

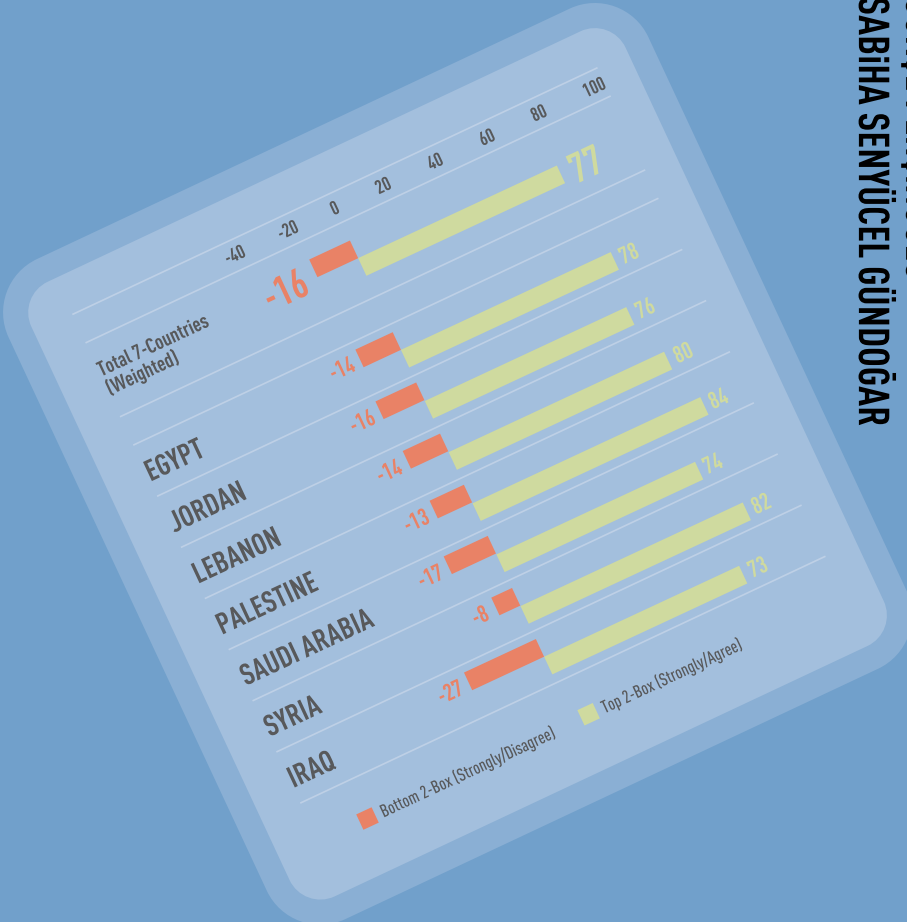
THE PERCEPTION OF TURKEY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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Foreword

In recent years, Turkey has gone beyond its traditional foreign policy and increased its political, cultural, and economic presence in the Middle East. In diplomacy, mediation, and the solution of regional conflicts, Turkey has gone far beyond its traditional stance and role in order to increase stability and prosperity in the region. On the other hand, Turkey's democratization process and the rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has drawn significant attention, not least in the Middle East. Cultural interest has also grown with Turkish soap operas becoming ever more popular.

This study was prepared in order to measure this interest. Between the 24 - 29th of July, simultaneous interviews were conducted by telephone in Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria, and face-to-face in Iraq. A total of 2,006 people were interviewed. Fieldwork and survey analysis were carried out by KA Research Company, one of the region and the field's most competent market research companies. The survey's questions were prepared by TESEV's Foreign Policy Program and KA Research Company with the support of Professor Meliha Altunışık, Professor Ersin Kalaycıoğlu and Professor Gökhan Çetinsaya. We are thus grateful to Prof. Altunışık, Prof. Kalaycıoğlu and Prof. Çetinsaya, and Ahu Alanya and Canan Uçar of KA; they made this possible. As in every study, TESEV's Foreign Policy Program also worked tirelessly.

However, if Bülent Kılınçarslan, President of KA Research Company, had not offered us his company's services, it would never have been possible. We are extremely grateful to him. In addition, we would like to thank the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Bilateral Fund, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Association Turkey Office, the Open Society Foundation, and the TESEV High Advisory Board for their financial support.

As will be seen in the following research, the results were both surprising and confirming. However, three results are noteworthy at this juncture:

- First, support for Turkey's role in conflict resolution was high among respondents.
- The second was that the most important problem for the people of the region was not, as we had assumed, the Palestine problem, but the economy.

- The third was that Turkey's relations with the Middle East was not seen as a barrier to European Union (EU) membership. On the contrary, the Arab world supported Turkey's membership.

When we designed this project, our aim was to shed light on the process of policymaking and to inform public opinion of the repercussions of Turkey's Middle East policy. We believe that this research rests on solid scientific foundations and thus will serve its intended purpose.

This report constitutes the research's first stage and is its first assessment. Next, there will be a workshop in which experts from the region and abroad will participate and another academic report that will be strengthened with in-depth interviews. Finally, we plan to share our findings and analysis with policymakers in major capitals throughout the world.

Sincerely,

MENSUR AKGÜN

ON BEHALF OF THE TESEV FOREIGN POLICY PROGRAM

Introduction

Until recently Turkey's Middle East policy revolved around a sense of mutual ambivalence; Turkey chose not to be a party to the region's problems, seeing it through the frame of East-West tension and its stated desire to be associated with the West. The same thing also applied for the Middle East - Turkey had little sway with anyone. Put simply, throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and even the 1980s relations remained far from intimate.

The change began when Turkey sought support for its Cyprus policy in the region. Turkey's interest further increased during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war which brought about various threats and opportunities, but it was really Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 that changed Turkey's view of the region. The humanitarian crisis that ensued in March 1991, which resulted in thousands of refugees pouring over Turkey's borders, and then the belief that a solution to the Palestine problem could be found at the Madrid and Oslo Peace Conferences both accelerated Turkey's changing view of the region. With the AK Party's rise to power, this change and rapprochement gained speed and visibility like never before.

The ascendancy of the view that argued for maintaining Turkey's political influence in the region has resulted in a qualitative increase in relations with the region; Turkey's foreign policy elite have begun to see the Arab world differently. Thus relations have intensified, deepened, and gradually became increasingly close. At the same time, the Arab world has also shown great interest in Turkey's recent democratic experience. While Arab democrats and opinion leaders saw Turkey as an example for themselves, Turkey has also started to act more sensitively in response to their interests and expectations.

The Davos incident between Shimon Peres and Tayyip Erdoğan on January 29, 2009 also helped strengthen Turkey's newfound image. Moreover Turkey has stopped concentrating on problems and started talking about solutions like never before; by mediating between Israel and Syria, Turkey is now trying to support peaceful solutions. Likewise, it played the role of facilitator in resolving the 2008 Lebanon crisis and the Israeli intervention in Gaza. As such Turkey has played a role at both the highest and most basic level.

The importance ascribed to Turkey and especially to the AKP in the American strategy that developed after September 11 paved the way for both Turkey's growing role in the region and the region becoming more aware of Turkey. Then came growing cultural proximity: in particular, several Turkish soap operas have become hits in the Arab world. As another KA survey suggested, 71.5% of Saudi women over the age of 15 enjoyed Turkish television series – higher than another except those from Syria.¹ In the broadest sense, strong political, economic, and cultural relations have been established.

This project, carried out simultaneously on July 24-29 in 7 countries with a total of 2,006 participants, confirms this relationship and presents noteworthy results. As the research makes clear, the closeness and sympathy felt for Turkey in much of the region is significant. Respondents openly supported Turkey's current regional policy. However, contrary to what might be presupposed in Turkey, respondents did not identify Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the greatest problem they faced – the economy, unemployment and poverty were of far greater concern.

When economic problems existed in the countries surveyed, they were rated ahead of other concerns by as much as 49%. Policymakers in Turkey should take into consideration the fact that even 32% of Palestinians gave precedence to economic problems and, even in an oil-rich country like Saudi Arabia, 39% of people took economic problems seriously. That 75% of respondents had a positive opinion of Turkey should also be of interest to policymakers. Especially when compared to 72% having similar opinions of Egypt – often considered the political leader of the Arab world.

When taking into account the responses given to question 6A about support for the Palestinian people, only 2% of respondents rank Turkish support as the most significant. This may seem low when viewed in Turkey but the situation might not be so dire; the question is not only open-ended but Turkey was also the only country outside the Arab world that was thought to protect Palestine. Looking at Palestinian responses to the question, Turkey ends up ahead of many other actors with 7% (5% in question 6B). Here another point should be noted: 15% of Palestinians (36% in question 6B) believe that no one protects their rights, including their own people. This sense of hopelessness is evident across the region. In sum, despite efforts to do so, Turkey has not yet played a key role in this issue.

