

# **KONDA**

# **Barometer**

***THEMES***

**Influence of Mass Media**  
***April 2014***



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey which forms the basis for this report was conducted on April 12-13, 2014 by face-to-face interviews with 2621 individuals in 149 neighborhoods and villages of 113 districts including the central districts of 30 provinces.

### Theme of the Month: The Influence of Mass Media

This month, we worked on the power of the media and social media in shaping daily politics. Specifically, the interaction of the TV channels with polarization brings about very striking results. One third of the society follow the news through the TV channels that we define as providing high support for the government. One fifth of the society, on the other hand, prefers those TV channels that have low support for the government, in other words government opponents. This grouping that we made according to the voting rates of the Ak Parti and the opposition parties among the viewers of each TV channel is observed as a clear parameter in describing most matters in daily politics.

A new finding about the television that we found out through this research is on the brand value of TV channels. The TV channel preferences of individuals do not change even on the basis of different contents. Even separate questions on news or TV series do not lead to dramatic changes in the ranking. This situation is yet another indication of the importance of brand value of TV channels. In other words, the viewer or reader profiles of TV channels or newspapers established over the years do not change their minds upon short-termed propaganda. Outstanding findings that confirm this allegation may be found in the analyses we made regarding the followers of Samanyolu TV and Zaman Newspaper, whose political preferences do not change.

Another finding shown or confirmed by this survey is that people follow the developments mostly through television whereas newspapers and radio seem to be outdated in the current era of speed. However, another very important issue that is relevant to this finding is that a considerable amount of people in the society follow all developments through social media.

We observe regarding social media which has become a very important feature in the definition of mass media in the past decade that although there is no significant increase in the rate of use of the internet, social media is becoming widespread at a striking speed. A new finding we obtained through this survey is that as the use of social media increases, there is a shift to one side of the political polarization. Especially Twitter users seem to have shifted towards the Ak Parti opposition at a great extent as understood from their approach towards the statements regarding daily politics.

As a general analysis, we observe through the data that television is a very convenient medium for propaganda as a one-sided mass medium; however, social media, which is built upon interactivity, might transform into a trap if it is controlled in terms of content and communication.





## **2. INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA**

As the theme of KONDA April'14 Barometer, we observed the social and political influence of mass media such as television, radio, newspaper, the internet and social media. We think that it would be useful to analyze the issue, especially given the timing, as we recently left another election period behind. Considering that more than one fourth of society can access the internet through their mobile phones; how the media conveys what has been said is much more important for political groups, parties and leaders than what has been actually said. In such an atmosphere, we can identify election periods as times when people follow political developments on screens of all sizes, or in other words, when they are bombarded with news by the media.

We begin our analysis on the influence of mass media by explaining our method:

- Our attempt was to understand which television channels and newspapers are followed by respondents, how often they use the internet, and which social media sites they follow. Also, which media they follow to obtain news on which events may be an important parameter. In addition, we also observed whether there is a difference between the media organizations respondents prefer and the ones they trust or not.
- Subsequently, in light of this information, we endeavored to analyze how respondent attitudes towards current developments differ in relation to their media preferences and how these differences can be grouped. We also observed how parallel these influences are to political preferences of the voters.
- In conclusion, we can conclude that mass media is not only a platform to follow the political conjuncture anymore, but it has evolved into an actor in the political arena at its own right.

### **2.1. Media Preferences**

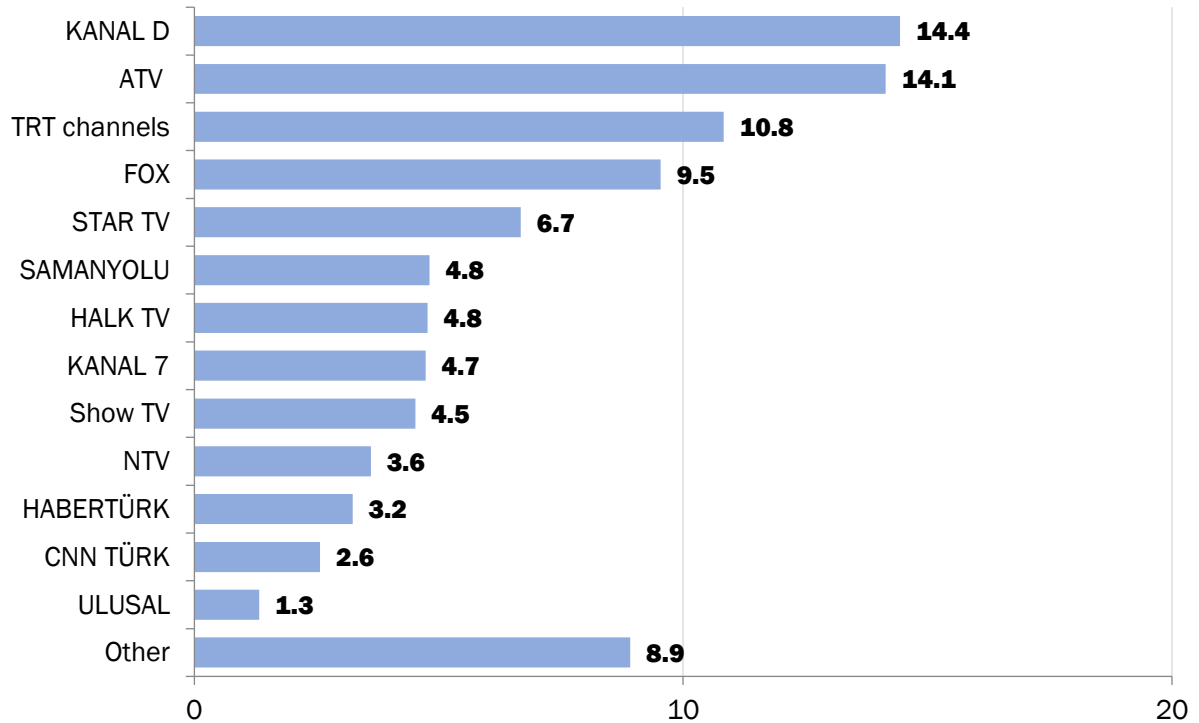
In line with the method we summarized above, it is first necessary to analyze the response rates to the questions regarding the media and internet preferences of respondents.

#### **2.1.1. TV preferences**

Turkish people spend a worldwide record time in front of the television. Therefore, TV channel preferences are quite critical. In this respect, we tried to observe TV channel preferences by approaching the issue through various perspectives, so that we could be certain about their preferences. First of all, we directed the question, "Which TV channel do you prefer to watch the news?" which we ask in almost every Barometer survey. Afterwards, we compared the response rates with those of the other questions regarding TV preferences. This question and other questions on TV preferences were directed as open-ended questions, in order to ensure that responses were provided free of any manipulation.



### TV channel preferred to watch the news



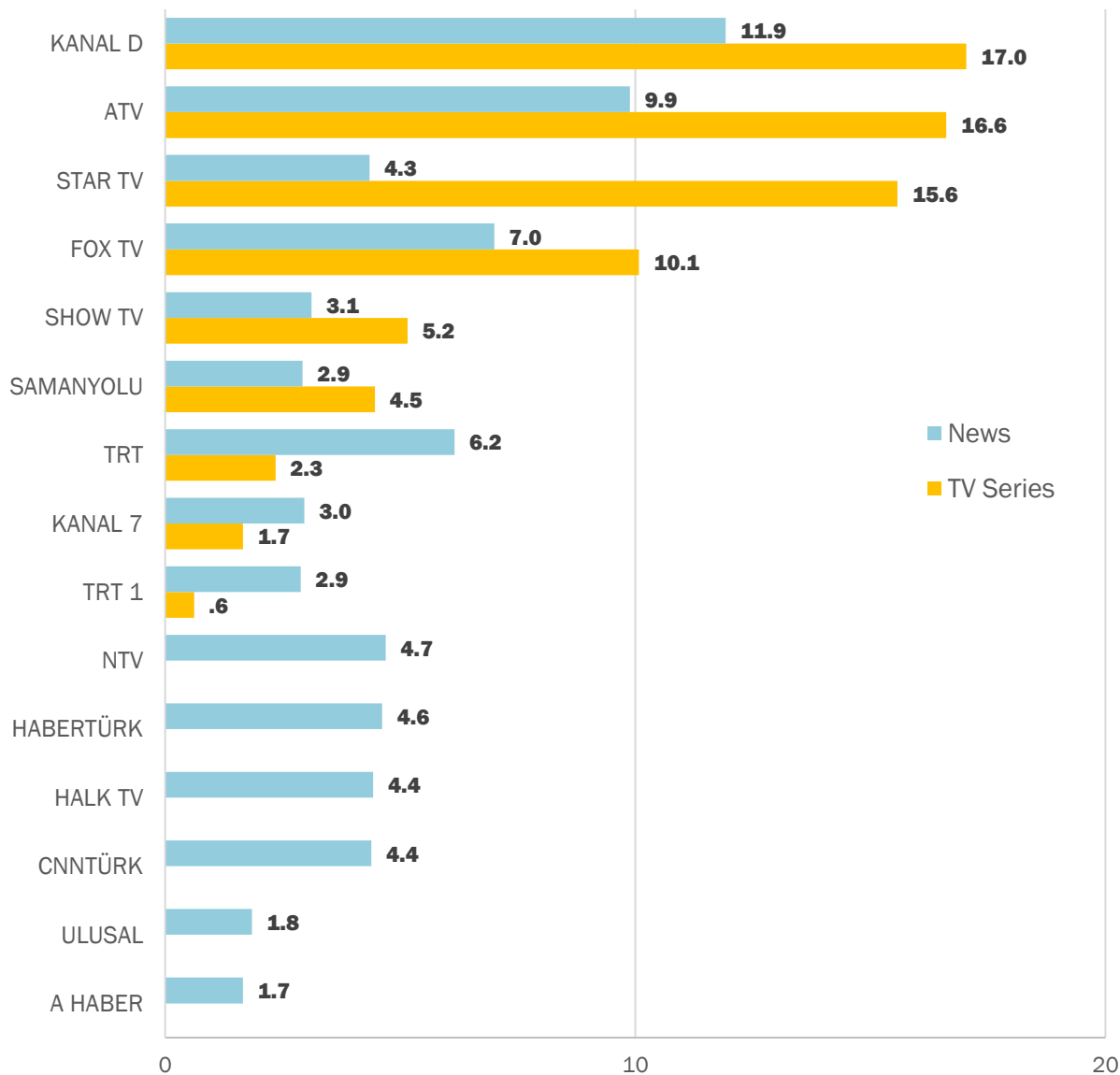
It would be wrong to expect that the rates above would be parallel to the results of TV ratings. However, it is worth noting that the ranking above is substantially in conformity with the TV ratings.

"TRT channels", which follow Kanal D and ATV, include all channels that respondents expressed and may be related to TRT, because the majority of respondents named TRT without identifying if it is TRT 1, TRT News or other TRT channels. This is specific to TRT, and it shows that it is a well-established brand.

We asked each respondent if they had different TV channel preferences to watch TV series and entertainment shows, and news and discussion programs. When we observe the responses, it is possible to see that some channels have a presence only with respect to a certain genre. As the graph on the next page presents, news channels were only named for watching news and discussion programs.



### TV channel preference rates for watching TV series and for watching the news



Star TV shows presence in both genres. However its preference rate for watching news is quite low in comparison to its preference rate for watching TV series: 16 percent name Star TV in response to the question, "Which TV channel do you prefer to watch TV series?", while less than 5 percent of respondents name Star TV as the channel they prefer to watch the news. While this may be perceived as the strategy of Star TV, this specific case is only observed for Star TV among the mainstream TV channels. Kanal D and ATV have a presence in both genres.

Fox TV presents a different trend when respondents were inquired about the genres separately. Fox TV enjoyed increasing ratings in recent years and is ranked as 4th or 5th TV channel according to the findings of the Barometers. We evaluate it as Fox TV's success that its preference rates for both for watching the news and for watching





TV series and entertainment shows are quite close to each other. Among so many news channels, Fox TV's preference rate of 7 percent is definitely a success on their behalf.

NTV is ranked first among news channels when respondents are inquired about two different genres. However, although NTV outscores its rivals when we direct our standard question of the preferred TV channel to watch the news, the difference becomes negligible when inquired separately about TV channel preferences to watch the news and TV series.

When we ask respondents which TV channel they prefer to watch the news, news channels are preferred at lower rates. However, when we inquire about their preferences for two different genres, the rate of news channels increases. This may indicate that respondents neglect the phrase "to watch the news" in the first question and express their general TV channel preference, and they pay more attention to the phrase "to watch the news" when we ask the two genres separately.

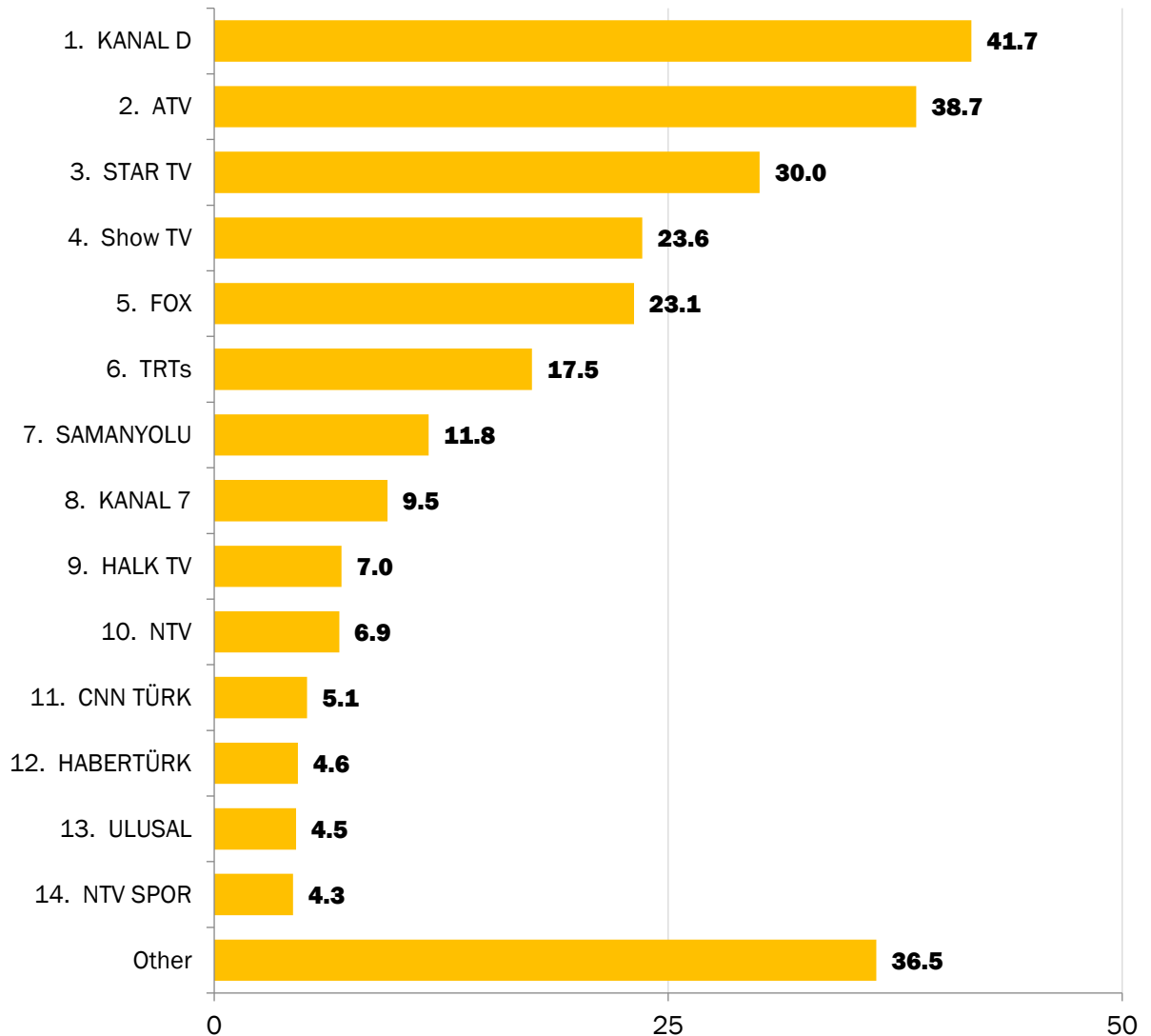
Respondents were also asked the question, "Which channels do you prefer when you turn the TV on?", and they were requested to name three different channels. The findings of this question are in support of our argument above.

The graph below shows the rates of each channel for being named among the top three channels listed by respondents. For example, 42 percent of respondents named Kanal D as one of the three channels they prefer when they turn the TV on.

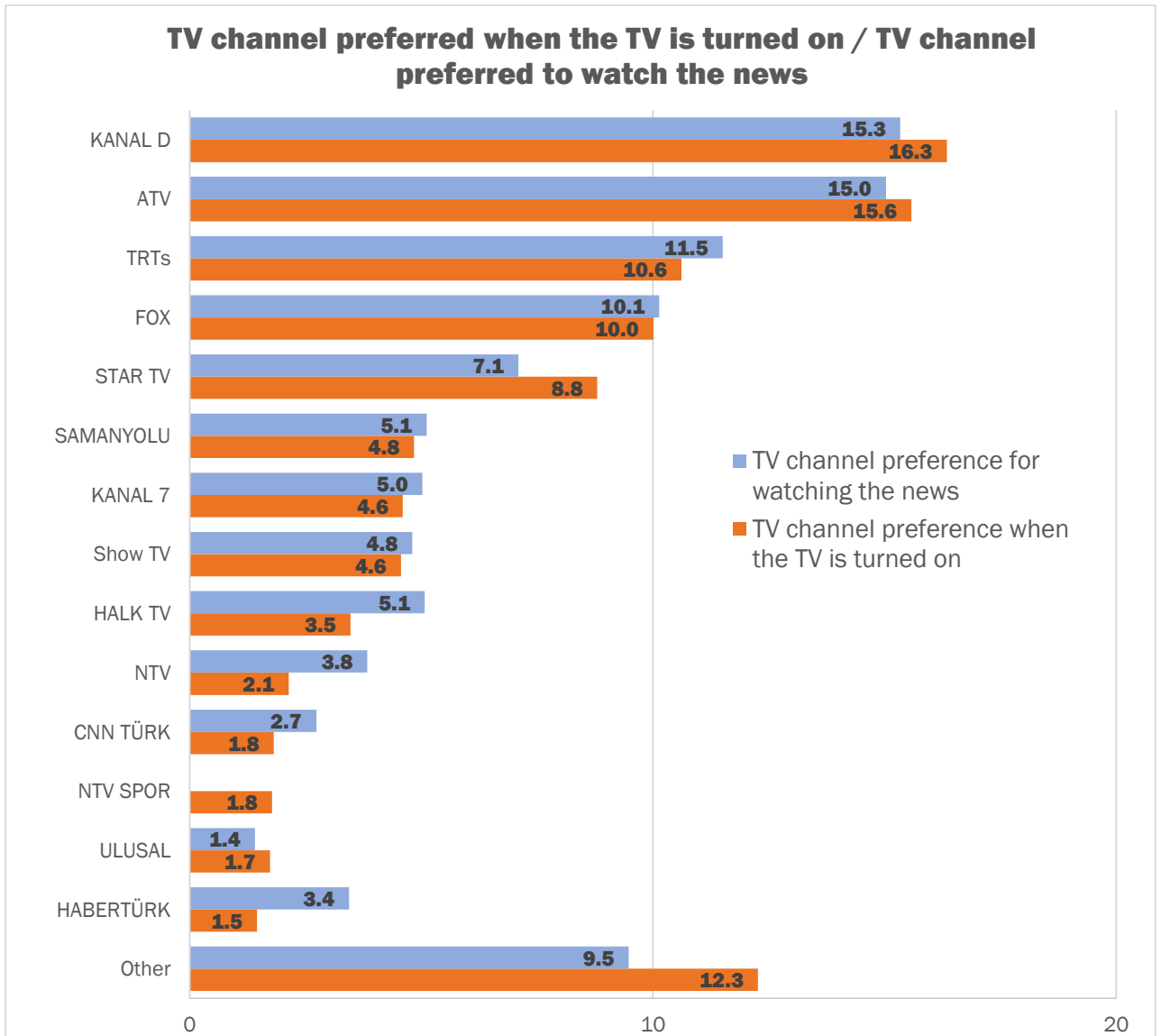
The ranking below is quite similar to that of channels preferred to watch the news. According to the ranking, it is possible to assert that Kanal D and ATV present a successful figure. Two out of every five respondents name Kanal D as one of the three channels they prefer, while one out of three respondents name ATV among their three preferences. In this ranking, Fox TV lagged behind.



### TV channel you prefer when you turn the TV on (three preferences)



The graph on the next page presents the preference rates of TV channels for being listed among the three respondents prefer "when they turn their TVs on", along with the response rates to the question we ask each respondent first, "Which TV channel do you prefer to watch the news?". If the genre difference is not specifically mentioned, the TV channel preferred to watch the news and the channel preferred when the TV is turned on are pretty much the same.



