

#### 4.4.1.1 Opinions of the governmental officials

The content analysis of the interviews with these participants regarding the current state of the relationship between Turkey and Balkans in the field of higher education highlighted two main themes: the active role of the Turkish governmental institutions in the Balkans and futile and slowly growing relations. The details of these themes were presented in Table 4.97 below.

First prominent theme emerged in interviews conducted with Turkish governmental officials was named *active role of the Turkish government institutions in the Balkans*. Within the framework of the growing international relations, Turkey has always aimed to improve its bilateral relations with its neighbors and the countries which are in its nearest geography, in all areas including education. Turkey gives a lot of importance to these relations, therefore there are many institutions acting in coordination. In this context, detailed information were given about the serious works and activities of the most effective institutions taking place in the overall educational policy of Turkey as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA).

The *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey* emerges as one of the *prominent institutions providing coordination* among the above mentioned and other local or international institutions. In addition to coordination responsibility (coordination of the educational activities abroad) among the tasks of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs are issues such as signing of bilateral educational cooperation agreements, organizing the visits of the Ministers of Education, equivalency of diplomas, joint university projects. Apart from these, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also giving support for the establishment of sister school relationships, encouraging the contacts between the relevant institutions in the countries concerned for the organization of school trips, directing the organization of in-service training seminars, summer camps and summer internships programs etc.

Table 4.97

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	<p>Active role of the government institutions in the Balkans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey</li> <li>- Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities (YTGB)</li> <li>- Ministry of National Education of Turkey</li> <li>- Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)</li> </ul> <p>Aim - to strengthen the relation at institutional level</p>
2	<p>Futile and slowly growing relations</p> <p>Reasons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bureaucratic obstacles</li> <li>- curricula differences in the education system</li> <li>- lack of educational strategies</li> <li>- limited financial resources of the Balkan educational institutions</li> <li>- shortcomings and deficiencies in the development of joint programs due to the regulation put into practice by HEC</li> <li>- high university fees for the international students</li> </ul>

As can be seen Ministry of Foreign Affairs is taking role in coordination and organization of many educational activities. Another important worth mentioning activity performed by the Diplomatic Academy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey was the programs developed at international level. It is reported that each year in the framework of the young international diplomats programs, career diplomats were invited from all over the world for special training programs organized by Diplomacy Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. It was emphasized that firstly, priority was given to the countries signing cooperation agreements with Turkey in this field, secondly, to the countries that have previously participated in these programs and showing stability in the participation and thirdly, if it is decided to initiate such cooperation with the concerned country during the state visits. These programs were applied for many countries, in collaboration with some universities, international or public institutions in accordance with certain criteria, without discrimination in the framework of Turkey's foreign policy and encompassing a variety of disciplines ranging from international relations, economics and protocol matters to visits to cultural and historical sites and to some major companies.

As the second important institution active in this field was cited as the *Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities (YTGB)*, established in accordance with law No. 5978, in which its responsibility was expressed as providing logistical, expertise and operational support for the activities pertaining to the kin and related communities abroad living in different regions and parts of the world such as Central Asia, Caucasus and the Balkans, having common cultural and historical relations with Turkish people, protecting and overseeing the legal rights of these communities in these countries, keeping their social and

cultural ties alive, encouraging and establishing healthy and close relations with Turkey.

One of the areas that YTGB concentrated was *allocation of scholarships*. In addition to the responsibilities mentioned above YTGB has been spending efforts to provide these scholarship allocations in a fairly manner, managing the scholarships process transparently and preventing the misuse of these scholarships.

This is to enable the effective, correct and equitable use of the budget, which is raised from the tax payers' money in Turkey and allocated for scholarships, and manage this whole process. This is to select the students in a correct fashion, to yield an increase, both quantitatively and qualitatively, based on the quotas established by protocols or in the manner that Turkey deems important. This is especially to gradually eliminate the abuses by intermediaries and wrong practices that complicate the direction of these scholarships to correct recipients during the process of awarding these scholarships. And as I said earlier, this is to create a transparent environment, in which everybody has access and is able to forward an application in trusting the State and the greatness of the Republic of Turkey.

The third institution active in the field of education is *the Ministry of National Education of Turkey*. Its main policy objective is to follow the developments and the movements of the international organizations in the field of education and reflect them into the studies of the Ministry's works. The fourth institution defined by the participants was *Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)*. TIKA is the institution that provides infrastructural, technical and financial support to the activities. All of the above mentioned institutions have been trying to execute their tasks entrusted to them by the political bodies and the relevant legislation adopted by the government. Sometimes conflict in roles may occur during the joint works between these due to the overlap of their tasks. One of the participants expressed this situation in the following way “overlap, the task definition in the law is clear, in the legislation is clear, but regarding the working principles sometimes there can be problems, there are matters that we work together (B6)”.

The information above revealed that Turkey is trying *to strengthen its relations at the institutional level*.

*Futile and slowly growing relations* were the second important theme suggested by the data from the interviews with governmental officials. According to the participants, there were several *problems encountered mutually* between Turkey and the Balkan countries. *Firstly*, it was reported that some *bureaucratic obstacles* occurred during the cooperation between the educational institutions of Turkey and the Balkan countries stemming from the legislation of these countries.

Secondly, *curricula differences in the education system* of Turkey and Balkan countries was cited also as a reason for the slowly developing relations. One of the participants reported that due to these differences in the curriculum programs *difficulties in diploma recognition* were often experienced.

*Lack of educational strategies* was cited as another reason for the futile relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. It was commented that this situation in the Balkans was due to the misunderstandings and destruction caused by the problems experienced in the last 20-25 years. In this sense, it was indicated that there is a need for reconstructing the administrative and academic structures and re-creating the mechanisms of representation of the countries located in this geography.

Apart from the above, another negative point expressed during the interview with the officials was related to the *limited budgetary facilities* of the Balkan educational institutions. Thus, financial inabilities were also depicted as one of the reasons that the educational institutions in the Balkan countries cannot respond to all activities implemented by Turkey. In this respect, the need for financial support of educational institutions in the Balkans was highlighted.

Turkey's educational policies were criticized as well. It is indicated that there were *shortcomings and deficiencies in the development of joint programs* with the Balkan countries. According to the governmental officials, the main obstacle stemming from *the regulation on the international joint education and training programs* put into force by Higher Education Council (HEC) in 2006. In accordance with Article 13 of the above mentioned regulation, the international programs can be done only in English, German and French language, which restrains the joint programs to be conducted in the local languages of the Balkan countries.

Furthermore, officials mentioned the obstacles regarding *university fees* faced by the students who wish to study in Turkey. It is known that there were central examinations until 2010 for the incoming foreign students to Turkish universities. But, in the HEC meeting held in January 2010, the removal of this examination was approved and after the enactment of a new application procedure, foreign students have been required to apply directly to the Turkish universities. The universities reserve the right to determine how to admit foreign students to their universities. But at the same time, a provision was put into force, according to which foreign students have to pay triple amount of the fees paid by Turkish students. This situation has been a type of a barrier in the applications of students with limited financial abilities, and especially for the students coming from the Balkans. It was denoted that initiatives were made by the educational institutions in order to find a solution for this problem.

#### ***4.4.1.2 Opinions of the academicians***

The data from the interviews with the academicians revealed two main themes: internationalization and the active role of the governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations. These themes were presented in detail in Table 4.98 below.

Table 4.98

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student mobility</li> <li>- differences in the educational systems (negative factor)</li> <li>- other problems (health insurance, resident permits, complains about the high university fees</li> <li>- organization of the orientation programs</li> </ul>
2	Active role of the governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education Council and Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports, Presidency of Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities (YTGB), Edirne Governor's office and Police Department in Edirne, Balkan Federation</li> <li>- soft power in Turkey's foreign policy</li> </ul>

Turkish academicians evaluated the educational policy of Turkey towards the Balkans as very positive. According to their evaluations, if the Balkan countries improve their economies, there would be many students from Turkey wishing to study in Balkan universities.

The first theme that emerged in the interviews with the Turkish academicians was *internationalization*. This theme was associated with the efforts of accelerating student mobility between Turkey and the Balkan countries. However, *the differences in the educational systems* emerged as a negative factor affecting student mobility. Some problems arising as a result of these differences between the educational systems of Turkey and the Balkan countries were reported. For example, academicians stated that in Balkan countries European Credit Transfer System is yet to be fully applied. In this sense, it was emphasized that problems occurred in the credit substitution stemming from the educational system of the Balkan countries itself. It was expressed that a solution was found for this problem by consulting with the Student Affairs of the universities. The following quotations exemplify this situation.

In fact, a few students reported that they ran into problems in transfer of credits since ECTS has not been initialized in the Balkans and that exchange programs have not been commonplace. But we have this agreement in hand, with which we can refer to as an official document ....Yes, they said that this is stemming from their system. But in the end, it is our responsibility to produce that official transcript and information they are going to transfer that course, but they need information on what kind of a course it is.

The other problems encountered by students from the Balkans during their study in Turkey were listed *as health insurance, resident permits, and complaints concerning high university fees*. It was suggested that same health care benefits should be extended to the

students from the Balkans. However, the academicians stated that the students from the Balkan countries actually did not encounter significant problems in adapting to the living conditions in Turkey. The contribution of the *orientation programs* organized for foreign students was emphasized to be very useful in this regard. In addition, it was expressed that even visits to Ataturk Mausoleum and “Contemporary Turkey” courses were organized for those who desire. By these programs information was given about the facilities of the universities and the campuses.

In the interview with the Turkish academicians *active role of the governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations* appeared as an important theme. Akin to the government officials, the academicians provided information on the activities and the tasks of the institutions directly affecting Turkey's overall educational policy. For example, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education Council and Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports were denoted as the institutions playing significant role in the bilateral educational relations with the Balkan countries. Additionally, they were indicated as the institutions dealing with the problems of the foreign students while studying in Turkey. Apart from that, attention was drawn to the contribution of the Presidency of Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities (YTGB). The primary objectives of this institution are to provide coordination and ensure the effectiveness and the efficiency of relevant services. In this context its task is understood as the determination of the principles for the successful implementation of the educational process regarding foreign students studying in Turkey.

Apart from the above, Edirne is the most preferred city by the students from the Balkans, since it is close to their country of origin. It was reported that beside the university authorities *Edirne Governor's office* and *Police Department* in Edirne displayed a very positive approach in order to help and direct the students coming from the Balkans who preferred the educational institutions in Edirne Province. Commissions were created by these institutions regarding the students' problems and meetings are carried out every two or three months with participation of the Governors, Mayors, Deans, University Student units for reviewing contingent issues.

Academicians stated that there were many *non-governmental organizations* (associations and NGOs) founded by the people with Balkan origin, working actively in bringing students from the Balkans to study in Turkey. For example, *the Balkan Federation* is one of these NGO's that provides in cooperation with Trakya University, vocational training and business training courses like hairdressing, computer operating for students who graduated from high schools. It was emphasized that financial support was given by the governorates as well. It was stressed that funds are allocated in their budgets for this purpose. Positive approach of HEC in this regard was emphasized as well. It was mentioned that 198 students came to

Turkey in this way.

It was emphasized that Turkey is recently resorting more often to the *use of soft power in its foreign policy*. In the literature, soft power was defined as the ability to attract and cooperate with others through persuasion and knowledge. In comparison to other Western countries, Turkey embarked on an initiative towards the Balkans by using its soft power. Especially the universities were defined to be very effective in this regard. The following quotation confirms Turkey's internationalization process towards the Balkans and clarify the use of soft power in its foreign policy. Naturally it emphasized the contribution of the universities in this process.

I think that Turkey is opening up to the Balkans in the context of internationalization, as you indicated earlier. Indeed we are opening up to the Balkans. I mean, the Germans came to these lands during World War I and II and they invaded, but they were not able to hold their grip on. And now the European Union has descended upon the Balkans. As for us, we have come with soft power. These universities are indeed soft power, which is much more effective.

#### *4.4.1.3 Opinion of the representative of the associations (Türkiye Diyanet*

##### *Foundation)*

In this study an interview was conducted with the representative of Religious Association. From the data obtained in the interview with the representative of the Turkish association *religion education* emerged as one of the significant theme in the bilateral relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. This theme was related to the problems faced during the implementation of the educational activities in the field of religion and the factors affecting the religion education in the Balkans. The details of this theme was presented in Table 4.99 below.

Table 4.99

##### *Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of Turkish Association*

No	Theme
1	Religion education <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- active role of the religious institutions of Turkey (Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and Religious Foundation of Turkey)</li><li>- problems faced during the cooperation between the religious authorities (changes occurred over a time, bureaucratic obstacles etc)</li><li>factors: - the impact of the poverty or economic inabilities</li><li>- the changes happened in the religion structure as a result of the political developments in the country concerned</li></ul>

In order to understand better the role of the religion authorities and the impact of the religion education on the educational activities carried out by Turkey towards the Balkans,

interview was conducted with the representative of the Religious Foundation of Turkey. It was stated that the *Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and Religious Foundation of Turkey* were the institutions playing an important role in carrying out activities in the field of religion education in the Balkans. From the data obtained it was understood that the Religious Foundation is working in parallel with the principle of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs of Turkey and its main objective is to provide support to all activities of the Presidency, to provide logistical and all kind of moral and material support in order to facilitate its work. The following expression of the representative of the Turkiye Diyanet Foundation is very striking. He indicated that there is no any political purpose apart from providing correct understanding of the Islam Religion.

In this context, the Administration of Religious Affairs has undertaken activities to train new clergymen and enhance the knowledge and service capacity of the present ones in order to enable the execution of religious services here in a correct and healthier manner. The principal activity here is to enable people to reach correct information and correct religious understanding and approach towards living their beliefs. No other political or different objective is sought out here.

It was noted that the Religion Foundation is working also in line with the programs defined by the HEC. In this context, it was reported that the mission of the Foundation is to carry out the educational activities abroad, to improve the quality of the information and the services held not only to our compatriots but also to all Muslim groups living in the Balkans, to provide an accurate information and correct understanding of the religion, to conduct the religious services more accurately in a healthy way, to provide training for the reverends and to organize activities in order to increase the quality of these reverends. The representative emphasized that although the interruption of 70 to 80 years, there were no cultural divergence between the Balkan countries and Turkey, in the sense that there is an overlap of common points with these countries. It was also stated that in comparison to other Balkan countries, and the countries separated from the Former Yugoslavia, the religious structure is much more preserved.

The representative mentioned certain *problems faced during the cooperation between the religious authorities of both countries*. It was denoted that after signing a protocol with the countries in the Balkans in the area of religion, various changes occurred over a time and these changes sometimes caused problems in implementing the activities in this field. Change referred to the changes in the circumstances over a time in the country concerned, changes in the government, change of the head of the religious authority that signed the protocol etc. In addition, it was reported that the problems were not serious, but sometimes they were minor problems faced regarding bureaucratic obstacles, or due to absence of skilled persons, or problems related to the budget, or due to the demands that could not be meet. It was stated that

there were no problems regarding the recognition of diplomas by Turkish authorities.

On the other hand, the representative drew attention also to the *factors affecting the religion life in the Balkans*. In other words, the ways that these factors affected the students' preferences in the area of religious education. Criticizing the religious education of the Balkan countries, the representative mentioned two important factors that have an impact on the religious life in any single country in the Balkans. The first one is *the impact of poverty or economic inabilities* in directing the students' education life. During the communist period, the religious schools in the Balkans have faced some financial difficulties, as well as infrastructure problems. It was expressed that during this period, Turkey did not provide opportunities for the Balkan students to study in Turkey in the field of religious education as the current time. Consequently, many students from the Balkans preferred to study in Arab countries, usually Egypt or Saudi Arabia, since they offer such chances to them. In other words, poverty or economic inability have forced the students to make that choice. It is known that this is not a conscious choice, but they had a chance and they used this opportunity. As a result these students got educated according to the understanding of these Arab countries, and after the graduation naturally they were trying to serve in the approach they have been educated. In this context, the importance of the religious factors in bilateral relations and the differences between the religious education in Arab countries and Turkey were emphasized as follows.

In other words, religious education is a factor that affects the religious life. There is a serious difference in perspectives of Islamic understanding between the students that studied in Arab countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Medinah and the students that studied in Turkey.

But, at the moment this perception has changed. Currently Turkey offers many opportunities for the students from the Balkan countries. As the second factor that can affect the religious life and that can be assumed as significant one can be cited *the changes happened in the religious structure as a result of the political developments in the country concerned*.

#### **4.4.2 The practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries**

##### ***4.4.2.1 Opinions of the governmental officials***

In the interview with the governmental officials regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards Balkans *the field of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions* theme come to the fore, details of which are presented in Table 4.100 below.

Table 4.100

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Governmental Officials*

No	Theme
1	<p>The field of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- technical assistance and support for improving the infrastructure of the educational institutions</li> <li>- providing support with educational materials</li> <li>- human resource support</li> <li>- curriculum support</li> <li>- educational and cultural activities</li> <li>- establishment of cooperation</li> <li>- educational activities carried out in other areas</li> </ul>

It is worth mentioning that there were no any priorities applied among the Balkan countries during the activities undertaken by Turkey. It was indicated that all educational activities were needs-oriented, carried out by taking into consideration the specific conditions of the Balkan countries according to their needs. As one of the participants stated “yes, we are obligated to move with taking into consideration the special circumstances that our counterpart countries may have”.

The data revealed that all of these institutions built their own tool(s) for materializing the cooperation in the field of education in the Balkans. Some of them are concentrated on training of diplomats, others on teaching Turkish language or infrastructure building of the educational institutions. The themes emerged regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries in the field of higher education were summarized respectively below.

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials was named as *the field of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions* in the Balkan countries. The fields of operation in education can be categorized under seven main headings: providing *technical assistance and support for improving the infrastructure of the educational institutions* (construction or renovation of the educational buildings, construction of laboratories, restoration of the historical monuments), providing support with *educational materials* (textbooks, technical equipment needed for laboratories and schools), *human resource support* (in-service trainings, training the educators, engaging of lecturers etc), *curriculum support* (support for improving curriculum), *educational and cultural activities* (organization of Turkish language courses, publication and distributions of books, organization of exhibitions, organization of visits for students and academicians to Turkey, summer internships for students, providing scholarships etc), *establishment of cooperation* (through signing of agreements for organization of Cultural exchange programs, exchange of diplomats,

protocols for opening of Turcology or Turkish Language and Literature Departments, establishment of Turkish language chair in the universities, organization of symposiums, festivals, conferences, workshops, publication of papers) and *educational activities carried out in other areas* such as religion, health, agriculture etc. The following expression of one of the participants confirms the variety of the activities undertaken by Turkey in the Balkans “classrooms and language laboratories are established; support is provided in terms of classrooms, computers, internet, television sets and many instruments as such; teachers and teaching staff are appointed”.

During the interviews detailed information was given about the various practices undertaken by institutions playing important roles in determining the general educational policy of Turkey towards the Balkans. It was stated that all these institutions contributed to the improvement in the education system of the Balkan countries. It has been expressed that these institutions during the implementation of their activities in the field of education in the Balkans were all in cooperation with each other, with non-governmental organizations and with some of the developmental agencies.

The data revealed that all kinds of Turkish institutions, public or non governmental organizations, were taking place in the Balkans with their activities in different areas. For example, TIKA is taking part mainly in rehabilitation of the infrastructure problems, while YTGB is operating in the field of social relations and education. On the other hand, the Turkish military corpus present in Kosovo also contribute to the educational activities. Its support for opening of the school in Mamusha, identifying the needs of this region and transmitting all kinds of equipment or school supplies by the aircraft of the Chief of General Staff cannot be underestimated.

Additionally, governmental officials indicated the role of the Embassies and Consulate Generals and other public institutions in building up the bilateral relations with the countries in the Balkans.

As it is known after the war, the regular training opportunities in the Balkan countries were interrupted and a number of difficulties and problems occurred in the field of education. Thus, Turkey is now conducting studies for prevention of this victimization. The following quotation is a good example for the efforts spent in the Balkans in this regard by the side of Turkey.

Turkey is trying to offer the opportunities that would comparatively heal the wounds of the youth and the people that are potential victims there. This might contribute to the infrastructure, be it opening or establishing a university there.

Turkey attaches great importance to cooperation with the Balkan countries. In this context, all kinds of initiatives were made for the establishment of cooperation with the Balkan

countries. The participants indicated that the educational policy of the *Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs* was shaped by the agreements on cooperation between the Diplomatic Academies with international character and recently by programs on exchange of diplomats. These programs are intended to provide accurate information about Turkey at first hand. For example, it was expressed that a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation with Diplomatic Academies of more than 60 countries were signed including Macedonia and Kosovo.

Among the most engaged issues of the *Cultural Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs* were *establishment of Turcology chairs*, meeting the demands regarding Turkish language and culture, to carry out the procedures of the intergovernmental scholarships and the scholarships in the framework of the “Great Student Project”.

The participants reported also about the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of education signed especially with Macedonia, with aim to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey from the historical books and exchange of documents on mutual recognition of the certificates. *Cultural Exchange Programs are other type of cooperation* preferred by the aforementioned Ministry. By these programs it is aimed to strengthen the cultural life in the Balkan countries and to improve the cross-cultural cooperation between Turkey and the Balkans. In these programs, a separate dimension of education is also taking part.

Further, it was indicated that *TIKA* in cooperation with the universities was signing mutual *protocols for opening of Turcology or Turkish Language and Literature Departments* in the universities in the Balkan countries. The Turcology project is worth mentioning in this context. To recall, this project was initiated by TIKKA in 1999. Within this project, Turkish Language and Turkish Literature Departments, Turkish Training Centers and Turkish courses have been opened. In addition, *academics were engaged from Turkey* in the universities in cooperation, support was given to the local faculty, materials and *equipment are provided for the newly opened departments*. If these activities of TIKKA would be explained in more detail, for example the activities carried out under the Turcology projects it is seen that they cover primarily infrastructure and technical support, educational and training tools and materials provided for the Turkish language departments established in the universities in the country concerned.

It was stated that direct and indirect *logistic and financial support was given by TIKKA for organizing the conferences, seminars and workshops, for printing and publishing of the papers and the travel expenses of the Turcologists* participating to these activities. It was stated that every year in Antalya was organizing an Alumni Workshop combining those who graduated from Turkey.

The signed agreements with the Balkan countries usually contains provisions related to the exchange of students and faculty, cooperation in the field of education and joint projects.

It was indicated that the educational and cultural activities carried out by Turkey also contributed to strengthen the relations with the Balkan countries. *Turkish courses* organized for all communities living in the Balkans was identified as one of the prominent activity in this sense. The main purpose was to contribute to the dissemination of the Turkish language in the Balkans. Further, summer internship programs have been implemented every year. Within this program the successful students studying in Turkish Language and Literature and in Turcology departments in cooperation with TOBB University are brought to Turkey for 10 or 15 days. In this way they have the opportunity to practice Turkish language and to attend to social activities and to have visits to historical places in Ankara, Bursa, Istanbul, Nevsehir, Konya and Istanbul. Students were provided the opportunity to be familiar with Turkey. Besides, financial support was given also, for example during this internship programs board and accommodation expenses of the students were covered and in addition daily pocket money were given to them. Trips were organized to historical sites, historic cities and museums. Some entertainments were organized and gifts were given in order to motivate the students. After the programs a network was created.

As it is known the scholarships primarily were allocated to the ethnic Turks living in the Balkans but later on in this scope relative communities and other ethnic communities were included. These scholarships are provided in all areas and all levels. Some wrong applications about student quota due to the lack of coordination between the educational institutions have led to the complaints of the educational authorities in the country where the service is provided. Therefore it is advised that the distribution of the scholarships (how many undergraduate, graduate and Ph. D), quota distribution according to the departments (how many medicine, engineering, architecture etc) should be done in consultation taking into account the bilateral cooperation agreement signed with these countries. Since it is a matter of budget the institutions can not always meet the demands of the educational authorities in the countries concerned. There were also scholarships granted by TIKA. The main criteria for granting these scholarships are as follows: granted especially for students working on research or thesis regarding Turkish language and literature and history, according to the topic to be covered.

Apart from the above, providing support with educational materials is another important field of operation of the Turkish institutions in the Balkans. *Turkish Ministry of National Education* officials reported that every kind of effort was spent to meet the needs of the schools in the Balkan countries where ethnic Turks children are predominantly studying. These needs in the area of education covers providing textbooks and training materials for Turkish education in the Balkans. For example in this context, in Macedonia help was made

to Tefteyyüz primary school in Skopje and to school in Ohrid where ethnic Turks are studying.

After the post-independence period in many Balkan universities *the lack of skilled, qualified and trained academic staff* emerged to be an important problem to be solved urgently. In this sense, Turkey contributed in raising and providing *human resource support to the universities in the Balkans*. Lecturers involved in teaching Turkish language were appointed in the Balkan universities by *Ministerial Joint Cultural Commission*. In this context, lecturers were engaged in the universities in Macedonia (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo University) and the instructor assigned to Prishtina University in Kosovo in the framework of Yunus Emre Institute Turcology project.

Beside the human resources support, *curriculum support* was also provided. During the interviews, it was indicated that efforts were spent for development and innovation in the curricula of the universities in the Balkan countries. Additionally, it was expressed that difficulties encountered during the creation of the educational curriculum of Turcology departments were tried to be solved in accordance with the reports prepared by these lecturers and academicians assigned in those departments.

Turkey's educational practices were covering not only education but also other areas. For example, TİKA is known as an institution realizing especially technical assistance activities such as alteration, reparation, refurbishment, equipment of every kind of conceivable supports held in almost every area including education. There were educational content projects held for doctors in the health area also.

It was reported that positive feedback was received from the educational activities organized. The request for repeating the activities is the most important indicator of success. At the end of the organized activities by taking the e-mail addresses of the participants creation of data banks and by using technological and communication facilities formation of the contact groups is another indicator of success. Positive feedback and impression have been recorded.

#### *4.4.2.2 Opinions of the academicians*

Two main theme emerged in the interviews with the academicians: teaching Turkish language and internationalization. These themes were presented in Table 4.101 below.

Recently interest for learning Turkish language has increased. From the data obtained it was seen that Turkey in the educational activities carried out towards the Balkans generally seems to be using the Turkish language very often. In other words, great importance is giving for learning Turkish language. In the interview with the Turkish academicians *teaching Turkish language* emerged as an important theme.

Table 4.101

*Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Academicians*

No	Themes
1	Teaching Turkish Language - Balkan Research Institute / Turkish courses and Turkish history - Turkish courses in TÖMER
2	Internationalization - student mobility / Erasmus Mundus program - organization of joint projects / "placement of the Turkish language and Turkish literature in the Balkans"

In this respect within the Trakya university was opened Balkan Research Institute, through which Turkish courses are given and Turkish history are taught to the students coming from the Balkans. Further, it should not be forgotten that almost in every province across Turkey TÖMER courses were opened for teaching Turkish language to foreigners. Thus opportunities are provided for the Balkans students to study in Turkish universities where medium of instruction is in Turkish. So, questions arised whether it is possible to internationalize by using Turkish language. According to the results, it can be said that Turkish language is an important factor affecting the internationalization of the higher education of Turkey.

The second theme emerging during the interview is *internationalization* theme. During the interview academicians discussed the important aspect of the internationalization *student mobility*. The representatives of the international office in METU, emphasized the importance of the students exchange and exchange of the faculty as well. The student exchange with European Union and Balkan countries was done trough the special program *Erasmus Mundus* developed by the European Union. Following long discussions about whether it is a European country or not, Turkey was accepted as a European country and a window was opened for the use. According to the information obtained from the academicians, within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus program, students from the Balkans came to study in METU. In this respect for the period from the year 2010 to 2011 totally about 21 students and faculty visit METU. To give in detail two faculty members and one students from Bosnia Herzegovina, there were no application from Macedonia since in METU's department there were no suitable programs, from Kosovo three students in undergraduate program (one mining engineering, two management) and two faculty members from architectural department, from the university of Sarajevo two students for master's degree and one student to archeology deoprtment for one semester from Mostar university, while the students from METU went to Belgrade University. Outside of METU, Anadolu University and Sabancı University also have

taken place in the Erasmus Mundus programs lot. Turkey has been involved in this window without paying any contribution. It was reported that, since the Turkish government did not pay this contribution the window was closed and unfortunately METU had to get out of this consortium. Therefore the exchange programs with the Balkans ended. There were comments that the responsible institutions for the payment of this contribution were European Union General Secretariat (now Ministry of European Union), Higher Education Council and National Agency. METU applied to consortium and take place in 6 lots (external cooperation window). Taking part in this consortium increased the demands of the Balkan universities for cooperation with METU. There were positive feedback obtained as well. In this context, collaboration with many Balkan universities and some associate partners were done. This cooperation is described in the following expression.

Yes, [these are] Belgrade [University] from Serbia, the University of Montenegro, the University of Mostar from Bosnia, the [University of] Novi Sad again from Serbia, [the University of] Prishtina from Kosovo, the University of Sarajevo again from Bosnia, [the University of Tiran] from Albania, the University of Tuzla again from Bosnia. There are also the associate partners, which includes institutions other than universities, such as NGOs that are working on the subject of Balkans, civil society organizations etc. Those that give their support in this way can be admitted as partners.

It was expressed that during the exchange process the students were allowed to benefit from all possibilities throughout their education in METU. These possibilities were: permission for staying in dormitories, for using the library, fitness center and computer labs, and health treatments were provided also in case of need. Within the Erasmus Mundus sufficient amount of scholarships were rewarded to the students. But sometimes problems occur regarding the high university fees.

Thus, by participating in this program it has been contributed to the internationalization of METU. It has been very useful for the students participating in the program also. Through this program cultural interaction has been provided between the students in Turkey and the students coming from the Balkans. The academicians emphasized that the Erasmus Mundus program has contributed to the diversity in education. The following quotations exemplify this perspective.

Ultimately, this has enhanced our internationalization. One should not take into consideration only the numbers since all is portrayed as a small piece when we look at the numbers, but it is an important thing in the end. Besides, we only had 6 lots and 10 students from each lot and when you look at it, it really is an important and beautiful thing and it added diversity, which is also important.

To this end, it is obvious that that this kind of collaborative activities such as expressed above contributed to the overall internationalization process of Turkey.

Apart from the student mobility, during the interviews another dimension of

internationalization has been emphasized, *organizing of joint projects*. One of this project to be mentioned is "placement of the Turkish language and Turkish literature in the Balkans" project. Further, there was also a training project according to which about 40 students from the Balkan universities (mainly Zagreb University and Sarajevo University) were accepted to study in Turkish Language and Literature Department of the Trakya University.

#### ***4.4.2.3 Opinion of the representative of association (Turkiye Diyanet Foundation)***

*Religion education activities* emerged as a dominant theme in the interview with the representative of the Religious Foundation / association regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey in the Balkans. This theme was presented in the Table 4.102 below.

Table 4.102

*Theme Emerged in the Interviews with the Representative of Turkish Association*

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1	<p>Religion education activities</p> <p>Features of the activities: - need oriented support (project based, in-service trainings, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, visits to historic cities or provide vocational training for the reverends and religious officials)</p> <p>- activities done at student level (allocation of student quota, scholarships, possibility for practice, signing of protocols)</p> <p>- financial support (for the religious authority needs, work places and restoration of the historical symbols)</p> <p>- inadequacies in religious education system shortages of the trained staff in the religious schools</p>

In the interview with the representative of the Foundation, information was obtained about the activities undertaken by Turkey in the field of religion. It was expressed that there was cooperation in the field of religion with almost all Balkan countries. The cooperation with the Balkan countries in the area of religion are carried out in the framework of bilateral relations with the local religious authorities or via Eurasian Council to which Balkan Religious Administrations have been also included. In addition, it was indicated that Religious Foundation in conducting of educational activities in the field of religion in the Balkan countries were in cooperation with many institutions, primarily with the Presidency of the Religious Affairs, Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities, TIKA, Yunus Emre Foundation and Higher Education Council of Turkey (HEC). The educational activities realized in the field of education in the Balkan countries was investigated under the following four sub-headings: needs-oriented support, activities done at student level, financial

support and inadequacies in religious education system.

*Need oriented support* was the first feature of the activities identified in the interview regarding the support given by Turkey to Balkan countries in the field of religious education. The respondent said that the activities towards the region were conducted within the framework of the foreign policy of Turkey, taking into account the demands conveyed from the region, and were arranged according to the needs and deficiencies existed in the region. It was stated that activity priorities were determined according to the local needs of the certain countries. Additionally it was emphasized that this support was project based in the form of organization of in-service trainings to religious officials, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, organizing visits to historic cities or provide vocational training for the reverends and religious officials currently working in the countries concerned. Additionally, it was added that studies have been also conducted for raising staff in the field of religion. Further, it was expressed that the field of operation of the said Foundation was very extensive, it covers wide range of activities mainly from organization of various seminars, conferences and educational historical excursions to support provided for improving of the infrastructure of some religious institutions including as well humanitarian aids. The activities in the field religious education indicated by he representative of the Foundation were expressed as followings:

Our operations continue in the Balkan countries especially in the fields of education and mutual cooperation of religious organizations including symposiums, training seminars, field trips aimed at increasing knowledge and experience, and humanitarian assistance activities.

The interview data revealed that the activities undertaken by Turkey in the field of religion covered mainly *the educational activities at the student level*. More precisely studies carried out by the Foundation were primarily on the direction of bringing students to study in Turkey or offering scholarships for the student wishing to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey. It was reported that there were procedures and criteria applied in selecting the students for studying in Turkey, and also quota allocated for the students at high school level, for undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. It was denoted that a certain amount of scholarships were given also. It was learned that there is a reconciliation between the Foundation and the Higher Education Council about this quota.

Additionally, it was expressed that in comparison to the religious high schools and the faculties of theology, which were giving only certain knowledge by following a specified curricula, the Foundation was offering for the students the possibility for practice. For example, it was stated that the students were taken to the mosques, opportunities were given for reading the sermon actually, for preaching or they were employed as imam. It was reported that the contact was also continued after the graduation of the students, that even support was

given for the job placement. The opportunities provided by Turkey have led to increase in the number of the students' coming from the Balkans. The representative explained that since this explosion in the number of the students, sometimes only certain proportion of the demands have been able to fulfill.

Apart from the above, it was mentioned that very comprehensive protocols were often signed between the religious authorities of Turkey and that of the Balkan countries. As the representative stated " ...this protocol does not only cover student training, but also includes mutual action on many issues, including for instance the adoption of a common calendar for Ramadan and production of certain common projects".

