ingev İNSANİ GELİŞME VAKFI

SOCIAL COHESION MONITOR

2018 - 2020 COMPARISION

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Social Cohesion Monitor

Turkey | 2018 to 2020

Presentation

Social cohesion has been one of the top issues of Turkey's political and social agenda in recent years. This has also been the case around the world as immigration and other factors resulted in polarization and triggered divisions in societies. In 2018, INGEV, together with the Istanbul Policy Center, developed a research approach[1] to measure social cohesion. It conducted a poll and published Social Cohesion Report, revealing Turkey's social cohesion landscape, identifying unifying anchors and existing challenges, and making policy suggestions to decisionmakers in order to enhance social cohesion in Turkey.

Due to the subject's continuing importance, INGEV conducted a monitoring survey in 2020 within the scope of the Human Development Monitoring study, which is running in collaboration with Bilgi University. The organization is now publishing the Social Cohesion Monitor to track the transition in dynamics of social cohesion in Turkey. The monitoring survey will facilitate an understanding of recent developments on social cohesion.

Turkey experienced a change in its administrative system in 2018, and in the years since is going through a transition and reconstruction period where relationships of public bodies are being redefined.

While the country was passing through such a transition period, 2020 was in practice a test year for governments around the world in terms of many vital areas of citizen-state relationships due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Transparency, strong action and economic management have been key areas of performance for all governments, and these have affected citizens' evaluations on issues related to social cohesion.

This tracking survey was conducted in one of the most challenging times in recent history, one which alienated people, caused sudden losses, damaged social relationships and negatively affected people all over the world. A deeply anxious social psychology defined the atmosphere surrounding this study. Even so, it is important to track social cohesion during these challenging times to understand the transition in key areas in order to have a road map for the right course of actions for social benefit.

[1] The model used in the research approach is modified from social cohesion model of Eurofound and Bertelsmann Stiftung. See. Eurofound and Bertelsmann Stiftung, Social cohesion and well-being in the EU, Reference no: EF1472, 25 Nov 2014,

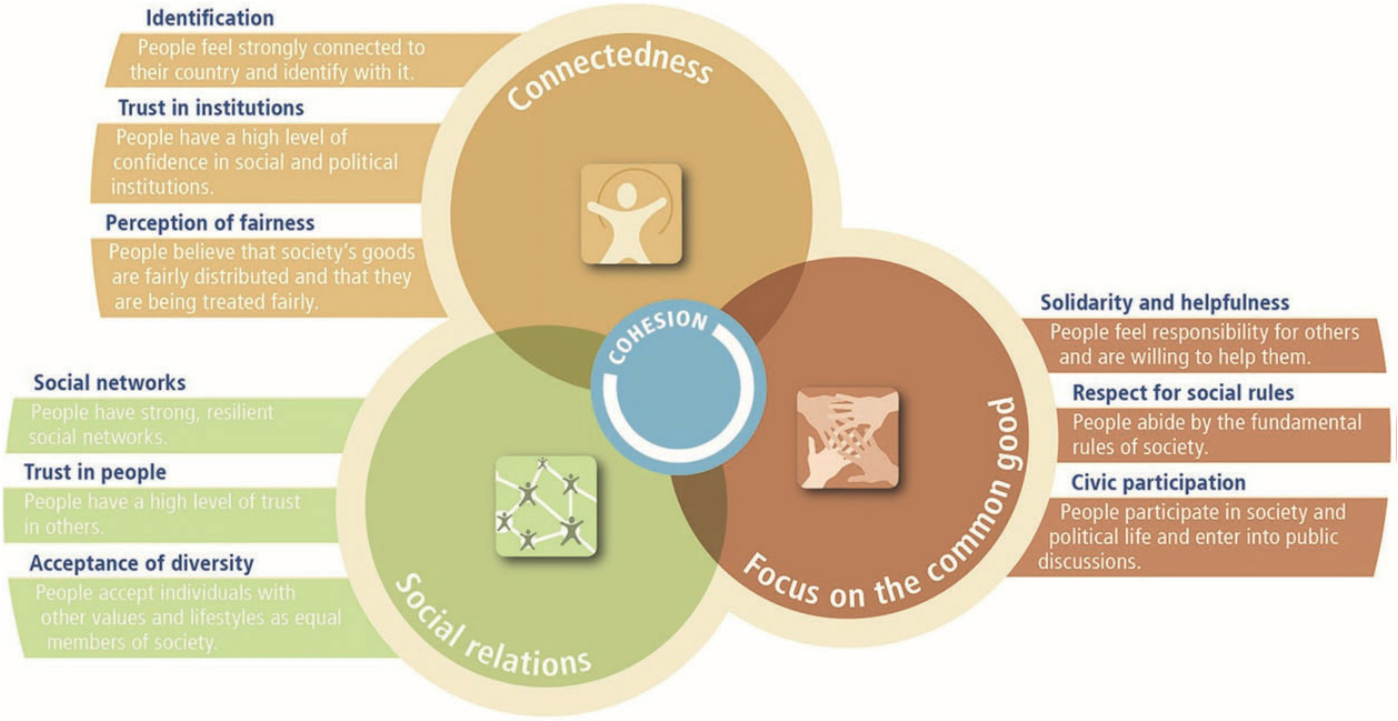
https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1472en.pdf

About Social Cohesion

The term social cohesion's academic origin[2] is from "conscience collective," which defines the non-material part of the community. The term social cohesion emerged on the humanitarian agenda in last two decades following rapid economic coupled with income inequalities both in most of the rich Western countries and in high population developing countries such as China and India. While the basic structures of governing such as rule of law and having equal opportunities (i.e., to be employed) are recognized as major factors on inclusive growth, social cohesion should be considered as a complementary term to be observed in the cognition of the importance of relationships with citizens, relying mainly on "social trust" and belief of being a part of a moral community. (Larsen, 2014)

Our Approach

INGEV's research approach[3] was designed to measure social cohesion in three main dimensions: connectedness, social relations and a focus on the common good, which measures inter-citizen relationships and government-citizen relationships.



[2] See. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2014/LarsenDevelopmentinsocialcohesion.pdf

[3] The model used in the research approach is modified from social cohesion model of Eurofound and Bertelsmenn Stiftung. See. Eurofound and Bertelsmann Stiftung, Social cohesion and well-being in the EU, Reference no: EF1472, 25 Nov 2014,

https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1472en.pdf

Project Design

Content

The Social Cohesion Monitoring survey was conducted among a sample representing the Turkish population. Fieldwork was carried out in 26 cities of Turkey with 49 statements covering all three dimensions of social cohesion and polarization axes in Turkey.

CONNECTEDNESS

Identification

Trust in Institutions

- Pr. of Religious Affairs
- Courts
- Government in Ankara
- Political parties in general
- Military Force
- Police Force
- Press
- Televisions
- News on social media
- Hospitals

Perception of Fairness

- Income Justice
- Equal Opportunities
- Regional Equity
- Order of Merit
- Economic Discrimination
- Physical Appearance

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Social Networks

- Core family
- Relatives
- Friends
- Hobby groups
- Religious groups
- Volunteer groups

Trust in People

- People in Turkey

Acceptance of Diversity

- Approving children being friend with…
- Discrimination:
  - Ethnicity
  - Religious Belief
  - Political View
  - Facing Violence in Public

FOCUS ON COMMON GOOD

Solidarity and Helpfulness

- Supporting Network
- Charity Involvement

Respect for Social Rules

- Following Rules
- Mutual Respect

Civic Participation

- Representativeness of political parties
- Political Party Membership
- Sharing Opinion on Social Media

Polarization axes:

- Turkish and Kurdish
- Government supports and opposition.
- Religious and seculars
- Rich and poor
- Sunnis and Alevis
- Moderns and conservatives
- Turkish and Syrians (only in 2020)

Monitor results were discussed with opinion leaders in an online round table discussion and final report was enriched by inputs of stakeholders.

Sample Design

Sample design represents Turkish population regionally and demographically by planned stratified sampling method. Interviews are conducted in 26 cities representing 12 statistical sub-regions (NUTS-1) of Turkey. Sample represents 18+ Turkish population.

CODE	REGION	CITIES	2018 (n)	2018 (%)	2020 W2 (n)	2020 W2 (%)	2020 W3 (n)	2020 W3 (%)
TR1	ISTANBUL	Istanbul	296	20%	311	20%	337	19%
TR2	WEST MARMARA	Tekirdağ, Balıkesir	66	4%	67	4%	71	4%
TR3	AEGEAN	İzmir, Aydin, Manisa	194	13%	197	13%	231	13%
TR4	EAST MARMARA	Bursa, Kocaeli	146	10%	147	9%	177	10%
TR5	WEST ANATOLIA	Ankara, Konya	170	11%	178	11%	195	11%
TR6	MEDITERREANEAN	Antalya, Adana, Hatay	181	12%	180	12%	213	12%
TR7	MIDDLE ANATOLIA	Kırıkkale, Kayseri	73	5%	76	5%	89	5%
TR8	WEST BLACKSEA	Zonguldak, Kastamonu, Samsun	93	6%	94	6%	106	6%
TR9	EAST BLACKSEA	Trabzon	52	3%	54	3%	71	4%
TRA	NORTHEAST ANATOLIA	Erzurum, Agri	43	3%	48	3%	53	3%
TRB	MIDDLE EAST ANATOLIA	Malatya, Van	63	4%	63	4%	71	4%
TRC	SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA	Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Mardin	137	9%	140	9%	160	9%
	TOTAL		**1514**	**100%**	**1555**	**100%**	**1774**	**100%**

Confidence level and standard error: 2018: +/-2,49% in 95% confidence level; 2020: +/-2,4% in 95% confidence level

	2018		2020- W2		2020- W3	
EDUCATION STATUS	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
Primary school and less	499	33%	434	28%	504	28%
Secondary School and High School	741	49%	819	53%	930	52%
University and higher	274	18%	303	19%	341	19%
TOTAL	1514	100%	1555	100%	1774	100%

	2018		2020- W2		2020-W3	
AGE GROUP	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
18-34	607	40%	637	41%	727	41%
35-49	454	30%	452	29%	514	29%
50+	453	30%	466	30%	532	30%
TOTAL	1514	100%	1555	100%	1774	100%

	2018		2020 W2		2020 W3	
GENDER	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Men	770	51%	776	50%	887	50%
Women	744	49%	779	50%	887	50%
TOTAL	1514	100%	1555	100%	1774	100%

Methodology

The 2018 study was conducted through face-to-face (F2F) interviews while 2020 study was conducted by phone calls (CATI). Being both agent-aided methodologies, these two methodologies (F2F and CATI) are accepted as comparable methods.

49 social cohesion tracking statements are questioned in 2020 W3 (Fieldwork: 22 October- 27 November 2020). To find out the impact of pandemic, 2020 W2 findings (Fieldwork: February 8 – March 6, 2020) which represents the pre-pandemic period, are reported in comparison of 2020 W3, post-pandemic period, where comparable data is available.

Analysis

Data is weighted according to address-based population registration system (ADKS) figures of the Turkey Statistical Institute (TurkStat), both in 2018 and 2020 W2 and W3 to fine tune the sampling.

Timing

Fieldwork for the social cohesion survey took place in Jan 10 – Feb 8, 2018, while 2020 data is collected in two waves: Wave 2: February 8– March 6, 2020 and Wave 3: October 22– November 27, 2020

A roundtable discussion (RTD) was held online on 24th December 2020 with the participant of 13 institutions from academy, civil society, labor union, student union, municipalities and public institutions.

The Social Cohesion Landscape in Turkey

Top findings of Social Cohesion 2018 Report:

Social Cohesion Report in 2018 revealed that Turkish society has strong social bounds with family and relatives, as well as strong national ties that expose itself on high level identification to society. On the other hand, social reflexes seemed to be rather weak when it comes fulfilling the requirements of coexistence such as following the rules and mutual respect which indicate practices of taking right attitude towards the common good. Another interesting finding was on identities. According to 2018 research findings, self-evaluation of individuals on their political, ethnic or lifestyle identities – which were assumed to be in conflict – were intertwined, indicating organic flexibility on identity-based conflicts while suggesting an explanation for the bases of high-level social tolerance and acceptance of diversity which eventually explores itself as dominant national characteristic.

The dimension analysis of the 2018 social cohesion study indicated Turkish society's national identity, social networks, acceptance of plurality and solidarity feelings were strong, while the focus on common good through actions such as like following social rules and civic participation were relatively weaker.

The 2018 report also revealed the necessity of revisiting political bodies' ability of representing people well and highlighted the need for rehabilitation of political landscape in general since the majority of the nation said their political views were not represented well in political scene.

Executive Summary

Turkish society was shifting to a new landscape in social cohesion at the end of 2020. Reduction in trust from 2018 to 2020 was the most significant finding of the 2020 Social Cohesion Monitoring Survey. Results indicated a regression in all key dimensions of social cohesion including positive identification, trust in institutions, perception of fairness, trust in people and respect for social rules, while there was significant improvement in solidarity and partial improvement in acceptance of diversity. Civic participation remained constant, except for a higher percentage of individuals sharing their political opinion on social media.

Research results on trust levels towards institutions were salient. The military, police and hospitals remained as trusted institutions by the majority, while institutions such as courts, media and the presidency of religious affairs were found to be less trustworthy by the public.

Another notable finding was the erosion in perception of social fairness and equality \. Turkish society was not presenting a dominant opinion on social justice matters in 2018. However, majority of the society now have negative perception on fair income distribution, equal opportunities including regional equality, and order of merit in Turkey in 2020. For instance, 78% of society had a negative perception on fair income distribution in Turkey in 2020, while this ratio was 41% in 2018. Similarly, a negative perception on

regional equality, which was 27% in 2018, rose to 68% in 2020 and became dominant opinion among all regions.

It appears that political bodies are suffering from corrosion, as research outcomes point out decreasing ratio in trusting political parties in general from 40% to 13% from 2018 to 2020, respectively.

According to research results, parallel to an erosion of trust in institutions, trust towards the government significantly fell by the end of 2020, after months of the pandemic. Around 55% of society had trust in government in Ankara in 2018. This ratio fell to 40% by the end of 2020. Another factor in governance was the appointment of public staff according to competence. Around 55% of society believed administrative staff in Turkey was not appointed according to competence in 2020, while this ratio was 25% in 2018.

While the importance of extending social support practices increased, Turkish society responded to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic by increasing solidarity. Correspondingly, perceived polarization among social groups regressed in 2020 compared to 2018. Relieved tension showed itself more in identity-based axes (Turkish- Kurdish and Sunni-Alevi) and already at the first quarter of 2020, before pandemic which became more visible after the consequences of pandemic were realized. It seems pandemic have an accelerating impact in trivializing polarization as it is bringing vital problems upfront. That said, government supporters and opposition remained the the most tense axis in terms of the tension it creates in society, although it measured in at a middle level tension (6.6 out of 10).

