

TESEV Foreign Policy Programme

Foreign Policy Perceptions in Turkey

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TESEV

Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı
Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation

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Foreword and Introduction

This report contains the results of a survey conducted on 6-14th December 2010 by KA Research that has been evaluated by TESEV Foreign Policy Programme. Based on a sample size of 1,000, the survey aims to understand the perception of foreign policy in Turkey. A first of its kind for TESEV, the survey includes striking findings that may be of interest to decision-makers in Turkey and those following Turkey around the world.

As in many places, people in Turkey are not particularly interested in foreign policy. Moreover, the majority learn about global events and developments in Turkey's foreign policy from the television. Indeed, the people of Turkey tend not to use the print media and other sources to learn of issues relating to foreign policy.

Despite this, almost everyone has an opinion about Turkey's foreign policy and who are its friends and foes. It may come as no surprise that Israel is seen as the most unfriendly country to Turkey by 40% of the people. In fact, considering the events in Gaza in late 2008 and early 2009, the Davos incident between Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Israeli President Shimon Peres, the diplomatically inappropriate low chair crisis and the flotilla episode with Israel's military intervention on the flagship Mavi Marmara, it is perhaps surprising that the percentage is not higher.

However both Ankara and Washington should note that with 33%, Turkey's traditional ally the United States (US), is seen as the second most unfriendly country to Turkey. According to various other polls Turkey is suspicious of the US, and thus the fact that the population thinks the US is not friendly towards Turkey is a result that should be taken seriously as the two countries have been official allies since 1952 - even before that, the US supported Turkey in protecting its territorial integrity.

Nevertheless, the prospect for future relations between the two countries is bright. The survey results show that the people of Turkey think that the US is unfriendly towards Turkey not because of some intransigent values, such as Turkey being a Muslim country, but merely because the US is pursuing its own interests. If Washington were to adopt a political line that considers the interests and sensitivities of Turkey in its region, then there will likely be a change in this negative perception.

The second piece of promising data on Turkey-US relations is the continuing popularity of President Barack Obama. People in Turkey feel more positively about Obama than the US public does. At the time of the survey, support for Obama varied between 45% and 49%¹ in the US, while

¹ The support given to President Barack Obama by the US public in 2010 was stated as 45% in the Ipsos/Reuters Poll of December 2-5, 46% in the Gallup Poll of December 9-11, 49% in the ABC/Post Poll of December 9-12, 45% in the ABC/WSJ Poll of December 9-13, and 48% in the CNN Poll of December 17-19. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/01/06/jobapproval-obama_n_726319.html

support in Turkey was 67%. Furthermore, it is also important that 76% of respondents find Turkey's attitude towards the US friendly.

The fact that more than half (53%) of Turkey see the future of Turkey-US relations in a positive light is something that should be taken into consideration by Washington. The future of bilateral relations is clearly promising. Additionally, Turkey's perception of the US is not based on structural anti-Americanism. Perception is shaped by diplomatic relations and whether the US takes Turkey's interests into consideration or not.

The survey's most striking result is on European Union (EU)-Turkey relations: Turkey still wants to be an EU member. Despite the Cyprus issue, the stalemate in negotiations and the attitude of France, support for Turkey's EU membership is 69% as of the end of 2010. When you ask the reasons for wanting EU membership, most people point towards economic reasons, whereas only 13% highlight democracy. 49% are confident enough to give a date for Turkey's future accession, while 30% believe the country will never become a member of the EU.

Although the negotiation process has come to a stalemate because of the Cyprus issue and there has been countless broadcasts on the topic on television (respondents' most common source of information), the people in Turkey put forward other reasons for the country's stumbling accession process. They see the EU's xenophobia and Turkey being a Muslim country as the main obstacles to its EU membership.

Cyprus has been on Turkey's agenda since the 1950's. The most popular solution advocated by the public is one based on the United Nations (UN) parameters (31%). Only 8% of the respondents advocate the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) becoming a part of Turkey, or, put another way, the old division (*taksim*) policy. 6% think the TRNC's independence should be protected.

It appears that Turkey's policy of seeking peaceful solutions to conflicts has been widely endorsed. 75% support Turkey's mediation efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian issue, 50% support rapprochement with Armenia and 58% support sending peace forces to Lebanon. The proportion believing that relations with Israel should be improved is not as low as might be expected. For 34%, the current state of relations is unfavourable to the interests of both countries, whereas 13% think it is unfavourable to Turkey alone.

There is also a strong conviction that Turkey can be a model for the countries of the Middle East. 82% consider Turkey a cultural model, 80% an economic model and 72% a political model. To a large extent these figures match the results we found in our previous study *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010*.

In our opinion, the political message given by these results is quite clear. To summarize:

- 1. For those governing Turkey:** Those interested in foreign policy in Turkey are to a large extent satisfied with the policies pursued. They support conflict resolution and they expect to see solutions to problems which Turkey is a party to. They want to become an EU member and want better relations with the US.

-
2. **For the US government:** There is no structural anti-Americanism in Turkey. If you want to be seen in a more positive light, we recommend improved contacts with Ankara and you take Turkey's interests and warnings seriously.
 3. **For the EU:** Turkey still wants to become an EU member. Use this opportunity and clear the path for the membership process. Act constructive on the Cyprus issue; contrary to what you think, Turkey does not want to see the north of the island a part of it.
 4. **For the Middle East:** This is a country that wants to improve relations with the Arab world and that wants to play a supportive role in the solution of the most important issue in the region. On the other hand, while Turkish people see Israel as the biggest threat to their security they also want to see improved relations.

Naturally, there are many more conclusions that can be drawn from this survey. In the following pages, you can read what people think about Turkey's relations with Armenia and their comments on Russia. Readers should bear in mind that this is only an initial evaluation based on the survey data. We hope to share with you more detailed analyses addressed within a historical perspective in the near future.

Needless to say, many people have contributed to this survey. We would like to extend our gratitude to Bülent Kılınçarslan, President of KA Research, and to Diler İnal, Bora Özbek, Seda Aras, Aytek Beştaş from the KA team.

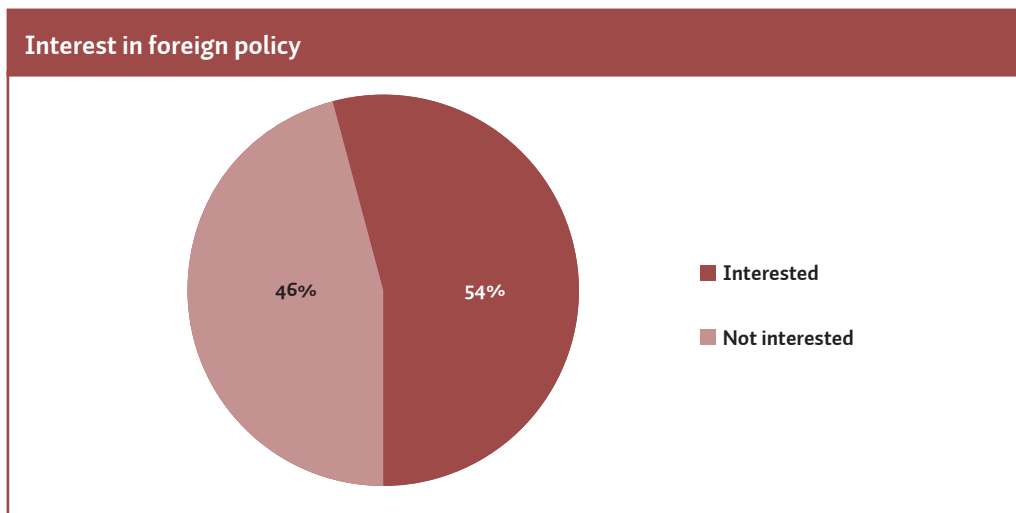
We would also like to thank the Open Society Foundation (OSF) and TESEV High Advisory Board for their support. We are grateful to Prof. Meliha Altunışık from Middle East Technical University and to Prof. Dr. Gökhan Çetinsaya from Istanbul Şehir University – both of whom have advised us on the survey right from the start - for their contributions.

However, as in all studies, those responsible for all the errors and problems in the report are those who have prepared this study for publication. I and my colleagues Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, Aybars Görgülü, Erdem Aydın welcome all criticism and suggestions.

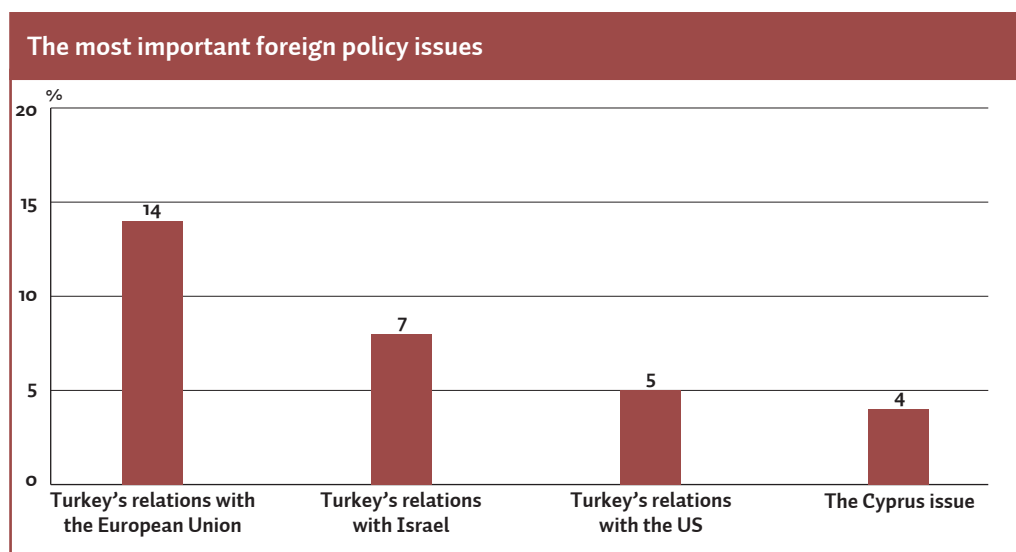
Mensur Akgün

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General Trends



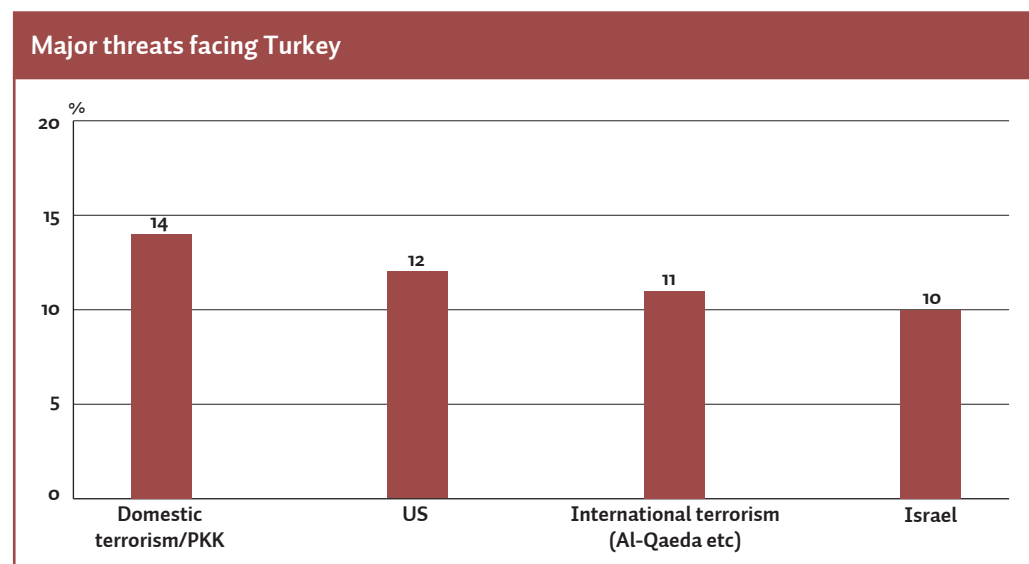
54% of respondents are interested in foreign policy. Considering that foreign policy is generally not widely discussed publically, it can be said that this percentage is not that low. The media plays an important role in shaping the perception of foreign policy. When asked what their sources of information on foreign policy were, 88% of the respondents said television, followed by newspapers with 28%. As such, rather than being knowledgeable of the area, respondents are interested in foreign policy issues to the extent that they are covered and discussed in the media.



When asked about Turkey's most important foreign policy issues, relations with the European Union was the most common answer with 14%. At a time when relations with the EU are stagnant, it is noteworthy that they are still considered as one of the most important foreign policy issues.

Relations with Israel take second place with 7%. Increased tension seen between Israel and Turkey in recent years that reached a peak following the flotilla crisis is seen as a problem in Turkey. Relations with the US took third place with 5%, followed by the Cyprus issue with 4%.

