

**IMAGE of TURKEY**  
**Perceptions of South Caucasian Students**  
**Studying in Turkey**

**Authors**

Yıldız DEVECİ BOZKUŞ  
Eda BEKÇİ ARI

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# FOREWORD

The end of the Cold War was followed by the independence of fourteen countries within the Soviet region. The three of these countries were Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, all of which is located in the South Caucasus. In the post-Cold War period, the South Caucasus area virtually became a territory of conflict between the Western countries and Russia. The events that took place in Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan have been the most apparent consequences of this conflict. Thus, the developments in the Caucasus about the questions of Crimea, Nagorno-Karabakh, Ossetia, Abkhazia etc. have showed that the struggle over this region will continue in the days ahead. As for Turkey and the Caucasus region, they have many important ties in various fields -mainly historical, cultural and political ones. The relations with the countries of the region are highly significant in order to improve; and sustain these ties in the future. The impressions of the students who came to Turkey from South Caucasus region for their studies will also be highly significant for the future of these relations. The aim of this study is to measure how university students' perception of Turkey before and after their arrivals. Supported by the Presidency For Turks Abroad And Related Communities (YTB), this study is also significant as it provides a perspective on the soft power-based foreign policy making- a matter that has drawn attention especially in the last years.

It is foreseen that studies such as this one will contribute positively to how our country is perceived abroad as all the international students coming to Turkey for education purposes are in fact honorary envoys. Therefore, it is expected that the publication of this study's results as a book will contribute to the related literature and similar studies that will be conducted.

The objectives of putting forth our common values with South Caucasian countries, procuring cooperation among the countries, strengthening the cultural ties between Turkey and aforementioned countries as well as the social memory sparked the idea of compiled this book. We believe that this study that we present by starting from the evaluation that the studies conducted in this field are insufficient especially in including the countries located in the South Caucasus will make a humble contribution to this gap. From this aspect, this study can be considered as a kind of an introductory book. We hope that the discussions that this book will raise, and its limitations will mediate more comprehensive and better works. Considering especially the developments that took place in 2020 in South Caucasus, it is apparent that there will be a more active period in the relations of Turkey and South Caucasus. For this reason, increasing the number of this kind of studies will contribute to the course of bilateral relations as well as the present deficiencies.

**Yıldız DEVECİ BOZKUŞ**  
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