Although it is possible to assume the pessimistic atmosphere affecting evaluations during the survey due to heavy social and economic consequences of pandemic, this historical period is likely to have a permanent effect on society, which brings crucial tasks in front of Turkey: rebuilding social trust by repairing institutional trust and ensuring social justice.

Key Findings

Connectedness

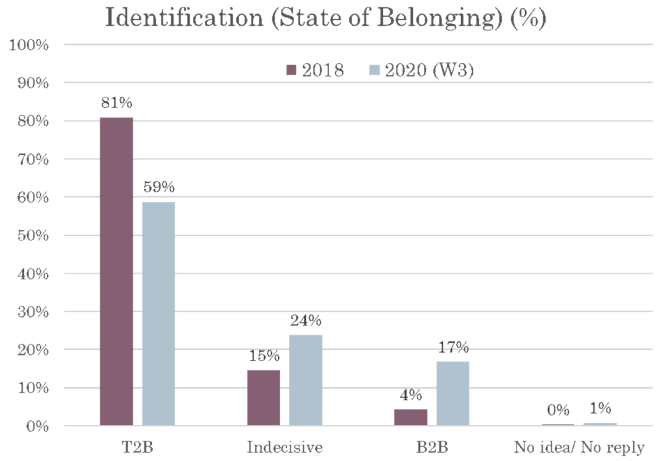
Connectedness is one of the key social cohesion dimensions determined by identification, trust in institutions and perception of fairness. This dimension is reflecting outcomes of citizen -state relationships shaped both by emotional tight and structural functioning of society.

1.1 Identification

2018 findings indicated high national identification of Turkish people, which was a strong contribution to connectedness. However, in 2020 positive identification dropped significantly, from 81% to 59%, while ambivalent group raised from 15% to 24% and negative identification increased from 4% to 17%.

Such erosion in national identification seems to be the outcome of decreasing trust between Turkish citizens, as well as corrosion in trust towards institutions as it shows itself clearly in further findings.

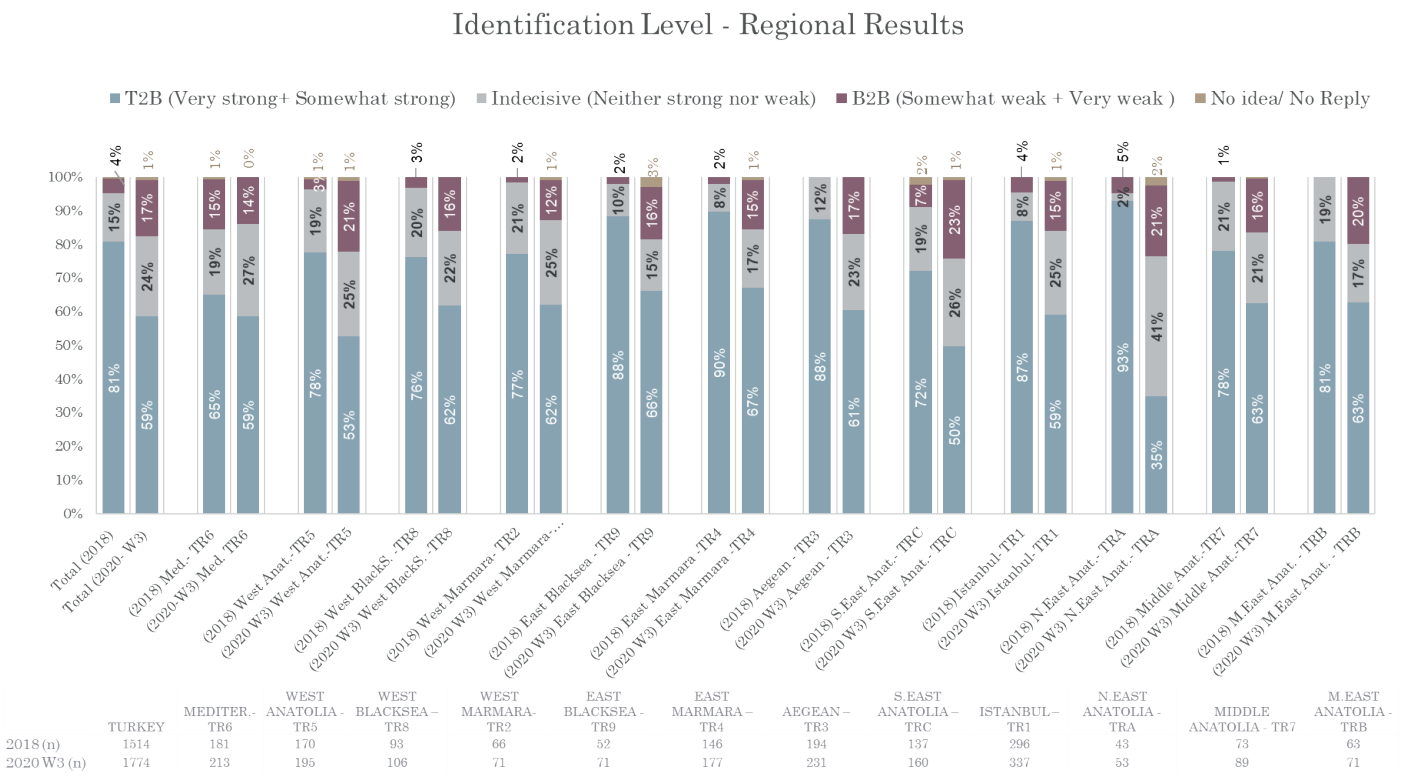
Question: Considering your social experiences in Turkey, how would you rate your feeling of belonging to society in general?



T2B: Very strong+ Somewhat strong | Indecisive: Neither strong nor weak | B2B: Somewhat weak + Very weak

Regional results point out regression in positive identification is spreading all regions. Regression in positive identification mainly leads to larger ambivalent group, rather than negative identification among regions other than Middle East Anatolia (Malatya, Van) where negative identification passes ambivalence. It was interesting to see regions with = high national identification in 2018 such as East Marmara (Bursa, Kocaeli), East Black Sea (Trabzon) and Istanbul also regress from 80-90% level to 60%-70% by the end of 2020.

The highest negative identification by the end of 2020 was in the South East Anatolia (Gaziantep, Diyarbakir, Mardin) region, followed by North East Anatolia (Erzurum, Agri) and West Anatolia (Ankara, Konya). Negative identification raised significantly among all regions other than Mediterranean (Antalya, Adana, Hatay) ,which remained the same over the years. Positive identification is dominant tendency among all regions except for North East Anatolia (Erzurum, Agri) where ambivalent group has been the largest as of 2020, after a sharp change compared to 2018. North East Anatolia was one of the highest positive identification regions of all regions in 2018.



	TURKEY	MEDITER.- TR6	WEST ANATOLIA - TR5	WEST BLACKSEA – TR8	WEST MARMARA- TR2	EAST BLACKSEA - TR9	EAST MARMARA – TR4	AEGEAN – TR3	S.EAST ANATOLIA – TRC	ISTANBUL – TR1	N.EAST ANATOLIA - TRA	MIDDLE ANATOLIA - TR7	M.EAST ANATOLIA - TRB
2018 (n)	1514	181	170	93	66	52	146	194	137	296	43	73	63
2020 W3 (n)	1774	213	195	106	71	71	177	231	160	337	53	89	71

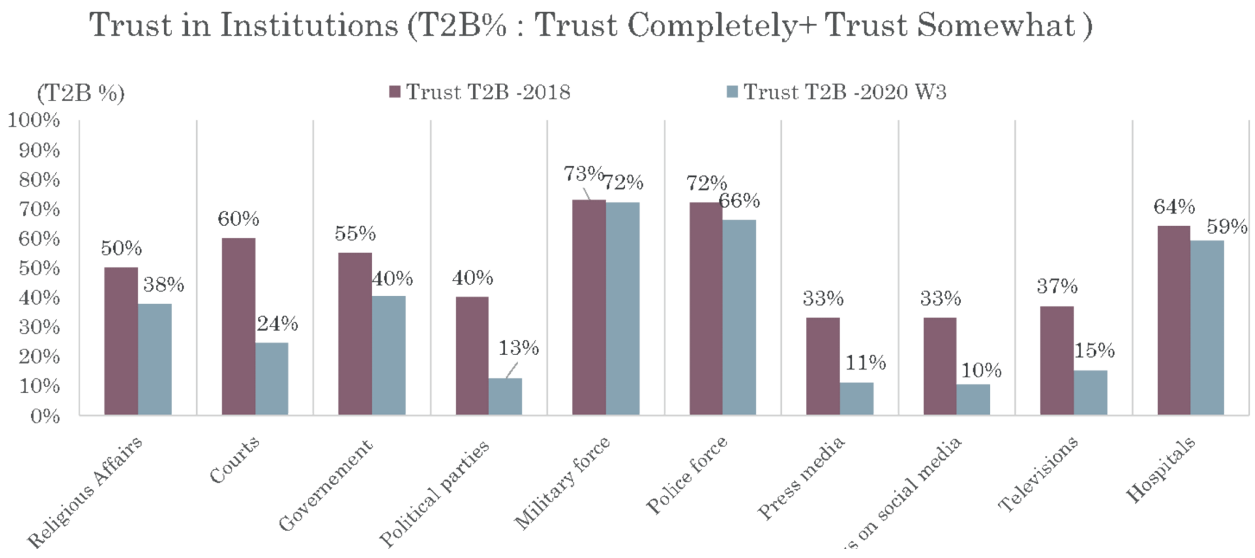
North East Anatolia (Erzurum, Agri) followed by Istanbul and Aegean (Izmir, Ayin, Manisa) were the top three regions where positive identification erosion was highest. Ambivalence raised in North East Anatolia and Istanbul more than negative identification. In Aegean, however, positive identification erosion fed negative identification more than ambivalence.

CHANGE IN IDENTIFICATION							
Cod	Region	Cities		% Change in Positive Identification	% Change in Ambivalence	% Change in Negative Identification	% Change in No idea/ No Reply
TR	Turkey	All	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-22%	9%	13%	0%
TR6	Mediterranean	Antalya, Adana, Hatay	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-6%	8%	-1%	-1%
TR5	West Anatolia	Ankara, Konya	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-25%	6%	18%	1%
TR8	West Blacksea	Zonguldak, Kastamonu, Samsun	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-14%	2%	13%	0%
TR2	West Marmara	Tekirdağ, Balıkesir	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-15%	4%	10%	1%
TR9	East Blacksea	Trabzon	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-22%	6%	14%	3%
TR4	East Marmara	Bursa, Kocaeli	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-23%	9%	13%	1%
TR3	Aegean	İzmir, Aydin, Manisa	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-27%	10%	17%	0%
TRC	South East Anatolia	Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Mardin	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-23%	7%	17%	-1%
TR1	İstanbul	Istanbul	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-28%	17%	10%	1%
TRA	North East Anatolia	Erzurum, Agri	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-58%	39%	17%	2%
TR7	Middle Anatolia	Kırıkkale, Kayseri	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-15%	0%	15%	0%
TRB	Middle East Anatolia	Malatya, Van	GAP (2020 W3 to 2018)	-18%	-2%	20%	0%

1.2 Trust in Institutions

Trust in institutions dropped significantly in 2020 compared to 2018 among all measured institutions except for military, where the difference is statistically insignificant. Military, police and hospitals were the three institutions kept their trustworthy position in the eye of public despite losing trust. Courts and government, on the other hand, lost their trustworthy status in the eye of majority as of 2020.

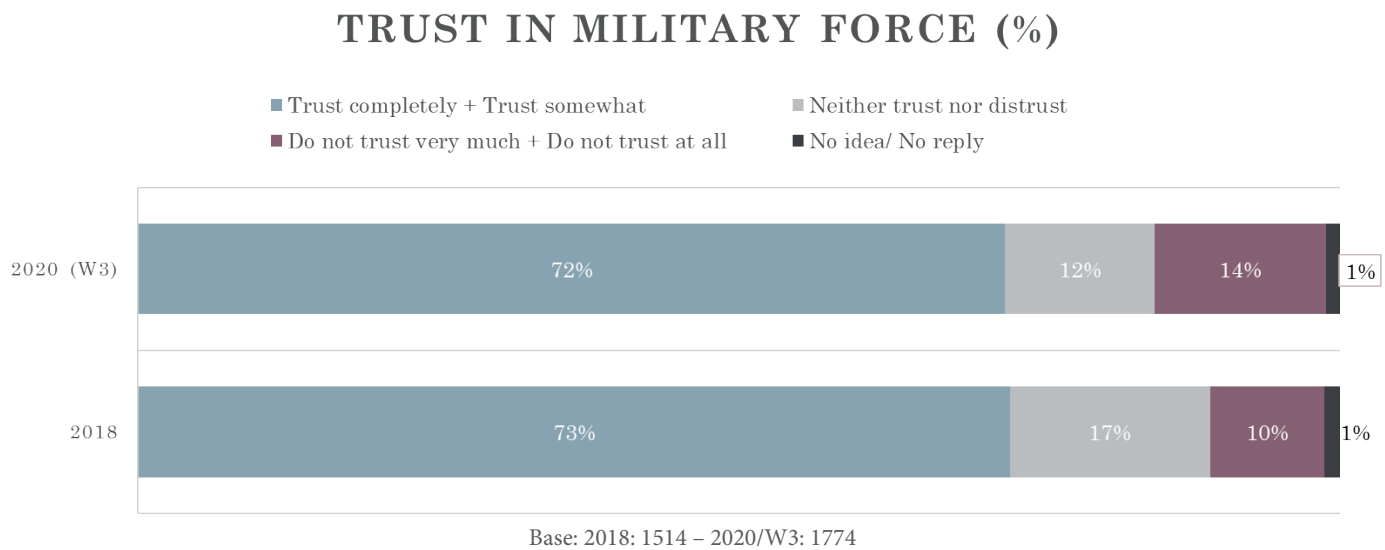
Q: How do you trust each institution I will read?
5= Trust completely 4=Trust somewhat, 3=Neither trust nor distrust 2= Do not trust very much 1=Do not trust at all.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