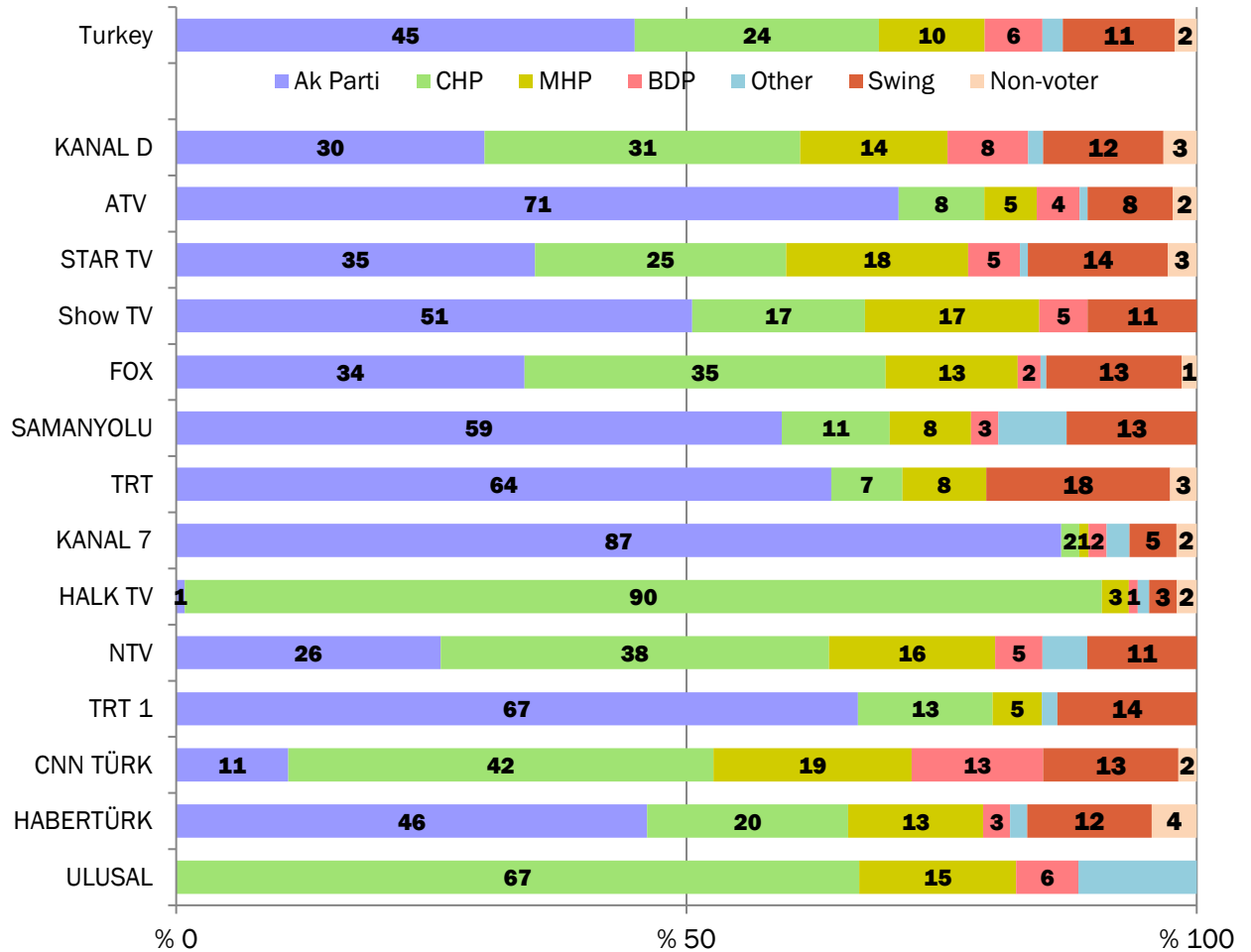
In the graph, Star TV stands out once again. Star TV has a lower preference rate for watching the news when we consider the two genres, while its overall preference rate at 8.8 percent is 2 points higher than before.

When we look at the overall TV channel preferences, the distribution of responses to our standard question, "Which TV channel do you prefer to watch the news", reflects the other TV channel preferences to watch different genres. Although they would not be acceptable for rating measurement purposes, the differences observed when we ask the TV channel that is specifically preferred to watch TV series or news and the TV channel that is preferred as soon as the TV is turned on are acceptable for a quantitative survey such as this one. The response given immediately is the channel that remains in the respondent's memory as a 'brand' and that signifies a sense of belonging.



Therefore, TV channel preferences to watch the news, i.e. the responses to our standard question, were used for the purpose of carrying out deeper analysis in the report.

### TV Channel Preference / Political Preference



First of all, it is helpful to analyze TV channel preferences in relation to political preferences. The rate of CHP voters is quite low among the respondents who prefer ATV, Kanal 7 and TRT, whereas the rate of Ak Parti voters is very low among those who watch the news on Halk TV and Ulusal Kanal. The differentiation we identified above holds true in many cases. It is observed that even the channels we would expect to reflect an average distribution are inclined to a certain side. For example, Ak Parti voters are prevalent among the Star TV audience, while opposition voters at 35 percent, are conspicuous among the Fox TV audience.

The prevalence of Ak Parti voters among respondents who prefer Habertürk and Show TV is clearly observed. It is also necessary to mention the change that TV channel preferences presented over the past year. In the previous Barometers, the rate of CHP voters was much higher, especially among the Habertürk audience. However, the change in the ownership structure of these two channels affected the broadcast content, consequently impacting the audience profile.

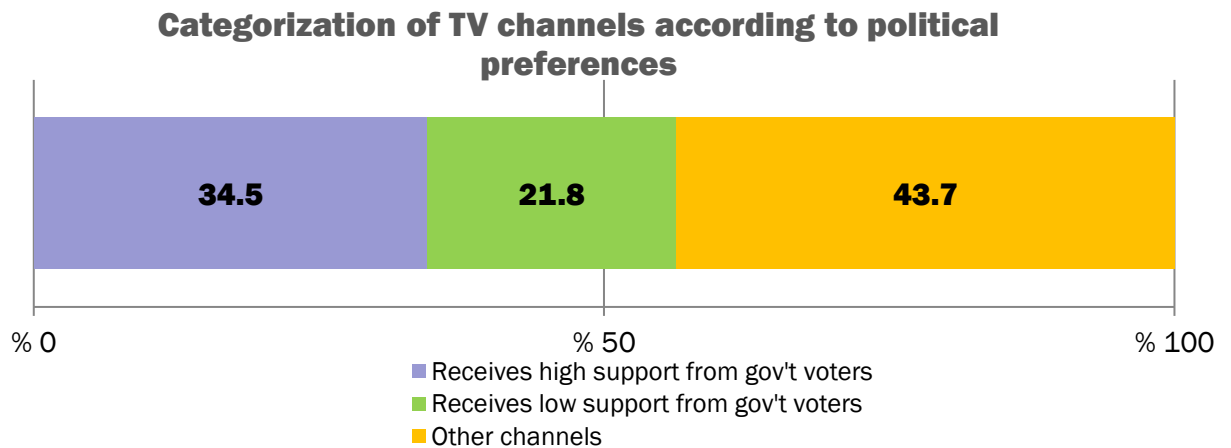


Samanyolu TV audience also presents notable findings. Ak Parti voters compose 60 percent of the audience of Samanyolu TV, well known for its rapport with the Gülen movement during the December 17th process. A similar observation is valid for Zaman when we analyze newspaper preferences. The 'Trust' section presents other findings on these two media institutions, both of which may be identified as the voice of the Gülen movement.

Further in the report, we will elaborate more on both politics and current political development in relation to TV channel preferences. We created a subjective categorization with the purpose to clarify and to simplify the analysis.

We pointed out that TV channel preferences, i.e. the channel preferred to watch the news, describes respondents' political preferences and their position on the polarization axis. Therefore, we grouped the TV channels according to the political preferences of their audiences.

If the direct preference rate of Ak Parti among the audience of any TV channel is higher than 55 percent, we categorized that channel as receiving "high support from the ruling party voters"; and if the direct preference rate of CHP among the audience of a TV channel is higher than 35 percent, we identified that channel as receiving "less support from the ruling party voters". This categorization does not carry any purpose other than facilitating the analysis. Accordingly, 34.5 percent of the TV channels preferred by the audience may be identified as channels receiving high support from the ruling party voters, and 28.1 of the channels may be identified as receiving less support from the ruling party voters.

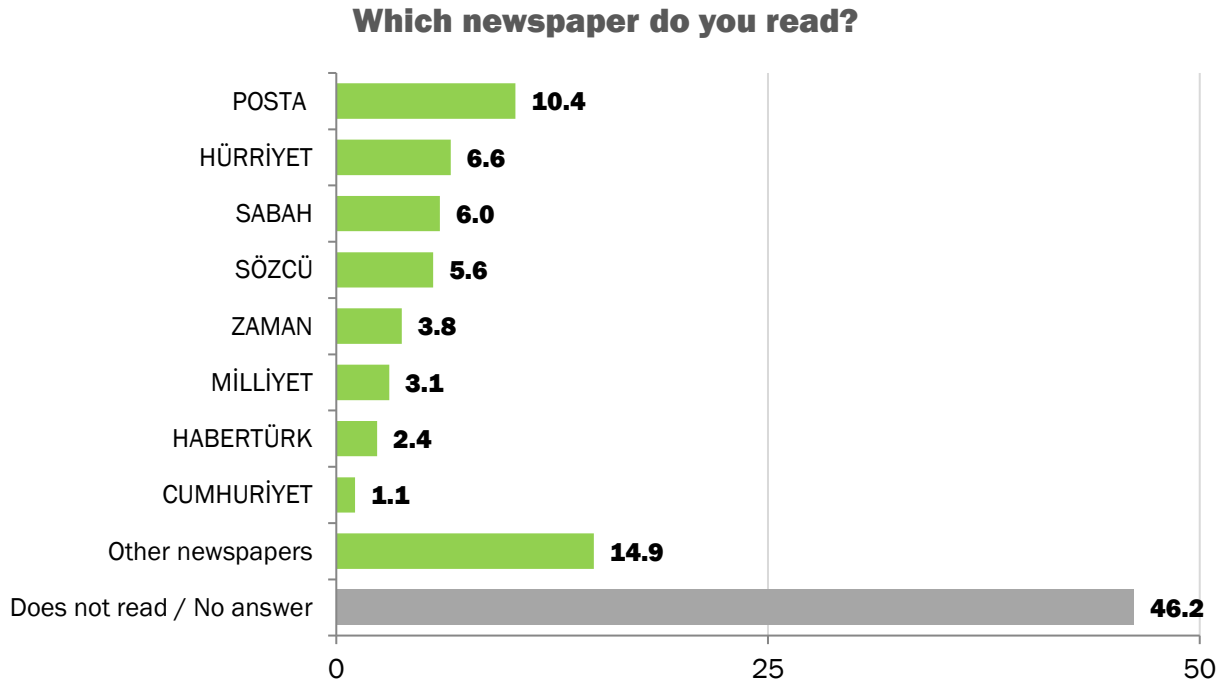


This objective of this categorization is not to label the TV channels, but to better understand the perception mechanisms influenced by TV broadcasts. We will also analyze preferences and opinions of respondents in relation to their TV channel preferences.



## 2.2. Newspaper Preferences

Although the majority of society shapes their opinions on current events and political developments based on TV broadcasts, newspapers still exert a powerful influence. In this respect, we endeavored to determine respondents' newspaper preferences in addition to their TV channel preferences.



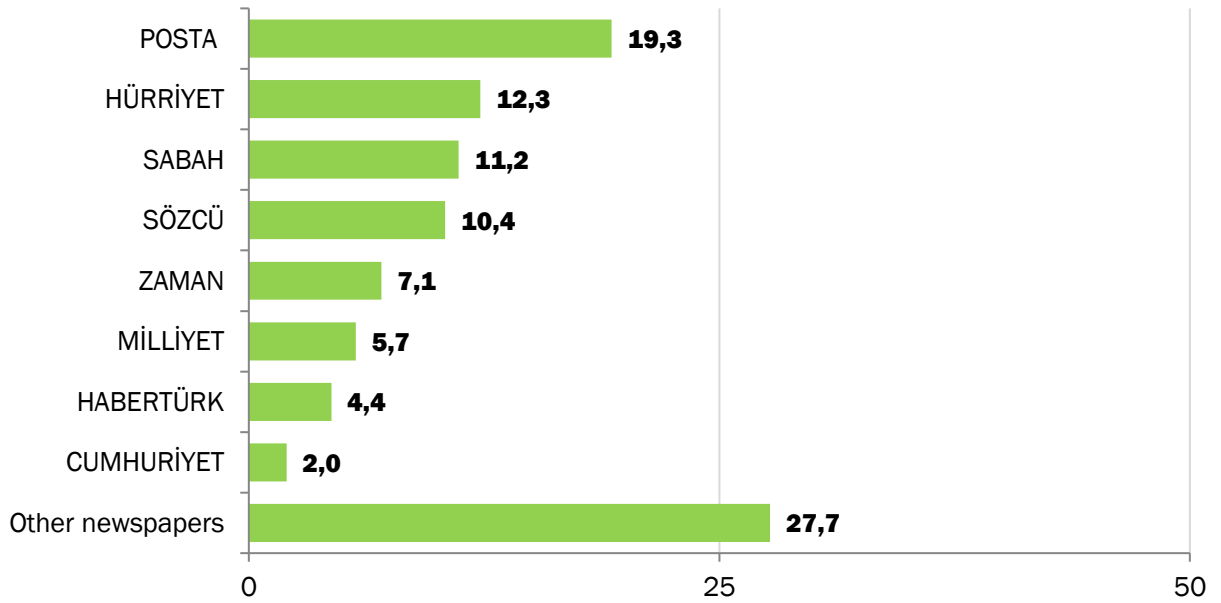
Almost half of the respondents either did not reply to this question or stated that they do not read the newspaper. 10 percent of the adult population in Turkey name Posta as the newspaper of their preference. Considering that this is equivalent to 5.5 million people, we may assert that the rate of newspaper readers and newspaper circulation figures are disproportional.

Sözcü is the most striking newspaper on this list. The high preference rate of Sözcü, a newspaper which could be described as a byproduct of polarization in the country, is worth further analysis, given its high circulation.

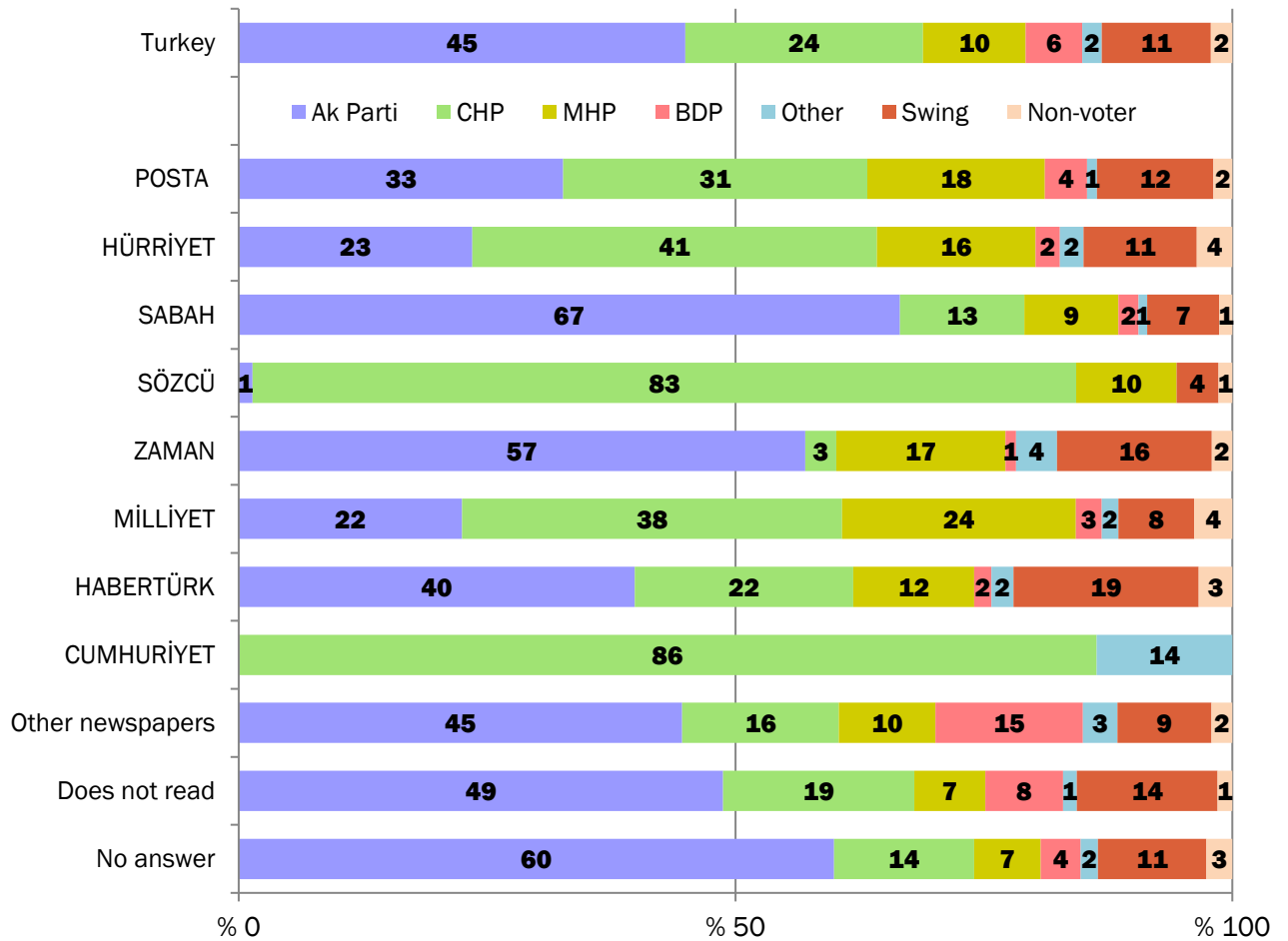
Furthermore, when we analyze the preference rates only among the respondents who read newspapers, it is observed that 19 percent of the readers prefer Posta, while 2 percent prefer Cumhuriyet, which is the least preferred newspaper.



### Which newspaper do you read? (excluding no answers)



### Newspaper preference / Political preference





As seen in the second graph on the previous page, the preference rates of newspapers are shaped in parallel to the polarization observed in the distribution for TV channel preferences.

We can easily spot Sözcü and Cumhuriyet on one end of the polarization axis, while Sabah lies clearly on the other side. Sabah had a different reader profile before it was seized by the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (SDIF), and it is still possible to observe nearly different voter groups which make up nearly a quarter of Sabah readers. However, there are no Ak Parti voters among Cumhuriyet and Sözcü readers.

Looking at the graph, we can identify those who stated they do not read newspaper and did not respond to this question, as a voters with a different political identity.

Zaman is another noteworthy newspaper on the list. Zaman is well known for its rapport with the Gülen movement which has been identified as the parallel state by the government. Ak Parti voters were significantly high among Zaman readers prior to December 17th. It is notable that, despite the conflict, three out of every five Zaman readers are also Ak Parti voters. A similar result was obtained for Samanyolu TV in the television preferences section. In the next section about trust, a different analysis will be provided about these two media institutions, which we can identify as the voices of the Gülen movement.

## **2.3. Which Source Do You Trust?**

As mentioned before, we endeavored to observe respondents' perceptions with respect to different aspects in order to understand their relationship with mass media. Determining levels of trust to media institutions is yet another approach we took.

### **2.3.1. Which TV channel do you trust?**

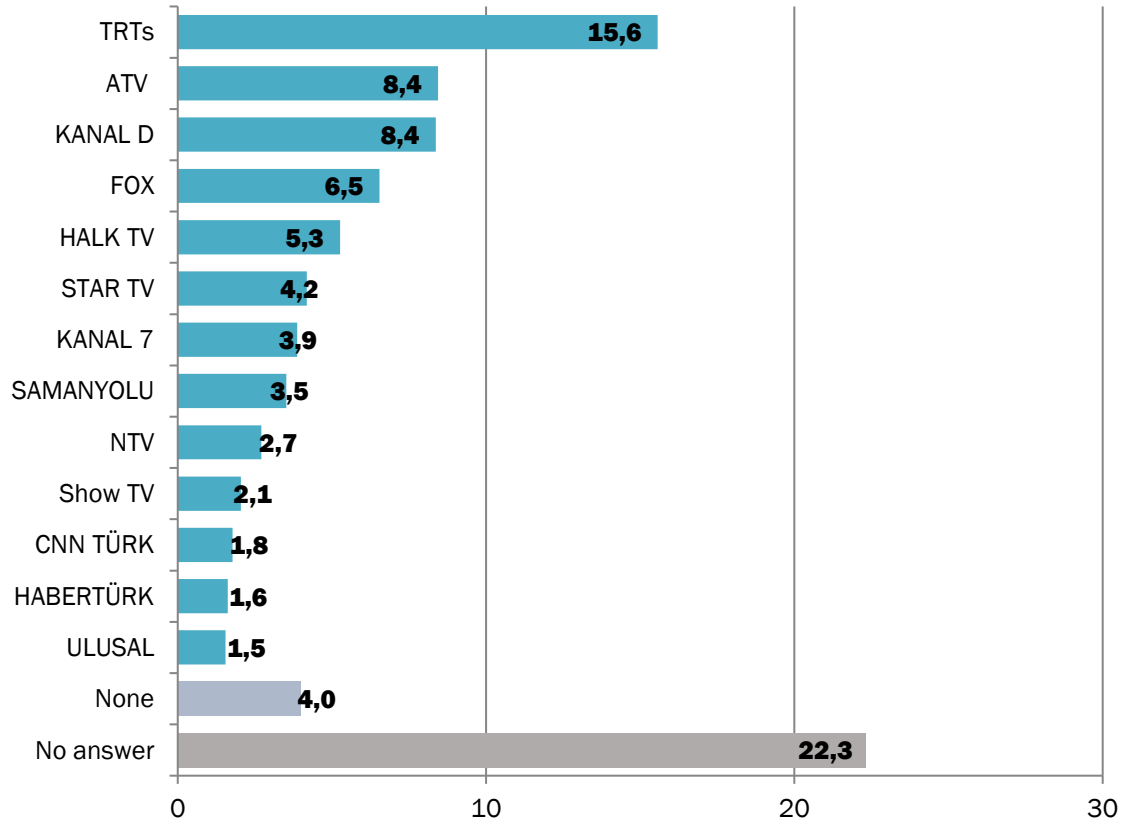
When answering the question, "Which TV channel do you trust?", respondents present a different approach than when they reply about their TV preferences. TRT channels, which received a low preference rate, is at the top of the list when it terms of trust. The question was directed as an open-ended question, and all TRT channels were again grouped together. This grouping may appear partial towards TRT. However, we should note that very few respondents identified a specific TRT channel explicitly, and the majority simply stated 'TRT' as their response.