1 KA Research Company. The Noor Phenomenon: From the Hearts and Minds of Saudi Women. Human Research Program – Project: 01 Noor. March 2009.

As to why this is needs further investigation, particularly as the Arab world wants Turkey's assistance in finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem, or rather wants it to assume the role of mediator. 79% of respondents across the region called on Turkey to play such a role. This percentage was as high as 89% in Palestine itself and 86% in Syria.

Respondents not only thought that Turkey should be more interested in the Palestine problem but should also play a bigger role in the Arab world. In question 8B, 77% of respondents from throughout the region called on Turkey to play a bigger role in the Arab world. Moreover, in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and even in Iraq, people thought that the Turkish government had friendly relations with their own government. More importantly, 76% of respondents accepted the view that Turkey will contribute positively to achieving peace in the Arab world.

Interestingly, despite Turkey's secular political system, 61% of respondents saw Turkey as a model for the Arab world. The fact that even 55% of respondents in Saudi Arabia thought that Turkey could be a model is evidence of the growing sense of opinion. As for when the question was asked more openly, the results qualitatively confirm one another; they show that the Arab world accepts the Turkish example of Islam and democracy and that they perceive it as a model for themselves.

Support for the entrance of a Muslim country into the EU, however, stands at 57%. Though this percentage might seem low when contrasted with the other results relating to Turkey's role in the region, we should consider the fact that support for the EU in the region is only 47%, it is actually quite high. Furthermore, 64% of people in the seven countries where the research was carried out believe that Turkey's membership process has had a positive effect on its role in the Arab world.

**QUESTION 1: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST URGENT ISSUE
FACING YOUR COUNTRY TODAY?**

Values in Percentages (%)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Economic problems	49	56	62	40	32	39	42	40
Infrastructure and public services	5	3	5	6	3	3	2	15
Education and schools	3	2	3	1	1	5	4	3
Palestinian-Israeli conflict	3	2	3	7	38	2	6	0
None, no problem at all	7	6	9	3	1	13	14	0
Don't know	11	10	8	3	1	19	20	0

**QUESTION 2: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST URGENT ISSUE
FACING THE ARAB WORLD TODAY?**

Values in Percentages (%)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Economic problems	26	26	34	20	24	31	31	21
Education and schools	4	5	4	3	2	2	3	3
Other political issues	10	10	13	14	14	13	8	4
Terrorism	3	2	2	3	1	2	1	10
Palestinian-Israeli conflict	18	22	17	19	19	14	17	9
Disunity of Arab states	8	12	6	12	12	7	5	0
Don't know	9	9	8	9	6	11	19	0

In the seven countries where the research was conducted, the 2006 people surveyed were asked in an open-ended fashion the following questions: "In your opinion, what is the most urgent issue facing your country today?" and "In your opinion, what is the most urgent issue facing the Arab world today?" The responses given have been sorted and the values expressed as percentages in the two tables above.

When the responses were evaluated:

- Contrary to popular belief that the most important issue facing the region is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, respondents identified economic concerns as far more significant (unemployment, poverty, living standards). 49% of respondents ranked domestic economic issues as the most significant whereas 26% thought the economy was the region's biggest problem.
- Indeed, looking at the responses to the question: "What is the most urgent issue facing your country today?" we see that economic problems ranked first in every country except Palestine. Even in Palestine, where the Israeli-Palestinian problem is seen as the most important problem, economic issues garner 32% of responses.
- When asked "What is the most urgent issue facing the Arab world today?" economic issues rank first with 26% - this is the case in all seven countries. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict loomed large as the region's second most important problem with 18% of responses.

QUESTION 3: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS?

Top 2 Box (Very favorable % + Somewhat favorable %)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
United Nations	40	36	34	50	36	36	35	56
NATO	23	17	15	23	17	21	15	48
European Union	47	46	43	57	44	40	48	57
Arab League	53	54	43	50	34	55	54	54
Organization of Islamic Conference	62	60	59	49	53	71	59	62

In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked what they thought about the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, the Arab League, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “very favorable,” “somewhat favorable,” “somewhat unfavorable” or “very unfavorable.” The table above was prepared from the responses given, combining the values for the responses of “very favorable” and “somewhat favorable” as percentages.

According to the responses given:

- Apart from in Lebanon, the Organization of the Islamic Conference was the most positively viewed organization with 62%.
- In Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, the Arab League was the next most favorable viewed organization. In the region generally, the Arab League was second as well with 53%.
- Throughout the region generally, the European Union (EU) took third place. This shows that the EU’s image in the region is relatively strong and that its monitoring of regional politics has been successful, particularly in Lebanon where 57% of people thought highly of. Indeed, Lebanon stands out as the only country among the 7 countries researched to place the EU in first place. This might be in part due to Lebanon’s sectarian nature and the economic aid that the EU gave for infrastructure reconstruction and post-war rehabilitation.
- The EU also stands out in Palestine and Jordan. While in Palestine the EU is the second most positively regarded organization with 44%, in Jordan it shares second place with the Arab League with 43%.
- The fact that in every country the EU was in front of the United Nations (UN) stands out.
- Without exception in all seven countries, NATO was seen as the most negatively regarded organization.

QUESTION 4: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES?

Top 2 Box (Very favorable % + Somewhat favorable %)	Region Total Weighted	Region Total Weighted*	01 ERG	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Egypt	80	72	89	72	70	62	78	71	68
Iraq	64	61	61	51	50	60	58	67	84
Jordan	69	68	69	93	83	77	78	76	49
Lebanon	72	72	70	72	83	79	74	78	68
Palestine	62	62	58	59	54	74	63	69	67
Saudi Arabia	80	78	87	83	76	76	92	81	44
Syria	75	72	76	83	70	80	80	94	52
Turkey	75	75	72	82	76	87	77	87	69

*This calculation does not include the results of the respondents' own countries.

In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked what they thought about Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: "very favorable," "somewhat favorable," "somewhat unfavorable" or "very unfavorable." The table above reflects the responses given as percentages, combining the values for the responses of "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable". When evaluating the total weight of the responses in the region, in the first column answers that survey respondents gave about their own countries were included; in the second column, when doing the calculations, the survey respondents own countries were not included.

When the responses given were analyzed:

- Contrary to the assumption that the people of the Middle East don't think highly of it, Turkey has a good image in all seven countries in which the research was carried out. Indeed, Turkey was the second most highly regarded country after Saudi Arabia with 75%.
- As a general trend we see that the people who participated in the survey placed their own countries first. The only exception to this was Palestine, where the people thought more positively of 5 countries (Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Jordan). We see that Turkey was the most supported country in Palestine with 87% of respondents responding favorable.

- Moreover, Turkey is also the most highly regarded country in Syria after itself. This is despite relations between the two countries being tense until recently and the fact that the survey was conducted before visa requirements between Syria and Turkey were mutually abolished.
- In Iraq, it is seen that, other than Iraq itself, no particular country fared well; Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, and Turkey had close percentages, but again Turkey was the second country in Iraq by a small margin.
- In all of the six countries Egypt also had a positive image.

QUESTION 5: WHICH COUNTRY POSES THE GREATEST THREAT TO THE ARAB WORLD?

Values in percentages (%)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Israel	48	50	53	62	51	39	57	43
USA	18	15	16	11	25	23	14	29
Iran	9	7	5	8	9	9	3	22
Other	5	5	7	5	4	5	3	6
No one	1	2	3	0	1	2	1	0
Don't know	16	19	13	10	9	19	20	0
Refused	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	0

In the seven countries where the research was conducted, the 2006 people surveyed were asked in an open-ended fashion the question: "In your opinion, which country poses the greatest threat to the Arab world?" The responses have been sorted and the values given as percentages in the table above.

When the responses given were assessed:

- Without exception, survey participants saw Israel and the United States of America (USA) as the greatest threats to the region. Israel took first place (48%) and the USA came second (18%).
- While it might have been expected that the USA would rank first in Iraq, even here Israel was viewed as the most threatening ahead of the USA by a large margin (43% and 29% respectively).
- Despite the fact that Iran is perceived to be a major threat by external observers, it is not seen as a great threat by most people in the region. Iraq is an exception in this case; this may be due to years of war between Iran and Iraq and that the belief that Iran has openly given support to Shia Arabs in Iraq.