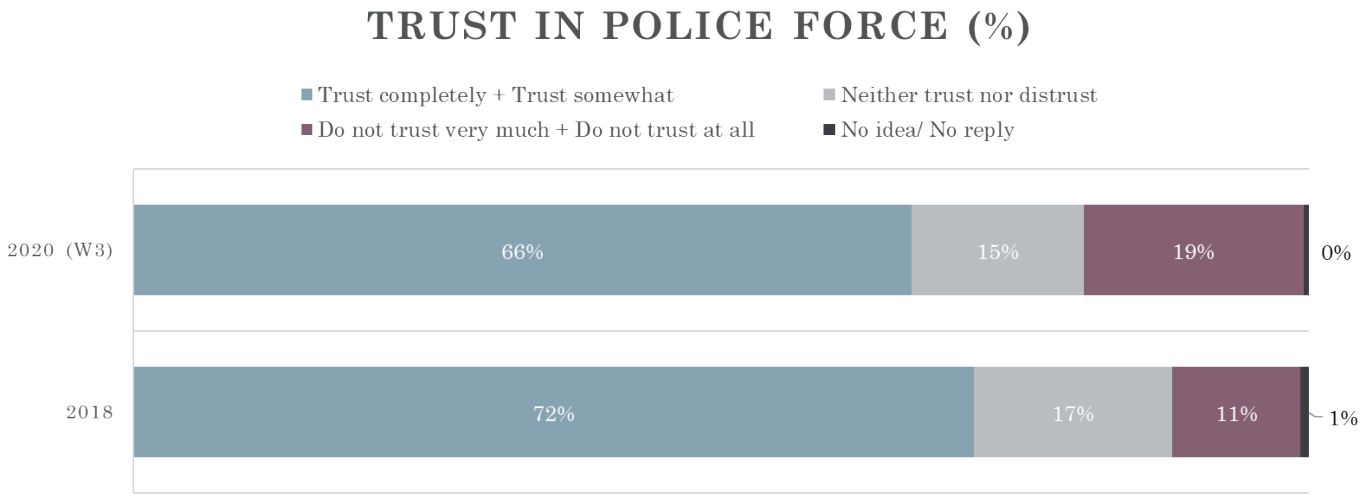
Security force

The military kept its trust level despite a statistically insignificant decrease. The ratio of people who do not trust the military increased from 10% to 14% in 2020 compared to 2018, while ambivalent group decreased.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

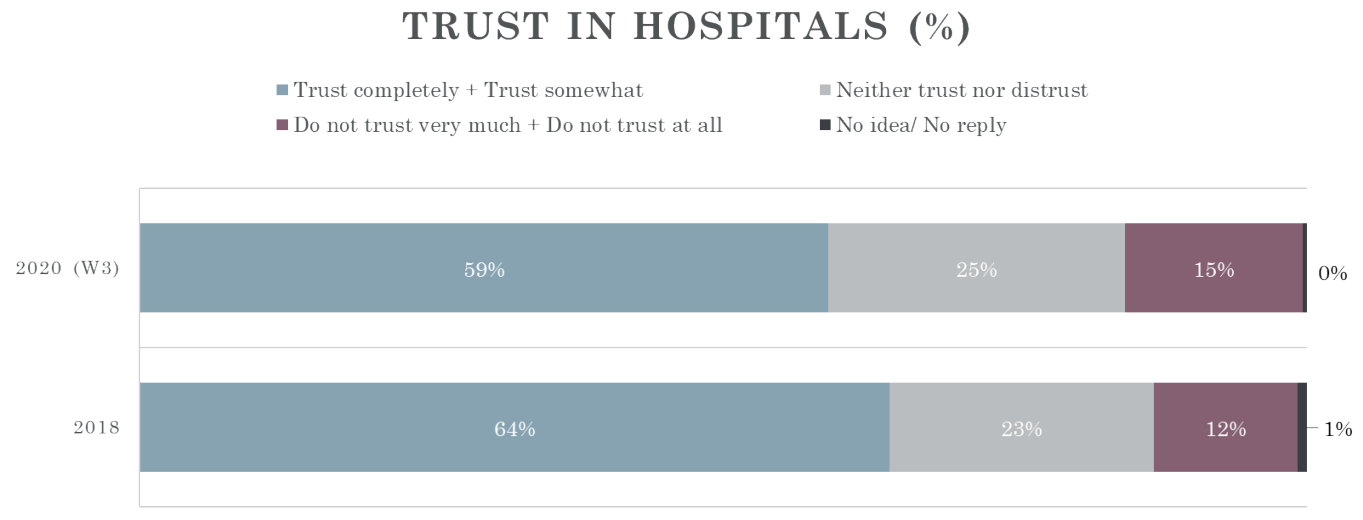
The police lost trust, however, it is still rated among trustworthy institutions by majority (66%) of society. That being said, the population not trusting police force increased significantly and reached to 19% by the end of 2020.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Hospitals

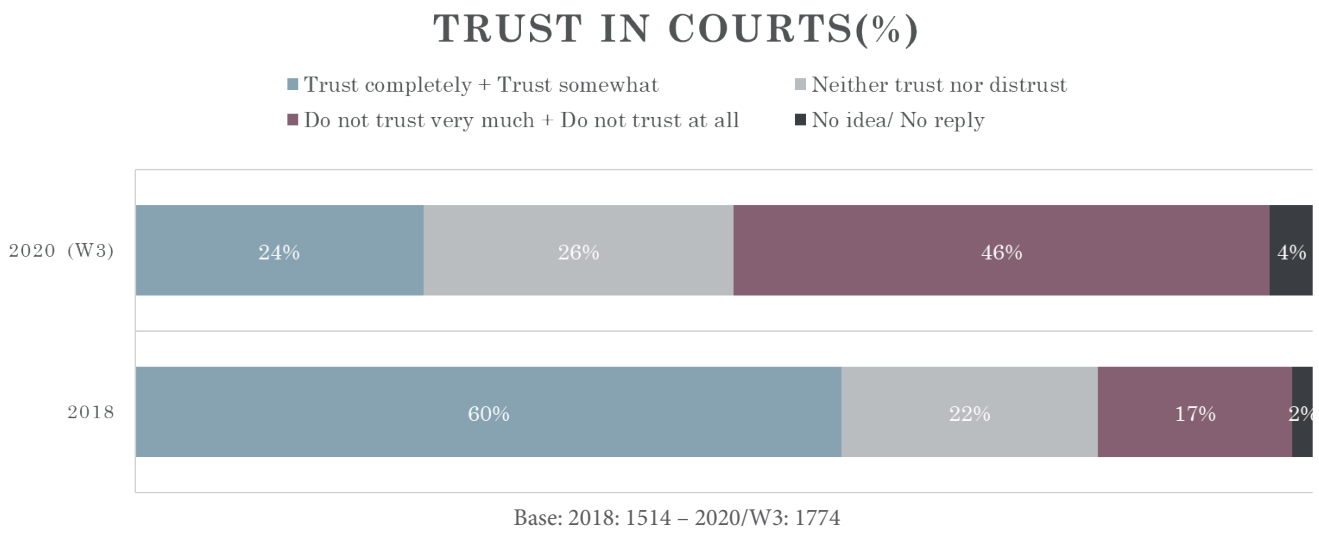
While majority of society (59%) still trust hospitals despite a loss when compared to 2018, those not trusting hospitals increased from 12% to 15% between 2018 to 2020.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

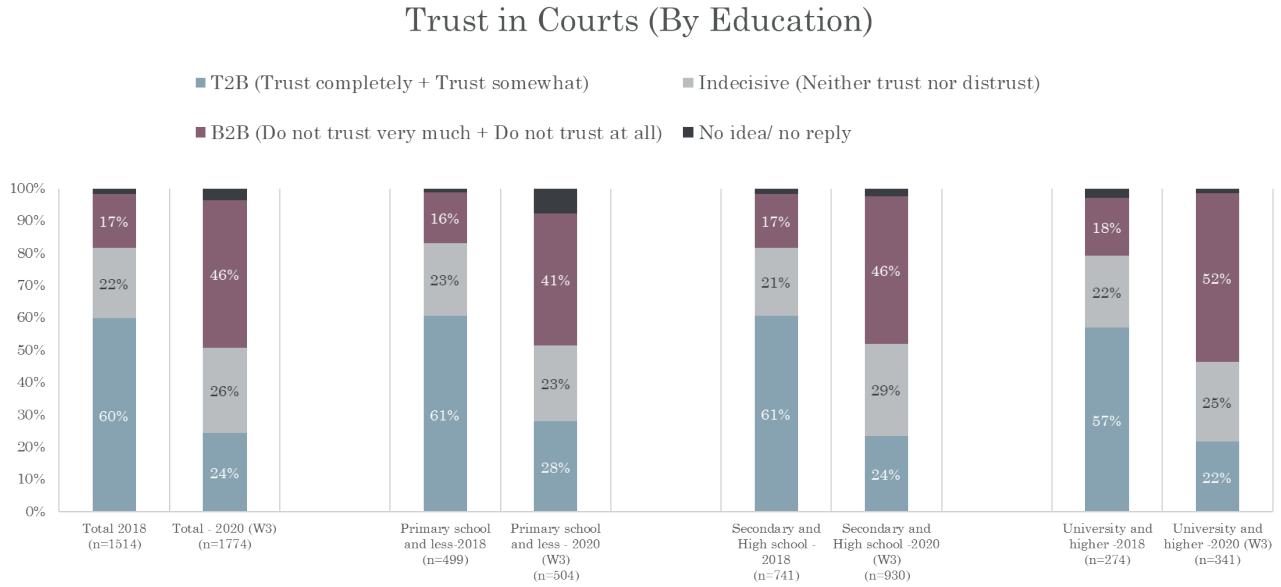
Courts and Justice

Courts, on the other hand, lost their trustworthy position in 2020. Courts were trusted by majority of society (60%) in 2018, but this fell to 24% in 2020. More people are hesitant about courts in 2020 compared to 2018, but almost half – or 46% – of society does not trust courts, while this ratio was only 17% in 2018. Such an erosion of trust towards courts seems to reflect on further evaluations on perception of social justice and fairness, which is one of the key pillars in overall social cohesion.

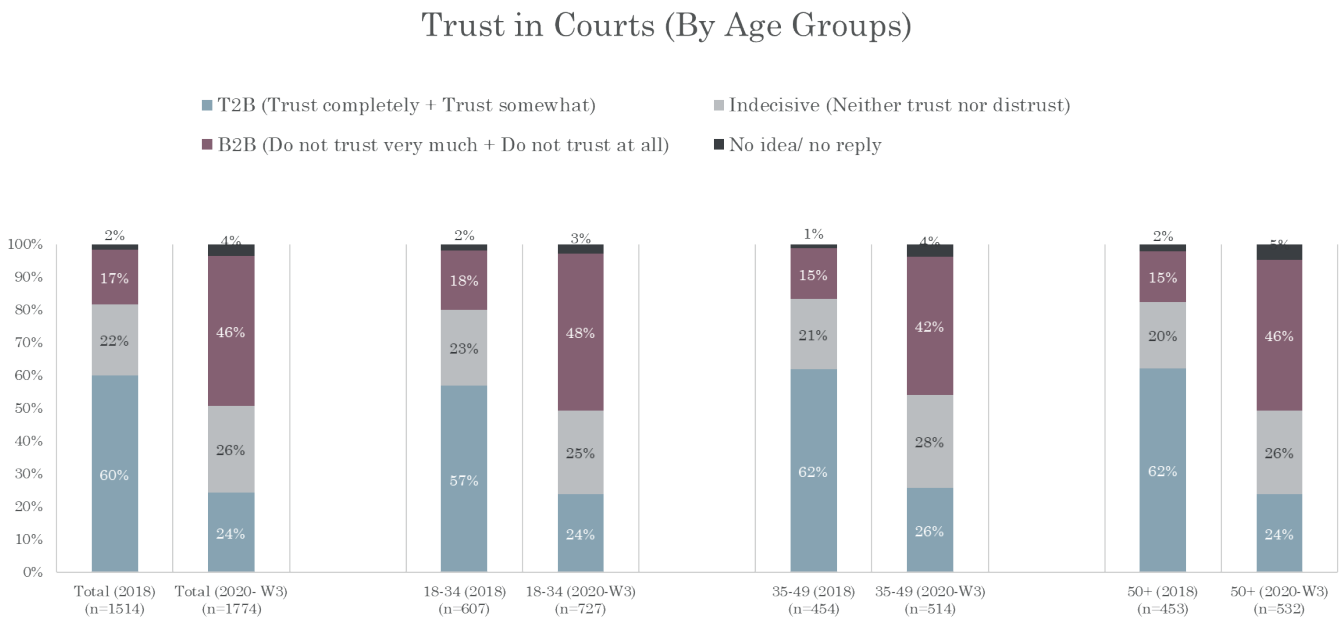


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Trust in courts fell among all education levels, and the loss accelerated as the education level increased. Around 52% of university and higher level educated population declared distrust towards courts, while this ratio was 46% among people with secondary education and 41% among primary education or less.

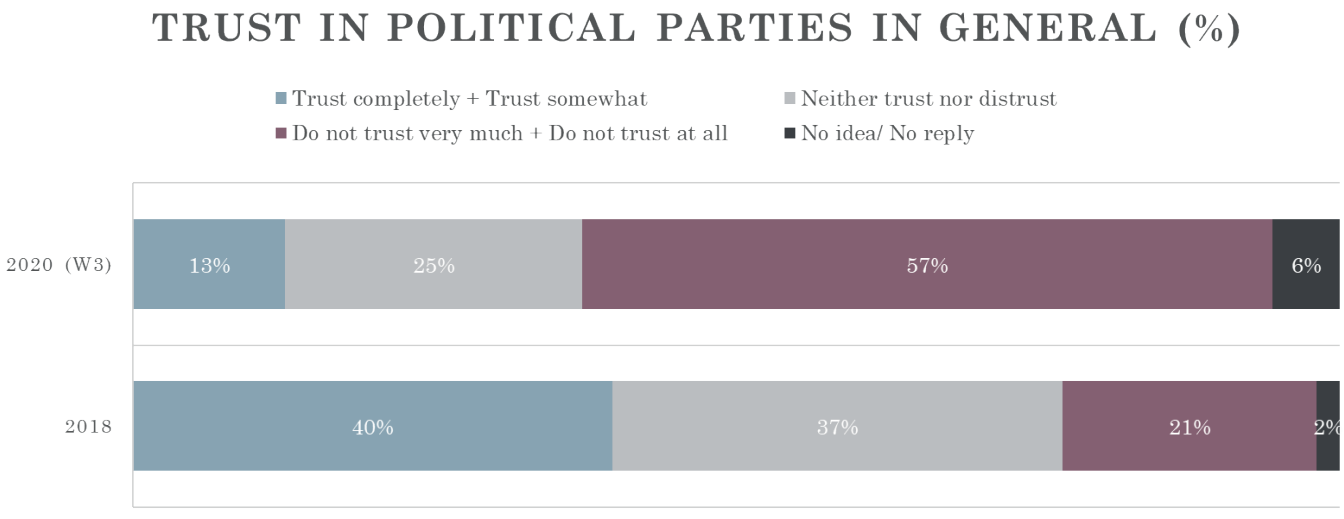


The erosion in trust towards the courts was visible among every age groups as well. The erosion in trust towards courts have not fed the ambivalence but the distrust among all age groups. The distrusting population was relatively higher (but statistically insignificant) among the 18-34 age range than elderly. Around 48% of those in the 18-34 age range declares distrust to courts, while trusting ones among the same group dropped from 57% to 24%, from 2018 to 2020, respectively. Same pattern is valid among other age ranges.