Another important feature of the activities held by the Foundation was expressed as providing *financial support* for restoration of the historical symbols, meeting the needs of the religious authorities regarding their offices or work places. It was indicated that besides TIKA, some contributions were also made by the Foundation for the repairment of the historical monuments such as mosques, religious schools and madrasas. It was denoted that financial aid was given for the refurbishment of these buildings as well.

*The inadequacies in religion education of the Balkan countries* emerged as a fact worth mentioning. A very often mentioned matter was related to the shortages of the trained staff in the religious schools in the Balkan countries. In this sense, the main strategy of Turkey was intensified on providing training for the persons who will work in the field of religion in these countries, and studies were done in this direction aiming creation of educated staff.

#### **4.4.3 The rationales behind Turkey's practices towards the Balkan countries**

##### ***4.4.3.1 Opinions of the governmental officials***

Some governmental officials stated that, apart from the cultural policy, which is an integral part of the Turkey's foreign policy, it is hard to say that Turkey has a special educational policy towards the Balkan countries. However, they at the same time reaffirmed the existence of such a policy. Thus, in accordance with the data obtained from the interviews with the governmental officials three main rationales were identified: cultural and social, political and academic rationales, which were presented in Table 4.103 below. It was seen that the cultural and social rationale was stated in the first place, while the political rationale in the second and then the academic rationale.

Table 4.103

*Themes Identified in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials*

No	Rationales
1	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promotion of Turkish culture and arts, Turkish language and literature</li> <li>- to re-establish the cultural ties stemming from the past</li> <li>- to provide better understanding of Turkey abroad</li> <li>- ensuring cultural interaction between Turkey and the Balkans</li> </ul>
2	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the presence of ethnic Turks and relative communities</li> <li>- strengthen the relations of the ethnic Turks with Turkey, and to maintain the bonds of affection between these communities and Turkey</li> <li>- reinforce the Turkish foreign policy</li> <li>- to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey</li> <li>- allocation of student quota and scholarship/ investment in the future political relations with Balkan countries</li> <li>- training programs for the foreign diplomats/ chance to explain more deeply Turkey foreign policy</li> </ul>
3	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quality of the Turkish education system</li> <li>- increase the quality of the education in Turkish universities</li> <li>- increase the prestige of the Turkish universities</li> <li>- contribute for the establishment of network/ provide continuation of the relations between Turkey and Balkan countries</li> </ul>

The first theme emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials was named as *cultural and social rationale*. This rationale was associated with the *promotion of the Turkish culture and arts and Turkish language and literature*. It was indicated that by the educational and cultural activities realized in these countries it was aimed to create a mass of Turkish speaking potential. As it is stated in the sentences below the main objective was defined as to generate a potential of Turkish – speaking mass, to generalize the learning of Turkish language and to *re-establish the cultural ties* stemming from the past with the neighboring and friendly relatives communities.

In present day, our institution's mission and vision concerning our field are to re-establish our cultural ties rooted in the past with the neighboring, friend and relative communities, to popularize the Turkish language, and to improve communication. Consequently, our objective and mission are to create a population that can speak Turkish in the process of educational, cultural, social, technical, commercial and economic cooperation in these countries, namely this is our objective and mission.

The above written opinion was repeated regarding the objective of the Turcology

project, initiated in 1999 by TIKA. By this project, it was aimed to re-establish the cultural relations stemming from the past with the friendly relative communities and to disseminate the Turkish language learning, to develop the communication with the neighboring communities. By this way, as it was indicated by one of the participants it was intended to ***provide better understanding of Turkey*** abroad.

Officials indicated that, in the context of the European Convention for the protection of the basic civil human rights, the primary aim of Turkey is to give opportunity to the ethnic Turks in the Balkans not to forget their own mother tongue and to give opportunity to survive their own culture. Further, very frequently repeated fact by the officials was that via Turcology project Turkey was aiming to ***re-establish the cultural relations stemming from the past*** with the neighboring and relative communities, by establishment of cooperation with the Balkan universities to teach Turkish language and to promote Turkey and Turkish history to the Balkan students and as well to ensure the development of the communication between the communities living in the Balkans and Turkey.

Apart from the activities organized in the Balkan countries, it was stated that the activities held in Turkey were also contributed ***for ensuring the intercultural interaction between Turkey and the countries concerned*** and were very effective in promotion of Turkey at international level. For example, it was mentioned about programs organized by Diplomatic Academy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the foreign diplomats from various countries including the countries from the Balkans.

***Political rationale*** was the second theme suggested by the data from the interview with the governmental officials. The political rationale was related to the foreign policy of Turkey. As it is stated in the introduction part Turkey attaches great importance to the Balkans since the ***ethnic Turks and relative communities*** living in these countries. It was indicated that these communities were one of the driving forces for Turkey to pursue an active policy towards the region. Actually by helping these ethnic communities, Turkey contribute for the improvement of the bilateral relations with the countries in the Balkans. The officials expressed that with the educational activities undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries it is aiming to ***strengthen the relations of the ethnic Turks with Turkey, and to maintain the bonds of affection between these communities and Turkey*** and as well to preserve the identity of the ethnic Turks living in the Balkans. It was indicated that by helping these communities mutual sympathy was created. The formation of this sympathy was considered as an important part of the policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a kind of ***hidden policy*** that can be seen as an extension of the formal foreign policy of Turkey. It helps to ***reinforce the Turkish foreign policy*** towards the Balkans, which was affirmed by the following expression.

Yes, we help all of them and a mutual affinity is created. We view this affinity as significant and in fact, I think this is an important policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These are neighbors of the European Union and a number of them are candidates to the European Union. And this fact is something that is going to strengthen our hand in the future.

On the other hand, it is known that the situation in the Balkans still remains fragile. Therefore taking into account the sensitivities on specific topics in that region, Turkey is striving to pursue a policy of not ignoring the rights, interests and expectations of these communities from Turkey. Of course Turkey does not want to create the impression that ethnic Turks and relative communities are protecting against the peoples of the concerned countries in the Balkans. Despite that, participants stressed that, Turkey need to show a special interest towards these communities.

It was indicated that the formation of sympathy will help also to eliminate the prejudices existed about Turks and Ottomans. In this respect, for example, it was reported that a memorandum of understanding was signed with Macedonia *aiming to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey*. The main problem on this regard was summarized as follows:

Let me put it this way: we may encounter statements that are not so friendly in history and geography books [about the Ottomans] since the Ottomans reigned in these regions in the past. For example, in a Macedonian history book, there may definitely be a depiction of an Ottoman soldier underneath the feet of a Macedonian general's horse. There are usually statements against Ottomans and these disturb the Turkish brothers that live there. And we cannot conveniently take a step forward when we say let us reciprocally change this. I mean the usual response that we get from the Balkan countries is that this subject would be evaluated and only acted upon in the context of mutual writing of the history within the Council of Europe. But this mutual writing of history has somehow never ended, succeeded or it has not been concluded. A book was prepared but this has also not paid off well. That is why we encounter obstacles whenever we say 'let us take out the damaging statements from the textbooks'; namely we clearly do not see the willingness to.

It was explained that the negative phrases on Ottoman Empire in the history books stemmed from the fact that Turkey has been a part of this Empire. Therefore the most significant part of the memorandum covers the removal of the harmful unfriendly statements from the books. The following expressions provide an information on the approach of the European Council and Turkey on this regard. It is seen that European Council also is giving importance on this issue.

In the same vein, the elimination of harmful statements from history books is a subject, which the Council of Europe is laying a heavy stress on. You cannot find an unfriendly expression about the Balkan countries or any other country in the world in our textbooks. The statements in our textbooks are designed in the context of good relations with countries. We are imposing on these countries the same and we further stress that these [harmful] statements are eliminated from textbooks if we are to learn to live together.

Other than this, the officials expressed the local authorities' concerns arising from the common history and some local ethnic sensitivities as follows:

It is necessary not to ignore the concerns of the local authorities that arise partly from our common history and partly due to local ethnic sensitivities. Namely, it is necessary that they should not get the idea that Turkey is carrying some different ambitions. As you will appreciate, this is an area that is susceptible to abuse.

Officials also warned that although Turkey has made efforts to improve the human resources, to reduce the problems of the peoples and rehabilitate them, to eliminate the problems facing in the region, there would be naturally some misunderstandings in regard to these efforts. In this sense, it was highlighted that Turkey has to act very carefully and to consider these issues in order that this situation not be abused by malicious people.

Most obvious manifestation of Turkey's policy towards Balkan countries in the field of education was *allocation of scholarships and student quota* in the framework of the Great Student Project. The participants underlined the *political reasons* for this project by saying that this project can be seen as an *investment in the future political relations with Balkan countries, because* students that have been educated in Turkey within this project, after returning to their own countries will obtain managerial or high responsible positions and will nourish warm feelings about Turkey, they will become cultural ambassadors forming the bridge between Turkey and the country concerned. As one of the participants indicated "Turkey's purpose is extremely clear. It is to train people who have a bond of love with Turkey". The comments outlines Turkey's policy in this regard.

The participants drew attention to *the contribution of the training programs for foreign diplomats* organized by the Diplomatic Academy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also. It was indicated that these programs were a kind of platform for expressing the bilateral, regional or international policies of Turkey as well give a *chance to explain more deeply Turkey foreign policy*. In addition it was indicated that with these programs a contribution was provided for the continuation of the foreign policy of Turkey.

According to the officials the factors affecting educational relations between Turkey and Balkan countries were firstly cultural and historical ties, foreign policy of Turkey, the quality of the universities in Turkey, employment opportunities after the graduation and geographical proximity, and as the second significant factors was emphasized the efforts of these countries to capture the educational norms of the European Union. The following expression strenghten the argument on the inclination of the Balkan countries towards Europe.

Secondarily, the European Union is very important in [these] relations, because the countries can remain in the position to engage in information exchange in order to reach European Union's norms. The EU's 2020 education and teaching activities are especially important.

The third important rationale prominent in the interviews with the governmental officials was labeled *as academic rationale*. This rationale was associated with *the quality of the education system in Turkey*. It was expressed that since the high quality of the universities in Turkey, Balkan countries want to take an advantage of this. In this respect, the demands for cooperation with the Turkish universities primarily in the area of exchange of academic staff and research was increased recently. The officials stressed that involving the successful students in Turkish universities will contribute to the *increase of the quality of the education in the universities* in Turkey and will also *increase the prestige of the Turkish universities at international arena*. Additionally, it was highlighted that the horizons of the students growing in multi-cultural environment will be more open, and this will be a significant investment for the future of Turkey and investment in the favor of the world. Further, it was expressed that the educational activities have contributed for the *establishment of network* between the academicians and students graduated from the universities in Turkey, which was a way for the continuation of the relations with the Balkan countries in the field of education.

#### 4.4.3.2 Opinions of the academicians

The main rationales identified in the interviews with the academicians were political, cultural and social and academic rationales. These rationales were presented in Table 4.104 below.

Table 4.104

#### *Themes Identified in the Interviews with the Academicians*

No	Rationales
1	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to contribute to the peace process in the Balkans</li> <li>- to strengthen the relations with the Balkan countries</li> <li>- to correct the image of Turkey in the Balkans</li> </ul>
2	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to strengthen the cultural ties stemming from the past</li> </ul>
3	Academic rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing the visibility of Turkish universities in the Balkans</li> </ul>

As it is seen from the table the same rationales were emerged in the interviews with the academicians as with the governmental officials. However, academicians put an emphasis on different matters regarding the content of these rationales. The first theme identified from the data was named a *political rationale*. The academicians expressed that the cooperation in the field of education with the Balkan countries provides a great advantage either from political and economic aspect. They highlighted that Turkey's education activities will definitely contribute to the *peace process in the Balkans*. The participants strongly supported this view.

One of them expressed his opinion by the following statement “absolutely, I think that education will contribute to the peace process in the Balkans”.

In addition, it was indicated that Turkey as an attractive destination for study abroad is a source of prestige for the Balkan students. One of the academicians stated that “They acquire prestige. Their sole purpose really is to come to Turkey and there is this longing for Turkey. The more powerful Turkey is the more they feel powerful. How ever much Turkey helps them, they get strength from Turkey's assistance”. In this sense, it is clearly understood that Turkey is of great importance for the Balkan students. Further, it was stated that these students become voluntary cultural ambassadors of Turkey in their host countries. *They contributed to strengthening of the relations between Turkey and Balkan countries.*

It is reality that the relations in the field of education have contribution on the promotion of Turkey and Turkish people. In addition it was highlighted that these educational relations have *contributed for the correction of the image of Turkey in the Balkans.*

*Cultural and social rationale* was the second theme suggested by the data from the interviews with the academicians. This rationale was linked with the historical and cultural ties arising from the common past. For example, it was stated that, the main reason for taking part within the consortium of the Erasmus Mundus programs was that Turkey has a *historical ties* with the Balkan countries. The importance of these ties was explained in the following way.

The most powerful aspect of this consortium was this: it has been pronounced and as you already know the only two countries that have historical ties to the Balkans is Austria and Turkey. Accordingly, Austria is already in the governing position of this consortium. The fact that Turkey was in this consortium was very effective in the election of this consortium.

In the light of recent events, academicians stated that the main reason of the Balkan students for choosing to study in Turkish universities was primarily *cultural ties*, as well as *convenient living conditions in Turkey and the amount of scholarship*. The following expressions summarized this situation.

Now for instance, this [professor] told me that he wished that Erasmus Mundus had continued with Turkey and that other Turkish universities had entered this consortium, as they would have wanted very much to engage in exchanges with Turkey, because we truly have cultural ties with every single one of them. Therefore the continuation of Erasmus Mundus is not only for METU, but as much as the Balkans, there are other countries for Turkey as well. One should not only think of the Balkans, but other parts of the world are also included in these regions. Consequently, it is also [an open] door for other Turkish universities as well. At the end of the day, receiving 1000 euros in scholarships is an important thing for Turkish student. Namely it is really [an] important [achievement] to be able to find this [kind of a] scholarship, plus the travel [expenses], plus the insurance. The Turkish universities should certainly benefit from this and so should the Turkish students. Ultimately, the Turkish students are also able to go and let us not only think of the incoming [students].

*Academic rationales* was another theme emerged as strongly in the interviews with the academicians. The academicians stated that the incoming students beside the development of the local economy they contributed to *the visibility and the internationalization of the Turkish universities* also.

#### 4.4.3.3 *Opinion of the representative of the association (Türkiye Diyanet Foundation)*

The main theme emerged in the interview with the representative of the association was named *as cultural and social rationale*, presented in detail in Table 4.105 below.

Table 4.105

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Representative of the Association*

No	Rationale
1	Cultural and social rationale - historical ties - the cooperation between the religious authorities - to bring together the ethnic groups having common history and culture, to prepare a joint action and to seek solutions for the specific problems.

This rationale was linked to the rationales regarding the activities in the field of religious education. It was indicated that *historical ties* were almost the foremost rationale for the activities carried out in the field of religion education. It was emphasized that the cooperation in this field of religion was conducted by the bilateral relations established with the religious authorities of Balkans countries or via Eurasian Islamic Council (Şurası), religious institution established for improving the cooperation the in the field of religion among the religious authorities in Europe and Asia . It was stated that through the above mentioned Councils were determined the strategies or the road map of the collaboration between Turkey and the countries concerned.

In fact this cooperation identifies the strategy or the road-map. The main objective here is to bring together these ethnic groups, these communities, which have both a common historical and national culture, along the axis of a common understanding and to create a mutual action plan. These are repeated every year; certain issues are put on the agenda; certain problems are identified there and solutions are sought; solutions to problems are sought.

As it is understood by the expression above the main objectives were defined as follows: within the framework of a common understanding *to bring together the ethnic groups having common history and culture, to prepare a joint action and to seek solutions for specific problems.*

#### 4.4.4 The expectations of different stakeholders in the Balkan countries from Turkey

##### 4.4.4.1 Opinions of the governmental officials

Two main themes emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials regarding the Balkan countries expectations from Turkey in relation to higher education. These rationales were named as the aspects of the internationalization and cultural and social support. These themes were presented in Table 4.106 below.

Table 4.106

##### *Themes Emerged in the Interviews with the Governmental Officials*

No	Themes
1	Aspects of Internationalization - increase in the student quota and scholarships
2	Cultural and social support - demands for printing textbooks and providing school materials needed for Turkish education - request for signing a memorandum of understanding for printing textbooks

The first theme named *aspects of internationalization* was closely related to *the student quota and scholarships* allocated by Turkey to the Balkan countries. From the interview data it was understood that Balkan countries demands were intensified mostly on *the increase of the student quota and the number of the scholarships*. According to the opinions of the officials, the requests for additional scholarships were always evaluated and if possible (if there were scholarships not used by some countries) unused scholarships were shifted to the countries demanding them. It was indicated that sometimes there were request not only for increasing the student quota but also to allocated student quota for certain branches in the universities. The officials emphasized that, in order to meet the demands of the Balkan countries, determination of the student quota should be done in line with the need of these countries, and otherwise Turkey's policy towards the Balkans would not be consistent.

The second theme was related to *the cultural and social support* expected from Turkey by different stakeholders in the Balkan countries. Governmental officials confirmed the fact that the educational authorities in the Balkan countries usually demanded *textbooks and teaching materials* needed for the schools providing Turkish education. It was indicated that these requests were met in the extent possible by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and TIKA. For example, it was explained that in Macedonia there were approximately 150 thousand ethnic Turks. Further, it was indicated that difficulties were experienced by Macedonian authorities in printing the Turkish

textbooks needed for the ethnic Turkish children, since that the number of the students in each grade level was not sufficient. In this respect, it was said that a *request was conveyed for signing a memorandum of understanding* with the Ministry of National Education of Turkey.

Officials summarized the situation as follows:

This Turkish community there...the Ministry of Education requested from us in the past the signing of a memorandum of understanding so that the Turkish versions of these books may be prepared and published in Turkey. In other words, they request this type of cooperation from us according to the needs that arise there.

#### 4.4.4.2 Opinions of the academicians

The main theme emerged in the interviews with the academicians regarding the expectations of the different stakeholders in the Balkans was named as *internationalization*. This theme was presented in Table 4.107 below.

Table 4.107

*Theme Emerged in the Interview with the Academicians*

No	Theme
1	Internationalization - raising academic staff

This theme was associated with the expectation regarding the need for trained academic staff for the universities in the Balkan countries. Academicians stated that in Balkan universities, there were cadre problems, especially in Turkish language and literature departments within the universities in the Balkans. Further, it was indicated that *raising academic staff* were frequently conveyed demands by the different stakeholders in the Balkans. Academicians proposed a radical solution for this problem, according to this proposal the staff can be trained in Turkey and than after to be engaged in the Balkan educational institutions.

There are doctoral candidates that have come from there to study here, for example in the departments of history, administrative sciences. Consequently, they are going to have been trained here and they are going to work in the universities there. I think this is the most important thing. In other words, it is much better if individuals receive their training here and return home to assume a position, rather than sending people from here.

#### 4.4.4.3 Opinion of the representative of the associations (Turkiye Diyanet Foundation)

The representative of the Association stated that the activities carried out in the field of religion education satisfied the expectations of the local religious authorities.

#### **4.4.7 Discussion on Republic of Turkey (Summary)**

In this study, a total of 8 participants were interviewed, five governmental officials, of two from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one from the Ministry of National Education, one from the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities and one from Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), two academicians one from Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara and one from Trakya university in Edirne and one representative of the Religious Foundation. The stakeholders were categorized into three groups (named as governmental officials, academicians and representative of association), whose opinions and the theme emerged from the data were presented separately under each headings.

#### **The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and the Balkan Countries**

Regarding the first research question four main themes emerged in the interviews, which are presented in detail in Table 4.108 below.

*Active role of the governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations* was the first theme identified in the interviews with the governmental officials and academicians. Detail information was given about the institutions taking place in overall educational policies of Turkey, having different responsibilities and acting in cooperation among themselves. Ministry of Foreign Affairs focusing mostly on signing agreements, encouraging the contacts between the relevant institutions, Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities providing logistical, expertise and operational support for the activities pertaining for the kin and related communities abroad, allocation of scholarships, Ministry of National Education of Turkey follow the developments and the movements of the international organizations in the field of education, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency provide infrastructural, technical and financial support to the activities. The efforts of these institutions were to strengthen the relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries at institutional level. The academicians added some other governmental and nongovernmental institutions which also contribute to the educational relations between Turkey and Balkan countries. They mentioned about the Edirne Governor's Office, Police Department in Edirne, which helped and directed students coming especially from the Balkans. In addition, academicians underlined the role of the non-governmental organization, namely Balkan Federation, in providing vocational training and business training courses in cooperation with Trakya University. From the data it was understood that Turkey recently have been including

more frequently the soft power in its foreign policy towards Balkans, which becomes the most important features of Turkey's foreign policy.

Table 4.108

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	Active role of the government institutions in the Balkans - MFA, YTGB, MoNE, TIKA Aim - to strengthen the relation at institutional level	- Governmental officials
	Active role of the governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations - MFA, MoNE, HEC, YTGB, Council and Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports, and Police Department in Edirne, Balkan Federation - soft power in Turkey's foreign policy	- Academicians
2	Futile and slowly growing relations Reasons - bureaucratic obstacles - curricula differences in the education system, lack of educational strategies - limited financial resources of the Balkan educational institutions - shortcomings and deficiencies in the development of joint programs due to the regulation put into practice by HEC - high university fees for the international students	- Governmental officials
3	Internationalization - student mobility - differences in the educational systems (negative factor) - other problems (health insurance, resident permits, complains about the high university fees - organization of the orientation programs	- Academicians
4	Religion education - active role of the religious institutions of Turkey (Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and Religious Foundation of Turkey) - problems faced during the cooperation between the religious authorities (changes occurred over a time, bureaucratic obstacles factors: - the impact of the poverty or economic inabilities - the changes happened in the religion structure as a result of the political developments in the country concerned	- Representative of Turkish association

The second theme suggested by the data regarding the current state of the relationships of Turkey with the Balkan countries were named as *futile and slowly growing relations*. This

theme was identified only in the interviews with the governmental officials. Some bureaucratic obstacles, curricula differences in the education systems of Balkan countries in comparison to Turkey, lack of educational strategies in educational institutions of Balkan countries and as well limited financial resources of these institutions were cited as possible reasons for the slowly developing relations. In addition, governmental officials drew attention to the shortcomings and deficiencies faced during the development of joint programs due to the regulation put into practice by Higher Education Council of Turkey. Bearing in mind the economic status of the students coming from the Balkans, the high university fees implemented for the international students was determined as an important obstacle as well.

The third theme was identified by the academicians was labeled as *internationalization*. This theme was associated with the student mobility. Differences in the educational systems, problems in relation to health insurance, resident permits, and high university fees were indicated as negative factors affecting the educational relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Orientation programs organized for the foreign students was cited as use useful facilitating the adaptation of the foreign students to living conditions in Turkey.

The fourth theme *religious education* was identified in the interview with the representative of the Religious Foundation regarding the current states of the relationships with Balkan countries in the field of religion education. The active role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Religious Foundation was emphasized. The attention was drawn to the problems faced during during the activities held in the field of religion education such as such as bureaucratic obstacles and changes occurred over a time. In addition, the impact of the poverty or economic inabilities, the changes happened in the religion structure on the bilateral relations were emphasized as well.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan Countries**

Four main themes were determined regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries which are presented in Table 4.109 below.

The first theme was named as the field of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions. This theme was suggested by the data from the interview with the governmental officials. They emphasized that there was no priority applied among the Balkan countries during the implementation of the educational activities, that all the practices were need oriented and carried out in accordance with the specific local conditions of the countries concerned. The practices were categorized under seven main headings which are: technical assistance and support for improving the infrastructure of the educational institutions (alteration, reparation, refurbishment of the educational institutions done mainly by TIKA),

providing support with educational materials (providing textbooks and training materials especially for Turkish education), human resource support (engaging lecturers through Ministerial Joint Cultural Commission to the Balkan universities), curriculum support (studies done for improvement of the curricula of the Turcology departments), educational and cultural activities (organization of Turkish courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, visits to historical places in Turkey), establishment of cooperation (protocols and agreements signed), educational activities carried out in other areas (as health sector, religion etc.).

Table 4.109

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	The field of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- technical assistance and support for improving the infrastructure of the educational institutions</li> <li>- providing support with educational materials and human resource support</li> <li>- curriculum support</li> <li>- educational and cultural activities</li> <li>- establishment of cooperation</li> <li>- educational activities in other areas</li> </ul>	- Governmental officials
2	Teaching Turkish Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balkan Research Institute / Turkish courses and Turkish history/Turkish courses in TÖMER</li> </ul>	-Academics
3	Internationalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student mobility / Erasmus Mundus program</li> <li>- organization of joint projects / placement of the Turkish language and Turkish literature in the Balkans</li> </ul>	- Academics
4	Religion education activities / Features of the activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need oriented support (project based, in-service trainings, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, visits to historic cities or provide vocational training for the reverends and religious officials</li> <li>- activities done at student level (allocation of student quota,scholarships, possibility for practice, signing of protocols)</li> <li>- financial support (for the religious authority needs, work places and restoration of the historical symbols)</li> <li>- inadequacies in religious education system shortages of the trained staff in the religious schools</li> </ul>	- Representative of Turkish association

The second important theme emerged in the interview with the academics was named at *teaching Turkish Language*. Academics expressed the importance of Turkish courses organized by TÖMER and Balkan Research Institute within Trakya University for the

foreign students. Turkish language was underlined as an important factor affecting the internationalization of the higher education of Turkey.

Another important theme identified in the interviews with the academicians was labeled as *internationalization*. Academicians regarding this theme focused on the *student mobility* between Turkey and the Balkan countries. It was mentioned about the Erasmus Mundus program developed by European Union. It was reported that within this program students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo came to study in METU. It was emphasized that involving in this consortium have a positive impact on the educational relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries and as well increased the demands of the Balkan universities for cooperation with METU. Apart from that, it was expressed that nearly 40 students from Balkan universities were accepted to study in Turkish Language and Literature Department of Trakya University within a *joint training project* organized by Trakya University.

The fourth theme suggested by the data from the interview with the representative of the representative of the Religious Foundation was named as *religion education activities*. It was indicated that there were a cooperation established among the religious authorities of Turkey and the Balkan countries. Further it was stated that the activities were mainly need oriented, project based in form of in-service trainings, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed, visits to historic cities or provide vocational training for the reverends and religious officials. In addition it was stated that the activities were done at student level, intensified on allocation of student quota and granting scholarships, providing possibilities for practice and signing protocols. Another important feature emphasized was the financial support given for the restoration of the historical monuments, for meeting the needs of the work places and buildings of the religious authorities of the country concerned. Lastly, due to the inadequacies in religious education system and shortages of trained staff in religious schools in the Balkan countries Turkey was focusing mainly on providing training for the persons who were engaged in the field of religion.

### **The Rationales behind Turkey's Practices towards the Balkan Countries**

The content analysis regarding the rationales behind Turkey's practices in higher education toward the Balkan countries suggested three main rationales: cultural and social, political and academic rationales. These rationales were presented in detail in Table 4.110 below.

First theme emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials, academicians and the representative of the association was named as *cultural and social rationale*.

Table 4.110

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

No	Themes	Stakeholder Groups
1	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the presence of the ethnic Turks</li> <li>- promotion of Turkish culture and arts, Turkish language and literature</li> <li>- to re-establish the cultural ties stemming from the past</li> <li>- to provide better understanding of Turkey abroad</li> <li>- ensuring cultural interaction between Turkey and the Balkans</li> </ul>	-Governmental officials
	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to strengthen the cultural ties stemming from the past</li> </ul>	-Academicians
	Cultural and social rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- historical ties</li> <li>- the cooperation between the religious authorities</li> <li>- to bring together the ethnic groups having common history and culture, to prepare a joint action and to seek solutions for the specific problems</li> </ul>	-Representative of Turkish Association
2	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the presence of ethnic Turks and relative communities</li> <li>- strengthen the relations of the ethnic Turks with Turkey, and to maintain the bonds of affection between these communities and Turkey</li> <li>- reinforce the Turkish foreign policy</li> <li>- to eliminate the prejudices about Turkey</li> <li>- allocation of student quota and scholarship/ investment in the future political relations with Balkan countries</li> <li>- training programs for the foreign diplomats/chance to explain more deeply Turkey foreign policy</li> </ul>	-Governmental officials
	Political rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to contribute to the peace process in the Balkans</li> <li>- to strengthen the relations with the Balkan countries</li> <li>- to correct the image of Turkey in the Balkans</li> </ul>	-Academicians

Table 4.110 (continued)

3	Academic rationale - the quality of the Turkish education system - increase the quality of the education in Turkish universities - increase the prestige of the Turkish universities - contribute for the establishment of network/ provide continuation of the relations between Turkey and Balkan countries	-Governmental officials
	Academic rationale - increasing the visibility and internationalization of Turkish universities in the Balkans	-Academics

By considering the presence of the ethnic Turks living in the Balkan countries, the governmental officials associated this theme with the promotion of Turkish culture and arts, Turkish language. They commented that in the context of the European Convention for the protection of human rights and opportunity should be given to ethnic Turks not to forget their mother tongue and to survive their own culture. Therefore, the aim of the educational activities undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkans was indicated as creating mass of Turkish speaking potential to re-establish the cultural ties stemming from the past and to ensure the cultural interaction between Turkey and the Balkan countries and consequently to provide better understanding of Turkey. Academics also expressed the same opinion as of the government officials. They also closely related the educational activities with the common historical ties. Thus, they explained the rationale of these activities as to strengthen the cultural ties stemming from the past. Representative of the association also confirm the affect of the historical ties. By examining the educational activities of Turkey towards the Balkans from the point of the religion education it was indicated that the principle purpose was to establish the cooperation between the religious authorities by this way to bring together the ethnic groups having common history and culture and to prepare a joint action for seeking solutions for problems of the ethnic groups regarding their religion education.

The second strongly emphasized theme in the interviews with the governmental officials and the academics was identified as the political rationale. Regarding this theme the presence of the ethnic Turks and relative communities was highlighted. As the motivation for the practices undertaken by Turkey was cited strengthening the relations of these ethnic Turks and relative communities with Turkey, maintaining the bonds of affection between these communities and Turkey and as well as by this way to reinforce Turkish foreign policy and to eliminate the prejudices occurred in the minds of the Balkan peoples about Turks and Ottomans. Even the reason for allocation of student quota and granting scholarships to the

students from the Balkan countries were interpreted as an investment in the future political relations of Turkey with Balkan countries. The training programs organized for the foreign diplomats were indicated as a platform for expressing bilateral, regional and international policies of Turkey. Academicians also emphasized the impact of the educational activities undertaken by Turkey on strengthening the relations with the Balkan and believed that these activities will contribute to the correction of the image of Turkey and as well as to the peace process in the Balkans, since the situation there is still fragile. As it was seen the main objective of Turkey has not changed up to now, it remains the same, the ultimate objective is the construction of a stable and secure region.

The last prominent theme emerged in the interviews with the governmental officials and academicians was academic rationale. The governmental officials expressed that the development of the educational cooperation between Turkey and the Balkan countries was a driving force for increasing the quality of the education in Turkish universities, which in turn increased the prestige of these universities in the international arena. In addition, they underlined the importance of the network established between the academics and students graduated from Turkey for the continuation of the relations between Turkey and the Balkans in the field of education. On the other hand, increasing the visibility and internationalization of Turkish universities were pointed as another reason by the academicians for the educational practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries.

### **The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in the Balkan Countries from Turkey**

Two main themes (internationalization and cultural and social support) emerged from the interviews with the governmental officials and academicians regarding the expectations of different stakeholders from Turkey in relation to higher education. These themes were presented in detail in Table 4.111 below.

According to the governmental officials, the expectations of the different stakeholders from Turkey were intensified mainly on the increase of the student quota and the number of the scholarships granted by Turkey. It was indicated that these demands were trying to meet in a possible extent, even some of the unused scholarships were shifted to the countries demanding them. On the other hand, the academicians drew attention to the cadre problems in the Turkish language and literature departments of the universities in the Balkan countries. They indicated that raising an academic staff was another expectation conveyed by different stakeholders in the Balkan universities.

Table 4.111

*Themes Presented by Stakeholder Groups*

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Stakeholder Groups</b>
1	Aspects of Internationalization - increase in the student quota and scholarships	Governmental officials
	Internationalization - raising academic staff	Academics
2	Cultural and social support - demands for printing textbooks and providing school materials needed for Turkish education - request for signing a memorandum of understanding for printing textbooks	Governmental officials

The second important theme regarding the expectations of the stakeholders from the Balkans was named as cultural and social support. This theme was determined in the interviews with the governmental officials. Another important expectation of the stakeholders from the Balkans expressed by the governmental officials was indicated as providing support for printing the textbooks for the Turkish education and teaching materials also needed for Turkish education in the Balkan countries. It was stated that these requests were met in possible extent by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and TIKA. It was mentioned that signing a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of National Education of Turkey for printing textbooks was also requested by the educators in the Balkans.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

In this chapter the findings of the study are discussed. Comments on the current state of the relationships between the Balkan countries and Turkey, the rationales behind these relations, the practices and expectations of the Balkan countries from Turkey with regard to research questions are discussed. Then, implications for practice and some recommendations for further research are outlined.

#### 5.1 Discussion

##### **The Current State of the Relationships between Turkey and the Balkan Countries**

The current state of the relationships between Turkey and Balkan countries was investigated from the point of three different stakeholder groups: governmental officials, academicians and representatives of non-governmental organizations in Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH (Balkan countries) and in Turkey. The data revealed nine different themes regarding the current state of the relationships with Turkey, which can be listed as follows: futile and slowly growing relations, western orientation of the Balkan countries, inadequate infrastructure of the education systems of the Balkan countries, change climate in Balkan education system, active role of the Turkish institutions in the Balkans, system's rationales behind internationalization, multi ethnic structure of the Balkan countries, religious education and cultural and social support given by Turkey to the Balkan countries. Six of these themes (futile and slowly growing relationships, western orientation of the Balkan countries, system's rationales behind internationalization, multi ethnic structure of the Balkan countries, religious education and inadequate infrastructure) were appeared in the interviews with the participants from each of three Balkan countries. Change climate theme emerged only in the interviews with the participants from Macedonia and Kosovo, while cultural and social support in BiH and active role of the Turkish institutions in Macedonia. By associating these themes with each other, the general outlook of the existing relationships of Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH with Turkey were discussed.