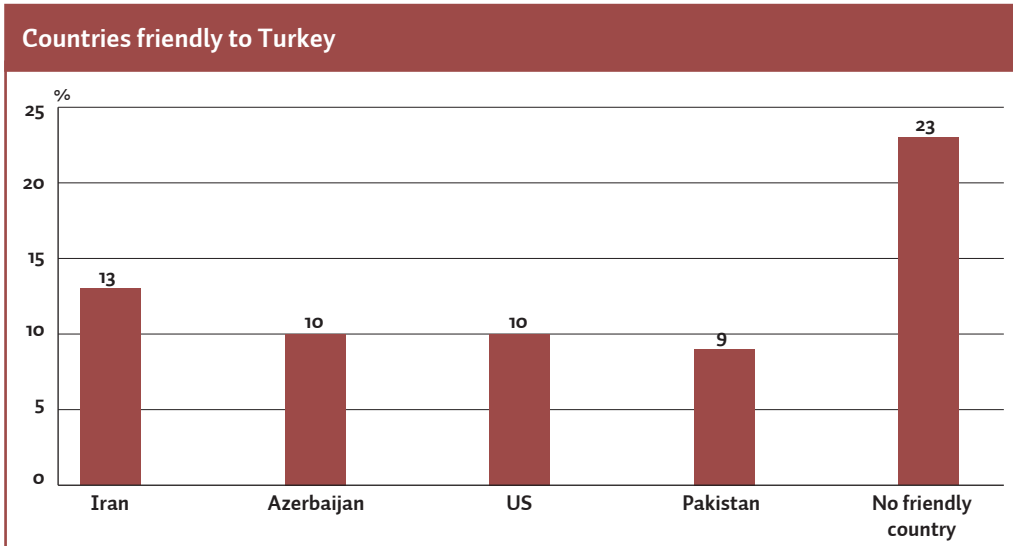
In addition, terrorism/the PKK was the sixth most common answer with 3% of responses. Although the question was about Turkey's foreign policy, the blurring of domestic terrorism and the PKK was still among the answers, albeit with a small percentage.



When asked what the major threats facing Turkey are, the domestic terrorism/PKK is the most common answer with 14%, followed by the US (12%), international terrorism (11%) and Israel (10%). Given how close these percentages are, it can be said that respondents saw these as the four major threats facing Turkey, attributing them almost equal importance.

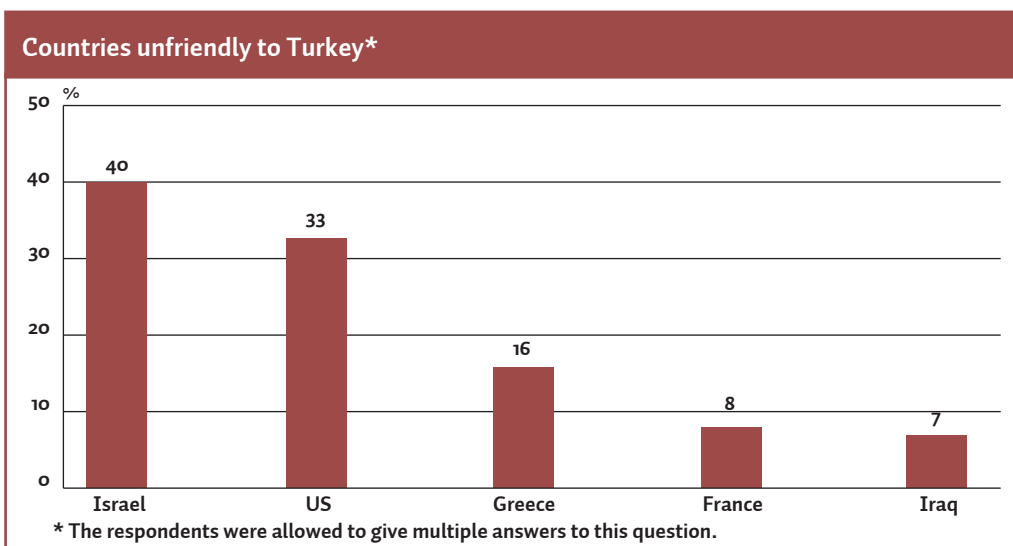
When evaluated in conjunction with the answers given to countries that are friendly or unfriendly towards Turkey, it seems that there is no clear perception on relations with the US in Turkey.

Unemployment and economy follow these four answers. The other responses included foreign powers, the Kurdish issue and the possibility of rebellion/war. In this regard, it is possible to say that threat perception in Turkey does not have one single focus.



Despite all the changes in Turkey’s domestic and foreign policy, the common belief that “Turks have no friends other than Turks” still resonates. 23% of respondents said that no country was friendly towards Turkey. The countries considered most friendly towards Turkey were Iran (13%), Azerbaijan (10%), the US (10%) and Pakistan (9%).

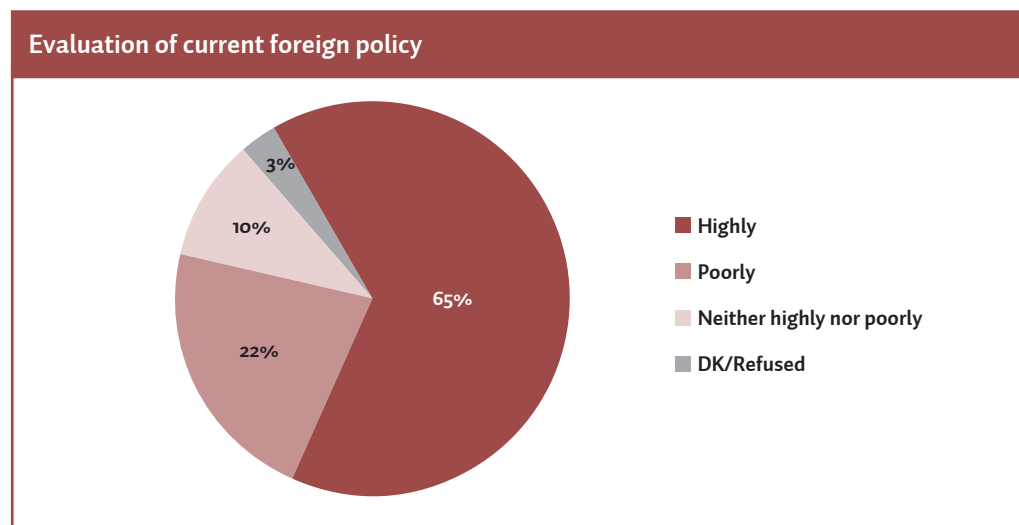
The fact that Iran is seen as the friendliest country to Turkey can be explained. When the survey was being conducted, there were heated debates on Iran’s nuclear programme and Turkey’s mediation efforts. Although Azerbaijan usually ranks as the friendliest country in many similar polls, it takes second place in this survey. Other noteworthy responses are Syria with 8% and Germany with 7%.



When asked what countries are unfriendly towards Turkey, respondents are far clearer. Israel takes first place with 40% of responses, followed by the US with 33%. Survey results support the negative perception of the US and Israel that is widespread in Turkey.

Greece takes third place with 16%. Although there has been no recent tension between Turkey and Greece, the perception of Greece as an unfriendly country continues. In fourth place is France with 8%. It can be said that French President Nicolas Sarkozy's stance on Turkey's EU membership influences responses.

Iraq, a country which Turkey has rapidly improved relations with in recent years, ranked fifth with 7% of responses. In the case of Iraq, this perception may be associated with the PKK issue. With 4%, Armenia, Russia, Germany and Iran are among the other answers given by respondents.

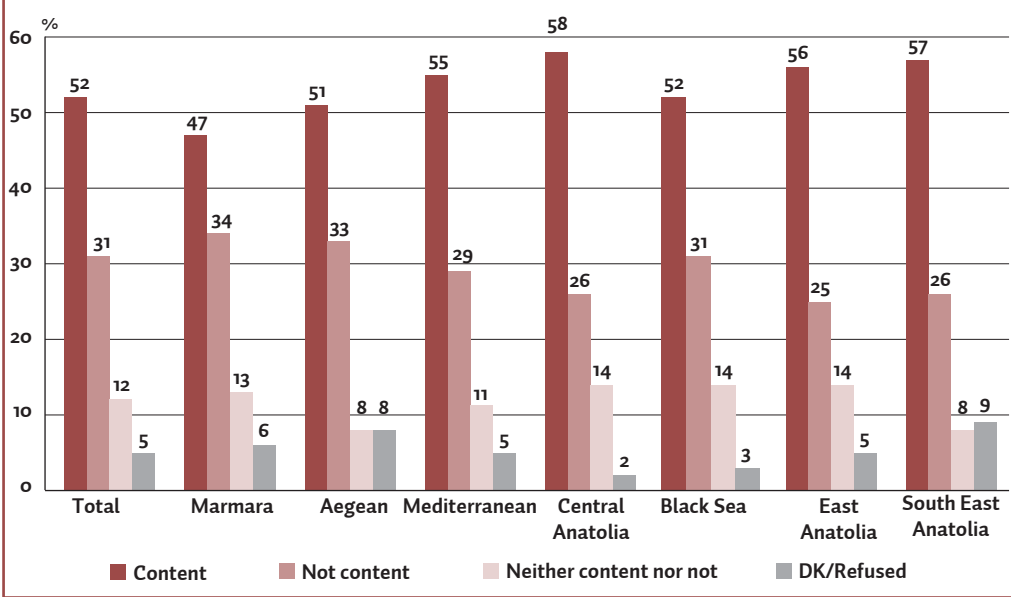


According to the survey results, the foreign policy pursued by the government is supported by 65%. 10% of the people of Turkey rate the government's foreign policy neither highly nor poorly, while 22% do not support it. Looking at the regional breakdown, the Black Sea region is most supportive of the government's foreign policy with 73%, followed by Central Anatolia with 67%, South East Anatolia and Aegean with 63% and Marmara and Mediterranean regions with 61%.

When asked why they rated Turkey's foreign policy poorly, relations with Israel, relations with the EU and more generally the problematic state of foreign policy were the most common answers.

Those who rated the government's foreign policy highly saw the pursuance of a decisive policy as the most important reason for their choice (12% of responses). This response is followed by the general success of Turkish foreign policy, the good relations built and maintained with other countries, the resolution of problems with neighbours and Turkey's efforts to play a mediatory role. It can be said that those answering this question were aware of and supported the more 'active foreign policy' being pursued in recent years.

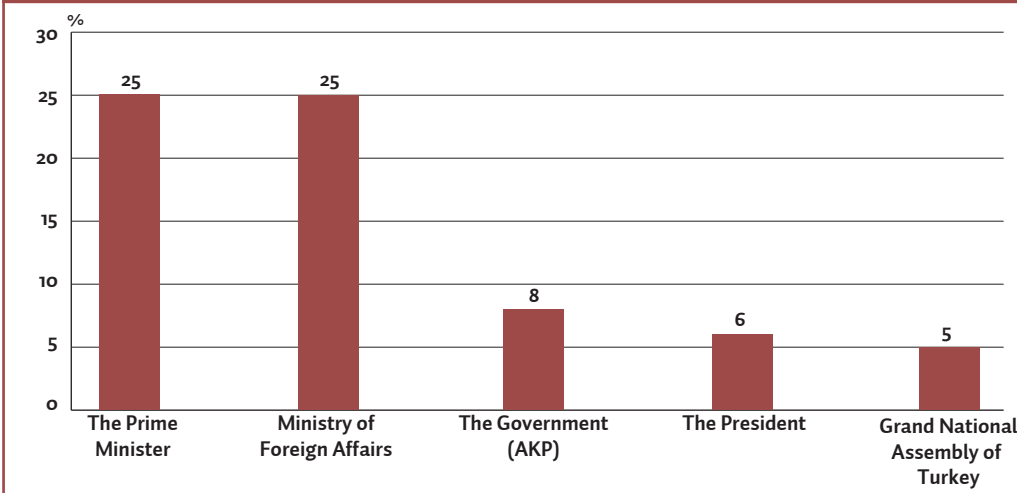
Satisfaction with the way foreign policy decisions are made



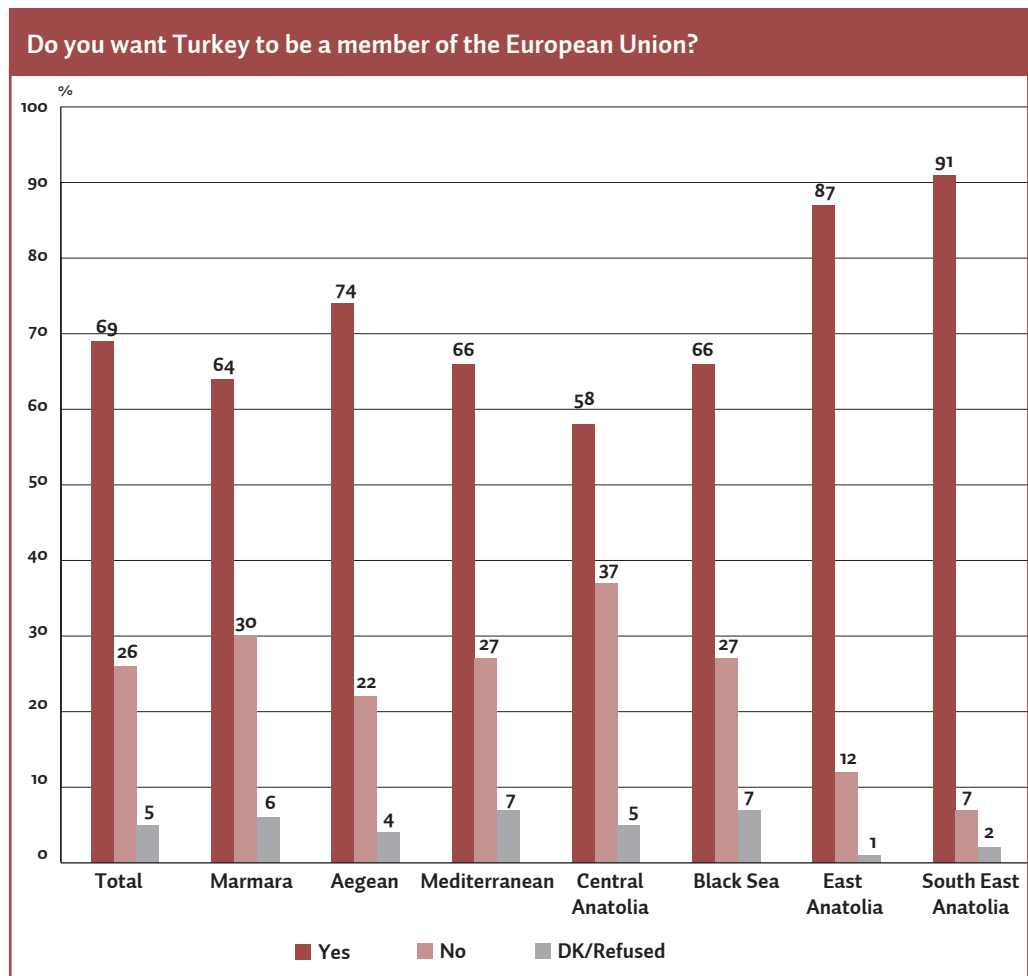
52% are satisfied with the way foreign policy decisions are made. Again, from a regional perspective there are clear distinctions, with the Marmara region being the least satisfied with 47%.

