Public Opinion Dynamics ahead of the June 2015 Elections in Turkey

5 May 2015

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About the Study

• Face to face interviews with 2201 participants from 49 provinces
• Participants selected by means of random sampling from Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS)
• Fieldwork carried out between 19 March and 26 April 2015
• Sponsored by the Open Society Foundation, Koç University and Ohio State University, School of Communication
Turkey’s most important problems
What, in your view, are the first and second most important problems Turkey faces?

Which party is most capable to resolve Turkey’s biggest problem? – 2015

- **Terrorism, national security**
  - AK Parti: 55%
  - CHP: 14%
  - MHP: 28%

- **Education, health, social policies**
  - AK Parti: 54%
  - CHP: 23%
  - MHP: 18%

- **Economy**
  - AK Parti: 43%
  - CHP: 31%
  - MHP: 15%
  - HDP: 9%

- **Kurdish question/Peace Process, etc.**
  - AK Parti: 28%
  - CHP: 6%
  - MHP: 61%

- **Bribery, corruption**
  - AK Parti: 26%
  - CHP: 42%
  - MHP: 21%
  - HDP: 11%

- **Other**
  - AK Parti: 45%
  - CHP: 32%
  - MHP: 10%
  - HDP: 9%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism, national security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime, purse snatching, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeastern/Kurdish question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation, high cost of living</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health, social security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic instability, crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribery, corruption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political uncertainty, instability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which party is most capable to resolve Turkey’s biggest problems? CHP – From 2001 to 2015

- Terrorism, national security: 14%
- Education: 25%
- Crime, purse snatching, etc.: 67%
- Unemployment: 28%
- Southeastern/Kurdish question: 3%
- Inflation, high cost of living: 37%
- Health, social security: 11%
- Economic instability, crisis: 36%
- Other: 27%
- Bribery, corruption: 42%
- Political uncertainty, instability: 23%
Which party is most capable to resolve Turkey’s biggest problems? MHP – From 2001 to 2015

- Terrorism, national security: 28%
- Education: 20%
- Crime, purse snatching, etc.: 16%
- Unemployment: 16%
- Southeastern/Kurdish question: 6%
- Inflation, high cost of living: 16%
- Health, social security: 14%
- Economic instability, crisis: 8%
- Other: 8%
- Bribery, corruption: 21%
- Political uncertainty, instability: 10%
Opinions about issues related to democracy
How satisfied are you with the operation of democracy in Turkey in general?

- Not satisfied
- Undecided
- Satisfied
How satisfied are you with the operation of democracy in Turkey in general? -2015

- AK Parti: 6.60
- MHP: 3.14
- CHP: 2.55
- HDP: 2.21
Opinion About the Turkish Democracy, 2007 – 2015

- Desired, ideal (average 8.8) 2007
- Desired, ideal (average 8.9) 2011
- Desired, ideal (average 9.3) 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close to democracy</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>93.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6-10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to dictatorship</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0-4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Absolute dictatorship

- 0
- 0
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 3
- 1
- 3
- 6
- 6

Full democracy
Opinion About Turkish Democracy, 2007 – 2015

- Current situation (average 5.7) 2007
- Current situation (average 5.4) 2011
- Current situation (average 4.8) 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Close to democracy (6-10)</th>
<th>Close to dictatorship (0-4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>%48,1</td>
<td>%23,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>%47,6</td>
<td>%32,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>%36,1</td>
<td>%43,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opinion About Turkish Democracy, 2007 – 2015

Forecast for the next 5 years (average 6.7) 2007
Forecast for the next 5 years (average 6.4) 2011
Forecast for the next 5 years (average 5.7) 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Close to democracy (6-10)</th>
<th>Close to dictatorship (0-4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>%66,8</td>
<td>%13,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>%64,5</td>
<td>%20,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>%48,3</td>
<td>%34,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Do you think people can freely express their views without fear in Turkey?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Could people freely express their views without fear in Turkey?</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes they can</td>
<td>%38</td>
<td>%46</td>
<td>%38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No they cannot</td>
<td>%60</td>
<td>%44</td>
<td>%56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Certainly they can express their views**
  - 2007: 14
  - 2011: 19
  - 2015: 16