Almost all of the participants from Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH evaluated the level of cooperation between Turkey and the countries concerned as insufficient. In this context, the educational relationships between Turkey and the above mentioned countries were defined as

*futile and slowly growing*. This situation was also confirmed by the Turkish governmental officials who were working in Kosovo, Macedonia and Turkey. The *structural differences between the educational systems* of Turkey and the three Balkan countries were underlined as the major factors for this situation. It was explained that these structural differences were due to the existing curriculum and grading differences which caused diploma recognition problems and in turn affected the student mobility between Turkey and these countries. This situation was also reaffirmed by the Turkish governmental officials. In addition, limited financial resources of the Balkan countries, the presence of the Western actors providing different alternatives for education, difficulties in coordination caused by some internal dynamics of these countries as lack of strategies and some bureaucratic obstacles were cited as other factors for the slow progress in the relations of the Balkan countries with Turkey. Apart from these, Macedonian participants pointed the economic sanctions and some local legal practices as other factors in play. Additionally, they drew attention to the impact of the human and financial factors which are believed to affect further development of the relations between Turkey and Macedonia. In fact, this view is equally valid for the other two Balkan countries under research. On the other hand, the concrete evidence cited by the Kosovar participants was the fact that the agreement signed between Turkey and Kosovo in the field of education was not implemented yet. This also constitutes a good example for the stagnant relations between Turkey and Kosovo. A very different situation emerged regarding the educational relations with BiH as well. In comparison to Kosovo and Macedonia, it was identified that beside the structural differences that existed between the educational systems and the other factors mentioned above, *the complex internal political structure of BiH* was also effective in the relationships between Turkey and BiH. As it was stated in the previous section BiH does not have a central Ministry of Education, its educational system is much decentralized and since the Federation is divided into 10 cantons each having its own Ministry of Education following different curricula. Consequently, the complex political structure of BiH is indicated as another obstacle that has an impact on the bilateral relations between Turkey and BiH. Indeed, this situation complicated for example signing of an agreement between the two countries in the field of education at state level.

According to the data, *the Western orientation of these countries* was identified as another factor hampering the relations with Turkey. It is at the same time an evidence of the asymmetric nature of the relations of Turkey with the countries under research. Interview data documented several reasons behind the westernization of these countries. Aiming at the reconstruction of their war-torn educational systems, these countries were trying to implement many reforms in line with the European Union processes. Bologna process in this sense was assumed as an impetus for the realization of these reforms. The active role of the Western

actors in these countries, English medium of instruction in the Western institutions and the impact of the history of these countries with the other European countries were among other reasons behind the westernization of these countries. For example, having common historical past, being under the rule of Austria-Hungarian Empire, BiH signed a long-term agreement with the Austrian Government in the field of education. According to this agreement, Bosnian students are accepted to the Austrian institutions without paying any tuition fees. In this respect, Bosnian students demonstrate an inclination towards this country. In fact, as one of the participants in Kosovo expressed, these countries felt more or less compelled to cooperate with the EU countries, since there were no other alternatives for them. It is necessary to emphasize that the influence of the European initiatives on the educational policies is closely related to the aspiration of these countries for joining European Union (EU). As is known Macedonia was granted a candidate status in 2005, BiH and Kosovo have been identified as a potential candidate for EU membership, while Turkey is still waiting to start negotiations (European Commission, 2014). Apart from the above, the slow progress in the relations of the Balkan countries with Turkey can be attributed to the reactions and concerns in some circles since the growing role of Turkey questioning whether it carries ambitions to recover Ottoman nostalgia in the region (Somun, 2011; Turbedar 2011). It is thought that these concerns might probably restrain the Balkan countries from inclination to Turkey.

Yet, *the inadequacy in the infrastructure of the education system*, which was a general assessment for Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH could be cited as another reason for the western orientation of those countries. As it is known, the political situation of the region in the 90's affected the education systems of these countries negatively. During the war period, most of the educational institutions were demolished and destroyed. The educational system nearly collapsed. In this sense, the critiques made on the quality and the state of the higher education systems of the Balkan countries have been remarkable. The critiques and complaints were mainly related to the shortages of textbooks, teaching materials and equipment in education, the lack of teaching staff, loss of well qualified staff due to brain drain and most importantly, the grievances regarding the lack of financial resources. Obviously, the universities in the Balkan countries do not have the opportunity to permanently hire highly qualified lecturers due to their budgetary problems. In this respect, the reforming and renewing of the education systems of these countries seems to be inevitable. Thus, the deficiencies and the inadequacies in the infrastructure of the education systems in the Balkan countries, dating back to the pre-war and war periods, were cited as the major internal driving force that has had an impact on the *climate change in higher education*. Climate change in education was considered a natural consequence of change appeared in the political and economic life of these countries. In this sense, climate change theme predominated in each of

the three countries. From this point of view, these countries have required to benefit from the experiences of the other countries in order to compensate for the shortcomings and the inadequacies of the infrastructure of their own education systems and begin to change and transform their education systems. Naturally the ultimate intention is to establish a quality-based education system. Along with other western countries Turkey also is playing an important role in supporting Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH in the field of education. But, it is necessary to clarify that, until the late 90's Turkey's presence in the Balkans was limited only to the political area, while this situation has immensely changed since then. As it is stated in the introduction part of this study there were several reasons, which make Turkey to follow the developments in the Balkans. In addition to there reasons, Bechev (2012) argued that the integration of the Balkan countries with the EU was another strong incentive for Turkey to strengthen its relations with the countries in the region. Thus, with the aim of improving its bilateral and regional relations, Turkey makes an effort to be present in these three Balkan countries with many actors, each of which are operating in different areas. In this sense, the *active role of the governmental and non-governmental organizations* cannot be underestimated. There was an extensive list of actors acting in support of both domestic and external educational policies in Turkey towards the Balkans. The actors that crucially stimulate these relations are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities, Ministry of National Education, Turkish Coordination and Cooperation Agency, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Turkiye Diyanet Foundation and non-governmental organizations, such as the Trakya University, Balkan Federation and some municipalities etc. They were the most prominent institutions playing significant role in the bilateral relations of Turkey with the Balkans. For example, 4 key stakeholders in granting scholarships for students in higher education are Ministry of National Education, Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relatives Communities, Yunus Emre Institute and Higher Education Council. Apart from these, TIKA offers technical assistance to the educational institutions and Presidency of the Religious Affairs and Turkiye Diyanet Foundation are effective in the field of religious education, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is charged with coordinating the activities of these above mentioned institutions. Naturally, the differences in opinion arise from time to time among these institutions and this might result in discordant implementation of policy. In the natural course of regulating simultaneous activities, imperfection can be tolerated. However, the Balkan peoples are proud and very sentimental. This is especially relevant to the Bosniaks, as issues relating to emotional sensitivity were accentuated in the expressions of the participants from BiH. In order to avoid such undesirable situations, extreme diligence must be exercised when approaching individuals belonging to various communities and the authorities in the education sector in the Balkans. In this regard it is

advisable that these institutions work in coordinated manner and by reviewing their vision to identify new strategies according to the latest development and needs of the Balkans.

The data revealed that each of the three Balkan countries were mutually involved in the *internationalization process with Turkey*. The quality of the Turkish universities, granting of scholarships and allocation of student quotas by Turkey to Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH make Turkey an attractive destination for the students from these countries. It was identified that the student mobility between Turkey and the Balkan countries reinforce the educational relations and constitute a chain effect in strengthening the relations with Turkey. Only “the brain drain” was asserted strongly as a point affecting negatively the relations between Turkey and the three Balkan countries. Kosovar, Macedonian and BiH's participants expressed their concerns in this regard. It was indicated that “brain drain” was stemming from the living conditions and job opportunities in these countries. On the other hand, Turkish participants drew attention to the problems arising from the structural differences in the education systems existed between the Turkey and the three Balkan countries. According to the Turkish participants' opinions, these differences affected negatively the student mobility among Turkey and the mentioned Balkan countries. In this context, it was determined that the main obstacle between Turkey and the three Balkan countries under research regarding the internationalization process was caused by the structural differences in the education systems.

The important point that needs to be taken into consideration is the *multi-ethnic structure* of Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH. As it was indicated in the introductory part of this study Turkish and Muslim communities were the main reason why Turkey is obligated to follow the developments in the Balkans. There is no doubt that these minority groups have directly affected the bilateral relations of Turkey with the countries in the Balkans. This effect of the minorities in Turkey's relations with Balkan countries is also visible in the field of education. As stated by Uzel (1982) “the minority could be used as a foreign policy tool” (p.100). In practice, Turkey often makes reference to Turkish minorities abroad and reinforces its relations with these groups through giving support to *Turkish education and intensification of Turkish language teaching*. Turkey's moves of support are equally demanded by the Turkish communities. For example, Macedonian participants emphasized the significance of the continuation of Turkish language education in Macedonia and drew attention to the problems, such as shortages in teaching staff, textbooks, financial difficulties, which are still pending to be resolved by both sides. On the other hand, Kosovar participants focused mainly on facilitating active access of the Turkish communities to educational opportunities. As a result, of intensive promotional activities, the interest in learning Turkish language has recently increased steadily. To illustrate, thanks to the efforts of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Sarajevo Turkish language was included as an elective course in the

curricula of the three cantons in BiH.

On the other hand, Muslim population in the Balkans is also an important reason, which induces Turkey to follow the developments in the Balkans. In this sense, the importance of the factor of religion in the formation of bilateral relations with the Balkan countries should not be overlooked. An important issue to be emphasized regarding *the religious education* was that the level of cooperation between Turkey and the Balkan countries in the field of religious education was found to be insufficient. This situation was confirmed by the Turkish governmental officials as well. As in the field of education, all efforts are spent also to strengthen cooperation in the field of religious education. The data revealed that Turkey is very effective in terms of *religious education in the Balkan countries*. Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs and Turkiye Diyanet Foundation were the most active institutions operating towards that end. It is a common view that the religious education and religious organizations affected the relationship between the states and the societies. In line with this, it is believed that through religious education, the Muslim communities in the Balkans may smoothly adapt to the new system formed after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia and the balance between the various ethnic groups can be maintained – a concern that applies to each of the three countries concerned. As one of the participants in BiH indicated the religion in the Balkans seems to have played an important role in the process of national identity building. For example, Islam Union in BiH was described as one of the most powerful civil society in BiH. In this context, the religious authorities in the Balkan countries are believed to have played an important role. During the interviews it was mentioned about the followers of undesirable Islamic streams, which crossed the borders into these Balkan countries after the 90's. One of the representatives of the Macedonian association remarked that there were sometimes problems occurred with those who were educated in the Arab countries in the point of the sect, point of view to religion and understanding of Ottoman Turkish Islam. A certain level of concern was also indicated regarding the evidence of an increasing Wahhabi movement, notably in Kosovo, and whether this can become a threat for the Muslim population there. In this respect, it was stated that Kosovo sought after whatever Turkey could offer in terms of religious education in order to be able to cope with this movement. Despite these concerns expressed by the Turkish governmental officials, some researchers argue that there is no reason to worry, because the Wahhabis are not at the level of constituting a real threat against the security of Kosovo “either as an ideology or as a force” (Shipoli,2009, p.94).

Another important factor having positive impact on the relation between Turkey and the Balkan countries was the support given to the cultural and social event. The representative of the Turkish association in BiH emphasized the importance of *the support relating to the cultural and social events* organized for all ethnic groups without discrimination. In light of

the opinions expressed by the Turkish participants, it can be concluded that the support given to the Balkan countries in the field of education was in accordance with the demands of these countries. In other words, the support provided was needs-oriented. It was also stressed that the Turkish and Muslim population in the countries concerned have started to feel themselves more powerful in dealing with the local problems and have found the strength to become pioneers in defending their rights before the local administrations of these countries on account of the presence and active support of Turkey in every domain. In this sense, Turkey's contribution to the Turkish and Muslim population in the Balkan countries cannot be underestimated.

To summarize, the level of the cooperation between Turkey and the three Balkan countries are evaluated as insufficient, in this context the relationships were defined as futile and slowly growing. As the main factors for this situation were cited the structural differences between the education systems and the western orientation of those countries. The inadequacies in the infrastructure of the educational system were assumed as driving forces for the climate change in higher education which make essential the reconstructing and renewing of the education system in the three Balkan countries. In this sense for transforming their education system these countries have required to benefit from the support and the experiences of the international actors. Having in mind the Turkish and Muslim communities living in those three Balkan countries under research Turkey was also present in the region with different actors in every domain aiming to contribute in the transitions of these countries. The contributions of Turkey in the field of education are discussed in the next part.

### **The Practices Undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan Countries**

The data revealed 11 different themes regarding the practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries in the field of education, which can be listed as follows: internationalization, active role of the Turkish government institutions, cultural and social support, dissemination of Turkish language, religious education, effectiveness of the international development agencies in Kosovo, various types of assistance given by Turkey, the role of the civil society, intensified intergovernmental relations, increasing the physical capacity of the educational institutions, multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of the countries under research, the fields of operation of the Turkish governmental institutions. The practices undertaken by Turkey in the field of higher education towards Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH are briefly explained below.

Turkish governmental officials stated that, all practices were needs-oriented, carried out by taking into consideration the specific conditions of the Balkan countries. Each of the countries and institutions have mastered their own tools of realizing cooperation with Turkey.

Turkey is present in these three Balkan countries with many actors (as stated above the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency of the Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities, Ministry of National Education, Turkish Coordination and Cooperation Agency (TIKA), Presidency of Religious Affairs, Turkiye Diyanet Foundation and non-governmental organizations as Balkan Federation, universities, some municipalities etc.) each of which are operating in different areas and are playing important roles in determining the general educational policy of Turkey towards the Balkans. The collaborative activities of Yunus Emre Cultural Center with universities in Macedonia, Kosovo and BiH cannot be also underestimated. It was identified that the internationalization was the most prominent theme emerged in the interviews with the participants from the three Balkan countries including Turkey. The practices undertaken in the frame of internationalization are explained in detail below.

The data revealed that the *internationalization* theme dominantly emerged in the interviews with the participants in each country. Many educational activities were undertaken by Turkey within the context of internationalization. As it was stated earlier in the introductory part of this study, internationalization covers a variety of practices. The activities carried out by Turkey in the countries under research can be categorized in four groups: (1) cooperation initiatives among the educational institutions in form of signing an agreements, research studies and implementation of joint projects, (2) activities related to the students mobility as internships, summer courses, granting scholarships and diploma recognition, (3) providing human resource support in the form of appointments of lecturers or instructors to the Turkish language and literature departments, training in the field of human resources development, organization of conferences and symposia and (4) infrastructural support given to the educational institutions. The most prominent aspects of this theme are summarized below.

The data revealed that Turkey is involved very actively in every aspects of the internationalization process. Especially *mobility of the students* towards Turkey constitute an important part in the cooperation between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Turkey demonstrates a successful performance in this regard. As it is known Turkey has recently become an attractive destination for study for the students from the Balkan countries. Many students from Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH benefit from the educational opportunities in Turkey through the Great Student Project. For example, the participants from Turkey stated that through Erasmus Mundus Program developed by the European Union, students from BiH and Kosovo are now able to study at the Middle East Technical University. According to the findings, the student mobility generally manifests itself from the Balkan countries towards Turkey. The noteworthy point is that in Macedonia and BiH there was evidence of reversed student mobility. The participants expressed that there were many students coming from

Turkey to study in Macedonian and Bosnian universities. These students were mainly studying in Turkish universities established with the contribution of the Turkish entrepreneurs, among which are International Balkan University in Macedonia (IBU), International Sarajevo University (ISU) and International Burch University in BiH. An important issue to highlight is that due to structural differences between the educational systems of Turkey and the Balkan countries, *student exchange programs* in the framework of Erasmus could not be implemented, but instead various trips were organized to Turkey with different purposes at different levels. A very pleasant development identified was that the programs of the International Balkan University in Macedonia as of 2013 and the International Sarajevo University as of 2008 were enlisted in the booklet of ÖSYM, which created an opportunity for Turkish students to enroll easily at IBU and ISU (ÖSYM, 2014).

Turkey is engaged in *multi-dimensional relations* with countries concerned. There were *cooperation agreements* signed in the field of education at the governmental level with Macedonia and Kosovo, while with BiH there was none, because of the complex political structure of this country. Nevertheless, the recent initiatives of the Turkish universities to establish cooperation with the Balkan universities is remarkable. There were also partnership and cooperation agreements signed between the educational institutions of Turkey and the three Balkan countries. Cooperation agreements were signed by Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje/Macedonia with Trakya, Kırıkclareli, Gazi, and 19 Mayıs Universities. Tetovo University in Macedonia also have an agreement with a number of Turkish universities. Additionally, initiatives for cooperation with Istanbul University, Ankara, Sakarya, Gazi, Hacettepe and Bursa Uludağ Universities and collaboration of the Sarajevo University with some Turkish universities, such as TOBB University in Ankara were also reported. The main purpose was usually concerned with the assignment of faculty members (according to the regulation of Higher Education Council article 39). Besides, a Turkish Language and Literature department was established within the Faculty of Literature of Tuzla University in BiH and became operational in the academic year of 2002-2003 in the framework of this protocol signed in 2001 between Tuzla University and TİKA. The cooperation initiatives and the agreements signed in the field of education between the educational institutions of Turkey and the Balkan countries have positively affected the student mobility. It increased the attractiveness of the Turkish universities. Additionally, these agreements signed between the universities encourage the regional relations of Turkey with the Balkans.

Another evidence of internationalization identified from the interviews was the *exchange of academic staff*. Human resource support was also given to the Balkan universities. Lecturers and academic staff were appointed in the universities in Kosovo,

Macedonia and BiH. For example, in the framework of Yunus Emre Institute's Turcology project an instructor was assigned to Prishtina University, and through the Ministerial Joint Cultural Commission within the Ministry of National Education of Turkey lecturers were appointed to the universities in Macedonia (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University) and in BiH (Sarajevo University). Additionally, *curriculum support* was also provided, especially for the development and innovation of the curriculum of the Turkish Language and Literature departments within the Balkan universities as well as infrastructure support for the expansion of the capacity of the educational institutions. Another indicator of internationalization in higher education of Turkey is the *joint training project* conducted by Trakya University for the students from the Balkan universities who were accepted to study in the Turkish Language and Literature department of the said university. Joint project was implemented also by the Oriental Institute of BiH Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) for the translation and publication in the Bosnian language of a book named "History of the Ottoman Empire and Civilization".

*Academic communication* emerged as another form of internationalization. In this respect there were continuous exchanges of ideas and opinions between the Yunus Emre Cultural Centers in Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH and the educational institutions in these countries covering research activities. There were activities reported about the research permits granted by Turkey's Prime Ministry State Archives to the Bosnian researchers for access to the Ottoman Archives with the aims of investigating Bosnian history from the Ottoman documents. Contacts were established in this regard with libraries, such as Suleymaniye, Ataturk, Istanbul University Manuscripts Library, Nuruosmaniye Library and other university libraries.

The *support for physical capacity expansion of the educational institutions* was another activity performed especially by TIKA for restoration of the educational buildings damaged in the war and the development of the infrastructure of the educational institutions. Two projects were implemented by TIKA in collaboration with the Bihach University in Krajina region in BiH for the establishment of two laboratories, one of which was for the analysis of the quality of the wood products in the forestry sector, and the other one was a microbiology laboratory aiming to contribute to animal husbandry and dairy products in the food industry. Construction of mechatronics laboratory in Mostar Machinery and Traffic High School was also an example of support given for the physical capacity expansion of the educational institution in BiH.

Another important practice carried out by Turkey in the Balkans was *teaching Turkish language*. Naturally, Turkish communities living in the Balkans constitute a great importance for Turkey. To protect the rights of the these communities living in the Balkans, subsidiary

Turkish language course support was given to Turkish education in order to solve the enduring problems, such as shortages of teaching staff, teaching materials and educational buildings. Thus, teaching the *Turkish language* becomes a priority in the activities of Turkey in the Balkans. It was identified that Yunus Emre Cultural Centers established in Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH are working very actively for dissemination of Turkish language. In this context, Turkish language summer courses have been organized for the students studying in the Turkish Language and Literature Departments of the universities in the Balkan countries and for others to improve their Turkish language skills. Among other reasons, recently, increase interest in Turkish media and in popular Turkish series in the television channels of the Balkan countries were cited as a reasons for learning Turkish language, which increase the number of Turkish speakers in the Balkans. As a result of the initiatives made by the Yunus Emre Cultural Centers teaching Turkish language started to spread in the Balkans. An example of success was that Turkish language was accepted as *elective course in three cantons in BiH* and there were initiatives reported in this respect in other cantons. In the light of this fact, it is seen that the activities regarding dissemination of Turkish Language in compare to Kosovo and Macedonia in BiH were in more intense.

Other area of activity of Turkey is in the *field of religious education*. Different ethnic groups constitute the Muslim communities in Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH. Concerning the welfare of the Muslim population in the Balkan countries, it is necessary to touch upon the activities carried out by Turkey in the field of religious education. The Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and Turkiye Diyanet Foundation are giving support to the religious education on the request of the Islamic Unions of these countries. In this regard, for example Muslim clerics (chaplains) were appointed by the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey to Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH. There were also other activities undertaken by Turkey in this field identified in the interviews done with the participants in Kosovo, Macedonian and BiH. The aid provided for the Muslim communities in the field of religion took many forms from provision of scholarships for the students wishing to study in the faculties of theology in Turkey, organization of Qur'an courses, organization of educational programs for religious persons, trainings of imams, publication and distribution of books demanded by local religious authorities, translation of Qur'an in the local languages. It is noteworthy that the Presidency of Religious Affairs is carried out the relations with the religious authorities in the world through the Eurasian Islamic Council, established in 1995. In the meetings of this Council (Avrasya İslam Şurası), the heads of the religious administrations, including those of the Balkan countries, a variety of subjects such as issues in Islamic practices, accreditation of the university degrees and problems faced during the assistance and services provided to the Muslim population are addressed. For example, unlike the situation in Turkey, the religious

schools in Macedonia are not attached to the Ministry of National Education. In this context, students graduating from religious schools in Turkey are facing diploma recognition problems when they apply to Macedonian universities. Therefore it is thought that the above mention Council is a suitable platform to discuss these problems and to find a solution for such problems. In the scope of the activities in the field of religion, various projects were held also for the protection of cultural heritage in the Balkans dating back to the Ottoman era. The most visible contribution of Turkey is regarding the reconstruction of the historical monuments and restoration projects implemented in collaboration with TIKA and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. For example, Pasic (2010) by emphasizing the expressions of the historical monuments as a “symbol of religious tolerance ... shaping the cultural and social life in Bosnia, especially during the political turbulence’s in the 20<sup>th</sup> century”, indicated that “rehabilitation of the Islamic monuments has a very important role in the return of the displaced people and reconciliation in general” (p.11). Remarks of satisfaction was expressed, for example by Macedonian governmental officials, for the activities undertaken by Turkey in the field of religious education. At this juncture, it is correct to reiterate that religious education has affected the bilateral relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries.

In line with the information above, it is seen that, many governmental and non-governmental actors including Turkish universities established by Turkish entrepreneurs in the Balkans are playing important roles in promoting and contributing to internationalization initiatives of Turkey towards the region. The analysis of the findings revealed that there were signs of willingness to develop regional cooperation between Turkey and these three Balkan countries, initiatives for building a closer cooperation among higher education institutions. These cooperative initiatives reminds the regionalization process. On the other hand, it is noteworthy to indicate that the cooperation between Turkey and the Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH was narrowed mainly to the various aspects of the internationalization, as collaborative activities among the universities in Turkey and in the Balkan countries, student mobility, human resource support to the educational institutions in the Balkans and fostering cooperation activities among the educational institutions by signing of agreements either at state or institutional levels. As it is stated by Knight (2012) “the internationalization and regionalization processes of higher education coexist and are compatible and complementary processes.... both processes include similar activities, actors and outcomes, but regionalization emphasizes intra-regional initiatives” (p.4). In this context, since the internationalization constructs the theoretical framework of this study, the findings of the study were investigated under the concept of internationalization in higher education. Therefore, the study focused on the internationalization process of Turkey towards the Balkans. It is obvious that the regional cooperation, collaboration and partnership initiatives among the educational institutions

between Turkey and the three Balkan countries under research are stimulus for the internationalization process of Turkey towards the region. Considering the importance of the Balkans for Turkey these initiatives at the same time may create a legal basis for the solution of the problems faced during the bilateral relations in the field of education.

### **Rationales Behind Turkey's Practices toward the Balkan Countries**

The rationales behind Turkey's practices undertaken towards the Balkans have been investigated by taking into consideration the four basic groups of rationales advanced by Knight (1999), which are classified as political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationales. It was necessary to clarify that to understand better Turkey's rationales towards the Balkan countries alongside with the opinions of the Turkish participants the opinions of the Balkan participants were also questioned.

The analysis of the results shows that the *political rationale* was strongly emphasized in the interviews by almost all participants from the Balkan countries and Turkey. The participants associated the political rationale with the foreign policy of Turkey. Participants from Balkan countries indicated that, thanks to the educational activities realized in the concerned countries, a contribution is made for *the promotion of Turkey in the region*. One of the Macedonian participant stated that through these educational activities, Turkey has become more active in the Balkans. The data revealed that Turkey's primary motive is based *on reconstruction of its relation with the newly established Balkan states* after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. For example, there were opinions indicated by the Turkish academicians in BiH, that with the activities realized in the field of education Turkey is aiming to pay its historical debt and at the same time to strengthen her status politically in BiH. In this context, it is seen that Turkey uses education as a tool for strengthening its bilateral relations with the countries in the Balkans in every domain and provide support to transforming the educational systems in these countries. In this context variety of educational activities were held and agreements were signed in different areas. By these agreements it is aimed *advancement in the relations* of Turkey with the countries under research. It is worth mentioning that students studying in Turkey or those students who are studying in the Turkish Language and Literature Departments of the Balkan universities were defined as an investment in the future diplomatic relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries. They were seen as bridge serving between Turkey and the relevant country. Further, the participants from the Balkan countries drew attention to the fact that all of the activities held by Turkey in the field of education added something to the image of Turkey and contributed in increasing the prestige of Turkey in the region.

On the other hand, Turkish academicians noted that with Turkey's educational

activities it is aimed to establish cooperative relations with all ethnic groups without discrimination and to contribute for ensuring the peace and stability in the region. As Turkish academicians indicated, the universities established by Turkish entrepreneurs in the Balkan countries, some of them known from the proximity to Gulen movement, contributed greatly in this regard by providing an environment for interaction of the different ethnic groups with each others before some prejudices occurs. Another noteworthy factor is that teaching Turkish language in the Balkan countries contributed for the elimination of the prejudices in the minds of the people about Turks and Ottomans. The data revealed that Turkish language is used as an instrument in the bilateral relations with the Balkan countries in this respect. As it was indicated by the participants from Balkan countries, thanks to these activities sympathy have been created towards Turkey and even wishes have been expressed for visiting Turkey. In this respect, it was denoted that various promotion activities and efforts spent by Turkey in the field of education also serve as an effective tool for changing the perceptions of the people in the Balkan countries about Turkey.

The multiethnic structure of the Balkans, more precisely the presence of the Turkish and relative communities in the Balkan countries is another factor affecting the educational policies of Turkey towards the Balkans. Especially, the existence of the ethnic Turks is a one of the strong motives behind Turkey's educational policies organized in the Balkan countries. Through the activities in the field of education Turkey becomes a strict follower of the developments regarding the protection of their rights to have education in mother tongue in order to preserve their national identity. Turkey is trying to maintain the bonds of affection between these communities and Turkey. Therefore, education can be assumed as an effective instrument for strengthening the relations with these communities. At the same time education helps Turkey to reinforce its foreign policy towards the Balkans. It is an important part of Turkey's foreign policy, a kind of hidden policy, as an extension of its formal foreign policy. Even it is said that the student quota and scholarships granted for the students from the Balkan countries have been allocated for political reasons. In this regard, it is stated that the students from the Balkans studying in Turkey are assumed as investment in the future diplomatic relations of Turkey. In addition, the existence of Balkan origin citizen in Turkey, who maintain their contacts with the people in the region, can be defined as another significant factor enforcing Turkey to develop bilateral relations with the Balkans in all areas including education.

The second important rationale addressed by the participants is ***cultural and social rationale***. Several factors can be related to this theme. Naturally the historical and emotional ties stemming from the common 500 years long past history with the Balkan countries play an important role in the cooperation with Turkey. As it is commented by Turkish academicians,

the historical ties with the Balkan countries was cited as one of the reason of Turkey for taking part in the consortium of the Erasmus Mundus program. Additionally, culture, customs, traditions are also affecting the educational relations of Turkey with Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH. Variety of cultural events conducted by Turkey contributed to cultural interaction with the Balkan countries. The data revealed that through various educational activities Turkey is aiming to re-establish its cultural relations with the Balkan countries stemming from the past.

On the other hand, religion is assumed to be an important factor motivating Turkey's practices in the Balkans not only in the field of education but also in the field of religion. Historical ties were almost the foremost reasons for the activities carried out in the field of religion education. As it is stated by the participants the purpose of Turkey in this regard was to bring together the ethnic groups having common history and culture and to prepare a joint action for seeking solutions for specific problems in this field of religion also. Apart from this, the common view is that Turkey is carrying out its relations with the Balkans through the historical symbols, mainly preservation and maintenance of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period. In this sense, the participants from Balkan countries drawn attention to the importance of them in the territory of the Balkan countries.

The third rationale revealed by the data from the interviews was *economic rationales*. This rationale is mostly associated with job opportunities created in the Balkan countries as a result of the investments made by Turkey in the field of education. According to the Turkish governmental officials these activities carried out by Turkey were aiming to contribute to the development of the economy of these countries. The data revealed that the main reason for learning Turkish language or choosing to study in Turkish Language and Literature departments of the universities or preferring Turkey for study abroad is for economic reasons. Thus, teaching Turkish language was indicated as an important factor in this sense. In addition, it was indicated that training of the staff needed in the Balkans institutions and organizations have a positive reflections in the economic development of the Balkan countries.

Regarding the *academic rationales* the participants were concentrated mainly on the cooperation activities between the educational institutions of Turkey and the countries under research. The mutual educational visits of the academicians and students in the framework of cooperation have positive effect on educational system of the Balkan countries in means of providing an advantage to improve their academic cadres and helping students to gain experience. It is assumed that these visits form a basis for these countries to be actors in the bilateral relations with Turkey in the field of education. In this context, according to the view of the participants, alongside with the intensive intergovernmental visits, variety of educational visits, collaborative and promotion activities realized in the Balkan countries contributed not only in dissemination of the Turkish language, but also increased the interest in Turkish

universities. Thus, the educational practices undertaken by Turkey in the Balkan countries are constituting a driving force for the increase of the quality of the education in the universities in Turkey and as well are increasing the prestige of the Turkish universities at international arena. Indeed, the network established between the academicians and students graduated from the universities in Turkey is ensuring the continuation of the relations with the Balkan countries in the field of education. The data revealed that increasing the level of the educational relations and establishing a bridge of friendship emerged as an ultimate purpose of the relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries.

In the light of the information above, it is seen that some of the above-mentioned activities can be associated both with the political and academic rationales or economic and social and cultural rationales. In addition, another point worth mentioning is that higher education policies of Turkey were not pioneered by academic rationales only but also they were motivated by various political, economic and social and cultural rationales. In this regard, the rationales for internationalization are change or shift according to the levels suggested by Knight (1999). In this sense, when the pursued educational policies of Turkey have been examined in terms of the internationalization it can be seen that this process have been realized at national policy level.

### **The Expectations of Different Stakeholders in the Balkan Countries from Turkey**

Different private, non-profit, and public organizations develop different educational practices for the Balkan countries and different institutions and organizations in Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH indicated various expectations from both public and non-profit organizations of Turkey. Turkey seems to respond to these expectations with various policies extending support in academic and non-academic domains. The expectations of the Balkan countries from Turkey in relation to higher education were discussed from the point of different stakeholder groups: governmental officials, academicians and the representatives of the association of the relevant countries including Turkey.

According to the data obtained from the interviews with the Bosnian, Macedonian and Kosovar governmental officials, the expectations in relation to higher education were mainly concentrated on the aspects of internationalization. Bosnian governmental officials conveyed their desire for *the mutual recognition of the educational systems* and the exchange of experts for examining educational systems of both countries. As it is expressed in the Results part of this study, the differences in the educational systems of BiH was indicated as one of the reasons for the futile and slowly growing relations with Turkey. Additionally, it was mentioned that the complex political structure of BiH complicated signing of an agreement in the field of education between the two countries at state level. Having in mind the situation of the

education system of BiH and the expectations regarding the recognition of the education systems of both countries, the governmental officials have a great responsibility in responding to these expectations. Furthermore, BiH's governmental officials expressed their demands for *organizing joint conferences* and mutual recognition of languages and opening departmental chairs for the languages of both countries, raising academic staff and increasing the student quotas and scholarships. As it is known, in the College of Letters and Arts of Trakya University there is a Bosnian Language and Literature department. The data revealed that initiatives were made by Bosnian educators for opening of Bosnian language departments in other universities as well. On the other hand, the expectations of the Macedonian governmental officials were concentrated on slightly different aspects of internationalization. For example, resolving the problem relating to *the recognition of the diplomas of the religious schools* (Imam Hatip Liseleri) came to the fore as an expectation expressed by one of the Macedonian governmental official and Turkish academician working in one of the universities in Macedonia. Other demands centered around prioritization of student mobility and strengthening collaboration between the educational institutions of both countries, providing teaching/training materials and training academic staff needed in the educational institutions in Macedonia, both in Turkish education and in the Turkish Language and Literature departments of the Macedonian universities. On account of the presence of Turkish communities in Macedonia, it is observed that the expectations of the Macedonian governmental officials intensified on the needs and the problems in Turkish education. Turkish governmental officials working in the missions of Turkey in Macedonia confirmed the demands of the Macedonian governmental officials regarding the needs and the problems in Turkish education in Macedonia as shortages in teaching staff and materials. In order to compensate for the teacher shortages in Turkish education, they advised that Macedonian student should be directed to the branches where the shortages were evident such as mathematics, physics, geography and Turkish language and that priority should be given for expanding the Turkish language to provide teaching material for the schools in the regions where ethnic Turks do not speak Turkish very well. Kosovar governmental officials' expectation also intensified on the aspects of internationalization regarding the student mobility, supporting the educational institutions with academic staff or raising staff needed in the educational institutions in Kosovo and diploma recognition. Demands were expressed especially for working jointly on diploma degree equivalences and studies to be made for harmonization of educational curriculum of both countries. Kosovar governmental officials as Macedonian governmental officials also emphasized the importance of Turkish education and expectations for supporting the Turkish education with teaching materials and textbooks as well as organization of activities for promotion of Turkish language, Turkish traditions, Turkish culture and history. Apart from this, Kosovar governmental

officials expressed their expectation regarding the historical symbols such as maintenance and preservation of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottoman period which were destroyed or closed for worship for years.