**QUESTION 6A: WHO DEFENDS THE MOST THE RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIANS IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT?**

Values in percentages (%)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Their own people (Resistance/ Insurgents/Militias)	30	27	32	36	40	31	28	37
Their own government	8	3	2	2	3	3	1	32
No one	7	7	8	15	15	10	6	0
Other Muslim people	6	6	2	4	3	11	5	6
Other Muslim governments	6	5	3	3	2	7	6	6
Arab states	3	4	2	3	1	4	3	0
Egypt	16 / 2*	29	1	2	7	7	0	2
Syria	5 / 2*	1	3	5	2	1	34	2
Turkey	2	2	3	1	7	1	1	2
Jordan	2 / 1*	1	26	0	1	1	1	1
Others	11	9	11	16	15	18	6	11

**QUESTION 6B: WHO DEFENDS THE SECOND THE RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIANS IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT?**

Values in percentages (%)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
No one	18	19	25	33	36	25	21	0
Other Muslims	11	9	8	7	9	14	9	17
Their own people (Resistance/ Insurgents/Militias)	9	8	4	5	3	5	6	23
Their own goverments	7	6	6	8	5	6	5	13
Other Muslim goverments	7	5	5	8	3	8	7	12
Syria	7 / 6*	8	3	5	5	6	14	4
Saudi Arabia	4 / 4*	7	3	1	2	5	1	0
Arab states	4	5	5	4	3	5	4	0
Turkey	3	2	4	2	5	1	6	8
Egypt	7 / 2*	10	7	3	6	6	3	3
Jordan	2 / 1*	1	10	1	4	1	1	1
Others	9	9	11	17	9	9	7	11

***This calculation does not include the results of the respondents' own countries.**

In the seven countries where the research was conducted, the 2006 people surveyed were asked in an open-ended fashion, first, "In your opinion, who defends the most the rights of the Palestinians in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?" and then, "In your opinion, who defends the second the rights of the Palestinians in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?"

When the responses given were analyzed:

- Survey participants displayed a degree of realism, suggesting Palestinians themselves are the most likely to uphold their rights (30%). Despite this, the percentage of those who felt the Palestine problem was hopeless was high - 7% in question 6A and 18% in question 6B.
- It can be argued that the Palestinians trust Egypt and Turkey more than other countries. In Palestine, Arab states polled just 1% whereas Turkey polled 7%, which can be taken as qualitative evidence of the trust placed in Turkey. In Jordan it was thought that Turkey (3%) defended Palestinian rights more than the Arab states (2%). Turkey's economic initiatives in Palestine may have impacted just as Turkey's recent rebuke against Israel may have done.
- According to the results coming out of Iraq, a country in the grips of war thought, only the Palestinians and the Palestinian government can protect their own rights.

QUESTION 7: AMONG MUSLIM COUNTRIES, HOW COMPETENT HAS THE GOVERNMENT BEEN IN... SPEAKING OUT FOR MUSLIMS?

Top 2 Box (Very competent % + Somewhat competent %)	Region Total Weighted	01 EGY	02 JOR	03 LEB	04 PAL	05 KSA	06 SYR	07 IRAQ
Egypt	77	90	66	62	63	78	60	58
Iraq	58	55	48	54	55	65	60	64
Jordan	66	69	90	66	69	77	67	41
Lebanon	59	59	55	68	58	62	60	52
Palestine	66	63	66	58	73	74	71	64
Saudi Arabia	84	84	89	83	80	79	95	76
Syria	73	73	75	71	65	78	88	59
Turkey	65	63	69	60	70	70	77	60

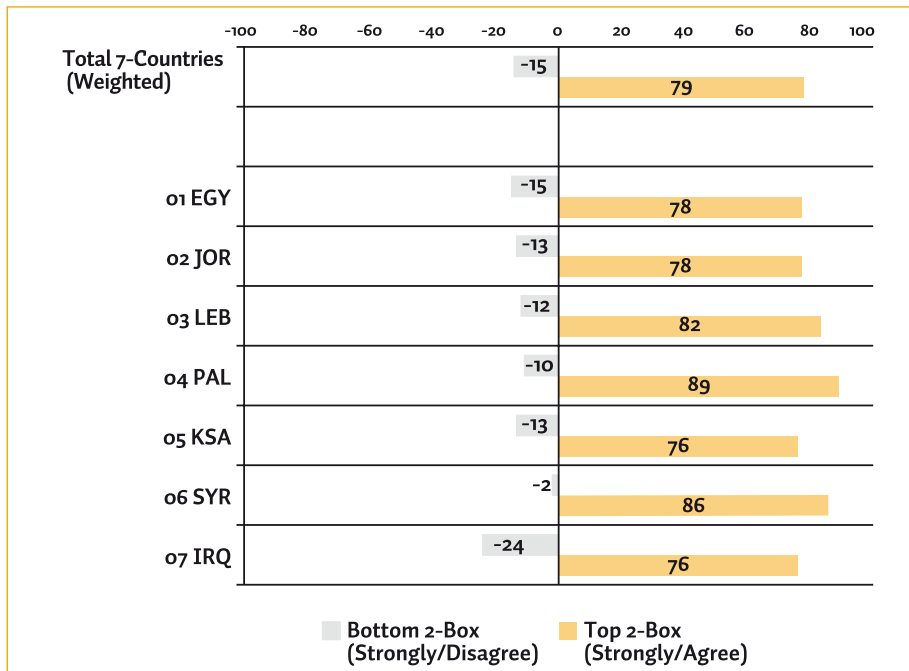
In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked "In your opinion, among the Muslim countries, how competent has the government been in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey speaking out for the Muslims?" and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: "very competent," "somewhat competent," "somewhat incompetent," or "very incompetent." The table above was prepared from the responses given, combining the percentage values for the responses of "very competent" and "somewhat competent".

When the responses given were analyzed:

- Turkey polled well in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Jordan. Unsurprisingly Saudi Arabia seems to be viewed as the most qualified country to speak for Muslims. As for survey participants from Saudi Arabia, they see Egypt and Syria as the second most qualified countries (after their own government) to speak for Muslims with a result of 78%.

QUESTION 8: HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE?

A: "TURKEY SHOULD PLAY A MEDIATORY ROLE IN RESOLVING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT"

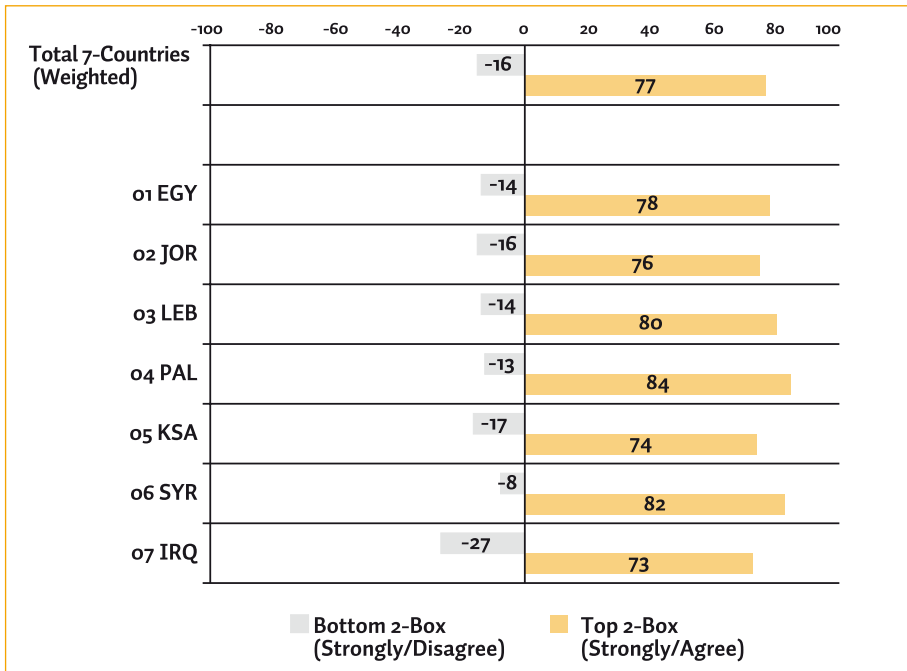


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked how much they agreed with the statement "Turkey should play a mediatory role in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree" or "strongly disagree." The percentage values were charted in the graphic above from the responses given, combining the responses of "strongly agree" with "agree," and "disagree" with "strongly disagree."

When the responses given were assessed:

- Turkey was seen fit for a mediation role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, receiving an average of 79% support in the seven countries. In Palestine that percentage was 89%, meaning that nearly 9 in 10 Palestinians think Turkey should assume a mediation role.
- When looking at the countries individually, even in the least supportive countries, the support for Turkey's role as a mediator was as high as 76%. This also shows us that in the seven countries in which the research was conducted; Turkey is supported on this topic by at least 3 out of every 4 people.
- From the data, it is possible to arrive at the conclusion that Turkey will be able to take an active role in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a legitimate and acceptable actor within the region.

