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Research Article

Governance Performance of Türkiye: A Comparative Analysis with OECD, EU, and BRICS Countries

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Abstract

This study evaluates Türkiye's governance performance using World Bank indicators and compares it with OECD, EU, and BRICS countries. Analyses reveal a decline in Türkiye's governance metrics in recent years, with performance significantly lagging behind OECD and EU countries but exceeding the average among BRICS countries. In the study, criteria weights were determined and multi-criteria decision-making techniques yielded consistent rankings. Correlation analysis confirmed strong alignment across methodologies. While highlighting methodological limitations of World Bank indicators, the study advocates context-sensitive governance reforms over one-size-fits-all institutional models, emphasizing the need to account for historical and socio-political dynamics. The implications of Türkiye's potential BRICS membership versus its prolonged EU accession process were critically examined, with findings suggesting that short-term alignment with EU institutional expectations remains pragmatic. However, long-term strategic decisions should holistically evaluate political, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Keywords: *Governance, Institutional Factors, Development, Multi-Criteria Decision Making, Türkiye*

Jel Classification: *E02, H11, O43, P48*

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Türkiye'nin Yönetişim Performansı: OECD, AB ve BRICS Ülkeleri ile Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analiz

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin yönetişim performansını Dünya Bankası göstergeleri üzerinden değerlendirmeyi ve OECD, AB ve BRICS ülkeleriyle karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Analizler, Türkiye'nin yönetişim performansında son yıllarda düşüş olduğunu, OECD ve AB ülkelerine kıyasla düşük seviyelerde yer aldığını, ancak BRICS ülkelerine göre ortalamanın üzerinde performans sergilediğini ortaya koymuştur. Çalışmada kriter ağırlıkları belirlenmiş ve çok kriterli karar verme teknikleri kullanılarak tutarlı sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Korelasyon analizi, farklı yöntemler arasında yüksek uyum olduğunu doğrulamıştır. Dünya Bankası göstergelerinin metodolojik sınırlamaları vurgulanırken, tek tip kurumsal reformlar yerine bağlama duyarlı ve tarihsel dinamikleri dikkate alan yaklaşımlar önerilmiştir. Türkiye'nin AB üyelik sürecindeki kurumsal beklentilerle BRICS üyeliğinin siyasi-ekonomik etkileri tartışılmış, kısa vadede AB perspektifine odaklanmanın daha gerçekçi olabileceği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Yönetişim, Kurumsal Faktörler, Kalkınma, Çok Kriterli Karar Verme, Türkiye*

Jel Sınıflandırması: *E02, H11, O43, P48*

1. Introduction

The transformation in institutional structures and shifts in governance paradigms driven by globalization, digitization, and democratization have attracted the attention of policymakers as well as academic circles. In this context, the impact of institutional factors on social and economic development has emerged as a significant topic of debate in the literature. Governance, as a related concept, focuses primarily on public administration and emphasizes a pluralistic, participatory, and collaborative approach in public processes. From this perspective, governance stands as one of the fundamental determinants of a country's developmental progress. While it is a critical area of study, there is no full consensus on its precise definition or implications. Nevertheless, assessing a country's governance potential and capacity remains crucial for the effectiveness of public policies. Despite ongoing methodological debates, one widely recognized and frequently cited framework in this field is the World Bank's governance indicators, which provide standardized criteria for evaluation.

The aim of this study is to examine Türkiye's governance performance from a historical perspective and to analyze it comparatively against OECD, EU, and BRICS countries. To this end, Türkiye's performance will be evaluated using multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) techniques, drawing on the World Bank's governance indicators for the period 2002–2023. The study is structured into four sections. First, the concept of governance and the components of the World Bank's governance indicators will be introduced. Second, a comprehensive framework will be established through a literature review on the subject. Third, the dataset employed in the study and its methodology will be briefly outlined. Finally, empirical findings will be presented, and the derived conclusions will be critically discussed. The findings aim to determine Türkiye's relative ranking compared to OECD, EU, and BRICS countries, thereby providing a basis for proposing policy recommendations tailored to Türkiye's governance challenges.

2. Conceptual Framework

Governance refers to a form of public administration in which the state, civil society, and private sector collectively participate in decision-making and implementation processes (Rhodes, 1996: 653). It embodies a management approach that brings diverse actors together to address public policy challenges, emphasizing trust-based, transparent, collaborative decision-making and cooperative processes (Ansell & Gash, 2008: 546; Emerson et al., 2012: 3). Unlike traditional hierarchical models of public administration, governance is distinguished by its participatory, pluralistic, collaborative, and network-based mechanisms, aiming to establish cooperation and coordination among stakeholders to achieve shared objectives (Stoker, 1998: 17). Governance manifests through the diminishing dominance of central government and the growing influence of non-state actors (Bevir,

2011: 185). However, reducing governance to the mere decline of state authority offers an incomplete perspective. Its defining feature lies in the expanded role of market forces and civil society in administrative processes (Peters, 2011: 65). This characteristic reflects a transformative shift aligned with modern administrative practices. Contemporary governance models prioritize transparent, participatory, and flexible systems, fostering a positive perception of state democracy and efficacy by enabling multi-stakeholder engagement in public policy formulation (Jessop, 1998: 32).

Governance indicators are closely intertwined with institutional factors and must therefore be examined through a holistic lens. Although some studies conflate the two concepts as interchangeable, nuanced distinctions exist between them. Institutional factors encompass broad, multidimensional elements that shape political, social, legal, economic, and cultural structures. Governance indicators, by contrast, involve the quantitative measurement of these elements, with a specific focus on public administration quality. While institutional factors outline a general, often theoretical framework that may include abstract variables, governance indicators provide a concrete, data-driven assessment of specific outcomes. In essence, governance indicators are underpinned by institutional factors, rendering them a subset of the latter. Thus, governance indicators can be interpreted as operational manifestations of institutional frameworks, tailored to evaluate administrative efficacy.

Determining the quality of governance necessitates the use of robust measurement methodologies to generate low-error data and establish widely accepted indicators. Quantifying governance and expressing it through numerical metrics presents inherent challenges, primarily due to the dual nature of governance data, which incorporates both subjective and objective dimensions. The inclusion of subjective inputs, such as surveys and expert opinions, introduces ambiguity and calls into question the precision of these indicators. Consequently, potential measurement errors must be explicitly acknowledged, and subsequent evaluations should account for these limitations. To enhance reliability, governance data should be corroborated with complementary qualitative and quantitative datasets. This way will strengthen the validity of analytical conclusions.

The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), developed by the World Bank, consist of a set of composite indices designed to measure governance capabilities across countries. These indices focus on six core dimensions: voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption. The WGI relies on data aggregated from over 30 sources, including surveys, expert assessments, and institutional metrics provided by think tanks, international organizations, civil society groups, and private firms (World Bank, 2025). Higher scores reflect stronger governance performance. These scores enable the identification of current governance conditions and the tracking of longitudinal changes within countries (Langbein & Knack, 2010: 350). Furthermore, the indicators facilitate cross-country comparative analyses. While temporal trends are significant, benchmarking relative to other countries holds greater analytical value for assessing governance efficacy. The WGI framework comprises six distinct dimensions, each briefly outlined below.

Voice and Accountability: This indicator assesses the extent to which citizens can select and scrutinize political authority. It measures elements such as political participation, freedom of expression, media independence, and the influence of civil society, while also evaluating the degree of democratic engagement and the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms (Kaufmann et al., 2011: 225). The ability of citizens to exert significant influence over state institutions and participate in public policy formulation is critical to governance performance (World Bank, 2025). This indicator serves as a key benchmarking tool for monitoring and evaluating governance reforms, particularly in developing countries, where institutional transparency and participatory frameworks often require strengthening (Thomas, 2010: 37).

Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: This indicator gauges the extent of political stability and security within a country. It evaluates the likelihood of government destabilization and the risk of violence-related incidents, both of which are critical determinants of governance quality (Kaufmann et al., 2011: 228). Political stability is a prerequisite for the democratic functionality of institutional frameworks and serves as a key benchmark in cross-country analyses (Norris, 2012: 54). The absence of violence and terrorism is equally vital for fostering economic development and a conducive investment climate. Conversely, the presence of such threats negatively impacts investment decisions and undermines efforts to attract foreign capital (Rotberg, 2014: 514). This indicator is particularly monitored in politically fragile states and those with high susceptibility to internal or external conflict, as it reflects governance resilience in volatile contexts (World Bank, 2025).

Government Effectiveness: This indicator measures the overall performance of government institutions, reflecting the quality of public service delivery and the efficiency of bureaucratic processes. A professional bureaucracy characterized by meritocratic recruitment practices is a critical determinant of enhanced governmental efficacy (Rauch & Evans, 2000: 52). Effective governance is indispensable for achieving sustainable development goals, as it directly correlates with economic growth and the successful implementation of development-oriented policies (Knack & Keefer, 1995: 225). Furthermore, government effectiveness serves as a key benchmark for institutional capacity and governance quality, particularly in cross-country comparisons involving developing countries (Fukuyama, 2016: 89; Grindle, 2007: 530).