In this study, the opinions of the Turkish governmental officials on the expectations of the Balkan countries were also considered. Accordingly, the expectations of the Balkan countries were concentrated mainly in the area of internationalization and providing support to Turkish education and teaching Turkish language in these countries as well as support for improving of the infrastructure of the religious educational buildings belonging to the religious institutions, and reparation of the historical monuments inherited from the Ottomans.

The analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with the Bosnian academicians revealed that the Bosnian academicians expressed approximately the same demands as the Bosnian governmental officials. They additionally emphasized the need of teaching materials and textbooks for the Turkish Language and Literature departments within the universities in BiH. Further, they expressed some demands which were mostly related to their professional developments such as providing access to library on-line resources and bibliography (references) in the libraries of Turkish universities, and support was requested for publication of the academic works and articles of the faculty members from the universities in BiH in the peer-reviewed journals. Turkish academicians working in the BiH's universities confirmed the above mentioned demands of the BiH governmental officials and the academicians. They stated that on various occasions these demands were communicated with them as well. Turkish governmental officials also reported the expectation conveyed to them from different Bosnian stakeholders in the field of religious education, concerning primarily the support to be given for the religious education, religious activities, for infrastructure of the religious education buildings and construction of madrasas in BiH.

The expectations expressed by the Macedonian academicians were also related to the aspect of internationalization. Similar to the Bosnian governmental officials and Bosnian academicians' expectations, the top priority for the Macedonian academicians was mutual recognition of the educational systems of both countries and the exchange of students and academic staff as soon as possible. Apart from these, they requested human resource support more precisely for fulfilling teacher shortages in Turkish education in Macedonia and as well teaching materials needed to Turkish Language and Literature departments within the Macedonian universities. Another notable serious expectation indicated by the Macedonian academicians was provision of guidance for the elimination of the prejudices existing in the textbooks against Ottomans and Turkish people. They claimed that this situation is offending the ethnic Turks living in Macedonia. Thus, they stated that these prejudices should be removed from the textbooks.

Kosovar academicians also have expectations in the area of internationalization. Compared to other groups, they focused on the brain drain, which is considered as a major risk for Kosovo. Therefore they advised some possible solutions for turning the brain drain into brain gain. As in the other groups they requested finding solution for the realization of student and faculty exchange between the two countries. The need of skilled and trained academic staff for the educational institutions was emphasized and support for raising staff was requested. Additionally, there were expectations regarding Turkish education and religion education.

The expectations of the representative of the Macedonian associations were in different direction. They emphasized the importance of the religious education in Macedonia and in this respect their expectations were mainly for increasing the quotas allocated by Turkey for the students wishing to study in the faculties of theology in Turkish universities. By emphasizing the importance of teaching Turkish language, expectations were expressed regarding the shortages in teacher training branches in Turkish education. In this regard it is demanded that student quotas be allocated for the teacher training branches of such departments as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and geography. On the other hand the expectations of the representative of the Kosovar associations were in the area of internationalization, for increasing the student quotas and training academic staff/ personnel needed for the educational institutions and support for improving the Turkish education and teaching Turkish language.

The data revealed that the expectations of the Balkan countries have to a great extent been met. This situation was confirmed by Turkish governmental officials as well. However, from the opinions of a number of participants from the Balkans, it is understood that some of expectations have not been met due to reasons put forth either by the side of Turkey or by authorities in these Balkan countries. Thus, it can be concluded that Turkey's activities are far from being able to respond to these expectations. Therefore, the difference between the reality and the expectations can serve as a guideline for policy makers.

### **The Practices Undertaken by the Balkan Countries in order to Enhance Cooperation with Turkey**

The analysis of the findings revealed that the Bosnian educational authorities have made initiatives primarily in the area of internationalization in order to enhance cooperation with Turkey in the field of higher education. In the interviews with the Bosnian participants this theme of internationalization emerged as the dominant one. The efforts were mainly spent to accelerate the student exchange, for example, in implementation of Erasmus program and to open Bosnian language sections within Turkish universities. In this respect, meetings were

held with many universities in Turkey. In addition, certain requests were forwarded for publication of books related to Turkish literature history.

It was noted that there were also some efforts spent by the side of the Macedonian educational authorities aiming to enhance cooperation with Turkey in the field of higher education. In comparison to BiH, beside the efforts spent in the area of internationalization there were also some activities conducted to solve the problems in Turkish education. As it is stated in previous sections the existence of the ethnic Turks in Macedonia is an important factor affecting the bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia. The problems in Turkish education in Macedonia constitute a top priority in the relations of both countries. It was denoted that even a *unit was established within the Ministry of State of Macedonia for dealing with the issues concerning Turkish minorities in Macedonia*. On the other hand, Macedonian participants expressed that the initiatives in the area of internationalization cover mainly acceleration of the student mobility, initiatives made before the Ministry of National Education *for increasing the student quota* allocated for Macedonia by Turkey and the initiatives before Higher Education Council for *accreditation of the Macedonian universities*.

Akin to the Macedonian educational authorities, the efforts of Kosovar educational authorities were intensified on two themes: internationalization and the problems in Turkish education. As it was mentioned before, great importance was placed by Turkey to the existence of Turkish communities in the Balkans. Encouraged by this advantage, Kosovar authorities were trying to identify and solve *the problems regarding Turkish education in Kosovo*. In this respect, conferences were held in collaboration with the Turkish educational institutions seeking solution for the teaching staff and textbook shortages in Turkish education. Regarding the initiatives in the area of internationalization, it was denoted that dialogues for establishment of cooperation between the educational institutions and non-governmental organizations in Turkey, such as universities, Tradesman and Businessman's Associations, Presidency of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities, TIKA etc. These initiatives were mainly intensified on improving the curriculum of the Kosovar education system, especially regarding the harmonization with the curriculum of Turkish education, organization of joint conferences, and the initiatives for requesting academic staff support for the universities in Kosovo and the betterment of the living and working conditions of the teachers engaged in Turkish language education. Apart from these, meetings were held aiming to prevent the "brain drain". In addition, initiatives made before relative institutions to minimize the problems of the students while studying in Turkey regarding the student visa, residence permit, diploma equivalency.

It is observed that the policies in BiH for enhancing cooperation with Turkey in the field of higher education covers only the area of internationalization, while in Macedonia and

Kosovo, policies cover the initiatives relating to the problems of Turkish education in addition to internationalization. The absence of Turkish communities accounts for the single cooperation venue between Turkey and BiH. In comparison to Macedonia, the practices undertaken by Kosovo were more comprehensive regarding internationalization and the problems related to Turkish education.

### **The Rationales behind Balkan countries' Practices to Realize Cooperation with Turkey**

The rationales behind Balkan countries' practices to realize cooperation in higher education with Turkey have been investigated by taking into consideration the four basic groups of rationales advanced by Knight (1999), which are classified as political, economic, academic and cultural and social rationales. In order to explain better the rationales behind Balkan countries' practices alongside with the opinions of the Balkan participants the opinions of the Turkish participants were also questioned.

In Macedonia's relations with Turkey in the field of education *the cultural and social rationales* were dominant. According to the opinions of the Macedonian participants one of the main reasons for cooperation with Turkey is the historical and cultural ties stemming from the common past and the presence of the Turkish communities living in Macedonia. It was denoted that these factors positively affected the relations of Macedonia with Turkey in every domain. The same rationale was also prominent in the interviews with the Bosnian participants. But this time the context of the rationale was slightly different. Bosnian participants focused mostly on the importance of the formation of the national identity and culture of BiH. Having in mind the political structure of BiH, this is a very understandable situation. In this respect, cooperation with Turkey is considered to be very important. It was indicated that by collecting archival documents and written publications within the context of cooperation with Turkey in the field of education, it has been possible to explore the culture and the history of the BiH in the Ottoman period. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the establishment of the local Turkish universities by Turkish entrepreneurs contributed immensely to the cultural integrity in BiH. This rationale was also indicated as the most important one by the Turkish governmental officials working in BiH. They drew attention to the role of the religion factor on the formation of the national identity in BiH. On the other hand, Kosovar participants evaluated the cooperation with Turkey in terms of the ethnic groups living in Kosovo. They stressed that the educational cooperation between the universities in Turkey and Kosovo contributed to socializing of the Albanian and Turkish students, which lead to strengthening of the intercultural dialogue and formation of the intercultural understanding, which is still needed in Kosovo. Akin to the Turkish governmental officials in

BiH, the Turkish governmental officials in Kosovo also drew attention to the influence of the religious factor in steering the relations with Turkey. They indicated that in order to eliminate the risk of “Wahhabi movement”, Kosovo Islamic Union is maintaining close relations with the religious authorities in Turkey. As it is seen, Bosnian participants evaluated the relations with Turkey from the point of providing cultural integrity among different ethnic groups by indicating the contribution of the Turkish universities operating in BiH on the bilateral educational relations, while Kosovar and Macedonian participants cited the presence of the Turkish communities as the most motivating factor for cooperation with Turkey.

On the other hand some of the participants from Macedonia, mainly Macedonian academicians, placed *the political reason as a top priority*. According to these participants, Turkey's educational activities increased the self-confidence of the Turkish minorities in Macedonia and the support given to Nomadic Turks living in the Eastern part of Macedonia has protected them from assimilation. In this sense, Turkey has been viewed as the protector of the Turkish communities in the Balkans. The Turkish governmental officials in Macedonia also emphasized the presence of the ethnic Turks in Macedonia as an important factor affecting Turkey's bilateral relations with Macedonia. Akin to the Macedonian participants, the participants from Kosovo also associated this theme with the Turkish communities living in Kosovo. The common view is that the cooperation with Turkey is essential for those communities. It is believed that Turkey's support in every field, including the field of education, will make Turkish communities feel more secure. It was indicated also that the cooperation with Turkey will strengthen their feelings of confidence. Further, it was stated that through the educational practices carried out by Turkey, opportunities were provided to Kosovar students to be acquainted closely with Turkey, Turkish culture, traditions and Turkish people. They indicated that through cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo would be possible abolishing the prejudices existed in Kosovo history about the Turks and the Ottomans. According to Turkish participants working in Kosovo, cooperation with Turkey is facilitating the recognition of Kosovo in the international arena and contributing to the stability and security of the Balkans at the same time. It is important at this juncture to keep in mind the fact that Kosovo is a newly established country and the situation in the Balkans is still fragile. In this sense Kosovo is intensifying its relations with Turkey. On the other hand, the Bosnian participants (academicians) cited the political and economic power of Turkey as one of the reasons for developing a close cooperation with Turkey. Akin to the Macedonian and Kosovar participants, BiH participants noted that the prejudices that had existed in the minds of the people in BiH have started to change, all because of the activities in the education sector. It is thought that the elimination of the prejudices in BiH against Turks and the Ottomans will be facilitated by research and exploration of BiH's history from the Ottoman documents.

As to the *academic rationale*, Macedonian governmental officials and the academicians emphasized that Turkey was assumed as a popular destination for education by the Macedonian students because of the quality of education in Turkey. It is believed that the educational relations between Turkey and Macedonia will contribute to the development of joint study programs between the educational institutions of both countries and will create an opportunity to improve teaching methods. Bosnian academicians also shared the opinion of the Macedonian participants on this subject. They indicated the positive impact of cooperation with Turkey in the field of education as reflected on the personal and professional development of the students and academicians. It is seen that the educational activities carried out by Turkey in BiH triggered cooperation with the universities in Turkey which naturally led to an increased interest towards the Turkish universities and Turkish language and literature departments within the universities in BiH. Aiming to reconstruct its war-torn education system, Kosovar participants emphasized that some Turkish universities, as TOBB in Ankara, were taken as a model for the establishment of new educational institutions in Kosovo. In addition, akin to the Bosnian participants, Kosovar participants also pointed out the impact of the collaborative activities on the personal and professional developments of the students and academicians. Furthermore, they indicated that the quality of education in Kosovo has increased as a result of the cooperation between Turkey and Kosovo. Apart from these, the representatives of Kosovar Association cited another significant reason for cooperation with Turkey that centers on the shortage of Turkish language textbooks and other teaching material. Thus, cooperation with Turkey was noted as an inevitable relationship that sustains the procurement of teaching materials in Turkish education.

*The economic rationale* cited by Macedonian government officials was closely related to the workforce needed for the labor market in Macedonia. According to them the students studying in Turkey have greatly contributed to the economic development of Macedonia. The same opinions were asserted by the Bosnian participants. It was indicated that the need for trained personnel in different positions and institutions in BiH were mostly fulfilled by students that studied in Turkey. Turkey contributed to training the manpower needed in the job market in both countries. In this respect, cooperation with Turkey is seen indispensable. Kosovar participants also indicated the contribution of Turkey in training the personnel for the labor market of Kosovo. They admitted that thanks to the graduates from Turkey, the shortages that once existed regarding the teaching staff of Turkish language education has been minimized. It was stated that economic growth in Kosovo has been supported by way of transferring Turkey's experiences to Kosovo both at the level of individuals as well as institutions. In respect of the fact that Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH are still countries in transition, one of the motivating factors for these countries to cooperate with

Turkey is raising a competent workforce for their economies.

To this end, it is seen that different stakeholders attributed different levels of importance to the rationales. For example, cultural and social rationales were identified as the most prominent rationales among the participants from Macedonia and BiH, while political and academic rationales were the most prevalent among the participants from Kosovo. It can be explained with the fact that Kosovo is a very young country, newly established, still seeking for international recognition. Therefore, the rationale for cooperation with Turkey is based primarily on political consideration, because the aim is to reconstruct its relationship not only with Turkey but also through Turkey with the other countries in the world. As to the academic rationale, it is seen that Kosovo is engaging in educational relations with Turkey aiming to rebuild its war-torn education system by giving emphasis on establishment of new educational institutions and collaborative activities aiming personal and professional development of the students and faculty members. In addition the results illustrate also that the rationales sometimes were overlapped. As participants expressed it can not be clearly defined which of the rationales was the most prominent. According to them each of them were equally important.

## **5.2 Implications**

A large number of studies on the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries were identified in the literature review. These sources generally seem to examine the political relations. The only study on the educational relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries was identified as the research conducted by Şahin (2014), which is investigating the educational relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries between 1923 and 1938 (Atatürk era). The study was conducted through the literature search in the newspapers (Aksam, Anadolu, Cumhuriyet, İkdam, Milliyet, Tan, Ulus, Vakit and Yeni Asır), covering mainly the visits of the students, teachers, academicians to Turkey and vice versa for a variety of purposes at different levels from Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and former Yugoslavia.

In stark contrast to the mainstream studies on the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries, this study is assumed to be the first attempt to investigate the educational policies of Turkey towards the Balkans after the 90's and to provide first-hand information in an extensive manner, covering the comparative perspectives of both local and foreign stakeholders. It is the first study investigating the educational relations of Turkey with Kosovo, Macedonia and BiH at macro level (inter-country level), to guide future studies which could be implemented in a similar way with other countries in the region. It helped to clarify both formal and informal initiatives occurred at the national and institutional levels.

In this sense, this study sheds light on the internationalization process of Turkey and

contributes to the theory, methodology and practice.

Through the findings of this study, it has been possible to discover the current level of educational relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries and to produce clarification on the most prominent elements of the internationalization process between Turkey and the Balkan countries. Similarly, it helped to identify the main actors significantly affecting the relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries as well as the problems and expectations of the Balkan countries from Turkey. On the other hand, the findings have clarified Turkey's regional cooperation initiatives towards the Balkan countries. It has been possible to display the intentional cooperative initiatives between the educational institutions of Turkey and the institutions in the Balkans. The findings of the study have also emphasized the importance of teaching Turkish language in the countries concerned. Through intensified Turkish language courses and giving support to the education in Turkish language at secondary level and Turkish Language and Literature departments Turkey is aiming to establish close relation with the people in the region, primarily Turkish and Muslim communities, not only in the field of education but also in other areas. The study has revealed that education in Turkish language occurs as an important factor for the Turkish communities in preservation of their culture and mother tongue. The support given for Turkish language education in the Balkan countries has apparently resulted in a positive outcome for Turkey. For example, integration of Turkish language teaching into the curriculum of the schools in three cantons in BiH has increased the interest of the Bosnian students in Turkish universities along with its contribution to the dissemination of Turkish language in BiH at the same time. It is reported that attracting more international students can contribute financially to the universities (Khalideen, 2008). Besides the fact that nearly all of the students preferring to study in Turkey were admitted in the framework of the Great Student Project or were granted scholarships, the situation with the universities in Turkey appears to be slightly different. It is understood that the primary motivation of the Turkish universities in attracting students from the Balkan countries is to gain reputation in the region.

On the other hand, the findings of the study confirm Turkey's distinct position in internationalization, as specified by Kondakci (2010). Turkey has deep historical and cultural ties with Balkan countries. Generally characterized as a sending country in terms of student mobility, it was understood from the interviews that the quality of education in Turkey makes it attractive for the students from the Balkans. On the other hand, there was also evidence of reverse student mobility from Turkey to the Balkan countries, namely to Macedonia and BiH. Some of the universities in these countries were accredited by YÖK and were enlisted in the booklet of the ÖSYM, which makes it possible for fast track enrollment of students from Turkey to the universities in BiH and Macedonia. Accreditation of the Balkan universities has

emerged as a stimulus indicator of Turkey's internationalization process towards Balkan countries.

The study contributed to the theory of internationalization by providing information on the rationales or motivations behind Turkey's educational practices towards the Balkan countries. Different rationales have enforced Turkey to undertake various practices in Balkan countries. The results have shown that some of the factors evident for one rationale could also be prevalent for other rationales and that it depends on the perspective the data was evaluated. To illustrate, the presence of Turkish communities can be placed under the political rationales when the point is related to preserving national identity, and when the point is related to teaching Turkish language to Turkish communities and other citizens of these countries, or support to be given to religious education, it could be associated with the cultural and social rationales. Academic rationales gain weight when the concerns are related to the problems and needs of Turkish Language education in these countries. According to the analysis of the data from the interviews, scholarships granted from Turkey to students from the Balkans can also be defined both as political and academic rationales.

As it is stated in the delimitation part, this study was constructed to investigate the educational practices of Turkey towards the Balkan countries under research only at the level of higher education. In order to gain more comprehensive understanding of the internationalization rationales of Turkey, the information obtained from the interviewees regarding the Turkish language education at the secondary level and the activities related to religious education were also used in analysis of the findings.

In summary, the results of the study on Turkey's internationalization towards the Balkans revealed an emphasized focus on rapid political changes that occurred in the Balkans, the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia and formation of the new states that seek international recognition. It was identified that Turkish and Muslim communities were the main determinants in the educational policies of Turkey towards the Balkans and it can be concluded that Turkey utilizes education policy as an integral part of its foreign policy. To this end, the positive outcomes of the activities within the concept of internationalization can be listed as the following: awareness was raised about the educational structure of higher education in the Balkans and opportunities were created in the establishment of a number of inter-university connections in the forms of partnerships and collaborative initiatives. There are many actors that can play important roles in the internationalization process of Turkey. The data revealed that these educational activities were strongly supported and encouraged by the governmental institutions. The findings have shown that internationalization activities of higher education institutions are strongly driven by political, social and cultural rationales and that the main focus was on the mobility of the student. In addition, religious education was also one of the

prominent factors affecting the relations of Turkey with the Balkan countries. It was understood that the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey and Türkiye Diyanet Foundation have spent great efforts to this end.

It would only be fair to mention that this research took place some years ago (2011-2012) and that in the meantime, a lot of progress has been made in the educational systems of the Balkan states and in their bilateral relations with Turkey.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Future Studies**

The study will naturally provide some recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of institutions of higher education with respect to academic decisions. It will also produce recommendations to the educational policymakers and university administrators on the factors that come into play in creating demand for higher education and the factors that instigate reform in education.

This study includes only the opinions of different stakeholder groups from governmental institutions, academic circles and some associations. Thus, to increase the generalizability of the results, the study can be regenerated by collecting information from the perspectives of the students. This kind of a study may provide background knowledge for other features of the relations between Turkey and the countries concerned. In order to be able to give more comprehensive explanation of Turkey's educational policy towards the wider Balkan geography, future studies may also be designed in a similar way focusing on other countries in the Balkans with different political structures or with other countries where Turkish or Muslim minorities are present, such as Albania, Bulgaria and Greece.

This study was designed as a qualitative study. But future studies with quantitative approach can be also considered.

The findings revealed that the exchanges of students between Turkey and the countries under research have still not been realized although all of these countries have been involved in the Bologna process. The study results showed that the structural differences in the educational systems of Turkey and the Balkan countries affected the educational policies and practices of Turkey towards the Balkans. In this context, it is recommended that;

- Experts are assigned to examine the structural differences existing between the educational systems of Turkey and the related Balkan countries and to address the issues regarding diploma equivalences, or more precisely the recognition of diplomas issued by Turkish religious vocational schools (Imam Hatip Liseleri), in view of the case of Macedonia,
- The agreements signed in the field of education are put into practice, having specifically in mind the agreement signed between Turkey and Kosovo in the field of education,

- Necessary steps are taken in relation to the agreement signed between Turkey and Macedonia on the elimination of negative statements from the history books about Turks and the Ottomans,

- Possibilities are explored to sign an agreement in the field of education between Turkey and BiH,

- Solutions are devised for the problems in Turkish language education (as shortages of teaching staff and materials) in consultation with the educators in the Balkan countries under research and coordination between the relevant Turkish institutions are ensured, while embracing and relying on more open contacts with the stakeholders in the Balkans in order to fully respond to the needs of these countries,

- Possibilities are investigated in relation to providing access for academicians in the Balkans to the library facilities of the Turkish universities,

- The possibility of creating an alumni network in order to discuss and determine the problems faced by the students from the Balkans during their stay in Turkey.

Last but not least, it is evident that the bureaucratic structures in the Balkan countries, lack of strategy and willingness also hamper Turkey's activities in the region. In this regard, as a first study on internationalization of Turkey towards the Balkans, this study can serve as a guide for the educators wishing to engage in cooperation with the educational institutions in the Balkan countries and to establish partnerships.

It is ultimately advisable that the issues raised in this study in relation to the educational systems of the Balkan countries are taken into account while preparing new strategies towards the Balkans.

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Appendix A

**MUSLIM POPULATION IN THE BALKAN COUNTRIES**

*Estimates of the Muslim Population in the Balkan Countries*

Country		1990	2000	2010	2020
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Population	4,121,595	3,332,123	3,781,274	4,290,968
	Muslim	1,805,259	1,459,470	1,656,198	1,879,444
	Muslim%	43.80	43.80	43.80	43.80
Croatia	Population	4,517,199	4,505,422	4,409,659	4,315,931
	Muslim	51,948	57,669	56,444	55,244
	Muslim%	1.15	1.28	1.28	1.28
Kosovo	Population	1,956,196	2,000,000	2,180,686	2,377,696
	Muslim	1,652,203	1,870,400	2,039,378	2,223,621
	Muslim%	84.46	93.52	93.52	93.52
Macedonia	Population	1,909,349	2,011,614	2,043,360	2,075,607
	Muslim	573,950	670,471	681,052	691,800
	Muslim%	30.06	33.33	33.33	33.33
Montenegro	Population	586,954	660,628	625,516	592,270
	Muslim	124,728	117,195	110,967	105,069
	Muslim%	21.25	17.74	17.74	17.74
Serbia	Population	7,612,549	8,134,031	7,675,171	7,242,196
	Muslim	329,623	260,289	245,605	231,750
	Muslim%	4.33	3.20	3.20	3.20
Slovenia	Population	1,926,701	1,985,406	2,024,912	2,065,204
	Muslim	29,479	48,047	49,003	49,978
	Muslim%	1.53	2.42	2.42	2.42

Source: Adapted from Kettani (2010).

## Appendix B

### INTERVIEW GUIDE/MÜLAKAT REHBERİ

#### Türkiye'deki Devlet Kurumlarına Yönelik Sorular

1. Kurumunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?
  - a. Kurumunuzun misyon ve vizyonunu tanımlar mısınız?
  - b. Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?
2. Kurumunuzun genel ulusal/uluslararası eğitim politikasını kısaca anlatır mısınız?
3. Bu genel politika çerçevesinde Balkan ülkelerine (özellikle Bosna Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova) yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim alanındaki genel politikasını kısaca anlatır mısınız?
4. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikalarının belirlenmesinde sizin görev yaptığınız kurumun rolü var mıdır?
  - a. (Var ise) kurumunuz ne gibi bir rol üstlendiğini anlatır mısınız?
5. Balkan ülkeleri ile işbirliği çerçevesinde yürütülen özel faaliyet/projeleriniz var mıdır?
  - a. (Var ise) bu proje/faaliyetlerde elde edilen başarılar nelerdir?
  - b. Başarı sebepleri nelerdir?
  - c. Bu proje veya faaliyetlerin yürütülmesi için kurumunuzca belirlenen hedefler nelerdir?
  - d. Bu proje veya faaliyetlerin uygulanması esnasında karşılaştığınız sıkıntılar ve sebepleri nelerdir?
6. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik Türkiye'nin yürüttüğü eğitim faaliyetlerinin bu ülkelere hangi açıdan faydalı olacaktır?
  - a. Bu politikaların yürütülmesi Türkiye'ye ne fayda sağlayacaktır?
7. Uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde Türkiye'nin yürüttüğü bu faaliyetlerin sözkonusu ülkeler için veya Türkiye için herhangi bir risk oluşturabilir mi?
  - a. Eğer oluşturacağını düşünüyorsanız sözkonusu ülkeler için bu riskler sizce ne olabilir?
  - b. Türkiye için bir risk oluşturma ihtimali var ise bu riskler sizce ne olabilir?
8. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yürütmüş olduğu eğitim politikası sayesinde bu ülkelerin uluslararasılaşma sürecinin hangi boyutlarında sizce daha çok gelişme sağlanmasına neden olmuştur?
9. Uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde kurumunuzun diğer eğitim kurumları (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, YÖK, Ulusal Ajans veya uluslararası kuruluşlar UNESCO, UNISEF gibi) ile ortaklaşa yürütülen faaliyetler veya projeler var mı?
  - a. (Var ise) bu faaliyetlerin/projelerin ortak yürütülmesinde karşılaşılan sıkıntılar var mı?

10. Balkan ülkelerindeki üniversitelerin eğitim- öğretim müfredatları/diploma/kredi transferi tanımı gibi konularda kurumunuzun da yer aldığı herhangi bir çalışma yapılmakta mı?
- Yapılmakta ise kısaca bu çalışmaları hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - Böyle bir çalışma yapılmakta ise eğitim- öğretim müfredatları, diploma /kredi transferi tanımı konularında karşılaşılan herhangi bir sorun var mı?
  - (Var ise) Bu sorunların çözümü için kurumunuzun getirdiği herhangi bir öneri var mı?
  - (Var ise) Bu öneri konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
11. Balkan ülkelerinde mevcut üniversitelerde okumak isteyen veya Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilere (örnek, Büyük Öğrenci Projesi kapsamında) Kurumunuz tarafından tahsis edilen özel bir burs kontenjanı mevcut mudur?
- (Var ise) Bu bursların sayısı ve hangi ülkelere tahsis edilmiştir?
  - Söz konusu bursların kapsamını açıklayabilir misiniz?
  - Burslar hangi alanlara tahsis edilmiştir? (eğitim, mühendislik, tıp, fen gibi)
  - Bursların tamamının kullanılıp kullanılmadığı konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
12. Türkiye’de öğrenim gören yabancı öğrenciler ile ilgili olarak mevcut olan kanun ve yönetmeliklerin uygulanmasında karşılaşılan ve kurumunuza intikal eden herhangi bir sorun var mı?
- (Var ise) Bu sorunlar nelerdir?
  - Kurumunuzca bu sorunların çözümü için ne gibi önlemler alındı?
13. Eğitimdeki rekabet ortamını da dikkate alarak, çalıştığınız kurumun Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikasındaki öncelikleri nelerdir?
- Bu öncelikler hangi ölçütlere göre belirlenmiştir?
14. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim faaliyetlerin belirlenmesi esnasında çalıştığınız kurum uluslararasılaşmanın hangi boyutuna öncelik vermekte?
- Bu faaliyetlere öncelik vermesindeki gerekçeler nelerdir?
15. Söz konusu eğitim ilişkilerinin belirlenmesi esnasında ülke önceliği yapılmakta mıdır?
- Eğer yapılıyor ise bu ülkeleri tercih etme sebepleriniz nelerdir?
16. Balkan ülkeleri ile işbirliği çerçevesinde yürütülen özel faaliyet/projeleriniz var mıdır?
- (Var ise) bu proje/faaliyetlerin yürütülmesinin sebepleri nelerdir?
17. Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi, kültürel ve dini bağlar da gözönünde bulundurularak Balkan ülkelerinde yaşayan soydaş ve müslüman toplulukların Türkçe öğrenme ve dini eğitim alma isteklerine karşılık Kurumunuzca yürütülmekte olan proje veya faaliyetler var mıdır?
- (Var ise) bu faaliyet veya projeler daha ziyade hangi ülkelerde yürütülmekte?
  - bu ülkelere öncelik verilmesinin sebepleri nedir?
  - Türkçe öğrenim veya dini eğitim ne şekilde yapılmakta?
  - Bu isteklerin karşılanmasını teminen yürütülen bu projelerdeki amaç nedir?
18. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yürüttüğü eğitim faaliyetleri esnasında kurumunuzca bu ülkelerin kurumlarına herhangi bir mali destekte bulunulmakta mıdır?
- (Bulunulmakta ise) bu mali destek uluslararasılaşmanın hangi boyutuna öncelik verilmekte?
  - Bu mali destek hangi amaçlarla yapılmaktadır, sebepler nelerdir?
19. Balkan ülkeleri ile Türkiye arasında eğitim alanında ikili anlaşmaların imzalanmasının sebeplerini anlatabilir misiniz?
- Amaç nedir?

20. Balkan ülkelerinde mevcut üniversitelerde okumak isteyen öğrencilere veya Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde okumak isteyen Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilere Türkiye tarafından tahsis edilen özel bursların gerekçeleri nelerdir?

21. Balkanlara yönelik eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce kimler?

22. Uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde Balkan ülkelerine yönelik uygulanan eğitim politikası esnasında karşılaşılan sorunların sebepleri sizce nelerdir?

23. Bu soruların dışında Balkanlara yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim politikasını sizce aydınlatabilecek ayrıca söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?

24. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikası konusunda bilgi alabileceğim sizin tavsiye edeceğiniz başka bir kurum veya kuruluş, şahıs var mı?

### **Balkan Ülkelerindeki Devlet Kurumlarına Yönelik Sorular**

1. Kurumunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?

- Kurumunuzun misyonu ve vizyonu nedir?
- Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?

2. Türkiye'nin ülkenize yönelik eğitim alanındaki genel politikası ülkeniz tarafından nasıl değerlendirilmekte kısaca anlatabilir misiniz?

3. Sizce ülkenizin eğitim sisteminin gelişmesinde Türkiye'nin eğitim politikasının rolü nedir?

4. Türkiye'nin uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde ülkenize yönelik yürütmüş olduğu eğitim politikası ülkenizin yükseköğretim kurumlarının yapısal ve işlevsel özelliklerine etki yapmakta mıdır?

- Eğer yapmakta ise, ne tür bir etki yaptığı konusundaki düşüncelerinizi söyleyebilir misiniz?

5. Balkan ülkeleri ve Türkiye'nin de imzaladığı Bologna süreci dikkate alındığında, uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde, ülkenizin Türkiye ile eğitim ilişkilerinde eriştiği seviyenin yeterli olup olmadığını söyleyebilir misiniz?

- Bu seviyenin daha da yükseltilmesi için ülkeniz ve ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarınca ne tür çabalar sarf edilmekte özetler misiniz?

6. Ülkenizdeki yükseköğretimden sorumlu kurumun Türkiye'deki ilgili kurumlar ile imzalamış olduğu herhangi bir işbirliği anlaşması var mı?

- (Var ise) bu anlaşma hangi alanları kapsamaktadır?
- Bu alanlara yönelik sözkonusu işbirliğinin gelişmesi için ülkenizce veya ülkenizdeki kurumlarca ne tür çabalar sarf edilmektedir?
- Uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde Türkiye ile eğitim işbirliğinin tesisi esnasında karşılaşılan sorunlar var mı?
- (Var ise) bu sorunların sebepleri sizce nelerdir?
- Bu engellerin aşılması için ne tür tedbirler alınmakta?