B: "TURKEY SHOULD PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN THE ARAB WORLD"

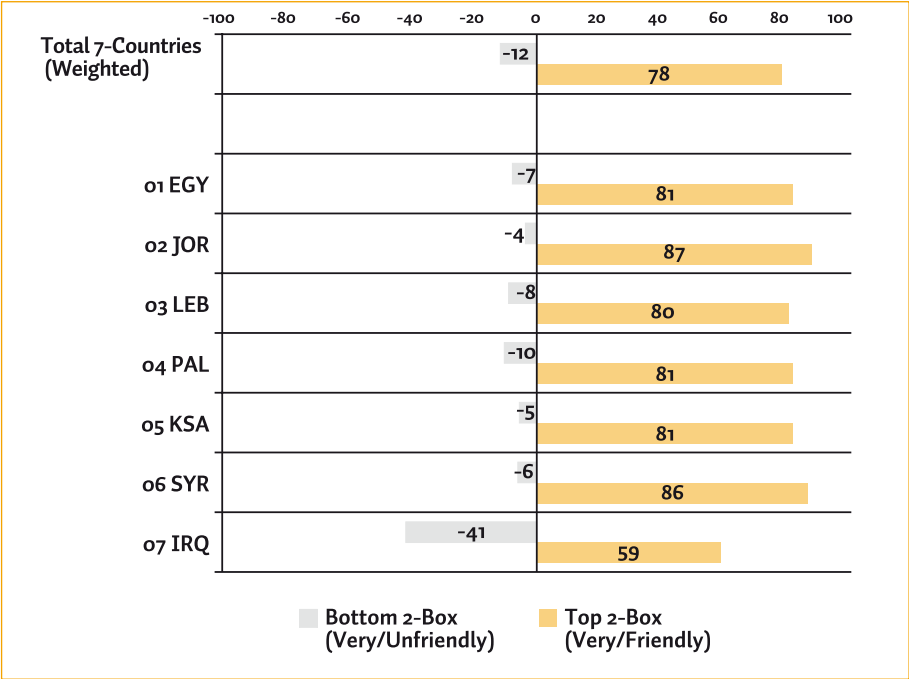


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked how much they agreed with the statement "Turkey should play a bigger role in the Arab world" and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree" or "strongly disagree." From the responses given, the responses of "strongly agree" were combined with "agree," and "disagree" with "strongly disagree," and the percentage values are reflected in the graphic above.

When the responses given were appraised,

- Both in the region as a whole (77%) as well as in the countries individually, there is specific support for Turkey continuing and increasing the active policy that it has been pursuing in the region.
- Syria (82%), Palestine (84%), and Lebanon (80%) were the countries that were most supportive of Turkey's new dynamic foreign policy.
- Even in Iraq, which was the least supportive of Turkey playing a bigger role in the Arab world, the support was 73%.
- The data again shows that Turkey is not seen by respondents as a threat, risk or adversary, and Turkey's more proactive foreign policy garners great support in the region.

QUESTION 9: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW FRIENDLY IS THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY TO YOUR GOVERNMENT?

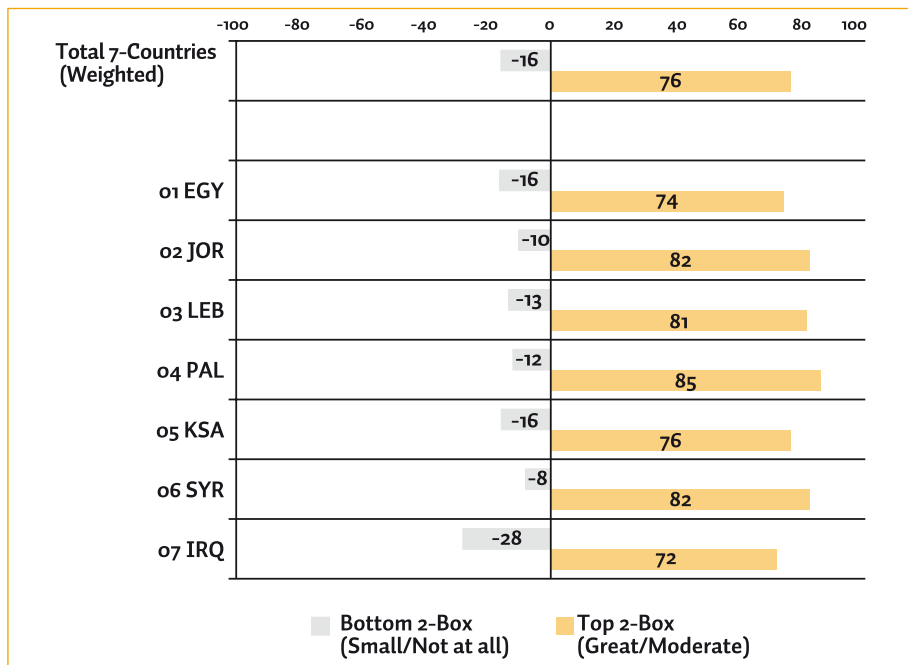


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked “In your opinion, how friendly is the government of Turkey to your government?” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “very friendly,” “friendly,” “unfriendly” or “very unfriendly.” The responses of “very friendly” were combined with “friendly,” and the responses of “unfriendly” with “very unfriendly,” and the percentage values are reflected in the graphic above.

When the responses given were analyzed:

- In the seven country average, 78% of survey participants thought that Turkey was friendly to their country. Particularly high percentages of Syrian (86%) and Jordanian (87%) respondents thought Turkey was friendly to their countries. Excluding Iraq, this percentage did not drop below 81%.
- The country with the highest percentage (41%) of people who thought that Turkey was not friendly to their government was Iraq. This could in part be connected to previous cross-border operations in Iraq; despite that fact that such occurrences no longer occur, sensitivities may still linger.
- These results show that the efforts to strengthen relations with the countries of the Middle East have been successful.

QUESTION 10: IN YOUR OPINION, TO WHAT EXTENT CAN TURKEY HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PEACE IN THE ARAB WORLD?



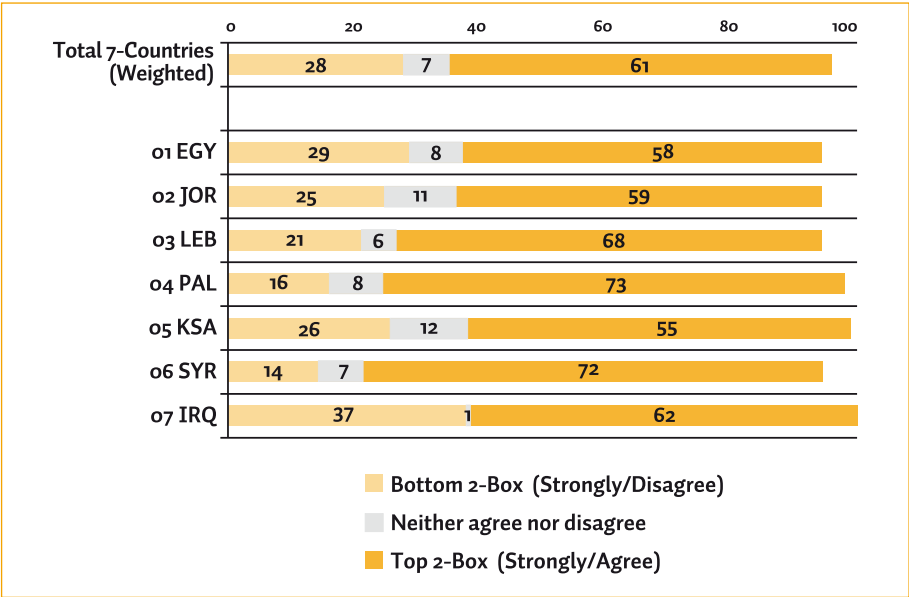
In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked “In your opinion, to what extent can Turkey have a positive impact on peace in the Arab world?” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “great positive impact,” “moderate positive impact,” “small positive impact,” or “no positive impact at all.” The responses of “great positive impact” were combined with “moderate positive impact,” and the responses of “small positive impact” with “no positive impact at all” and the percentage values are reflected in the graphic above.