Parallel to this question, when asked to name the most important person or institution in foreign policymaking, the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs share first place with 25%. The AKP Government is third with 8%, and the President fourth with 6%. Only 2% cited the Army as their answer and only 1% thought that society was the most important institution in foreign policymaking.

The most important person/institution in foreign policymaking

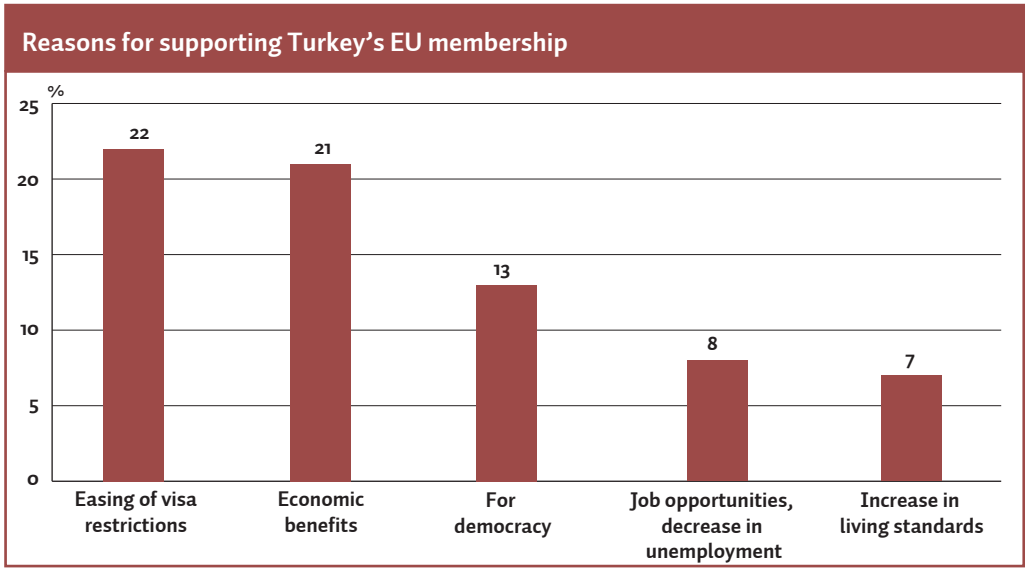


European Union - Turkey Relations

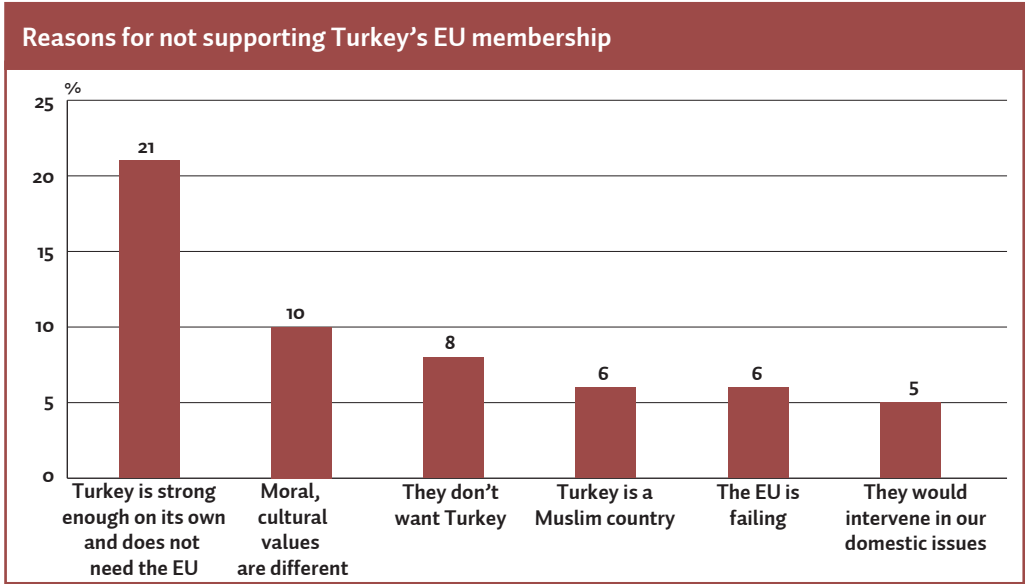


At a time when interest in the EU has declined in Turkey, 69% of respondents still said they supported Turkey's EU membership. Clearly, accession is still seen as valuable and important; Turkey's membership is supported as an ultimate goal.

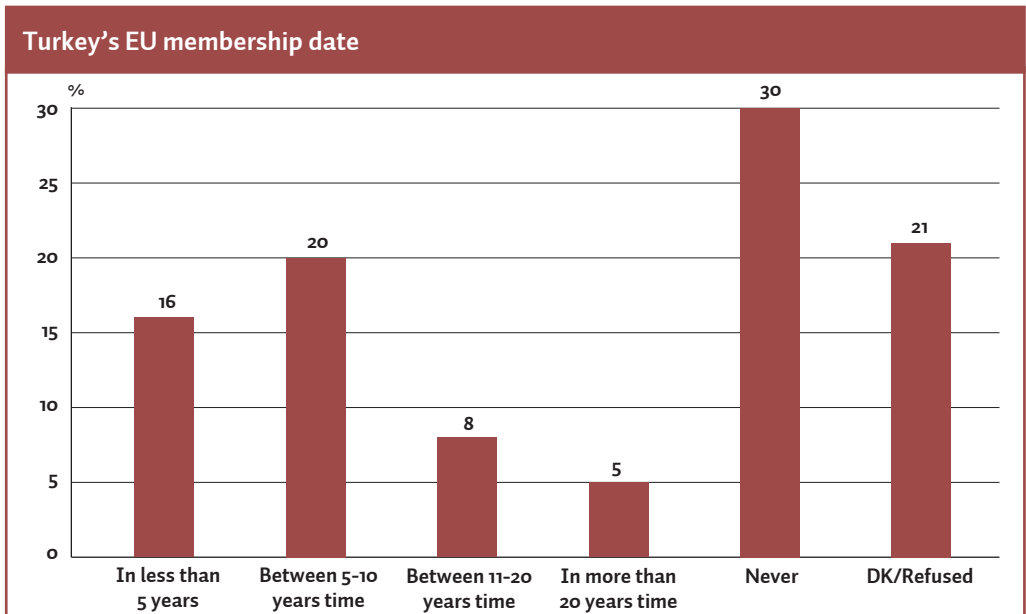
Looking at the regional breakdown, the most supportive region is South East Anatolia with 91%, followed by East Anatolia with 87%. Support for Turkey's EU membership in these regions can be explained by taking political and economic factors into account. These two regions will gain from increased welfare level and they will significantly benefit from Turkey's democratic transformation on the path to EU membership. The lowest support for the country's EU membership comes from Central Anatolia with 58%.



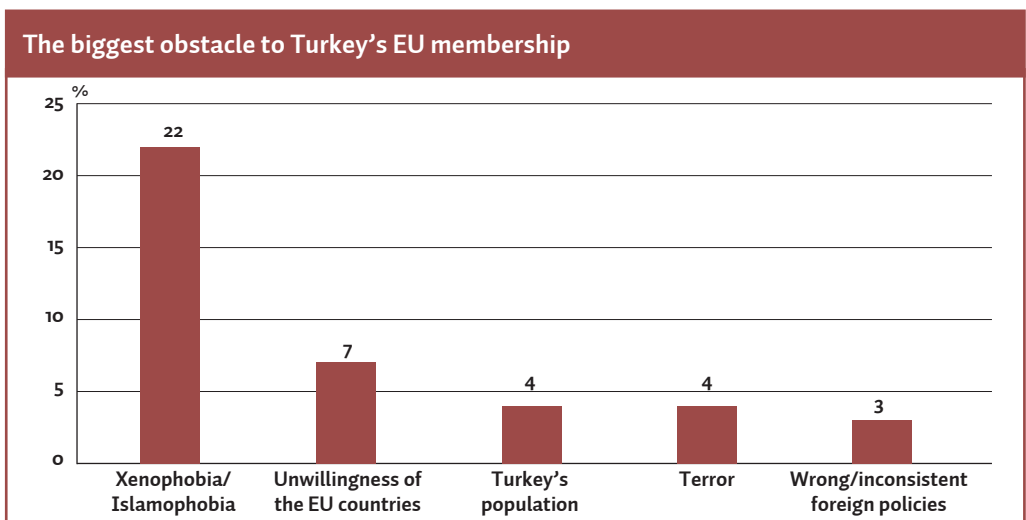
When asked why they want Turkey to be a member of the European Union, the economy and related answers come to the fore. The easing of visa restrictions takes first place with reference to the right to free movement. The three of the next four responses are directly related to the economy. 21% saw the economic benefits, 8% stated increased job opportunities and 7% stated increased living standards, while 13% emphasized democracy as reasons why they wanted Turkey to be a member.



Of the 26% that did not support Turkey's EU membership, the most common reason given was that Turkey was strong enough on its own (21%). 10% stressed the differences between the moral and cultural values of Turkey and the EU, while 8% said the EU did not want Turkey. 6% of the respondents stated they did not want Turkey to become an EU member since Turkey is a Muslim country. Similarly, 6% said the EU is failing. From this response, it is possible to say that the economic crisis that the EU is currently going through has not gone unnoticed in Turkey.



When asked when they thought Turkey would become a member of the European Union, 49% of the Turkish people thought that Turkey would become a member of the EU within the next 5 to 20 years. Despite this 'never' is the most popular answer with 30%, while 20% think Turkey will become a member within the next 5 to 10 years. The most optimistic segment, with 16%, believes that Turkey will accede within the next 5 years.

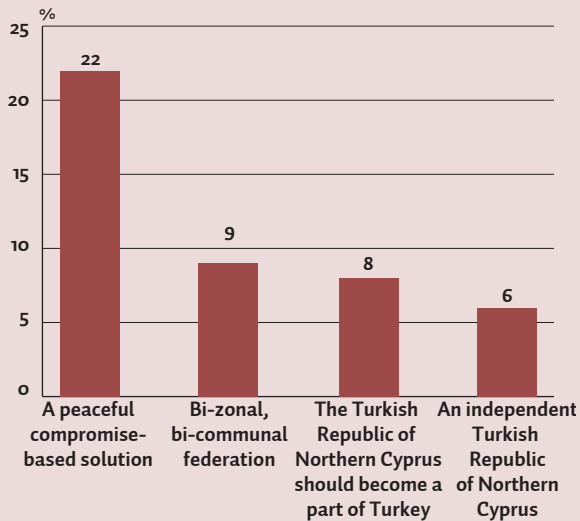


In the survey, when asked to list the biggest obstacle to Turkey's EU membership, the most common answer given by the respondents was xenophobia/Islamophobia (22%). Other answers included the unwillingness of EU countries (7%), Turkey's young population (4%) and terror (4%). Only 3% stated that the biggest obstacle to Turkey's membership was the Cyprus issue.

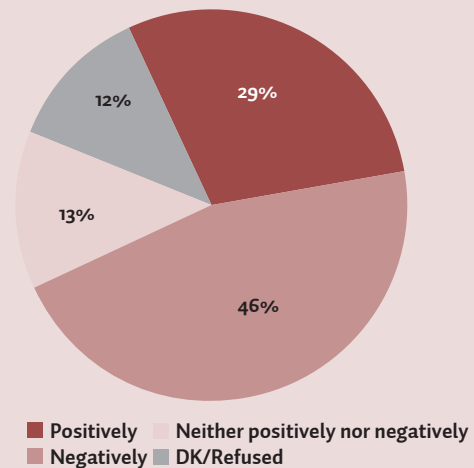
These responses are consistent with the view that the EU is making it harder for Turkey to become a member for religious and cultural reasons, a sentiment that is becoming increasingly widespread in Turkey.