7. Ülkenizdeki eğitim kurum veya kuruluşların Türkiye'deki eğitim kurum veya kuruluşları arasındaki eğitim işbirliğinde bugüne kadar hangi tür faaliyetlere öncelik verilmiştir?
- Bu faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesi için herhangi bir girişimde bulunuldu mu?
  - Bulunulduğu ise ne tür girişimler bunlar anlatabilir misiniz?
8. Ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarınca Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları ile bundan sonra işbirliği anlaşmaları imzalaması sözkonusu olması halinde bu anlaşmalarının hangi alanlarda imzalanmasına öncelikle daha çok ihtiyaç olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
- Öncelikli olarak ilgi gösterilmesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz bu alanlardaki işbirliğinin gelişmesi için kurumunuzun katkısı ne olabilir?
  - Öncelikli olarak gelişmesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz bu alanlardaki işbirliği her iki tarafa ne gibi faydalar sağlayacaktır?
  - Öncelikli olarak gelişmesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz sözkonusu alanlardaki işbirliği ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının beklentilerini sizce ne derecede karşılayacaktır?
9. Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi, kültürel ve dini bağlar da gözönünde bulundurularak, ülkenizde yaşayan soydaş ve müslüman toplulukların Türkçe öğrenme ve dini eğitim alma isteklerinin karşılanmasını teminen Türkiye tarafından düzenlenen projelerin verimliliği hakkında bilgi verir misiniz?
- Bu projelerin sözkonusu toplulukların beklentilerini karşılayabilmesi için ülkenizce ayrıca bir katkıda bulunulmakta mıdır?
  - Ülkenizdeki soydaş ve müslüman topluluklara Türkçe öğretim ve dini eğitim verilmesinin bu toplulukların ihtiyaçlarını sizce ne derecede karşılamıştır?
  - Eğer yetersiz olduğunu düşünüyorsanız beklentilerin karşılanması için ayrıca neler yapılmasında yarar görüyorsunuz?
10. Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları ile ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarınca yürütülmekte olan faaliyetlerin gerçekleştirilmesinde yaşanan sıkıntılardan bahsedebilir misiniz?
- Bu sıkıntıların giderilmesi için kurumunuzca ayrıca uygulanan tedbirler nelerdir?
  - Bu sıkıntıların giderilmesi için Türkiye'deki kurumlar nezdinde ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarınca herhangi bir girişimde bulunulduğu ise bu girişimler konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - Girişimler sonucunda bu sıkıntılar ne derece giderilmiş oldu?
11. Türkiye'nin ülkenize tahsis etmiş olduğu öğrenci kontenjanı ve öğrenci bursları konusundaki görüşleriniz nelerdir?
- Bu kontenjanlar ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının ve öğrencilerin talebini karşılamakta mıdır?
  - Kontenjan içerikleri ve tahsis edildikleri alanlar ülkeniz ihtiyacını ne derecede karşılamakta?
12. Türkiye ile ülkeniz arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce kimler?
13. Türkiye ile eğitim alanında yürütülen işbirliğine ülkenizdeki eğitim kurumları sizce neden önem vermekte?
- Türkiye ile işbirliğini tercih etme sebepleriniz nelerdir?

14. Ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının Türkiye’den hangi alanlarda daha çok yardım beklemekte veya desteğe ihtiyaç duymaktadır?
- Bu alanlardaki beklentilerin gerçekleştirilmesi sizin için neden önemli?
  - Sebeplerini söyleyebilir misiniz? (akademik, sosyal, kültürel, tarihi, ekonomik, siyasi gibi)
  - Eğitim işbirliğinde hangi faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesinde yarar var?
  - Bu faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesinin sebeplerini anlatır mısınız?
15. Sizce eğitim alanında gerçekleştirilen çeşitli faaliyetler ülkenizdeki eğitim kurumların beklentilerini ne derecede karşılamıştır?
- Bu faaliyetler ülkeniz eğitimine nasıl bir katkıda bulunmuştur?
  - Söz konusu faaliyetler, sağlanan faydanın yanısıra ülkeniz eğitimine aynı zamanda sizce herhangi bir risk oluşturabilir mi?
  - Oluşturduğunu düşünüyorsanız bu riskler sizce ne olabilir?
16. Türkiye’de öğrenim gördükten sonra ülkesine geri dönen öğrencilerin Türkiye’deki öğrenimleri esnasında sahip oldukları bilgi birikiminin ülkenizdeki insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılamada yeterli olup olmadığı hususundaki görüşleriniz nelerdir?
- Ülkenizden Türkiye’ye gelen öğrencilerin daha çok hangi alanlarda eğitim görmesi halinde ülkedeki insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılayabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz?
  - Bunun için herhangi bir sebep gösterebilir misiniz?
17. Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi, kültürel ve dini bağlar da gözönünde bulundurularak ülkenizde yaşayan soydaş ve müslüman toplulukların Türkçe öğrenme ve dini eğitim alma taleplerinin karşılanması konusunda kurumunuzca herhangi bir girişimde bulunuldu mu?
- Bulunulduğu ise, bu taleplerin karşılanması sizce neden önemli?
18. Türkiye’nin ülkenize tahsis etmiş olduğu öğrenci kontenjanı ve öğrenci bursları sizce yeterli midir bu konudaki yorumlarınız nelerdir?
- Yeterli değil ise artırılması için yapılan girişimleriniz nelerdir?
  - Hangi nedenlerden dolayı bu kontenjanların artırılması sizin için önemli?
19. Türkiye'deki kurum veya kuruluşlarca ülkenizdeki eğitim kurum veya kuruluşlarına herhangi bir maddi destek sağlanmakta mıdır?
- (Sağlandığı ise) bu mali desteğin yeterli olup olmadığı konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - Bu destek hangi alanlarda yapılması halinde daha yararlı olacağını düşünüyorsunuz?
20. Bu soruların dışında Türkiye'nin ülkenize yönelik eğitim politikasını aydınlatabilecek ayrıca başka söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?
21. Türkiye'nin ülkenize yönelik eğitim politikası konusunda bilgi alabileceğim tavsiye edeceğiniz başka bir kurum veya kuruluş, şahıs var mı?

## **Türkiye'deki Akademik Kuruluşlara Yönelik Sorular**

1. Kurumunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?
  - a. Kurumunuzun misyonu ve vizyonu nedir?
  - b. Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?
2. Kurumunuzun genel ulusal/uluslararası eğitim politikasını kısaca anlatır mısınız?
3. Bu genel politika çerçevesinde Balkan ülkelerine (özellikle Bosna Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova) yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim alanındaki genel politikası konusundaki görüşünüz nedir?
4. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelere yönelik eğitim politikalarının belirlenmesinde sizin görev yaptığınız kurumun rolü var mıdır?
  - a. (Var ise) kurumunuz ne gibi bir rol üstlendiğini anlatır mısınız?
5. Balkan ülkeleri ve Türkiye'nin de imzaladığı Bologna süreci dikkate alındığında uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde eğitim ilişkilerimizde Balkanlar ülkeleri ile erişilen seviyenin yeterli olup olmadığını değerlendirebilir misiniz?
6. Balkan ülkelerindeki kurum veya kuruluşlar ile sizin görev yaptığınız kurum arasında imzalanan herhangi bir işbirliği anlaşması veya yürütülen ortak projeler var mıdır?
  - a. (Var ise) bunlar ne tür anlaşmalar veya ortak projeler olduğunu anlatabilir misiniz?
  - b. (Var ise) bu anlaşmalar veya projelerde elde edilen başarılar nelerdir?
  - c. Anlaşma veya projelerin uygulanması esnasında karşılaştığınız sıkıntılar nelerdir?
7. Balkan ülkeleri ile Türkiye arasında eğitim alanında imzalanmış olan ikili anlaşmaların çalıştığınız eğitim kurumuna ve yükseköğretime etkisi sizce nedir?
8. Üniversitenizde yabancı öğrencilere danışmanlık hizmeti verilmekte midir?
  - a. Öğrencilerin bu hizmetten yararlanması için ne tür faaliyetler düzenlenmekte?
9. Türkiye'de öğrenim gören yabancı öğrenciler ile ilgili olarak mevcut olan kanun ve yönetmeliklerin uygulanmasında karşılaşılan ve size intikal eden herhangi bir sorun var mı?
  - a. (Var ise) bu sorunlar nelerdir?
  - b. Bu sorunların çözümü için kurumunuzca ne tür tedbirler alınmakta?
10. Uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde, kurumunuzun diğer eğitim kurumları (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, YÖK, Ulusal Ajans veya uluslararası kuruluşlar UNESCO, UNISEF gibi) ile ortaklaşa yürüttüğü faaliyetler veya projeler var mı?
  - a. (Var ise) bu projelerin ortak yürütülmesinden sağlanan katkı nedir?
  - b. Bu projelerin uygulanması esnasında karşılaşılan sıkıntılar nelerdir?
  - c. (Sıkıntı ile karşılaşıldığı ise) bu sıkıntıların giderilmesi için alınan tedbirlerden bahsedebilir misiniz?
11. Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrenciler için kurumunuzca tahsis edilen özel bir burs kontenjanı var mı?
  - a. (Var ise) bu burslar hangi ülke öğrencilerine tahsis edilmiştir?
  - b. Tahsis edilen bursların kapsamı hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
12. Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrenciler Üniversiteniz/Enstitünüz hangi bölümlerini genellikle tercih etmekte?

13. Balkan ülkelerindeki üniversitelerin eğitim- öğretim müfredatlarının tanınması konusunda kurumunuz görüşlerini kısaca özetleyebilir misiniz?

- a. Müfredat farklılığı bu ülkelerden gelen öğrencilerin Üniversiteniz/ Enstitünüze uyum sağlamada yarattığı sıkıntılar neler?
- b. Bu sıkıntıların giderilmesi için ne gibi önlem alınmakta?

14. Üniversitenizde/Enstitünüzde istihdam edilen Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğretim üyesi var mı?

- a. (Var ise) sözkonusu öğretim üyesi Üniversitenize/Enstitünüze eğitim programlarına katkısı ne oldu?
- b. Yabancı öğretim üyesi istihdamı Üniversitenizde/Enstitünüzde herhangi bir değişikliğe sebep oldu mu?

15. Eğitimdeki rekabet ortamını da dikkate alarak, çalıştığınız Üniversite/Enstitünün Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikasındaki öncelikleri nelerdir?

- a. Bu önceliklerin saptanmasındaki gerekçeleri söyleyebilir misiniz?

16. Kurumunuzca Balkan ülkelerindeki eğitim kurumlarına yönelik eğitim ilişkilerinin belirlenmesi esnasında ülke önceliği yapılmakta mıdır?

- a. Eğer yapılmakta ise ülke önceliği neye göre belirlenmekte?
- b. Bu ülkeye öncelik tanınmasının sebepleri nelerdir?

17. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim ilişkilerin belirlenmesi esnasında çalıştığınız Üniversite/Enstitü hangi faaliyetlere öncelik vermekte?

- a. Bu faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesindeki gerekçeler nelerdir?

18. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yürüttüğü eğitim faaliyetleri çerçevesinde Üniversitenizce/Enstitünüzce bu ülkelerin ilgili eğitim kurumlarına herhangi bir mali destekte bulunmakta mıdır?

- a. Bulunmakta ise bu mali destek hangi amaçlarla yapılmaktadır?
- b. Mali destekte bulunma sebepleri nelerdir?

19. Balkan ülkeleri ile Türkiye arasında eğitim alanında işbirliği hangi alanlara yönelik öncelikli olarak imzalanmasında yarar olabilir?

- a. Bu alanlara yönelik öncelikli olarak işbirliği yapılmasının sebeplerini açıklayabilir misiniz?

20. Balkan ülkelerinde mevcut üniversitelerde okumak isteyen öğrencilere veya Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde okumak isteyen Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilere Üniversitenizce/Enstitünüzce tahsis edilen özel bursların gerekçeleri nelerdir?

21. Balkanlara yönelik eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce neler veya kimlerdir kısaca anlatabilir misiniz?

22. Bu soruların dışında Balkanlara yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim politikasını sizce aydınlayabilecek başka söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?

23. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikası konusunda bilgi alabileceğim ve sizin tavsiye edeceğimiz başka bir kurum veya kuruluş, şahıs var mı?

## **Balkan Ülkelerindeki Akademik Kuruluşlara Yönelik Sorular**

1. Kurumunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?
  - a. Kurumunuzun misyonu ve vizyonu nedir?
  - b. Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?
2. Türkiye'nin ülkenize yönelik genel eğitim politikası konusundaki düşünceleriniz nelerdir?
3. Türkiye'nin uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde, ülkenize yönelik yürütmüş olduğu genel eğitim politikası ülkeniz yükseköğretim kurumlarının yapısal ve işlevsel özelliklerine etkisi konusundaki düşüncelerinizi söyleyebilir misiniz?
4. Ülkenizin ve Türkiye'nin de imzaladığı Bologna süreci dikkate alındığında, uluslararasılaşma çerçevesinde, Türkiye ile eğitim ilişkilerinde erişilen seviyenin yeterli olup olmadığını ve bu seviyenin yükseltilmesi için ne tür çabalar sarfedilmekte olduğunu özetler misiniz?
5. Türkiye'deki yükseköğretim kurumları ile imzalanan işbirliği anlaşmaları var mı?
  - a. Var ise bu işbirliği anlaşmaları hakkında kısaca bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - b. Bu anlaşmalar hangi alanları kapsamakta?
  - c. Bu işbirliğinin gelişmesi için kurumunuzca neler yapılmakta?
  - d. Bu işbirliği her iki tarafa ne gibi faydalar sağlamaktadır?
  - e. Yapılan veya yapılması öngörülen bu anlaşmalarda hangi konulara öncelik verilmesi halinde daha yararlı olacaktır?
  - f. Bu işbirliği anlaşmaları Üniversitenizin beklentilerini karşıladı mı?
6. Ülkeniz ile Türkiye arasında eğitim alanında imzalanmış olan ikili anlaşmaların yükseköğretime etkisi sizce ne yönde olmuştur?
7. Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi, kültürel ve dini bağlar da gözönünde bulundurularak ülkenizde yaşayan soydaş ve müslüman toplulukların Türkçe öğrenme ve dini eğitim alma isteklerinin karşılanmasını teminen düzenlenen projeler hakkında bilgi verir misiniz?
  - a. Bu projelerin verimliliğini arttırabilmek ve bu toplulukların beklentilerini karşılayabilmek için kurumunuzca neler yapılmakta?
  - b. Düzenlenen bu projeler ülkenizdeki soydaş ve müslüman topluluklara Türkçe öğretim ve dini eğitim verilmesinin bu toplulukların beklentilerini sizce ne derecede karşılamıştır?
8. Ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının Türkiye'den hangi alanlarda daha çok yardım beklemekte veya desteğe ihtiyaç duymaktadır?
  - a. Bu yardımı veya desteği sağlayabilmek için Kurumunuzca ne tür çabalar sarfedilmiştir?
  - b. Kurumunuz için bu yardım veya destek neden önemli?
  - c. Bu yardım veya destek kurumunuza ne tür bir katkı sağlamış olacaktır?
9. Ülkenizdeki eğitim kurum ve kuruluşların Türkiye'deki eğitim kurum ve kuruluşları arasındaki eğitim işbirliğinde hangi tür faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesinde ülkeniz açısından daha yararlı olacağını düşünüyorsunuz?
  - a. Bu faaliyetlerin gerçekleşmesi sizin için neden önemli?
10. Sizce gerçekleştirilen bu faaliyetler ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının ve toplumun beklentilerini ne derecede karşılamaktadır?
  - a. Eğer beklentilere yeterli cevap vermiyorsa bunun sebebi ne olabilir?

- b. Bu beklentilerin karşılanabilmesi için Üniversitenizce Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları ile ortaklaşa yürüttüğü faaliyetlerden var ise bunlardan kısaca sözedebilir misiniz?
- c. Sizce gerçekleştirilen bu eğitim faaliyetleri ülkeniz eğitim alanında sağladığı fayda veya verdiği zararlar nelerdir?
11. Öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi değişim programları konusunda Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları ile her hangi bir işbirliğine yönelik çalışmanız var mı?
- a. (Var ise) bu işbirliğinin gerçekleştirilebilmesi için kurumunuzca ne tür çabalar sarfedilmiştir?
- b. Bu işbirliği Kurumunuz için neden önemli?
- c. Bu işbirliğinin size getirdiği kazanımlar konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
12. Türkiye'nin ülkenize tahsis etmiş olduğu öğrenci kontenjanı ve öğrenci burslarının yeterli olup olmadığı konusundaki yorumlarınız nelerdir?
- a. Yeterli değil ise bu kontenjanların neden arttırılması gerekiyor?
- b. Bu kontenjanların arttırılması için Kurumunuzca herhangi bir girişimde bulunuldu mu?
- c. Bulunulduğu ise sonuç ne oldu?
13. Türkiye'de öğrenim gördükten sonra ülkesine geri dönen öğrencilerin Türkiye'deki öğrenimleri esnasında sahip oldukları bilgi birikimi ile ülkenizdeki meslek gruplarına göre insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılamada yeterli olup olmadığı hususundaki görüşleriniz nelerdir?
- a. Öğrencilerinizin daha çok hangi meslek gruplarında eğitim görmesi halinde ülkedeki insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılayabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz?
- b. Bu alanlar ülkeniz açısından neden önemlidir?
- c. Öğrencilerinizin bu meslek gruplarında eğitim görmesi için Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları nezdinde herhangi bir talepte bulundunuz mu?
- d. Bu talebiniz ne şekilde sonuçlandı?
14. Ülkeniz ile Türkiye arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce neler veya kimlerdir kısaca anlatabilir misiniz?
15. Bu soruların dışında ülkenize yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim politikasını aydınlatabilecek ayrıca başka söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?
16. Türkiye'nin ülkenize yönelik eğitim politikası konusunda bilgi alabileceğim ve sizin tavsiye edeceğiniz başka bir kurum veya kuruluş, şahıs var mı?

### **Türkiye'deki Dernek – Düşünce Kuruluşlarına yönelik sorular**

1. Derneğinizi/Düşünce Kuruluşunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?
- a. Kurumunuzun (derneğinizin) misyonu ve vizyonu nedir?
- b. Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?
2. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim ilişkileri çerçevesinde çalıştığınız kurum ne tür faaliyetler düzenlenmekte?
- a. Bugüne kadar düzenlenen faaliyetler nelerdir?
- b. Hangi faaliyetlere öncelik verilmektedir?

3. Kuruluşunuzca düzenlenen bu faaliyetlere (seminer, toplantı, proje gibi) ilgili kurum ve kuruluş çevrelerince gösterilen ilgi ve katılım konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - a. Bu faaliyetler kurumunuzda kimin inisiyatifi ile düzenlenmekte?
  - b. İlgili ülke kurumları tarafından düzenlenmesi talep edilen faaliyetler var mı?
  - c. Var ise bu talepler ne oranda karşılanabilmekte?
  - d. Düzenlediğiniz faaliyetler (örneğin seminerler sonrası) geribildirim yapılmakta mı?
4. Hangi Balkan ülkeleri ile işbirliği içerisindesiniz?
  - a. İşbirliği yaptığınız veya ortak proje yürüttüğünüz kurum veya araştırma merkezleri hangileridir?
  - b. Bu kurumlar ile eğitimin hangi alanında işbirliği yapmaktasınız?
  - c. İşbirliğine ilişkin eğitim ilişkilerinizin seviyesini açıklayabilir misiniz?
5. Kuruluşunuzca ilgili ülkede eğitim faaliyetleri düzenlenmesi esnasında karşılaştığınız engeller veya zorluklar nelerdir?
6. Kuruluşunuzun yürütmüş olduğu bu faaliyetler sayesinde Balkan ülkelerin eğitim ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması için daha çok hangi konularda katkıda bulunuldu?
7. Derneğiniz/Kuruluşunuzca Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilere burs tahsisı yapılmakta mı?
  - a. (Yapılmakta ise) bu bursun içeriği, miktarı konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?
  - b. Burs tahsis ettiğiniz öğrenciler daha çok hangi bölümleri tercih etmektedir?
8. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim faaliyetleri yürütmedeki derneğiniz/ düşünce kuruluşunuzun amacı nedir?
  - a. Bu amaçlarınızı gerçekleştirmedeki sebeplerin neler olduğunu söyleyebilir misiniz?
9. Eğitimdeki rekabet ortamını da dikkate alarak, çalıştığınız dernek / düşünce kuruluşunuzun Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikasında öncelikleri sizce neler olmalı ?
  - a. Bu önceliklerin gerekçelerini söyleyebilir misiniz?
10. Dernek / düşünce kuruluşunuzca Balkan ülkelerindeki eğitim kurumlarına yönelik eğitim ilişkilerinin belirlenmesi esnasında ülke önceliği uygulanmakta mıdır?
  - a. (Eğer uygulanmakta ise) ülke önceliği belirlemesi için ne tür kriterler uygulandı?
  - b. Bu kriterlerin uygulanma sebepleri nelerdir?
11. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim ilişkilerin belirlenmesi esnasında çalıştığınız dernek / düşünce kuruluşu hangi faaliyetlere öncelik vermekte?
  - a. Bu faaliyetlere öncelik vermesinin nedenlerini söyler misiniz?
12. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yürüttüğü eğitim faaliyetleri çerçevesinde dernek / düşünce kuruluşunuz bu ülkelerin dernek veya düşünce kuruluşlarına herhangi bir mali destekte bulunulmakta mıdır?
  - a. (Bulunulmakta ise) bu mali destek hangi amaçlarla yapılmaktadır?
  - b. Mali destekte bulunma sebepleri nelerdir?
13. Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde okumak isteyen Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilere dernek veya düşünce kuruluşunuzca tahsis edilen özel burslar var mı?
  - a. (Var ise) tahsis sebepleri nelerdir?

14. Balkanlara yönelik eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce kimlerdir kısaca anlatabilir misiniz?

15. Bu soruların dışında Balkanlara yönelik Türkiye'nin eğitim politikasını sizce aydınlatabilecek ayrıca başka söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?

16. Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik eğitim politikası konusunda bilgi alabileceğim ve sizin tavsiye edeceğimiz başka bir kurum veya kuruluş, şahıs var mı?

### **Balkan Ülkelerindeki Dernek ve Düşünce Kuruluşlarına yönelik sorular**

1. Derneğinizi/Düşünce Kuruluşunuzu kısaca tanıtır mısınız?

- Kurumunuzun (derneğinizin) misyonu ve vizyonu nedir?
- Kurumunuzun görev/faaliyet alanları nelerdir?

2. Türkiye'de herhangi bir eğitim kurumu, dernek veya düşünce kuruluşu ile işbirliği yapmakta mısınız?

- (Eğer yapmakta iseniz) işbirliği yaptığımız, ortak proje yürüttüğünüz kurum veya araştırma merkezleri hangileridir?
- Bugüne kadar düzenlenen faaliyetler nelerdir?
- Daha çok hangi faaliyetlere öncelik verilmektedir?
- Sözkonusu dernek veya kuruluşlar ile eğitim alanındaki ilişkilerinizin seviyesini açıklayabilir misiniz?
- Ülkenizdeki eğitim kurumlarının Türkiye'den beklentilerinin karşılanabilmesi için kurumunuzca ne tür çabalar sarfedilmiştir?

3. Derneğiniz veya kuruluşunuzun inisiyatifi ile düzenlenen faaliyetler var mı?

- Var ise bunlar hangileridir?
- Derneğiniz inisiyatifi ile düzenlenmesi düşünülen ancak destek alınmadığı için gerçekleştirilemeyen faaliyetler var mı?
- Düzenlenmesinden vazgeçilen faaliyetler var mı?
- Bu faaliyetlerin düzenlenmesinden hangi sebeplerden dolayı vazgeçilmiştir?

4. Türkiye'deki dernek veya düşünce kuruluşlarının talebine binaen düzenlenen faaliyetler var mı?

- Var ise bu taleplerin karşılanabilmesi için kuruluşunuzca yapılan katkılardan bahsedebilir misiniz?
- Düzenlenen bu faaliyetlere ülkenizdeki ilgili kurum ve kuruluş çevrelerince gösterilen ilgi ve katılım konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?

4. Düzenlenen bu faaliyetler (seminer, konferans, toplantı gibi) sonrası geribildirim yapılmakta mı?

5. Sizce Türkiye ile eğitim alanında yürütülen faaliyetler ülkenizdeki eğitim kurumlarının ve toplumun beklentilerini karşılayıp karşılamadığı konusunda bilgi verebilir misiniz?

- Eğer bu beklentiler yeterince karşılanamıyorsa bu konuda neler yapılmalı?
- Bu beklentilerin karşılanması ülkeniz için hangi açıdan önemli?
- Ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının Türkiye'den beklentilerinin karşılanabilmesi için kuruluşunuzca ne tür çabalar sarfedilmiştir?

6. Sizce gerçekleştirilen bu eğitim faaliyetleri ülkeniz eğitim alanında sağladığı fayda veya verdiği zararlar nelerdir?

7. Ülkeniz eğitim kurumlarının Türkiye'den işbirliği çerçevesinde hangi alanlardaki faaliyetlere daha çok yardım yapılması beklemekte veya desteğe ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır?
- Hangi tür faaliyetlere öncelik verilmesinde ülkeniz açısından daha yararlı olacağını düşünüyorsunuz?
  - Bu faaliyetlerin gerçekleşmesi ülkeniz için neden önemli?
  - Bu yardımı veya desteği sağlayabilmek için Derneğiniz/düşünce Kuruluşunuzca ne tür çabalar sarfedilmiştir?
  - Çaba sarfetmenizin sebeplerini söyler misiniz?
8. Türkiye'nin ülkenize tahsis etmiş olduğu öğrenci kontenjanı ve öğrenci burslarının yeterli olup olmadığı konusundaki yorumlarınız nelerdir?
- Yeterli değil ise bu kontenjanların neden artırılması gerekiyor?
  - Sizin derneğinizce/kuruluşunuzca Türkiye'de okumaları için öğrencilerinize tahsis edilen burslar var mı?
  - (Var ise) bu burslar hangi amaçlarla verilmekte?
9. Türkiye'de öğrenim gördükten sonra ülkesine geri dönen öğrencilerin Türkiye'deki öğrenimleri esnasında sahip oldukları bilgi birikiminin ülkenizdeki insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılamada yeterli olup olmadığı hususundaki görüşleriniz nelerdir?
- İnsan gücü ihtiyacının karşılanması için hangi kriterlere dikkat edilmeli?
  - Bu kriterlerin belirlenmesi sebeplerini açıklar mısınız?
10. Ülkenizden Türkiye'ye gelen öğrencilerin daha çok hangi alanlarda eğitim görmesi halinde ülkedeki insan gücü ihtiyacını karşılayabileceğine ilişkin düşüncelerinizi özetleyebilir misiniz?
- Bu alanlar ülkeniz için neden önemlidir?
11. Ülkeniz ve Türkiye arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerini etkileyen başlıca faktörler veya paydaşlar sizce neler veya kimlerdir kısaca anlatabilir misiniz?
12. Bu soruların dışında ülkeniz ile Türkiye arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerini aydınlayabilecek ayrıca başka söylemek istediğiniz herhangi bir husus var mı?
13. Türkiye'nin ülkeniz arasındaki eğitim ilişkileri konusunda bilgi alabileceğim sizin tavsiye edeceğiniz başka dernek, kuruluş veya şahıs var mı?

## Appendix C

### DOCUMENTS COLLECTED AS SECOND SOURCE OF DATA

#### Documents Collected in Kosovo

1. The Law on the Higher Education in Kosovo – Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Prishtina 2004 (booklet). The law nr. 2002/2 adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo on Higher Education in Kosovo during the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

2. The Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Kosovo – Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Prishtina 2004 (booklet). The law nr. 2002/03 adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo on Higher Education in Kosovo during the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The new law entered into force after the proclamation of independence.

3. Strategy for Development of Pre-university Education in Kosovo (2007-2017) – Provisional Institutions of Self- Government- Government of Kosovo – Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Prishtina 2007 (book). This study confirms the westernization policy of Kosovo. As it is indicated in the study, one of the reasons “for drafting the strategy rests on the need to keep up with the European trends in this sector and in building an education structure that would ensure efficiency and quality in teaching” (p.6).

4. Teachers Cadre in Turkish Language Education in Kosovo (Kosova'da Türkçe Eğitimde Öğretmen Kadrosu) by Nazan Safçı and Bedrettin Koro (book). In this study the schools giving Turkish language education in Kosovo and the teachers working in these schools were introduced. From the biography of the teachers, it is understood that the teaching staff of these schools generally were drawn from among the ranks of graduates from Higher Pedagogical Institute in Prizren and Turkish Language and Literature Department of the University of Prishtina, and naturally from among the graduates of universities in Turkey in the recent past.

5. Turkish Language Education in Kosovo, Problems and Solutions (Kosova'da Türkçe Eğitim, Sorunları ve Çözümleri)(Book) – Kosovo Turkish Teachers Association Book Printing, October 2005 (Kosova Türk Öğretmenler Derneği Kitap Yayınları, Ekim 2005). It was provide an information that the Turkish language education in Kosovo started in 1951 and that it has undergone several periods of progress and recession. It was understood that some problems listed in the book are still unresolved. Besides the problems reported regarding the Turkish language education, in the book was stated that one of the main aims of providing

Turkish language education in Kosovo is to maintain the national unity among Turks living in Kosovo, and to raise them as productive members of the society by raising their level of education.

6. Turkish Language Education living in Kosovo (Kosova'da Yaşayan Türkçe Eğitim) (Book) – by Dr. Cem Topsakal and Bedrettin Koro, Balkan Intellectuals and Writer Publications, 40, July 2007, Prizren (Balkan Aydınları ve Yazarları Yayınları : 40, Temmuz 2007, Prizren). Besides the informative content on Turkish language education in Kosovo, evaluations of the scholarships granted by Turkey in the framework of the Great Student Project were presented in the book. According to these evaluations, sending students to Turkey cause a discontinuation of interest in the universities in Kosovo on the part of the students from the Turkish community in Kosovo. It was additionally registered as a reason for brain drain. Furthermore, it includes information on the needs of textbooks and teaching materials in Turkish language education, problems relating to teaching positions, in-service training needs for teachers etc.

7. Turkish Language Education in Prishtina 1951-2001 - (Priştine'de Türkçe Eğitim 1951-2001)(Book)-by Nevzat Hüdaverdi, TWINS Printing House, 2003. The book contains information on the schools giving Turkish language training, Turkish teachers involved in Turkish language education, extracurricular activities held in these schools, Turkish textbooks, Turkish books listed in Prishtina libraries, Turkish community alumni, higher education in Prishtina etc.

8. 55. Anniversary of Turkish Education in Kosovo, Turkish Education Conference (Kosova Türk Eğitiminin 55.yıldönümü Türk Eğitim kurultayı)(Book) – by Raif Vırmiça – Kosovo Turkish Teachers Association, April 2007, Prizren (Kosova Türk Öğretmenler Derneği, Nisan 2007 Prizren). The book includes the speeches made in the ceremony held in December 2006 on the occasion of the 55 anniversary of the Turkish Education in Kosovo and the texts of the papers presented in the IV. Turkish Education Conference.

9. Eurasian Bulletin (Avrasya Bülteni) - published by TİKA, December 2010. The information is presented about the projects realized for the protection of the cultural heritage in the Balkan countries, such as Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. It also contains information on projects related to agriculture in African countries, road construction projects in Afghanistan and health sector projects in Uzbekistan.

10. BAL-TAM Turkishness Info (BAL-TAM Türklük Bilgisi) – peer-review journal published by Balkan Turcology Research Center, September 2010 Prizren. This is a journal published twice a year, in March and September. It includes articles written by researchers from Turcology departments and from around the Turkic countries. Articles especially focus on investigations carried out by academicians from the Balkans.

## **Documents Collected in Macedonia**

1. Hikmet – Journal of Scientific Research – Nr: November 2010/2, May 2010/1, November 2009/2, Mays 2009/1, December 2008/2, May 2008/1, October 2007/2. Journal, which publishes articles mainly in Turkish and some in English. It is a peer-reviewed journal containing articles on issues related to Turkish Islamic Culture in Rumeli. Some examples are “Islamic identity of the Balkans” by Assoc.Prof.Dr. Numan Aruç (2009/2), “The Ottoman multiculturalism – Macedonian multicultural model” by Goran Janev (2007/2). This journal was published by the Association named ADEKSAM (Abdülhakim Hikmet Doğan – Eğitim, Kültür ve Sanat Merkezi) (Abdülhakim Hikmet Doğan – Education, Culture and Arts Center). This association was founded in 1997 in Gostivar (a city located in the northwestern part of Macedonia). The main objective of this association is to improve, promote and cherish the education and the culture of Turkish community in Macedonia. A large number of conferences were held by this Association with the aim of raising awareness in this community on religious and national issues.

2. 10 Years Study Bulletin (10 Yıllık Çalışma Bülteni) – published by ADEKSAM, Macedonia-Gostivar, 2007. Contains information on the activities realized by this association between the years 1997 and 2007.

3. Balkan Turkishness (Balkan Türklüğü) by Yusuf Hamzaoğlu, Logos A, Skopje, 2010. The book is comprised of 3 volumes. The first volume named “Balkan Turkishness (Macedonia, Croatia. Pre-Ottoman Balkan Islamism)”. The second “Balkan turkishness (Macedonya, Bulgaria, Slovenia)”. The third is “Balkan Turkishness (The Serbian Turkishness: pre-Ottoman, Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods”. The volumes present information obtained from the researches and analysis conducted in relation to the concept of Turkishness in Macedonia and Croatia as well as information on Balkan Islamism in the pre-Ottoman period.

4. The Problems in Turkish Education at Primary and High Schools in Macedonia and Proposed Solutions (Makedonya'da İlkokul ve Lise Türkçe Eğitimindeki Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri) published by MATUSITEB (Union of Turkish NGO's in Republic of Macedonia), Skopje, 2009. This document contains useful information on the current situation in the Turkish education in Macedonia, problems and proposed solutions and statistical data.

5. Quiet Ship (Sessiz Gemi) – journal published with the contribution of the students and the faculty members of the Turkish Language and Literature Department of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. It contains a large number of stories, poems and essays by students of this Department.

6. Snowdrop (Kardelen) (educational and cultural children magazine for the age group

9-14) – Skopje, November 2010, published by Kopru (Bridge) Association (Cultural, Arts and Educational Association founded in 2003). The publishing and editing board of the magazine is composed of students of the Turcology Department in Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.

7. Bridge (Köprü) – Culture, Art and Literature Journal, Skopje, March 2010/42. The journal contain different types of the works of the literati in Macedonia. The journal offers research content for the readers on the cultural activities carried out in the Balkans, the analysis of the Turkish books on the Balkans translated into Macedonian and information about the developments in the Balkan literature.

8. Booklet on the State University of Tetova, which was established in 1994 in Tetova.

9. Booklet on the Goce Delchev University in Stip, which was established in 2007. There is a Turkish Language and Literature Department within the Faculty of Philology.

10. South East European University (SEEU). The First Four Years 2001/02-2004/05. This University is providing education in Albanian language.

11. South East European University 10 years from Greenfields to Intelligent Buildings -June 2010.

### **Documents Collected in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

1. I. International Turcology Workshop Handbook (I. Uluslararası Türkoloji Çalıştayı El Kitabı). This handbook includes information on the I. International Turcology Workshop that was held between 19-24 April 2012 in Istanbul, such as the agenda of the workshop, the support to be given to the Turkish Language and Literature departments of the universities, and information on the faculty members, student numbers, needs, demands and the problems of the universities that were represented during the workshop. According to a protocol signed in 2011 with TIKA, the Turcology Project was placed under the supervision of Yunus Emre Institute.