Regulatory Quality: This indicator evaluates a government's capacity to formulate and implement public policies and regulations effectively, with a focus on fostering private sector development through market-friendly approaches (World Bank, 2025). Improving regulatory quality can stimulate economic development by strengthening institutional capacity and fostering investment climate, which in turn has a positive impact on economic growth (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008: 17; Rodrik, 2004: 12). For sustainable economic growth and development, it is essential to analyze regulatory quality in conjunction with other governance indicators, such as institutional effectiveness and anti-corruption measures. Countries with robust regulatory frameworks are projected to experience more developed financial markets and greater economic stability, as coherent regulations reduce systemic risks and incentivize long-term investments (La Porta et al., 1999: 223).

Rule of Law: This indicator encompasses societal norms, the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, trust in the judicial system and law enforcement, and the prevalence of crime and violence. It seeks to measure the integrity of the legal framework, the enforceability of laws, and the protection of individual security rights. Judicial independence, anti-corruption efforts, and the safeguarding of civil liberties are pivotal to ensuring the rule of law, which is widely regarded as a cornerstone of modern state legitimacy and stability (Fukuyama, 2011: 17). A robust rule of law is indispensable for democratic governance and serves as a prerequisite for establishing inclusive institutional structures. Moreover, it plays a critical role in fostering long-term economic growth and enhancing citizen trust in state institutions (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012: 79; O'Donnell, 2004: 33).

Control of Corruption: This indicator captures perceptions of public resource misuse, ranging from petty to grand corruption, including the appropriation of state assets by elites or private interest groups for personal gain (World Bank, 2025). It measures the quality of governance in managing public resources, with a focus on evaluating the transparent and efficient utilization of state assets. Control of corruption is intrinsically linked to institutional quality and, like other governance indicators, exerts a determinative impact on economic development (Kaufmann et al., 2011: 220). Corruption's potential to distort resource allocation hinders economic growth, yet its implications extend beyond economic metrics. Effective corruption control is critical for social equity and political stability, as it

mitigates public distrust and reinforces institutional legitimacy (Mauro, 1995: 682; Rothstein & Teorell, 2008: 170).

Governance indicators play a pivotal role in evaluating the quality of governance across countries. By measuring state effectiveness through composite dimensions, these indicators provide critical insights for policymakers, researchers, international organizations, and investors (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008: 1–2). The data enable longitudinal analysis of a country's governance trajectory and facilitate cross-country comparisons, thereby addressing a critical gap in governance assessment. However, these indicators have faced substantial criticism. Their methodological complexity and contested conceptual frameworks raise questions about the precision of governance measurement. A key concern lies in their reliance on subjective inputs, such as surveys and expert assessments, which introduce potential measurement biases and undermine objectivity (Thomas, 2010: 33–34). The most significant debate surrounding these indicators concerns the potential for biased and erroneous results stemming from the data collection methodologies employed in their computation. While governance indicators provide a valuable dataset for analysis, it is imperative to corroborate these findings with alternative data sources and perspectives to ensure robust and reliable conclusions.

3. Literature Review

The quality of governance has significant political, social, economic, and societal implications. It is indispensable for development, as it positively influences economic growth, enhances human capital, strengthens the political climate, and fosters social cohesion. Therefore, a decline in the quality of governance is undesirable. Numerous studies in the literature address this topic. This section aims to outline a general framework by summarizing key research contributions to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

North (1990) systematically examines the determinant role of institutions in economic performance. The study seeks to explain the fundamental dynamics of economic development through the interaction between formal and informal institutions. Efficient and well-functioning institutions stimulate investment and facilitate economic activity by reducing transaction costs. While high-quality institutions support long-term growth, inefficient institutions may lead to economic stagnation. The study evaluates the reasons for the gradual and resistant nature of institutional change and analyzes factors that hinder institutional reforms. It argues that a favorable institutional framework is essential for effective capital accumulation and technological advancement. Consequently, the study concludes that institutional quality holds greater critical importance for economic development than capital or technology alone.

Knack and Keefer (1995) analyze the impact of governance performance on economic outcomes in their study. The research establishes a link between economic growth and governance indicators such as the rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, and contract enforceability. The rule of law is examined specifically in relation to property rights protection. The study highlights that countries with high governance quality achieve faster economic growth due to secure investment environments. Additionally, robust governance indicators are shown to support long-term development by ensuring efficient market operations.

Mauro (1995) investigates the relationship between corruption and economic growth in his study. The core focus of the research is to explore how the quality of governance influences anti-corruption measures and, subsequently, how these measures affect economic growth via investments. The study asserts that corruption diminishes public service quality and results in inefficient resource utilization. The findings indicate that countries with high corruption levels suffer from decreased investment and sluggish economic growth. According to the author, historical elements like political instability and a corrupt bureaucracy play a pivotal role in determining the poverty levels of current low-income countries. In conclusion, improving the quality of governance reduces corruption, which in turn exerts a positive influence on economic performance.

Hall and Jones (1999) analyze the determinants of cross-country differences in worker productivity in their study. They find that productivity disparities are predominantly linked to social infrastructure, defined as institutional and governance-related factors. Social infrastructure encompasses the rule of law, property rights, and free market conditions. The study demonstrates that effective governance and high institutional quality promote efficient resource allocation and enhance economic productivity. While geographic location and climate exert limited influence on productivity, the authors argue that institutional frameworks constitute the primary determinant of productivity outcomes.

La Porta et al. (1999) investigate the economic outcomes of governance quality in their study. The quality of governance is measured through indicators such as the rule of law, property rights, corruption levels, and bureaucratic efficiency. The findings reveal that the rule of law and property rights stimulate private sector investments, while bureaucratic efficiency enhances the quality of public services and trust in government institutions. Additionally, institutions weakened by corruption are shown to generate inefficiencies in resource allocation. The study emphasizes the fundamental importance of good governance for economic development.

Aron (2000) conducts a comprehensive review of the literature on the relationship between institutional structure and economic growth, drawing critical inferences. The study focuses on institutional metrics such as property rights, contract enforcement, and bureaucratic quality, synthesizing empirical evidence to comparatively analyze their impact on economic growth. The author concludes that institutional factors exert a more significant influence on economic performance than traditional inputs like capital and labor. Despite the short-term costs of institutional reforms, the analysis underscores their medium- to long-term capacity to substantially enhance growth, particularly emphasizing political and legal institutional quality as the primary driver of sustained expansion. This effect is observed to be more pronounced in developed economies. Additionally, she highlights methodological limitations in the World Bank's governance indicators, cautioning that data quality issues may skew analytical outcomes and urging prudence in the interpretation and application of such datasets.

Chong and Calderón (2000) empirically examine the relationship between institutional quality and economic growth across multiple countries. Their findings reveal a bidirectional and reinforcing interaction between these variables over time: institutional quality drives economic growth, while economic growth enhances institutional quality. The study identifies indicators such as rule of law and property rights as having a stronger influence on growth compared to other institutional metrics. Additionally, it distinguishes between low-income and high-income countries, concluding that institutional factors dominate in low-income economies, while economic factors are more critical in high-income contexts. The authors stress that development policies must account for country-specific dynamics.

Treisman (2000) investigates the root causes of corruption across multiple countries. The study identifies low public sector wages, centralized governance structures, dependence on natural resources, and deficiencies in democratic processes as the most influential factors driving corruption. It finds that corruption gradually declines in long-standing democracies as institutions mature, whereas newly democratized countries do not experience immediate reductions. The analysis underscores the critical importance of transparent institutions, effective accountability mechanisms, and competitive political environments in combating corruption. The research concludes that institutional reforms are an effective tool for reducing corruption.

Acemoglu et al. (2001) examine the enduring effects of inclusive and extractive institutional structures established in different regions during the colonial period on contemporary economic development disparities. The study reveals that regions dominated by inclusive institutions achieved higher growth and welfare levels, while those with predominantly extractive institutions exhibited

lower growth and developmental performance. The findings demonstrate the decisive role of historical factors in shaping current governance quality and the impact of institutional frameworks on economic development.

Globerman and Shapiro (2003) analyze the impact of governance quality on U.S. foreign direct investment (FDI) using cross-country data. The study finds that governance indicators—such as rule of law, corruption control, and bureaucratic efficiency—exert a stronger influence on attracting FDI compared to conventional economic indicators. Results indicate that countries with higher governance capacity attract 40–80% more U.S. investment, underscoring institutional quality as a critical determinant of FDI. This is attributed to investor risk aversion, as robust governance reduces uncertainty. The study concludes that developing countries must prioritize governance reforms—such as enhancing legal frameworks and bureaucratic efficiency—to attract foreign investment. These findings provide empirical support for the practical relevance of the World Bank's governance indicators.