The Cyprus Issue

What kind of a solution do you support in Cyprus?



Evaluation of the EU's role in the settlement of the Cyprus problem



According to the survey results, a peaceful, compromise-based solution in Cyprus is supported by 22% of respondents.² The second preference voiced by 9% of the respondents is a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation. This preference can also be read in conjunction with the first one. Thus, when evaluated, finding a solution within the framework of the UN parameters gets the support of 31%. In the survey, those who wish to see the TRNC as a part of Turkey (8%) and as an independent Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (6%) remain a distinct minority.

The European Union plays a key role in the Cyprus issue. With the Greek Cypriot rejection of the Annan Plan in the 24th April 2004 referendum, the Republic of Cyprus became a member of the EU on its own on 1st May 2004. Right after the referendum, on 26th April, the European Council prepared the Green Line Regulation governing the movement of people, goods and services between the Southern and Northern parts of Cyprus to lift the isolation imposed on the Turkish Cypriot Community, the Financial Aid regulation for €259 million and the Direct Trade Regulation. The first and the second – after an 18 month delay for which the Greek Cypriot Government was partly responsible - partially came into force³; while the third was blocked by the Greek Cypriot Government.

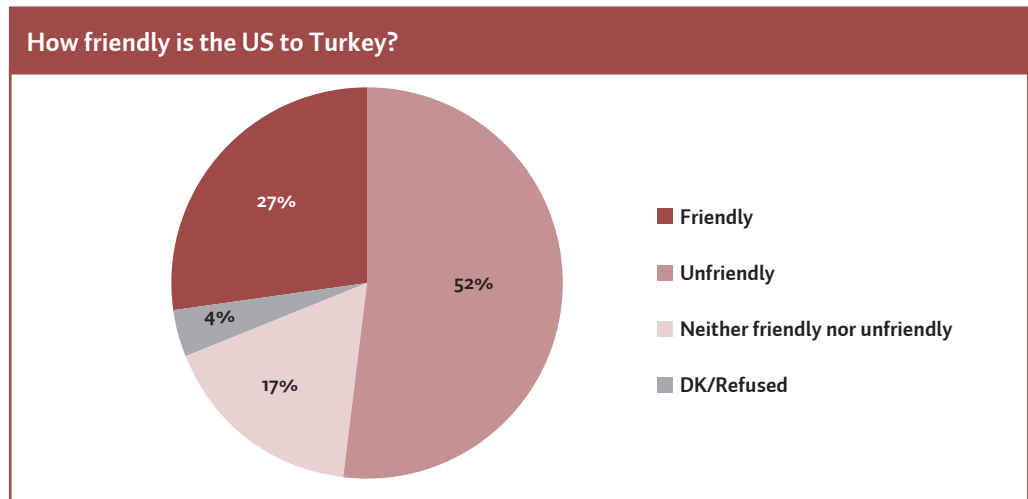
Turkey's signing of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement with reservations on 29th July 2005 resulted in adding Turkey's EU membership as a new dimension in the Cyprus issue. In December 2006, the European Council froze 8 of the 35 negotiation chapters on the grounds of the objection raised by the Republic of Cyprus.

According to the survey results, 46% evaluate the EU's role in the settlement of the Cyprus issue negatively, while 29% find the EU's role positive. It may be suggested that the reason behind this perception in Turkey is that the EU accepts only the will of the Greek Cypriot Government on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus, and that the embargoes imposed on the Turkish Cypriot community remain in place.

² 75% of the Greek Cypriots and 55% of the Turkish Cypriots think that the Cyprus issue should be solved on the basis of a "mutually acceptable compromise". Please see: Cyprus 2015, 'Investigating the Future: An in-depth study of Public Opinion in Cyprus', December 2009, p. 5-6. http://cyprus2015.org/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=1%3Apublic-opinion-poll&Itemid=34&lang=tr

³ Only €110 million of the total financial aid of €259 million has been spent so far. This corresponds to 40% of the total aid foreseen. Please see: (Former Head of the Turkish Cypriot Community Task Force of the European Commission) Andrew Rasbash: "AB verdiği sözleri tuttu" ("EU kept its promises"), Kıbrıs Ekonomi, 14 October 2010. <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=32045>

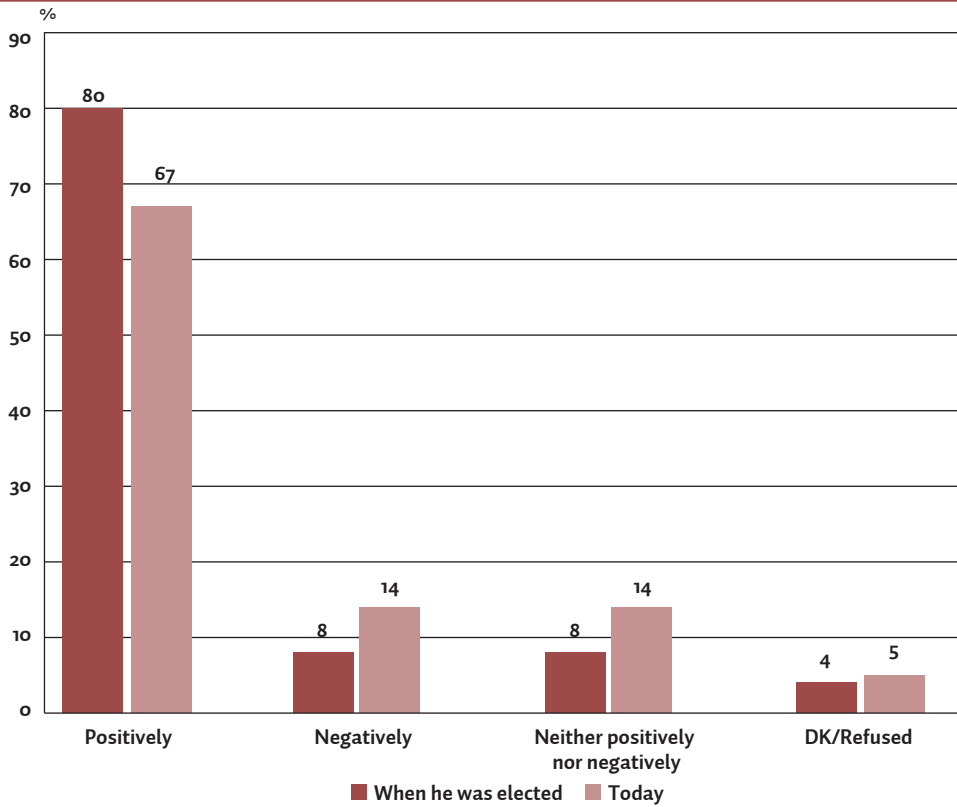
Turkey - United States Relations



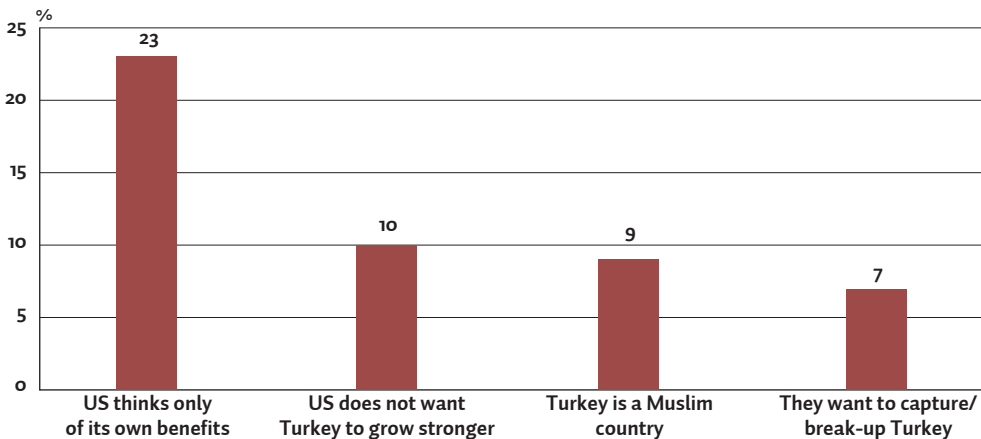
According to the survey, 52% believe that the US is unfriendly towards Turkey, while 27% think that the US is friendly. This result is important as it shows that the majority of people in Turkey have a negative view of the US's approach to their country. Regionally, South East Anatolia is the only region where those that find the US's approach to Turkey friendly (41%) is higher than those that think that the US is unfriendly (39%).

However, when asked to evaluate Barack Obama as the US President, a high percentage (80%) had a positive view of his election. When asked to comment on President Obama's performance as of December 2010, 67% evaluate his performance positively, representing a 13% drop in overall support. From this angle, although the Obama presidency has not fully satisfied the expectations of Turkey's public, it is still regarded positively.

Evaluation of Barack Obama's Presidency

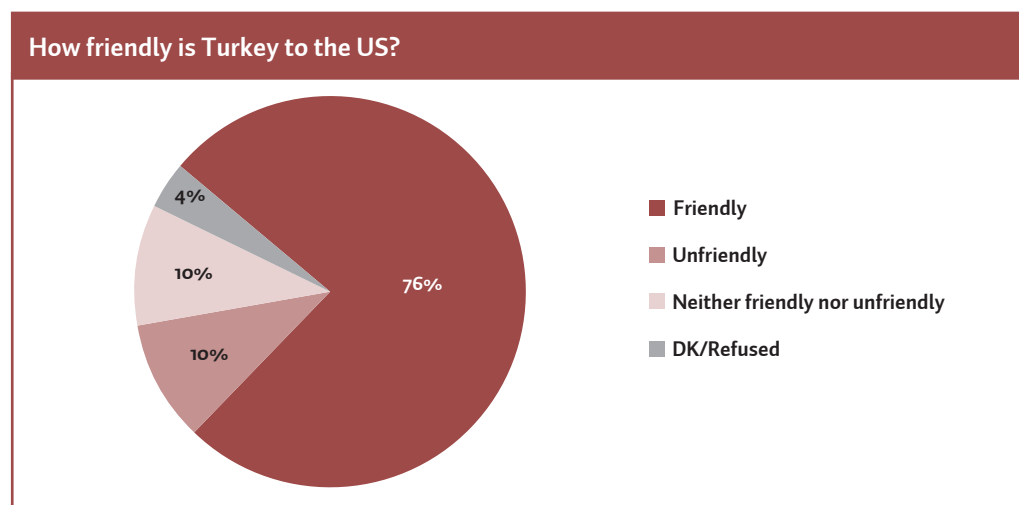


Why is the US unfriendly to Turkey?

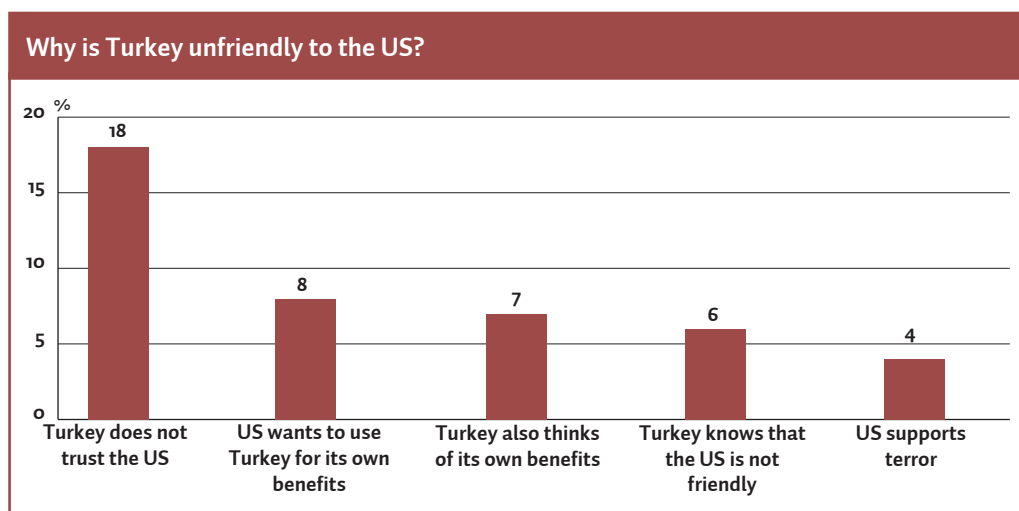


Among that consider the US unfriendly in its approach to Turkey, 23% say their main reason for doing so is because the US only thinks about its own benefits. Other important reasons given by respondents holding a negative view of the US are that the US does not want Turkey to become stronger and that it wants to split Turkey. Only 9% gave Turkey's Muslim identity as an answer,

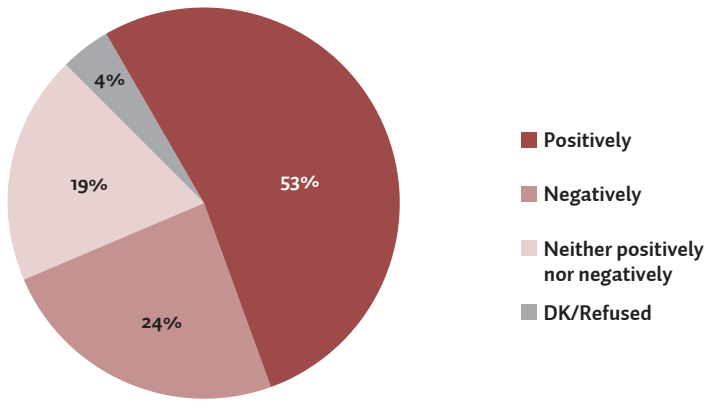
compared to 40% voicing the other three reasons. Based on this result, it can be said that the perception in Turkey is that the US is unfriendly towards Turkey not because of some intransient values, such as Turkey being a Muslim country, but because the US only acts according to its own benefits.