According to the responses given:

- It is possible to say that Turkey’s potential mediation role is viewed positively in the region (76%). In particular, Palestine (85%), Syria (82%), Jordan (82%) and Lebanon (81%) stand out as the countries that think that Turkey has a very positive impact on achieving peace in the region.
- Again Iraqis were the most skeptical of Turkey’s role in the region; 28% of respondents thought Turkey did not have a positive impact on peace in the region. Despite this, 72% of Iraqis thought Turkey had the potential to have a more positive impact.
- The responses given to this question bring into sharp relief a fact that should be taken into consideration by organizations and states that want to have a say in the Middle East. When both the USA and the EU are designing their regional policies, the advantages of Turkish involvement should be very evident.

QUESTION 11: HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE?

A: "TURKEY CAN BE A MODEL FOR ARAB COUNTRIES"

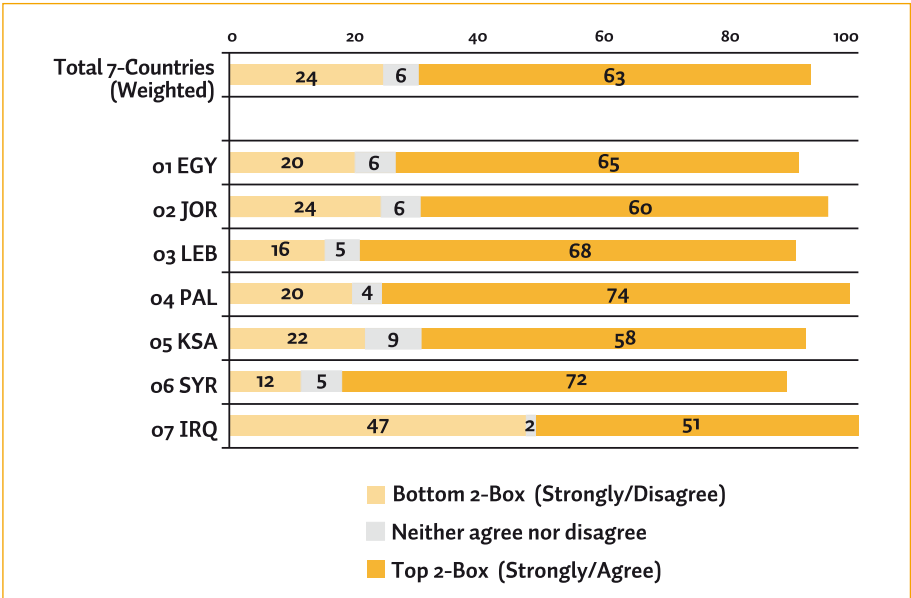


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked how much they agreed with the statement "Turkey can be a model for the Arab countries" and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," "strongly disagree" or "neither agree nor disagree." The values for the responses given are reflected in the graphic above as percentages, combining the responses of "strongly agree" with "agree," and the responses of "disagree" with "strongly disagree."

When the responses given were scrutinized:

- 61% of respondents were agreed with the concept of Turkey being a model for Arab states. This in stark contrast to the accepted notion that Turkey’s secular nature hinders it from being a model for the region.
- Syria and Palestine stand out as the two countries that thought that Turkey could be a model for the region with 72% and 73% of participants respectively responding positively. Even in Saudi Arabia, which is quite conservative in structure, more than half of the respondents (55%) agreed that Turkey could be a model.

B: “TURKEY IS A SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLE OF THE COHERENCE BETWEEN ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY”

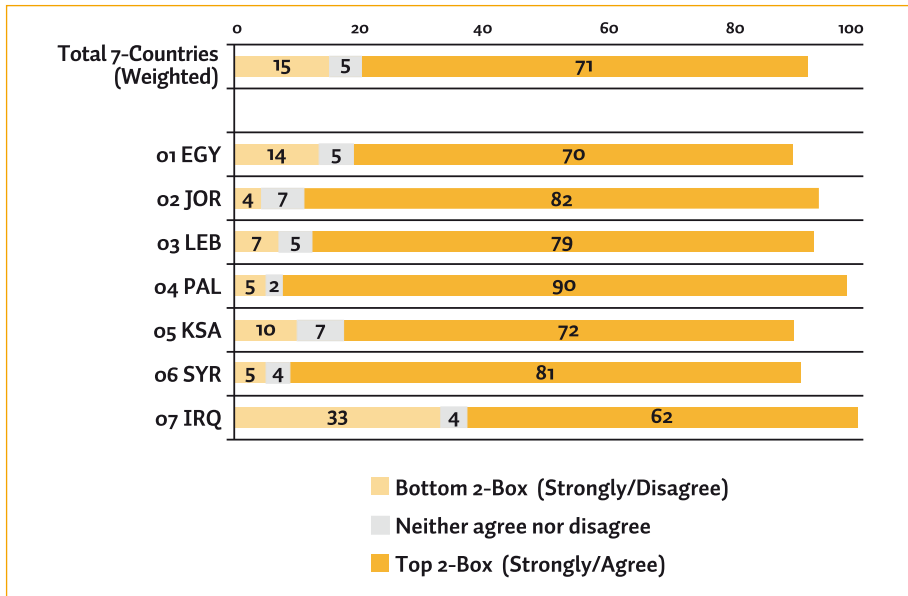


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked how much they agreed with the statement “Turkey is a successful example of the coherence between Islam and Democracy” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree” or “neither agree nor disagree.” The values for the responses given were charted in the graphic above as percentages, combining the responses of “strongly agree” with “agree,” and the responses of “disagree” with “strongly disagree.”

When we looked at the responses given:

- We observed that Turkey’s democracy experience was thought to be successful in the seven countries where the research was conducted and was seen as a country with a good synthesis of religion and democracy.
- Again, Syria (72%) and Palestine (74%) were the most supportive of Turkey, with Lebanon (68%) in third.
- As in previous questions, Iraq was the least supportive of Turkey’s coherence of Islam and democracy. Despite this, half of Iraqi respondents thought Turkey displayed a good combination of Islam and democracy.

C: “TURKEY HAS BECOME MORE AND MORE INFLUENTIAL ON ARAB WORLD POLITICS IN RECENT YEARS”

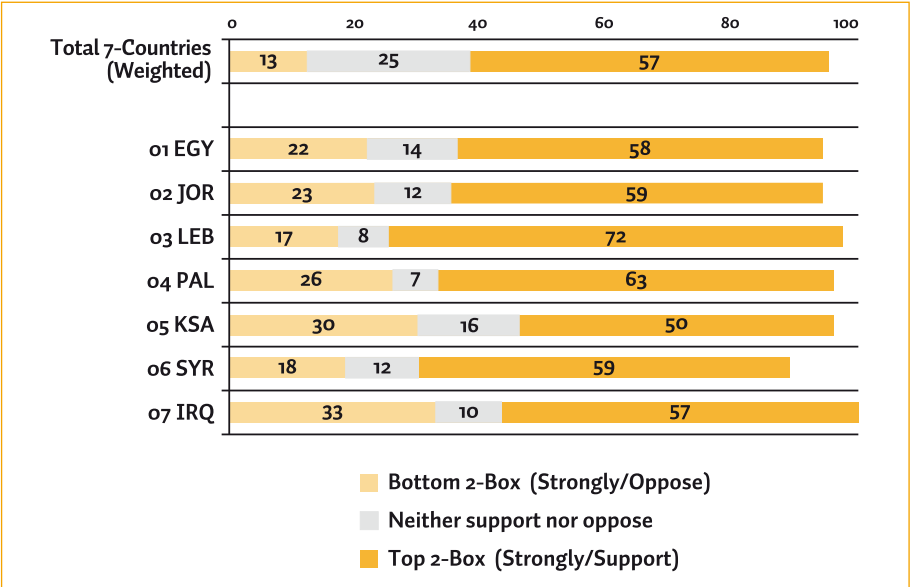


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked how much they agreed with the statement “Turkey has become more and more influential on Arab world politics in the recent years” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree” or “neither agree nor disagree.” The values for the responses given are reflected in the graphic above as percentages, combining the responses of “strongly agree” with “agree,” and the responses of “disagree” with “strongly disagree.”

When the responses given were analyzed:

- We can see that the active policy that Turkey has been pursuing recently has not gone unnoticed. 71% of participants noted that Turkey has been pursuing a more active regional policy.
- Turkey’s increasing influence on Arab world politics was closely felt in Syria (81%), Palestine (90%), and Jordan (82%).

QUESTION 12: DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE A MUSLIM COUNTRY’S
ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION?