Glaeser et al. (2004) investigate the impact of institutions on economic growth in their study. Adopting a critical perspective, they argue that empirical research findings may overstate this effect, positing that factors such as human capital can play a more influential role by positively shaping institutional development and thereby driving economic growth. The study highlights that human capital introduced during the colonial period supported economic growth in recipient countries independently of their institutional frameworks. The authors assert that strong institutions typically emerge in wealthy, developed countries and are not an absolute prerequisite for economic growth. Consequently, they caution against overreliance on governance indicators in policy recommendations. The analysis concludes that development policies must consider institutions alongside human capital and historical factors to achieve comprehensive progress.

Rodrik et al. (2004) in their analysis of the fundamental determinants of economic development, conclude that institutions hold significantly greater importance compared to geographic location and trade integration. While geography and integration exert some influence on development, their effects are not as pronounced. The study identifies institutional quality as the most critical driver of economic development. It emphasizes that institutional structures are indispensable for long-term economic performance. Accordingly, the authors argue that economic development policies should prioritize institutional frameworks and governance.

Svensson (2005) identifies a strong correlation between poverty and weak institutional structures, insufficient transparency, and low accountability. In his study he examines eight key questions related to the causes, effects, and solutions to poverty. The study asserts that corruption negatively impacts income distribution, investments, and economic growth, necessitating its prevention. To address this, institutional and structural reforms must be implemented, including strengthening public institutions, enhancing the role of civil society, and expanding opportunities for international cooperation. Enhanced the quality of governance is expected to play a pivotal role in reducing corruption.

Easterly (2007) empirically investigates the effects of inequality on economic development. The study finds that countries with high inequality experience lower economic growth, which adversely impacts development processes. The results demonstrate that inequality negatively affects investments, political stability, and governance quality. The analysis concludes that reducing inequality would positively influence sustainable development by increasing investments, establishing political stability, and improving governance quality.

Kurtz and Schrank (2007) highlight methodological issues in the literature examining the relationship between governance and economic growth. They argue that governance indicators, largely derived from perception-based surveys, inadequately reflect actual conditions and thus overstate the link between governance and economic growth. The authors suggest that high governance scores in high-income countries create a methodological illusion. Additionally, the study contends that using

objective governance indicators would reveal a weaker relationship between governance and growth than commonly cited in the literature. The findings advocate a critical perspective on governance reforms in development policies and emphasize the need to refine governance measurement frameworks.

Andrews (2008) critically assesses the World Bank governance indicators as a basis for understanding governance performance. Governance reforms often prioritize universal norms and standards from developed countries while overlooking contextual factors. The author argues that most governance indicators oversimplify complex realities into basic quantitative measures, lack robust theoretical foundations, and remain superficial. Thus, countries with identical governance scores may exhibit vastly different institutional structures. The study concludes that governance reforms should be context-sensitive, problem-oriented, and tailored to local conditions rather than adhering strictly to universal principles.

Rodrik (2008) acknowledges the critical role of institutions in economic development but argues that establishing ideal institutions may not always be feasible or contextually appropriate. The study contends that universally accepted best-practice institutional models do not guarantee uniform outcomes across countries, emphasizing the need for institutional reforms to be customized to local conditions and priorities. It posits that developing countries may achieve greater success through "second-best" institutions, which are adaptable to a country's internal dynamics (for example culture, historical trajectory, and economic structure). Such institutions should be designed with flexibility to align with local realities. By prioritizing context-specific approaches over uniform frameworks, the study asserts that institutions can operate more effectively and exert a stronger influence on economic development.

Rothstein and Teorell (2008) define impartiality as a core criterion of good governance in their study. Critiquing traditional governance definitions, they argue that the ability of state institutions to serve citizens neutrally, independent of personal interests, is a more critical issue. They emphasize that impartiality represents a broader concept than the mere absence of corruption. Supported by empirical evidence, the authors assert that impartial bureaucracy enhances both economic development and social equilibrium. The study notes that impartiality, embedded in institutional culture and daily practices, cannot be explicitly measured by the World Bank's governance indicators. It concludes that governance reforms should prioritize how a country is governed or ought to be governed, rather than focusing on who governs.

Aidt (2009) examines the effects of corruption on economic development from an institutional perspective. Corruption generally undermines economic growth, though it may occasionally exhibit a "greasing effect" that temporarily stimulates growth in weak institutional contexts. Inefficient bureaucratic processes and rigid state systems, slowed by red tape, can be expedited through corrupt practices like bribery, enabling faster completion of official procedures and short-term economic activity. However, this risks delaying necessary institutional reforms. Over the long term, strong institutions reduce the harms of corruption, while weak institutions exacerbate them. The study argues that reliance on the greasing effect should be rejected, and bureaucratic obstacles must be eliminated. Institutional reforms should prioritize rule of law, accountability, and market-friendly regulations. The analysis also stresses the importance of democratic institutions and civil society participation in combating corruption.

Williamson (2009) aims to comparatively analyze the impact of informal institutions—such as social norms, traditions, and religious rules—on economic performance relative to formal institutions. The study finds that informal institutions exert a stronger influence on economic growth than formal ones, particularly in developing countries. The author attributes this to informal institutions assuming a critical role in regulating economic activities when formal institutions are weak. Consequently, successful institutional reforms require compatibility with local informal frameworks. She further

argues that the World Bank's governance indicators, which focus solely on formal institutions, may inaccurately and incompletely represent a country's institutional capacity.

Dreher and Schneider (2010) empirically investigate the relationship between corruption and the informal economy in their study. Their findings indicate that corruption amplifies the informal economy, while the expansion of the informal economy further entrenches corruption. The authors emphasize that this bidirectional causality is particularly pronounced in low-income countries with weak institutional structures. They also note that high tax burdens and bureaucratic intensity reinforce this dynamic. Consequently, the study argues that governance reforms must address corruption and the informal economy concurrently rather than in isolation.

Langbein and Knack (2010) statistically test the validity of the World Bank's six governance indicators. The study argues that these indicators contain highly overlapping information and essentially measure a single dimension of governance. The authors contend that the indicators suffer from methodological multicollinearity due to their reliance on identical data sources. They emphasize that the World Bank governance indicators should be used cautiously, as different institutional indicators may reflect the same underlying characteristics.

Méon and Weill (2010) empirically examine the impact of corruption on economic efficiency. The study demonstrates that the "greasing effect" of corruption—which posits that corruption facilitates bypassing bureaucratic hurdles and thereby enhances efficiency—applies only in countries with very high governance quality. Findings indicate that corruption reduces efficiency in countries with average governance quality, with this negative effect intensifying in contexts of weak institutional structures. Consequently, the authors argue that corruption primarily functions as "sand" rather than "grease" in most cases. The analysis proposes that reforms targeting bureaucratic inefficiencies may prove more effective than direct anti-corruption measures, offering a distinct perspective on institutional reform strategies.

Thomas (2010) critiques the World Bank governance indicators on both conceptual and methodological levels. The author highlights several issues: the indicators fail to fully capture institutional capacity when assessing institutional factors, may exhibit bias due to heavy reliance on Western expert opinions, and often produce inconsistent scores across different sources for the same country. The study notes discrepancies between the "rule of law" indicator and results from local surveys. These limitations lead to the conclusion that the World Bank governance indicators lack sufficient reliability, underscoring the need for more objective measurement criteria.

Chang (2011) critically questions the widely accepted approach linking institutions to economic development. Theoretical frameworks and historical experiences contradict the imposition of "ideal" institutional models on countries. The author demonstrates, through historical evidence, that institutional quality frameworks emphasizing minimal state intervention, free markets, and property rights were never applied during the development phases of Western countries. The study notes that most developed countries historically relied on protectionist policies, state-led development strategies, and flexible institutional structures. Consequently, it argues against development reforms based on universal institutional mimicry, advocating instead for institutional diversity tailored to each country's unique context. The analysis further asserts that the World Bank's governance indicators disregard historical realities and pressure developing countries to adopt uniform institutional reforms misaligned with their distinct dynamics.

Kaufmann et al. (2011) examine the methodology and analytical challenges of the World Bank governance indicators in their study. The study details the data sources and computational methods underlying these indicators. The authors note that these indicators may contain measurement errors due to data limitations. While they remain crucial for assessing governance performance, their potential limitations necessitate cautious interpretation of results.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) emphasize the critical role of institutions in shaping countries' political and economic development. Their study posits that inclusive institutions foster increased political participation, incentivize innovation, and expand economic opportunities. Conversely, extractive institutions exacerbate corruption and deepen societal inequality. In countries with robust political stability, accountability, and rule of law, inclusive institutions drive development and growth by influencing economic expansion through investments. The analysis further concludes that extractive institutions impede long-term developmental progress.