The fact that ATV, Fox TV and Halk TV enjoy higher levels of trust in comparison to their preference rates as a news source, and Show TV's lower level of trust in comparison to its respective preference rate as a news source are notable findings from the responses. Halk TV has another noteworthy characteristic. Halk TV was ranked 9th on the list of channels respondents turn on first, but it rises to the 5th position in responses regarding the issue of trust. We can assert that respondents who prefer to watch the news on Halk TV, but the TV series and entertainment shows on mainstream channels, prefer 'to trust' the channel that is closer to their political views and broadcasts in line with their opinions.





### Most trusted TV channel

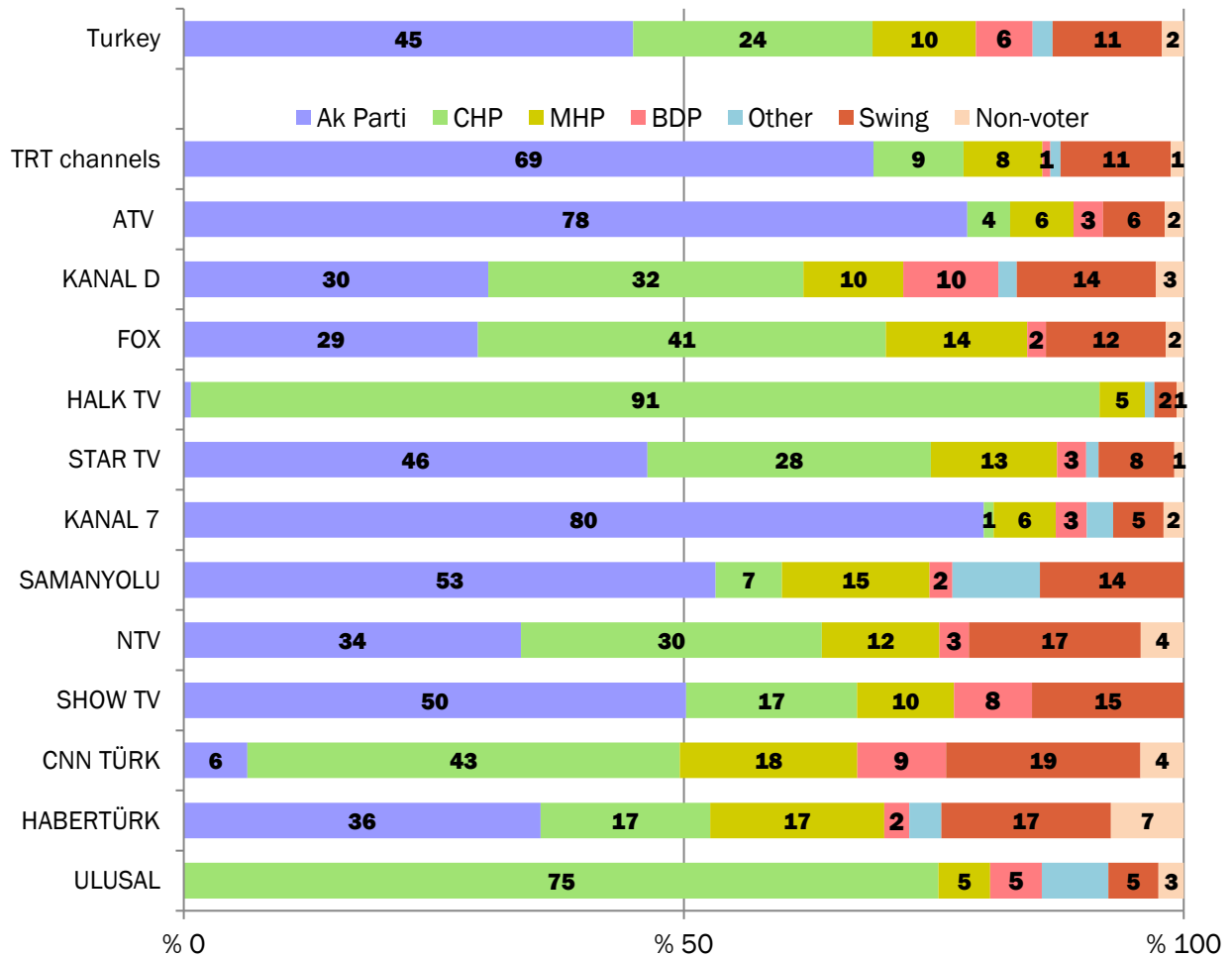


It is clearly observed that one fourth of respondents did not identify a channel they trust. We can offer two different explanations: These respondents may not be attributing a significant meaning to television, therefore they may not consider the 'trust' issue, or they may be suspicious of all channels upon witnessing the media industry split into sides due to the increasingly polarized political atmosphere.

However, the table below provides the basis of analyses in the following pages of this section, reflecting our observations on trust levels of TV channels in relation to political preferences of voters. In other words, the distribution in this graph confirm the same findings we observe in our surveys on the relation between TV channels and political preferences.



### Political preference in relation to the TV channel trusted



Similar to the distribution of TV channels preferred to watch the news, the rate of CHP voters is quite low among the respondents who trust channels such as ATV, Kanal 7 and TRT, whereas the rate of Ak Parti voters is very low among those who trust Halk TV or Ulusal Kanal. It is observed that even the channels we would expect to reflect an average distribution are inclined to a certain side. For example, Ak Parti voters are prevalent among Star TV audience, whereas CHP voters at 41 percent are dominant among Fox TV audience.

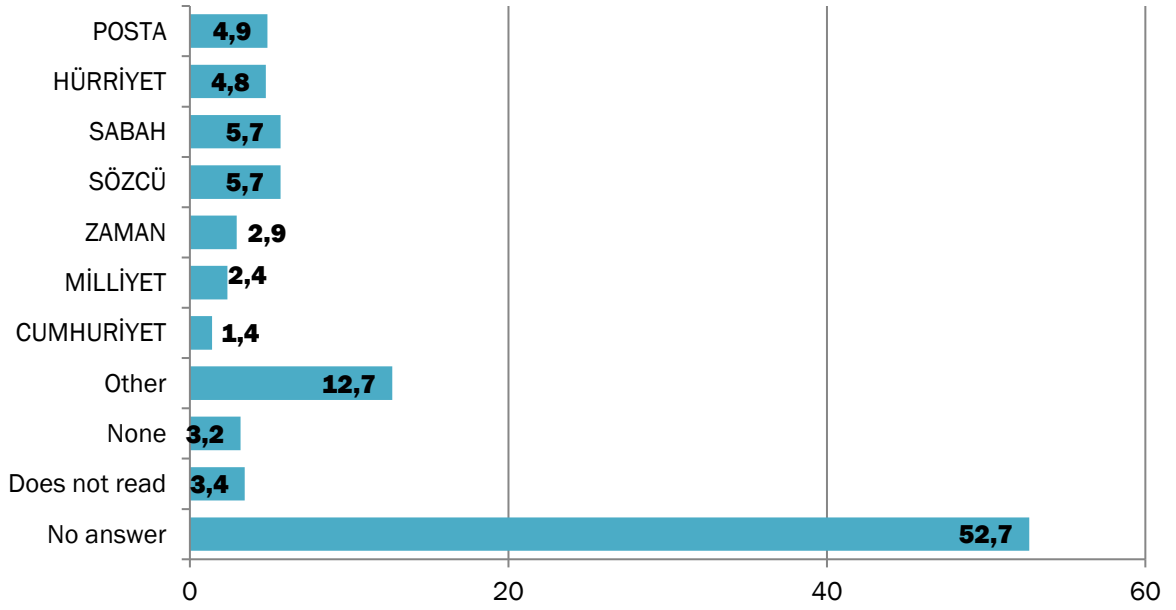
### 2.3.2. Which newspaper do you trust?

Similar to the case with TV channels, the ranking of preference rates and trust levels of newspapers present differences.

The table below demonstrates that only 40 percent of respondents replied to the question. On the other hand, the trust level in other newspapers at 12 percent is notable, given that the most trusted newspaper only reaches 5 percent. Other media institutions, which are preferred at a rate lower than 1 percent, are trusted by different groups of people.

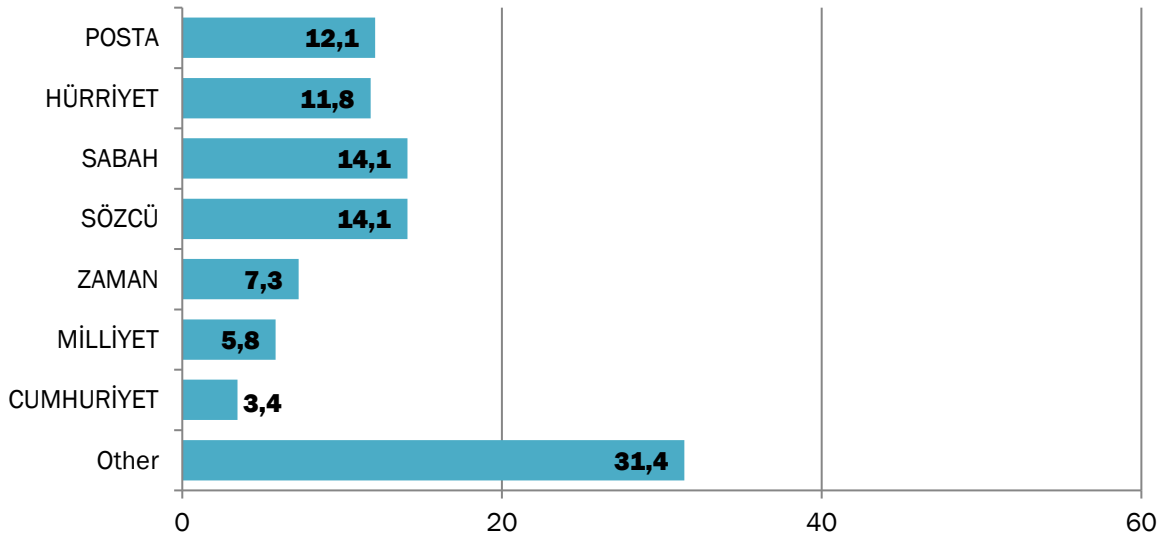


### Most Trusted Newspaper



The graph below is provided by redistributing the rates only among those who provided a reply to the question.

### Most Trusted Newspaper (excluding no answers)



### Two most trusted newspapers: Sabah and Sözcü

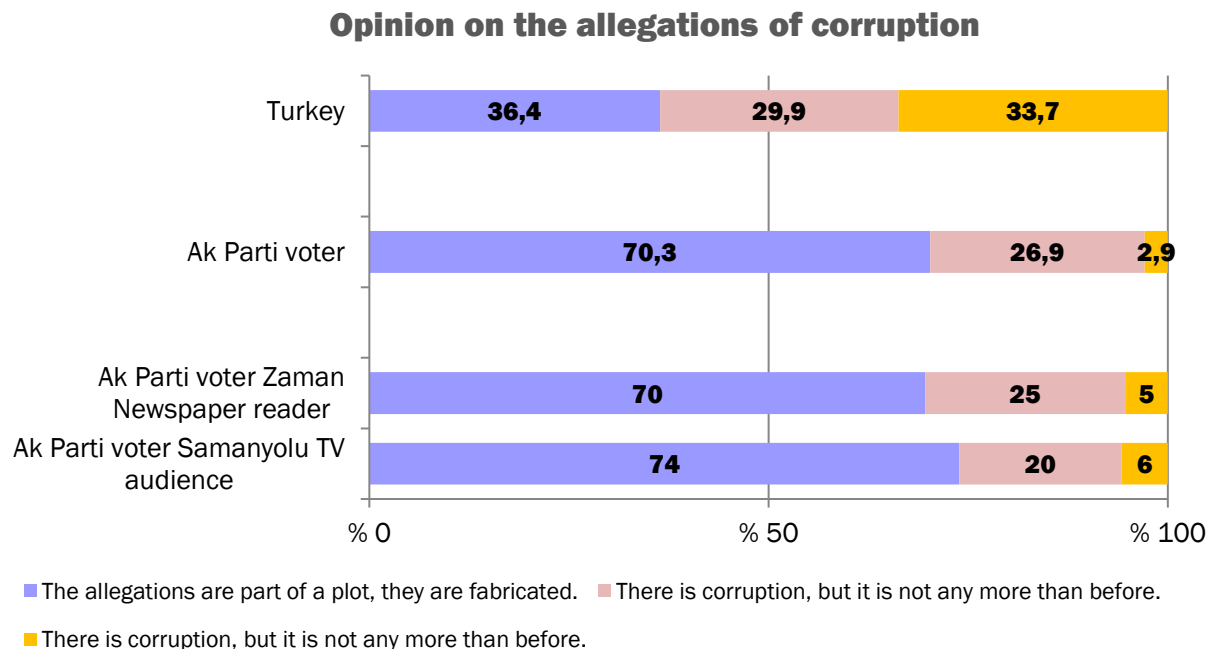
Sabah and Sözcü share the first place on the list of most trusted newspapers. This is a significant picture as it demonstrates the extent of polarization clearly. The publication policies of these two newspapers are based on either advocating or opposing the government. Therefore the fact that Sabah and Sözcü are the most trusted newspapers demonstrates that the media industry is staggering in terms of objectivity.



### 2.3.3. Analysis of Zaman Newspaper and Samanyolu TV

The relationship of Zaman newspaper and Samanyolu TV with the Gülen movement is well known among society. These media institutions explicitly supported the Gülen movement during the Gülen movement-government conflict which unraveled after December 17. However, in the sections on TV channel and newspaper preferences, we pointed out that Ak Parti voters are prevalent among the followers of these two media institutions. In order to confirm this interesting finding, we analyzed media preferences in relation to the question about the allegations of corruption.

We asked respondents the question, "Which of the below explains your opinion on the allegations of corruption which also involve the Prime Minister?" and provided them with three choices listed on the graph below.



70 percent of Ak Parti voters think that "the allegations are part of a plot". We can observe that Ak Parti voters who prefer to read Zaman and to watch Samanyolu TV share the same opinions with the rest of Ak Parti voters. This could be explained by various arguments. However, considering that both institutions have been addressing an established voter profile for many years, it would not be reasonable to expect that the follower profiles would change in 4 months.

However, in the next section on 'media institutions that respondents would never prefer', it is possible to observe that a group in opposition to Samanyolu TV and Zaman was established over 4 months.



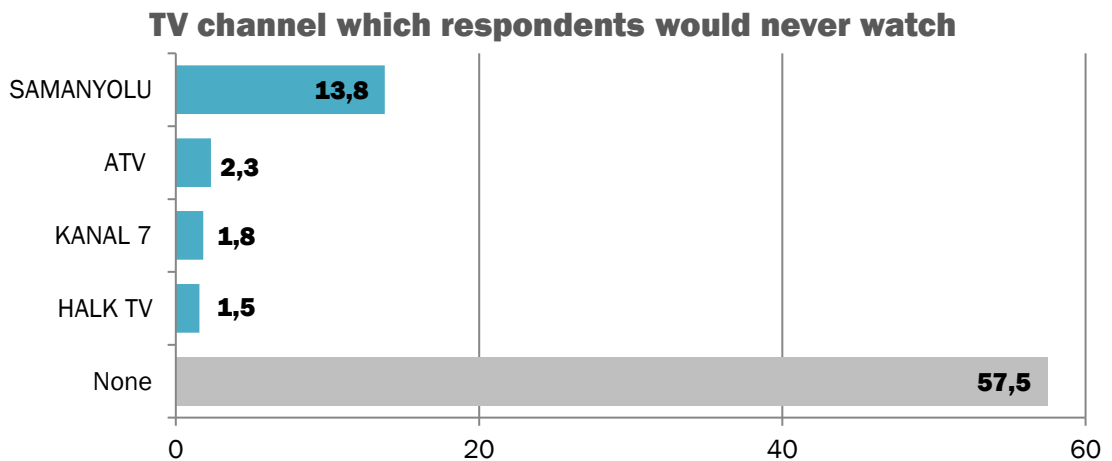
## 2.4. Media Institutions Which Respondents Would Never Prefer

In addition to asking which media institutions they trusted the most, we also asked respondents about the TV channel they would never watch and the newspaper they would never read, in order to examine their relation with different media institutions. Two findings worth noting as we observe the responses to these questions:

- The majority of society do not have a media institution they say that they would never follow.
- An opposition has formed against the media institutions which are affiliated with the Gülen movement.

### 2.4.1. TV channel which respondents would never watch

60 percent of respondents do not express a TV channel that they would never watch. In addition, the response rates for most of the channels provided in responses are below 3 percent. Only the rate of respondents who state they would never watch Samanyolu TV is 14 percent. It should be noted that 14 percent is a quite high rate in the existing distribution.

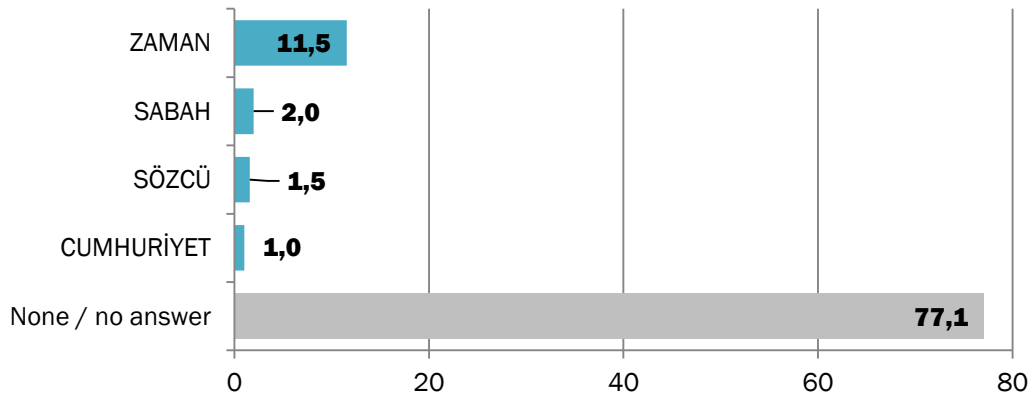


### 2.4.2. Newspaper which respondents would never read

Similar to the TV channels which they would never watch, 77 percent of respondents state that there is no newspaper which they would never read. This high rate of 77 percent is related to the low rate of newspaper readership.



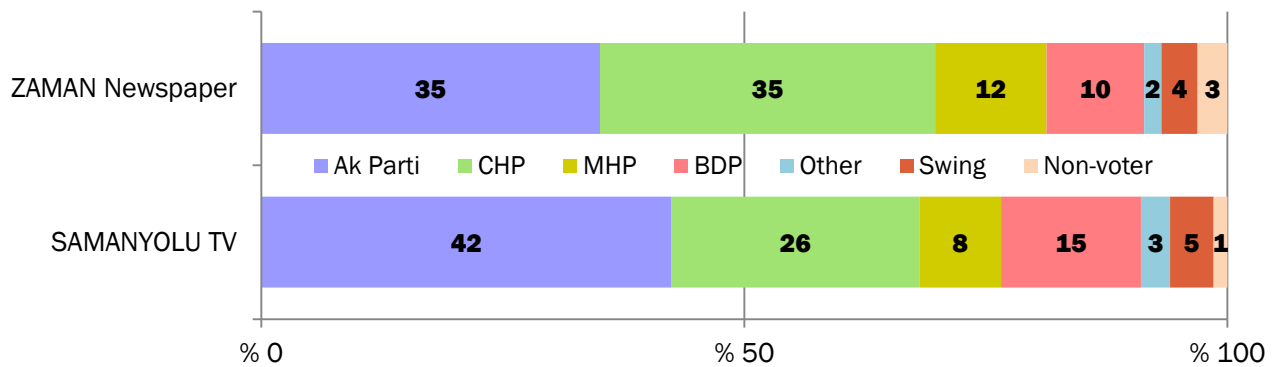
### Newspaper which respondents would never read



At 12 percent, Zaman was named most frequently as the newspaper which respondents would never read. Response rates of other newspapers are not more than 2 percent.

Looking at the two graphs above, we can conclude that an opposition has formed against the media institutions affiliated with the Gülen movement. However, this opposition does not only consist of supporters of the government. Ultimately, both Zaman newspaper and Samanyolu TV reflected a pro-Ak Parti trend for many years. Consequently, it is possible to anticipate that those in opposition to the government would not favor these media institutions.

### Political preferences of the respondents who state they would never read/watch a specific newspaper/TV channel



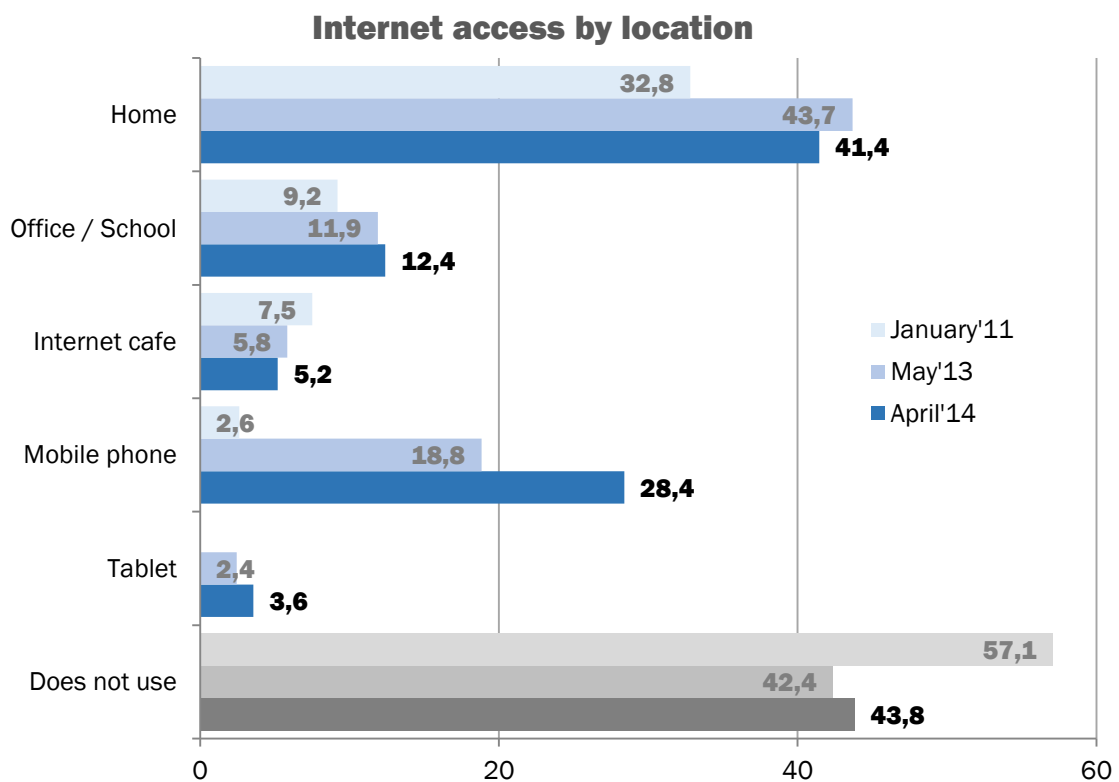
As the graph above presents, opposition voters compose a significant proportion of the respondents who say 'never' for these two media institutions. Therefore, media institutions affiliated with the Gülen movement are suffering blows from both sides.