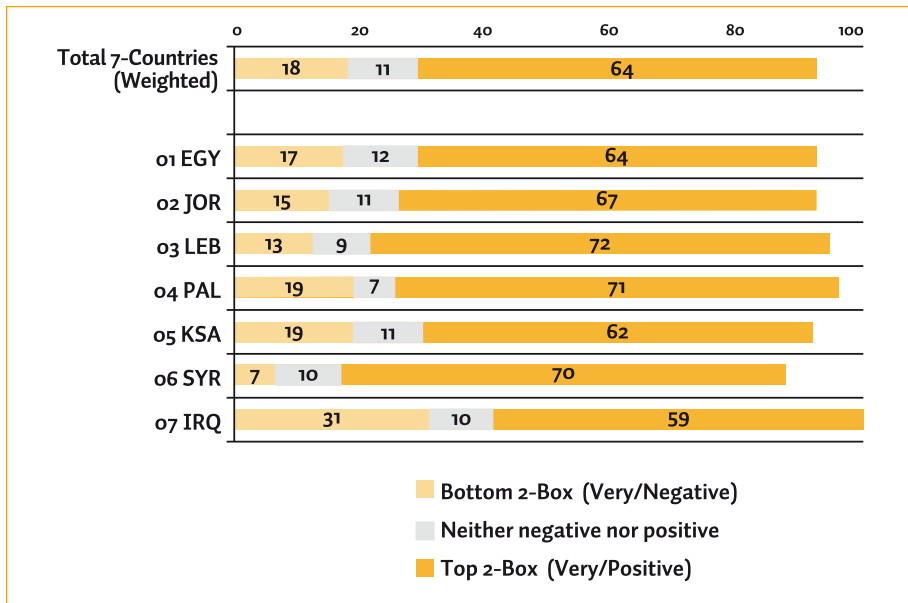


In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked “Do you support or oppose a Muslim country’s accession to the European Union?” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “strongly support,” “support,” “oppose,” “strongly oppose” or “neither support nor oppose.” The values for the responses given are given in the graphic above as percentages, combining the responses of “strongly support” with “support,” and the responses of “oppose” with “strongly oppose.”

According to the responses given,

- In the average of the seven countries researched, 57% of respondents supported the accession of a Muslim country.
- Lebanon is the most supportive of a Muslim country acceding to the EU (72%). This may be in part because of Lebanon’s significant Christian population and the role the EU played in post-conflict reconstruction.
- The least support came from Saudi Arabian participants, although half of the people looked favorably on a Muslim country’s EU membership.

**QUESTION 13: DO YOU THINK EU ACCESSION PROCESS OF TURKEY
OVERALL HAVE A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE AFFECT ON ITS
ROLE IN THE ARAB WORLD?**



In the seven countries where the research was conducted, a total of 2006 people were asked “Do you think EU accession process of Turkey overall have a positive or negative affect on its role in the Arab World?” and were asked to choose from one of the following choices: “it had a very positive effect,” “it had a positive effect,” “it had a negative effect,” “it had a very negative effect,” or “it had neither a positive nor a negative effect.” The values for the responses given are reflected in the graphic above as percentages, combining the responses of “it had a very positive effect” with “it had a positive effect,” and the responses of “it had a negative effect” with “it had a very negative effect.”

When the responses given were looked into to:

- While 57% of respondents supported the accession of a Muslim country, 64% thought that Turkey’s accession process had had a positive impact on Turkey’s relations with the Arab world.
- In Syria (70%), Palestine (71%), and Lebanon (72%), a significant proportion of respondents thought that the EU membership process had contributed positively to Turkey’s role in the region.

Conclusion

The aforementioned data contains information that should interest not just Turkey but all other actors interested in the region. This project looks at Turkey's changing Middle East policy from the region itself. It thus enables us to see how Turkey's initiatives and efforts are perceived by the people of the region in the seven countries surveyed. The most obvious initial conclusion to be drawn from this project is that Turkey's changing policy is not going unnoticed.

Participants in this survey all displayed great interest in Turkey. Further, the results show that the active diplomacy that Turkey has pursued has been positively received across the seven countries that were surveyed. Put simply, Turkey stands out as an actor that the region deems legitimate.

The often spouted argument that the region is weary of Turkey due to its Ottoman past cannot find support in this study. Turkey is not perceived as a hegemonic actor in the region or as a threat. On the contrary, the people of the region support Turkey's increasingly active foreign policy that seeks to establish the country as a problem solver.

The survey results also suggest that Turkey will preserve its newfound positive image as long as it provides assistance in solving regional problems and supports democratization - Turkey is seen as both a good model and a successful combination of Islam and democracy. In addition, participants were encouraged by the positive role Turkey plays in supporting peace in the region and hoped it would continue its mediation role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

However, the Israeli-Palestinian issue was not respondents' main concern; in all seven countries the economy ranked as the foremost problem. When the Turkish government determines its short and medium-term policies towards the region, the economy must be at the centre of its decision making.

On the subject of Turkey-EU relations, the study's findings will be of interest to both sides. In particular, the survey results allow us to answer questions that have continually come up in discussion of Turkish accession — would Turkish membership benefit the EU or bring it closer to regional threats. If the EU wants to be an effective actor in the Middle East – as it has often espoused to be – Turkish membership would be an asset.

Throughout the survey the EU was viewed relatively positively, particularly in comparison with other Western international organizations. Nevertheless when examining the views of those surveyed, the likelihood is that if the EU were to reject a Muslim country its standing in the region would decrease. Clearly, therefore, the EU should heed the survey's results and start to really see Turkey as an asset.

From the other hand, Turkey must continue with its accession process. Among the conclusions that came out of the research was that Turkey's accession process has allowed it to play a greater role in the region; Turkey's Middle East policy and its EU membership process are mutually supportive. Extrapolating this point further, we could go far as to say that as long as Turkey is influential in the Middle East, it will have a far greater chance of EU membership.

As was previously noted, this study reflects the results of interviews conducted with 2,006 people in seven countries — Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia — between July 24-29. In international relations and especially in this region, nothing is static. However, to suggest that the results of this research apply only to the dates concerned belittles the overall trends witnessed.

Appendix

Population Data			
Country		Total Population	18+ Population
Egypt	EGY	72.579.030	45.957.000
Jordan	JOR	5.074.242	3.129.000
Lebanon	LEB	3.755.033	2.729.000
Palestine	PAL	3.761.646	1.794.000
Saudi Arabia	KSA	23.980.834	14.086.000
Syria	SYR	18.356.000	10.709.000
Iraq	IRQ	27.962.968	14.628.000
All Countries		155.469.753	93.032.000

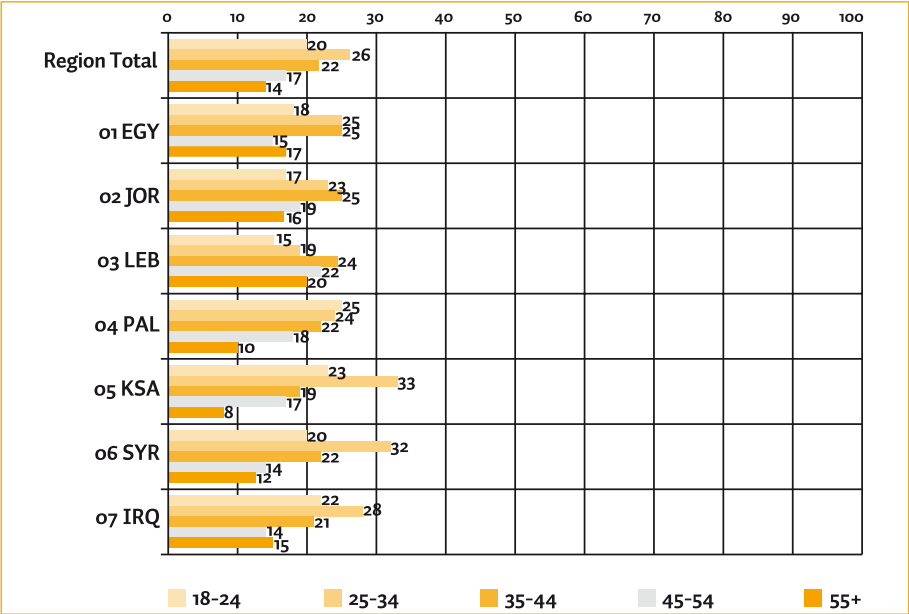
Population Data (18+ Population)	
01 Egypt	49,4%
02 Jordan	3,4%
03 Lebanon	2,9%
04 Palestine	1,9%
05 Saudi Arabia	15,1%
06 Syria	11,5%
07 Iraq	15,7%
00 TOTAL	100,0%

Survey Data	
o1 Egypt	14,3%
o2 Jordan	14,3%
o3 Lebanon	14,3%
o4 Palestine	14,3%
o5 Saudi Arabia	14,4%
o6 Syria	14,3%
o7 Iraq	14,3%
oo TOTAL	100,0%