Fukuyama (2013) seeks to address ambiguities surrounding the concept of governance by proposing a clear theoretical framework. The author argues that governance must be analyzed in both narrow and broad terms. Conceptually, the narrow definition focuses on the capacity to enforce rules, while the broad definition emphasizes democratic accountability. Fukuyama critiques the World Bank's governance indicators for neglecting this distinction, leading to policy recommendations unsuitable for developing countries. Drawing on historical analysis, he asserts that bureaucratic capacity should precede democratization. The author observes that Western countries historically prioritized state-building before political reforms, yet they now frame democracy as a prerequisite for institutional development. The study concludes that successful governance reforms require prioritizing state capacity over political reforms.

Rotberg (2014) critiques existing governance indicators, including those of the World Bank, for prioritizing processes over outcomes. He argues that evaluating governance reforms should incorporate objective service metrics—such as access to clean water, education quality, and infrastructure adequacy—alongside citizen satisfaction surveys. The author asserts that effective governance must be measured by tangible outputs rather than procedural benchmarks. He supports this claim by citing examples of countries with high governance scores that fail to deliver basic public services. The study highlights deficiencies in the World Bank's governance indicators and presents an alternative perspective for evaluating governance effectiveness.

Sabry (2015) examines how institutional factors influence public-private partnerships (PPPs) in delivering improved infrastructure services. The study empirically analyzes the impact of governance quality on private investment growth. Findings reveal that PPPs alone do not significantly affect investment growth, but well-governed institutions—particularly regulatory quality, bureaucratic efficiency, and independence—demonstrate positive and significant effects on investments through PPPs. The research emphasizes that institutional factors are crucial for PPPs success, enabling positive externalities and private investment attraction.

Dryzek (2016) assesses the impacts of the Holocene-to-Anthropocene transition on political institutions, the limitations of existing institutional frameworks, and the necessity for governance approaches adapted to this new era. The study reveals that contemporary institutions predominantly prioritize economic growth while neglecting ecological concerns. This institutional disregard for environmental challenges may precipitate long-term economic instability and potential catastrophes. While acknowledging the need for institutional reform, the research highlights these systems' inherent resistance to change. As a solution, the study proposes the concept of "ecosystemic reflexivity" to address these systemic deficiencies.

Bokpin (2017) investigates the environmental sustainability impacts of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa through the lens of governance and institutional quality. The study pursues two objectives: first, analyzing FDI's ecological impact on African ecosystems, and second, evaluating how institutional frameworks regulate these effects. Empirical results demonstrate that increased FDI flows significantly exacerbate environmental degradation. However, robust institutional mechanisms can positively influence sustainability outcomes by effectively monitoring foreign investors' activities. The research indicates that when quality institutions enforce corporate accountability, FDI

can potentially yield net environmental benefits. The findings ultimately support institutional reforms as a viable policy solution for mitigating ecological damage from investment flows.

Niesten et al. (2017) analyze the impact of governance and institutions on sustainable performance within inter-firm collaboration contexts. The study posits that individual firms cannot adequately address sustainability challenges alone, requiring collective efforts to integrate environmental and social considerations into economic decision-making. The research demonstrates that institutional environments, particularly environmental legislation and regulations, positively influence collaboration and relationship management in sustainable supply chains. Findings indicate that effective governance fosters cooperative mechanisms which enhance environmental, social, and economic performance outcomes.

Binay and Atalay (2019) empirically test the impact of "global governance"—emerging from competitive pressures of economic globalization in the post-Cold War era—on economic growth and income distribution. The study defines global governance as a composite of multiple elements, most notably rule of law, participation, transparency, and accountability. Empirical results demonstrate that improvements in governance indicators positively affect economic growth, yet fail to ameliorate income inequality. The findings suggest that while governance indicators play a pivotal role in economic growth across both developed and developing countries, achieving equitable income distribution requires complementary social policy interventions.

Glass and Newig (2019) examine governance effectiveness in achieving the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), conceptualizing governance through four dimensions: participation, democratic institutions, policy coherence, and reflexivity/adaptation. The study employs Bertelsmann Stiftung's Sustainable Governance Indicators while acknowledging their insufficiency alone to explain SDGs attainment, thus incorporating socioeconomic controls (GDP per capita, population size, education, and geographic location). Findings reveal that improvements in both governance indicators (particularly participation and democratic institutions) and structural factors (GDP per capita, education, geographic location) positively influence SDGs achievement. The research notes methodological limitations, as governance indicators rely on qualitative expert assessments despite rigorous peer-review validation processes.

Zattoni et al. (2020) present a comprehensive review of how national institutions influence governance mechanisms and firm performance through their systematic analysis. Robust national institutions, particularly those designed to protect investors, demonstrate consistent positive correlations with enhanced corporate governance and improved financial outcomes at the firm level. The study establishes that such institutional frameworks can stimulate economic growth by elevating corporate financial performance. However, the research identifies an institutional paradox: excessively rigid regulations may constrain managerial flexibility, thereby adversely affecting firm performance. The analysis reveals a dual relationship between national institutions and corporate governance mechanisms, characterized by both complementarity and substitutability effects. Notably, corporate governance practices prove particularly impactful in contexts where national institutional efficiency remains low. The review highlights a significant research gap, with extant literature predominantly focusing on formal institutions while largely neglecting informal institutional arrangements, despite their demonstrable capacity to foster economic growth through firm-level performance enhancements.

Holland-Lulewicz et al. (2022) critique Western-centric democratic paradigms, focusing instead on institutions facilitating democratic governance. The study criticizes the prevailing academic tendency to either disregard non-Western democratic systems or categorize them as undemocratic alternatives, arguing this perspective limits our capacity to understand democratic systems across temporal contexts. Through analysis of indigenous North American societies, the authors identify "keystone institutions" that enable complex institutional arrangements and broad citizen participation in power

distribution. These institutions provide mechanisms for equitable power allocation by facilitating inclusive governance processes. The article contends that democracy should be studied not as an abstract concept, but through the examination of specific institutions that are constructed, managed, and transformed through human agency.

Hossain et al. (2023) examine governance through an environmental lens, analyzing formal institutions' role in achieving sustainable development goals in Bangladesh. The study originates from the premise that economic growth induces environmental degradation, necessitating both comprehensive strategies and paradigm shifts to integrate ecological considerations into development policies. The research identifies inadequate institutional capacity as a primary barrier to effective environmental regulation enforcement. Consequently, the authors emphasize governmental institutions' pivotal role in fostering sustainable transitions and advocate for institutional reforms to enhance the quality of governance.

Boateng et al. (2024) investigate the influence of formal and informal institutions on corruption levels in African countries. The study establishes an institutional linkage to explain elevated corruption prevalence in certain countries, while critically reviewing prior literature's exclusive focus on formal institutions. Empirical results demonstrate that weak formal institutions—characterized by low accountability, political instability, limited government effectiveness, poor rule of law, and inadequate regulatory quality—significantly correlate with higher corruption. Informal institutions are analyzed through cultural dimensions, revealing how cultural values and beliefs interact with formal structures to shape corruption patterns. The research concludes that effective anti-corruption strategies require dual institutional reforms, necessitating coordinated efforts among national governments, civil society organizations, and traditional leaders to address both formal and informal institutional frameworks.

Chinoda and Kapingura (2024) analyze the relationship between digital financial inclusion and economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, with particular emphasis on the critical mediating role of institutions and governance. Digital financial inclusion, defined as individuals' and firms' access to formal financial services through digital platforms, is recognized as a key enabler for achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is widely acknowledged to positively influence economic growth. The study utilizes World Bank governance indicators to operationalize its framework: voice and accountability, political stability/absence of violence, and government effectiveness represent institutional dimensions, while regulatory quality, rule of law, and corruption control measure governance quality. The findings demonstrate that economic growth requires not only enhanced digital financial inclusion but also robust institutional frameworks and effective governance practices.

Honeybun-Arnolda et al. (2024) assess the opportunities and challenges of scaling down governance from international to local levels to enhance democratic participation for sustainable development. The study identifies implementation challenges when translating global objectives like the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to local contexts, particularly due to significant variations in subnational institutional capacity and willingness. The authors propose "goal-based governance" as a framework to encourage existing bodies to align around shared objectives. Focusing on innovations in Cornwall, UK, the research demonstrates how goal-based sustainability governance can integrate spatial specificities with organizational constraints to address local sustainability challenges. Findings highlight the potential of institutional reforms aligned with goal-based governance to strengthen global-local linkages in sustainable development implementation.

Rachid and Khalid (2025) empirically test the impact of macroeconomic variables and institutional quality indicators on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Singapore. Their model incorporates three macroeconomic factors: economic growth, trade openness, and infrastructure investment. For institutional quality measurement, the study utilizes World Bank governance indicators including

government effectiveness, regulatory quality, and control of corruption. Results demonstrate statistically significant positive effects of all explanatory variables on FDI inflows. The authors establish that robust institutions reduce uncertainty, lower transaction costs, and create stable investment environments. Consequently, they advocate complementing macroeconomic policies with institutional reforms. The research particularly emphasizes the synergistic benefits of an integrated policy approach combining institutional improvements, economic strategies, trade liberalization, and infrastructure development.