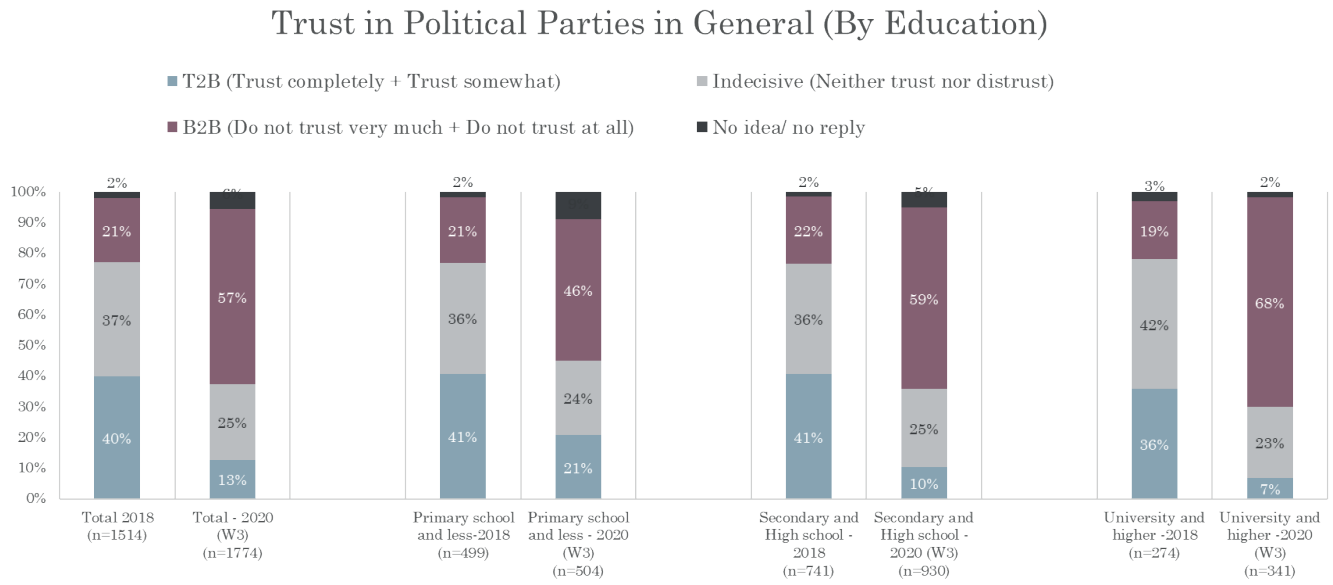
Political bodies / Political Parties in General

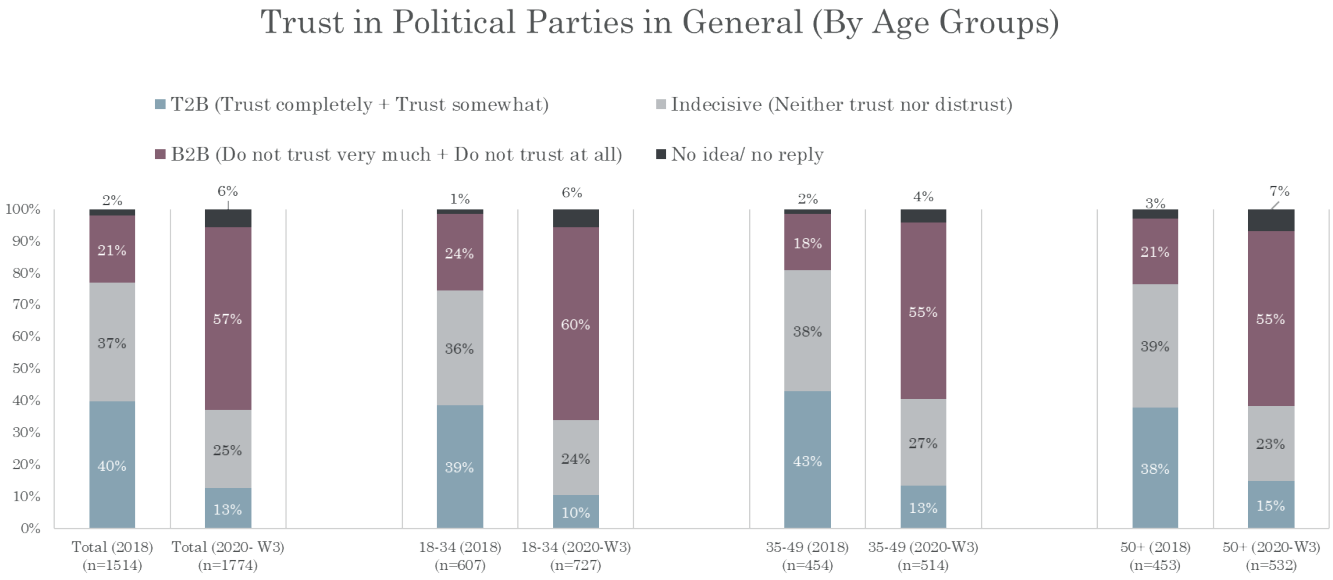
Political parties in general turned into distrusted institutions in the eye of majority of Turkish society in 2020. Trust in political parties dropped (statistically) significantly from 40% to 13%, while distrusting population faced a sharp (and statistically significant) increase from 21% to 57%. This indicates quite a weak position in terms of responsive democracy.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

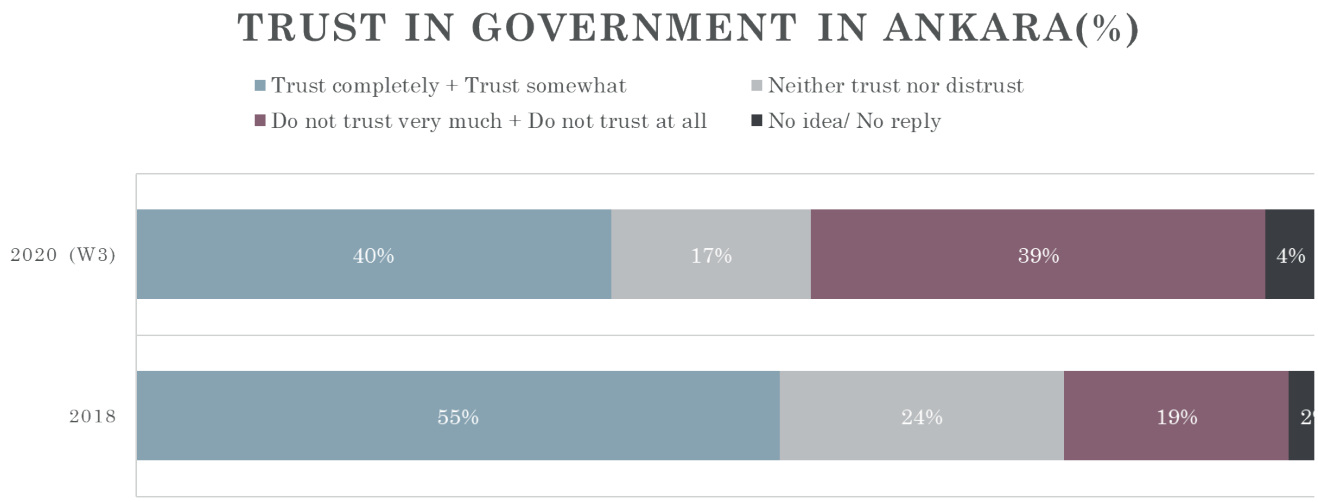
Trust in political parties in general dropped (statistically significantly) among all groups from various education levels and age ranges. The results showed that as the education level increased, trust to political parties fell. In addition, younger the population was less trusting of political parties.





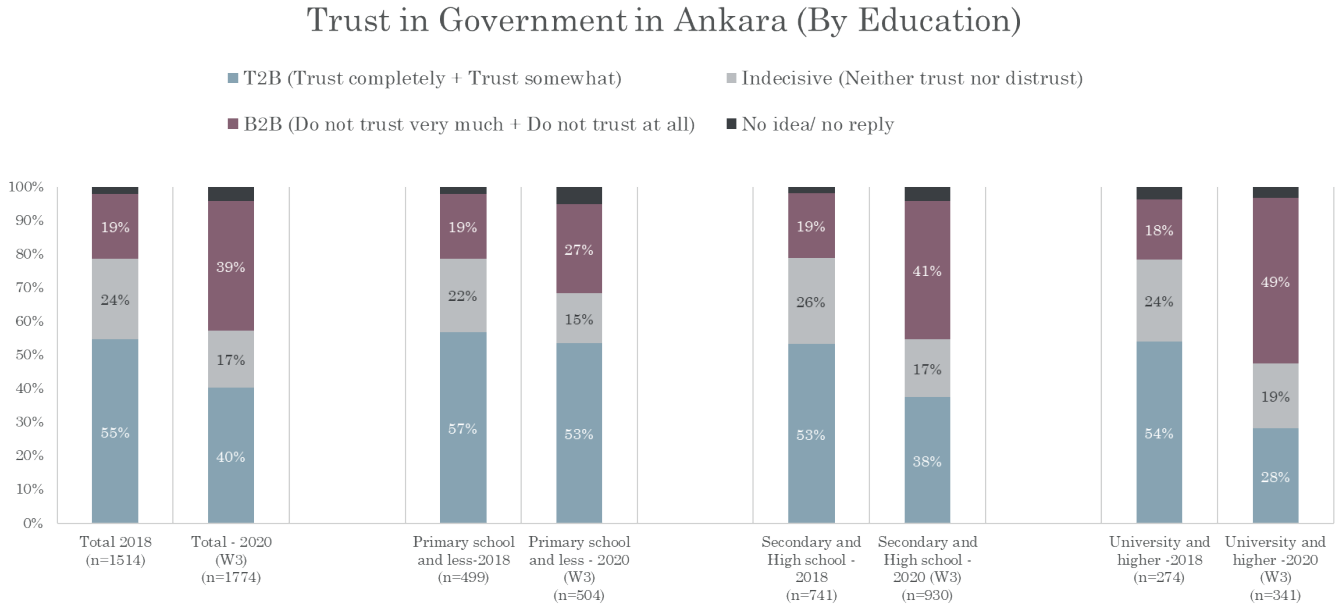
Political bodies / Government in Ankara

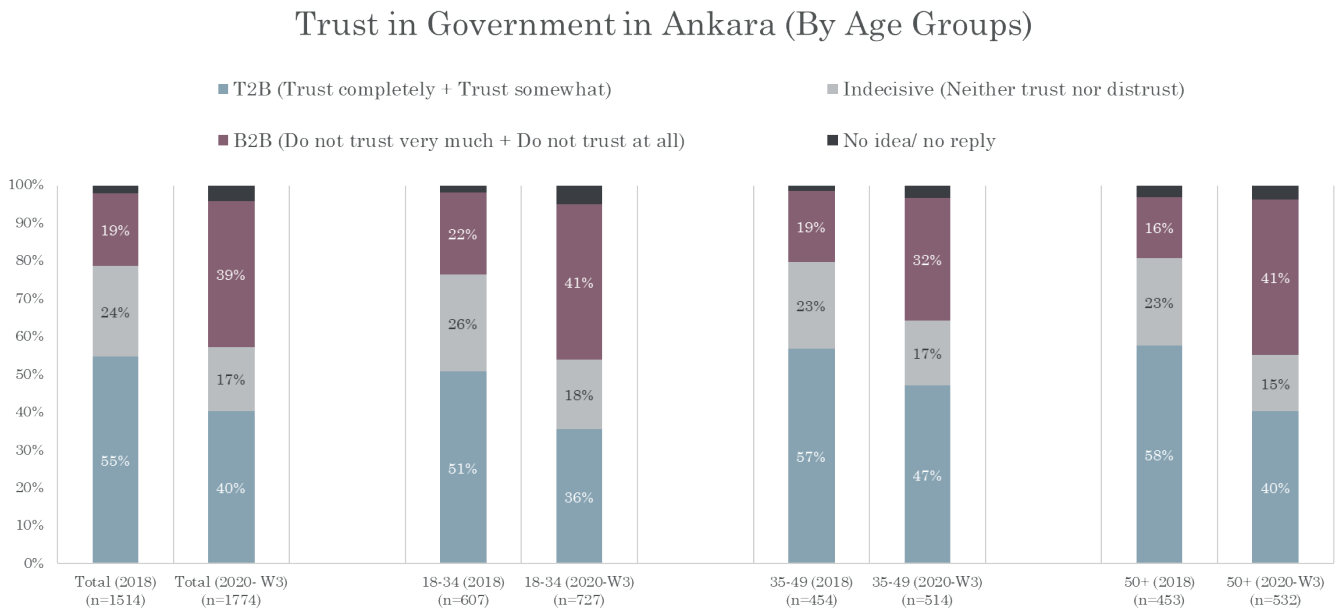
The government in Ankara, which was trusted by majority of society in 2018, also lost this position in 2020. By the end of 2020, 40% of society trusted the government. This ratio was 55% in 2018. Those not trusting government increased significantly from 19% to 39%, while ambivalent population – which was 24% in 2018 –fell to 17% in 2020.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

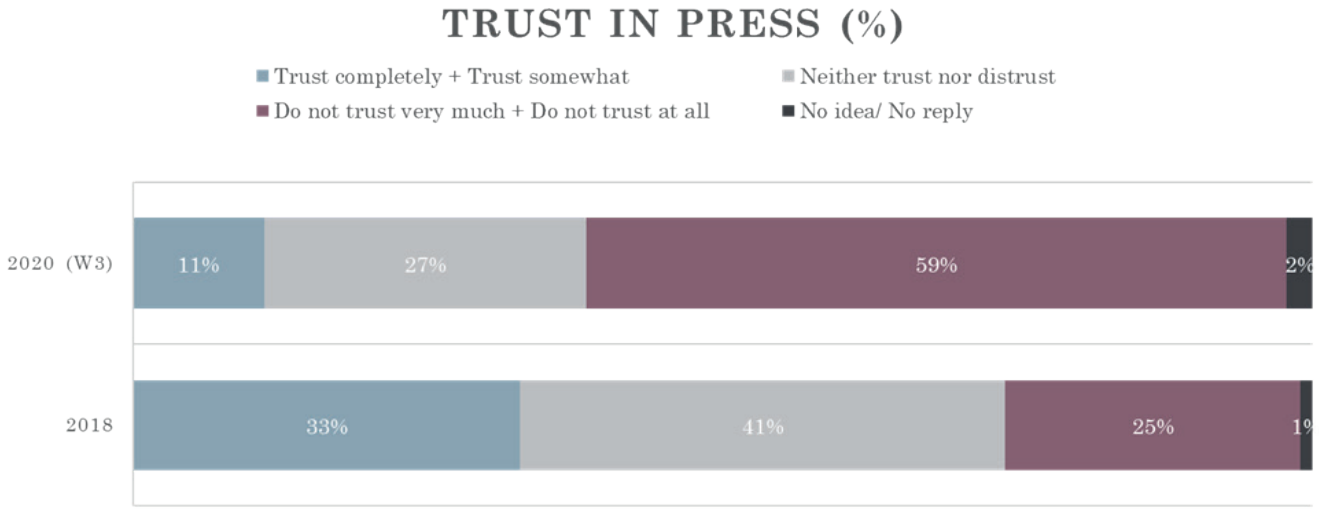
The government in Ankara was trusted by more than half of people in each education status in 2018. However, this position changed by the end of 2020. The government lost the majority's trust among all education status, while ambivalent groups shrank and the mistrusting group increased. The higher the education level, the larger the distrust. Distrust towards the government was not the majority opinion in total and among demographic groups other than university and higher level educated population. Trust erosion was less apparent among people with primary school and less education, which represents 28% of overall Turkish population in 18 years of age and over. Loss of credit is observed in every age range as well.