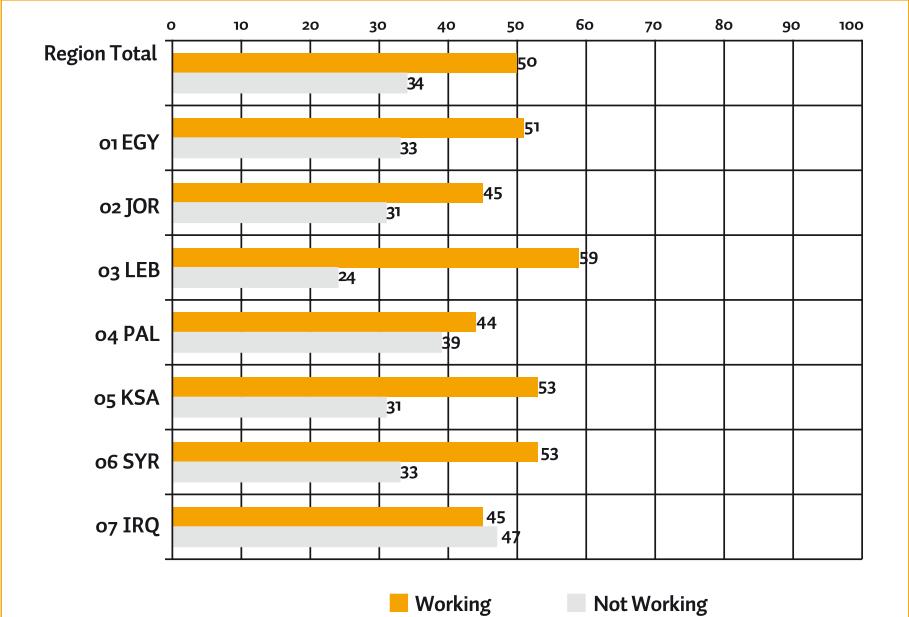
Weighting factors	ProWt
o1 Egypt	3,46485
o2 Jordan	0,23591
o3 Lebanon	0,20575
o4 Palestine	0,13478
o5 Saudi Arabia	1,05461
o6 Syria	0,80739
o7 Iraq	1,09901

DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

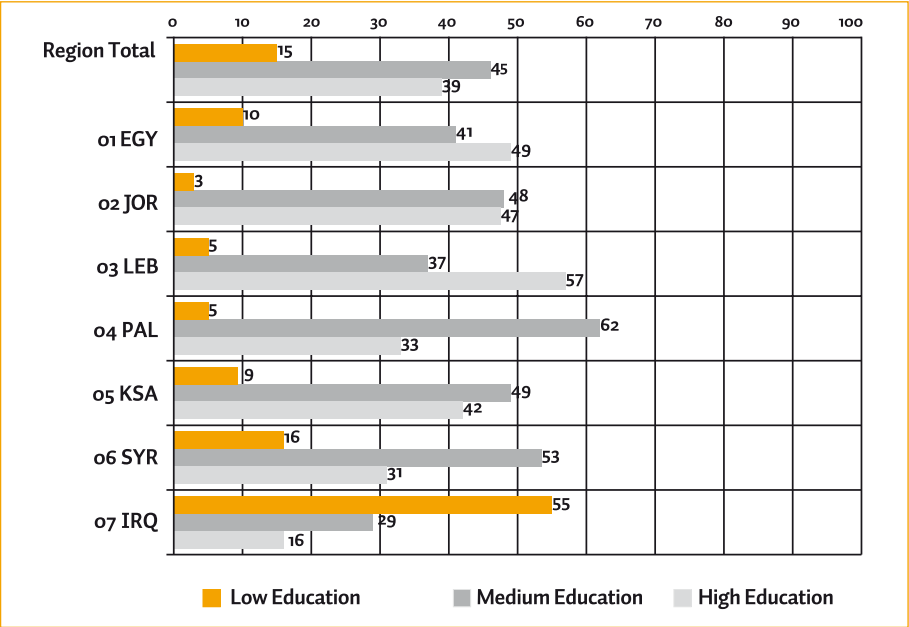


EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

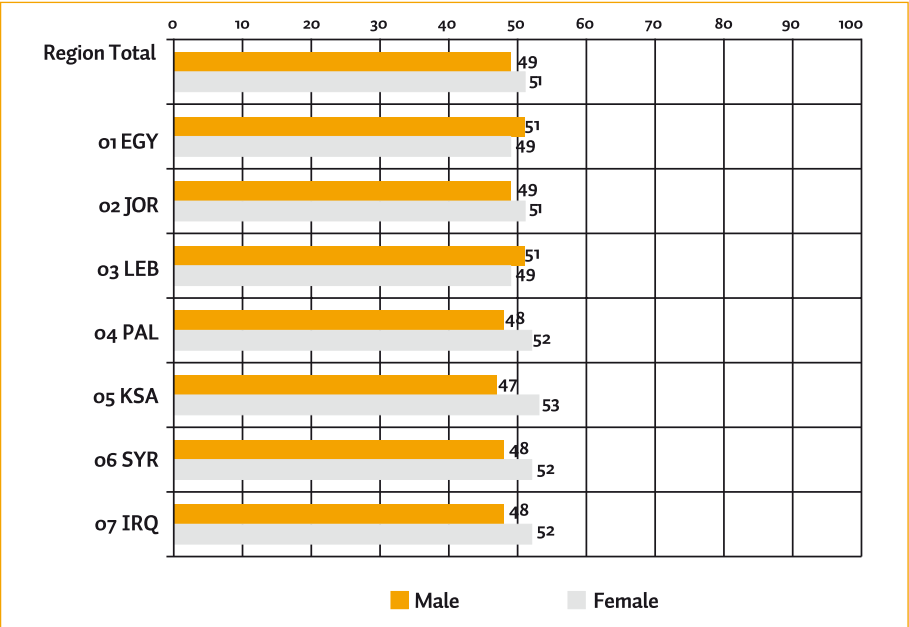


(Not working does not include students and retirees.)

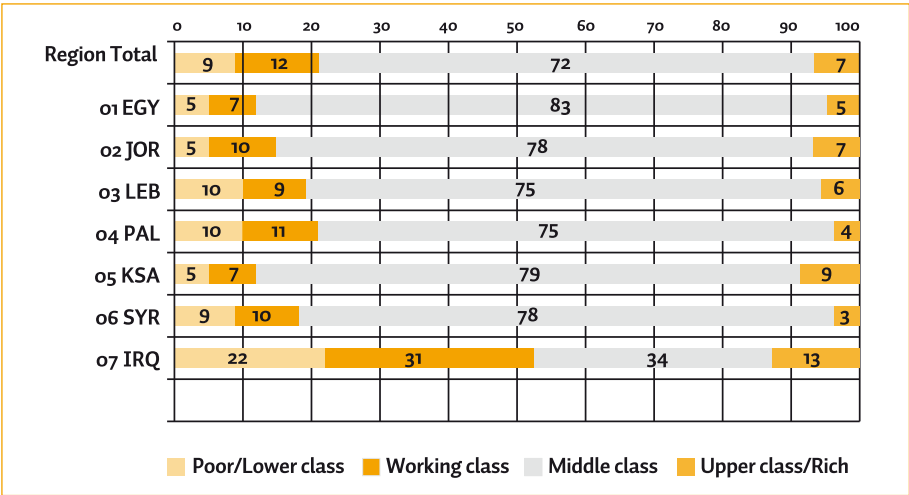
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY



GENDER OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

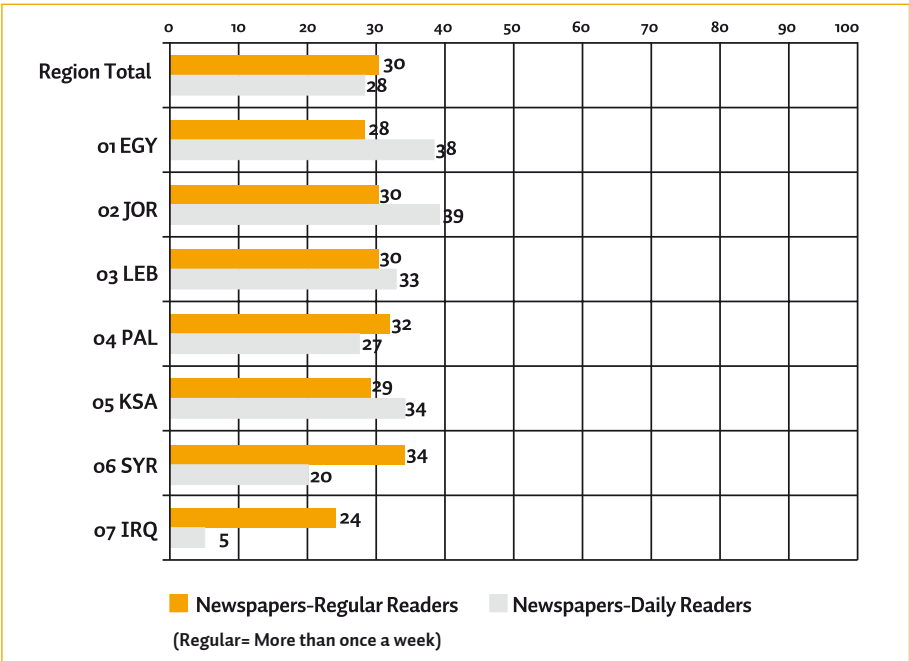


SOCIAL CLASS OF RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY (BASED ON RESPONDENTS' CLAIM)