The prevailing consensus in the literature suggests that institutional quality positively influences economic growth and development. Indicators such as property rights, rule of law, and bureaucratic efficiency are emphasized as critical for long-term growth. Studies in the literature highlight that strong governance indicators enhance public trust in the state, reduce uncertainty, and foster reliable investment climates. However, some studies adopt a critical stance regarding the direction of this relationship. Research distinguishing between developed and developing economies also exists, examining variations in the nature and magnitude of institutional impacts. A debated issue is the distinction between formal and informal institutions, with informal institutions often argued to exert stronger effects on economic performance. A notable concern in the literature revolves around the reliability of governance indicators. Methodological limitations, including the exclusion of historical data, local perspectives, and informal institutions, restrict their measurement accuracy. Reliance on perception-based surveys and Western expert opinions further undermines their neutrality. Consequently, scholars advocate refining governance indicators through context-sensitive, localized, and impartial methodologies. Given these concerns, the literature cautions against uniform and universal reform practices derived from the World Bank's governance indicators.

Studies examining the effects of variables such as governance and institutional factors in Türkiye have yielded diverse results using different periods and methodologies. Özşahin (2016) found that high institutional quality in Türkiye directly increases foreign direct investment (FDI) volume, reduces its volatility, and identified a unidirectional causality from institutional quality to FDI. Acaravcı et al. (2018) determined that increases in real income and institutional quality positively affect real FDI inflows to Türkiye, with institutional quality exerting a positive impact on FDI in both the short and long term. Özşahin et al. (2022) demonstrated that corruption control positively influences FDI inflows, while geopolitical risks have a significant negative effect. Kapçak (2023) identified bidirectional causality between democracy (civil liberties) and FDI in Türkiye. Köstekçi et al. (2023) concluded in their analysis that participation and accountability reduce FDI in Türkiye, improvements in political stability have no significant effect on FDI, and some good governance sub-components may not always influence FDI in the expected direction. In their study, Ünlükaplan et al. (2018) found that indicators such as regulatory quality, government effectiveness, control of corruption, freedom of expression, and accountability have a positive and significant relationship with Türkiye's economic growth, while the rule of law and political stability/absence of violence variables were statistically insignificant. The literature notes that Türkiye's overall governance performance is weak, though improvements were observed in some governance indicators in the early 2000s. However, a marked decline in political stability occurred after the 2016 coup attempt (Durgun & Aydın, 2019; Yıldırım, 2019; Gündoğdu & Aytekin, 2020). Compared to OECD, EU, and G7 countries, Türkiye ranks near the bottom in sustainable governance performance, with significant deficiencies in democracy quality, corruption control, and public policy implementation capacity. Türkiye's lag in governance and institutional quality has been attributed to the absence of inclusive institutions (Güzel & Murat, 2019; Aytekin & Gündoğdu, 2021; Yörükoğlu, 2021). The literature highlights FDI as a prominent theme in studies on Türkiye, with findings generally aligning with theoretical expectations. Türkiye's underperformance in cross-country comparisons is notable. While early 2000s saw improvements in governance indicators, subsequent declines stand out in the literature.

4. Data Set and Methodology

The World Bank governance indicators dataset commenced in 1996. These data were published biennially until 2002, transitioning to annual releases thereafter. At the time of the study, the most recent data cover the period up to 2023. For analyzing Türkiye's governance performance over time, the years 2002–2023 were selected. To evaluate Türkiye's performance relative to other countries, OECD, EU, and BRICS countries were included as comparative benchmarks.

The founding members of the OECD are Austria, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Türkiye, and the United States. Countries that subsequently joined the OECD include Australia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. With 20 founding members, the OECD dataset encompasses a total of 38 countries.

The founding and early expansion members of the EU include Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Countries that joined during later expansions are Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Following the United Kingdom's withdrawal in 2020, the EU now comprises 27 member states. Countries with official candidate status for EU membership are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. The EU dataset consists of 27 member states and 9 candidate countries, totaling 36 countries.

The BRIC organization, initially formed by Brazil, Russia, India, and China, expanded to become BRICS with South Africa's inclusion, reflecting the acronym of its member states. By 2024, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates joined, followed by Indonesia in 2025, increasing membership to 10 countries. Saudi Arabia was invited to join BRICS in 2023 but had not responded as of May 2025; thus, it was excluded from the dataset. Associate member states within BRICS include Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan. Algeria, Türkiye, and Vietnam were invited to join as associate members, but their statuses remained unresolved as of May 2025. These countries were included in the dataset pending their final membership classification. The BRICS dataset comprises 10 member states and 12 associate members, totaling 22 countries.

This study utilizes multi-criteria decision-making techniques to analyze Türkiye's governance performance over time and relative to other countries. The methodology is structured into two phases. First, the weights of the criteria are determined, followed by performance analysis using these weights. Objective criterion weighting is calculated via the CRITIC (Criteria Importance Through Intercriteria Correlation) method. Performance analysis is conducted using ARAS (Additive Ratio Assessment), TOPSIS (Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution), VIKOR (Višekriterijumsko Kompromisno Rangiranje), COPRAS (Complex Proportional Assessment), MABAC (Multi-Attributive Border Approximation Area Comparison), EDAS (Evaluation Based on Distance from Average Solution), MOORA-Ratio (Multi-Objective Optimization on the Basis of Ratio Analysis), SAW (Simple Additive Weighting), and PROMETHEE (Preference Ranking Organization Method for Enrichment Evaluations). The results from these methods were subsequently aggregated using the BORDA method. Türkiye's performance is analyzed both independently and in comparative assessments against OECD, EU, and BRICS country groups. All countries within these four groups are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Country Alternatives

Code	Country	OECD	EU	BRICS	Code	Country	OECD	EU	BRICS
ALB	Albania		C		IRN	Iran			M
ARE	United Arab Emirates			M	ISL	Iceland	M		
AUS	Australia	M			ISR	Israel	M		
AUT	Austria	M	M		ITA	Italy	M	M	
BEL	Belgium	M	M		JPN	Japan	M		
BGR	Bulgaria		M		KAZ	Kazakhstan			P
BIH	Bosnia-Herzegovina		C		KOR	South Korea	M		
BLR	Belarus			P	LTU	Lithuania	M	M	
BOL	Bolivia			P	LUX	Luxembourg	M	M	
BRA	Brazil			M	LVA	Latvia	M	M	
CAN	Canada	M			MDA	Moldova		C	
CHE	Switzerland	M			MEX	Mexico	M		
CHL	Chile	M			MKD	North Macedonia		C	
CHN	China			M	MLT	Malta		M	
COL	Colombia	M			MNE	Montenegro		C	
CRI	Costa Rica	M			MYS	Malaysia			P
CUB	Cuba			P	NGA	Nigeria			P
CYP	Cyprus		M		NLD	Netherlands	M	M	
CZE	Czechia	M	M		NOR	Norway	M		
DEU	Germany	M	M		NZL	New Zealand	M		
DNK	Denmark	M	M		POL	Poland	M	M	
DZA	Algeria			P	PRT	Portugal	M	M	
EGY	Egypt			M	ROM	Romania		M	
ESP	Spain	M	M		RUS	Russia			M
EST	Estonia	M	M		SRB	Serbia		C	
ETH	Ethiopia			M	SVK	Slovakia	M	M	
FIN	Finland	M	M		SVN	Slovenia	M	M	
FRA	France	M	M		SWE	Sweden	M	M	
GBR	United Kingdom	M			THA	Thailand			P
GEO	Georgia		C		TUR	Türkiye	M	C	P
GRC	Greece	M	M		UGA	Uganda			P
HRV	Croatia		M		UKR	Ukraine		C	
HUN	Hungary	M	M		USA	United States	M		
IDN	Indonesia			M	UZB	Uzbekistan			P
IND	India			M	VNM	Vietnam			P
IRL	Ireland	M	M		ZAF	South Africa			M

In Table 1, “M” denotes OECD, EU, and BRICS member states; “C” represents EU candidate states; and “P” indicates BRICS partner states. Türkiye is the sole country included in all three datasets: OECD, EU, and BRICS. As a founding member of the OECD and an EU candidate, Türkiye has also been invited to join BRICS as a partner state. As noted earlier, the BRICS partner status of countries such as Algeria, Türkiye, and Vietnam remains unresolved; however, they have been included in the comparative country set. The World Bank Governance Indicators criteria selected for analysis across the four groups are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Performance Criteria

Code	Criterion
VA	Voice and Accountability
PV	Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism
GE	Government Effectiveness
RQ	Regulatory Quality
RL	Rule of Law
CC	Control of Corruption

In Table 2, higher values for the criteria are deemed favorable, while lower values are unfavorable. The analysis for Türkiye involves 6 criteria and 22 annual alternatives spanning the 2002–2023 period. Under the defined 6 criteria, there are 38 country alternatives for the OECD, 36 for the EU, and 22 for BRICS. The datasets for OECD, EU, and BRICS countries were constructed using the 22-

year average from 2002 to 2023. Analyses will be conducted using Microsoft Excel and Visual PROMETHEE software.