On the other hand, a large majority (76%) is of the opinion that Turkey is friendly towards the US. Only a small segment (10%) thinks that Turkey is unfriendly towards the US. From these results, we can see that the general view is that Turkey is the friendlier party in the relations. Only 4% stated that 'Turkey is unfriendly towards the US because the US supports terror'.

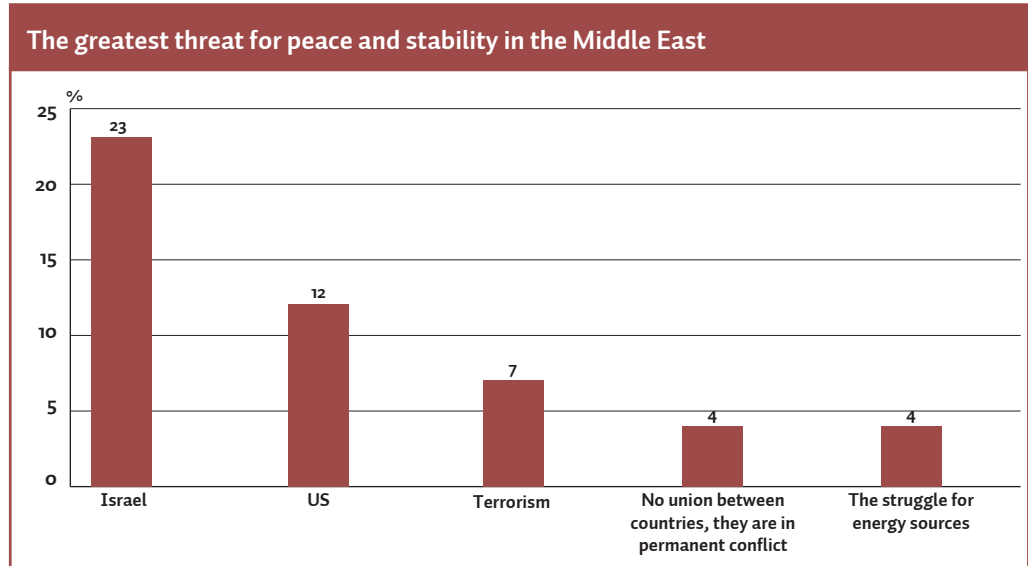


The future of relations between Turkey and the US



When asked about the future of Turkey-US relations, 53% have a positive view while 24% have a negative one. Given the recent crisis between Israel and Turkey and the disagreements over Iran, the fact that the majority have a positive view of the future of relations is an important finding.

Middle East - Turkey Relations

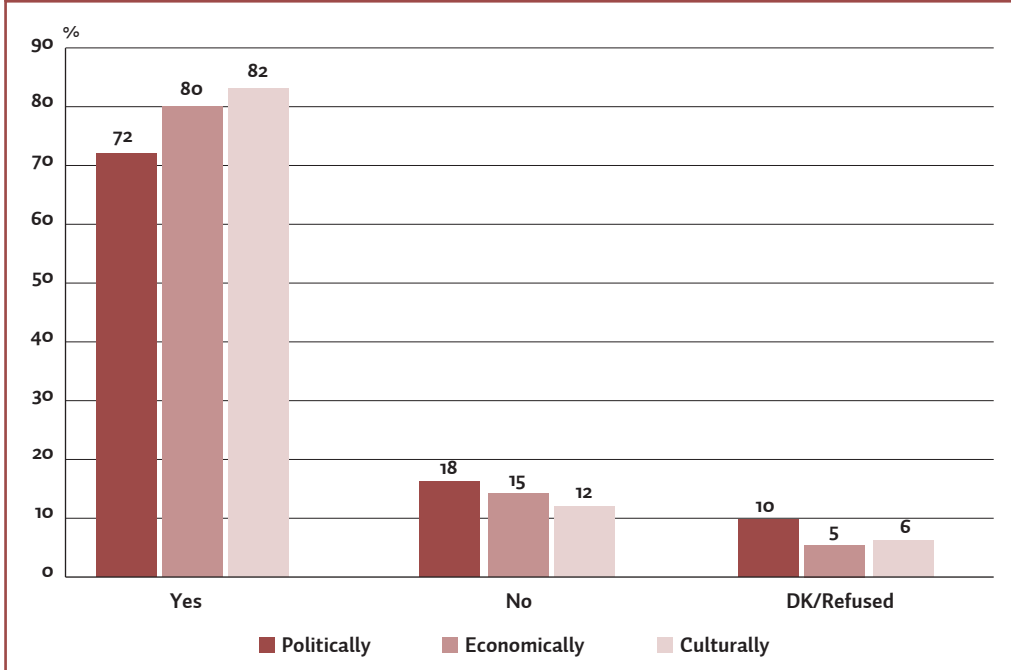


When asked to name the greatest threat to peace and stability in the Middle East, Israel was the most common response (23%). Israel is followed by the US, with 12%. Based on the survey *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010* conducted by TESEV Foreign Policy Programme⁴, it can be said that this result matches the general trend in the Middle East. According to the results of the said survey, the biggest threat to the Middle East was Israel (40%), followed by the US (26%). In the same survey, 9% saw Iran as a threat for the region. In Turkey however, Iran is not seen as an obstacle to peace and stability in the Middle East.

Terrorism was seen by 7% as the greatest threat to peace and stability in the region. This represented the third greatest threat to peace and stability in the region after Israel and the US. In addition, a lack of union between the countries (4%) and struggle for energy resources (4%) were the next most popular answers.

⁴ Mensur Akgün, Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, Jonathan Levack, Gökçe Perçinoğlu, *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010*, Istanbul: TESEV Publications, 2010.

Can Turkey be a model for the countries of the Middle East?



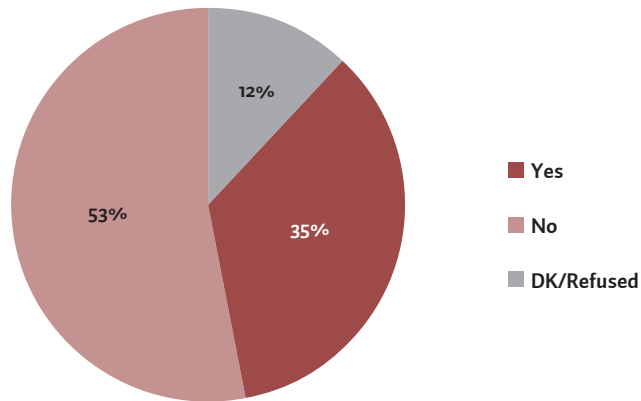
From the Turkish side, the idea of Turkey being a model for the countries of the Middle East is broadly favoured. According to the results of *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010*, 66% of the respondents from the Middle East saw Turkey as a model for the countries of the region. When the same question was asked in Turkey, 72% support the concept of Turkey as a political model, 80% as an economic model and 82% as a cultural model.

Among those that see Turkey as a political model, 16% cited Turkey's democratic regime and another 16% cited its political attitude. Those believing that Turkey could be a model in economic and cultural terms emphasized the country's economic power (30%) and cultural history (35%) respectively.

When these results are compared to the results from the previously mentioned Middle East survey, more reference is made to Turkey's Muslim identity in the region⁵, while the perception in Turkey focuses more on democracy. Those in Turkey that see it as a model because of its Muslim identity make up only 5% of the respondents, ranking in third place.

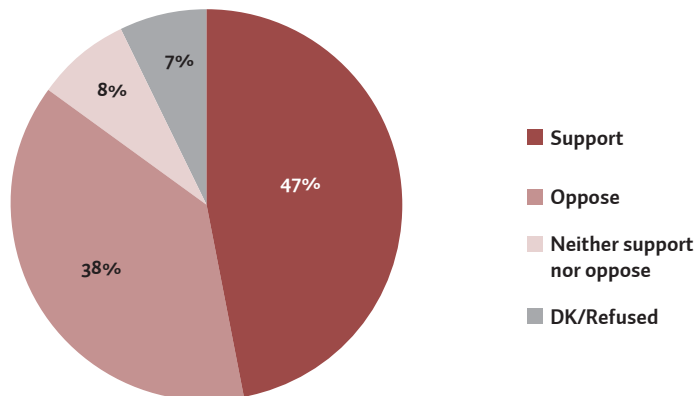
⁵ In the survey *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010*, 15% of the respondents stated they saw Turkey as a model because of its Muslim identity, 12% because of its economy, 11% because of its democratic regime and 10% because Turkey protects the rights of Palestinians and Muslims.

Iran: A threat to the region?



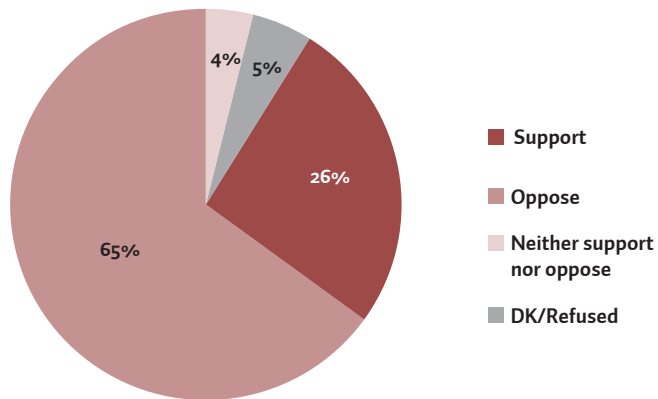
When asked to identify the major threat to peace and stability in the Middle East, Iran did not come up as a statistically significant answer. However, when the question was reshaped to ask whether they thought Iran was a threat to the region or not, 35% of the respondents said 'yes'. Nevertheless, 53% of survey respondents do not see Iran as a threat to the Middle East. When the answers are evaluated on a regional basis, Iran is perceived as a threat by 40% in the Black Sea region, 38% in Central Anatolia and 36% in the Mediterranean region. Interestingly, the regions that are the least concerned by Iran are East Anatolia with 25% and South East Anatolia with 26%.

Support for Iran's peaceful nuclear energy programme



Iran's peaceful nuclear energy programme finds support from 47% of respondents, while 38% are opposed. Regionally, the highest proportion of opponents to Iran's nuclear energy programme is found in the Marmara region with 49%, followed by South East Anatolia with 37% and the East Anatolia and Aegean regions both with 35%. The greatest support for Iran's peaceful nuclear energy programme comes from the Mediterranean and Central Anatolia regions, with 55% of the respondents in both regions saying they support it, followed by the Black Sea region with 51%.

Support for Iran developing nuclear weapons

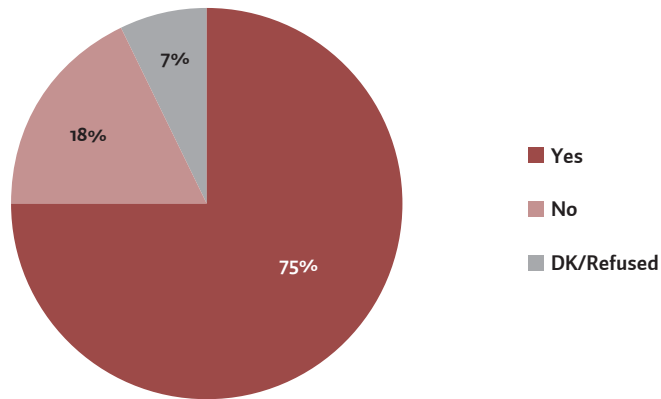


When asked whether they support the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons, support falls to 26% across Turkey. By comparison, support for the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons is far lower in Turkey than it is in the region.⁶

Looking at the results regionally, Central Anatolia is the most supportive of the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons with 35%, whereas the least supportive is the Marmara region with 70% opposition. In the East Anatolia region which neighbours Iran, 29% declare their support, while 31% do so in South East Anatolia.

⁶ In *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010*, the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons was supported by 39% of the people in the region with Iran excluded, and 40% when Iran was included. The question 'why do you favour Iran developing nuclear weapons?' was answered by a majority of 19% as 'because other states possess them', with 17% giving their reason as 'for Iran to ensure its own security'.

Should Turkey play a role in solving the Israeli-Palestinian problem?