2. Turcology Project brochure by TIKA. As it is stated in the brochure, Turcology is the name of the scientific branch which deals with Turks, Turkic languages and its dialects. Regarding the Turcology projects, TIKA focused especially on supporting the existing Turkish Language Training units, opening new Turkish Language Training units where necessary, equipping the Turkish language training units with high quality training materials and equipment, appointing lecturers to these departments, offering Turkish language courses for the public, organizing events that promote Turkish language and Culture in places where Turkish is taught, awarding successful students with a “Summer Internship Program” in Turkey. But after the establishment of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center, TIKA was relieved of its duty of executing the Turcology project and all of the activities indicated above have

recently been placed under the auspices of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center.

3. Brochure on projects and activities in the Balkans and Western Europe (Balkanlar ve Doğu Avrupa proje ve faaliyetler Broşürü) – This brochure by TİKA offers detailed information concerning some of the projects carried out by TİKA in various Balkan countries and in Eastern Europe. It covers only some parts of the activities in 2006 and 2007. As it is mentioned in the brochure, all of these activities were conducted with the aim of enhancing communications with these countries that would lead to establishing a common cultural basis and contributing to the social peace in the region.

The brochure contains information also on some of the activities performed outside the field of education in the Balkan countries. For example some of the activities in Kosovo are as follows: the establishment of Turkish TV broadcasts in Prizren with the purpose of protecting the cultural heritage, constructing in cooperation with the Kosovo Livestock Research Institute a surrounding wall around the Ottoman Cemetery in Prizren with the purpose of contributing to Kosovo's national economy, development of the sheep farming project, construction of a water tank in Mamusha village in Kosovo.

Activities carried out in BiH mentioned in the booklet are as follows: equipping the Emergency department of the Goradze Hospital located in the eastern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina region and which is inhabited by people who were displaced during the War. In order to ensure the economic contribution for the people living in Eastern Bosnia in Glasticavo region establishment of Konjic Fishing Center. Further, under the protocol signed with the municipality of Visegrad the restoration of Drina Bridge, build by architect Sinan between 1571-77 years. Reconstruction and restoration of the historic Konjic Bridge, built in 1682 during the reign of sultan Mehmet IV and which was damaged during the World War II.

The activities carried out in Macedonia are the renovation and furnishing of 10 schools, drinking water project in Latsa and Ocalı villages, beekeeping development project, restoration of the Mustafa Pasha mosque, constructing a bridge in the Arachinova municipality.

4. Bridge-Most (Köprü – Most), Culture and Arts Journal Nr: 3, Year 2012 – this journal was prepared by the contribution of the faculty members and the students from the Turcology Department of the Sarajevo University within the Faculty of Philosophy. The journal covers poems and stories written and translated by the students or academicians of Sarajevo University into Bosnian or in Turkish.

### **Documents Collected in Turkey**

1. Workshop on Acceptance of Foreign Students 2011 Programs (Yabancı Uyruklu Öğrenci Kabulü 2011 Programı Çalıştayı) – Trakya university, Edirne 2011. The booklet covers the opinions of the rectors and vice rectors from various universities in Turkey

participated in the workshop which was held on February 14, 2011 in Balkan Congress Center of the Trakya university. During the workshop the problems encountered by the foreign students were raised and suggestions were made for regulation of the admission process as well.

2. A Pride Table TIKA (Bir Gurur Tablosu TIKA). The booklet contains an information of the activities have been carried out by TIKA in different countries including Balkan countries and the support given in the field of education and in other sectors.

3. Interaction among the Balkan Nations (Balkan Milletleri Arasında Etkileşim) – book about the international Balkan congress held between 24 and 25 April 2008 in Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University Campus.

4. A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation between the Foreign Service Training Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and The Diplomatic Education sector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia signed on March 21, 2007 in Skopje. The purpose of the memorandum is furthering mutually beneficial cooperation for the training in the field of diplomacy and the exchange of information on topics of international law, diplomatic law and other academic disciplines that are relevant for the practice of diplomacy and international relations, be they political, economic, cultural, financial or other.

## Appendix D

### METU ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL



1956

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Sayı: B.30.2.ODT.0.AH.00.00/126/18-104

26 Ocak 2011

Gönderilen: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı

Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen

IAK Başkan Yardımcısı

İlgi : Etik Onayı

"Regional Internationalization Policy of Turkey In the Balkans: Investigation of Turkey's Higher Education Policies Towards the Balkans ( Türkiye'nin Balkanlar'daki Bölgesel Uluslararasılaşma Politikası: Türkiye'nin Balkanlar'daki Yükseköğretim Politikalarının İncelenmesi)" isimli araştırmanız "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

26/01/2011

**Prof.Dr. Canan ÖZGEN**  
**Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi**  
**( UEAM ) Başkanı**  
**ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA**

## Appendix E

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

This study is conducted by Servet Köksal, Ph.D. student in the Educational Science Department at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara/Turkey, under the supervision of Assist. Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı. The aim of this study is to investigate the cross-border higher educational practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries (namely Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo) under the concept of internationalization. The information obtained by this study will be used to write a dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree in the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Education in METU in Ankara/Turkey.

The study is expected to display the scope of the educational relationship between Turkey and the Balkan countries. The findings of this study will help not only to identify the gap between the reality and expectation regarding relationships between Turkey and the Balkans in relation to higher education but also to determine how to meet those expectations. The results of this study is expected also to contribute to the development of a framework for understanding different rationales that motivate Turkey and Balkan countries toward internationalization; to guide future studies on internationalization at macro level (inter-country level); to provide references and guidelines for the Turkish Ministry of Education, the Council on Higher Education (YÖK) and other institutions of higher education for assisting the educators in enhancing the partnership between the Turkish education institutions and their counterparts in the Balkans.

Your participation in the study will be through a face-to-face interview lasting 90 minutes. The interview will be tape recorded unless otherwise requested by the participant. If you grant permission for audiotaping, no audio tapes will be used and or played for any purpose other than to do this study. You will be asked a series of an open ended semi-structured questions (approximately 25) and your participation in this study must be on a voluntary basis. You do not need to write your name or any information that may reveal your identity unless your wishes for the use of full name in the study. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be evaluated by the researcher and her thesis supervisor. The results will be used for scientific purposes only.

There are no risk involved in participating in this study. The interview guide does not contain questions that may cause discomfort in the participants. However, if you feel uncomfortable, you will have the right to terminate the study at any time and for any reason.

In such a case, it will be sufficient to tell the person conducting the interview that you do not want to continue anymore with the interview. In the event you choose to withdraw from the study all information you provide (including tapes) will be destroyed and omitted from the final paper.

**Thank you very much for your contribution. You can always ask further information about the study by contacting Servet Köksal (Tel: 00 90 312 292 21 10; E-mail: [servet.koksal@yahoo.com](mailto:servet.koksal@yahoo.com)) or her thesis supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı from the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Education in METU (room EF412; Tel: 00 90 312 210 40 77; E-mail: [kyasar@metu.edu.tr](mailto:kyasar@metu.edu.tr)).**

*I am participating in this study totally on my own will and am aware that I can quit participating at any time I want/ I give my consent for the use of the information I provide for scientific purposes.*

(Please return this form to the data collector after you have filled it in and signed it).

Name and Surname of the Participant	Date	Signature
.....	----/----/2012	.....

## Appendix F

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM / GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu çalışma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümünde Doktora öğrencisi olan Servet Köksal tarafından Y. Doç. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı'nın danışmanlığında yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin yükseköğretim alanındaki sınır ötesi eğitim politikaları uluslararasılaşma kavramı ile ilişkilendirilerek Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine (özellikle Bosna-Hersek, Makedonia ve Kosova) yönelik eğitim politikalarının incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmadan elde edilecek sonuçlar Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesinin Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümünde doktora derecesi elde etmek için gerekli olan doktora tezi yazımında kullanılacaktır.

Ayrıca, çalışmadan elde edilecek olan sonuçlar ile Türkiye ve Balkan ülkeleri arasında halihazırda mevcut olan eğitim ilişkilerin kapsamının belirlenmesi ve bu ülkelerin Türkiye'den beklentilerinin saptanması hedeflenmektedir. Böylece, ortaya çıkacak olan farkın bu ülkelere yönelik politikaların belirlenmesinde ve eğitim kurumları arasındaki işbirliğinin artırılması yönünde karar merciler için rehber görevi yapacağı gibi bu beklentilerin ne şekilde karşılanması gerektiği hususunda da ayrıca bir fikir vermesi beklenmektedir. Çalışmanın sonuçları uluslararasılaşma yönünde Türkiye ile Balkan ülkelerini motive eden farklı gerekçelerin anlaşılması için bir çerçeve geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunması, gelecekte uluslararasılaşma konusundaki diğer çalışmalara makro-düzeyde (ülkeler arası) öncülük etmesi, Türk Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) ve diğer eğitim kurumları için kaynakça oluşturması ve eğitimcilere Türk eğitim kurumlarının Balkan ülkelerindeki karşıtları ile işbirliğinin artırılmasında rehberlik etmesi beklenmektedir.

Çalışmaya katılımınız 90 dakika sürebilecek yüz yüze (bire-bir ortamda) gerçekleşecek şekilde bir mülakattan ibaret olacaktır. Görüşme, başkaca bir şekil talep etmediğiniz sürece banda kayıt edilecektir. Ses kaydına izin vermeniz halinde, kayıtlar bu çalışmanın dışında herhangi bir amaçla kullanılmayacaktır. Görüşme esnasında açık uçlu yarı yapılandırılmış yaklaşık 25 adet soruyu yanıtlamanız istenecektir. Çalışmaya katılımınız nedeniyle isminiz ve kişisel bilgileriniz izniniz olmadığı sürece herhangi bir rapor veya tezde yer almayacak ve gizli tutulacaktır. Cevaplarınız tamimiyle gizli tutulacaktır. Elde edilen veriler araştırmacı ve tez danışmanı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Sonuçlar sadece bilimsel amaçla kullanılacaktır.

Çalışmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllük esasına dayalıdır. Bu çalışma, konumları itibarıyla katılanlara zarar getirebilecek herhangi bir psikolojik ya da fiziksel bir risk

çermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissetmeniz halinde dilediğiniz bir zamanda herhangi bir sebep olmaksızın çekilme hakkına her zaman sahiptir. Böyle bir durumda mülakatı uygulayan kişiye daha fazla devam etmek istemediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır. Çalışmadan çekilmeniz halinde görüşme esnasında elde edilen tüm bilgiler ses kaydı dahil imha edilecek ve sonuç raporlara yansımayacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Servet Köksal (Tel: 00 90 312 292 21 10; E-mail: [servet.koksal@yahoo.com](mailto:servet.koksal@yahoo.com)) veya adıgeçenin tez danışmanı Y.Doç. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı (ODTÜ, Eğitim Fak. Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü; Oda: EF412; Tel: 00 90 312 210 40 77; E-mail: [kyasar@metu.edu.tr](mailto:kyasar@metu.edu.tr)) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

***Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.***

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra lütfen uygulayıcıya geri veriniz)

Katılımcının Adı Soyadı

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## Appendix G

### **DEBRIEFING FORM**

This study is conducted by Servet Köksal, Ph.D student in the Educational Science Department at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara/Turkey.

The aim of this study is to investigate the cross-border higher educational practices undertaken by Turkey towards the Balkan countries (namely Bosnia Hezegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo) under the concept of internationalization, the expectations of these countries from Turkey with regard to higher education and to identify the political, economic, academic, cultural and social rationales behind these practices developed by Turkey in order to meet those expectations.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of a framework for understanding different rationales that motivate Turkey and Balkan countries toward internationalization in higher education. Furthermore, the study is expected to guide future studies on internationalization at macro level (inter-country level). The results of the study could provide references and guidelines for the Turkish Ministry of Education, the Council on Higher Education (YÖK) and other institutions of higher education. In addition, the results will contribute to enriching the existing body of knowledge on education in the Balkan countries and will assist the educators in enhancing the partnership between the Turkish education institutions and their counterparts in the Balkans.

**The results are planned to be obtained by September 2011. The data will be evaluated by the researcher and her supervisor. The data obtained will be used for scientific purposes only. You can always ask further information about the study and its results by contacting the names below.**

**Thank you very much for your contribution.**

Researcher: Servet Köksal; Tel: 292 13 42; E-mail: [servet.koksal@yahoo.com](mailto:servet.koksal@yahoo.com)

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı; Tel: 210 40 77; E-mail: [kyasar@metu.edu.tr](mailto:kyasar@metu.edu.tr)

## Appendix H

### DEBRIEFING FORM / KATILIM SONRASI BİLGİ FORMU

Bu çalışma Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Doktora öğrencisi Servet Köksal tarafından yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır.

Bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin yükseköğretim alanındaki sınır ötesi eğitim politikaları çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesini oluşturan uluslararasılaşma kavramı ile ilişkilendirilerek Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine (özellikle Bosna – Herzek, Makedonya ve Kosova) yönelik eğitim politikaları, bu ülkelerinin Türkiye'den eğitim (yükseköğretim) alanındaki beklentileri, Türkiye'nin bu beklentilere karşılık geliştirdiği bu politikaların ardındaki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik kültürel ve sosyal gerekçelerin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Çalışmanın sonuçları yükseköğretim alanında uluslararasılaşma yönünde Türkiye ile Balkan ülkelerini motive eden farklı gerekçelerin anlaşılması için bir çerçeve geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunacaktır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma, gelecekte uluslararasılaşma konusundaki diğer çalışmalara makro-düzeyde (ülkeler arası) öncülük etmesi, Türk Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) ve diğer eğitim kurumları için kaynakça oluşturması (Balkan ülkelerin eğitim sistemi konusunda mevcut olan bilgilerin geliştirilmesi) ve eğitimcilere Türk eğitim kurumlarının Balkan ülkelerindeki karşıtları ile işbirliğinin artırılmasında rehberlik etmesi beklenmektedir.

Çalışmanın sonuçları Eylül 2011 ayına kadar elde edilmesi planlanmaktadır. Sonuçlar araştırmacı ve araştırmacının tez danışmanı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Elde edilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel amaçlı kullanılacaktır. Çalışma ve çalışmanın sonuçları hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için aşağıda yazılı şahıslara başvurabilirsiniz.

Katkılarınız için çok teşekkür ederiz.

Araştırmacı: Servet Köksal; Tel: 292 13 42; E-mail: [servet.koksal@yahoo.com](mailto:servet.koksal@yahoo.com)

Tez Danışmanı: Assist. Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı; Tel: 210 40 77;

E-mail: [kyasar@metu.edu.tr](mailto:kyasar@metu.edu.tr)

## Appendix I

Figure 3.1  
*Example of Initial Coding and Categories*

Categories	Codes
TREDPOLEVALUATION Evaluation of the Turkish educational policy	TREDPOLEVALUATION- inadequate TREDPOLEVALUATION – positive (+) TREDPOLEVALUATION – negative (-) TREDPOLPROMOTION- inadequate promotion TREDPOLEVALUATION-towards each ethnic groups TREDPOLPROMOTIONEFFORTS TREDPOLCRITICS TREDPOLPROPOSALS TREDPOLBENEFITS – for Turkey
LEVELEDRELTRBLK Level of the educational relations between Turkey and Balkans	LEVELEDRELTRBLK - sufficient LEVELEDRELTRBLK -insufficient LEVELEDRELTRBLKIMPROVE – efforts spent to improve the level, to enhance the level
BLKINSTEDSYS Evaluation of the general education policy-educational system of the Balkans	BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-western oriented BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-relation with western countries BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL- multiple oriented BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-Turkey oriented BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-inadequacy BLKINSTEDSYSPROBL BLKINSTEDSYSPROBLSOLV BLKINSTEDSYSAREAACTIVITY BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-improvements BLKINSTEDSYSEVAL-willing to cooperate with Turkey BLKINSTEDSYSSTRUCTURE
TREDSYSTEVAL Evaluation of Turkish education	TREDSYSTEVAL-positive TREDSYSTEVAL- negative TREDSYSTEVAL- importance TREDSYSTEVAL-high quality of education system
TRBLKRELAT Turkey's relation with Balkans	TRBLKRELAT - History TRBLKRELAT - Political TRBLKRELAT - Economic TRBLKRELAT – Cultural

## Appendix K

Figure 3.2  
*Coding a Page from a Sample Interview Transcript*

Institution Name : Ss. Cyril and Methodius University City : Skopje Country: Macedonia	Interview participant: C... Position : International Office Phone number : E-mail address : Date of interview : 14.02.2011	Group: Macedonian Academicians File: C
This university is the oldest one in Macedonia having the largest number of faculty and students	A- Could you introduce please briefly your instituiton that you are working? K- I'm working in Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. <i>Its university with long          tradition about 65 years up to now.</i> I'm working in the department with the foreign students. The university has approximately 50000 students now, 2500 professors and assistants working here. We have 180 differents study programmes at the university and we have studies on national, social, science and arts.	
	A- What are the mission, vision or activities of your university? K- I will give the mission and vision in a written form it will help you.	
Approximately 150 Students from Turkey, studying in the faculty of medicine and Turkish language and Literature Department	A- Ok, my second questions is what is your opinion on general educational activities undertaken by Turkey here in Macedonia, just briefly in general? K- You mean about the students that we have from Turkey? A- Educational policies of Turkey. K- We don't have specified policies with Turkey. There is some governmental, but it is not very clear for me. Today we don't have something specific to say, but <i>we have          students from Turkey and they are generally          interested to study medicine and Turkish          language and literature</i> , because we have department for Turkish Language and Literature and they have approximately <i>150          students from Turkey today.</i>	

<p>Problems arising from the differences among the educational systems, especially diploma recognition in high school level, but not in higher education (university) level</p>	<p>A- By taking into consideration the Bologna process which is signed either by Turkey and Macedonia in the framework of internationalization could you explain please just in brief does the level reached in the educational relation between Turkey and your country is sufficient?</p> <p>K- Yes, it is. We have some differences in the educational policies in Turkey and Macedonia, but it is mainly in the high school level not in the university level. In Turkey you have 3 year for high school education, we have 4. It is sometimes trouble for the students which are going to study here in recognition of diplomas. We don't have trouble in recognition of university diplomas.</p>	<p>LEVELEDRELTRB LK- sufficient</p>
	<p>A- Ok. Are there any agreements signed for cooperation between your university and your counterparts in Turkey?</p> <p>K- We have some years ago a contract with the Gazi university in Ankara, but I'm not sure that it is active any more. I think that it was finished.</p>	<p>BLKTREDAGR</p>
<p>The agreements are generally interdepartmental rather than between the universities</p>	<p>A- Which areas this agreement covered?</p> <p>K- I don't know.</p> <p>A- I can list some areas may be you can remember like recognition of educational systems, exchange of expert for examining the educational systems, recognition of diplomas, mutual exchange of documents, educational technological cooperation.</p> <p>K- No, I don't know the field of cooperation between the two universities. <i>It was between the different departments in our university.</i></p>	<p>BLKTREDAGRAR EAS</p>

Appendix L

Figure 3.3  
Illustration of Coding (Assembled Sheet)

KOSOVO-CONTENT ANALYSIS		
GROUP: KS (KOSOVO GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS)		
FILE: A, B, C, D, E, N		
BLKINST	BLKINSTMISS – A2 quality assurance	We are responsible for overall quality assurance and legislation of higher education in Kosovo. (A2)
	BLKINSTMISS – A2 directed to economy	We are aiming higher education and research of course which is in benefits of people in Kosovo and further also in benefits and use for the economic development of the Republic of Kosovo. (A2)
	BLKINSTAREAA B2, CTIVITY B2, E1	<p>İlk etapta sadece diplomatik, siyasi ve ekonomik faaliyetler üzerinde daha fazla yoğunlaşmış durumdaydık. Devamında da yasal altyapı mevzuatın oluşması ile birlikte konsolosluk hizmetlerinin bir bölümünü de vermeye başladık.(B2)</p> <p>Devamında da yasal altyapı mevzuatın oluşması ile birlikte konsolosluk hizmetlerinin bir bölümünü de vermeye başladık. (B2)</p> <p>başta tabi Kosova milletvekili olarak, aynı zamanda Türk toplumunun yararlarına çalışarak Kosova Türk milletvekili olarak çalışmalarımızı sürdürüyoruz.(E1)</p>
	BLKINSTRELAT- C1, C1 Turkey oriented D1, D2, D6, E1	<p>Tabii Bakanlığımızın bütün uluslararası örgütlerle çalıştığı gibi yine parantez açarak söylemek istiyorum Türkiye'nin de belirli kuruluşları ile işbirliği içerisinde. Tabii ki bu işbirliği içerisinde Türkiye'nin TİKA ve Tarım Bakanlığı ile işbirliği içerisinde, imzaladığı bir protokol vardır ve bu çerçevede tarım alanında Türkiye ile bir sürü faaliyetler ve işbirliği gerçekleşmektedir.(C1)</p> <p>Tabii bakanlığımız sadece Türkiye ile değil Avrupa Birliği, FAO, USAID, DANIDA gibi diğer kuruluşlarla da işbirliği içerisinde ve bu kuruluşlar sayesinde tarımın kalkınmasında öncülük yapılmaktadır.(C1)</p> <p>İlk önce 1 Şubat 2005 yılında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü ile bir işbirliği protokolü imzaladık ve bu işbirliği protokolü çerçevesinde çok büyük çalışmalarımız oldu. (D1)</p>

Şunu da bildirmek istiyorum sadece bu 3 kurumla bizim işbirliğimiz sınırlı kalmıyor, tabii arşivler olarak üniversitelerle de işbirliğimiz var. Örneğin Trakya Üniversitesi ile, Samsun 19 Mayıs Üniversitesi ile de çok iyi bir işbirliğimiz var. Öyle ki kurumumuz sadece Türkiye'deki arşivlerle değil yani Türkiye'de bizim alanımıza yakın olan üniversiteler, kütüphaneler de bizler için çok önemli.(D2)

Fakat şunu da bildirmek istiyorum Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile 99 savaşıdan sonra kurum olarak Kosova arşivleri ilk ciddi anlamda işbirliğini yürüten bir kurumdur. 2005 yılından beri bu çok önemli tabii.(D6)

Bütün dünyadan destek beklerken Türkiye Cumhuriyetinden biraz fazla alıyoruz (E1)

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## TURKISH SUMMARY

### **TÜRK YÜKSEKÖĞRETİMİN BÖLGESEL ULUSLARARASILAŞMASI: TÜRKİYE'NİN KOSOVA, MAKEDONYA VE BOSNA HERSEK'E YÖNELİK EĞİTİM POLİTİKALARI**

#### **GİRİŞ**

1980'li yılların sonunda meydana gelen sosyal, ekonomik ve siyasi değişiklikler Balkan yarımadasında çeşitli etnik çatışmalara ve aşırı milliyetçi hareketlere sebep olmuştur. Bu gelişmelerin akabinde eski Yugoslavya Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti dağılmış ve bölgede yeni devletler ortaya çıkmıştır. Sözkonusu yeni devletlerin oluşumu Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik ilgisini arttırmıştır. Balkanlarda beş asra yakın hüküm sürmüş olan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun mirasçısı olan Türkiye için Balkanlar bir çok nedenden dolayı önemli bir bölgedir. Birincisi, Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerinde yaşayan milletler ile ortak tarihi, dini ve kültürel bağ bulunmasıdır (Alp, 2004). İkincisi, çeşitli dönemlerde Türkiye'ye göç etmiş Balkan kökenli vatandaşların Türkiye'deki mevcudiyetleri ve onların halen Balkanlar'da yaşayan milletler ile ailevi, akrabalık veya ticari ilişkilerinin olmasıdır. Buna ilave olarak, Balkan ülkelerinde yaşayan soydaş ve müslüman azınlıkların varlığı da diğer bir etkidir. Son olarak ise Balkanlar'ın stratejik jeopolitik konumu itibariyle Türkiye için Balkanlar Avrupa'ya ve Batı ülkelerine geçit olarak addedilmesidir.

Bu bağlamda, Türkiye Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yapıcı bir politika izlemekte ve bu sebeple de bu bölgedeki ülkelere özel bir önem atfetmektedir, çünkü herhangi bir şekilde bölgedeki güvenliğin veya dengelerin bozulması halinde Türkiye'nin Avrupa ile fiziki bağın kesilmesi anlamına gelecektir, bu da bölgede yaşayan soydaşların kaderi ile ilgili endişe yaratacaktır (Bilman, 1998). Bu görüşten hareketle, 1990 yıllardaki radikal değişikliklerin beraberinde getirmiş olduğu siyasi ve ekonomik sorunlar nedeniyle bölgede meydana gelen savaşlardan zarar gören özellikle Bosna- Hersek ve Kosova gibi ülkelere diğer uluslararası toplumların yanısıra Türkiye de her alanda ve her seviyede yardımda bulunmakta ve geçiş sürecinde bulunan bu ülkelere eğitim dahil siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal yaşamlarında halen çözülmemiş olan bir çok sorunların çözümü için de arabuluculuk görevini üstlenerek destek vermeye çalışmaktadır (Sancaktar, 2010).

Türkiye, bağımsızlık ve toprak bütünlüğüne saygı, iç işlerine karışmama ilkesi kapsamında, bölgedeki ülkeler ile ikili ilişkilerini en üst seviyede düzenlenen karşılıklı ikili ziyaretler, çeşitli alanlarda (askeri, ticaret, kültür, eğitim gibi) imzalanan anlaşmalar ile

pekiştirmekte ve yaşamın her alanında eğitim dahil bağ oluşturulması için çaba sarfetmektedir.

Yukarıdaki açıklamalar ışığında, Türkiye'nin yükseköğretim alanında gerçekleştirmekte olduğu Balkan ülkelerine yönelik sınır ötesi eğitim faaliyetleri bu çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesini oluşturan uluslararasılaşma kavramı ile ilişkilendirilerek incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Son yıllardaki sosyal, politik, kültürel ve ekonomik gelişmelerden dolayı eğitim araştırmacılarının özel ilgisine neden olan yükseköğretimdeki uluslararasılaşma kavramı konusunda eğitimin değişik işlev ve boyutlarını öne çıkaran çeşitli tanımlar ortaya atılmıştır. Örneğin, Yang'a (2003) göre uluslararasılaşma kavramı “iki veya daha fazla milletler veya kültürler arasında karşılıklı insan, fikir, mal ve hizmet değişimini” ifade eder. Knight (2004) ise uluslararasılaşma kavramı yükseköğretim kurumlarının araştırma, öğretim ve hizmet sunma gibi üç temel misyonuna uluslararası bir boyut katılması süreci olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu tanıma göre uluslararasılaşmanın yükseköğretimdeki çeşitli uygulamaları kapsadığı anlaşılmaktadır. Söz konusu uygulamaların öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi hareketliliği, uluslararası iletişim ağ kurulması, eğitim kurumları arasında işbirliği ve ortak projelerin başlatılması, yeni akademik müfredat ve araştırma girişimleri, yurtdışı kampus kurulması, yabancı öğretim üyesi ve öğrenci istihdamı gibi pek çok işlevi kapsadığı Knight (2008) tarafından belirtilmiştir. Bu uygulamaların, Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan ülkeler için de uluslararasılaşma kavramı çerçevesinde üzerinde durulması gereken aynı geçerlikte uygulamalar olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak, Mızıkacı (2005) Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumlarının uluslararasılaşmasını ikili bölgeselcilik (bilateral regionalism) olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bu tanım Balkan ülkeleri ele alarak değerlendirilecek olursa Türkiye'nin uluslararasılaşmadaki bölgeselcilik uygulamaları, Türkiye'nin bu bölgeye yönelik tarihi ve kültürel bağlarına isnat edilebilecektir. Diğer bir deyişle, Türkiye bu bölgedeki ülkeler ile ilişkilerini güçlendirmek için eğitimi bir araç olarak kullanması söz konusudur. Böylece, yoğun ikili eğitim ilişkileri sayesinde Balkanlar'da yaşayan daha çok soydaşa erişilebilecek ve bölgenin daha iyi tanınması mümkün olabilecektir. Dahası, ikili eğitim ilişkileri, bu ülkelerin Türkiye ile tarihi ve kültürel bağlarının canlı tutulmasına, Türkiye'nin bölgedeki etkinliğinin artmasına ve dolaylı olarak da bölgenin istikrarı ve güvenliğinin pekiştirilmesine katkıda bulunulmasına yardımcı olacaktır.

Son zamanlarda uluslararasılaşma kavramı üniversitelerin, bu üniversitelerdeki öğretim üyelerin ve mezunlarının karakteristik özelliklerini tanımlamada sıkça kullanılan bir tanım haline gelmiştir (Enders, 2004). Dolayısıyla, uluslararasılaşma eğitim kurumlarında çeşitli reformların gerçekleştirilmesi, üniversiteler arası işbirliğinin tesisi, yeni teknolojinin uyarlanması veya yeni birimlerin kurulması için temel neden olarak görülebilir. Ancak, Callan (2000) uluslararasılaşma kavramının tanımının çeşitli gerekçelere (rationales), teşviklere, aktivitelere, siyasi veya ekonomik durumlara göre değişebileceğini belirterek

uluslararasılaşma, Avrupalılaşma ve küreselleşme kavramları arasında önemli bir anlam farkına da işaret etmiştir. Diğer taraftan, Knight (1999), eğitim kurumların uluslararasılaşma yönündeki çabalarını değerlendirebilmek için kurumların öncelikle kendileri için uluslararasılaşmanın ne anlama geldiğini tespit etmeleri gerektiğini, zira bu kurumların uluslararasılaşmaları için çeşitli gerekçeler olabileceğini vurgulamıştır. Bu gerekçeleri Knight (1999) 4 ana grupta sınıflandırmıştır: siyasi, ekonomik, akademik, kültürel ve sosyal. Wit (2002) ise bu 4 ana grubu şu şekilde açıklamıştır: örneğin siyasi gerekçeleri dış politika, ulusal güvenlik, barış ve karşılıklı anlayış, ulusal ve bölgesel kimliğin oluşturulması ile bağdaştırmış, ekonomik gerekçeleri ise ekonomik büyüme, ekonomik rekabet, iş gücü, devletin veya kurumların talebi veya mali teşvikleri ile ilişkilendirmiştir. Adıgeçen devamla, akademik gerekçelerin müfredatta getirilen yenilikler, yabancı lisan eğitimi, ortak projeler ve eğitim kalitesinin yükseltilmesi ile bağlantılı olduklarını belirtmiş, kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeleri de ulusal kültürün korunması ve tanıtılması için diğer kültürleri anlama ve saygı gösterme yolu olarak ilişkilendirmiştir. Örneğin, eğitim kurumlarınca yetenekli ve bilgili öğrenci yetiştirmek ülkeler arasındaki ikili ilişkilerin kolaylaştırılması ve gelişmesine katkıda bulunacaktır. Ancak, Wit (2002) gerekçeler konusunda ayrıntılı bilgi verirken bu gerekçelerin birbirleriyle örtüşebileceğinin veya bu gerekçelerin çeşitli paydaş gruplarına göre (devlet veya özel kurumlar, eğitim kurumları gibi) değişebileceğinin, zamanla veya bölgeler itibari ile de bu gerekçelerin öncelik sıralamasının değişebileceğinin hatırdta tutulması gereken önemli bir husus olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Dolayısıyla kurumların uluslararasılaşma sürecinin değerlendirilmesi esnasında uluslararasılaşma sonucu kurumlarca elde edilecek fayda veya görülecek zararların da hesap edilmesi gerekmektedir. Örneğin, Khalideen (2008) uluslararasılaşma sonucunda oluşan öğrenci nüfusundaki çeşitlik ve yabancı öğrenci istihdamının üniversitelere maddi kazanç sağlamasını olumlu sonuç olarak değerlendirmiştir. Knight (2003) ise öğrenci, öğretim üyesi ve öğretmenlerin gelişmesinin, öğretim ve eğitimdeki akademik standart ve kalitenin yükselmesinin, ayrıca kültürel farkındalık oluşmasının en önemli olumlu sonuçlar olarak gösterilebileceğine işaret etmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, beyin göçü, kültürel kimliğin aşınması gibi hususlar da uluslararasılaşmada olumsuz sonuç olarak değerlendirilmiştir (Knight, 2003). Uluslararasılaşma sürecinin olumlu veya olumsuz yönlerini tartışırken yabancı lisanın özellikle İngilizce eğitimin etkisi de gözönünde bulundurulmalıdır. Son zamanlarda yabancı lisan olarak İngilizcenin iletişim, ticaret, bilim ve eğitimde en popüler ve en çok tercih edilen bir lisan olmuştur. Bilimsel yayınlarda da İngilizce dili zorunluluk arz etmektedir (Wit, 2002). Bu sebeptendir ki, Türkiye'de olduğu gibi bir çok Balkan ülkesindeki üniversitelerde de öğretim dili İngilizcedir. Ancak, TİKA'nın yürüttüğü "Türkoloji Projesi" sayesinde, İngilizce'nin yanı sıra Türkçe de Balkan ülkelerinde çok tercih edilen bir lisan durumuna gelmiştir. Bosna-Hersek ve Kosova'daki üniversitelerde Türkçe

Bölümleri ve Türk kürsüleri açılmış, Balkan ülkelerinde yaşayan soydaşlarımızın talepleri üzerine Türkçe öğrenim kursları düzenlenmiştir (TİKA internet sayfası).