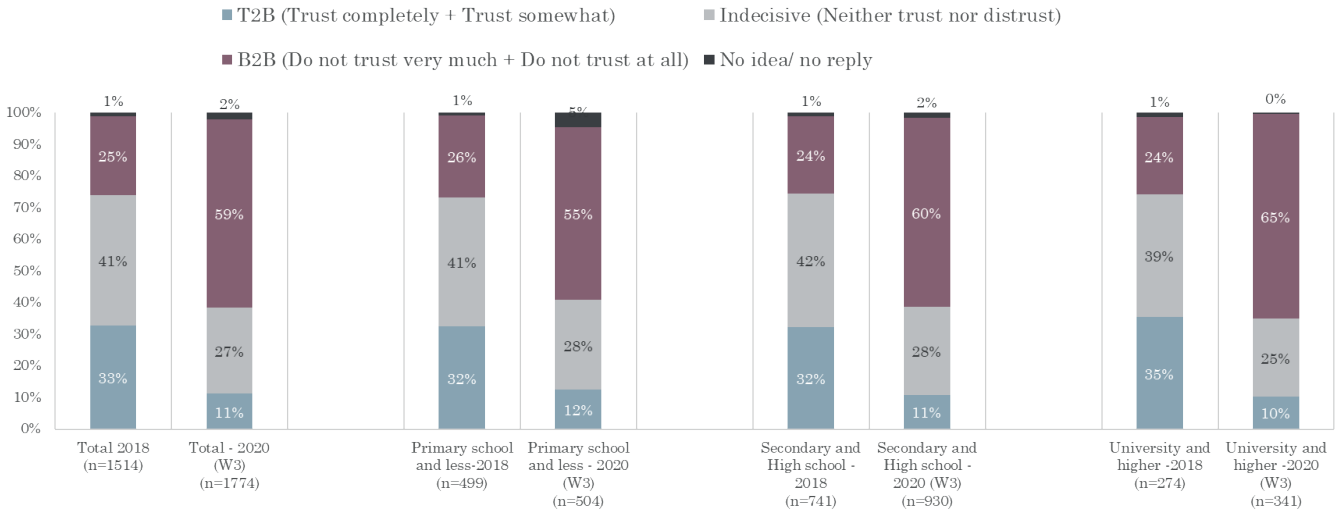
Media

Media bodies, which had mainly a floating status in 2018, where trusting people were more than distrusting ones and ambivalent group was the largest. However, media bodies faced a sharp (and statistically significant) loss of credit and they are positioned among distrustful institutions by majority of society as of 2020. This is valid both for press and televisions. It is a common evaluation among different age groups and education status. In addition to traditional media institutions, social media news was also not trusted by majority of society in 2020.

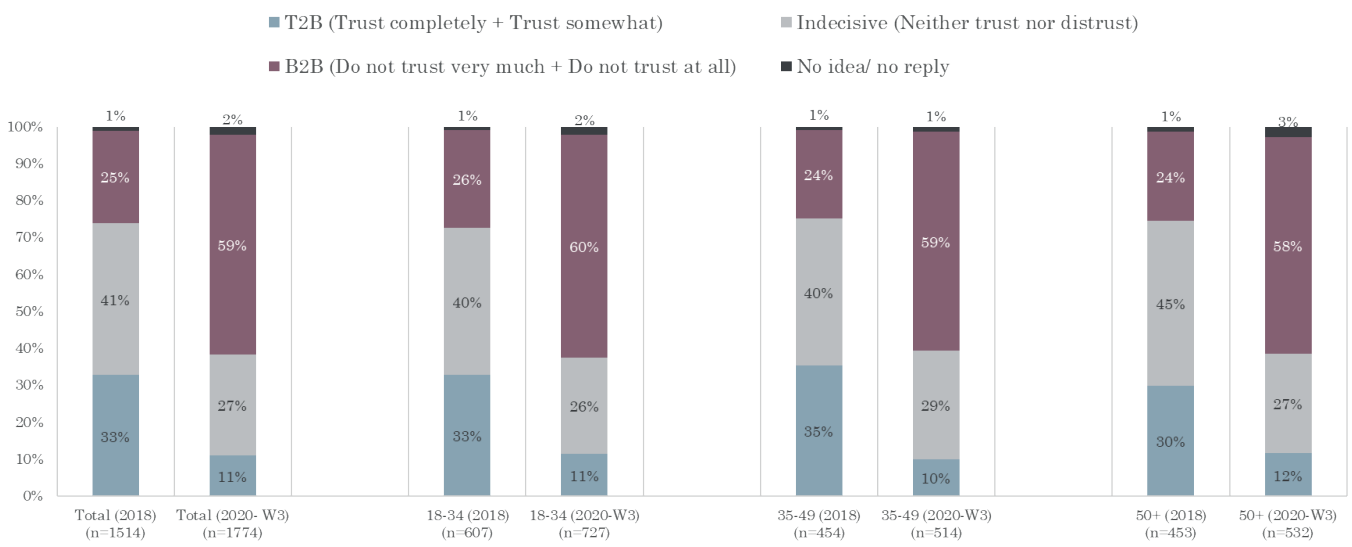


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

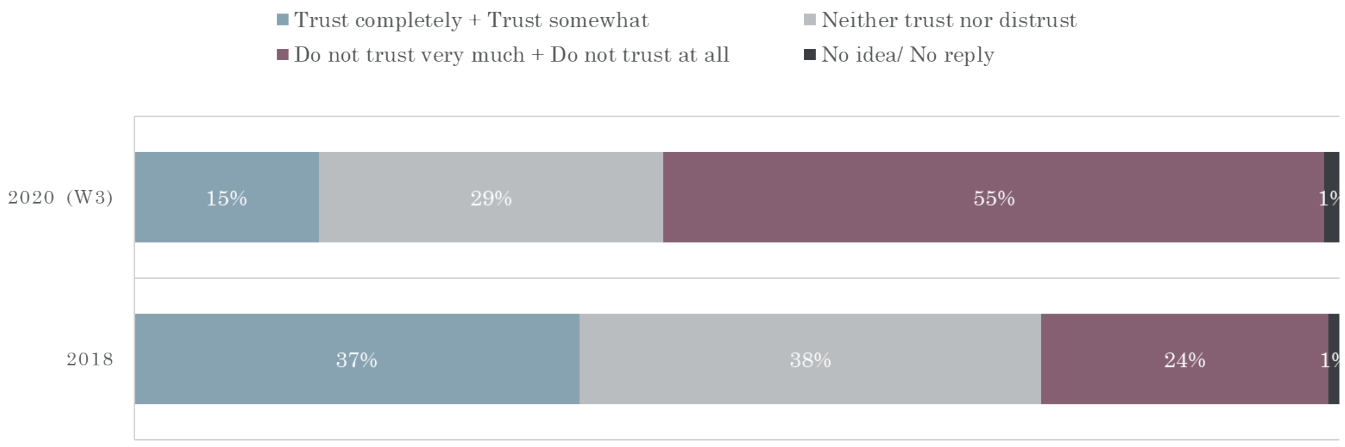
Trust in Press (By Education)



Trust in Press (By Age Group)

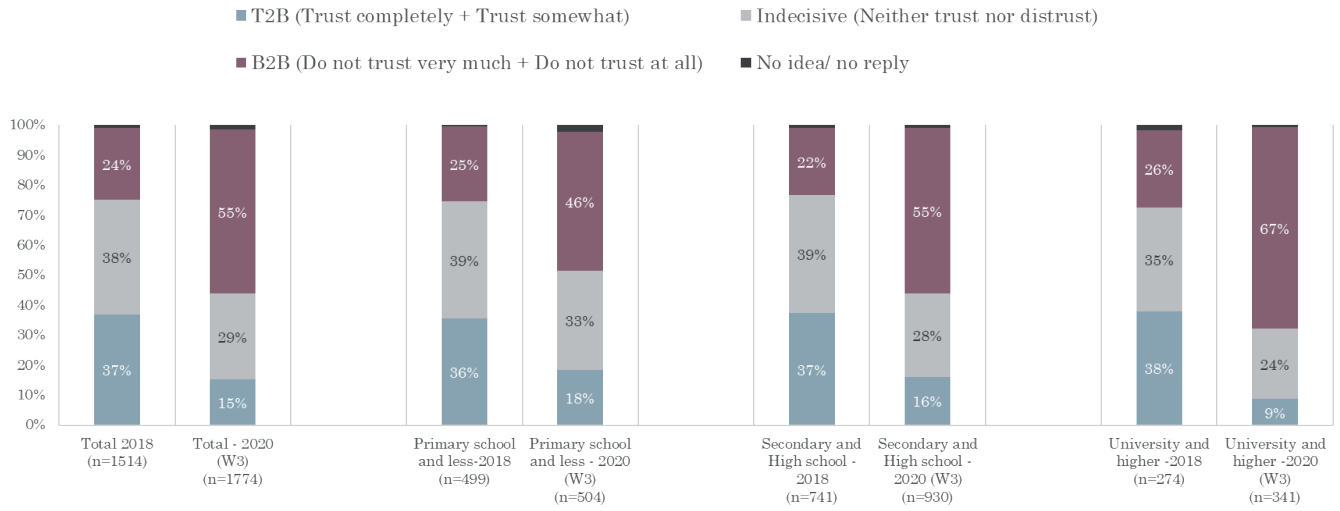


TRUST IN TELEVISIONS (%)

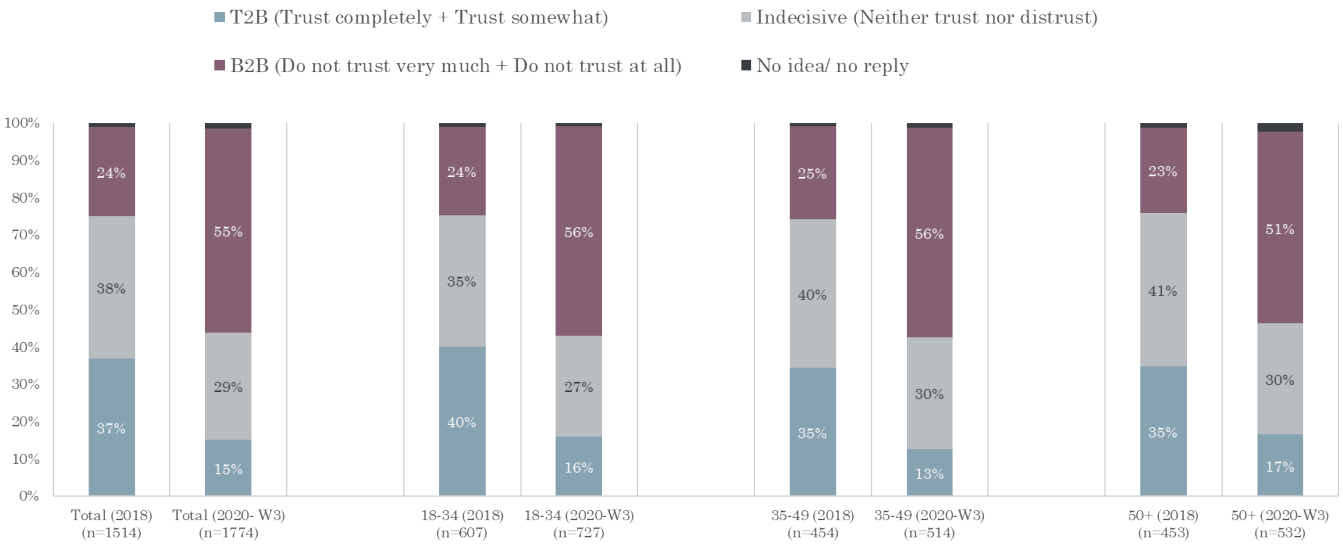


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

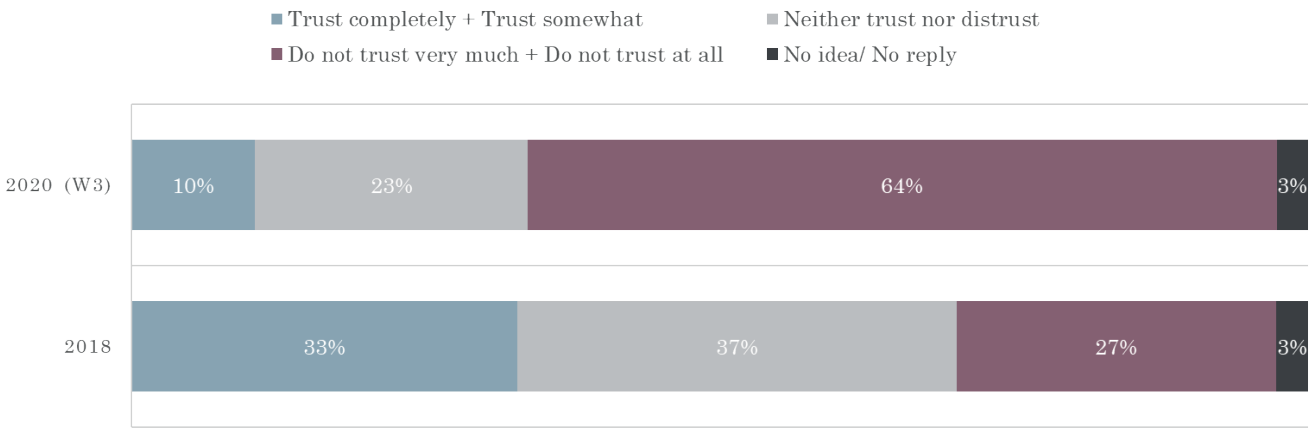
Trust in Televisions (By Education)