- **Usually they can express their views**
  - 2007: 24
  - 2011: 27
  - 2015: 22

- **There are limitations to free speech**
  - 2007: 42
  - 2011: 27
  - 2015: 38

- **They can’t in any way express their views freely**
  - 2007: 18
  - 2011: 17
  - 2015: 18

- **DK/NR**
  - 2007: 2
  - 2011: 10
  - 2015: 6
Do you think people can freely express their views without fear in Turkey?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All voters</th>
<th>AKP voters</th>
<th>Opposition voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, certainly</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are limitations</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainly no</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To what extent, do you think, government respects human rights?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government ... human rights</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respects</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not respect</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the probability of a powerful leader to replace the elected parliament to govern the country in a couple of years to come in Turkey?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possibility for a leader/president to replace the elected parliament in Turkey...</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not possible</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all likely</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not likely</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly likely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Would you support a regime where the parliament is dissolved and the country is led by a powerful leader capable of taking decisions quickly and thus managing things more smoothly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would...a powerful leader</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not support</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opinions about presidential system
A presidential system is a better system of government for Turkey than a parliamentary one.
Government systems in the world

*Today most democracies have parliamentary systems of government rather than a presidential one as in the U.S.*
Opinions on a new Constitution
Do you think that Turkey needs a new constitution?

Yes, Turkey needs a new constitution: 49 (2011), 60 (2015)
No, current constitution is fine: 36 (2011), 20 (2015)
Do you think that Turkey needs a new Constitution?

![Bar chart showing results of a survey on constitutional reform in Turkey. The chart compares the opinions of voters from various political parties: All voters, AKP voters, CHP voters, MHP voters, and HDP voters. The questions are based on whether they support or oppose a new constitution.](chart.png)
Should the ruling and the opposition parties reach a consensus for a new constitution Turkey needs?

- They should reach a consensus: 71% (2011) vs 66% (2015)
- The majority party should be able to make a new constitution as they please: 15% (2011) vs 18% (2015)
- DK/NR: 14% (2011) vs 16% (2015)
Should the ruling and opposition parties reach a consensus for a new Constitution that Turkey needs?

- **They should reach a consensus**: 66%
- **The majority party should be able to make a new Constitution as it pleases**: 18% (AKP), 31% (CHP), 19% (MHP), 13% (HDP)
- **No opinion/No answer**: 16% (All voters), 19% (AKP), 8% (CHP), 7% (MHP), 19% (HDP)
Opinions on the Kurdish question/Peace process
The Kurdish issue can be resolved through the economic development of Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia rather than through the recognition of ethnic and cultural identities.
More authority/powers can be given to local administrations in order to resolve the Kurdish issue.

![Bar chart showing voter opinions on granting more authority to local administrations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Don't Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All voters</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKP voters</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP voters</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHP voters</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDP voters</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary school education should be conducted in Turkish regardless of pupils’ ethnicity.
A general amnesty applying to all armed and non-armed members of the PKK cannot be accepted, even if it would help to resolve the Kurdish issue.
The definition of citizenship in the Constitution should become more inclusive by embracing different ethnicities like Circassians, Arabs, and Kurds.
Citizens should be able to receive service from public offices in their native languages in addition to Turkish.
The ultimate goal of the Kurdish political movement in Turkey is to establish an independent state.
Opinions about repression of devout religious people and secularists, aspirations for sharia rule and threat to one’s way of life
Can Alevis freely worship? 75% Yes, 14% No for 2015.
Can secularist people pursue their way of life freely?

- Yes: 86% in 2009, 82% in 2011, 75% in 2015
- No: 10% in 2006, 11% in 2009, 11% in 2011, 18% in 2015
- NA: 11% in 2006, 10% in 2009, 11% in 2011, 18% in 2015
Are religious people being oppressed in Turkey?

- Yes: 50, 56, 77, 71, 85, 91%
- No: 42, 40, 17, 24, 13, 5%
- NA: 17, 18, 16, 15, 14, 5%

Are people of a secular conviction being oppressed in Turkey?

- Yes: 83, 87, 84, 77%
- No: 8, 9, 9, 13%

Would you like to see a sharia based religious state in Turkey?