5. Empirical Findings

Performance analysis using multi-criteria decision-making methods requires prior determination of criteria weights. These weights are essential for the analytical framework of the study. The criteria weights calculated via the CRITIC method for Türkiye and the OECD, EU, and BRICS country groups are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Criteria Weights

Data Set	VA	PV	GE	RQ	RL	CC
Türkiye	0.139	0.283	0.127	0.166	0.113	0.172
OECD	0.128	0.336	0.147	0.158	0.107	0.124
EU	0.155	0.307	0.144	0.130	0.115	0.149
BRICS	0.275	0.223	0.110	0.146	0.120	0.126

The highest-weighted criteria are, respectively, PV, CC, and RQ for Türkiye; PV, RQ, and GE for OECD countries; PV, VA, and CC for EU countries; and VA, PV, and RQ for BRICS countries. The aggregate weight of the top three criteria is approximately 62% for Türkiye, 64% for OECD countries, 61% for EU countries, and 64% for BRICS countries. The lowest-weighted criterion is RL for Türkiye, OECD, and EU countries, and GE for BRICS countries.

Table 4 presents the decision matrix of Türkiye's governance indicators for 2002–2023. Overall, Türkiye's GE and RQ values are relatively higher compared to other indicators, while PV remains the lowest across all metrics. A notable observation is the declining trend in indicators other than PV in recent years. PV consistently registers very low values. The years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 exhibit the lowest scores for all indicators except PV.

Table 4: Decision Matrix for Türkiye

Year	VA	PV	GE	RQ	RL	CC
2002	42	22	58	57	50	35
2003	46	25	57	56	55	50
2004	50	21	57	55	57	50
2005	51	28	58	60	56	56
2006	46	27	58	58	53	58
2007	46	20	65	62	54	59
2008	46	19	63	59	55	61
2009	45	16	63	62	56	60
2010	45	19	64	61	55	59
2011	44	18	65	63	56	59
2012	42	13	66	66	54	62
2013	41	11	66	67	54	61
2014	36	12	68	66	55	54
2015	35	9	62	63	48	52
2016	30	5	53	61	40	50
2017	28	7	54	56	41	48
2018	25	10	50	55	38	43
2019	24	10	51	52	41	43
2020	24	13	47	50	38	42
2021	24	12	49	48	36	40
2022	23	14	44	43	37	35
2023	25	14	42	44	33	35

Table 5 displays the results of the multi-criteria decision-making analysis for Türkiye's governance performance across 6 criteria and 22 annual alternatives from 2002 to 2023. All methods indicate that governance performance peaked in 2005, followed by 2006. Excluding 2002, Türkiye's governance performance during 2003–2011 significantly surpasses that of the 2012–2023 period. A decline in governance performance began in 2012, with the lowest scores observed in 2016 (marked by the July

15 coup attempt), 2021, 2022, and 2023. A notable finding is that most methods identify 2023 as the year with the lowest performance.

Table 5: Analysis Results for Türkiye

Year	ARAS	TOPSIS	VIKOR	COPRAS	MABAC	EDAS	MOORA	SAW	PROMETHEE	BORDA
2002	10	6	13	10	13	10	10	12	13	11
2003	3	3	3	3	9	3	3	3	8	4
2004	8	4	6	8	11	8	8	8	10	8
2005	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2006	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2007	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3
2008	5	8	7	5	5	5	5	5	6	5
2009	9	10	9	9	7	9	9	9	7	9
2010	6	7	5	6	6	6	6	7	4	6
2011	7	9	8	7	4	7	7	6	5	7
2012	11	11	10	11	8	11	11	10	9	10
2013	12	13	11	12	10	12	12	11	11	12
2014	13	12	12	13	12	13	13	13	12	13
2015	14	17	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
2016	21	22	22	21	15	22	20	16	15	20
2017	17	21	21	18	16	18	17	15	16	17
2018	16	19	16	16	17	16	16	18	18	16
2019	18	20	20	17	18	17	18	19	19	18
2020	15	16	15	15	19	15	15	17	17	15
2021	19	18	18	19	20	19	19	20	20	19
2022	20	15	17	20	21	20	21	21	21	21
2023	22	14	19	22	22	21	22	22	22	22

Table 6 presents the decision matrix of average governance indicator values for OECD countries during the 2002–2023 period. The data reveal that countries such as Finland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden exhibit high scores. PV indicator values are comparatively lower on average than other metrics. Norway holds the highest VA value, while Iceland, Luxembourg, and New Zealand lead in PV. Denmark and Finland rank highest in GE, and Finland and New Zealand in RQ. Finland also tops RL, and Denmark leads in CC. Overall, more than half of the 38 OECD countries demonstrate strong governance performance. Colombia, Mexico, and Türkiye consistently rank at the bottom, though their positions vary slightly. Other countries with lower governance scores include Israel, Italy, Costa Rica, and Greece.

Table 6: Decision Matrix for OECD Countries

Country	VA	PV	GE	RQ	RL	CC
AUS	94	80	93	97	94	95
AUT	94	86	93	92	97	91
BEL	93	70	90	87	89	90
CAN	96	84	95	95	95	95
CHE	98	94	98	95	98	97
CHL	82	61	80	88	84	86
COL	46	11	51	59	39	46
CRI	81	69	63	69	66	71
CZE	79	82	79	84	81	69
DEU	94	72	91	93	93	94
DNK	98	83	99	97	99	100
ESP	84	49	82	81	83	79
EST	86	69	82	90	85	85
FIN	98	91	99	98	100	99
FRA	88	59	89	85	89	88
GBR	92	59	91	96	93	93
GRC	75	51	67	71	66	59
HUN	71	73	72	76	71	64
IRL	93	85	90	95	92	92
ISL	95	96	93	88	95	96
ISR	69	13	86	83	79	78
ITA	80	61	68	75	63	65
JPN	80	84	91	85	89	89
KOR	71	60	83	79	81	71
LTU	77	73	77	82	75	69
LUX	98	96	95	97	96	96
LVA	73	64	74	81	74	67
MEX	50	25	54	59	34	32
NLD	97	80	96	97	96	96
NOR	99	92	97	92	99	97
NZL	98	96	94	98	98	99
POL	75	69	68	77	67	70
PRT	88	79	82	79	84	80
SVK	76	76	73	78	67	62
SVN	81	81	81	74	81	78
SWE	98	88	96	96	98	98
TUR	37	16	57	58	48	50
USA	83	56	90	91	91	88

Table 7 presents the analysis results using multi-criteria decision-making techniques with 6 criteria and 38 country alternatives, identifying New Zealand as the OECD country with the highest governance performance. Other high-performing countries include Luxembourg, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark. Türkiye ranks 37th across all methods, reflecting the second-lowest performance after Colombia among the 38 OECD countries. Following these countries are Mexico, Israel, Greece, and Italy.

Table 7: Analysis Results for OECD Countries

Country	ARAS	TOPSIS	VIKOR	COPRAS	MABAC	EDAS	MOORA	SAW	PROMETHEE	BORDA
AUS	13	14	13	13	12	13	13	13	13	13
AUT	10	8	9	10	11	10	10	11	10	10
BEL	16	19	18	16	17	17	16	16	16	16
CAN	9	10	10	9	10	9	9	9	9	9
CHE	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3
CHL	24	27	26	24	24	24	24	24	24	25
COL	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
CRI	31	25	30	31	32	32	32	32	32	32
CZE	19	15	16	19	22	19	19	20	20	19
DEU	15	18	15	15	14	15	15	15	14	15
DNK	8	11	8	8	7	8	8	8	8	8
ESP	32	33	33	32	26	31	31	31	27	31
EST	21	22	19	21	18	21	21	19	19	20
FIN	4	6	4	4	2	4	4	3	2	4
FRA	22	28	25	22	21	23	22	22	22	22
GBR	18	26	22	18	16	16	18	17	17	18
GRC	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	35	34
HUN	27	23	24	27	30	27	27	27	29	27
IRL	12	9	11	12	13	12	12	12	12	12
ISL	6	5	7	6	8	6	6	6	7	6
ISR	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	33	35
ITA	33	32	32	33	33	33	33	33	34	33
JPN	14	12	14	14	15	14	14	14	15	14
KOR	28	31	31	28	27	28	28	28	28	28
LTU	25	21	21	25	25	25	25	25	25	24
LUX	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2
LVA	30	29	29	30	29	30	30	30	31	30
MEX	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
NLD	11	13	12	11	9	11	11	10	11	11
NOR	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
NZL	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
POL	29	24	28	29	31	29	29	29	30	29
PRT	17	16	17	17	19	18	17	18	18	17
SVK	26	20	23	26	28	26	26	26	26	26
SVN	20	17	20	20	23	20	20	21	21	21
SWE	7	7	6	7	6	7	7	7	6	7
TUR	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
USA	23	30	27	23	20	22	23	23	23	23

Table 8 presents the decision matrix of average governance indicators for EU member states and candidate countries during the 2002–2023 period. A notable observation is that candidate countries predominantly occupy the lowest ranks, with minor exceptions. The EU member states with the highest governance scores are Finland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands, while the lowest-performing EU countries are Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Greece. Among candidate countries, Türkiye exhibits the lowest VA and PV values, ranking behind Georgia and Montenegro in other indicators. Georgia and Montenegro demonstrate relatively stronger governance metrics among candidate countries. When assessing all member and candidate countries, Ukraine, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina record comparatively lower scores.