Trust in Television (By Age Group)

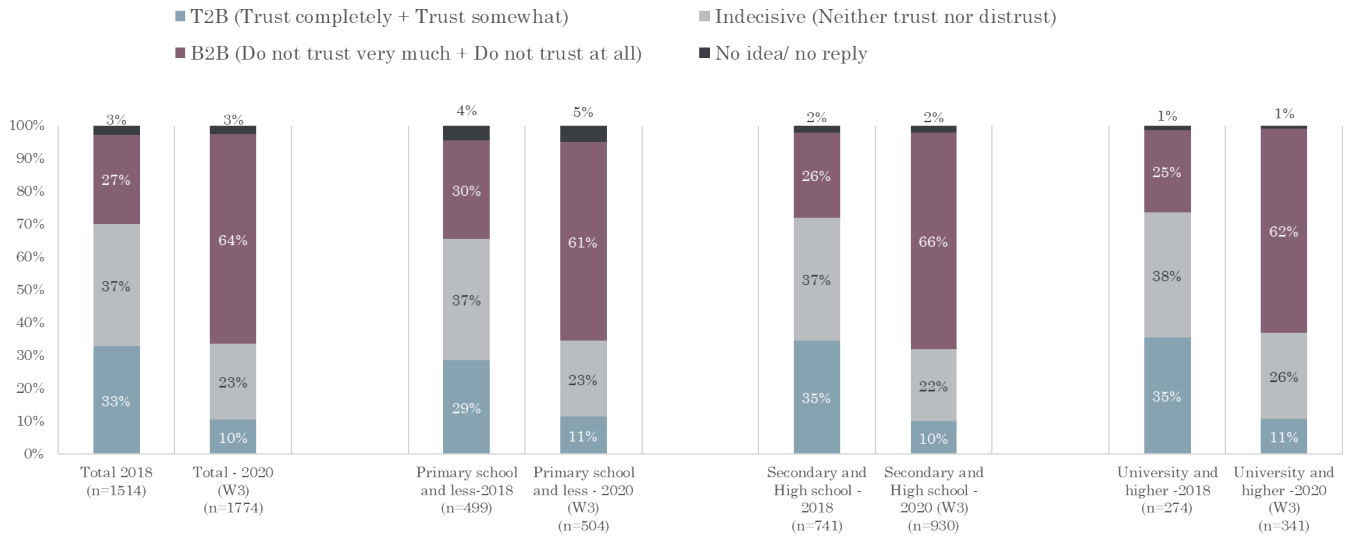


TRUST IN NEWS IN SOCIAL MEDIA (%)

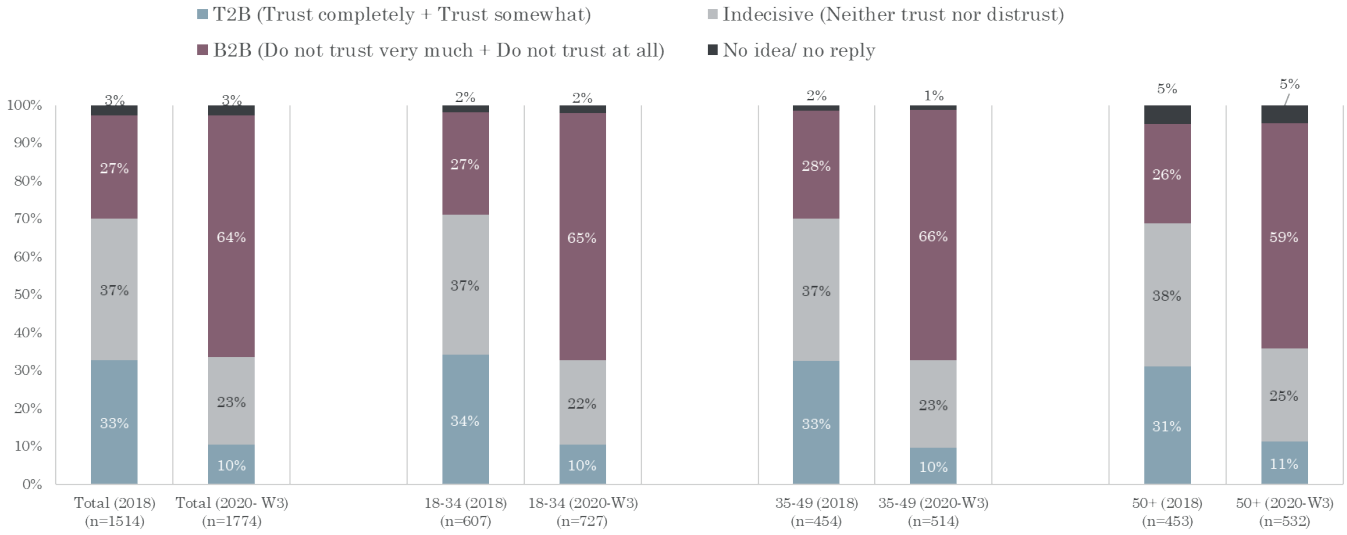


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Trust in News on Social Media (By Education)

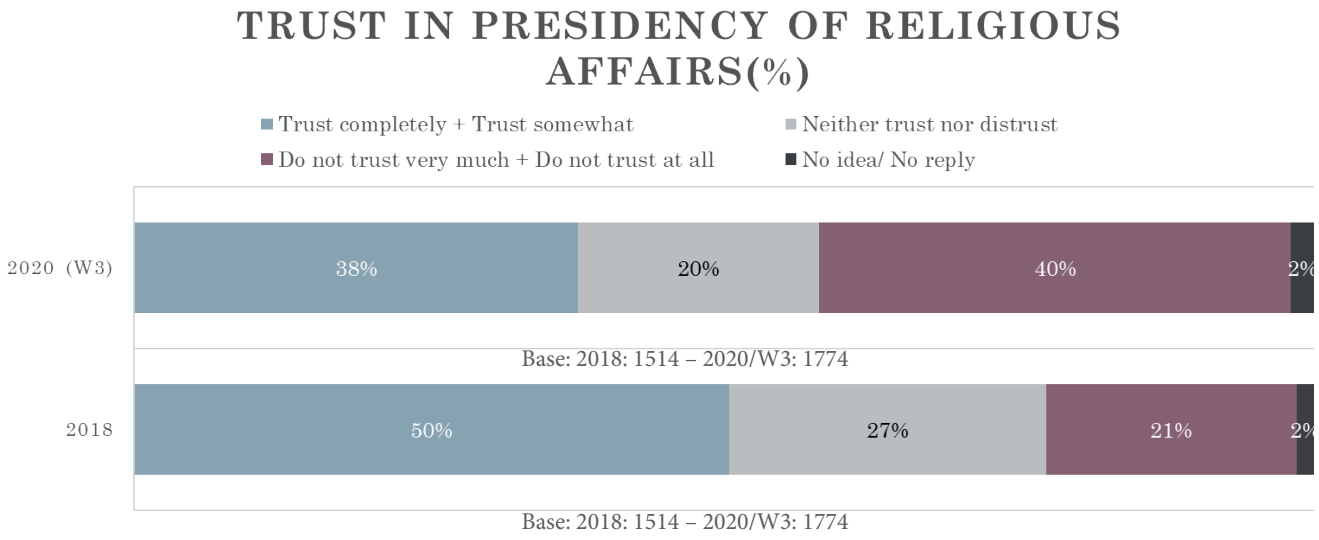


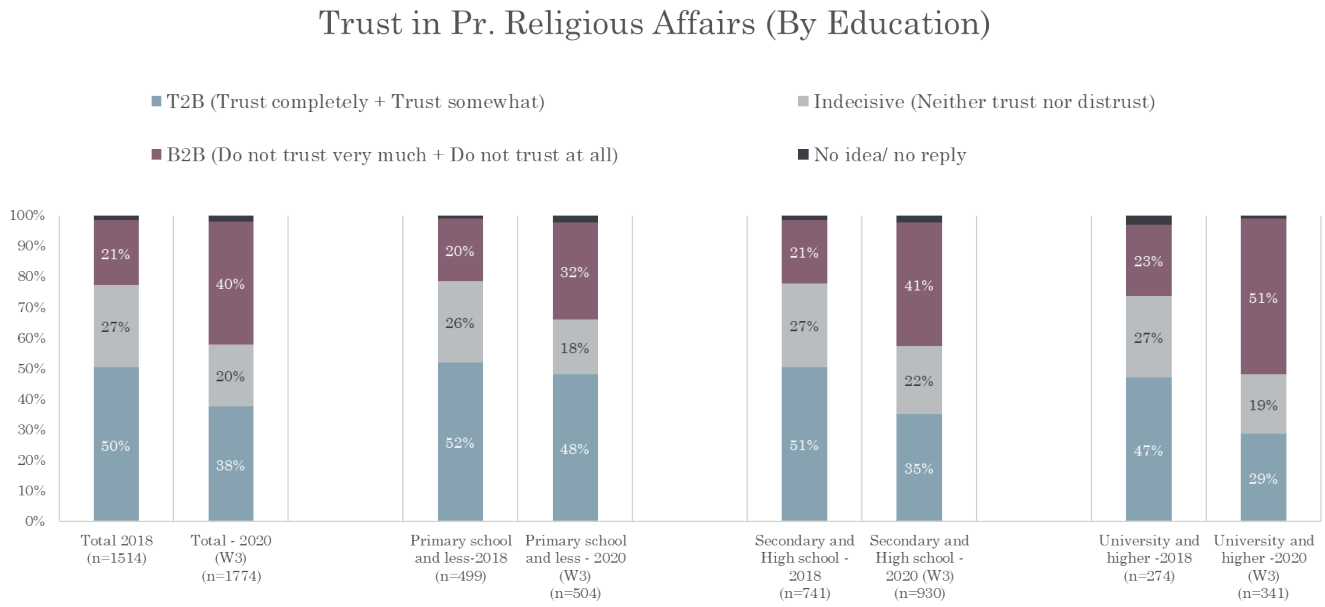
Trust in News on Social Media (By Age Group)

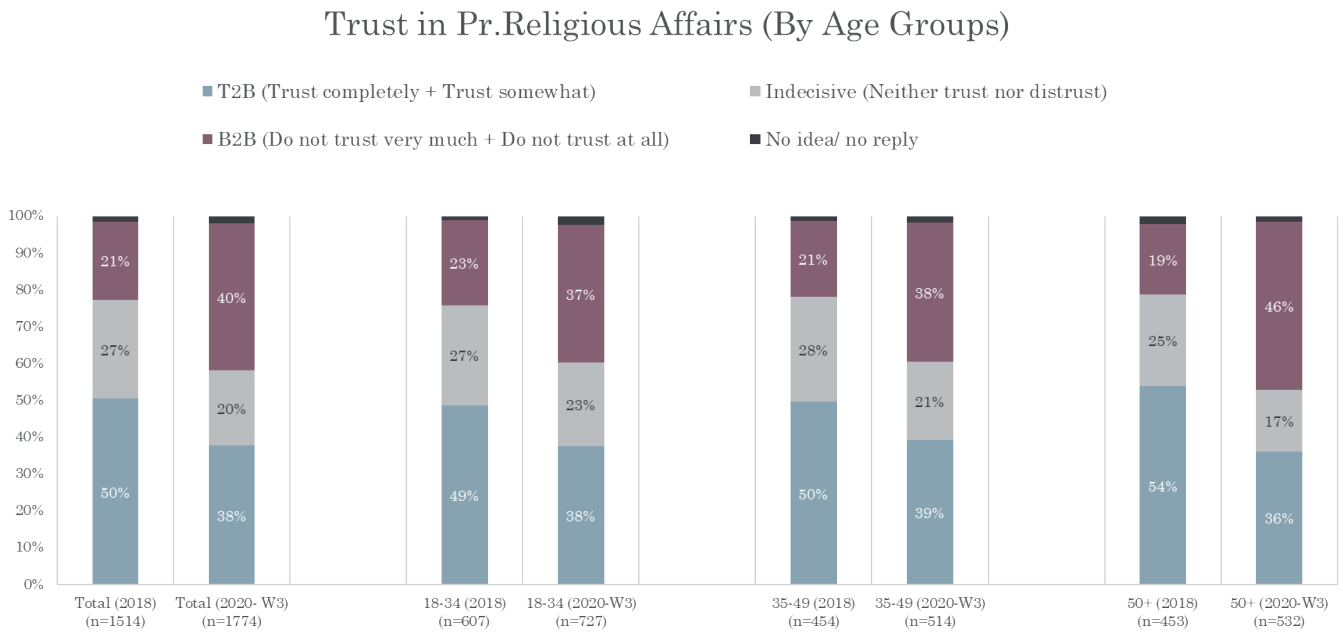


Presidency of Religious Affairs

Trust in the Presidency of Religious Affairs fell significantly in 2020 compared to 2018, while ambivalent group decreased and negative evaluation rose from 19% and to 40%. The last two years of activities of Presidency of Religious Affairs did not seem to build institutional trust, which is one of the key drivers of institutional reputation. Trust fell as education level increased.