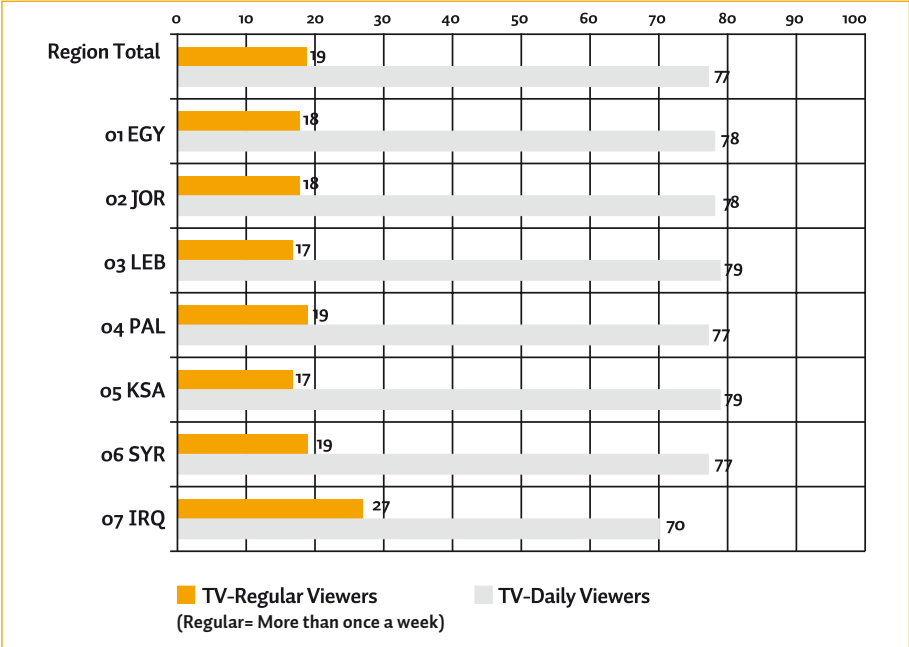


MEDIA HABITS

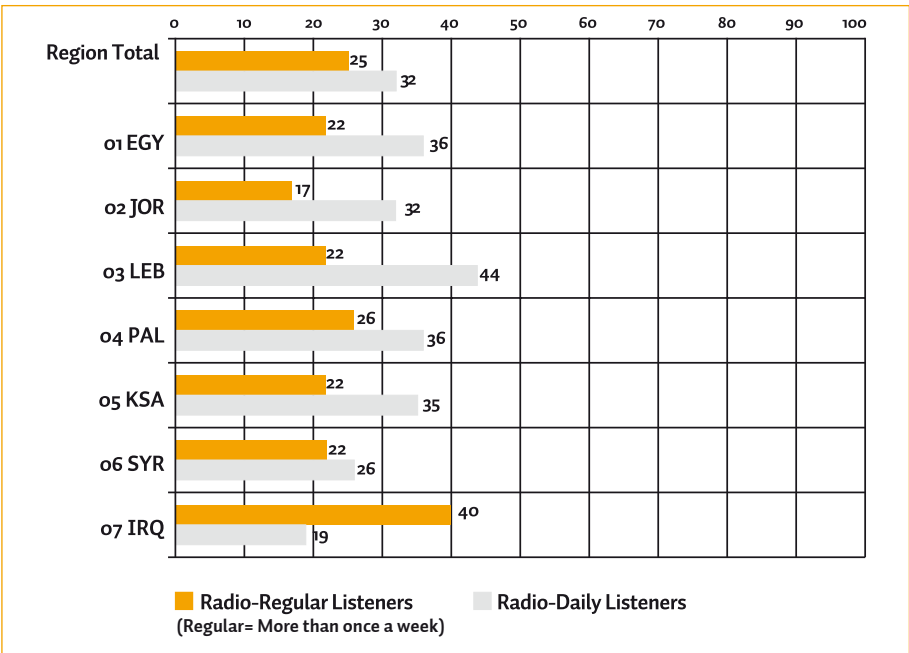
RESPONDENTS WHO READ NEWSPAPERS



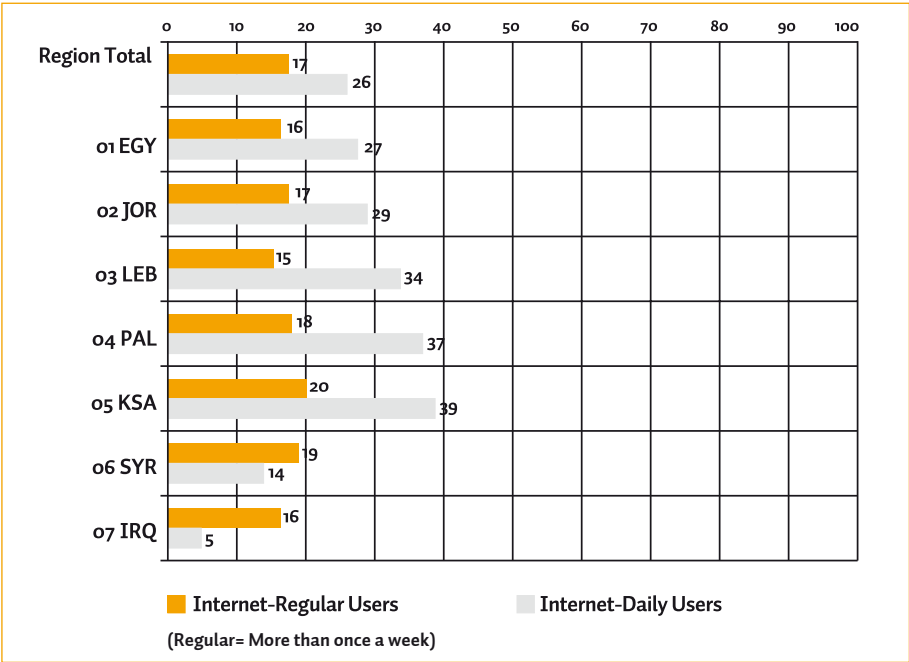
RESPONDENTS WHO WATCH TV



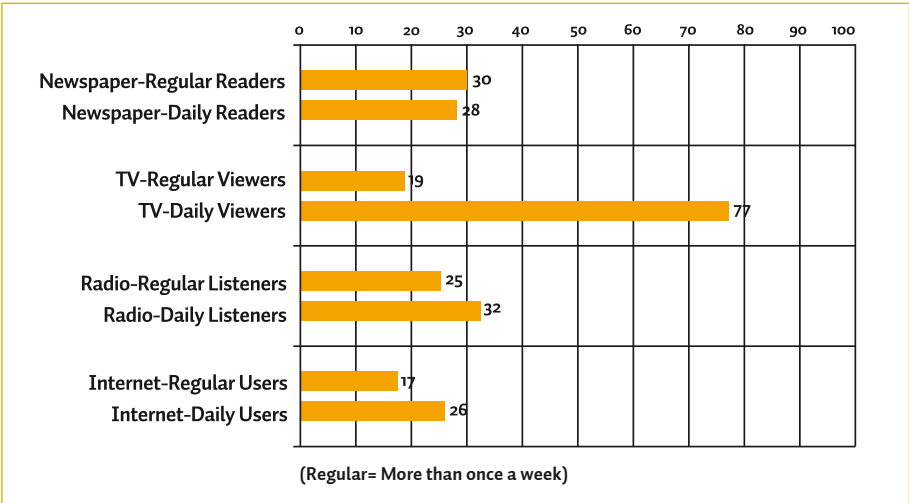
RESPONDENTS WHO LISTEN TO RADIO



RESPONDENTS WHO USE THE INTERNET



AUDIENCE SIZE FOR THE REGION FOR DIFFERENT MEDIA OUTLETS





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