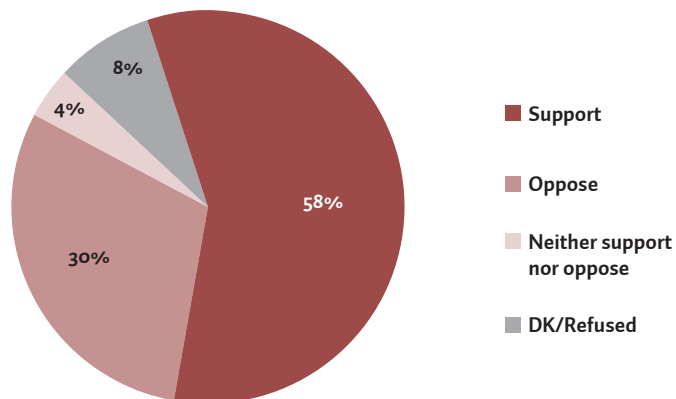


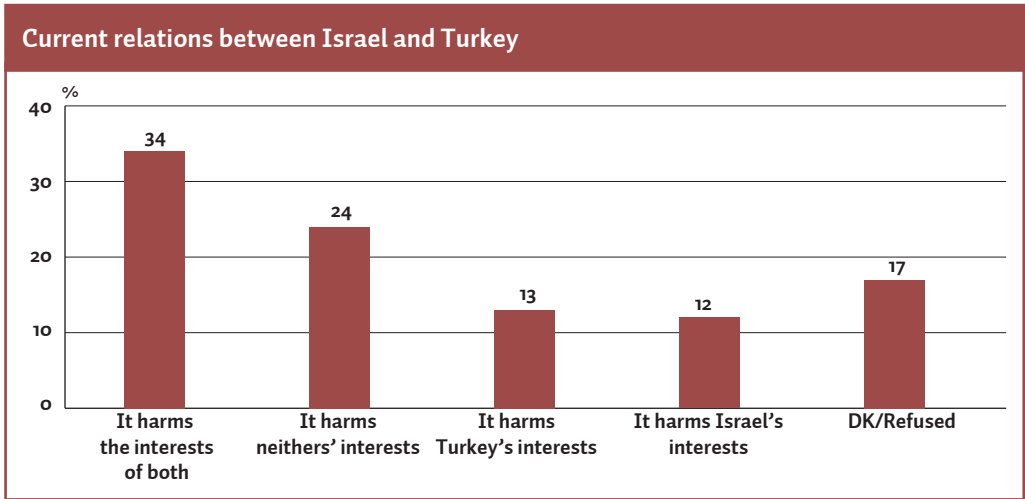
The prospect of Turkey playing a mediatory role in solving the Israeli-Palestinian problem is supported by 75% of respondents. This response can be interpreted as an indication that the visibility Turkey has gained in the recent years in the politics of the Middle East is generally approved of by the Turkish public. Those not supporting Turkey playing a mediatory role is low at 7%.

Generally, the Middle East also looks favourably on Turkey in the region. In *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East 2010* survey, a majority (78%) said 'Turkey should play a bigger role in the Middle East and a further 78% agreed with the statement that 'Turkey should play a mediatory role in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict'.

Furthermore, support is given to Turkey's contribution to international peace forces as an extension of the country's conflict resolution policy; Turkey sending peace forces to Lebanon is viewed favourably by 58%.

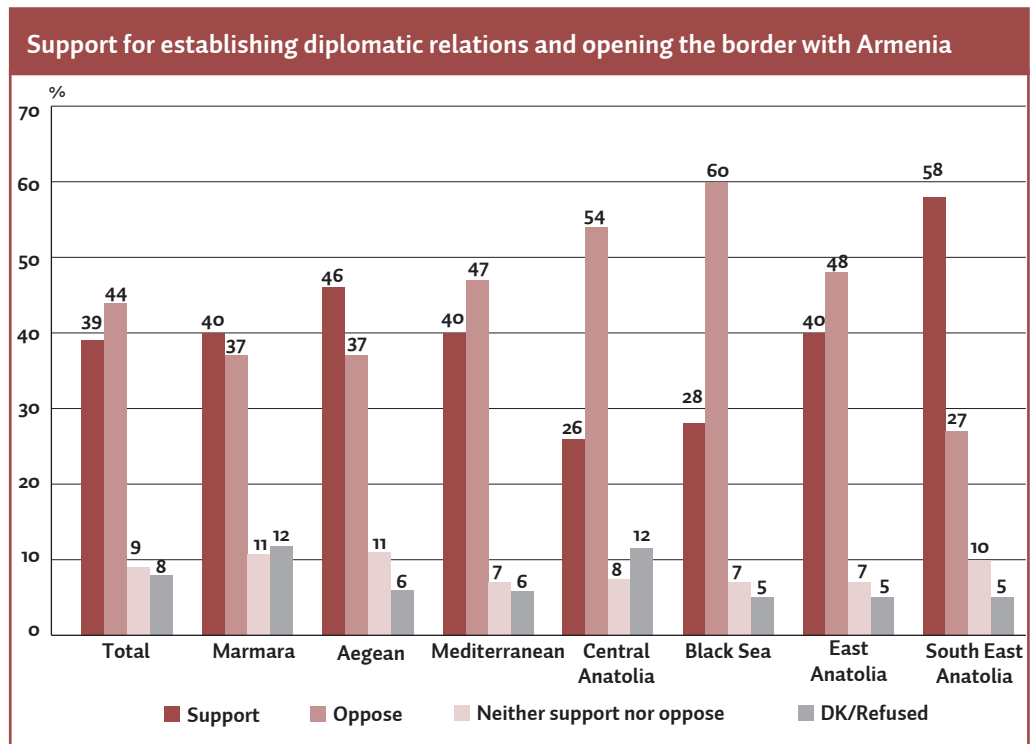
Support for Turkey sending peace forces to Lebanon



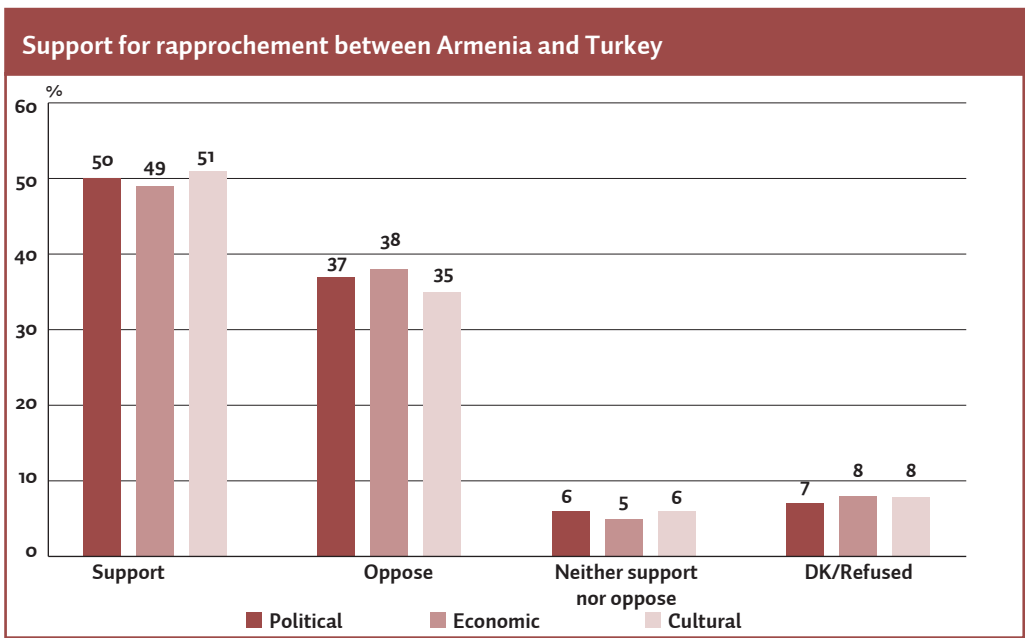


Following a rise in tensions in recent years, Israeli-Turkish relations entered into a state of crisis after the flotilla incident on 31st May 2010. As stated in previous sections of the report, Israel is seen as the most unfriendly country towards Turkey. However, when asked their views of the latest developments in the Israel-Turkey relations, 34% of the respondents said they thought that this situation harmed the interests of both countries. Those believing that only Turkey's interests were harmed and only Israel's interests were harmed were 13% and 12% respectively. From the answer given to this question, it can be deduced that in Turkey, relations with Israel are not based on a zero-sum game where one country's gain or loss is proportionate to the losses or gains of another country.

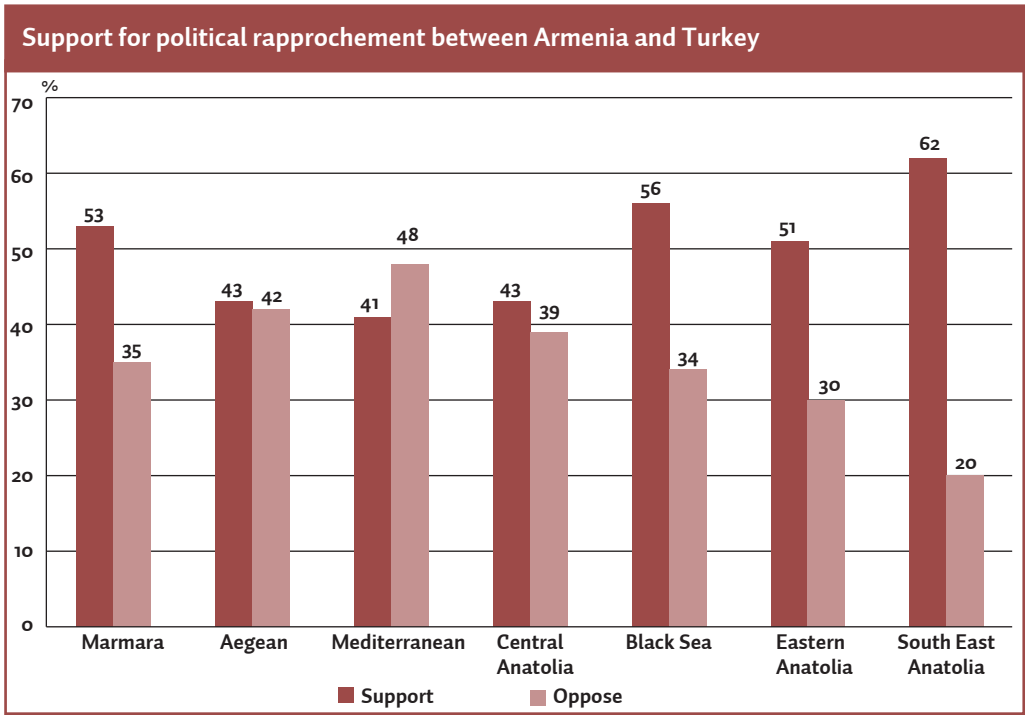
Caucasus/Central Asia - Turkey Relations



Across Turkey, 39% support establishing diplomatic relations with Armenia and opening the border, whereas 44% do not. Regionally, there are more supporters in the Marmara, Aegean and South East Anatolia regions, while opposition to the rapprochement process is high in the Mediterranean, Central Anatolia, Black Sea and East Anatolia regions. Particularly in the Central Anatolia and Black Sea regions, the process receives the lowest support; in Central Anatolia, 54% are opposed to establishing diplomatic relations with Armenia and opening the border, while opposition goes up to 60% in the Black Sea region. On the other hand, South East Anatolia is the most supportive of the rapprochement process with 58%. In Eastern Anatolia, which has a land border with Armenia, 48% of the population do not support the process.



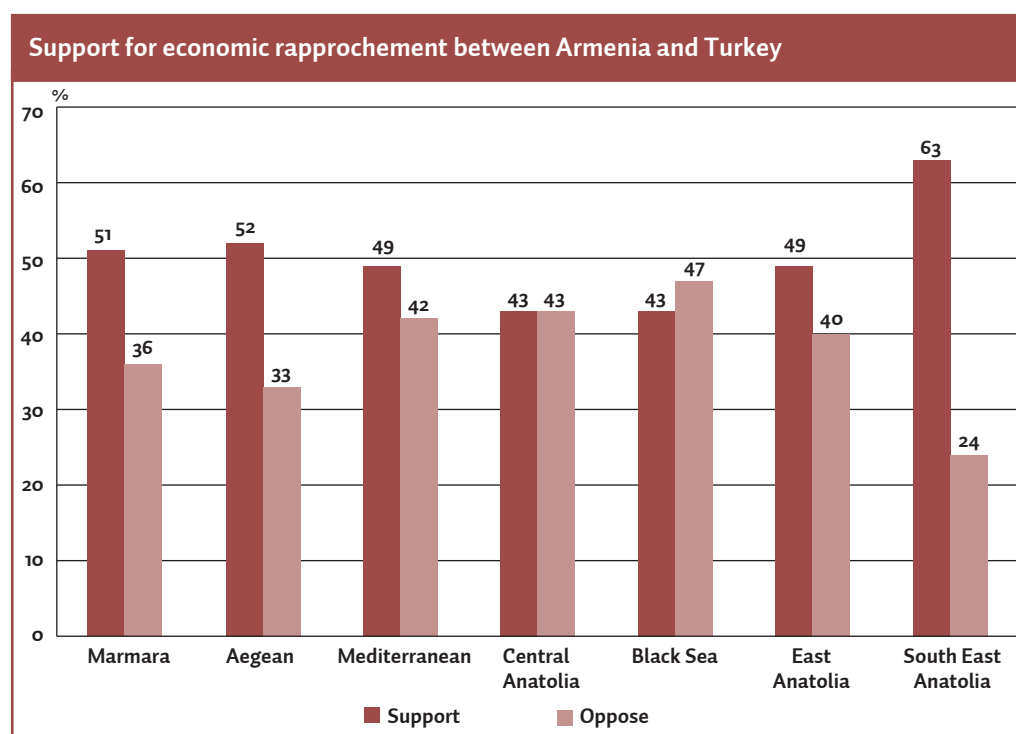
Political, economic and cultural rapprochement with Armenia receives almost equal support. Throughout Turkey, political rapprochement is supported by 50%, economic rapprochement by 49% and cultural rapprochement by 51%. When the question is rephrased to ask whether they support establishing diplomatic relations and opening the border with Armenia, fewer respondents express support.