## 2.5. Internet and Social Media Preferences

We endeavor to track respondents' internet and social media habits in Konda Barometers since 2011. In this context, we analyzed the social media factor once again, which has an increasing existence and prevalence in mass media.

We first asked respondents about from where they access the internet. Observing the findings in the graph below, it is possible to assert that internet users remained at similar rates. The 1 point decrease in the rate of those who state that they do not use the internet is within the error margin of the research. However, in general, two out of every five adults do not have internet access. This should be noted as a rate below the international standards.



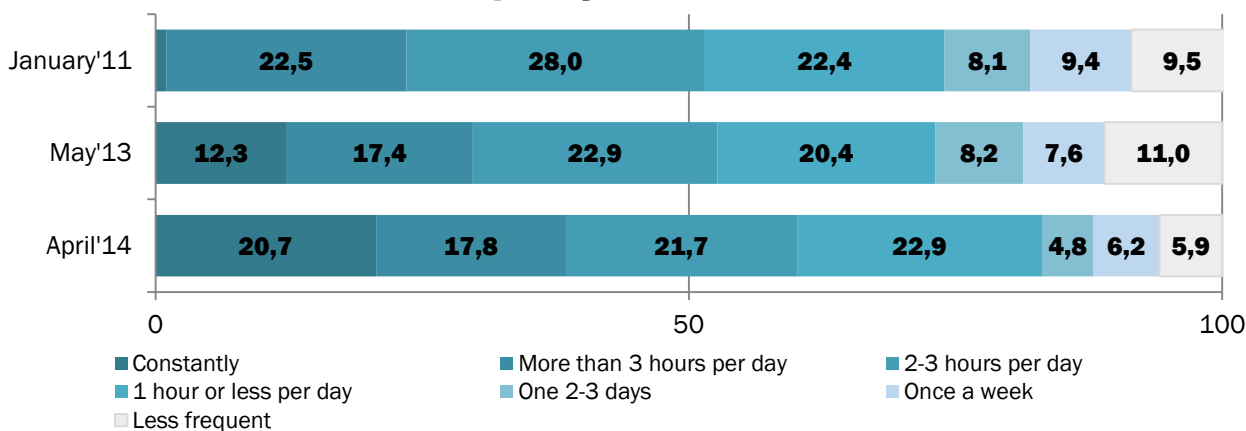
Although it is an anticipated result, the rate of respondents who access the internet through mobile devices is notable. The rate of those who access the internet through mobile phones and tablets increased by 50 percent.

Increased opportunities for internet access through mobile devices provides an explanation to the decreased rate of respondents who access the internet through their personal computers at home and from internet cafes.

The frequency of internet use also increased as a consequence of more widespread internet access. While in 2011, the rate of respondents who stated that they used the internet 'constantly' was at 1 percent level; in April 2014, one out of every five respondents state that they 'constantly' use the internet.

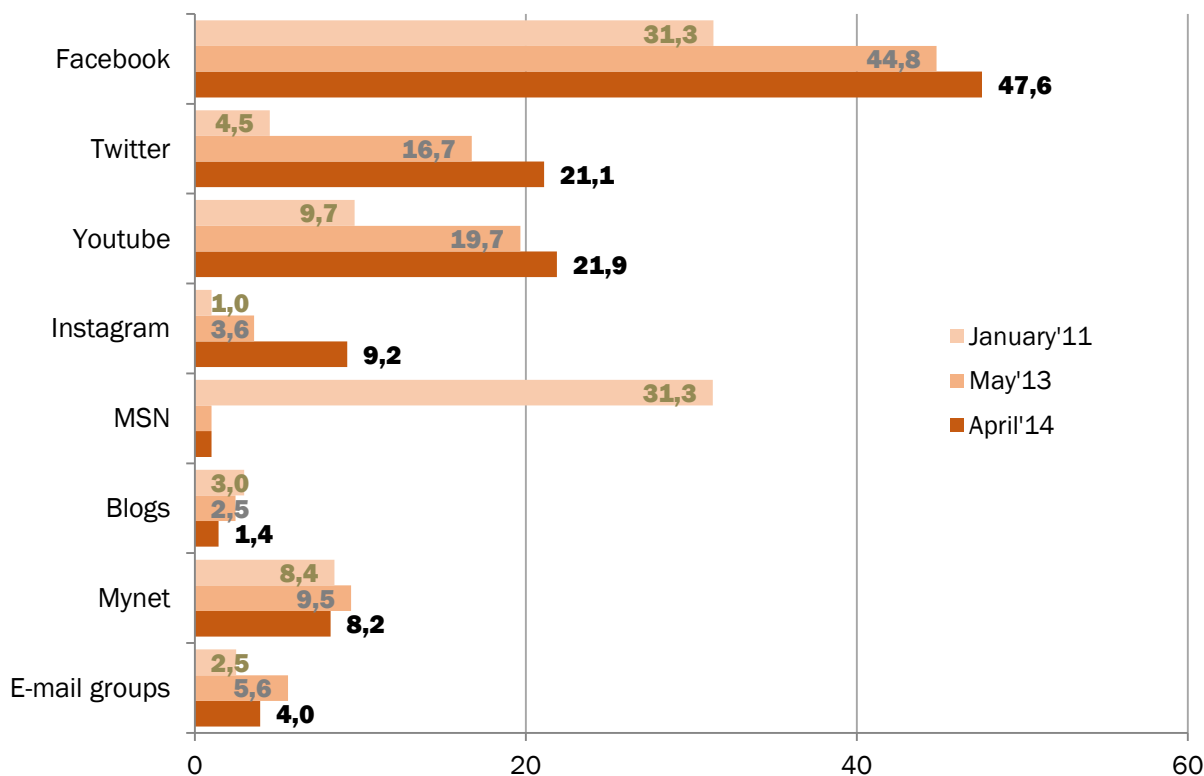


### Frequency of internet use



When surveying internet and social media use, we also asked respondents which websites and platforms they use the most. Considering the data from the past three years, we can observe that social media platforms have become significantly widespread. According to this picture, one out of every two adults has a Facebook account. In addition, the rate of Twitter users increased from 5 percent three years ago to one in five in this month. Proliferation of social media use follows a more rapid course than the proliferation of internet use throughout the country.

### Websites visited on the internet

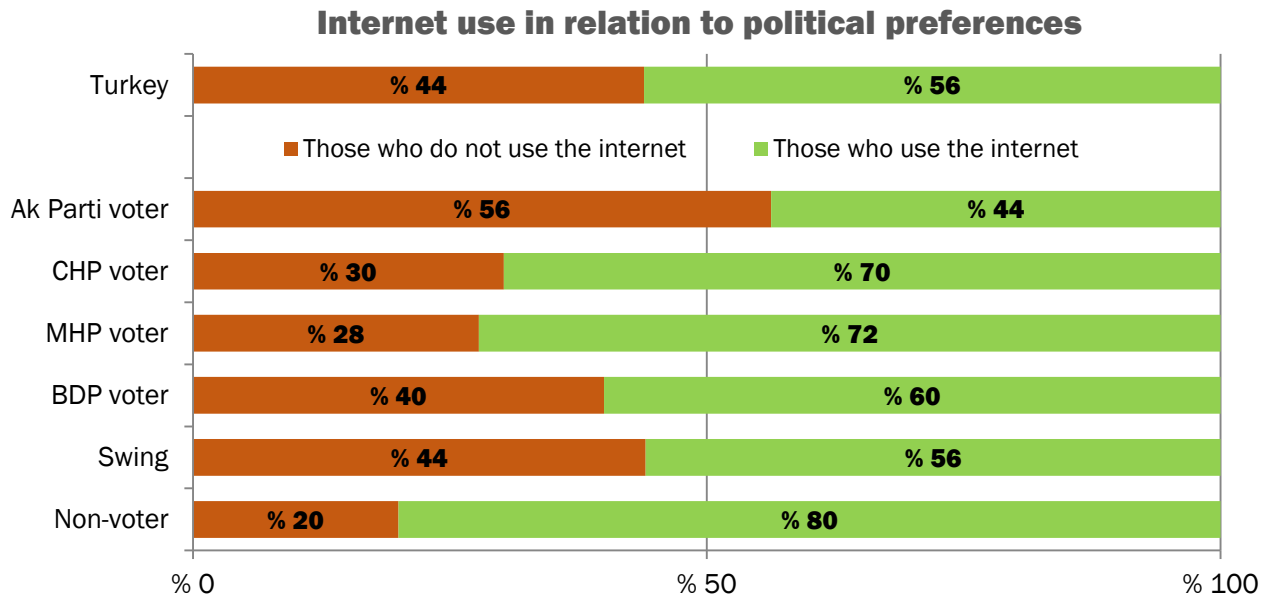






### 2.5.1. Opinions on the Internet and Social Media

In the research, respondents were also inquired about their opinions on social media along with their internet use. However, prior to delving into their opinions on social media, it is useful to analyze the social media and internet use of respondents in relation to their political preferences.

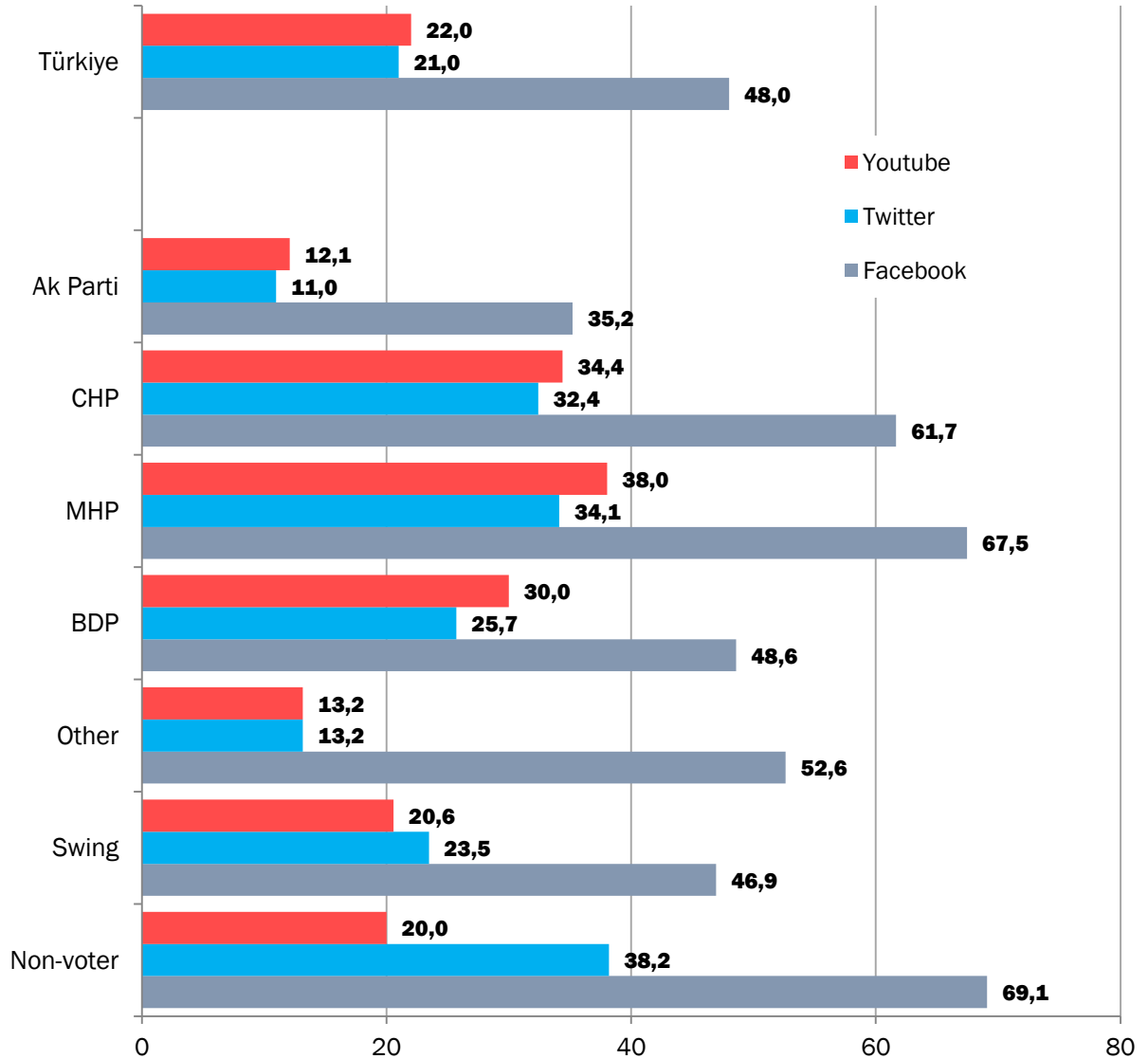


As presented in the table, the rate of respondents who do not use the internet is 44 percent in Turkey, while this rate reaches 56 percent among Ak Parti voters. According to these rates, it would be wrong to identify Ak Parti voters as a group which does not use the internet. Two out of every five Ak Parti voters use the internet.

The graph below presents the extent to which each voter group uses the three different social media websites. It is observed that Ak Parti voters use social media far less than others. When we consider that the government kept a certain distance from social media, the lower rate of internet use among Ak Parti voters is anticipated.



## Social media platforms used in relation to political preferences

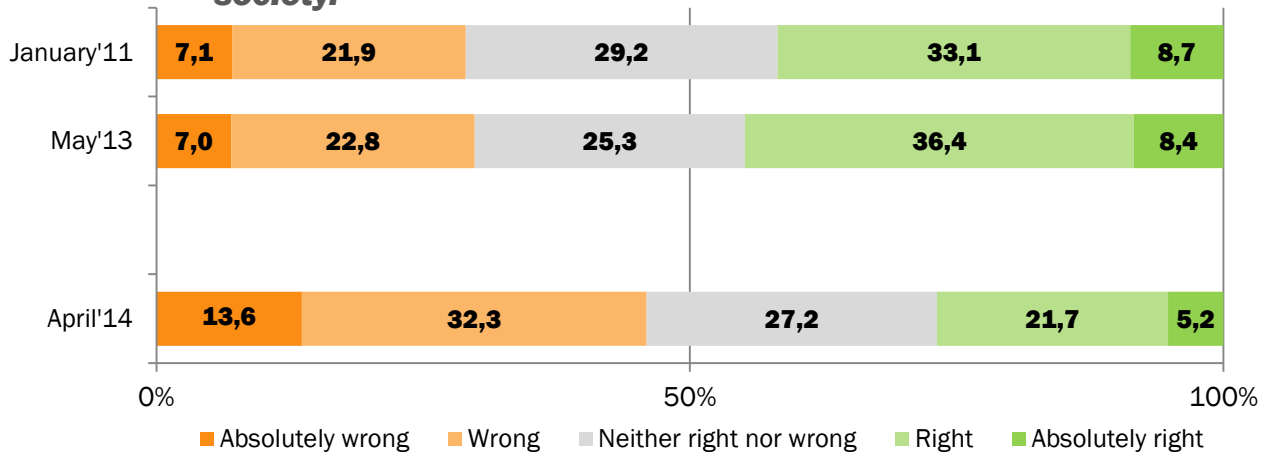


After presenting social media usage rates in relation to political preferences, we can review the responses to the questions directed with the purpose to analyze respondents' opinions on social media.

When we evaluate a question we have been asking over the past three years, we can observe that the rate of those who think that social media does more harm than good in society dropped significantly. While 45 percent of respondents thought that the internet does more harm than good one year ago, this rate dropped to 27 percent in this month.

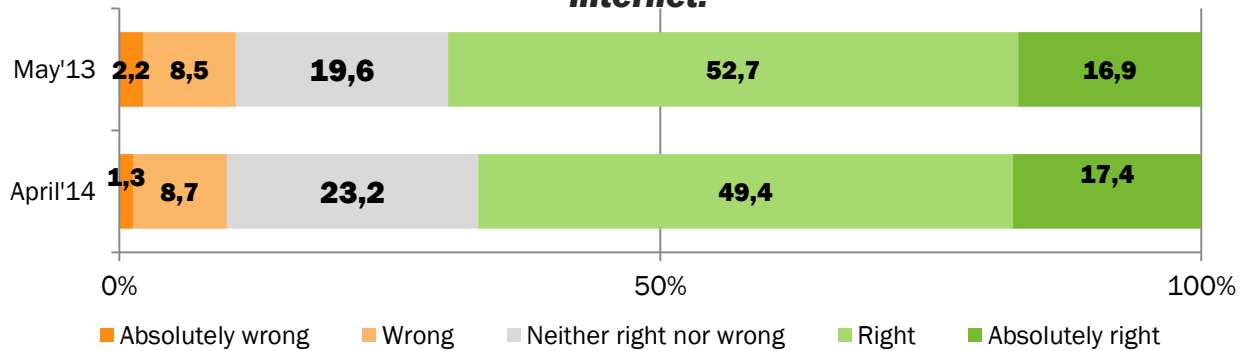


***I believe that the internet does more harm than good in society.***



In our last two surveys on social media, we also asked respondents about freedom of speech on the internet. The graph below presents that respondents have clear opinions on this issue and their opinions did not shift over the past year. Three thirds of society think that the government should ensure freedom of speech on the internet.

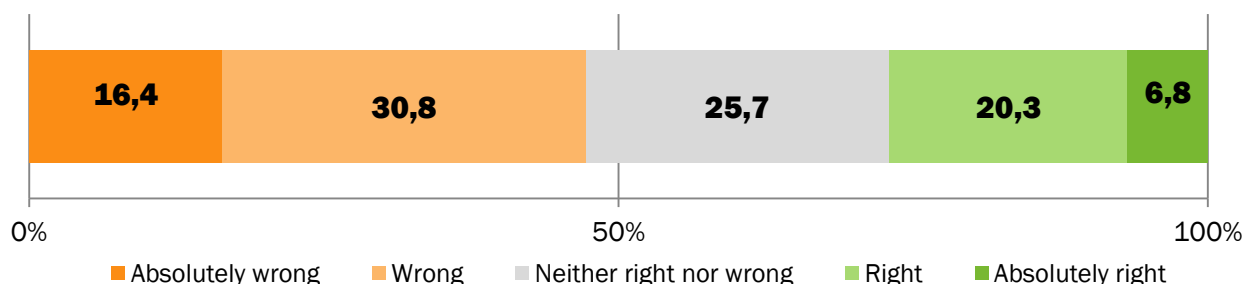
***The government should ensure freedom of speech on the internet.***



We directed respondents whether they agree with the statement below, in light of the Prime Minister's harsh statements about Facebook and Twitter. The rate of those who think that social networks are a menace to society is 27 percent and is lower than the rate of those who do not use the internet. However, it should be also be noted that one fourth of respondents remained undecided on the issue.

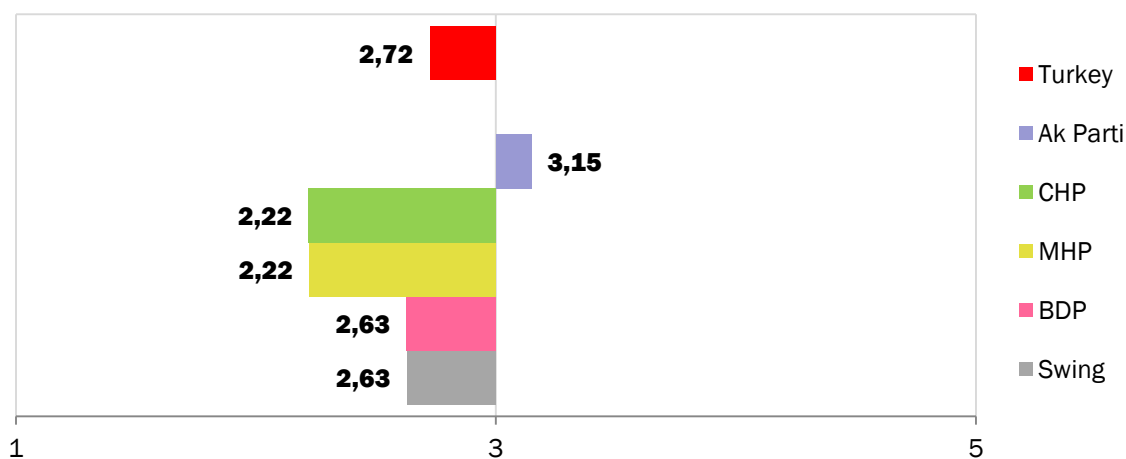


**Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook are a menace to society.**



It is also necessary to analyze how response rates to the three statements above change in relation to political preferences. The three graphs below present the average response rates, where 1 means “absolutely wrong”, and 5 means “absolutely right”.