Günümüzde, Balkanlar ülkelerini etkileyen eğitim alanındaki gelişmelerden en önemlileri Bologna sürecine dahil olmaları ve öğrenci hareketliliğidir. Bilindiği üzere, Bologna sürecinin amacı ortak Avrupa Yükseköğretim Sistemi kurulması, öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi hareketliliğini kolaylaştırılmak, eğitim kalitesini yükseltmek, ekonomik büyümeye katkı sağlamak ve Avrupa ile bütünleşmeyi teşvik etmektir (Heitmann, 2005). Bu bağlamda, Bologna süreci, ortak eski Yugoslav geçmişleri olan bu Balkan ülkelerinin eğitim sistemlerinde reform gerçekleştirmeleri veya yenilemelerinde önemli rol oynamaktadır. Öğrenci veya öğretim üyesi hareketliliği ise yükseköğretimdeki uluslararasılaşmanın derecesi konusunda önemli bir gösterge olarak kabul gördüğü, ayrıca, yetenekli öğrencileri cezbetmek, ekonomik rekabeti arttırmak ve refahı sağlamak için önemli bir unsur olarak Kehm (2005) tarafından değerlendirilmektedir. Bu bilgilerden hareketle, son zamanlarda, Balkan ülkelerinden Türkiye'yi eğitim için tercih eden öğrencilerin sayısında artış olduğu gözlenmektedir. Bu öğrencilerin Türkiye'yi tercih etmeleri çeşitli sebeplere dayandırılmaktadır. Bu sebeplerin bazıları ise: Türk eğitim kurumlarınca burs tahsisi, Türk üniversitelerindeki eğitim kalitesi, Balkan ülkelerinden gelen öğrencilerin ülkemiz kültürüne ve yaşam şartlarına vakıf olmaları, ayrıca, Türkiye'de akrabalarının olması ve Türkiye'nin kendi ülkelerine yakın olması gibi nedenler gösterilebilir (Kondakçı, Y., Çetinkaya, E. & Çakır, S.G., 2009). Türkiye'nin eğitim alanında bu ülkelerden gelen öğrenciler için düzenlediği pek çok faaliyetler sıralanabilir. TCS (Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Akraba Toplulukları Sınavı) ve YÖS (Yabancı Öğrenciler için Sınav) sınavları, İlahiyat Fakültelerinde okumak isteyen öğrenciler için Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı tarafından tahsis edilen burslar başlıca sayılabilecek faaliyetlerden bazılarıdır.

Türkiye tarafından düzenlenen bu faaliyetlerin (sınavlar ve tahsis edilen burslar) Balkan ülkeleri ile dostluk ilişkilerin pekiştirilmesinde önemli bir etken olacağından hiç şüphe yoktur.

### **Araştırmanın Amacı ve Araştırma Soruları**

Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışmanın kuramsal yapısını oluşturan uluslararasılaşma kavramı çerçevesinde, Türkiye'nin Güneydoğu Avrupa'da bulunan (özellikle Bosna-Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova) üç Balkan ülkesine yönelik eğitim politikalarını incelemektedir. "Geçiş sürecinde" olan bu ülkeler eski Yugoslavya'nın dağılması akabinde 1990'larda ve sonrasında kurulmuşlardır. Bu ülkelerde, sosyal ve kültürel yaşam üzerine etkisi olduğu inanılan halen derin siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal dönüşüm süreci yaşanmaktadır. Bu ülkelerin siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal açıdan dönüşümüne katkı anlamında eğitim önemli bir araç olarak

ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ancak, eğitim aynı zamanda bu geçiş süreci tarafından etkilenen bir olgudur. Diğer bir deyişle, eğitim bu ülkelerin geçiş dönemlerinde etkileşimli bir rol oynar.

Yukarıdaki bilgiler çerçevesinde, bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye'nin bahsekonu ülkeler ile eğitim alanındaki ilişkilerin kapsamını belirlemeyi, bu ülkelerin Türkiye'den eğitim (yükseköğretim) alanındaki beklentilerini, Türkiye'nin bu beklentilere karşılık geliştirdiği eğitim faaliyetlerini ve bu faaliyetlerin ardındaki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik kültürel ve sosyal nedenleri incelemeyi amaçlamıştır.

Sözkonusu çalışma kapsamında, aşağıda yazılı soru ve alt sorulara yanıt bulmaya çalışılmıştır.

**Araştırma sorusu 1:** Yükseköğretim alanında Türkiye ve Balkan ülkeleri arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerin mevcut durumu nedir?

**1a.**Yükseköğretim alanında Balkan ülkelere yönelik Türkiye tarafından gerçekleştirilen uygulamalar nelerdir?

**1b.**Yükseköğretim alanında Türkiye tarafından Balkan ülkelere yönelik gerçekleştirilen uygulamaların ardındaki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik, kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeler nelerdir?

**Araştırma sorusu 2:** Yükseköğretime ilişkin Balkan ülkelerindeki farklı paydaşların Türkiye'den beklentileri nelerdir?

**2a.**Yükseköğretim alanında Türkiye ile Balkan ülkeleri arasındaki işbirliğinin geliştirilmesi için Balkan ülkeleri tarafından gerçekleştirilen uygulamalar nelerdir?

**2b.** Yükseköğretim alanında Türkiye ile Balkan ülkeleri arasındaki işbirliğinin geliştirilmesi için Balkan ülkelerinin uygulamaları ardındaki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik ve sosyal gerekçeler nelerdir?

### **Araştırmanın Önemi**

Bu çalışmanın, Türkiye ile Balkan ülkeleri arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerinin kapsamını açığa çıkarması beklenmektedir. Bunu yaparken, öncelikle halihazırdaki mevcut ilişkiler belirlenecek ve sonrasında, Balkan ülkelerin Türkiye'den beklentileri özetlenecektir. Ayrıca, Türkiye'nin halihazırdaki eğitim politikalarının ve Balkan ülkelerin Türkiye'den beklentilerinin analiz edilmesi gerçek durum ve beklentiler arasında yükseköğretim alanında ortaya çıkacak olan farkın belirlenmesine yardımcı olacaktır. Dolayısıyla, gerçek durum ile beklentiler arasında ortaya çıkacak olan fark, eğitim politikaların belirlenmesinde karar merciler için rehber görevi yapacaktır. Son olarak, Türkiye ile Balkan ülkelerinin uluslararasılaşmaya ilişkin gerekçelerinin tespitine çalışılacaktır. Diğer bir deyişle, bu politikaların ardındaki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik, kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeler de belirlenecektir. Böylece, Türkiye ile Balkan ülkelerinin yükseköğretim alanındaki

uluslararasılaşma uygulamalarının karşılaştırılması da mümkün olacaktır.

Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkelerine yönelik yükseköğrenim alanında gerçekleştirmiş olduğu eğitim politikaları ile bu politikaların ardındaki gerekçelerin neler olduğu hususunda yeterince çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu sebeple bu çalışmanın teoriye, metodolojiye ve pratiğe sağlayacağı katkılar kısaca aşağıda sıralanmıştır:

1. Kapsam olarak bölgesel (Balkan ülkelerine yönelik) çalışma niteliği taşıyan bu çalışma teorik açıdan gelişmekte olan ülkelerin yükseköğretimdeki uluslararasılaşma sürecinde, özellikle Türkiye ile Balkan ülkelerini uluslararasılaşmaya doğru iten farklı gerekçelerin anlaşılabilmesi için bir çerçeve geliştirilmesi konusunda katkı sağlaması beklenmektedir.

2. Söz konusu çalışma makro düzeyde (ülkeler arası düzeyde) uluslararasılaşma konusunda gelecekte gerçekleştirilecek olan çalışmalara rehber görevi yapması beklenmektedir. Diğer bir deyişle, bu çalışma, uluslararasılaşma olgusu ile ilgili olarak iki farklı bakış açısı ortaya koyacaktır: uluslararasılaşma olgusu hakkında farkındalık yaratılması ve yükseköğretimdeki uluslararasılaşma kavramı ile ilgili olarak ölçme yöntemi üretecek bir çerçeve geliştirilmesi.

3. Çalışma ayrıca, pratiğe de katkı yapması beklenmektedir. Bölgedeki üniversite ve Eğitim Bakanlıkları hakkında elde edilecek olan bilgilerin Türkiye Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Yükseköğretim ve diğer eğitim kurumları için bir kılavuz rolü görecektir. Türkiye'deki eğitim kurumları ile Balkan ülkelerindeki eğitim kurumları arasındaki işbirliğinin geliştirilmesi eğitim kalitesini yükselteceği gibi sözkonusu eğitim kurumların itibarını da arttıracaktır. Dahası, yabancı öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi istihdamının müfredat değişikliği veya yeni programların uygulanmasını gerektireceği ve böylece bölgedeki uluslararasılaşma sürecini kolaylaştıracak ve teşvik edecektir. Ayrıca, eğitim kurumlarındaki öğrenci çeşitliliğinin yabancı veya yerel öğrenciler açısından kültürlerarası deneyim kazanmalarında fayda sağlayacak olup, kültür bilincinin oluşması ve diğer milletlere de saygı yaratacaktır.

4. Son olarak, Balkan ülkeleri ile eğitim ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi Türkiye'nin Balkanlar'daki etkinliğini arttıracacağı gibi barışçıl sosyal aktiviteler sayesinde Balkanlar'da yaşayan milletler ile tarihi ve kültürel bağların canlı tutulmasına da yardımcı olunacaktır.

Bu nedenle, bölgede yaşayan bu toplulukların beklentilerinin nasıl karşılanacağına karar verilebilmesi için uluslararasılaşmanın sonuçlarının değerlendirilmesi büyük önem arz etmektedir.

## **Alan Yazın Taraması**

Bu çalışmanın alanyazın taramasında aşağıdaki başlıklar ele alınmıştır:

- Uluslararasılaşma kavramının tanımı,
- Uluslararasılaşmanın gerekçeleri
- Uluslararasılaşmanın faydaları ve riskleri
- Uluslararasılaşmada yabancı dilin rolü
- Balkanlarda eğitim alanındaki son gelişmeler
- Kosova, Makedonya ve Bosna Hersek'deki eğitim sistemi
- Balkanlarda İslam Yükseköğretimi

## **YÖNTEM**

### **Araştırma Deseni**

Bu çalışma nitel bir çalışma olarak tasarlanmış olup, Güneydoğu Avrupa'da bulunan ve “geçiş sürecinde bulunan ülkeler” olarak addedilen Bosna – Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova olmak üzere üç Balkan ülkesini kapsamaktadır. Seçilen Balkan ülkelerindeki değişik paydaş gruplarının bu ülkelerin Türkiye ile eğitim ilişkilerinin mevcut durumunun tespiti, eğitime ilişkin Türkiye’den beklentileri ve bu beklentilerin gerisindeki siyasi, ekonomik, akademik, sosyal ve kültürel nedenlerin ortaya çıkarılması için nitel çalışma olarak tasarlanmıştır.

Fraenkel ve Wallen (2006)'in belirttiği gibi, nitel çalışmalarda araştırmacılar genellikle durum ve olayları araştırmaya iştirak eden kişilerin bakış açılarını anlamak üzerine yoğunlaşırlar. Bu nedenle bu çalışmanın asıl amacı kilit paydaşların görüşlerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Ayrıca, çalışma sözkonusu ülkeler ile Türkiye arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerine dair paydaşlar arasındaki görüşlerde benzerlikleri ortaya koymayı da hedeflemiştir.

### **Veri Kaynakları**

Katılımcıların seçilmesinde amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama başladıktan sonra ilave kilit katılımcıların belirlenmesi ve seçilmesi amacıyla ise kar topu zincir örnekleme stratejisi uygulanmıştır.

Çalışmanın örneklemi 53 kişiden oluşmaktadır. Kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarında görevli önemli karar merci şahıslar, akademik kurum ve kuruluşlarda görevli eğitim uzmanları ile eğitim araştırma veya düşünce kuruluşlarında çalışan çeşitli paydaşlar bu çalışmaya katılmaları için davet edilmiştir. Sözkonusu kişilerin listesi ülkeler bazında aşağıdaki tabloda verilmiştir:

Table 3.1.

*Paydaş Gruplara Göre Katılımcı Sayısı*

Alt gruplar	Kosova	Makedonya	BiH	Türkiye	Toplam
Balkan ülkeleri devlet görevlileri	6	4	1	-	11
Balkan ülkelerindeki Türk devlet görevlileri	3	3	2	-	8
Türkiye'deki Türk devlet görevlileri	-	-	-	5	5
Balkan ülkelerindeki Balkan akademisyenler	6	5	3	-	14
Balkan ülkelerindeki Türk akademisyenler	-	2	4	-	6
Türkiye'deki Türk akademisyenler	-	-	-	2	2
Balkan ülkelerindeki Balkan Dernek Temsilcileri	2	2	-	-	4
Balkan ülkelerindeki Türk Dernek Temsilcileri	-	1	1	-	2
Türkiye'deki Türk Dernek Temsilcileri	-	-	-	1	1
TOPLAM	17	17	11	8	53

**Örneklem**

Türkiye ve Güneydoğu Avrupa'da bulunan Bosna-Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova'daki kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarında görevli önemli karar merci şahıslar, akademik kurum ve kuruluşlarda görevli eğitim uzmanları ile eğitim araştırma veya düşünce kuruluşlarında çalışan çeşitli paydaşlar bu çalışmaya katılmaları için davet edilmiştir. Hedef evreni oluşturan bu kişilerin çalıştıkları kurum ve kuruluşların seçilmesini teminen amaçlı örneklem yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Amaçlı örneklem yönteminde araştırmacı örnekleme evrenden tasarlayarak seçmektedir (Creswell, 2005). Amaçlı örnekleme mantık derinlemesine bilgi (in depth information) toplamaya önem verilmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır (Patton, 2002). Ancak, çalışma süreci esnasında örneklem stratejisi ile ilgili başkaca yöntemler de uygulanmıştır, örneğin maksimum çeşitlilik (maximal variation) veya kartopu (snowball sampling) örnekleme gibi. Nitel çalışmalarda örneklemin sayısını etkileyebilecek bir çok faktörler (amaç, zaman, finansal kaynaklar, kullanılan örneklem method ve stratejileri gibi) de göz önünde bulundurulması gerektiğinden veri toplamada doyma noktası (saturation) yaklaşımı örnekleme sayısının oluşturulmasında temel prensip olarak kabul edilmiştir (Mason, 2010). Çalışmanın

planlama aşamasında 30 katılımcı ile görüşülmesi öngörülmüştü. Ancak, daha fazla bilgi edinmek amacıyla, kartopu örnekleme uygulanmış ve böylece katılımcı sayısı 53'e yükselmiştir. Sözkonusu ziyaretler esnasında konuya ilişkin dokümanlar da analiz yapmak üzere toplanmıştır.

### **Veri Toplama Yöntemi ve Süreci**

Veri toplamada mülakat (yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine mülakat), doküman analizi ve gözlem (alan notları) gibi farklı nitel veri toplama teknikleri uygulanmıştır. Her bir katılımcı grup için yarı yapılandırılmış açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan farklı mülakat soruları hazırlanmıştır. Veri toplamak amacıyla ilgili kurumlara ziyaretler gerçekleştirilmiş ve mülakatlar uygulanmıştır.

### **Veri Toplama Aracı**

Çalışmada, nitel çalışma desenine uygun olarak mülakat yöntemi uygulanmıştır. Her bir katılımcı grup için birer örnekleri ilişkide sunulan yarı yapılandırılmış (semi-structured) açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan farklı mülakat soruları hazırlanmıştır. Çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesini uluslararasılaşma olgusu teşkil ettiğinden sözkonusu mülakat soruları uluslararasılaşma boyutları dikkate alınarak geliştirilmiştir. Bu çerçevede, mülakat soruları, genellikle kurumların misyon ve vizyonu, eğitimdeki uygulamaların önemi, sebepleri, öncelikleri ile bu uygulamalar esnasında karşılaşılan sorunlar, bu sorunların çözümü ile ilgili alınan önlemler, düzenlenen faaliyetlerden sağlanan fayda veya görülen zararlar konusunda çeşitli paydaş gruplarından bilgi edinilmesine yönelik hazırlanmıştır. Böylece eğitim uygulamalarının ardındaki gerekçelerin tespiti mümkün olmuştur. Dolayısıyla veri toplamak amacıyla ilgili kurumlara ziyaretler gerçekleştirilmiş ve yapılan mülakatlar ses kayıt cihazı ile kayıt altına alınmıştır. Son olarak da veri toplamak için doküman incelemesi uygulanmıştır. Bu nedenle üniversite, kurum ve kuruluşların internet sayfaları, yıllık raporları, öğrenci kayıt işlemlerine ilişkin katalog veya broşürler, öğrenci değişim programlarına ilişkin tanıtıcı malzeme, uluslararası öğrenci rehberleri, öğrenci kayıt raporları gibi malzemeler çalışmanın amacı için zengin kaynak oluşturmuştur. Toplanan dokümanlar ülke bazında çalışmanın ekinde yer almaktadır.

### **Araştırmanın Çalışma Planı**

Çalışmaya ilişkin veri toplama süreci Şubat 2011 ayında başlayarak Mayıs 2012 ayında sonlandırılmıştır. Çalışmanın temel çerçevesinin uluslararasılaşma kavramı oluşturması nedeniyle bu kavram ile ilgili kaynakçalar incelenmiş ve akabinde Türkiye'nin yükseköğretim alanında gerçekleştirmekte olduğu sınır ötesi eğitim faaliyetleri çerçevesinde

çeşitli paydaş grupları için farklı mülakat soruları hazırlanmıştır. Veri toplama süreci ve sonuç raporunun hazırlanması aşağıdaki tabloda belirtildiği şekilde gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Table 3.4A

*Araştırma Süreci Çalışma Planı*

Tarih/Faaliyet	Haziran 2010	Temmuz -Kasım 2010	Aralık 2010	Ocak 2011	Şubat 2011	Mayıs 2012	Haz. 2012 - Mayıs 2013	Mayıs 2013 -Ağustos 2014
Araştırma konusunun tespiti	X							
Literatür taraması		X						
Öneri savunması			X					
Web sitelerinden ön araştırma				X				
Mülakat reherlerinin hazırlanması				X				
Etik Kurulu izni alınması				X				
Pilot görüşme				X				
Türkiye'de veri toplama				X				
Kosova ve Makedonya'da veri toplama					X			
BiH'te veri toplama						X		
Yazılı doküman toplanması				X	X	X		
Verilerin kayıt edilmesi / Member check				X	X	X		
Analiz süreci (Kodlama/içerik analizi)							X	
Verileri raporlama								X

Tablonun incelenmesinden de görüleceği üzere, ODTÜ Etik Komitesinden izin alınmasını müteakiben (bakınız Appendix D) Ocak 2011-Mayıs 2012 ayları arasında ekte

listede belirtilen Balkan ülkeleri ve Türkiye kurumlarında çalışan kişilerle irtibata geçilerek mülakat tarih ve saatlerinin ayarlanması, görüşmeye gönüllü olarak katılacak olan kişilerin yazılı (informed consent) izinlerinin alınmasını müteakiben görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ayrıca eşzamanlı olarak da yazılı dokümanlar toplanmıştır. Görüşmelerin tamamlanması akabinde Haziran 2012'den başlamak üzere Aralık 2013 ayına kadar içerik analizi ve doküman incelemesi yapılarak sonuç raporu hazırlanmıştır.

### **Veri Analizi**

Verilerin analizi için içerik analizi (content analizi) uygulanmıştır. Söz konusu analizde veriler kavramsallaştırılır, organize edilir, veriyi açıklayan temalar saptanır. Bu analiz, özellikle geniş veri veya mülakat değerlendirilmesinde kullanılmaktadır (Grbich, 2007). Bu amaçla, ilk olarak mülakat esnasında ses kayıt cihazı ile elde edilen bilgiler yazılı metne dönüştürülmüş, daha sonra ise katılımcıların mülakat esnasında söyledikleri ifadeleri onaylamaları sağlanmış, katılımcıların metinleri onaylamalarını müteakiben ise kodlama süreci uygulanmıştır. Kodlama sürecinde elde edilen veriler ana konulara göre tasnif edilmiş ve temalar oluşturulmuştur. Son aşamada ise elde edilen bilgiler rapor haline getirilmiştir. Bilgiler öncelikle ülkeler ve çeşitli paydaş gruplar bazında, daha sonra ise özet sunulmuştur.

Ayrıca içerik analizi yanısıra veri toplamak için doküman incelemesi de yapılmıştır.

### **Sınırlamalar**

Çalışmanın kapsamını daraltmak amacıyla aşağıdaki önlemler uygulanmıştır:

- İşbu çalışma, halen geçiş sürecinde bulunan sadece üç Balkan ülkesini: Bosna-Hersek, Makedonya ve Kosova'yı kapsamaktadır.
- Bu çalışma, örnekleme yer alan ülkelerin eğitim politikalarındaki gelişmelerin sadece 1990'lı yıllardan sonraki dönemi veya bu ülkelerin bağımsızlıklarını ilan ettikleri tarihlerden sonraki dönemi içermektedir.
- Bu çalışmaya öğrenciler dahil edilmemiştir.

Çalışmada karşılaşılabilecek sıkıntılar:

- Çalışmanın örneklem (amaçlı örneklem) seçiminden dolayı kaynaklanan sıkıntılar
- Araştırmacıdan kaynaklanan önyargı (araştırmacı çalışmanın tüm evrelerinde yer alacaktır)

### **Çalışmanın Geçerliliği ve Güvenirliği**

Elde edilen verilerin geçerlilik ve güvenilirliğinin artırılması için çeşitleme (triangulation) stratejisi kullanılmıştır (Patton, 1999). Diğer bir deyişle, çeşitli paydaşlardan

elde edilen verilerin, doküman veya yazılı belgelerle tutarlılıklarının karşılaştırılması amacıyla veri kaynaklarını çeşitleme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama sürecinin en doğru bir şekilde uygulanması için gerekli tedbirler alınmıştır, örneğin katılımcılardan görüşme akabinde hazırlanmış olan görüşmeye ilişkin metni onaylamaları istenmiştir. Bu sayede, yanlış anlamaların bertaraf edilebilmesini teminen bu çalışmaya katılanların görüşlerinin doğru olarak yansıtıldığını tasdik etmeleri için fırsat verilmiştir. Ayrıca, çalışmanın iç ve dış geçerlilik ile güvenilirliğinin artırılması için, Türkiye ve Balkan ülkeleri arasında halihazırda mevcut olan eğitim ilişkileri konusunda detaylı bilgi verilmesinin yanı sıra çalışmanın deseni, araştırmacının rolü, katılımcıların seçimi, veri toplama teknikleri ile toplanan verilerin analizi konusunda ayrıntılı bilgi verilmesine de gayret edilmiştir (Creswell, 2003).

### **Etik Kurallar**

Veri toplama sürecinde üç temel etik prensip araştırmaya rehberlik etmiştir: kişiye saygı, ihsanîyet ve adalete sadakat (Lindorff, 2010). Katılımcıların korunması Gönüllü Katılım Formu (Informed Consent Form) sayesinde sağlanmıştır (Boeije, 2010). Bu form ile katılımcıların çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ettiklerine dair yazılı beyan ve imzaları alınarak çalışmayı yapan araştırmacının kim olduğu, kurumu, araştırmanın amacı, katılımın olası yararı veya riskleri, çalışmanın gönüllülük esasına dayalı olduğu, katılmaktan vazgeçmesi halinde olumsuz herhangi bir sonuç ile karşılaşmayacakları, elde edilen bilgilerin gizliliği, ayrıca araştırma konusunda oluşabilecek sorularla ilgili irtibata geçmeleri gereken şahısların kişisel bilgileri (isim, telefon, e-posta gibi) ve bilgilerin sadece bilimsel amaçlı kullanılacağı konusunda katılım sonrası bilgi formu ile de bilgilendirilmişlerdir.

## **BULGULAR VE SONUÇ**

### **Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleri ile Halihazırdaki Eğitim İlişkileri**

Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkeleri ile halihazırdaki eğitim ilişkileri devlet görevlileri, akademisyenler ve sivil toplum kuruluşları temsilcileri olmak üzere 3 paydaş grubun görüşleri dikkate alınarak incelenmiştir. Gerçekleştirilen müakatlar sonucunda elde edilen verilerin analizinde 9 tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunlar yavaş ilerleyen ilişkiler, Balkan ülkelerin batı odaklı eğitim ilişkileri, Balkan ülkelerinin eğitim sistemindeki yetersiz altyapı, Balkan eğitim sisteminde iklim değişimi, Türk kurumlarının Balkanlardaki etkin rolü, uluslararasılaşma Balkan ülkelerin çok etnili yapısı, dini eğitim ve Balkan ülkelerine Türkiye tarafından verilen sosyal/kültürel destek. Bu temalardan 6 tanesi (yavaş ilerleyen eğitim ilişkileri, Balkan ülkelerin batı odaklı eğitim ilişkileri, Balkan ülkelerin çok etnili yapısı, dini eğitim ve yetersiz

altyapı) her üç ülkede de görülmüş olup, iklim değişimi teması Makedonya ve Kosova katılımcıları ile yapılan görüşmede, sosyal ve kültürel destek Bosna Hersek katılımcıları ile gerçekleştirilen görüşmede, Türk kurumların Balkan'lardaki aktif rolü ise sadece Makedonya'da ortaya çıkmıştır. Hemen hemen tüm katılımcılar Türkiye ile bu üç Balkan ülkesi arasındaki işbirliği düzeyini yetersiz olarak değerlendirmişlerdir. Bu çerçevede Türkiye ile halihazırdaki eğitim ilişkilerini yavaş geliştiği şeklinde değerlendirmişlerdir. Bu duruma başlıca sebeplerden Türkiye ile bu üç Balkan ülkesi eğitim sistemleri arasındaki yapısal farklılıklar ile Balkan ülkelerin izledikleri batı odaklı eğitim politikaları gösterilmiştir. Öte yandan, Balkan ülkelerin eğitim sistemlerindeki altyapı yetersizliği de eğitim sistemlerini yeniden yapılandırılmasını teminen iklim değişimi için itici bir güç oluşturmuştur. Bu anlamda, geçiş sürecinde bulunan bu ülkeler uluslararası aktörlerin tecrübelerinden faydalanma ihtiyacını gerektirmiştir. Bu üç Balkan ülkesindeki Türk ve Müslüman toplulukların varlığı da dikkate alınarak diğer aktörlerle birlikte Türkiye de bölgede her alanda katkıda bulunduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu katkıların nelerden ibaret olduğu bir sonraki bölümde anlatılmıştır.

### **Balkan Ülkelerinde Türkiye Tarafından Gerçekleştirilen Uygulamalar**

Türkiye'nin eğitim alanında Balkanlara yönelik gerçekleştirdiği uygulamalar ile ilgili olarak görüşmelerden elde edilen verilen 11 çeşit temayı ortaya çıkarmıştır. Belirlenen temalar sırasıyla şu şekilde adlandırılmışlardır: uluslararasılaşma, Türk devlet kurumlarının etkin rolü, Balkan ülkelerine verilen kültürel ve sosyal destek, Türkçenin yaygınlaştırılması çalışmaları, dini eğitim alanındaki faaliyetler, uluslararası kalkınma ajanslarının bu ülkelerdeki çalışmaları, Türkiye tarafından yapılan çeşitli yardımlar, sivil toplum örgütlerinin eğitim ilişkilerine etkisi, yoğunlaştırılmış devletlerarası ilişkiler, Balkan ülkelerindeki eğitim kurumlarının fiziki kapasitelerinin artırılması çalışmaları, incelenmekte olan bu ülkelerin çok etnili ve çok dinli yapısı ile Türk devlet kurumlarının faaliyet alanları. Balkan ülkelerine yönelik gerçekleştirilen uygulamalar kısaca aşağıda özetlenmiştir.

Türk devlet görevlileri tüm faaliyetlerin ihtiyaç doğrultusunda, bu ülkelerin özel durumları dikkate alarak gerçekleştirildiğini belirtmişlerdir. Türkiye ile işbirliğinde bu ülkelerin ve bu ülkelerdeki eğitim kurumlarının her biri kendine has araçlar geliştirdikleri, Türkiye'nin de çok aktif bir şekilde çeşitli kurumlarıyla (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Yurtdışında Yaşayan Türkler ve Akraba Toplulukları Başkanlığı, Türkiye İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı, Türkiye Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, bölgede bulunduğu, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, pek çok sivil toplum örgütü Balkan Federasyonu gibi, üniversiteler, belediyeler vs.) her biri çeşitli alanlarda olmak üzere bölgede faaliyet göstermekte ve Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik genel eğitim politikasını şekillendirmede önemli rol oynamaktalar. Öte yandan, bu

ülkelerde açılan Yunus emre Kültür Merkezlerinin bu ülkelerdeki üniversitelerle olan işbirliği girişimleri de küçümsenemez.

İncelemekte olduğumuz üç Balkan ülkesi katılımcıların görüşlerinden uluslararasılaşma teması diğer temalara nazaran en güçlü tema olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Giriş bölümünde de belirtildiği üzere uluslararasılaşma bir çok uygulamayı içermektedir. Bu uygulamaları 4 gruba ayırmak mümkündür: 1) eğitim kurumları arasında eğitim işbirliği (anlaşma imzalanması, ortak projelerin düzenlenmesi; 2) öğrencilere yönelik gerçekleştirilen aktiviteler (öğrenci hareketliliği, staj, yaz kursları, burs tahsisi, diploma denklik işlemleri gibi); 3) insan kaynağı desteği (Türk dili ve edebiyatı bölümlerine okutman görevlendirilmesi, hizmetiçi eğitim, konferans ve sempozyumların düzenlenmesi); 4) eğitim kurumlarına verilen altyapı desteği. Elde edilen veriler Türkiye'nin uluslararasılaşma sürecinin tüm boyutlarına aktif bir şekilde dahil olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu uygulamaların arasında en çok gündeme gelen öğrencilere yönelik uygulamalardır. Öğrenci hareketliliği Türkiye'nin sözkonusu Balkan ülkeleri ile ilişkilerinin en önemli parçasıdır. Öğrenci hareketliliğinin genelde Balkan ülkelerinden Türkiye'ye yönelik olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ancak, Makedonya ve Bosna Hersek'te tersine öğrenci hareketliliği de gözlenmiştir, yani bu ülkelere Türkiye'den eğitim için giden pek çok öğrenci bulunmaktadır. Türk girişimciler tarafından kurulan örneğin Uluslararası Balkan üniversitesi ile Uluslararası Saraybosna üniversitesinin bu konuda etkileri olduğu düşünülmektedir. Nitekim Uluslararası Saraybosna üniversitesi 2008 yılından itibaren, Uluslararası Balkan üniversitesi ise 2013 yılından itibaren ÖSYM'in tercih kitapçığına dercedildiği ve böylece öğrencilerin kolay bir şekilde bu üniversiteleri tercih etme imkanı yaratılmıştır.

Öte yandan, Türkiye bu ülkelerle çok boyutlu ilişkiler içerisinde bulunmaktadır. Makedonya ve Kosova ile devlet düzeyinde imzalanan işbirliği anlaşmaları var iken karmaşık siyasi yapısı nedeniyle BiH ile böyle bir anlaşmanın devlet düzeyinde ne yazıkki imzalanmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin de Balkan ülkelerindeki eğitim kurumları ile yakın ve yoğun bir işbirliği içerisinde buldukları öğrenilmiştir. Örneğin, görüşmelerde Makedonya'da köklü bir üniversite olan Kiril i Metodi üniversitesinin Türkiye'deki Trakya, Kırıkkaleli, Gazi ve 19 Mayıs üniversiteleri ile işbirliği girişimleri olduğu belirlenmiş, Bosna Hersek eğitim kurumlarının ise İstanbul, Ankara, Sakarya, Hacettepe ve Bursa üniversiteleri ile işbirliği girişimlerinde buldukları ve işbirliğinin genelde akademik personel değişimi, müfredat çalışmalarına destek verilmesi gibi çalışmalarını kapsadığı katılımcılar tarafından ifade edilmiştir. Yapılan belirlemelere göre eğitim kurumları arasındaki işbirliğinin özellikle öğrenci hareketliliğine olumlu yansımaları olduğu gözlenmiştir. Nitekim bu işbirliklerinin Türk üniversitelerin çekiciliğini arttırdığı, uluslararasılaşmanın diğer önemli bir boyutu olan akademik iletişime önem verildiği görüşmeler esnasında vurgulanmıştır. Bu

çerçeve, bu ülkelerde açılan Türk Kültür Merkezleri ve Türk İşbirliği Kalkıma Ajansları gibi Türkiye devlet kurumlarının bu ülkelerdeki eğitim kurumları ile irtibata geçerek etkin çalışmalarda buldukları öğrenilmiştir. Örneğin, Bosnalı araştırmacılar için Osmanlı arşivleri ve kütüphanelerde araştırma yapma izinleri sağlandığı, yetersiz altyapıya sahip ve savaştan zarar gören bir çok eğitim kurumunun fiziki altyapı iyileştirme çalışmaları yapıldığı gözlenmiştir.

Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik gerçekleştirdiği diğer önemli bir uygulama ise Türkçe öğretimidir. Balkanlarda yaşayan Türk toplumu dikkate alınarak, bu toplumun haklarının korunması adına Türkiye'nin bu ülkelerdeki Türkçe eğitimin devam edebilmesi için öğretim elemanı ve eğitim malzemesi gibi konularda destek verildiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Özellikle Türkçe öğretimi konusunda Yunus Emre Kültür Merkezleri öncü rol oynadıkları görülmüştür. Örneğin bu Merkezin girişimleri sonucunda Bosna Hersek'te 3 kantonda Türkçe'nin seçmeli ders olarak kabul edildiği öğrenilmiştir.

Bu üç Balkan ülkesinde dini eğitim alanında gerçekleştirilen faaliyetler de dikkat çekici olmuştur. Bu ülkelerde yaşayan Müslüman topluluklara yönelik Türkiye tarafından gerçekleştirilen bir dizi etkinlik düzenlendiği ve dini eğitim veren kurum ve kuruluşlara doğrudan veya dolaylı destek verildiği görülmüştür. Balkan ülkelerinin dini idarelerinin de katılımlarının sağlandığı 1995 yılında kurulan Avrasya İslam Şurası dini eğitim alanında ortaya çıkan sorunların çözümü için iyi bir platform oluşturduğu katılımcılar tarafından ifade edilmiştir. Dini eğitim alanında aktif çalışmalarda bulunan Türkiye Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı ile Türkiye Diyanet Vakfının önemli katkıları olduğu, yardım ve desteğin bu ülkelerin dini otoriteleriyle bilistişare yapıldığı, öncelikle Balkanlar'daki Müslüman öğrencilerin Türkiye'deki İlahiyat Fakültelerinde okuma imkanı sağlanmasının yanısıra bu ülkelerde bulunan Osmanlı dönemine ait tarihi sembollerin tamiri ve renovasyonu gibi konularda da takdire şayan hizmetlerde bulunduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu bilgiler çerçevesinde, dini eğitimin de Türkiye'nin bu ülkelerle olan ikili ilişkilerini etkilediği görülmüştür.