On a regional basis, South East Anatolia and the Black Sea region are the most supportive of political rapprochement, with 62% and 56% support respectively. It is interesting that the Black Sea region, where 60% are opposed to establishing diplomatic relations and opening the border with Armenia, appears to support the political rapprochement between the two countries. It is also noteworthy that the East Anatolia region supports political rapprochement with 51% for and 30% against, while being opposed to establishing diplomatic relations and opening the border.

Another important finding is that only in the Mediterranean region did opposition to political rapprochement outweigh support; 48% take a stance against political rapprochement, while 41% support the process.

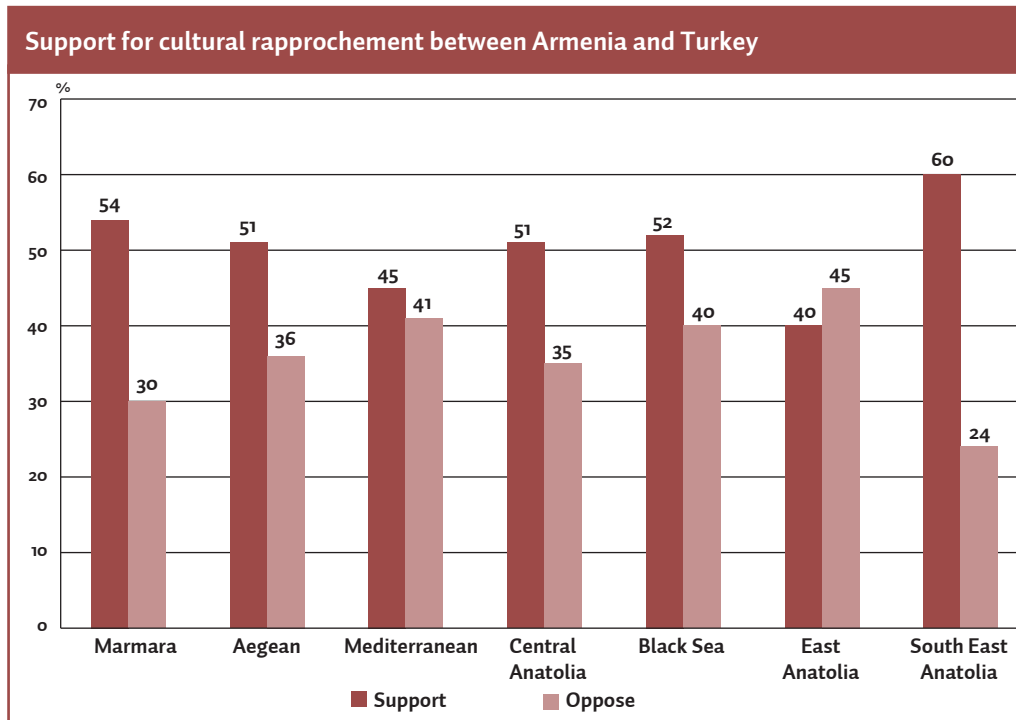
Of those supporting the political rapprochement, when asked why, 39% wanted to resolve the conflict. The second most common response was because 'both countries are neighbours' with 11%. On the other hand, those in opposition to the rapprochement process based their opinion on the following reasons: 13% because Armenians are unfriendly towards Turks, 11% because of alleged betrayal and 9% because of the genocide claim. Those opposing the political rapprochement with Armenia because of Azerbaijan make up only 5% of respondents - an interesting result.



Support for economic rapprochement is 63% in South East Anatolia, 52% in the Aegean, 51% in Marmara and 49% in the Mediterranean and East Anatolian regions. 47% are against the process in the Black Sea region, while both support and opposition to economic rapprochement is equal in Central Anatolia at 43%. Of those supporting economic rapprochement, 39% do so because they feel it will be beneficial for the Turkish economy. This is followed by the two reasons emphasized by those supporting political rapprochement: 17% of respondents emphasize the importance of

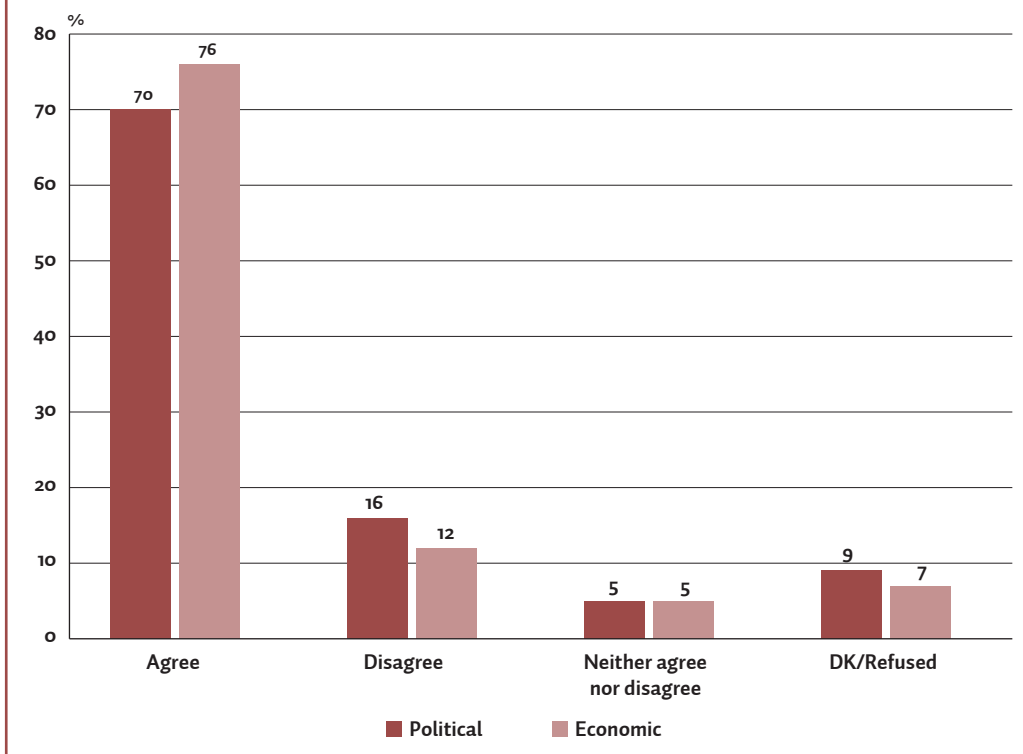
settling the conflict between the two countries, while 14% give the fact that both countries are neighbours as the reason for their support for economic rapprochement.

Of respondents opposed to economic rapprochement, 21% state that Armenians are unfriendly towards Turks as their reasoning - the same reason underlined by those opposed to political rapprochement. This is followed by Armenia being a small country and thus making it unlikely that economic rapprochement will be beneficial (13%) and relations with Azerbaijan (8%).



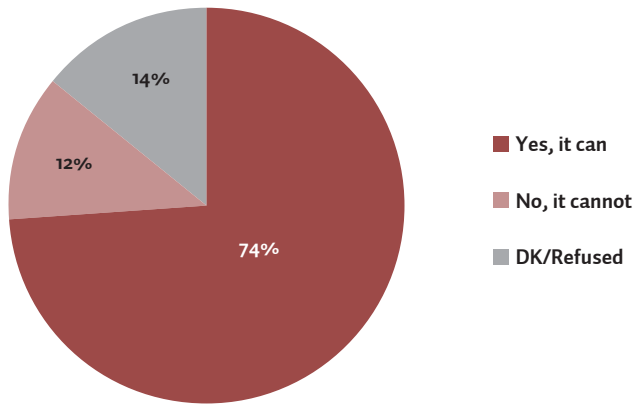
Finally, when we look at the answers given to the question about cultural rapprochement, we see that South East Anatolia is again the most supportive region with 60%. East Anatolia and the Mediterranean regions appear to have the highest concentration of those opposed to cultural rapprochement, with 45% and 41% respectively. Those supporting the cultural rapprochement express their reasons for doing so as follows: 15% so that the conflict between the two countries can be settled and 14% because the peoples of Turkey and Armenia share a common history. For those against the process, 16% cite cultural differences and another 16% base their opposition on the rationale that Armenians are unfriendly towards Turks.

Should Turkey increase its political and economic cooperation with Russia?



Increased economic cooperation between Russia and Turkey is supported by 76% of respondents, with only 12% stating opposition. Increased political cooperation between the two countries is also widely supported with 70% favourable to it, while those expressing a negative opinion of political rapprochement is low at just 16%. Based on these results, it can be said that the recent political and economic rapprochement between Russia and Turkey is well regarded.

Can Turkey play an effective role in the Caucasus and Central Asia?



The survey shows that 74% of respondents support Turkey playing a role in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Based on this, it can be said that there is public support for Turkey not turning a blind eye to recent developments in the region, such as the Georgian-Russian War of 2008, and it playing an active role in large scale energy projects such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan or Nabucco. Looking at it regionally, it is seen that support is over 70% in all regions. Support for Turkey playing an effective role in the Caucasus and Central Asia is supported by 79% in East Anatolia, 79% in the Mediterranean and 77% in the Black Sea regions.

Afterword

This section is not an epilogue to the survey but rather an afterword to this presentation. We are of the opinion that a lot more can be said about perceptions of Turkey's foreign policy and that this survey will light the way for decision makers and question many of the assertions concerning Turkey's foreign policy.

We hope you agree that many of the findings derived from the survey are noteworthy. In our opinion, the positive view of the future of Turkey-US relations and the continuing expectation and desire for EU membership are important. At least at societal level, the claims that Turkey's axis has shifted or that it has drawn away from the West are unfounded.

The results indicate that Turkey, as a society, has not drawn away from 'the West'. In Turkey, a significant majority (69%) of the people want Turkey to become a member of the EU and want to see improvement in its relations with the US and even with Israel.

To avoid misunderstanding, we should stress that this survey does not enumerate the official foreign policy trends of Turkey or the AKP government, but rather provides a picture of the trends and expectations of the people of Turkey. Nonetheless, if we have to make a deduction, based on the data and the practices of the government, it can be argued that these two are never far away from each other.

On the other hand, this survey depicts a picture of society taken at a specific time. With the questions we posed, we tried to see the big picture. To understand the background of this picture, we will have to further dwell on its findings.

We would like to continue this research and assess society's perception of Turkey's foreign policy. TESEV Foreign Policy Programme and KA Research have already agreed to work together to this effect. Reflecting of the survey's findings, an analysis series will follow soon and, no doubt, will be further enriched with studies undertaken by others.

Methodology

The *Foreign Policy Perceptions in Turkey* survey was conducted by KA Research through Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) at the company's call centre located in Istanbul. The survey was administered on 1,000 respondents who were over the age of 18 and who were selected through the random sampling method from 81 provinces in the 12 regions of Turkey as determined using the NUTS - I methodology⁷; for data analysis purposes, the results were distributed among Turkey's 7 administrative regions.