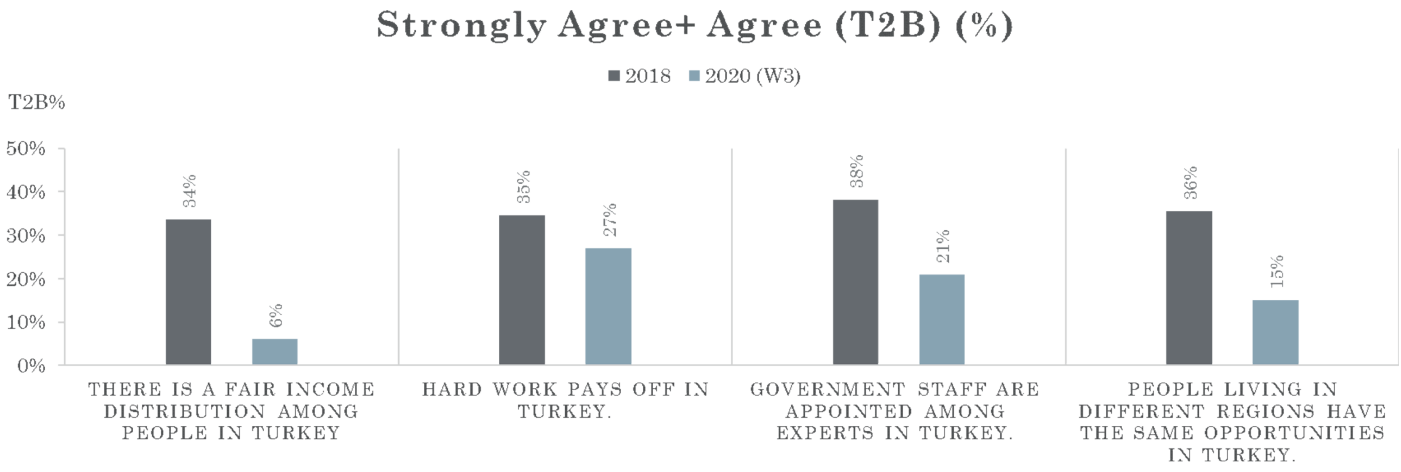






1.3 Perception of Fairness

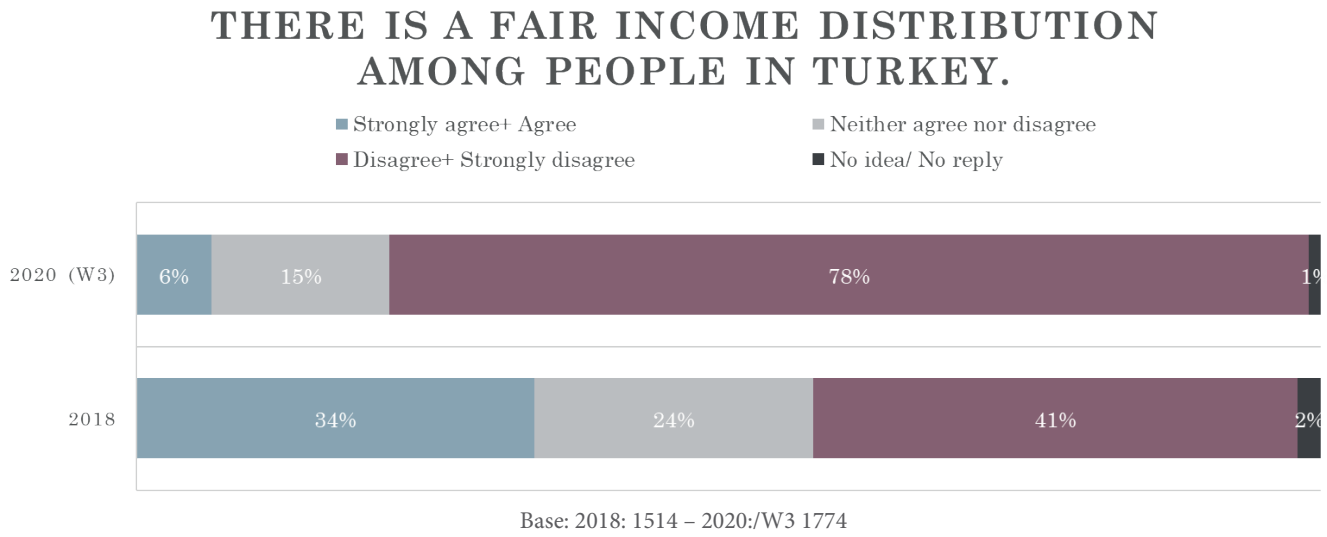
The perception of fairness and social justice fell in Turkish public opinion in 2020 compared to 2018.



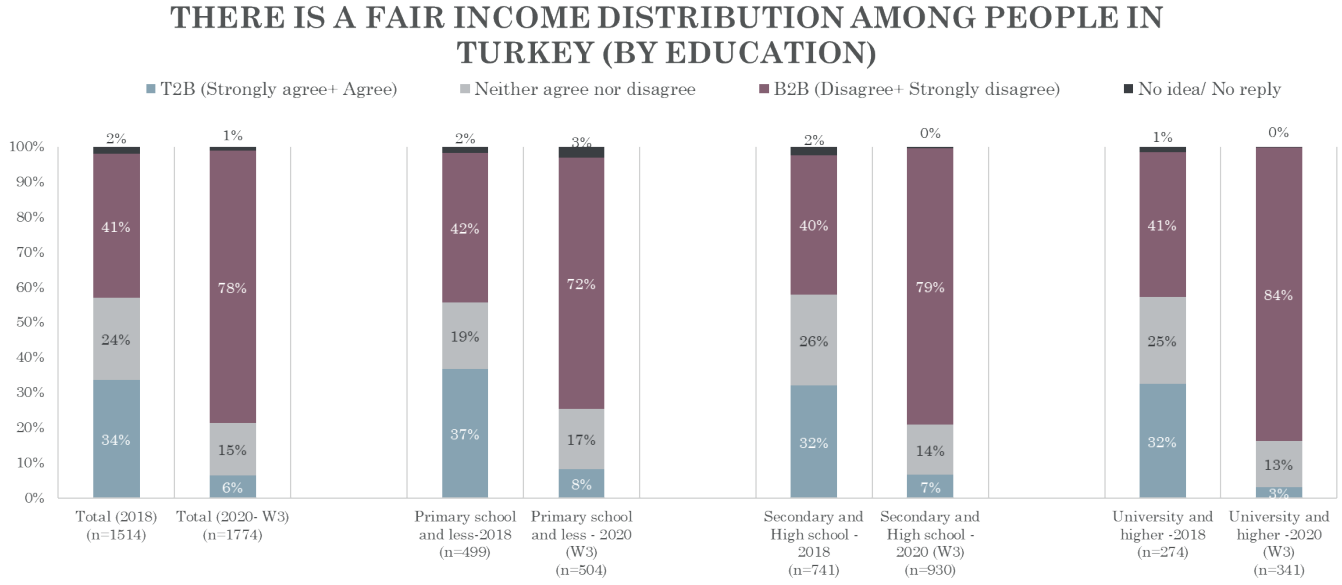
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020: 1774

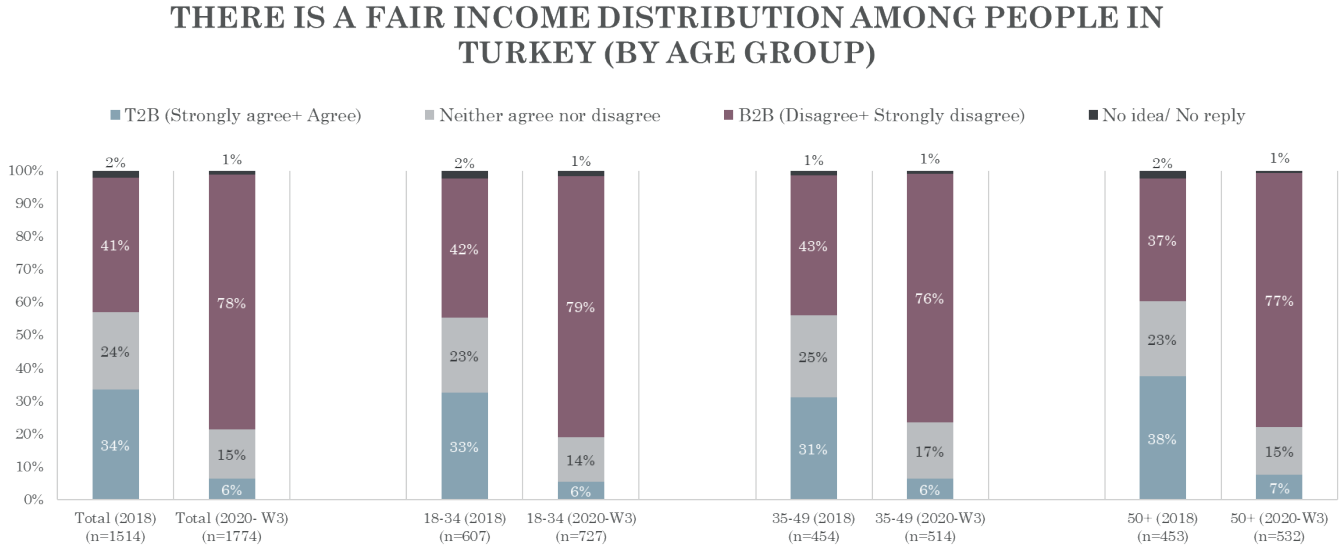
Social Justice / Income Distribution

78% of society had a negative opinion about Turkey's income distribution, while this ratio was 41% in 2018. Those that had a positive opinion fell (statistically significantly) from 34% to 6% between 2018 and 2020. This negative evaluation was the dominant opinion among all age ranges in 2020 at similar levels, and strengthens as education level increases.



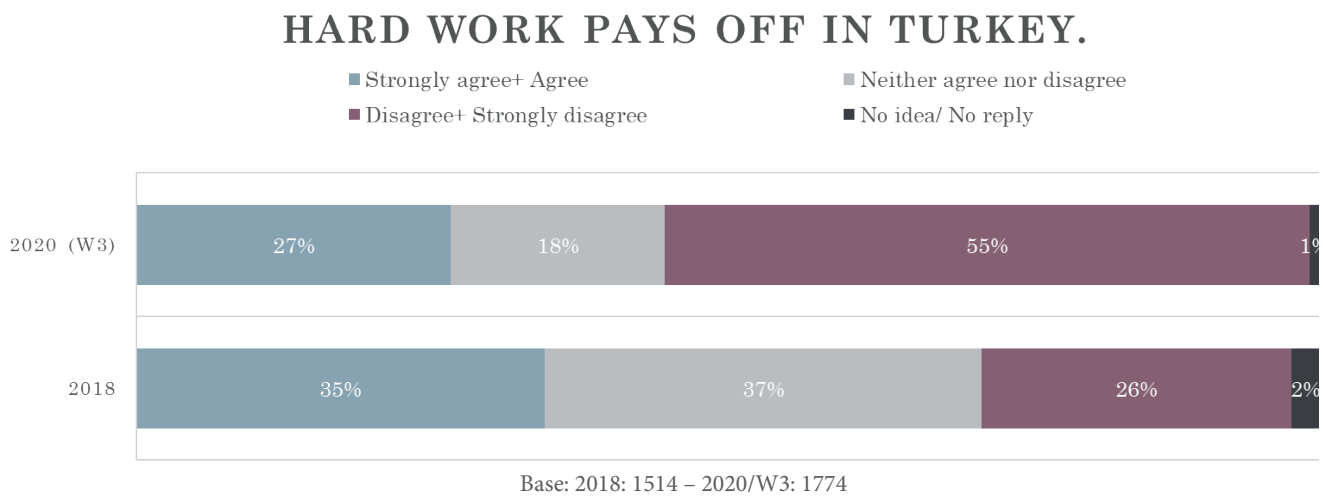
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020:/W3 1774



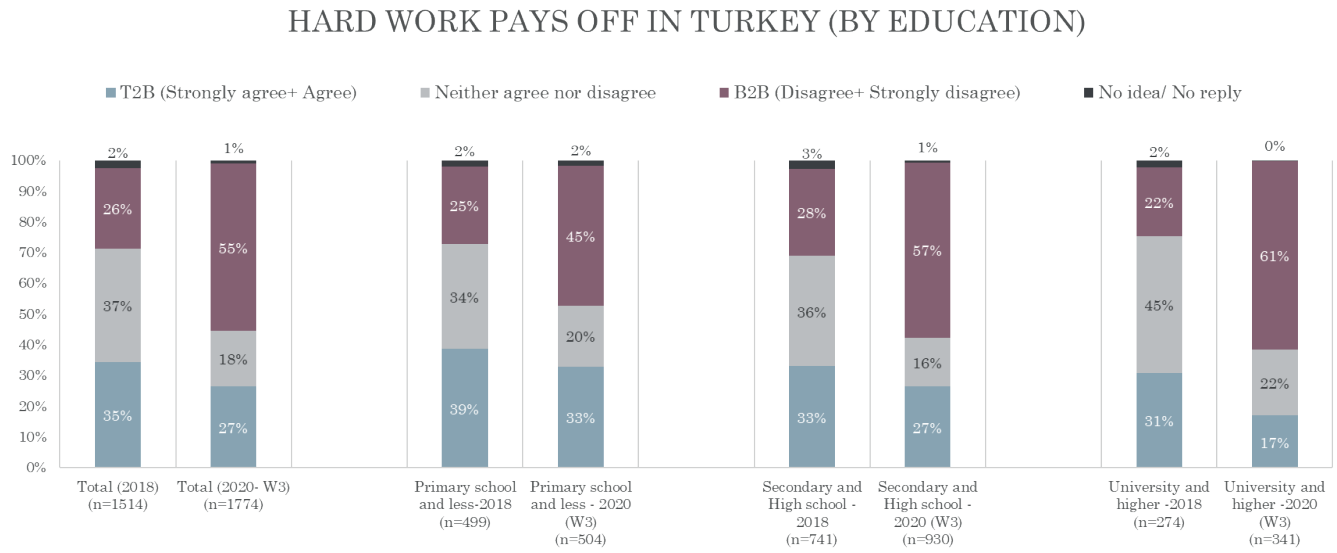


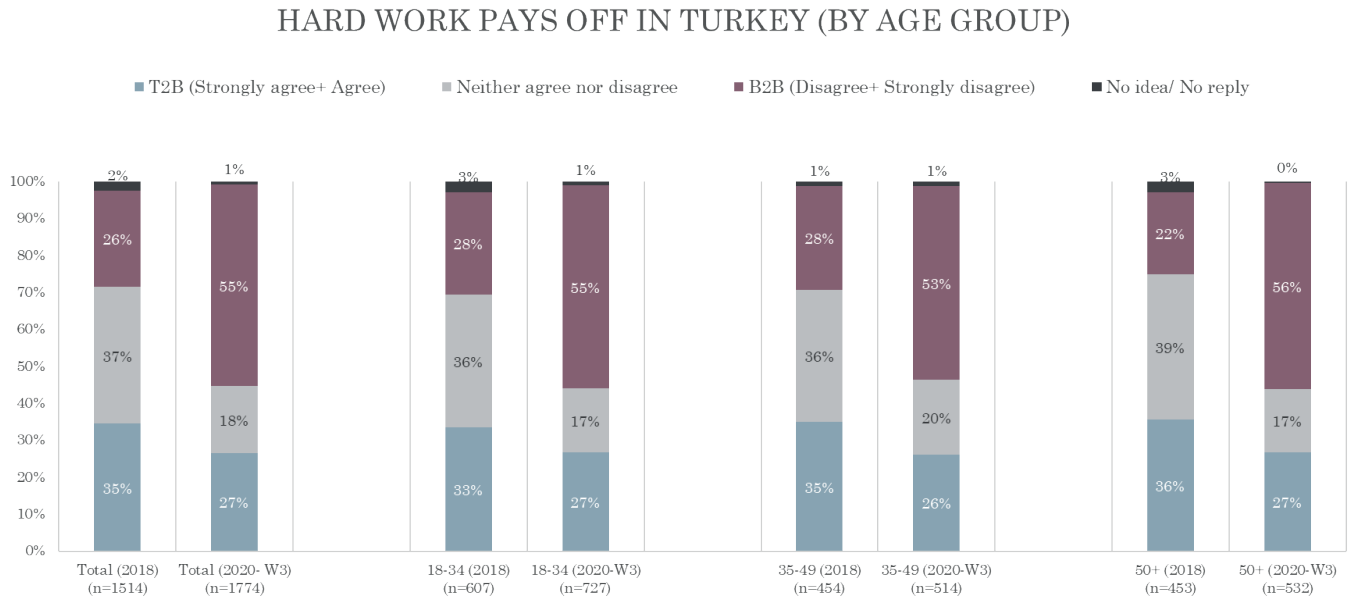
Social Justice / Equal Opportunities

The majority of society (55%) does not believe that if one works hard in Turkey, it pays off, while the number of believers fell (statistically significantly) from 35% to 27%, and ambivalent group reduced from 37% to 18% in 2020. Being paid for hard work, which requires a fair system, is considered one of the key indicators of equal opportunities. As such, this statement indirectly implied the level of positive expectation from work life thereby the motivation. This negative evaluation was the dominant opinion among all age ranges in 2020 at similar levels, and strengthens as education level increases.