Yukarıdaki bilgiler muvacehesinde, Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik uluslararasılaşma sürecine katkıda bulunan bir çok devlet kurumları, üniversiteler ve sivil toplum örgütlerinin yer aldığı belirlenmiştir. Verilerin analizinden Türkiye'deki bahse konu kuruluşların bölgesel işbirliği geliştirmeye ve üniversiteler arasında yakın işbirliği tesis etmeye yönelik çabaları bölgesel uluslararasılaşmayı anımsatmaktadır. Knight (2012), uluslararasılaşma ve bölgeselleşme birbirini tamamlayan süreçler olduğu, her ikisinin aslında aynı faaliyetleri kapsadığı, ancak bölgeselleşmenin daha çoğunlukla bölgeler arası girişimleri kapsadığını belirtmiştir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini uluslararasılaşma kavramı oluşturduğundan çalışmada elde edilen veriler yükseköğretimde uluslararasılaşma kavramı altında incelenmiştir. Bu nedenle çalışma, Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik uluslararasılaşma

sürecine odaklanmıştır. Türkiye ve incelenmekte olan Balkan ülkeleri eğitim kurumları arasındaki bölgesel işbirliği ve ortaklık girişimleri Türkiye'nin uluslararasılaşma sürecini teşvik ettiği aşikardır. Balkanların Türkiye için önemi dikkate alındığında, bu girişimlerin aynı zamanda eğitim alanındaki ikili ilişkiler esnasında karşılaşılan sorunların çözümü için yasal bir zemin oluşturmaktadır.

### **Yükseköğretim Alanında Türkiye Tarafından Balkanlara Yönelik Gerçekleştirilen Uygulamaların Ardındaki Gerekçeler**

Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik uygulamalarının ardındaki gerekçeler Knight (1999) tarafından önerilen dört kategori, siyasi, ekonomik, akademik ve kültürel ve sosyal gerekçe, dikkate alınarak incelenmiştir. Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik gerekçelerinin daha iyi anlayabilmek için Türk katılımcıların yanısıra Balkan ülkelerindeki katılımcıların da görüşlerinin alındığını açıklamakta yarar vardır.

Verilerin analizine göre, siyasi gerekçeler Balkan ülkelerindeki katılımcılar tarafından çok kuvvetli bir şekilde ifade edildiğini göstermektedir. Katılımcılar bu gerekçeyi Türkiye'nin dış politikası ile bağdaştırmıştır. Balkan ülkelerindeki katılımcılar, ilgili ülkelerde gerçekleştirilen eğitim faaliyetleri sayesinde Türkiye'nin bölgedeki tanıtımına katkı sağladığını belirtmişlerdir. Bir Makedon katılımcı, Türkiye'nin bu eğitim etkinlikleri sayesinde Balkanlarda daha etkin olduğunu ileri sürmüştür. Veriler, Türkiye'nin ana motivasyonunun, dağılan Yugoslavya'dan sonra oluşan yeni Balkan devletleri ile yeniden ilişki kurmaya dayalı olduğunu göstermektedir. Örneğin, Bosna Hersek'ten bir katılımcının Türkiye'nin gerçekleştirdiği eğitim faaliyetleri ile tarihi borcunu ödemek ve aynı zamanda Bosna Hersek'teki siyasi durumunu güçlendirmek için olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu bağlamda, Türkiye'nin Balkanlardaki bu ülkelerle her alandaki ikili ilişkilerini güçlendirmek ve bu ülkelere eğitim sistemlerinin geçişine yardımcı olmak amacıyla eğitimi bir araç kullandığını görmekteyiz. Bu çerçevede, çeşitli eğitim faaliyetleri gerçekleştirilmiş ve anlaşmalar imzalanmıştır. Anlaşmaların imzalanması ile ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu anlamda, Balkanlardaki üniversitelerde Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümünde okuyan öğrenciler ile Türkiye'de okuyan öğrencilerin Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkeleri ile gelecekteki diplomatik ilişkilerine bir yatırım olarak görülmektedir. Onlar Türkiye ile ilgili ülkeler arasında bir köprü vazifesi görmektedir. Dahası, Balkan ülkelerinden bir katılımcı, eğitim alanında Türkiye'nin gerçekleştirdiği bu faaliyetlerin Türkiye'nin prestijine bir şeyler kattığını ve Türkiye'nin Bölgedeki prestijinin artmasına katkıda bulunduğunu ifade etmiştir.

Diğer taraftan, Türk akademisyenler, Türkiye'nin eğitim faaliyetleri ile herhangi bir ayırım gözetmeksizin tüm etnik gruplar arasında işbirliği ilişkilerinin tesis edilmesinin amaçlandığını bildirmişlerdir. Akademisyenler ayrıca, önyargılar oluşmadan çeşitli etnik

grupların etkileşimi için ortam yaratılması konusunda Türk girişimciler tarafından kurulan ve bazılarının Gulen hareketine yakınlığı ile bilinen Balkanlardaki üniversitelerinin de bu anlamda çok büyük katkıları olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Öte yandan, bahsedilmesinde kayda değer diğer önemli bir husus ise Türkler ve Osmanlıya karşı olan önyargıların giderilmesidir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, Türkçe'nin Balkan ülkeleri ile ikili ilişkilerde bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Katılımcılar, bu aktiviteler sayesinde Türkiye karşı bir sempati oluştuğunu ve tanıtım faaliyetlerinin Balkan ülkelerindeki insanların algılarının değişmesinde etkili olduğu ifade etmişlerdir. Balkanlarda mevcut olan Türk ve Müslüman toplulumunun Türkiye'nin da eğitim politikasını etkileyen diğer önemli bir faktördür. Türkiye Balkanlara yönelik gerçekleştirdiği eğitim uygulamaları kapsamında bu bölgede yaşayan bu toplulukların haklarının korunması hakkındaki gelişmelerin sıkı takipçisi olmuştur. Türkiye bu topluluklarla ilişkilerini bağlarını güçlendirilmek anlamında eğitimi bir araç olarak kullanmaktadır. Böylece eğitim vasıtasıyla Türkiye Balkanlara yönelik politikasını pekiştirme çabasındadır. Eğitim Türkiye'nin dış politikasının ayrılmaz bir parçası, bir çeşit gizli politika, resmi politikasının bir uzantısı olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Hatta Türkiye tarafından Balkan ülkelere tahsis edilen öğrenci kontenjanı ve bursların da siyasi amaçlı olduğu söylenmektedir. Bu anlamda, Türkiye'de eğitim gören öğrenciler, Türkiye'nin gelecekteki diplomatik ilişkilerine yatırım olarak algılanmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye'deki Balkan kökenli kişilerin de Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik eğitim politikasını etkileyen bir başka faktördür.

Katılımcılar tarafından belirtilen ikinci önemli gerekçe kültürel ve sosyal gerektir. Bu temayı da birçok faktör ile bağdaştırabiliriz. Tabiyatıyla 500 yıllık ortak tarih geçmişin de Balkan ülkeleri ile ikili ilişkilerde etkili olmaktadır. Hatta, akademisyenler, ODTÜ'nün Erasmus Mundus programına katılımının bu nedenle kabul edildiğini ifade etmişlerdir. Bulgulara göre, Türkiye'nin çeşitli kültürel faaliyetleri ile Balkan ülkeleriyle kültürel ilişkiler tesis etmeyi amaçlandığı anlaşılmaktadır.

Din olgusunun da Türkiye'yi Balkanlara yönelik uygulamalarında motive eden önemli bir unsurdur. Türkiye din eğitimi aracılığıyla Balkanlardaki etnik grupları bir araya getirmeyi amaçladığı belirtilmiştir. Öte yandan, Türkiye Balkan ülkeleri ile ilişkilerini tarihi semboller vasıtasıyla yürüttüğü görülmektedir, genellikle Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi eserlerin korunması ve tamir edilmesi anlamında.

Görüşmelerde ortaya çıkan üçüncü bir gerekçe ise ekonomik gerektir. Katılımcılar genellikle bu temayı iş imkanlarının yaratılması ile bağdaştırmıştır. Türkiye gerçekleştirdiği faaliyetlerle bu ülkelerin ekonomisine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Veriler, Türkçe öğrenmenin ana nedeni veya üniversitelerin Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümlerini veya Türkiye'de okumayı tercih etme sebebinin ekonomik nedenlerden olduğunu göstermektedir. Öte yandan Balkanlarda'ki eğitim kurumlarına eleman yetiştirilmesi Balkan ülkelerin ekonomik gelişmesinde olumlu

yansımaları olduğu belirtilmiştir.

Akademik gerekçelerle ilgili olarak katılımcılar genellikle Türkiye ile Balkan ülkeleri arasındaki eğitim kurumlarının işbirliği faaliyetleri üzerinde odaklanmıştır. Eğitim işbirliği çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilen karşılıklı ziyaretlerin akademik kadro imkanlarının artırılması ve öğrencilere tecrübe kazandırması bakımından Balkan ülkelerin eğitim sistemi üzerinde olumlu etkisi vardır. Ziyaretlerin, bu ülkelerin Türkiye ile ikili ilişkilerde aktör olmaları bakımından temel oluşturmaktadır. Bu çerçevede, katılımcıların görüşlerine göre, devletlerarası yoğun ziyaretlerin yanısıra düzenlenen çeşitli eğitim ziyaretleri, işbirliği ve tanıtım faaliyetleri sadece Türkçenin yaygınlaştırılmasına değil Türk üniversitelerine karşı ilgiyi de arttırmıştır. Böylece, Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik eğitim faaliyetleri Türkiye'deki üniversiteleri için eğitim kalitelerini arttırmak ve uluslararası alanda prestijlerinin arttırmak için itici bir güç olmuştur. Öte yandan, akademisyenler ve Türkiye'den mezun olanların oluşturduğu iletişim ağı Balkan ülkeleri ile eğitim alanındaki ilişkilerin devamını sağlamaktadır. Elde edilen sonuçların eğitim ilişkilerin seviyesinin yükseltilmesi ve dostluk köprüsü oluşturulması Türkiye'nin Balkan ülkeleri ile ilişkilerindeki nihai amaçtır.

Bu bilgiler ışığında, yukarıda bahsedilen faaliyetlerden bazıları siyasi veya akademik veya economic veya sosyal ve kültürel gerekçelerle ilişkilendirilebilmektedir. Dahası, bahsedilmeye değer başka önemli bir husus ise Türkiye'nin yükseköğretim politikalarının sadece akademik gerekçelerle değil çeşitli siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyo kültürel gerekçelerle de motive edilmektedir. Bu anlamda, uluslararasılaşma gerekçeleri Knight (1999) tarafından önerilmiş olan seviyelere göre değişmekte veya geçiş yapmaktadır. Türkiye'nin yürüttüğü eğitim politikasının uluslararasılaşma bakımından incelendiğinde bu sürecin ulusal düzeyde gerçekleştiği görülmektedir.

### **Balkan Ülkelerindeki Çeşitli Paydaşların Türkiye'den Beklentileri**

Çeşitli devlet, özel, ve kar gütmeyen kurumlar Balkan ülkeleri için çeşitli uygulamalar geliştirmiş ve Kosovo Makedonya ve BiH kurumları devlet ve kar gütmeyen kuruluşlardan çeşitli beklentiler belirtmiştir. Türkiye bu beklentilere karşılık akademik veya akademik olmayan alanlarda çeşitli politikalar geliştirmiştir. Balkan ülkelerinin Türkiye'den beklentileri çeşitli paydaş gruplar bakımından irdelenmiştir.

Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, BiH, Makedonya ve Kosova devlet görevlilerinin genellikle uluslararasılaşmanın yönlerine odaklanmıştır. Bosnalı devlet görevlileri karşılıklı olarak eğitim sistemlerinin tanınması ve her iki ülkenin eğitim sistemlerinin incelenmesi için uzman değişim yönünde arzularını belirtmişlerdir. Bu çalışmanın sonuç bölümünde de belirtildiği üzere, iki ülke eğitim sistemleri arasındaki farklılığın Türkiye ile ilişkilerin yavaş ilerlemesine neden olduğu belirtilmişti. Dahası, BiH'nin karmaşık siyasi yapısının da iki ülke

arasında devlet düzeyinde bir anlaşma imzalanmasını zorlaştırdığı bahsedilmişti. BiH'in eğitim sistemi ve her iki ülkenin eğitim sistemlerinin tanınması beklentisi dikkate alındığında, devlet görevlilerinin bu beklentilere yanıt vermesinde büyük sorumlulukları vardır. Bundan başka, BiH devlet görevlileri ortak konferanslar ve her iki ülkenin dillerinin tanınması ve ülke dilleri kürsülerin açılması, akademik personel yetiştirilmesi ve öğrenci kotası ile burs sayısının arttırılması yönünde talepler bildirmişlerdir. Bilindiği üzere, Trakya üniversitesi Dil ve Edebiyat Fakültesinde Boşnak Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü vardır. Elde edilen veriler Bosnalı eğitimcilerin diğer üniversitelerde de Boşnak Dili bölümü açılması yönünde girişimler yaptıklarını ortaya koymuştur.

Öte yandan Makedon devlet görevlilerin ise uluslararasılaşmanın biraz daha farklı boyutlarına yoğunlaşmışlardır. Örneğin, imam hatip lisesi diplomaların tanınması konusundaki beklentiler ön plana çıkmıştır. Diğer beklentilerin ise öğrenci hareketliliğine öncelik verilmesi ve iki ülke arasındaki eğitim kurumların işbirliğinin güçlendirilmesi, eğitim malzemesi desteği verilmesi ve Türkçe eğitim veren okullara ve Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümlerine akademik personel yetiştirilmesi üzerinde durulmuştur. Makedonya'daki Türk toplumu bulunması nedeniyle Makedon devlet görevlilerin beklentileri Türkçe eğitimdeki sorun ve ihtiyaçlara odaklanmıştır.

Kosova devlet görevlileri de öğrenci hareketliliği, eğitim kurumların akademik kadro veya akademik personel yetiştirilmesi ve diploma tanınması gibi uluslararasılaşmanın boyutları üzerinde yoğunlaşmışlardır. Özellikle diplomaların tanınması ve iki ülke müfredatlarının uyumlaştırılması için ortak çalışmaların yapılması talepleri dile getirilmiştir. Kosova devlet görevlileri de Makedon devlet görevlileri gibi Türkçe eğitim önemine vurgu yapmış ve Türkçe eğitimin öğretim malzemesi ve ders kitapları ile takviye edilmesi ve Türkçe'nin, Türk geleneklerinin, Türk kültürünün ve tarihinin tanınması için etkinlikler düzenlenmesi konusundaki beklentilerini bildirmişlerdir. Bunlardan başka Kosova devlet görevlileri Osmanlı döneminden kalan ve savaş yıllarında tahrip olan tarihi eserlerin korunması ve bakımı konusunda da beklentilerini ifade etmişlerdir.

Yukarıdaki bilgiler muvacehesinde Balkan ülkelerindeki devlet görevlilerin beklentilerinin çoğunlukla uluslararasılaşma alanına odaklandığı ve Türkçe eğitim ile Türkçenin öğretilmesi, dini eğitim veren kurumların altyapılarının geliştirilmesi ve Osmanlı döneminden kalan tarihi eserlerin onarımını kapsamaktadır.

Bosnalı akademisyenler de devlet görevlileri gibi aynı beklentileri ifade etmişlerdir. İlave olarak Bosna'daki üniversitelerin Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümlerine öğretim malzemesi ile ders kitapları ihtiyacını dile getirmişlerdir. Bundan başka, öğretim üyelerinin profesyonel gelişimleri ile ilgili örneğin Türk üniversiteleri nezdindeki kütüphanelerin on-line kaynak ve yayınlara ulaşım imkanı sağlanması ve ayrıca öğretim üyelerin çalışmalarının dergilerde

yayınlanması konusunda destek talepleri olmuştur. Ayrıca, dini eğitime destek verilmesi, dini eğitim veren kurumların alyaplarının iyileştirilmesi gibi konularda beklentilerini iletmişlerdir.

Makedon akademisyenlerin de beklentileri genelde uluslararasılaşmanın boyutlarına odaklanmıştır. Bosnalı devlet görevlileri ve Bosnalı akademisyenler gibi Makedon akademisyenlerin de karşılıklı eğitim sistemlerinin tanınması ve öğrenci ve öğretim elemanı değişiminin bir an önce başlatılması konularına öncelik vermişlerdir. Onlar da Türkçe eğitimde eleman ihtiyacının karşılanması ve Makedon üniversiteleri nezdindeki Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı ülümlerine eğitim malzemesi ihtiyacının karşılanmasına destek verilmesi talebinde bulunmuşlardır. Makedon akademisyenlerce ifade edilen diğer çok önemli ve ciddi bir beklenti ise ders kitaplarından Türkler ve Osmanlı hakkındaki zararlı ifadelerin kaldırılmasıdır. Akademisyenlere göre bu durumun Makedonya'daki Türk azınlığını rencide etmektedir.

Kosovalı akademisyenler de beklentilerini uluslararasılaşma alanında yoğunlaştırmıştır. Diğer gruplarla mukayese olarak, onlar Kosova için büyük risk oluşturan beyin göçüne odaklanmıştır. Çözüm bulunmasına yönelik önerilerde bulunmuşlardır. Diğer gruplar gibi onlar da öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi değişimi için çözüm bulunması talebinde bulunmuşlardır. Ayrıca ihtiyaç olunan akademik kadronun yetiştirilmesi ve Türkçe ve dini eğitime destek verilmesine dair beklentilerine iletmişlerdir.

Makedon dernek yetkililerin beklentilerinin ise daha farklı alanlarda olmuştur. Onlar dini eğitimin önemine vurgu yapmış ve bu bağlamda Türkiye'deki ilahiyat fakültelerinde okumak üzere öğrenci kontenjanlarının artırılması yönünde beklentileri olmuştur. Ayrıca, Türkçe eğitimde görev alan branş öğretmenleri kadrolarındaki elemanı eksikliği dikkate alınarak öğrenci kontenjanlarının matematik, fizik, kimya, biyoloji ve coğrafya gibi branş öğretmenleri dallarına tahsis edilmesi yönünde talep bildirmişlerdir.

Kosovalı dernek yöneticilerinin istekleri ise uluslararasılaşmanın boyutları ile ilgili alanlarda olmuştur, örneğin öğrenci kotasının artırılması, akademik personelin yetiştirilmesi ve Türkçe eğitimin iyileştirilmesi gibi.

Elde edilen bilgiler, Balkan ülkelerinin taleplerinin büyük ölçüde Türkiye tarafından karşılandığı görülmüştür. Bu durum Türk devlet görevlileri tarafından da teyit edilmiştir. Ancak, bir çok katılımcının ifadelerinden bazı beklentilerin gerek Türkiye gerekse Balkan ülkeleri yetkililerinden kaynaklanan sebeplerden dolayı karşılanamadığı anlaşılmıştır. Bu nedenle, Türkiye'nin gerçekleştirdiği faaliyetleri bu beklentilere cevap vermekten uzak olduğu sonucu çıkarılabilir. Böylece, gerçek ve beklentiler arasında ortaya çıkan bu fark politika yapımcılar için bir yol gösterici olarak hizmet edecektir.

## **Türkiye ile İşbirliğini Arttırılmasını Teminen Balkan Ülkeleri Tarafından Gerçekleştirilen Uygulamalar**

Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, Bosnalı yetkililerin yükseköğretim alanında Türkiye ile işbirliğinin arttırılması için uluslararasılaşma alanında başlıca girişimler yaptıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Öğrenci hareketliğinin hızlandırılması, örneğin Erasmus programının uygulanması ve Türk üniversitelerinde Boşnak dili bölümlerinin açılması. Bu kapsamda bir çok üniversite ile toplantıların yapıldığı ve Türk edebiyatı tarihi konusunda bazı kitapların basımı için girişimlerde bulunulduğu anlaşılmaktadır.

Türkiye ile Makedonya arasındaki işbirliğinin arttırılması amacıyla Makedon eğitim yetkililerince de bazı girişimlerin yapıldığı görülmektedir. Bosnalı yetkililerle mukayese ederek, Makedon yetkililerce uluslararasılaşma alanının yanısıra Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunların çözümü amacıyla da faaliyetlerde bulunulmuştur. Daha önceki bölümlerde de belirtildiği üzere, Makedonya'daki Türk toplumunun varlığı iki ülke arasındaki ilişkileri etkilemektedir. Makedonya'da Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunlar iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilerde öncelikli yer almaktadır. Bu çerçevede, Makedonya'daki Türk azınlığının sorunlarının çözümü için Makedonya Devlet Bakanlığı nezdinde bir bölüm kurulduğu görülmüştür. Öte yandan, öğrenci hareketliliğinin hızlandırılması amacıyla Türkiye tarafından Makedonya'ya ayrılan öğrenci kontenjanının arttırılması yönünde Türkiye Mille Eğitim Bakanlığı nezdinde, Makedon üniversitelerin akreditasyonu ile ilgili olarak ise YÖK nezdinde girişimde bulunulduğunu ifade etmişlerdir.

Makedon eğitim yetkililerine göre, Kosovalı eğitim otoritelerinin ise iki tema üzerinde odaklanmıştı: uluslararasılaşma ve Türkçe eğitim. Türkiye'nin Balkanlardaki Türk toplumuna verdiği önemden hareketle Kosovalı yetkililer Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunların tespiti ve çözümü konusunda başlıca çalışmalar yürütmektedir. Çözüm arayışı kapsamında Türk eğitim kurumlarının işbirliğinde konferanslar düzenlenledikleri öğrenilmiştir. Uluslararasılaşma teması çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilen girişimlerde çeşitli kurumlar arası dialog kurulması çabaları dikkat çekmiştir. Bu girişimlerin genelde Kosova eğitim sisteminde müfredat iyileştirilmesi ve Türk eğitim sistemi ile uyumlaştırma çalışmaları yer almaktadır. Bundan başka, beyin göçünün önlenmesi amacıyla toplantıların düzenlendiği, ayrıca öğrenci vizesi, oturma izni ve diploma denklik gibi sorunların asgariye indirilmesi için de ilgili kurumlar nezdinde girişimler yapıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır.

Görüldüğü üzere, Türkiye ile yükseköğretim alanındaki işbirliğini arttırmak üzere BiH yetkililerince yürütülen politakanın sadece uluslararasılaşma alanındaki faaliyetleri, oysa Makedonya ve Kosova yetkililerince uygulanan politakanın uluslararasılaşma alanındaki girişimlere ilave olarak Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunları da kapsamaktadır. BiH'de Türk

toplumumu bulunmamasından kaynaklandığı anlaşılmaktadır. Ancak, Makedonya yetkililerine mukayese olarak, Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunların ilişkin Kosova yetkililerin girişimlerinin daha kapsamlı olduğu görülmüştür.

### **Türkiye ile İşbirliği Gerçekleştirmek için Balkan Ülkelerin Uygulamalarının Ardındaki Gerekçeler**

Balkan ülkelerin Türkiye ile işbirliğindeki uygulamalarının ardındaki gerekçeleri Knight'ın (1999) önerdiği ve dört grup olarak kategorize ettiği siyasi, ekonomik, akademik ve kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeler dikkate alınarak incelenmiştir. Balkan ülkelerin gerekçelerinin daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi için Türk yetkililerin de Balkan ülkelerin sözkonusu gerekçelerine dair görüşleri alınmıştır.

Makedonya ile Türkiye arasında eğitim alanındaki ilişkilerde kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeler ön plana çıkmıştır. Makedonya katılımcılarına göre Türkiye ile işbirliğinin başlıca nedeni ortak geçmişten kaynaklanan tarihi ve kültürel bağlara ve ayrıca Makedonya'daki Türk toplumunun varlığına dayanmaktadır. Bu gerekçelerin iki ülke arasındaki mevcut olan her alandaki ilişkileri olumlu yönde etkilediği görülmüştür.

Aynı gerekçelerin BiH katılımcıları ile de yapılan görüşmelerde öne çıkmış, ancak gerekçenin içeriğinde farklılık gözlenmiştir. Bosnalı katılımcılar genellikle milli kimliğin oluşturulması noktasında odaklanmışlardır. BiH'nin siyasi yapısı gözönünde bulundurulduğunda bu anlaşılabilir bir durumdur. Bu anlamda Türkiye ile işbirliğinin önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir. Türkiye ile işbirliği kapsamında toplanan arşiv belgeleri ile yayınların BiH'nin Osmanlı dönemindeki kültür ve tarihin incelenmesine fırsat oluşturduğu katılımcılar tarafından belirtilmiştir. Öte yandan, Türk girişimciler tarafından BiH'da kurulan Türk üniversitelerin de çeşitli etnik grupları arasında bütünleşme sağlanması bakımından büyük katkı sağladığı görüşmelerde ifade edilmiştir. BiH'da görevli Türk yetkililerce de bu gerçenin BiH için çok önemli olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Ayrıca, din faktörünün de BiH'teki milli kimliğin oluşumundaki rolüne dikkat çekilmiştir.

Öte yandan Kosovalı katılımcılar ise Türkiye ile işbirliğini Kosova'da yaşayan etnik gruplar bakımından değerlendirmiştir. Onlar Türkiye ile eğitim alanındaki işbirliğinin Türk ve Arnavut öğrencilerin sosyalleşmesine katkıda bulunduğunu bunun da kültürlerarası diyalogu güçlenmesine ve kültürlerarası bir anlayışın inşasına katkı sağladığını belirtmişlerdir, ki Kosova'da buna halen ihtiyaç vardır. Kosova'da görevli Türk yetkililer de Kosova'daki din eğitiminin iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilere etkisi olduğu hususunu dile getirmişlerdir. Türk yetkililer, bu anlamda Kosova İslam Birliğinin Türkiye dini otoritelerle yakın işbirliği içerisinde bulunduğunu ifade etmişlerdir.

Görüleceği üzere, Bosnalı katılımcılar, BiH'daki üniversitelerin katkısına da

değinererek, Türkiye ile işbirliğini etnik gruplar arasında kültürel bütünleşme sağlanması bakımından değerlendirmiş, Kosova ve Makedon katılımcılar ise Türk toplumunun varlığının Türkiye ile işbirliğinde en önemli motive eden faktör olarak göstermiştir.

Öte yandan, Makedonya'dan bazı katılımcılar, özellikle Makedon akademisyenler, siyasi gerekçeleri ön plana çıkarmıştır. Bu katılımcılara göre, Türkiye'nin eğitim faaliyetleri Makedonya'daki Türk toplumunun kendine güvenini arttırdığı, Makedonya'nın doğu kısmında yaşayan göçebe Türklerin asimilasyondan koruduğunu iddia etmişlerdir. Bu anlamda Türkiye Balkanlardaki Türk toplumunun koruyucu olarak görülmektedir. Makedonya'daki Türk yetkililer de Türkiye'nin Makedonya ile ikili ilişkilerinde Türk toplumunun önemine dikkat çekmişlerdir.

Makedonya katılımcıları gibi Kosova katılımcıları da sözkonusu siyasi temayı Kosova'da yaşayan Türk toplumu ile ilişkilendirmiştir. Bu toplum bakımından Türkiye ile işbirliğinin gerekli olduğuna dair ortak görüş mevcuttur. Türkiye'nin her alandaki desteği Türk toplumunu daha güvenli kılacağına inanılmaktadır. Türkiye ile işbirliğinin bu toplumun kendine güven duygularını güçlendireceği katılımcılar tarafından ifade edilmiştir. Ayrıca, bu eğitim faaliyetleri sayesinde Kosovalı öğrencilere Türkiye'yi, Türk kültürünü ve Türk insanını yakından tanıma imkanı sağladığını belirtmişlerdir. Bu işbirliği sayesinde de Türklere ve Osmanlıya karşı olan önyargıların da Kosova tarihinden kaldırılabilceği ifade edilmiştir. Kosova'daki Türk yetkililere göre ise Türkiye ile işbirliğinin Kosova'nın uluslararası alanda tanınmasını kolaylaştırdığı ve aynı zamanda Balkanlardaki istikrarın ve güvenliğin sağlanmasına da katkı yapmaktadır. Unutmamak gerekir ki Kosova henüz yeni kurulmuş bir devlet ve Balkanlardaki durumun ise halen kırılgandır. Bu anlamda da Kosova Türkiye ile ilişkilerini yoğunlaştırmaktadır.

Öte yandan Bosnalı katılımcılar Türkiye'nin siyasi ve ekonomik gücünün işbirliğini geliştirmek için bir neden olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Makedonya ve Kosova katılımcıları gibi BiH katılımcıları da Türkiye'nin sözkonusu eğitim faaliyetleri sayesinde insanların zihinlerinde mevcut olan önyargıların değişmeye başladığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Akademik gerekçelere gelince, Makedon devlet görevlileri ve akademisyenler Türkiye'nin eğitim kalitesinin Makedon öğrenciler için çekici olduğunu vurgulamıştır. İki ülke arasındaki eğitim ilişkilerinin eğitim kurumları arasında ortak programların geliştirilmesine katkı sağlayacağına ve öğretim metodlarını geliştireceğine inanılmaktadır.

BiH katılımcıları da Makedon katılımcıların görüşlerini paylaşmaktadır. Onlar da bu işbirliğinin öğrencilerin ve öğretim üyelerin kişisel ve mesleki açıdan gelişmelerine olumlu yansıdığını belirtmişlerdir. Türkiye tarafından gerçekleştirilen bu eğitim faaliyetlerinin Türkiye üniversiteleri ile işbirliğini tetiklediği ve Türk üniversitelerine ve Türk dili ve edebiyatı bölümlerine olan ilgiyi arttırdığı görülmüştür.

Kosovalı yetkililer, Kosova'nın savaştan zarar gören eğitim sistemini yeniden yapılandırma yönündeki çalışmalarında yeni kuracakları eğitim kurumları için Türkiye'deki bazı üniversiteleri, TOBB gibi, örnek aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bosnalı katılımcılar gibi Kosovalı katılımcılar da işbirliği faaliyetlerinin öğrenci ve akademisyenlerin kişisel ve mesleki açıdan gelişmelerine olumlu katkısı olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, bu işbirliği sayesinde Kosova'daki eğitim kalitesinin de arttığını söylemişlerdir. Kosovalı dernek yetkilileri ise Türkçe eğitimdeki sorunların giderilmesi açısından Türkiye ile işbirliğinin gerekli olduğuna işaret etmişlerdir.

Ekonomik gerekçeler Makedon devlet görevlilerince Makedonya'da ihtiyaç duyulan işgücü ile yakından ilişkilendirilmiştir. Makedon yetkililere göre, Türkiye'de okuyan öğrencilerin Makedonya ekonomisinin gelişmesine büyük katkı sağlamaktadır. Aynı görüş Bosnalı katılımcılar tarafından da ifade edilmiştir. BiH'da çeşitli kademelerdeki yetişmiş eleman ihtiyacının büyük ölçüde Türkiye mezunlarından karşılandığını belirtmişlerdir. Türkiye'nin sözkonusu ülkelerdeki iş piyasasında ihtiyaç olunan eleman ihtiyacını yetiştirmede katkısı olmaktadır. Bu anlamda çalışmaya konu bu ülkelerin Türkiye ile işbirliği kaçınılmaz görünmektedir. Kosovalı katılımcılar da Kosova'nın iş piyasasındaki eleman ihtiyacının karşılanması noktasında Türkiye'nin katkısı olduğunu belirtilmişlerdir. Türkiye mezunları sayesinde Türkçe eğitimde mevcut olan öğretmen açığının minimize edildiğini itiraf etmişlerdir. Kosova'daki ekonomik kalkınmanın Türkiye tecrübesinin gerek bireysel gerek kurumsal seviyede Kosova'ya aktarılacak suretiyle desteklendiğini ifade etmişlerdir. Bu bağlamda, Kosova, Makedonya ve BiH'nın halen geçiş sürecinde olan ülkeler oldukları dikkate alındığında, bu ülkeleri Türkiye ile işbirliğine iten önemli faktörlerden biri de kendi ekonomileri için ihtiyaç olunan eleman yetiştirilmesidir.

Bu itibarla, görüldüğü üzere çeşitli paydaşlar gerekçelere çeşitli derecede önem vermişlerdir. Örneğin, kültürel ve sosyal gerekçeler Makedonya ve BiH'da öne çıkarken, siyasi ve akademik gerekçeler Kosova katılımcıları arasında daha öncelikli olmuştur. Bu durumun Kosova'nın genç bir ülke olduğu, yeni kurulmuş, halen uluslararası tanıma arayışında olması etkindir. Bu nedenle, Kosova'nın siyasi düşüncelerden hareketle Türkiye ile işbirliğinde bulunduğu, zira amacının sadece Türkiye ile değil dünyadaki diğer ülkelerle de ilişki kurmaktır. Akademik gerekçelere gelince, Kosova savaştan zarar gören eğitim sistemini yeni eğitim kurumları kurarak yeniden yapılandırmak ve öğrencilerin ve öğretim üyelerinin kişisel ve mesleki açıdan gelişmelerini sağlamak üzere işbirliği faaliyetlerinde bulunmaktadır.

Yukarıdaki bilgiler muvacehesinde, gerekçelerin bazen örtüştüğü görülmektedir. Katılımcıların da ifade ettiği gibi hangi gerekçenin daha önemli olduğunun açıkça ayırt edilememektedir. Katılımcılara göre tüm gerekçeler aynı derecede önemlidir.

## Appendix N

### CURRICULUM VITAE

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Köksal, Servet

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: June 14, 1957, Eskicuma (Tirgovishte/Bulgaria)

Marital Status: Single

e-mail: [servet.koksal@yahoo.com](mailto:servet.koksal@yahoo.com)

#### EDUCATION

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Year of Graduation</b>
Ph.D.	METU, Educational Sciences	2014
MS	METU, Educational Sciences	1991
BS	Anadolu University, Business Administration	1988
High School	“Georgi.Dimitrov”- Lycee/Tirgovishte/Bulgaria	1974

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

Servet Köksal worked at METU as an administrative staff from 1981 to 1988. She has been working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey since 1988 at different positions in Ankara and the Embassies of Turkey in Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Poland and Consulates General of Turkey in Germany (Nuremberg, Berlin and Düsseldorf).

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English, Bulgarian, Russian

Appendix O

**TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU**

**ENSTİTÜ**

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

**YAZARIN**

Soyadı : KÖKSAL

Adı : SERVET

Bölümü : Eğitim Bilimleri

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce): Regional Internationalization of Turkish Higher Education: Turkey's Higher Education Policies Towards Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

**TEZİN TÜRÜ**: Yüksek Lisans

Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**