1995-98 TÜSES, 1999 TESEV surveys
To what extent you feel your way of life, apart from economic difficulties, is under threat given the present circumstances you are living in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not worried</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK Party voters</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP voters</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK Party voters</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP voters</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ideological shift, 1990-2015
Distribution of voters across the Left-Right scale
1990-2015

- 21.8% 1990
- 15.3% 2002
- 16.9% 2007
- 18.1% 2011
- 23.7% 2015

- 22.7% 1990
- 43.3% 2002
- 46.9% 2007
- 44.4% 2011
- 39.9% 2015
Where do the party constituencies see themselves and others along the Left-Right scale?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AK Parti</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHP</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDP</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Where would you place yourself on this scale?

- All voters
- Party’s own voters
Opinions about the leaders
Evaluations of the Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>All voters</th>
<th>Own/previous party voters</th>
<th>Other parties’ voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recep Tayyip Erdoğan</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmet Davutoğlu</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devlet Bahçeli</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selahattin Demirtaş</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- All voters
- Own/previous party voters
- Other parties’ voters
LEADER EVALUATIONS, (0 TO 10)

- **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**
  - 2007: 6.1
  - 2011: 5.9
  - 2015: 5.0

- **Ahmet Davutoğlu**
  - 2007: 4.5
  - 2011: 3.6
  - 2015: 3.4

- **Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu**
  - 2007: 3.1
  - 2011: 3.8
  - 2015: 2.6

- **Devlet Bahçeli**
  - 2007: 2.9
  - 2011: 3.1
  - 2015: 2.1

- **Selahattin Demirtaş**
  - 2007: 3.8
  - 2011: 3.6
  - 2015: 3.4
Opinions about the economic situation
Perceptions on unemployment rate

What is the unemployment rate in Turkey nowadays?

[Bar chart showing perceptions of unemployment rate among different voter groups.]
Perception on unemployment trends

Thinking about the last 12 months, do you think the unemployment rate has been increasing, decreasing, or hovering about the same level?
Performance evaluations of the government
How successful or unsuccessful, in your opinion, has the AKP government been in the past 4 years in the following areas?

### Net evaluations of AK Party Government's Performance in different policy areas, (Positive minus negative evaluations) 2007-2015

- Lowering the unemployment rate: -42
- North Iraqi/Syrian policies: -39
- Fight against bribery and corruption: -33
- Lowering poverty: -32
- Accession to EU: -29
- Kurdish question/Peace Process: -21
- Economic growth: -18
- Ensure supremacy of law: -13
- Women’s rights: -11
- Fight against terrorism: -10
- Protection of the environment: -3
- Education: -2
- Urban transformation: 15
- Health services: 30
- Resolution of the headscarf issue: 40

Legend:
- **2015**
- **2011**
- **2007**
Perceptions of corruption? Will the general elections be carried out in a fair manner?
Perceptions of Corruption

Which of the below statements is closer to your opinion?

Perceptions of corruption

Which of the below statements is closer to your opinion?

- Very few public officials are involved in corruption
- Less than half of the public officials are involved in corruption
- The majority of public officials are involved in corruption
- Almost all public officials are involved in corruption
- No opinion/No answer
Do you think the approaching (22 July 2007/12 June 2011)/7 June 2015 elections will be held in a fair manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will not be fair</td>
<td>%28</td>
<td>%30</td>
<td>%43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will be fair</td>
<td>%70</td>
<td>%57</td>
<td>%48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing the percentage of responses for each year.](chart.png)
About the election

Do you think the approaching 7 June 2015 elections will be held in a fair manner?

![Graph showing responses to the question about the fairness of the election among all voters, AKP voters, and opposition voters.](image-url)
About the election

After the votes has been cast in the upcoming election, do you believe that the votes will be counted in a fair manner?

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses among all voters, AKP voters, and opposition voters, with categories: Don't believe at all, Don't quite believe, Inclined to believe, Believe absolutely.]

- All voters: 22, 24, 22, 23 (Colours: Brown, Orange, Yellow, Light yellow)
- AKP voters: 4, 11, 25 (Colours: Brown, Orange, Yellow)
- Opposition voters: 38, 34, 17, 6 (Colours: Brown, Orange, Yellow, Light yellow)
Thanks,

Questions??