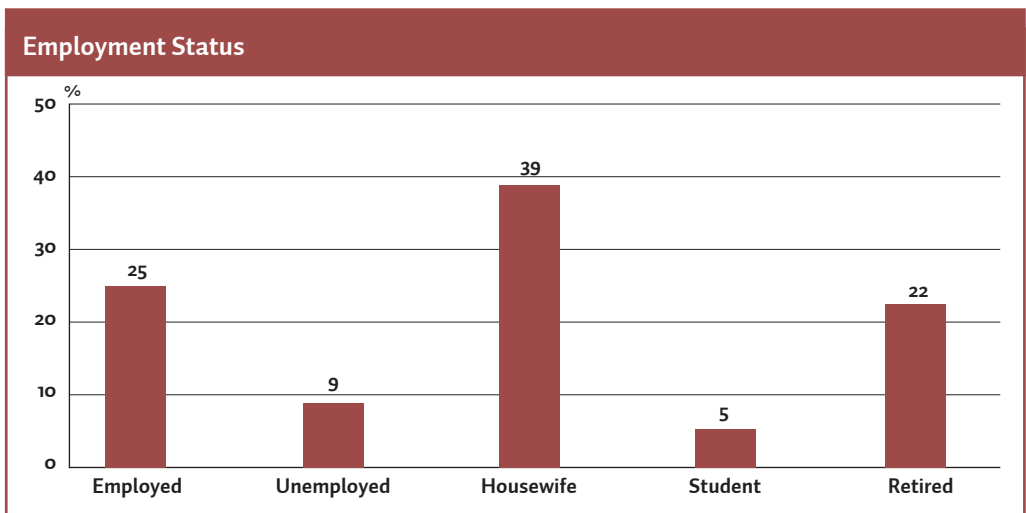
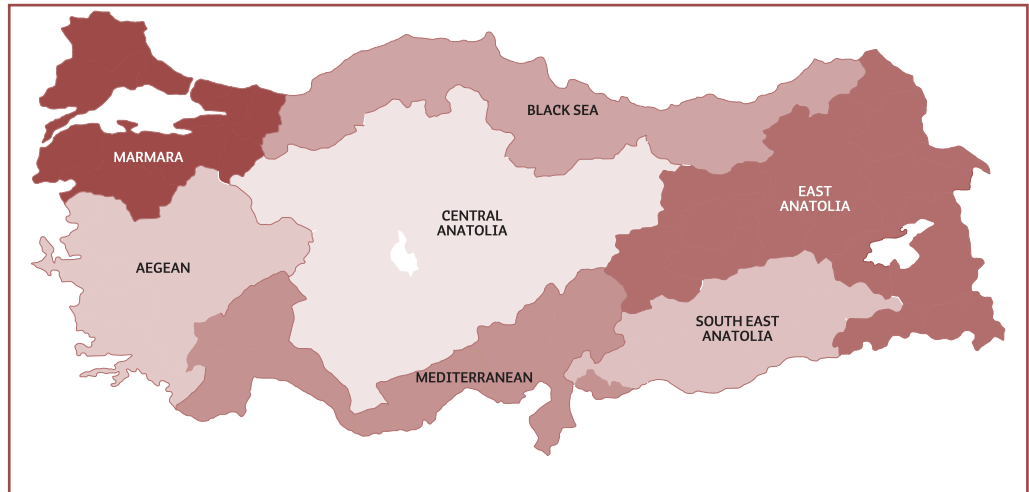
The fieldwork for the project was carried out on 6-14th December 2010, quality control on 7-17th December 2010, and data analysis between 17th December 2010 and 26th January 2011. The survey consisted of 54 content-based, 12 demographic and 20 quality control questions. The CATI fieldwork was carried out by 32 specifically-trained interviewers who were native speakers of Turkish. A successful interview varied between 12 to 57 minutes in length, with an average of 23.3 minutes spent on an interview. The phone numbers of interviewed households were produced by generating random numbers (the last 4 numbers), and the respondents were determined through the full enumeration method⁸.

During the fieldwork, 1906 households were successfully contacted, with 906 of them refusing to answer the questionnaire due to various reasons, resulting in a response rate of 52%. The survey has a +/-2.54% margin of error with a confidence level of 95%.

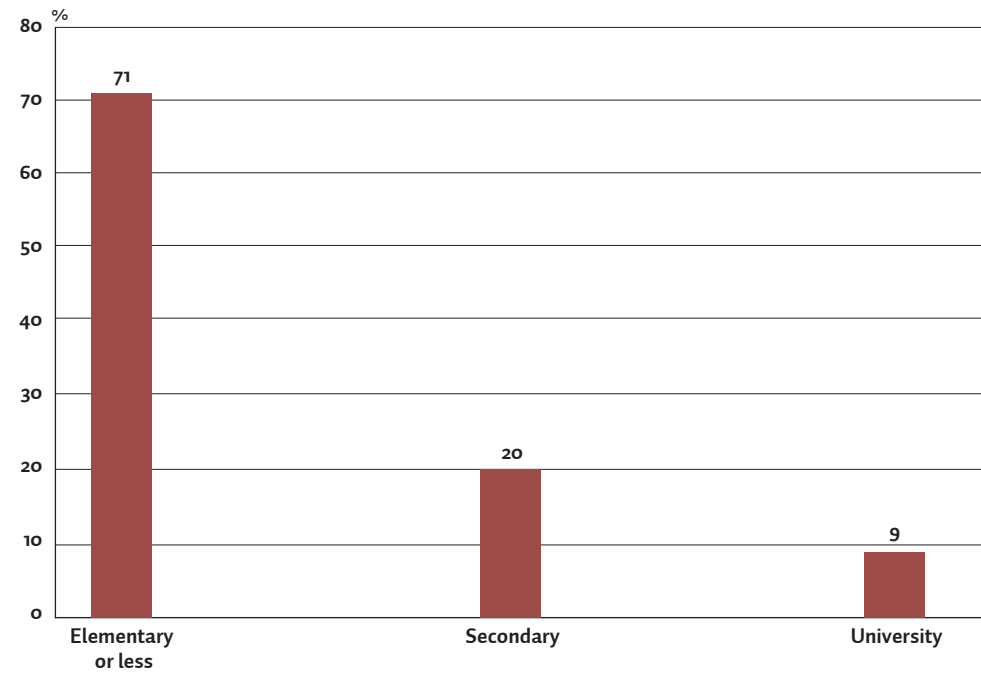
7 Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics – NUTS. Created in order to eliminate the developmental differences between regions and thus analyze the regions socio-economically and to produce data that is comparable with the European Union (EU), NUTS is a system defined according to EU regional categorization. It consists of three levels. In the first step 81 provinces are defined as level three regional units (NUTS – III). Provinces that are similar economically, socially, culturally and geographically are grouped and defined under 26 level two units (NUTS – II). Again using the same criteria level two units are grouped and defined under 12 level one units. (NUTS - I) <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/DIESS/SiniflamaSurumDetayAction.do?surumId=164>

8 In the “full enumeration” method the respondent is asked the number of all 18+ people living in the household. Then, each 18+ person who is registered into the CATI system is given a number by the system. The CATI system generates a random number (for example 2) and the designated respondent is the person matching that number (the person listed in the second rank).

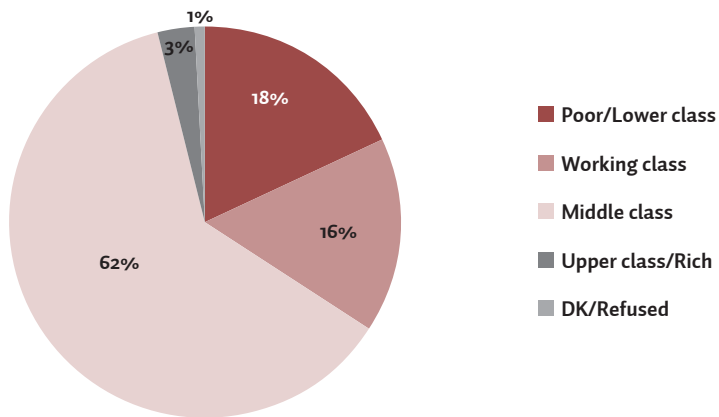
Demographics



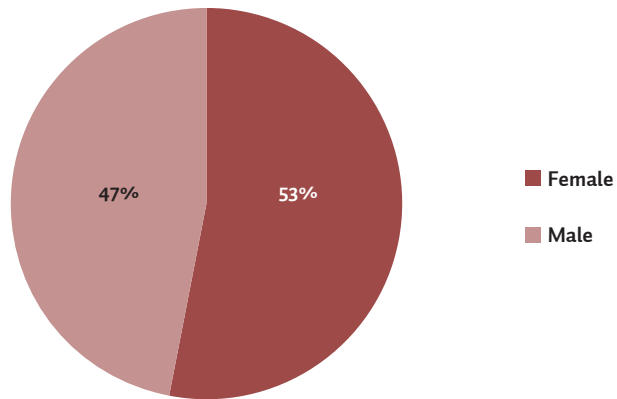
Education



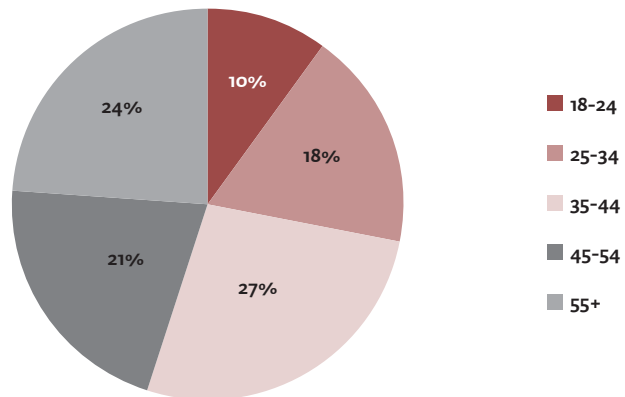
Social class (as stated by respondents)



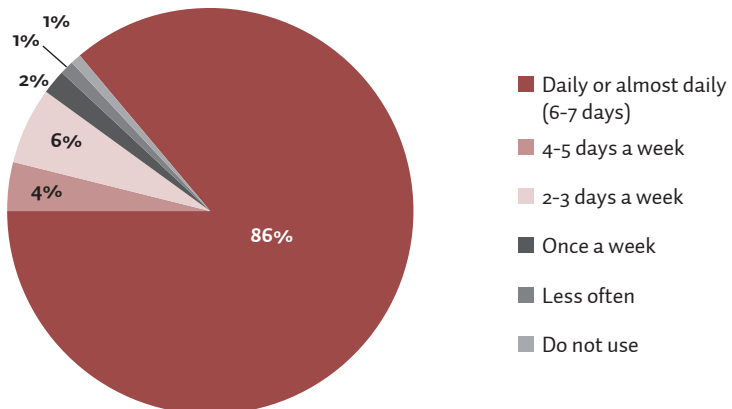
Gender



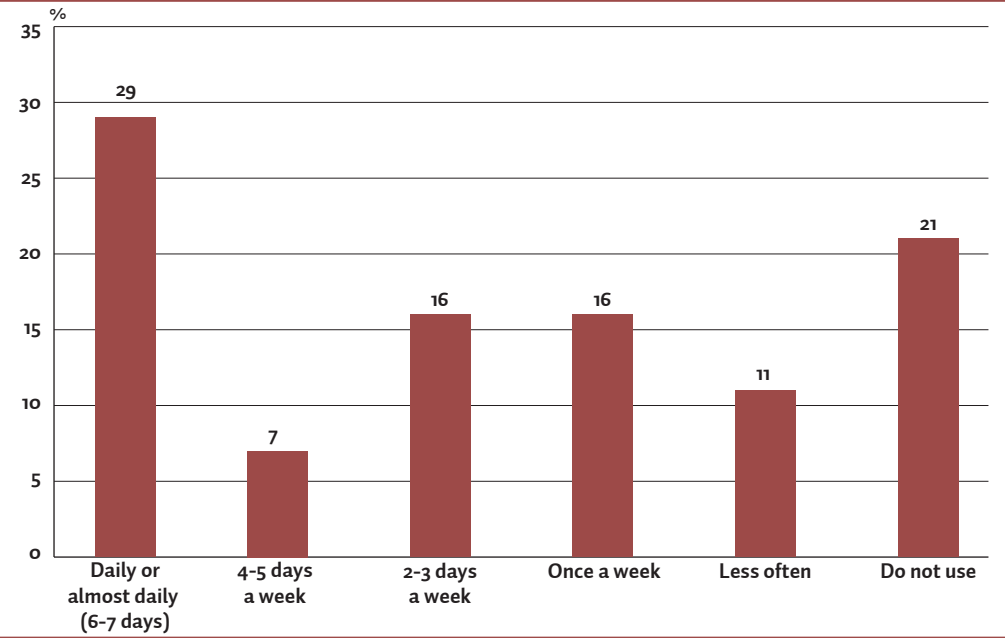
Age



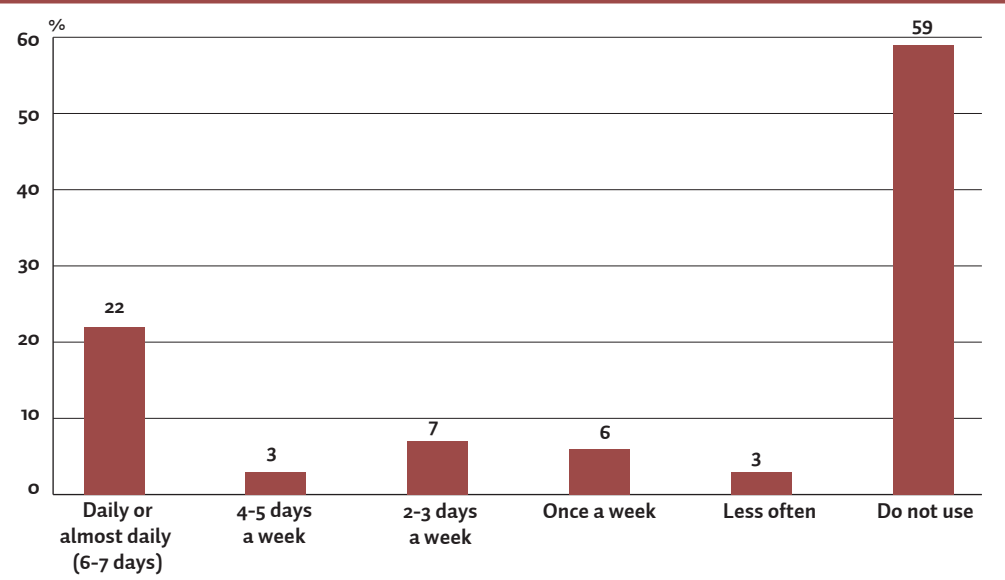
Media usage habits - TV



Media usage habits - Newspapers



Media usage habits - Internet



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