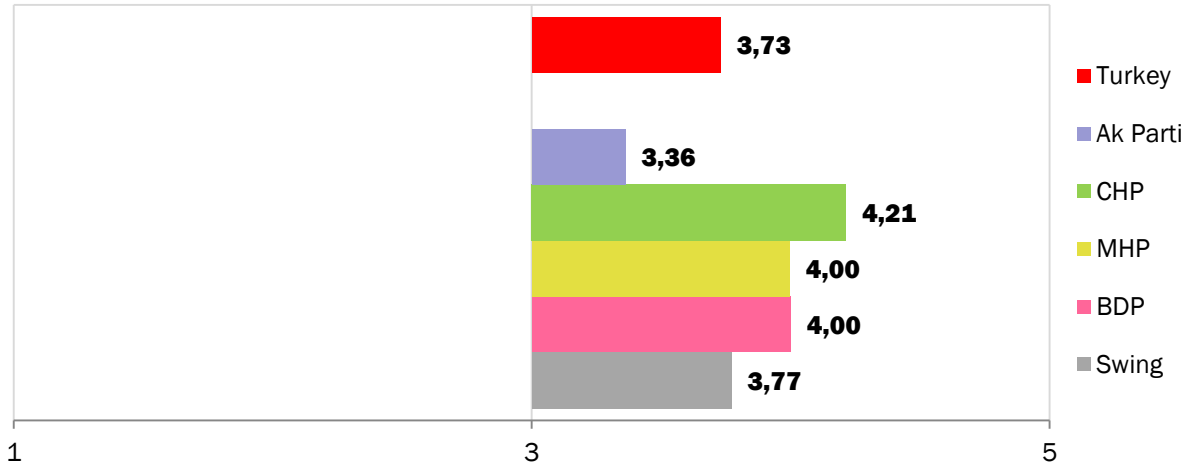
**I believe that the internet does more harm than good in society. / In relation to political preferences**



Ak Parti and opposition voters have quite contrary opinions on the internet's effect on society. Among swing voters, the rate of those who oppose the statement is higher than average.

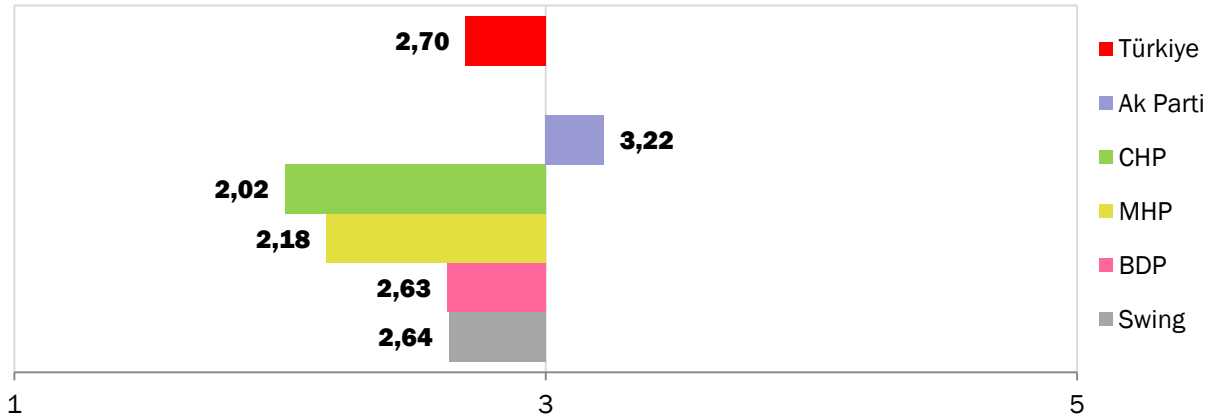


**The government should ensure freedom of speech on the internet / In relation to political preferences**



Although Ak Parti voters do not take an opposing stance and defend that the government should ensure freedom of speech on the internet, their attitude is not as clear as that of CHP voters.

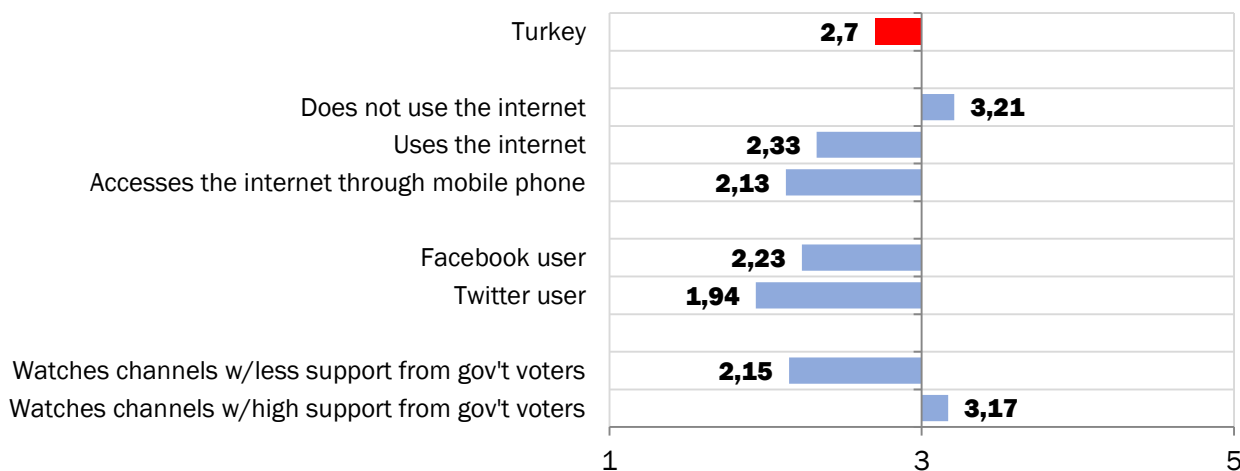
**Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook are a menace to society. / In relation to political preferences**



Among Ak Parti voters, the opinion on whether social networks are a menace to society is reflected in the center on average, as "neither right nor wrong". On the other hand, responses of CHP voters reflect the average score of 2 which corresponds to "wrong" among the responses.



### **Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook are a menace to society.**



When we observe the responses in relation to several parameters, we come across anticipated findings that respondents who use the internet oppose the statement more than those who do not use the internet, and respondents who are Facebook and Twitter users oppose the statement more than those who do not use these social media platforms. Likewise, respondents who make up the audiences of TV channels that receive higher support from ruling party voters agree with the statement at higher rates.

## **2.6. Media Where Respondents Follow News and Events**

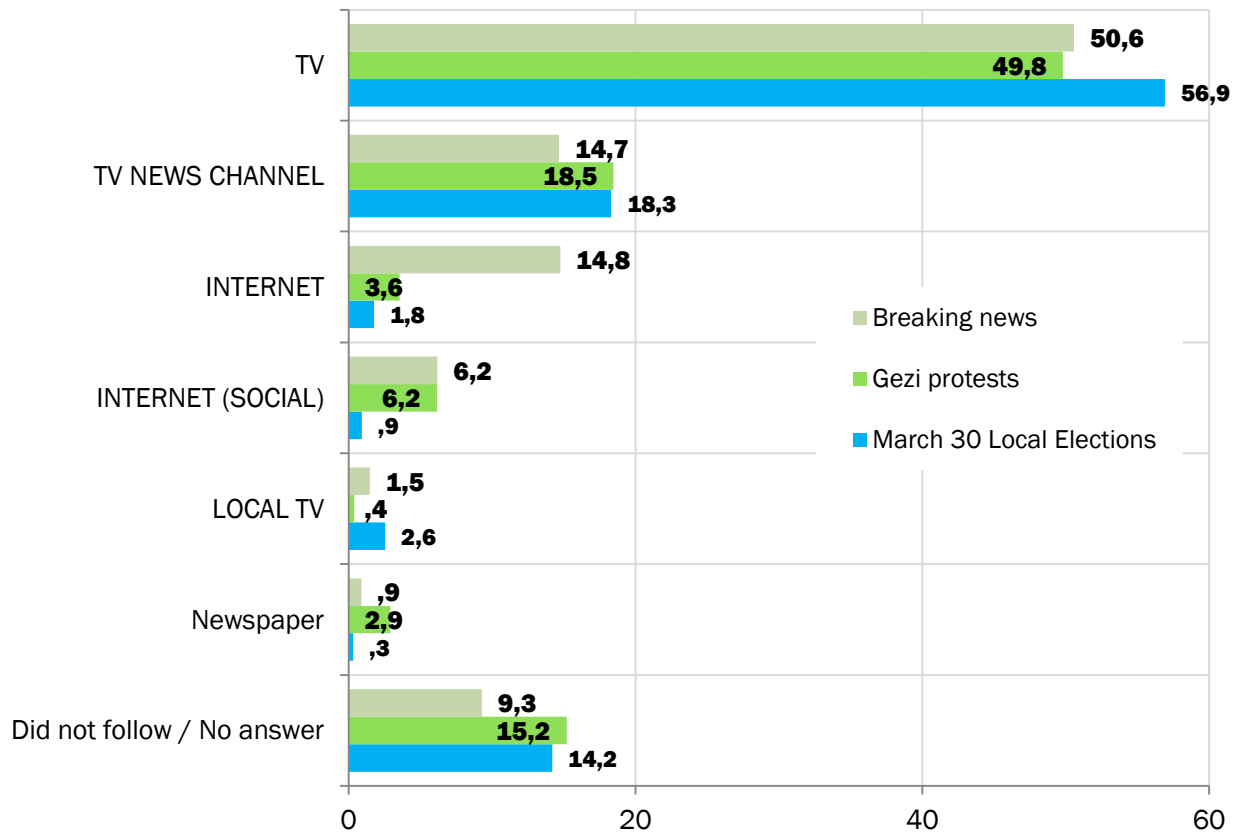
As mass media evolved into a more complex structure with the emergence of social media, it has become important to identify the sources where society follows current events from. We endeavored to identify these sources by asking three open-ended questions. We asked respondents three questions listed below:

- \*Which media source do you use to follow the breaking news during the day?
- \*Which newspaper, TV channel or website did you primarily follow to get the news on events such as the Gezi protests, the Gülen movement-government conflict, December 17th process?
- \*Which TV channel or website did you follow to get the results of the March 30th Local Elections?

We categorized the responses as shown in the graph below. The most remarkable finding is the considerable rate of those who followed the news on social media.



### Media where respondents follow the news and events

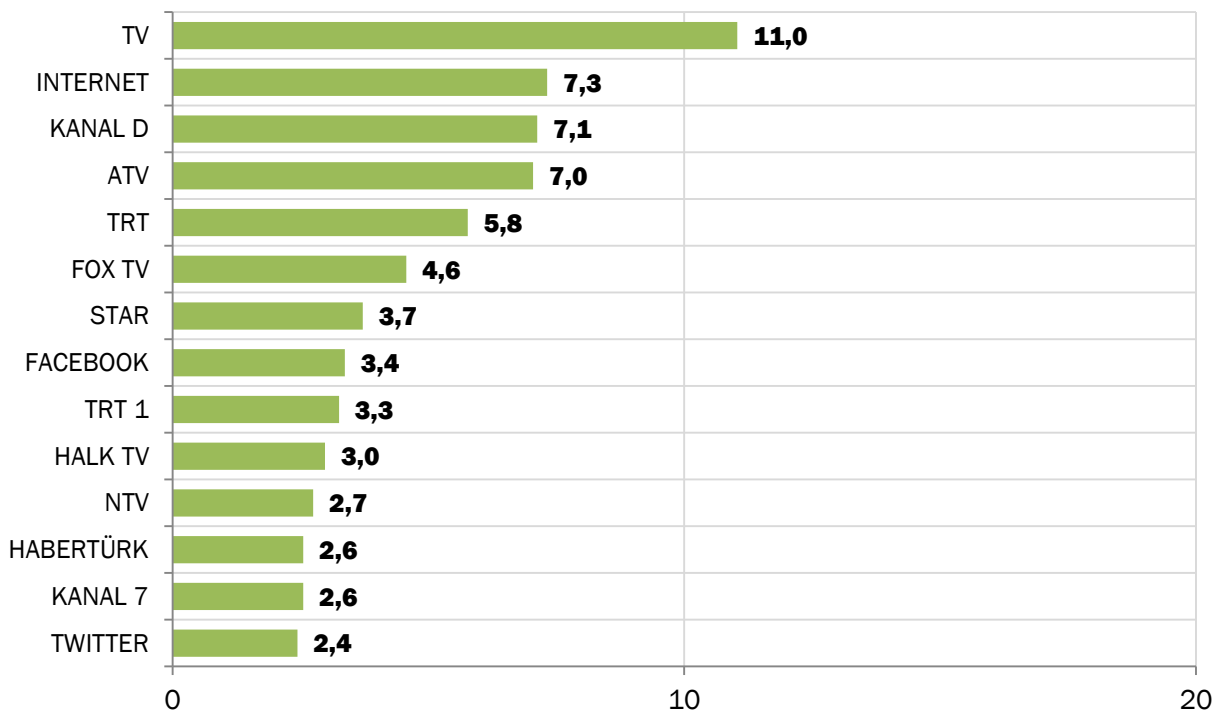


As the graph above presents, the majority of society follow the news on TV channels.

Following the overall evaluation above, for each question, we can analyze the open-ended responses which are at a rate higher than 2 percent. The graph below presents the original responses classified into groups. For example, 11 percent of respondents clearly stated that they 'follow the breaking news on television'.



### I follow the breaking news on...

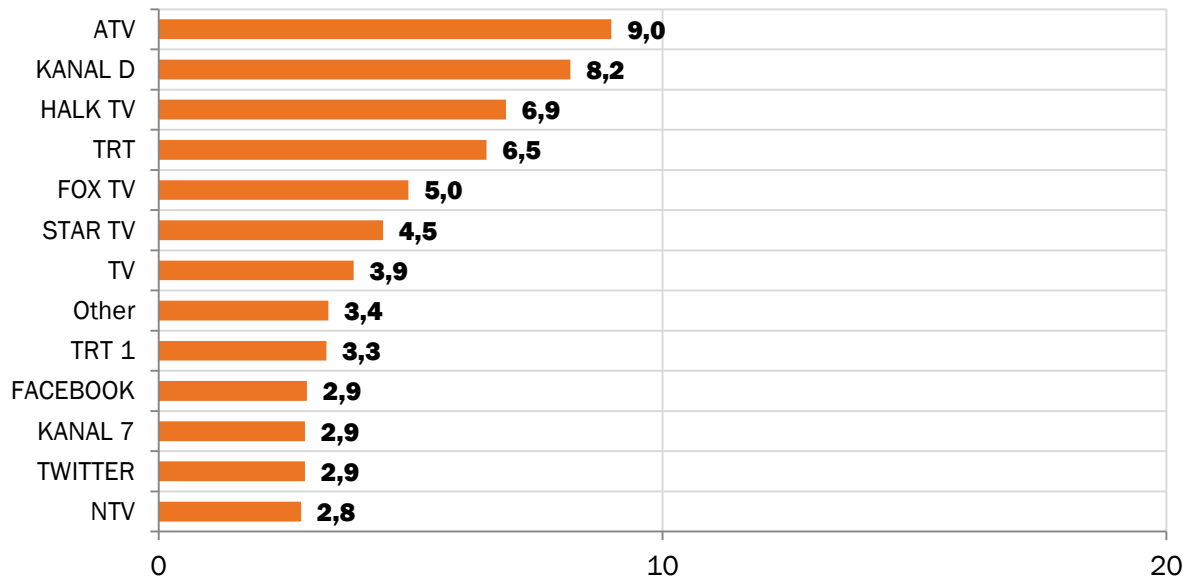


The rates presented above reflect the responses to the presumption, 'if there are any breaking news throughout the day'. Respondents expressed general media sources such as "TV" or "the internet"; however when they were asked to name the source they follow for specific news such as the Gezi protests or December 17th operations, they identify more specific news sources. In the July'13 Barometer, we noted that during the Gezi protests, the preference rate of Halk TV was higher than before. This is confirmed by the data presented below.



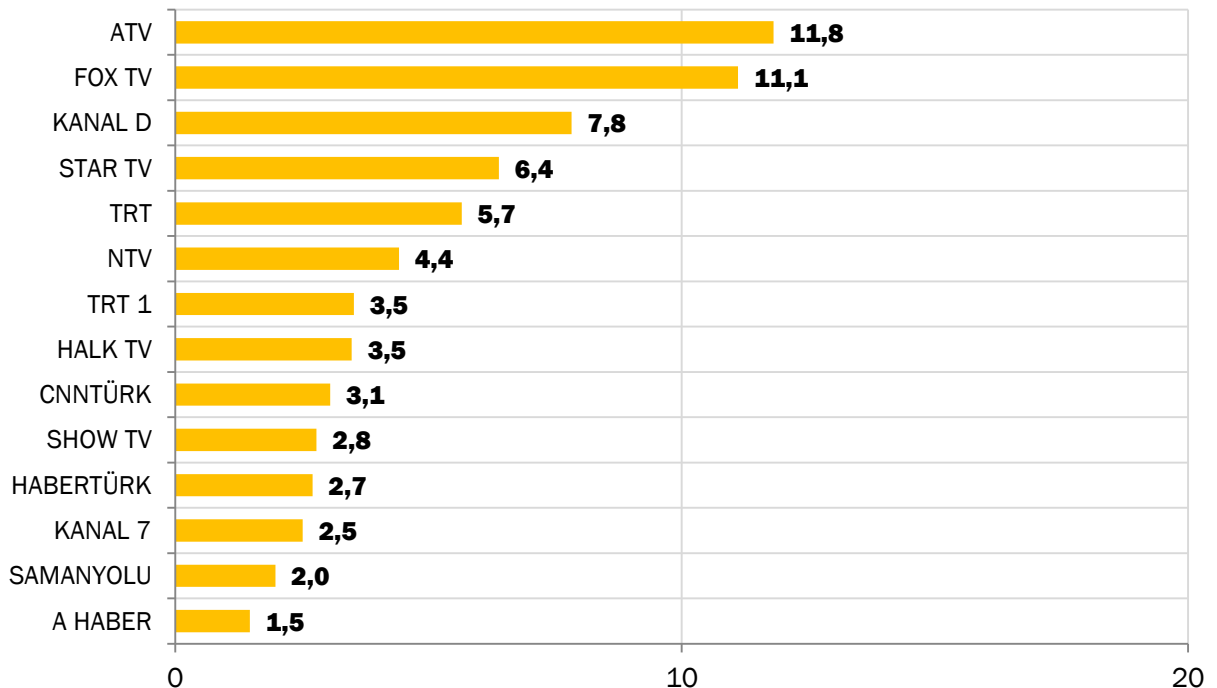


### I followed the news such as the Gezi protests and December 17th operations on...



The next graph shows the sources from which respondents preferred to follow the results of the March 30th Local Elections. ATV is preferred the most both for following significant events and the results of the March 30th Local Elections. On one hand, we can claim that this is a broadcasting success; on the other hand, we can also say that this is an anticipated result, given the political preferences of society.

### I followed the results of the March 30th Local Elections on...





It is illustrative to state that 70 percent of those who named ATV in response to the two questions above are Ak Parti voters, while 90 percent of those who responded as Halk TV are CHP voters.

### **The difference between Halk TV and ATV**

In various sections of this report, we identified two channels that signify the opposite ends of the political polarization. However, there is a significant difference between these channels. Nearly all of Halk TV (and Ulusal TV) audience is made up of opposition voters. There are even no swing voters among Halk TV audience. However, it is not possible to outline a symmetrical profile for the ATV audience. Although the majority of the ATV audience is made up of Ak Parti voters, it is not as homogeneous as those of opposing channels. With this perspective, we can describe Halk TV as a channel that has a solid viewer base, and ATV as a mass media institution that still has room for promotion. To conclude, ATV holds more political potential not only because it is a mainstream channel and reaches wider audiences, but also because it is more widespread throughout the country.

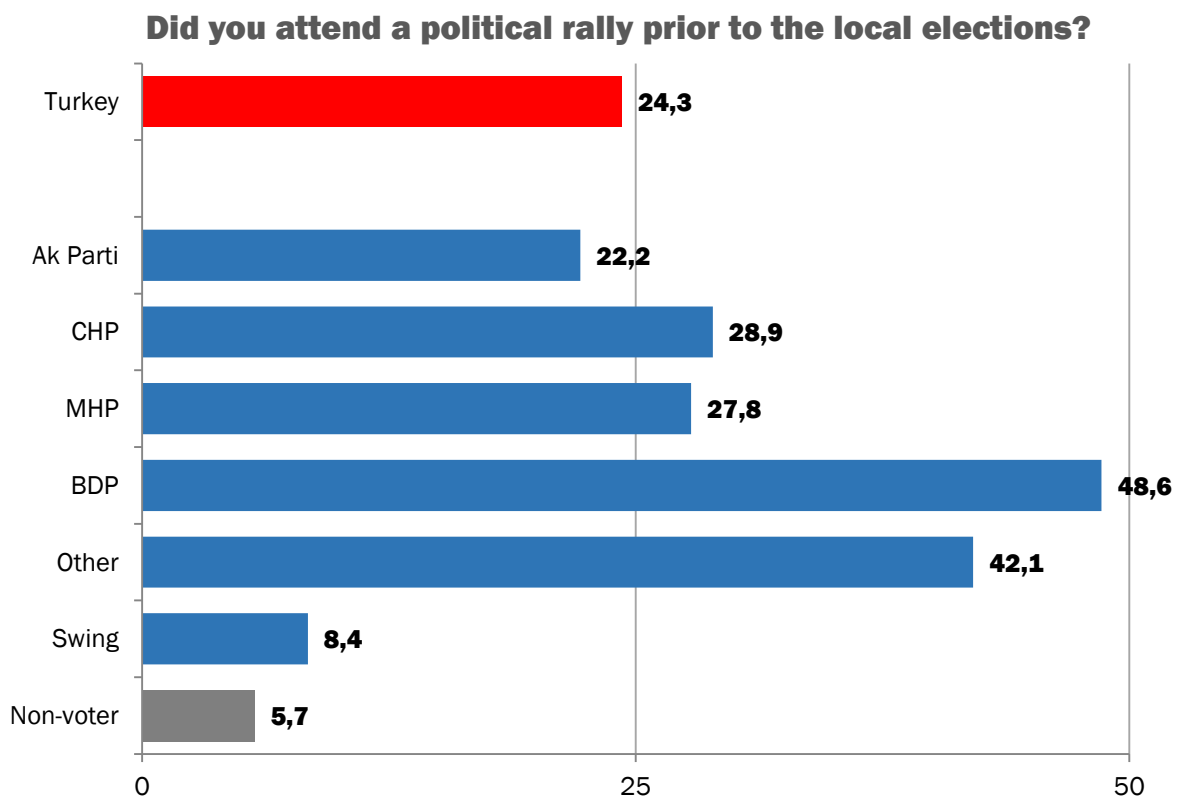


## 2.7. Following Politics

With the aim to understand their relationship with newspapers, the internet and television, we asked further questions to respondents about how they follow political developments. Whether respondents attend political rallies or not is an important indicator on their political participation during the election period.