Table 8: Decision Matrix for EU Country Group

Country	VA	PV	GE	RQ	RL	CC
AUT	94	86	93	92	97	91
BEL	93	70	90	87	89	90
BGR	62	55	54	70	51	50
CYP	80	62	83	83	80	77
CZE	79	82	79	84	81	69
DEU	94	72	91	93	93	94
DNK	98	83	99	97	99	100
ESP	84	49	82	81	83	79
EST	86	69	82	90	85	85
FIN	98	91	99	98	100	99
FRA	88	59	89	85	89	88
GRC	75	51	67	71	66	59
HRV	64	67	69	65	58	59
HUN	71	73	72	76	71	64
IRL	93	85	90	95	92	92
ITA	80	61	68	75	63	65
LTU	77	73	77	82	75	69
LUX	98	96	95	97	96	96
LVA	73	64	74	81	74	67
MLT	87	89	80	84	86	73
NLD	97	80	96	97	96	96
POL	75	69	68	77	67	70
PRT	88	79	82	79	84	80
ROM	62	54	49	66	58	49
SVK	76	76	73	78	67	62
SVN	81	81	81	74	81	78
SWE	98	88	96	96	98	98
ALB	52	45	47	56	38	31
BIH	45	31	26	46	43	40
GEO	48	26	62	66	49	61
MDA	43	36	32	48	40	27
MKD	48	35	49	60	45	44
MNE	53	55	57	58	52	50
SRB	50	38	50	48	42	42
TUR	37	16	57	58	48	50
UKR	44	25	31	36	24	19

Table 9 presents the governance performance analysis of 36 alternatives—27 EU member states and 9 candidate countries—based on six criteria. The results indicate that all member states outperform candidate countries. Among member states, the highest-performing countries are Luxembourg, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, and the Netherlands. Romania ranks as the lowest-performing member state, followed by Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, and Italy. Within candidate countries, Montenegro achieves the highest ranking, while Ukraine occupies the lowest position. Türkiye exhibits below-average performance relative to other candidates but ranks above Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine.

Table 9: Analysis Results for EU Country Group

Country	ARAS	TOPSIS	VIKOR	COPRAS	MABAC	EDAS	MOORA	SAW	PROMETHEE	BORDA
AUT	6	4	5	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
BEL	10	13	13	10	9	10	10	10	9	10
BGR	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
CYP	17	20	20	17	16	17	17	17	17	18
CZE	14	12	10	14	15	14	14	14	14	14
DEU	8	11	12	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
DNK	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
ESP	20	24	24	20	19	19	20	19	19	20
EST	12	14	14	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
FIN	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2
FRA	15	18	18	15	13	15	15	15	15	15
GRC	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
HRV	24	22	22	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
HUN	19	17	17	19	20	20	19	20	20	19
IRL	7	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
ITA	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
LTU	16	15	16	16	17	16	16	16	16	16
LUX	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1
LVA	22	21	21	22	21	22	22	22	22	22
MLT	9	8	8	9	10	9	9	9	10	9
NLD	5	7	7	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
POL	21	19	19	21	22	21	21	21	21	21
PRT	11	9	9	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
ROM	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
SVK	18	16	15	18	18	18	18	18	18	17
SVN	13	10	11	13	14	13	13	13	13	13
SWE	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
ALB	30	29	29	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
BIH	35	35	34	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
GEO	29	30	32	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
MDA	34	33	33	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
MKD	31	32	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31
MNE	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
SRB	32	31	30	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
TUR	33	34	35	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
UKR	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36

Table 10 displays the decision matrix of average governance indicator values for BRICS member countries, partner states, and countries invited for partnership with unresolved status during the 2002–2023 period. Unlike the EU country group, no sharp disparity exists between member and non-member states in this bloc. While EU candidate countries lag behind members, such a pattern is absent in BRICS. BRICS member states like the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, Brazil, and India exhibit high governance scores. Among non-member countries, Malaysia, Thailand, and Türkiye demonstrate comparatively strong performance. Malaysia's case is notable, as it outperforms many BRICS members across multiple indicators. The lowest-scoring countries are Uzbekistan, Iran, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Algeria. It is worth noting that Iran and Ethiopia are BRICS members.

Table 10: Decision Matrix for BRICS Country Group

Country	VA	PV	GE	RQ	RL	CC
BRA	61	37	45	52	47	48
RUS	22	18	40	38	20	18
IND	59	15	56	42	54	42
CHN	6	30	62	43	41	43
ZAF	68	39	60	62	54	58
ARE	21	73	83	75	70	82
EGY	15	17	38	33	43	32
ETH	14	8	29	15	29	33
IRN	9	14	32	6	20	26
IDN	49	21	49	45	35	29
BLR	8	47	20	12	16	39
BOL	45	30	34	22	18	28
CUB	7	61	44	6	29	61
KAZ	16	48	41	47	27	25
MYS	37	53	80	69	65	61
NGA	30	5	15	19	14	12
THA	33	22	62	57	53	41
UGA	29	18	33	43	40	17
UZB	4	26	24	9	11	13
DZA	22	14	35	18	25	32
TUR	37	16	57	58	48	50
VNM	10	51	50	32	42	35

Table 11 presents the governance performance analysis of 22 countries—10 BRICS members, 9 partner states, and 3 states with invited but unresolved status—based on six criteria. The highest-performing countries are South Africa and the United Arab Emirates, both member states. Among members, Brazil, India, and Indonesia exhibit relatively strong performance. Malaysia leads among partner states, followed by Thailand. The lowest-performing member states are Iran and Ethiopia, while Uzbekistan and Nigeria rank lowest among partners. Türkiye's position within this group is mid-to-high, placing 6th–7th behind member states South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, Brazil, and India, as well as partner states Malaysia and Thailand.

Table 11: Analysis Results for BRICS Country Group

Country	ARAS	TOPSIS	VIKOR	COPRAS	MABAC	EDAS	MOORA	SAW	PROMETHEE	BORDA
BRA	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
RUS	16	16	12	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
IND	5	5	7	5	5	5	5	5	6	5
CHN	13	15	17	13	13	13	13	13	12	14
ZAF	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1
ARE	1	4	4	1	1	2	1	1	3	2
EGY	15	18	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
ETH	19	21	19	20	19	19	19	19	19	19
IRN	21	22	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
IDN	8	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
BLR	17	14	20	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
BOL	9	7	6	9	12	9	10	11	11	9
CUB	12	10	16	12	11	12	12	12	13	12
KAZ	11	11	11	11	10	11	11	10	10	11
MYS	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	3
NGA	20	17	18	19	20	20	20	20	20	20
THA	7	9	5	7	6	6	6	6	5	6
UGA	14	13	10	14	14	14	14	14	14	13
UZB	22	20	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
DZA	18	19	13	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
TUR	6	8	9	6	7	7	7	7	7	7
VNM	10	12	14	10	9	10	9	9	9	10

The consistency and reliability of ranking results derived from diverse analytical techniques are evaluated through correlation analysis. Correlation coefficients can range from -1 to +1, with positive

values close to +1 indicating strong agreement in performance rankings across methods. Table 12 presents the correlation coefficients between rankings obtained from the multi-criteria decision-making techniques employed in this study.