### 2.7.1. Did you attend a political rally? Did you watch political debates on TV?

First of all, we will take a look at the rate of respondents' attendance to political rallies. The rates below show the rate of those who expressed that they "went to a political rally".



No significant changes are observed in the political rally attendance rates of the top three voter groups. Almost one third of voters attended political rallies in each of the voter groups.

BDP voters back their party at the highest rate in the traditional sense. One out of every two BDP voters expresses that they went to a political rally.

The most notable remark is observed among the small political groups we identify as 'other parties'. Among the voters of these parties, the rate of attending rallies is quite high.



This may also be related to the fact that voters of small parties prefer to communicate with their parties through traditional methods and they are somewhat politically conservative.

Place of residence is the most significant factor affecting attendance to rallies. Respondents who live in non-metropolitan urban areas present the highest rate of attendance to political rallies. Attending political rallies is more common among respondents who live in towns. It is not difficult to understand the reasons behind these rates: Respondents residing in villages have difficulty in reaching rally arenas, while respondents residing in metropolitan areas are challenged by the conditions of urban life.

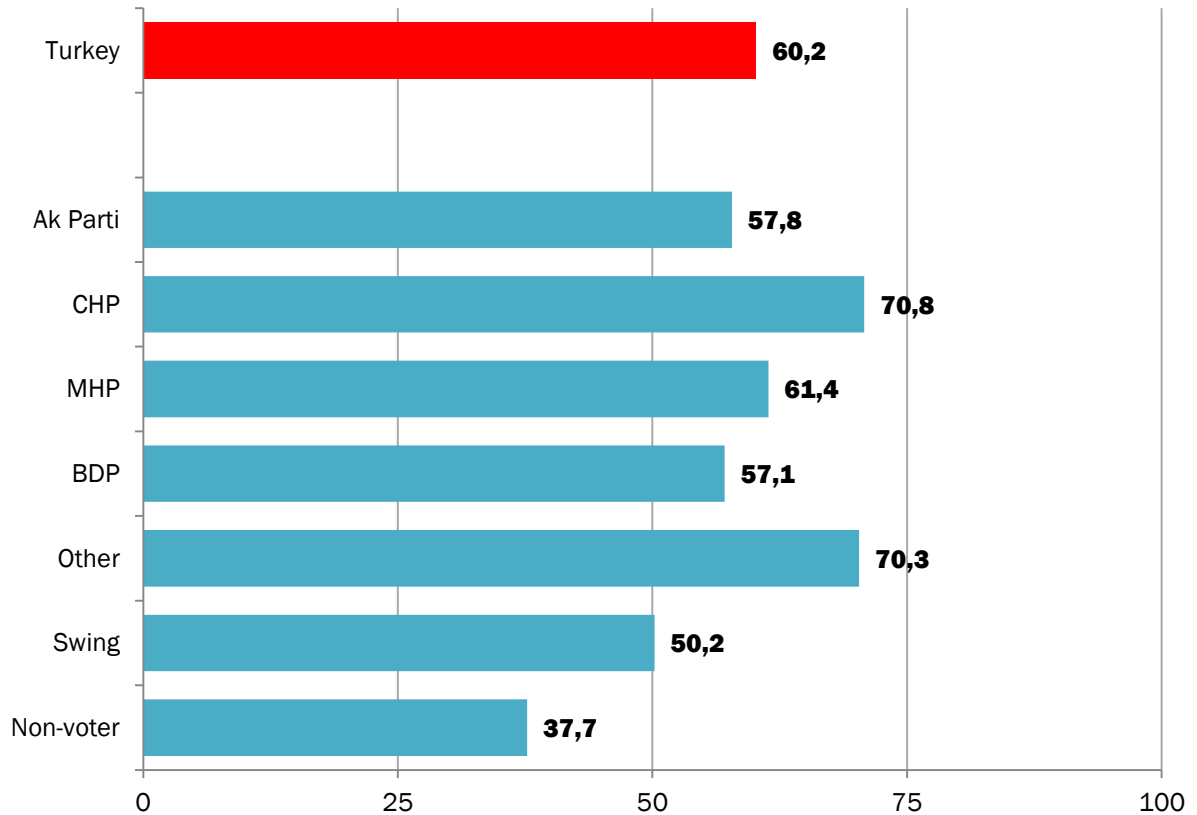
Ak Parti voters who live in metropolitan areas attend political rallies at a lower rate. However, among CHP voters the rate of attending a rally is the highest among respondents who live in rural areas.

When we look at the overall picture, we observe that the rate of attending rallies increases along with educational attainment level. It raises from 22 percent to 27 percent, reflecting an increase. The same increase is also observed among swing voters. Only 5 percent of swing voters with a high school degree express that they attend a rally, whereas this rate reaches 15 percent among swing voters with a college degree.

Watching political debates on television before the elections appears to be a widespread habit among respondents. It is quite difficult to assert that it changes in relation to political preferences. Those who vote for small parties watch political debates at higher rates, and this may indicate that they are politically very sensitive.



### Did you watch political debates prior to the local elections?



Educational attainment level is a significant parameter with respect to the rate of watching political debates. Men watch political debates more than women. However, this is not related with women having a lower educational level overall. The difference between the rates of watching political debates among women and men can be observed even when educational attainment level increases. Educational attainment level and income level significantly affect the rate of watching political debates. The effect of income level can be observed independently from the effect of educational attainment level.

CHP voters and those who watch the TV channels that receive less support from the ruling party voters watch political debates at higher rates. It can be observed that those who follow the newspapers and TV channels which are obviously in opposition to the government watch political debates at higher rates.

Watching political debates and attending political rallies are indicators of political sensitivity.

#### 2.7.2. Did you listen to the tapes?

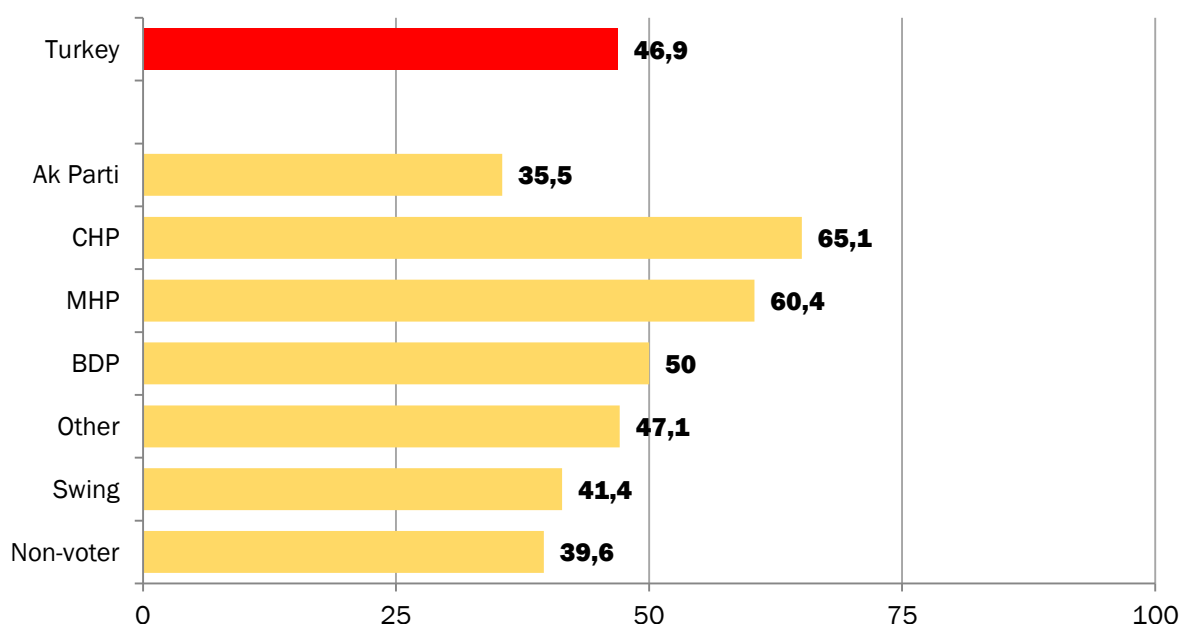
The leaked recordings of telephone conversations of many individuals including the Prime Minister were an important element of the conflict between the Gülen movement and



the government which began after December 17th onwards. These recordings, named as "tapes", were only available on the internet. It was forbidden to broadcast them on television. Even access to websites and social media platforms where these tapes were broadcast was blocked at times.

Among voters other than Ak Parti's, the audio recordings caused resentment and lead to expectations, and it was alleged that Ak Parti voters did not listen to the audio recordings. Therefore, we asked the following question to determine to what extent the tapes were heard among society.

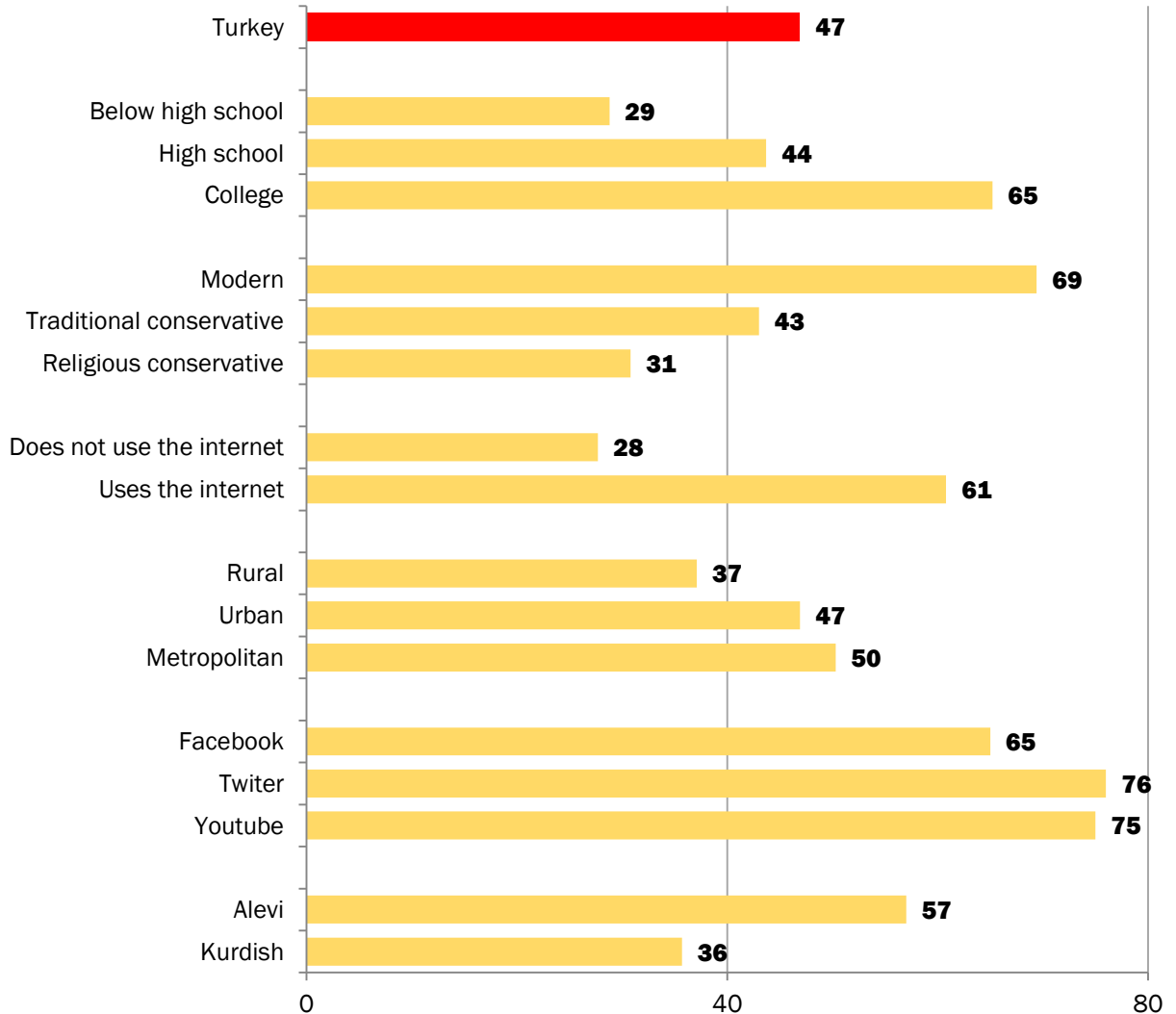
### Did you listen to the tapes?



Half of society expresses that they listened to the tapes. The rate is low among Ak Parti voters and high among CHP voters. However, at least one third of Ak Parti voters state that they listened to at least one of the tapes.



### Did you listen to the tapes?



However, it is possible to assert that this rate is quite high considering that the tapes were available only on the internet and that the rate of internet access is a little above 50 percent.

As anticipated, having internet access or not is an important indicator for the rate of those who listened or did not listen to the tapes. However, it can be observed that more than one fourth of those who express that they do not use the internet listened to the tapes. Looking at the considerable rate of respondents who listened to the tapes even though they do not use the internet, we may presume that they made an extra effort to listen to the tapes or their friends made them listen.

We may also presume that respondents evaluated expressing whether one heard the tapes or not as a political statement. On the other hand, we may abandon the opinion that having listened to the tapes identifies an anti-Ak Parti discourse when we consider that at least one third of Ak Parti voters listened to the tapes.

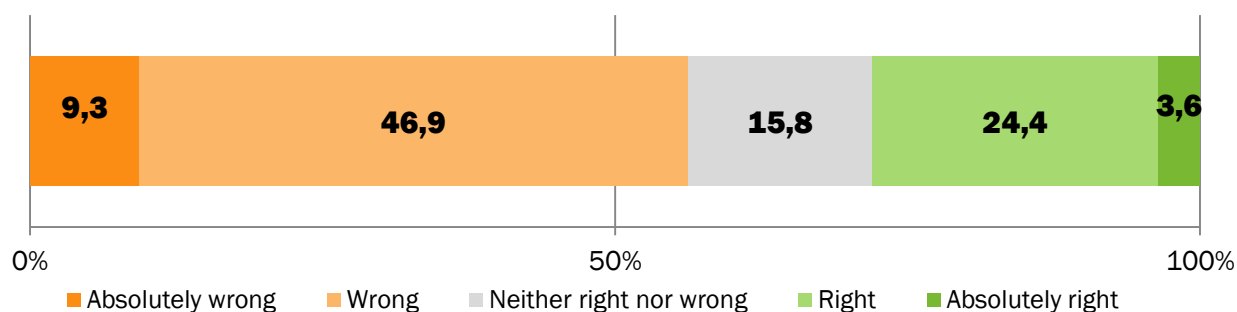


The rate of those who listened to the tapes is higher in metropolitan areas in comparison to rural areas, and it also increases as level of income increases and degree of piety decreases.

## 2.8. Media and Product Preferences

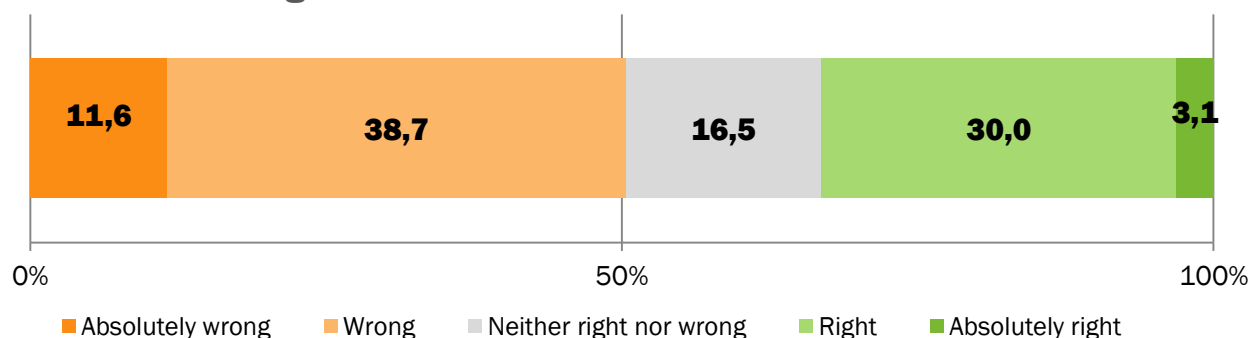
We also directed the questions below in order to understand the relationship between media and products.

**I would not buy a product if its commercials are broadcast on a channel I oppose.**



The rate of those who agree with the statement above is not more than 30 percent. Attitudes towards this statement do not change in relation to any of the parameters including TV channel preferences.

**I usually get information on any organization, product or brand through social media.**



The rate of those who obtain information on product through social media is 33 percent.

When we analyze the response rates to this question in relation to various demographic parameters, we observe that educational attainment level has a considerable influence. Increase in educational attainment level leads to increased use of the internet, mobile systems and social media. Therefore, the rate of obtaining





information from social media increases in parallel to the increase in educational attainment level.

On the other hand, political preferences, life style or degree of piety affect the relation of respondents with social media to a certain extent. The rate of those who obtain information through social media increases as educational attainment level increases, regardless of the degree of piety or life style cluster.

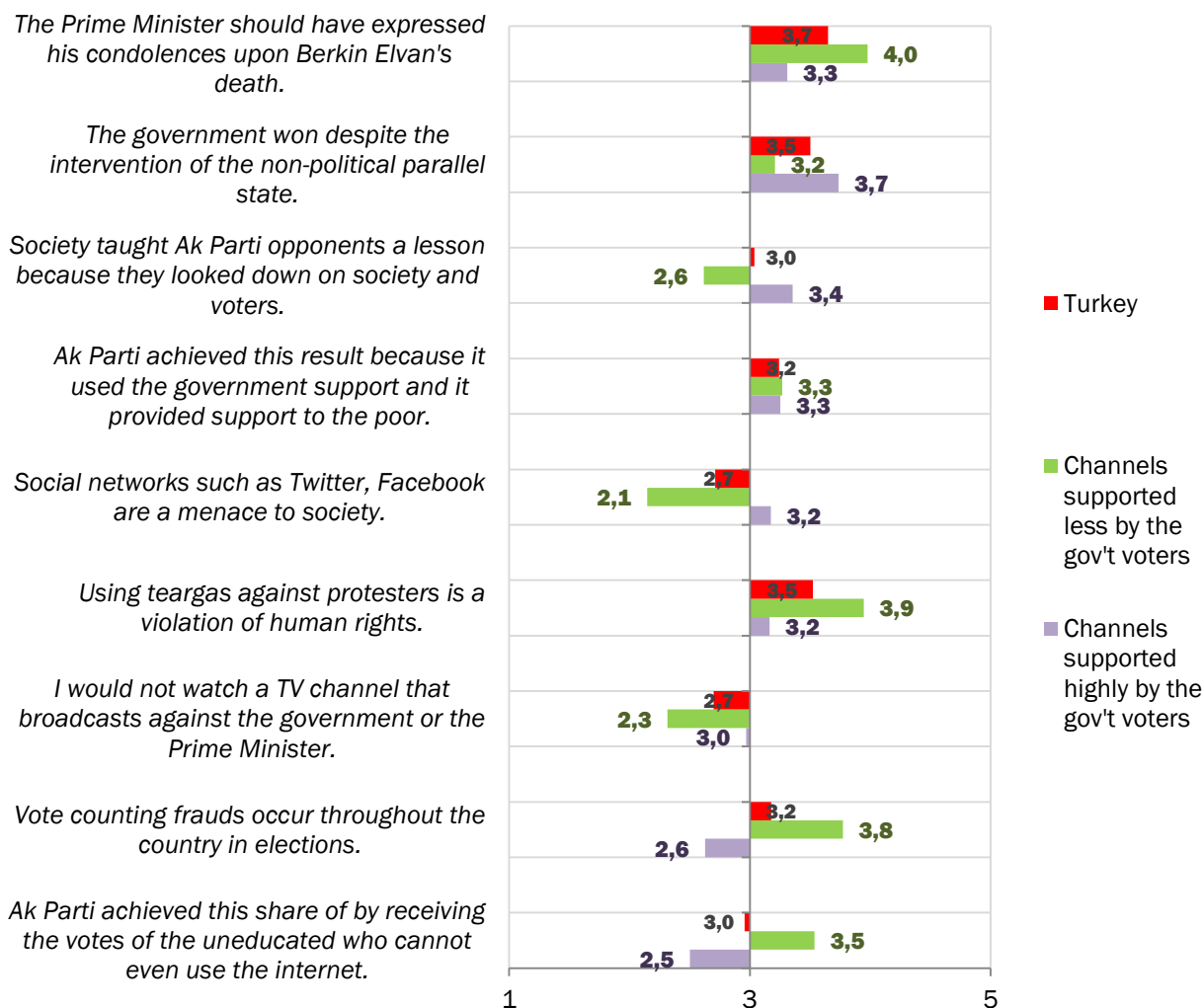
## **2.9. Perspective on Current Politics through Media Perspective**

We followed a different method to understand the influence of mass media on different groups in society. We asked respondents to what extent they agreed with various different political statements. First of all, according to the categorization of TV channels we have provided earlier in the report, it is possible to observe that the members of these two groups do view any issue from the same perspective.

Both groups have similar opinions only on the statement that "Ak Parti is successful in elections because it provides support the poor". Furthermore, both groups, at average, agree that the Prime Minister should have expressed his condolences upon Berkin Elvan's death. However, the rate of those who choose the response of "absolutely right" is quite high among the respondents who follow the TV channels that receive less support from government voters.



## Perception of current events with respect to political categories



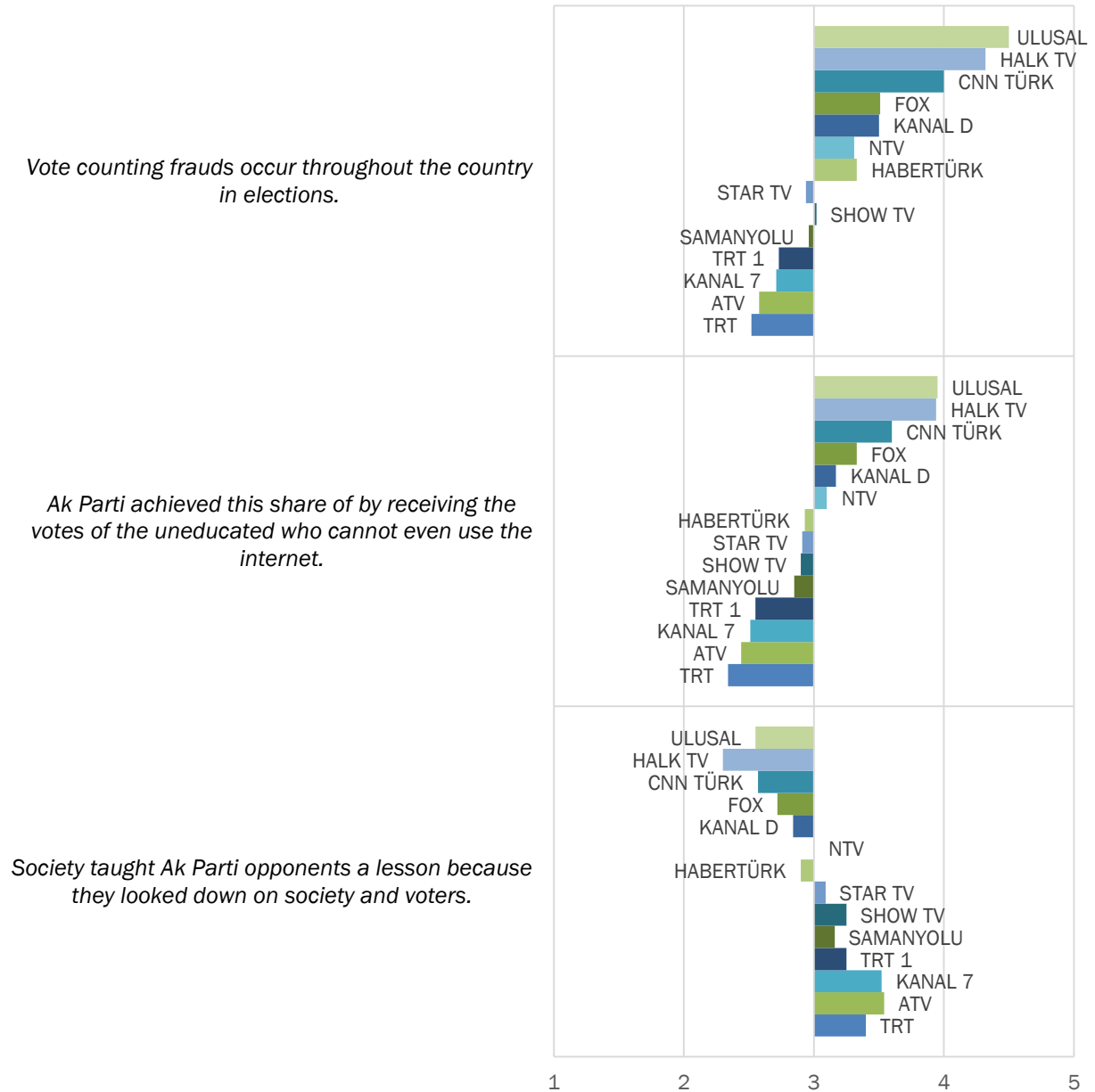
It appears that the two groups cannot agree with each other on any topic other than the two mentioned above. Moreover, in most cases, we can state that they oppose each other. The most significant difference of opinions occur on statements about "vote counting frauds" and "Ak Parti achieving the local election results by receiving votes from the uneducated".

It is particularly noteworthy that opinions on vote counting fraud differ so much in relation to TV channel preference. After the local elections in which Ak Parti received 45 percent of the votes, opposition parties expressed that electoral frauds occurred. In cities where the elections went head-to-head such as Ankara and Yalova, allegations of electoral frauds in social media continued for the two weeks following the elections. As the graph above presents, those who follow the news on TV channels with an audience composed of 55 percent of Ak Parti voters are either not convinced or aware of the allegations of electoral fraud.



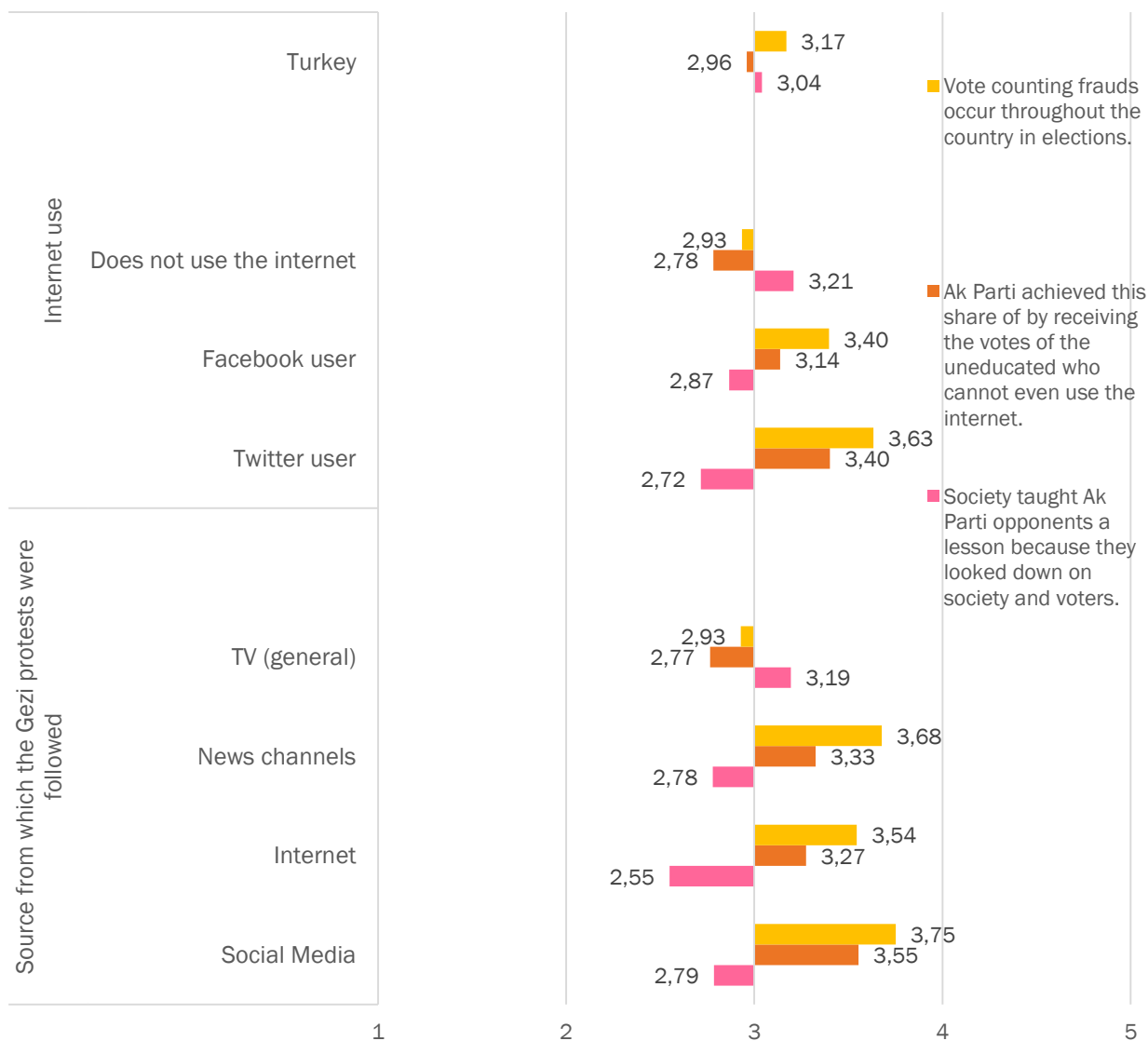
The categorization above proves that TV channels have influence on opinions or they are at least an influential parameter. However, specific topics should be analyzed for each channel, for a more thorough analysis.

### Opinion on current news in relation to TV channel preferred to watch the news





When we analyze the attitudes towards the three statements, it is clear that Twitter use is an important factor. Anti-Ak Parti stance is more common among Twitter users.



Also, among the respondents who followed the news about the Gezi protests and December 17th process on social media, the rate of observing a pro-Ak Parti attitude decreases.

The relation between social media habits, political preferences and attitude towards current politics is notable. In general, educational attainment level could seem like the source of this outlook. However, when educational attainment level is pegged, we can observe that those who use social media more present a similar trend.

On the other hand, it is difficult to affirm whether this is a consequence of the Prime Minister's statements on social media after the Gezi protests or whether those who



use social media define a distinct citizen profile or not. One third of Ak Parti voters use Facebook, and one fifth of Ak Parti voters use Twitter.

To conclude, there is a certain group made up of voters who use social media extensively, and for the moment this group is inclined towards one side of the polarization. We can say that this holds true for Twitter users if not for Facebook users. However, considering the rapidly increasing use of social media, the current scenario does not appear manageable for a group which seeks to take advantage of polarization and displays a stance against social media. It is apparent that Twitter and similar social media websites will expand into even wider reach and use. An even more impossible scenario involves blocking social media and controlling the expansion of the internet. In light of the scenarios that are not very likely to happen, the government may be attempting to promote the expansion of the internet and to keep access to social media within a defined control mechanism. Prior to estimating how successful this scenario may be, it is necessary to analyze the success of the government regarding other mass media.

The findings on the themes about mass media led to a number of remarks. The most significant remark is that Ak Parti quite effectively uses one-way media as a tool for 'propaganda'. Some media institutions, which have moved away from objectivity to openly support Ak Parti and the Prime Minister, contribute to the successful propaganda of Ak Parti. Even though the explicit support of these media institutions is against journalistic objectivity, this report presents that the media support reaches the purpose it serves for. Therefore, we can state that Ak Parti and the Prime Minister are very successful in using TV channels as a tool for 'propaganda'.

However, as mentioned in the previous page, controlling social media presents a different case than controlling TV channels. TV is a one-way medium, and it is preferred to the extent it attracts people's attention. As long as people are attracted to the TV screen out of curiosity and entertainment, it is a great tool to utilize for one-way propaganda. Social media, on the other hand, is an interactive environment. Moreover, interactivity is what makes people become addicted to social media. Consequently, controlling social media and transforming it into a propaganda tool is quite difficult to achieve by a party that receives support from only half of society. This is because giving one-way speeches on television does not mean anything on social media. Social media is indeed quite difficult to control. Particularly, if the control on social media aims to distribute certain opinions and block others, the medium may prove to turn into a trap which makes it next to impossible to achieve this mission.

To conclude, TV channels can be helpful in steering society through the one-way nature of the communication. However, one-way communication may result in regrets and lead to psychological tension among society. Relations based on two-way communication carry the potential to evolve into consensus. Therefore, social media can be utilized as an efficient tool to serve this purpose.







## 2.10. Before the local elections

Articles published before the 2014 local elections were on how many votes that the Ak Parti will win rather than the provincial and district candidates. The basic motivation in these debates was to find out at what extent the events that occurred after December 17 would affect the votes of the Ak Parti.

Articles published before the local elections can be divided into two categories. The first category consisted of the articles of those columnists who considered the local elections as a vote of confidence for Erdoğan and voting for Erdoğan as a way of struggling with the “parallel state.”

Two days before the local elections, the voice recordings of a meeting held in the Foreign Ministry Office were published in the internet regarding alternative actions against a possible attack of Al Qaeda to the Suleyman Shah Tomb in Syria.

Abdülkadir Selvi, a columnist in Yeni Şafak newspaper, stated the following with regard to his opinion that the Ak Parti is a struggle of existence against the “parallel structure:” “If the Ak Parti gains more than 40 percent of the votes and especially a few points above 40 percent, then these files will turn out to be useless for the parallel structure. Therefore, this election is far more important than a regular local election. It transformed into a ‘struggle for democracy’ due to the plot of the parallel structure for closing the Ak Parti down.” (Selvi, 26/03/14, Yeni Şafak)

Hilal Kaplan, a columnist again in the Yeni Şafak newspaper stated the following showing that voting is a part of the struggle against the “traitor network:” “As Salih Tuna asked: Will Turkey be governed by Ankara or by the states for which this spy and traitor network is acting as a puppet? A single vote has never been that significant.” (Kaplan, 28/03/14, Yeni Şafak)

Elif Çakır, one of the columnists in Star newspaper stated that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan confronts the accusations and slander and this has been an exhausting process, with the

It was claimed that the Ak Parti was preparing for the submission to the speakership of the Parliament of amendments in the election system. The proposals for amendments in the election system were included in the democratization package declared last year. The amendments to be made should pass the Parliament before June 12 so that they can be applied in the 2015 general elections.

following words: “Your voice got hoarse at the Van rally, you have been very tired for many months the Tall Man.. You got exhausted. You were faced with many accusations and vicious plots. Tall Man, it is not easy to strive against centers of tutelage. It needs courage and risking death. Tall Man, you risked death for the future of this country! When reminded of Adnan Menderes’s tragic end, you challenged it by saying ‘I wear my shroud.’ You said ‘I am here, I am against you, I am not afraid.’ You challenged those who showed you the scaffolds they would install in plazas.” (Çakır, 28/03/14, Star).

Ahmet Taşgetiren claimed that all kinds of plots against Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are futile and analyzed why ‘Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is loved this much: “Tayyip Erdoğan went rally to rally, refreshed his sincere connection with his





people and put it in the use of the elections. The one who knows how to do it, deserves the victory. If you act like Tayyip Erdoğan and receive people's blessings, embrace old people, touch babies, receive mothers' love, perhaps you will have a victory, too. This country gives credit to plots no more ..." (Taşgetiren, 27/03/14, Star).

As the opposite axis of the first axis, the second axis emphasized theft before the elections. The columnists in this category basically had two suspicions, the first being the ignorance of people and second being the probability that the Ak Parti would conduct unlawful deeds in the elections in order to gain advantage.

Emin Çölaşan emphasized that there is a large number of "ignorant" people and stated the following: "Look how primitively they react against our explanations regarding the theft conducted in our country and the identity of the thieves! These pathetic people, these ignorant and boorish minds will also use votes on March 30." (Çölaşan, 27/03/14, Sözcü)

Soner Yalçın called out to the Ak Parti voters and did not refrain from emphasizing ignorance discreetly: "My dear brother supporting AKP ... My countryman... Uninformed people may be easily deceived; do not be the one to deceive or be deceived! Listen to your conscience; support profound goodness rather than evil! Give up revenge for holding grudge corrodes the personality and eventually diminishes it. Do what suits you best, reveal the chivalry in your soul: Do not take part in theft..." (Yalçın, 28/03/14, Sözcü).

Mehmet Türker, a columnist again in Sözcü newspaper made the following analysis in his article projecting on the election results: "Even those with the slightest intelligence have well realized that this country can no longer be governed by Tayyip! Tayyip is destroying himself and his despair is reflected on his rage! Mr. Tayyip assumes that by changing the atmosphere of the local elections into that of a general election, he might gain back prestige on March 31! As we say every day, he will be left empty handed!" (Türker, 28/03/14, Sözcü).

Ali Bulaç who had been writing pro-Gülen Community articles during the debate between the Gülen Community and the Ak Parti in the post-December 17 term, claimed that this election will also measure the moral sensitivities of the society: "To my opinion the most important point is that we shall measure the moral sensitivity of the society in Turkey in these elections. We shall test the effect of the clearly revealed graft and bribery operation, pool system and the inappropriate talks made by certain politicians regarding the Koran, on the results." (Bulaç, 27/03/14, Zaman).

Ali Bayramoğlu made a calm and different analysis amidst all these debates, indicating the following: "Regardless of the level of the voting rates the Ak Parti will receive, the Ak Parti is still obliged to make an explanation to the public regarding the graft claims and the voice recordings... The other reality is the obvious struggle for power. And behind this struggle, there is a discreet and dark structure in terms of its actions." (Bayramoğlu, 26/03/14, Yeni Şafak)

## **2.11. After the local elections**



The articles published after the March 30 local elections may be categorized similarly to the categorization made for the pre-election articles above. The group that emphasized “parallel state” and “plot” before the elections declared victory after the elections. They primarily aimed at two social clusters: firstly the “parallelists” and secondly the “Jacobbeans” that looked down on the society.

Abdulkadir Selvi, Ankara correspondent of the newspaper Yeni Şafak, interpreted the election results as an answer of the humiliated public and the realization of the prayers of the Muslims throughout the world for Erdoğan: “These results show the lesson taught by the ordinary people who were humiliated by Yılmaz Özdil as ‘barrell heads,’ by Mine Kırkkanat as ‘hairy legs,’ by Cüneyt Özdemir as ‘people who couldn’t grow tall due to living on pasta,’ by Nazlı Ilıcak as ‘countrymen and dirty peasants.’ These results are also the indication that prayers, causes and hopes of Gazaian Yusuf, Rakhine Mohammed, Egyptian martyr Esmâ were not unowned. These results show that the prayers of the public beat the curses of Pennsylvania and that the Tall Man who was wanted dead resurrected in the voting box.” (Selvi, 31/03/14, Yeni Şafak).

Similarly, Melih Altınok wrote: “The voters that you humiliated by saying that they were short, ignorant, ugly and sheepish again had the same attitude in the elections since 1950... What repeats itself is not history but your stupidity ...” (Altınok, 01/04/14, Türkiye)

Mustafa Karaalioğlu expressed that the election results were a victory against the tutelage and the media that support it: “Yesterday, not only those who support the tutelage but also the media of the tutelage were defeated in the elections. The media which work as the press office of CHP and the PR firm of the parallel organization have nothing more to say to the people of this country. The media of lies, distortion, campaign and montage is history now, the journalism of voice recordings will be left behind as an embarrassing chapter in history,” (Karaalioğlu, 31/03/14, Star) whereas Rasim Ozan Kütahyalı went even further and reminded the Uzan Group incidence: “The media groups that do not acknowledge the message of the people will end up in Uzans’ situation.” (Kütahyalı, 31/03/14, Sabah)

Hilal Kaplan, in her article in which she also mentioned the major capital groups of Turkey, analyzed that Erdoğan won against many centres: “Koçs, Sabancıs, Doğans fell short. The nonproportional media fell short. Curses did not become reality. All these centers of power came together but Allah did not let them accomplish what they wanted. Erdoğan stood tall, he did not yield. Short and hairy peasants had their say. People ran to the voting boxes and the citizens could not destroy the ‘dictator!’ Yet, the opposition of this country not only forgot how to win but also failed to lose gracefully.” (Kaplan, 02/04/14, Yeni Şafak)

Mehmet Ocaktan in his article titled “In your face, you snobs who humiliated the public” indicated the following: “They recognized and noted down all those so-called democratic foolish liberals who tirelessly produced dictatorship fairy tales in their most superficial manners... And the people spoke their word when it was their turn on March 30... The mute crowds consisting of Turks, Kurds, Alevis, Sunnis and minorities who were waiting for March 30 with all their patience and insightfulness uttered a strong voice of democracy saying ‘We notice the coup and the hands that try to intervene in democracy. We are happy with the twelve-year period of democracy, freedom, peace, economic progress and stability’.”



(Ocaktan, 01/04/14, Akşam)

Halime Kökçe from Star newspaper stated: “Despite the attempts of taking down the government through extra-political means in other words through a friendly-modern coup that started on December 17, politics won and thanks God we had the elections. A record was broken on March 30, the participation of the voters in the election reached 90 percent which was never low anyway... Izmir citizens voted with the determination that nothing is as bad as the AK Parti’s win. They even came to a point where they would almost wish that the Greek win but not the AK Parti. I think this is CHP mentality, even if the country burns down, even if it separates into two just like Ukraine, they will not mind as long as the Ak Parti and Erdoğan is gone!” (Kökçe, 03/04/14, Star) thereby indicating that the election results were the prevalence of politics. However, she considered the preference for CHP in Izmir as an *idée fixe* that leads to preference of Greeks over the Ak Parti.



The columnists belonging to the second axis claimed that there was fraud in the elections and highlighted the existence of 55 percent of the voters who did not vote for the Ak Parti instead of the 45 percent who did. Some columnists asserted that the results were due to the ignorance of the people.