Table 12: Rank Correlation Coefficients

Method		ARAS	TOPSIS	VIKOR	COPRAS	MABAC	EDAS	MOORA	SAW	PROMETHEE	BORDA
TÜRKİYE	ARAS	1.000	0.898	0.965	0.999	0.922	0.998	0.999	0.973	0.940	0.997
	TOPSIS	0.898	1.000	0.936	0.899	0.772	0.909	0.890	0.850	0.802	0.883
	VIKOR	0.965	0.936	1.000	0.966	0.878	0.970	0.959	0.928	0.904	0.962
	COPRAS	0.999	0.899	0.966	1.000	0.920	0.999	0.998	0.968	0.937	0.995
	MABAC	0.922	0.772	0.878	0.920	1.000	0.912	0.929	0.960	0.991	0.941
	EDAS	0.998	0.909	0.970	0.999	0.912	1.000	0.995	0.962	0.929	0.993
	MOORA	0.999	0.890	0.959	0.998	0.929	0.995	1.000	0.979	0.947	0.998
	SAW	0.973	0.850	0.928	0.968	0.960	0.962	0.979	1.000	0.972	0.980
	PROMETHEE	0.940	0.802	0.904	0.937	0.991	0.929	0.947	0.972	1.000	0.957
	BORDA	0.997	0.883	0.962	0.995	0.941	0.993	0.998	0.980	0.957	1.000
OECD	ARAS	1.000	0.958	0.987	1.000	0.986	0.999	1.000	0.998	0.994	0.999
	TOPSIS	0.958	1.000	0.984	0.958	0.915	0.952	0.956	0.950	0.940	0.957
	VIKOR	0.987	0.984	1.000	0.987	0.963	0.984	0.987	0.984	0.978	0.988
	COPRAS	1.000	0.958	0.987	1.000	0.986	0.999	1.000	0.998	0.994	0.999
	MABAC	0.986	0.915	0.963	0.986	1.000	0.989	0.988	0.991	0.995	0.989
	EDAS	0.999	0.952	0.984	0.999	0.989	1.000	0.999	0.998	0.995	0.999
	MOORA	1.000	0.956	0.987	1.000	0.988	0.999	1.000	0.999	0.995	1.000
	SAW	0.998	0.950	0.984	0.998	0.991	0.998	0.999	1.000	0.996	0.999
	PROMETHEE	0.994	0.940	0.978	0.994	0.995	0.995	0.995	0.996	1.000	0.995
	BORDA	0.999	0.957	0.988	0.999	0.989	0.999	1.000	0.999	0.995	1.000
EU	ARAS	1.000	0.986	0.982	1.000	0.998	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.999
	TOPSIS	0.986	1.000	0.998	0.986	0.977	0.984	0.986	0.984	0.984	0.988
	VIKOR	0.982	0.998	1.000	0.982	0.974	0.981	0.982	0.980	0.980	0.984
	COPRAS	1.000	0.986	0.982	1.000	0.998	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.999
	MABAC	0.998	0.977	0.974	0.998	1.000	0.998	0.998	0.998	0.998	0.997
	EDAS	1.000	0.984	0.981	1.000	0.998	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999
	MOORA	1.000	0.986	0.982	1.000	0.998	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.999
	SAW	0.999	0.984	0.980	0.999	0.998	1.000	0.999	1.000	0.999	0.999
	PROMETHEE	0.999	0.984	0.980	0.999	0.998	0.999	0.999	0.999	1.000	0.999
	BORDA	0.999	0.988	0.984	0.999	0.997	0.999	0.999	0.999	0.999	1.000
BRICS	ARAS	1.000	0.955	0.912	0.999	0.992	0.998	0.998	0.995	0.988	0.997
	TOPSIS	0.955	1.000	0.894	0.959	0.940	0.957	0.948	0.944	0.936	0.959
	VIKOR	0.912	0.894	1.000	0.913	0.890	0.920	0.907	0.902	0.907	0.928
	COPRAS	0.999	0.959	0.913	1.000	0.991	0.997	0.997	0.994	0.986	0.995
	MABAC	0.992	0.940	0.890	0.991	1.000	0.992	0.997	0.999	0.991	0.991
	EDAS	0.998	0.957	0.920	0.997	0.992	1.000	0.998	0.995	0.991	0.999
	MOORA	0.998	0.948	0.907	0.997	0.997	0.998	1.000	0.999	0.992	0.997
	SAW	0.995	0.944	0.902	0.994	0.999	0.995	0.999	1.000	0.993	0.994
	PROMETHEE	0.988	0.936	0.907	0.986	0.991	0.991	0.992	0.993	1.000	0.989
	BORDA	0.997	0.959	0.928	0.995	0.991	0.999	0.997	0.994	0.989	1.000

All the correlation coefficients in Table 12 are statistically significant at the 1% level (p-values<0.01). The coefficients reveal strong positive correlations between rankings generated by different methods. These results suggest significant alignment in performance rankings across techniques. Thus, outcomes derived from diverse multi-criteria decision-making approaches are consistent and exhibit high reliability.

6. Conclusion

Governance is a concept centered on the effective, transparent, and participatory management of institutional relationships among actors such as the state, civil society, and the private sector. The literature frequently emphasizes that institutional frameworks should encompass both formal and informal institutions from a broad perspective. This approach, foundational to modern public administration, directly shapes countries' political, social, and economic development. Good governance practices should not be evaluated solely in terms of public policy efficiency and

effectiveness. Governance can play a pivotal role in sustainable development and positively influence structural transformation. Strengthening institutional capacity through governance reforms fosters progress in areas such as social justice, public trust, investment climates, and global competitiveness. Consequently, enhancing institutional quality and governance is critical for all countries—developed, developing, or underdeveloped—without distinction. However, when interpreting empirical findings or proposing policies based on governance indicators, critiques of these metrics must be rigorously addressed, and a critical analytical lens retained.

This study evaluates Türkiye's governance performance, drawing insights from historical trends and comparative analyses with other countries. The findings highlight a notable decline in Türkiye's governance metrics in recent years. Compared to OECD countries and EU member/candidate states, Türkiye demonstrates significantly lower governance performance, ranking below all EU members and under the average among candidate countries. Conversely, Türkiye's governance scores surpass the average within BRICS members, partner states, and invited countries. These results prompt two critical discussions. First, as widely noted in the literature, the World Bank's governance indicators suffer from methodological limitations, including reliance on survey-based data from diverse sources and opaque calculation methods, raising reliability concerns—particularly for developing economies. Second, Türkiye's weaker performance relative to EU countries but stronger standing compared to BRICS countries may ignite debates about its political and economic "axis shift".

The methodological limitations of the World Bank's governance indicators could foster a perception that the data are entirely flawed. Such a perception risks undermining institutional reforms and hindering progress in governance. Türkiye's recent decline in governance performance and its lower scores compared to OECD and EU countries must be contextualized within these concerns. It is imperative for Türkiye to position its governance performance both historically and relative to other countries in alignment with its potential and dynamics, setting achievable targets and implementing necessary structural and institutional reforms. Türkiye's above-average governance performance relative to BRICS countries may fuel public debate on potential BRICS membership. Despite a prolonged EU accession process, this issue warrants comprehensive evaluation. BRICS membership would likely divert Türkiye from its EU accession objectives, potentially dampening expectations for institutional reforms. Thus, a near-term focus on aligning institutional frameworks with EU membership criteria represents a more pragmatic approach. However, long-term considerations of EU or BRICS membership should be assessed through a broader lens encompassing political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions.

In summary, the study's findings indicate that Türkiye's governance performance remains low compared to developed countries and has experienced a decline in recent years. These findings are supported by research conducted by Durgun and Aydın (2019), Güzel and Murat (2019), Yıldırım (2019), Gündoğdu and Aytekin (2020), Aytekin and Gündoğdu (2021), and Yörükoğlu (2021). The prevailing view in literature suggests that improved governance quality is expected to positively impact economic growth, development, and the attraction of foreign direct investment. In this context, it is crucial to support Türkiye's economic growth and development through reforms and regulations that enhance governance quality. While numerous variables influence economic growth and development, the relative importance of governance quality can be tested through various models. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that governance quality and institutional factors should not be neglected in the pursuit of sustainable economic growth and development.

In conclusion, within the conceptual framework, literature review, and empirical findings of this study, several recommendations can be proposed for Türkiye and other developing countries with low governance performance. While the neutrality of the World Bank's governance indicators remains contentious, dismissing them entirely risks institutional complacency and inertia. Thus, uncritically adopting indicator data for policy design may prove counterproductive. Imposing

Western-style institutional reforms on developing economies risks delaying desired governance outcomes. The historical trajectories of Western countries, which shaped their current institutional frameworks, must be critically examined—acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses. Institutional structures should be analyzed through comparative static or dynamic frameworks rather than static models, fostering nuanced debate. A one-size-fits-all governance approach should be replaced with context-sensitive strategies that account for a country's historical evolution, political-economic structures, and socio-cultural foundations. Türkiye's governance performance could be re-evaluated using alternative indicators from diverse institutions and comparative analyses with varied country groupings.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

This study was conducted by a single author.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

There is no financial conflict of interest, and there is no conflict of interest among the authors.

ETHICAL STATEMENT ON THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER SITUATIONS

AI-supported software [DeepL] was utilized in a limited capacity for language editing purposes during the preparation of this manuscript. The content creation, analysis, and scientific evaluation were entirely performed by the author.

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