For example Çiğdem Toker, a columnist in Cumhuriyet newspaper and Bekir Coşkun from Sözcü newspaper considered the 55 percent of the voters that did not vote for the Ak Parti as an integrated structure and highlighted this number as follows: “Another way of interpreting this is that a high percentage of the voters (55 percent) said no to AKP policies, polarization and claims of graft.” (Toker, 31/03/14, Cumhuriyet), “In these elections, ‘the shoe boxes’ won... 45 percent... but you are the 55 percent...” (Coşkun, 01/04/14, Cumhuriyet)

Mehmet Türker who before the elections stated that Erdoğan will be left empty handed, stated the following in his article after the elections: “These elections provided comfort to the government in a great deal!!!. The majority (55 percent) took siege of the minority (45 percent)!.. The majority threatened the minority once the results started to come out and converted the voting box into a washing machine and the voting rate of 45 percent into detergent!..” (Türker, 02/04/14, Sözcü)

Emin Çölaşan carried this calculation of 55 percent even further by a quotation from Sultan Vahideddin: “They too will go. Perhaps not today but sooner or later they will go. No need to get pessimistic. No need to fall into panic after yesterday’s elections. Remember what the traitor Sultan Vahideddin said? ‘The nation is a flock of sheep and I am the shepherd.’ Look who the shepherd is now!... They used the state’s and the nation’s money. They really succeeded in trading religion. Money on the one hand, religious trade on the other, this is a combination that fools our public... Unfortunately, millions of citizens, especially in Central Anatolia and the Black Sea, who consider themselves nationalist-conservatives voted for AKP thereby taking the first step towards separating Turkey ... Yes, Tayyip received 45 percent of the votes but there are still 55 percent of the public who did not vote for him and



that makes more than half of the public. We did the best we could. We hold our head high. We are not defeated." (Çölaşan, 01/04/14, Sözcü)

Mine Kırıkkanat also analyzed the election results on the basis of the ignorance of the people: "We as the opposition, in these elections that transformed into a national vote of confidence rather than local elections, already knew that the government would gain the majority nationwide. In a society where half of the people can express and think about their problems and expectations in merely 100 words, we were not expecting that AKP would lose its voting rate only because it demolished the state of law, imprisoned the innocent, muted the opposing media, closed down Twitter and YouTube... Of course, we were aware that the crowds who refrain from paying for their water, electricity and their taxes and who historically never miss a chance of plunder would think that he who has something to do with a big deal will always draw some profit... It was obvious that this cluster of the society would arrive at the conclusion that as long as the top people break the bank, they will keep silent for the citizens' mischief as well." (Kırıkkanat, 02/04/14, Cumhuriyet)

The columnists of the Zaman newspaper mostly emphasized democracy and the state of living together. For instance, Ahmet Turan Alkan wrote: "In fact, real victories of democracy honor not only the winners but also the losers. Elections are not wars, winners and losers have to live together, trust and even love each other after the elections," (Alkan, 31/03/14, Zaman) whereas Ekrem Dumanlı indicated the concept of democracy: "whatever the election results may be, the obligatory direction that Turkey should take is obvious: More democracy, more freedom, more justice in order to approach and even surpass universal legal standarts... Those who believe in the contrary will lead the country to disaster and those who take part and participate in it will never be able to pay for this mistake before the history and society ..." (Dumanlı, 31/03/14, Zaman)

Mümtaz'er Türköne differentiated from these two columnists in that he expressed doubts regarding the elections: "interference in the voting boxes is directly related to the purity of democracy. Simultaneous power cut in 41 provinces cannot be merely coincidence." (Türköne, 03/04/14, Zaman)

Aslı Aydıntaşbaş stated that everybody should make his/her own criticism by refraining from making excuses: "There is no need to turn around the subject and claim that there was power cut, there was fraud or Anadolu Agency conducted manipulation. These are in the end cold comfort... we all belong to the losers. But this does not mean that we take a wrong stand." (Aydıntaşbaş, 31/03/14, Milliyet)



The results of the local elections were interpreted on the basis of the duality of victory/defeat rather than the revelation of democracy. Halime K k e of the Star Newspaper while analyzing the election results with an emphasis on democracy, went on to say regarding Izmir that Izmir citizens voted with a determination that nothing is worse than the win of the Ak Parti, thereby showing that the choices of the public are respected only if they are parallel with the journalists' own opinions.

This kind of attitude is not only embraced by one side of the polarization. Similar tendencies were shown at the other side of the polarization in articles titled "We won Izmir!" "Fortunately, Izmir exists!" and "We are 55 percent" trying to explain the election results through the educational level of the citizens.

Majority of the articles published on the local election results were used by the columnists as a means to re-define their positions rather than aiming to understand the demands and perceptions of the citizens.

## 2.12. Presidential elections



Immediately after the local election results were available, opinions were shared with regard to the presidential elections to be held in August this year. President Abdullah G l's statement on April 3 indicating that they will discuss the presidency with the prime minister and his statement on April 19 indicating "I served our state in all levels and all of them with great pride. In the current circumstances, I have no political plans for the future" formed the basis of the discussions that were carried out with regard to the presidential elections.

Murat Yetkin in his article in which he handled possible scenarios regarding the presidential elections, analyzed: "The lock to the gate of  ankaya is in Erdoğan's hands but it has yet to be known which key he will use to unlock it."(Yetkin, 03/04/14, Radikal)

The common ground of the scenarios produced in this regard was the opinion that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's will regarding presidency is the basic determinant. Hasan Celal G zel, in his article praising Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership skills, indicated the following: "It is not possible that any person other than Erdoğan is elected for presidency unless Erdoğan wants it. In case Erdoğan becomes a candidate, regardless whoever is nominated against him, he will be elected as the president in the first round because he is not only a statesman with many qualities but also a genuinely charismatic leader." (G zel,04/04/14, Sabah). Erdoğan's will being the determinant factor was also mentioned by the columnists of the opposition. For instance, Orhan Bursalı of Cumhuriyet newspaper wrote: "It is not G l who will introduce the subject of AKP candidacy to presidency to the agenda, it is RTE. He is the only determiner." (Bursalı, 07/04/14, Cumhuriyet)



The most frequently mentioned method to be applied regarding the presidential elections was the Putin-Medvedev model. Abdülkadir Selvi stated that this “exchange” model might be one of the possible methods however stated that there are also alternative methods: “Regarding presidency, one of the formulas is the Putin-Medvedev model, i.e. Erdoğan to presidency, Gül to prime ministry. However, there are other alternatives, too. Abdullah Gül is a possibility due to his experience in the state but a new Menderes may come up. The worst alternative will be the method of depository since this society will never vote for a depository.”(Selvi, 07/04/14, Yeni Şafak). Fehmi Kuru however approached suspiciously to this method and analyzed it as follows: “If Tayyip Erdoğan is considering presidential candidacy, I do not think that what he wishes after himself is a formula of ‘exchange’.” (Kuru, 18/04/14,Star)

The possibility that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will want to broaden the presidential authority in case he becomes the president caused heavy discussion in the media.

Ali Bayramoğlu indicated that such situation will put the constitutional borders into pressure and made the following warning: “Erdoğan's presidency will put the country into a new political and constitutional situation. Since there is no possibility as yet for amendment of the constitution, in case Erdoğan becomes the president, transition to an actual presidency will bring the possible developments of putting the constitutional borders into pressure (hence debates of crisis and violation), deepening of the current party structure based on leadership and the increase in the personalization of the government.” (Bayramoğlu, 10/04/14, Yeni Şafak).



Etyen Mahçupyan also predicted that in the case of Erdoğan's possible presidency, legal conflicts may come up: “Erdoğan's presidency implies that various legal conflicts are ahead of us due to the current constitution and judicial institutions. Preference for a prime minister that may work in harmony with the president will not be a solution either because a president who interferes with daily politics will categorically make it possible for the coalition of the opposition to remain intact on the basis of the opposition against Erdoğan and provoke the jurisdiction.”(Mahçupyan, 20/04/14, Zaman).

Tarhan Erdem also analyzed that Erdoğan's attempt for presidency will mean that he will combine party leadership, prime ministry and presidency in one person and this may lead to a crisis of regime: “Mr. Erdoğan's presidential candidacy is the start of many mistakes and uncorrectable menaces. His candidacy will be the manifestation of the aim to combine prime ministry and presidency. Mr. Erdoğan's recent statements are sheer examples of insensibleness. Turkey is not a primitive country in which such an experiment can be executed, our people will not allow combination of these three tasks. Those who attempt extraconstitutional seizure of authorities and those who allow it will be ashamed. Mr. Erdoğan firstly will experience difficulties in finding people who will accept the weakness and the contempt of taking the tasks of prime ministry and party leadership. The public will eventually prevent this seizure of authority, perhaps not today but a painful punishment will definitely come in the spring of 2015 or immediately thereafter.”(Erdem, 21/04/14,



Radikal)

Mehmet Tezkan approached the matter at a slightly different angle and indicated in an ironical style that organization in Turkey will not allow two heads: “Let us consider that the Prime Minister has become the President and the President Prime Minister... Will Turkey be governed by a dynamic, active president and an active prime minister? You might say, so what, let them both be active and dynamic... but what if they crash when they run? Wouldn't this cause an enormous accident?” (Tezkan, 14/04/14, Milliyet).

Eser Karakaş from Star newspaper reminded that there are no talks on structural reforms and even if Erdoğan becomes the president, the constitution of the country to which he will be the president will still remain as the September 12 Constitution: “The lust of the politics takes precedence over everything else. Most importantly, it takes precedence over structural reforms... Mr. Erdoğan will be the president, okay but what significance will being elected as the top authority of the state have in a country where the basic legal document is the constitution?” (Karakaş, 11/04/14, Star).



## 2.13. Ban on access to Twitter and the related verdict of the Constitutional Court



On March 21, access to Twitter was banned in Turkey. The Constitutional Court, in its verdict dated April 2, ruled upon an individual application that the rights of the appellars were infringed.

The ban on Twitter was handled in the media in two different angles. Those in the first group indicated that the ban is against democracy: “The final impact on distancing from democracy was the attempt to ban Twitter and blocking the use through different DNS. Of course, such ban and blocking are impossible to implement... AKP showed its real authoritarian face to the world and also put itself in a ridiculous position for putting a ban that is impossible to apply” (Kongar, 25/03/14, Cumhuriyet) whereas those belonging to the other group stated that this blocking had nothing to do with democracy and such ban was necessitated by the fact that Twitter failed to apply the verdicts of the courts of Turkey: “The fact that Twitter did not take notice of a decision taken by a court, the access to Twitter in Turkey was temporarily blocked. The court took this decision upon a woman's complaint whose private images were published through a Twitter account created under a false name.” (Altınok, 25/03/14, Türkiye).

After the verdict of the Constitutional Court on April 2, Prime Minister Erdoğan made the following statement: “We are bound by the Constitutional Court decisions however we are not bound to be respectful towards them and I am not. Actually, I do not find it national to



*apply to the Constitutional Court regarding Twitter. An American firm was defended while our national values were shoved aside.”*

Bekir Bozdağ, Minister of Justice made the following statement on the same matter: “There is no right to apply to the Constitutional Court before exhausting all judicial means. Unfortunately, the Constitutional Court in its verdict regarding Twitter, did not comply with the procedures put forward by the law and overstepped the law.”



Upon these statements, many articles were published that agree with the opinions of the government authorities. Hilal Kaplan wrote: “In reality, it is observed that although the Constitutional Court is the highest judicial organ in Turkey, it reached a verdict surpassing its judicial authority. The provision that individual application cannot be made regarding an administrative process and the condition that internal judicial means should be exhausted in order to make an individual application are violated. Therefore, not only the means for individual application for all kinds of administrative processes is available now but also all stages such as the State Council, the Supreme Court and the courts of first instance are shoved aside by surpassing the quality of being the final advisory authority in the internal law.” (Kaplan, 07/04/14, Yeni Şafak). Markar Esayan: “The ‘Twitter’ decision of the Constitutional Court reminds me of the ‘Verdict 367’ of 2007. The fact that the Constitutional Court reached a verdict before the exhaustion of all internal judicial means on the basis of an individual application right and an abstract emphasis on ‘freedom’ are likely to create serious chaos.” (Esayan, 10/04/14, Yeni Şafak).

Taha Akyol criticized both the verdict of the Constitutional Court and the debates that followed with the following words: “I wish we could have discussed the ‘borders’ of the jurisdiction and the ‘borders’ of the legislation and execution in terms of the principle of separation of powers. (Akyol, 14/04/14, Hürriyet)

Constitutional Court Head Haşim Kılıç’s speech on the occasion of the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the court’s foundation was heavily criticized by the Ak Parti.

A statement of condolences was published in the official website of the Prime Ministry signed by the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for Armenian events. The necessity of the establishment of a history commission and the shared pain were emphasized in the message and further, the following statement was made: “Having experienced events which had inhumane consequences - such as relocation - during the First World War, should not prevent Turks and Armenians from establishing compassion and mutually humane attitudes among towards one another.”







### **3. RESEARCH ID**

#### **3.1. Overall Description of the Survey**

The survey that this report is based on was conducted by KONDA Research and Consultancy Limited (KONDA Araştırma ve Danışmanlık Ltd. Şti.) for the subscribers of KONDA Barometers.

The field survey was conducted on April 12-13, 2014. This report presents the political trends, preferences and profiles of the adult population above the age of 18 in Turkey within the dates of the field survey.

The survey is designed and conducted with the purpose to determine and monitor trends and changes in the preferences of respondents who represent the adult population above the age of 18 in Turkey.

The error margin of the survey is +/- 2 at 95 percent confidence level and +/- 2.6 at 99 percent confidence level.

#### **3.2. The Sample**

The sample was selected through the stratification of the population data and education level data of neighborhoods and villages based on the Address-Based Population Registration System (ADNKS), and the results of the June 12, 2011 General Elections in neighborhood and villages.

First, the settlements were grouped as rural/urban/metropolitan, and then the sample was determined based on the 12 regions.

Within the scope of the survey, 2621 respondents were interviewed face-to-face in 149 neighborhoods and villages of 113 districts -including central districts- of 30 provinces.

<b>Provinces visited</b>	30
Districts visited	99
Neighborhoods/villages visited	146
Number of respondents	2582



Within the 18 surveys conducted in each neighborhood, quotas regarding age and sex were considered.

Age group		Female	Male
Between 18-28		3 respondents	3 respondents
Between 29-44		3 respondents	3 respondents
44 and above		3 respondents	3 respondents
	Level 1 (12 regions)	Provinces visited	
1	İstanbul	İstanbul	
2	Western Marmara	Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Edirne	
3	Aegean	Denizli, İzmir, Kütahya, Uşak	
4	Eastern Marmara	Bursa, Eskişehir, Kocaeli	
5	Western Anatolia	Ankara, Konya	
6	Mediterranean	Adana, Antalya, Hatay, Mersin	
7	Central Anatolia	Kayseri, Niğde, Sivas	
8	Western Black Sea	Samsun, Tokat	
9	Eastern Black Sea	Trabzon	
10	Northeastern Anatolia	Erzincan	
11	Middle Eastern Anatolia	Elazığ, Malatya, Van	
12	South Eastern Anatolia	Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa	



The distribution of respondents according to the regions and place of residence is shown in the table below.

	Region where the survey was conducted	Rural	Urban	Metropolitan	Total
1	Istanbul			16.0	16.0
2	Western Marmara	2.1	3.5		5.6
3	Aegean	4.0	6.2	5.7	15.8
4	Eastern Marmara	1.4	2.8	5.3	9.5
5	Western Anatolia	0.6		10.3	11.0
6	Mediterranean	3.3	3.0	6.2	12.5
7	Central Anatolia	1.4	2.1	1.4	4.9
8	Western Black Sea	2.7	3.5		6.2
9	Eastern Black Sea	1.3	2.0		3.3
10	Northeastern Anatolia	1.4			1.4
11	Middle Eastern Anatolia	1.4	2.8		4.2
12	South Eastern Anatolia	2.1	3.5	4.2	9.8
	Turkey	21.5	29.4	49.0	100.0





## 4. FREQUENCY TABLES

### 4.1. Profile of the Respondents

Gender	Percentage
Female	50.0
Male	50.0
Total	100.0

Age	Percentage
Between 18 - 28	28.3
Between 29 - 43	34.8
44+	36.9
Total	100.0

Education level	Percentage
Illiterate	6.8
Literate without degree	2.4
Primary school diploma	33.6
Secondary school diploma	15.7
High school diploma	29.6
College diploma	11.0
Masters / PhD	.9
Total	100.0

Household size (group)	Percentage
1 - 2	16.8
3 - 5	66.5
6 - 8	13.8
9 or more	2.9
Total	100.0



<b>Place of birth</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Istanbul	5.6
Western Marmara	5.2
Aegean	13.1
Eastern Marmara	7.5
Western Anatolia	8.6
Mediterranean	11.3
Central Anatolia	8.2
Western Black Sea	9.9
Eastern Black Sea	5.8
Northeastern Anatolia	4.7
Middle Eastern Anatolia	6.4
South Eastern Anatolia	11.9
Abroad	1.6
Total	100.0

<b>Father's birthplace</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Istanbul	2.4
Western Marmara	5.3
Aegean	12.5
Eastern Marmara	6.8
Western Anatolia	6.3
Mediterranean	10.8
Central Anatolia	9.5
Western Black Sea	10.1
Eastern Black Sea	7.9
Northeastern Anatolia	6.1
Middle Eastern Anatolia	6.9
South Eastern Anatolia	13.1
Abroad	2.2
Total	100.0



<b>Employment status</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Public officer	4.5
Private sector	4.6
Worker	9.9
Small retailer	6.7
Merchant / businessman	.9
Self-employed	1.6
Farmer, agriculturist, stock breeder	3.8
Employed, other	6.0
Retired	12.0
Housewife	33.8
Student	10.7
Unemployed	4.5
Disabled	1.0
Total	100.0

<b>Lifestyle Cluster</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Modern	25.6
Traditional conservative	47.3
Religious conservative	27.1
Total	100.0

<b>Head cover</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No head cover	28.0
Head cover	50.8
Turban	7.6
Chador, purdah	.9
Bachelor men	12.7
Total	100.0





<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Turkish	81.0
Kurdish	12.7
Zaza	1.6
Arab	2.5
Other	2.1
Total	100.0

<b>Religion/Sect</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Sunni Muslim	93.3
Alevi Muslim	5.5
Other	1.1
Total	100.0

<b>Piety</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Non-believer	1.7
Believer	26.3
Religious	59.1
Devout	12.9
Total	100.0

<b>Monthly Household Income</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
TRY 300 or less	1.5
Between TRY 301 - 700	7.5
Between TRY 701 - 1200	34.6
Between TRY 1201 - 2000	33.5
Between TRY 2001 - 3000	13.7
TRY 3001 or more	9.2
Total	100.0



<b>Car ownership</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	39.5
No	60.5
Total	100.0

<b>Type of housing</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Traditional house	40.0
Slum	5.9
Apartment flat	49.5
Luxury residence	4.7
Total	100.0

<b>Settlement code</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Rural	21.5
Urban	29.4
Metropolitan	49.0
Total	100.0

<b>Region where the survey was conducted</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
İstanbul	16.0
Western Marmara	5.6
Aegean	15.8
Eastern Marmara	9.5
Western Anatolia	11.0
Mediterranean	12.5
Central Anatolia	4.9
Western Black Sea	6.2
Eastern Black Sea	3.3
Northeastern Anatolia	1.4
Middle Eastern Anatolia	4.2
South Eastern Anatolia	9.8
Total	100.0



## 4.2. Influence of Media on Political Opinions

Which TV channels do you prefer when you turn the TV on? (three channels)	Percentage
Kanal D	41.7
ATV	38.7
Star TV	30.2
Show TV	23.8
Fox	23.2
Samanyolu	11.9
TRT	11.3
Kanal 7	9.6
Halk TV	6.8
NTV	6.9
TRT 1	6.3
CNN Türk	4.9
Habertürk	4.6
Ulusal	2.6
NTV Spor	4.4
Other channels	38.7
Total	100.0
<b>24.1 Channel preference for TV series, movies or entertainment shows</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Kanal D	17.0
ATV	16.6
Star TV	15.7
Show TV	5.2
Fox	10.0
Samanyolu	4.5
TRT	2.3
Kanal 7	1.7
Halk TV	.2
NTV	.6
TRT 1	.1
CNN Türk	.1
NTV Spor	.3



Other channels	4.4
No answer	21.3
Total	100.0

Channel preference for news and discussion programs	Percentage
Kanal D	12.0
ATV	10.0
Star TV	4.4
Show TV	3.1
Fox	7.0
Samanyolu	2.9
TRT	6.2
Kanal 7	3.0
Halk TV	4.3
NTV	4.6
TRT 1	2.9
CNN Türk	4.2
Habertürk	4.6
Ulusal	1.8
NTV Spor	.1
Other channels	9.1
No answer	19.7
Total	100.0



Is there a TV channel you would never watch? If yes, which channel?	Percentage
Kanal D	.4
ATV	2.3
Star TV	.4
Show TV	.6
Fox	.7
Samanyolu	13.8
TRT	.3
Kanal 7	1.8
Halk TV	1.5
NTV	.2
TRT 1	.4
CNN Türk	.2
Habertürk	.2
Ulusal	.6
NTV Spor	.0
Other channels	6.3
There is no channel I would never watch.	57.5
No answer	12.6
Total	100.0



<b>Is there a newspaper you would never read? If yes, which newspaper?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Posta	.8
Hürriyet	.5
Sabah	2.0
Sözcü	1.5
Zaman	11.5
Milliyet	.3
Habertürk	.2
Cumhuriyet	1.0
Other	5.1
There is no newspaper I would never read.	61.5
Does not read newspaper	1.1
No answer	14.6
Total	100.0

<b>Which TV channel do you trust the most?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Kanal D	8.4
ATV	8.4
Star TV	4.2
Show TV	2.1
Fox	6.5
Samanyolu	3.5
TRT	10.4
Kanal 7	3.9
Halk TV	5.3
NTV	2.7
TRT 1	5.2
CNN Türk	1.8
Habertürk	1.6
Ulusal	1.5
NTV Spor	.2
Other channels	8.1
None	4.0
No answer	22.3
Total	100.0



Which newspaper do you trust the most?	Percentage
Posta	4.9
Hürriyet	4.8
Sabah	5.7
Sözcü	5.7
Zaman	2.9
Milliyet	2.4
Habertürk	.2
Cumhuriyet	1.4
Other	12.7
None	3.2
Does not read newspaper	3.4
No answer	52.7
Total	100.0

I would not buy a product if its commercials are broadcast on a channel I oppose.	Percentage
Absolutely wrong	9.3
Wrong	46.9
Neither right nor wrong	15.8
Right	24.4
Absolutely right	3.6
Total	100.0

I usually get information on any organization, product or brand through social media.	Percentage
Absolutely wrong	11.6
Wrong	38.7
Neither right nor wrong	16.5
Right	30.0
Absolutely right	3.1
Total	100.0



<b>I would not watch a TV channel that broadcasts against the government or the Prime Minister.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Absolutely wrong	12.2
Wrong	43.2
Neither right nor wrong	13.9
Right	23.8
Absolutely right	6.9
Total	100.0

<b>I believe that the internet does more harm than good in society.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Absolutely wrong	13.6
Wrong	32.3
Neither right nor wrong	27.2
Right	21.7
Absolutely right	5.2
Total	100.0

<b>The government should ensure freedom of speech on the internet.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Absolutely wrong	1.3
Wrong	8.7
Neither right nor wrong	23.2
Right	49.4
Absolutely right	17.4
Total	100.0

<b>Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook are a menace to society.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Absolutely wrong	16.4
Wrong	30.8
Neither right nor wrong	25.7
Right	20.3
Absolutely right	6.8
Total	100.0