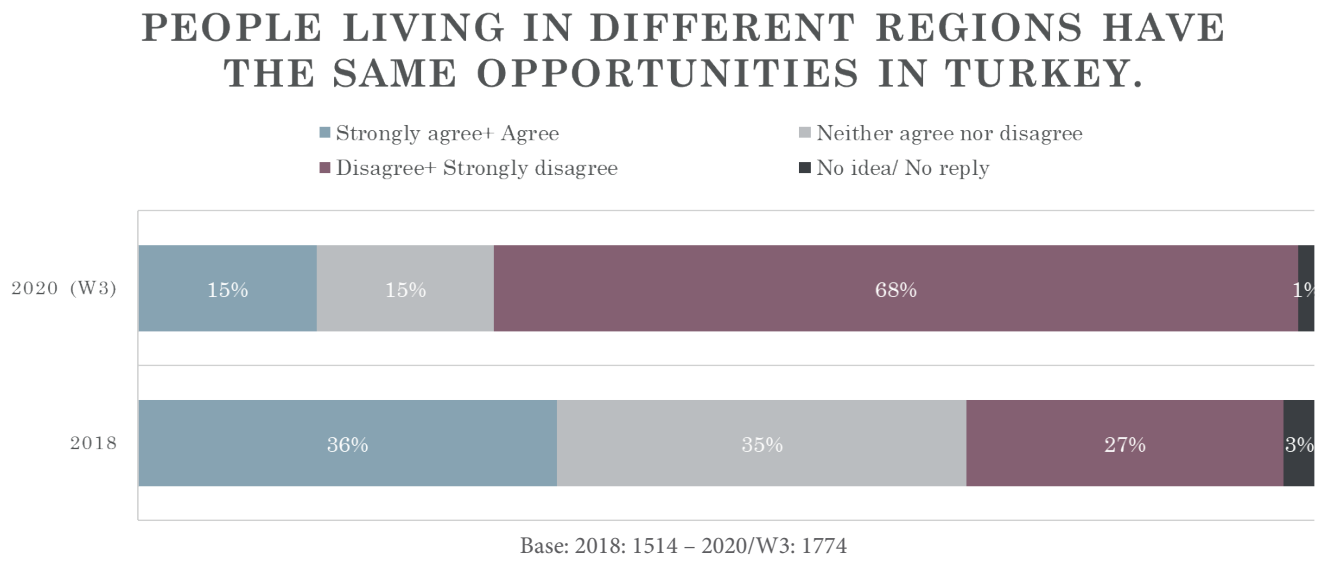


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774



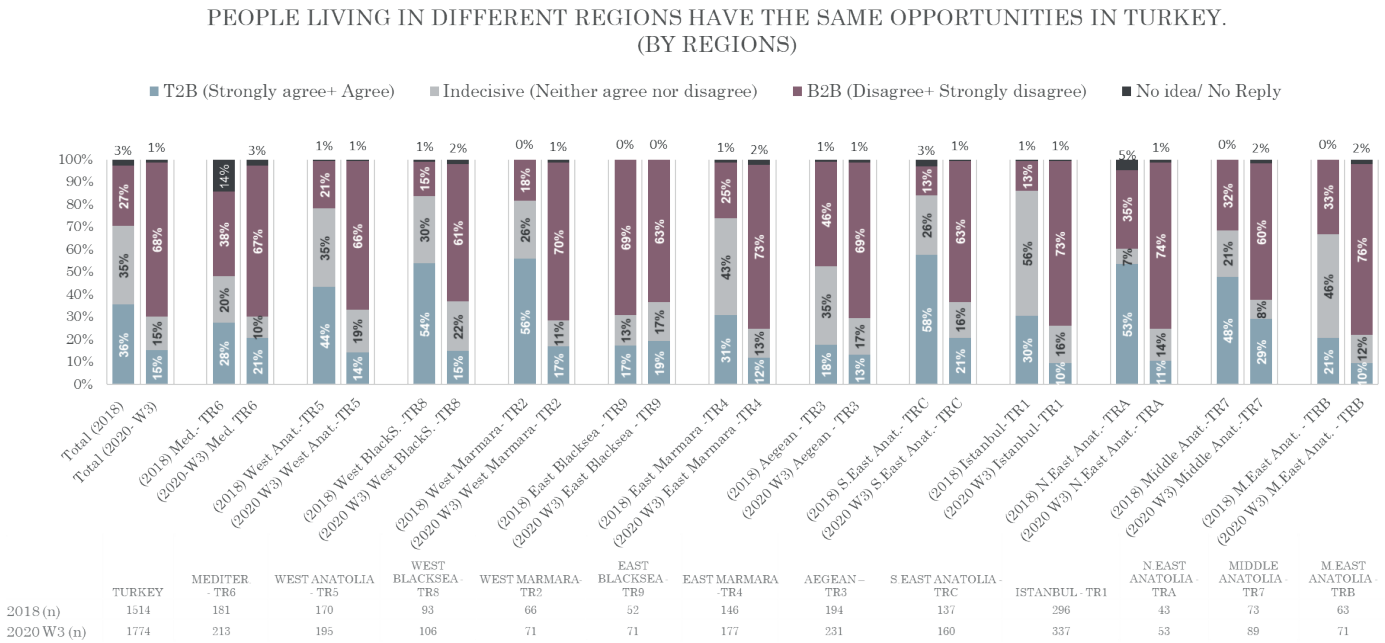


In line with a negative perception of income distribution and on having equal opportunities, the majority of Turkish society had negative opinion on the regional equality of opportunities in Turkey. The negative opinion had a sharp (and statistically significant) increase in 2020 to 68%, while this ratio was only 27% in 2018.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

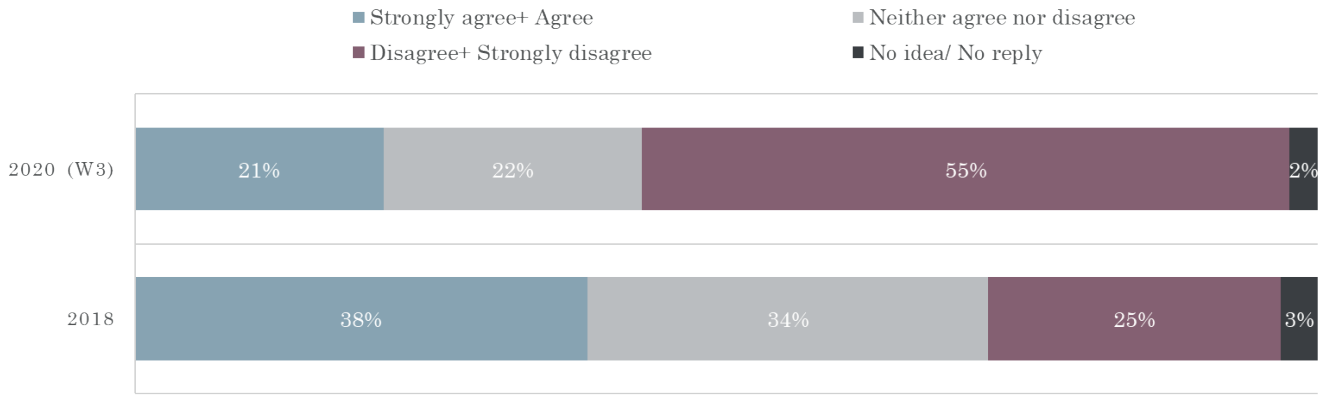
Interestingly, this evaluation was shared among all 12 regions of Turkey and was a dominant opinion in each of them. The West Black Sea (Zonguldak, Kastamonu, Samsun), West Marmara (Tekirdağ, Balıkesir), Southeast Anatolia (Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Mardin) and Northeast Anatolia (Erzurum, Agri) were the regions that changed their majority opinion from positive to negative between 2018 and 2020. Large ambivalent groups turned into negative perception in Istanbul, East Marmara (Bursa, Kocaeli) and Middle East Anatolia (Malatya, Van) from 2018 to 2020.



Social Justice/ Competence Principle

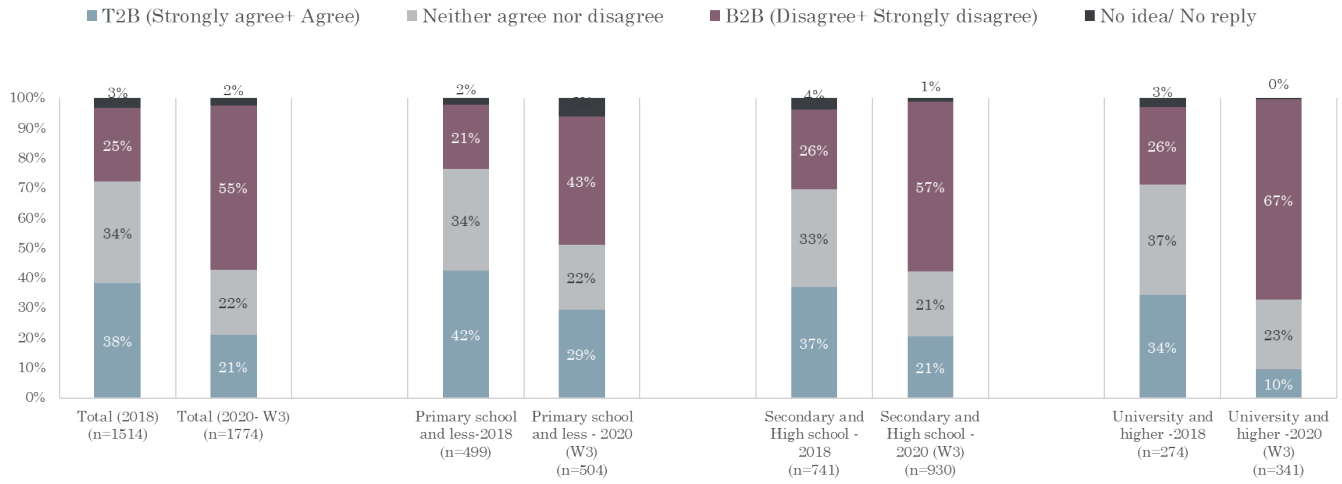
A positive evaluation on the competence of appointed government staff eroded in 2020 compared to 2018. This was an area where public opinion was not clear in 2018, which is clarified in negative way as of 2020. The majority (55%) of the society now does not believe that government staff is appointed according to competence, while positive evaluation fell from 38% to 21%, and ambivalent groups falls from 34% to 22%. (All changes are statistically significant.)

GOVERNMENT STAFF ARE APPOINTED AMONG EXPERTS IN TURKEY.

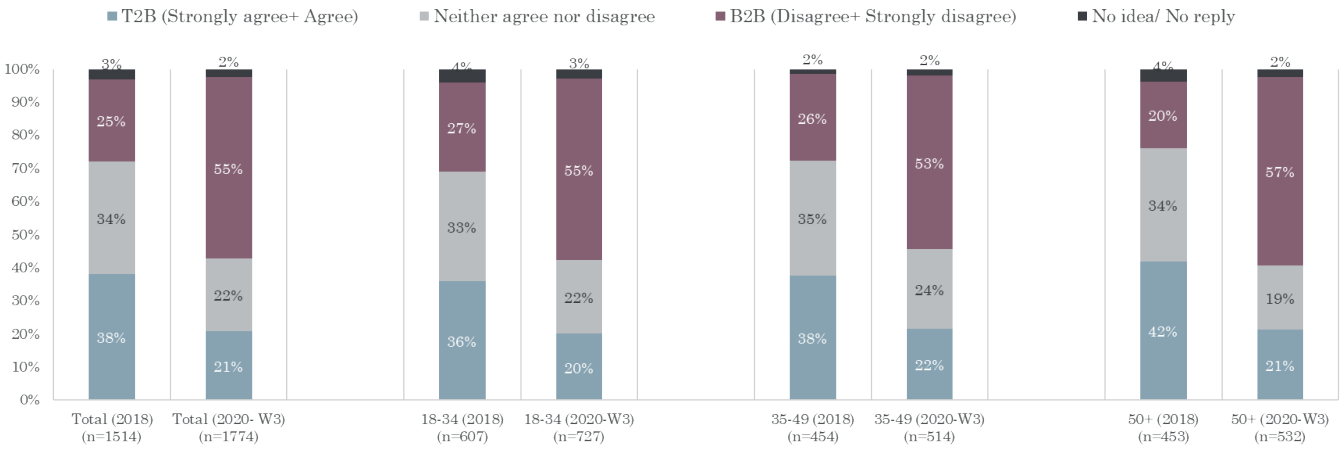


The number of those with a negative opinion on competence evaluation strengthened as education level increased. 57% of secondary level and 67% of university and higher level educated people declared negative judgement on issue. This negative perception did not change significantly among age groups. Additionally, a negative judgement was dominant opinion in each age range.

GOVERNMENT STAFF ARE APPOINTED AMONG EXPERTS IN TURKEY. (BY EDUCATION)



GOVERNMENT STAFF ARE APPOINTED AMONG EXPERTS IN TURKEY. (BY AGE GROUP)

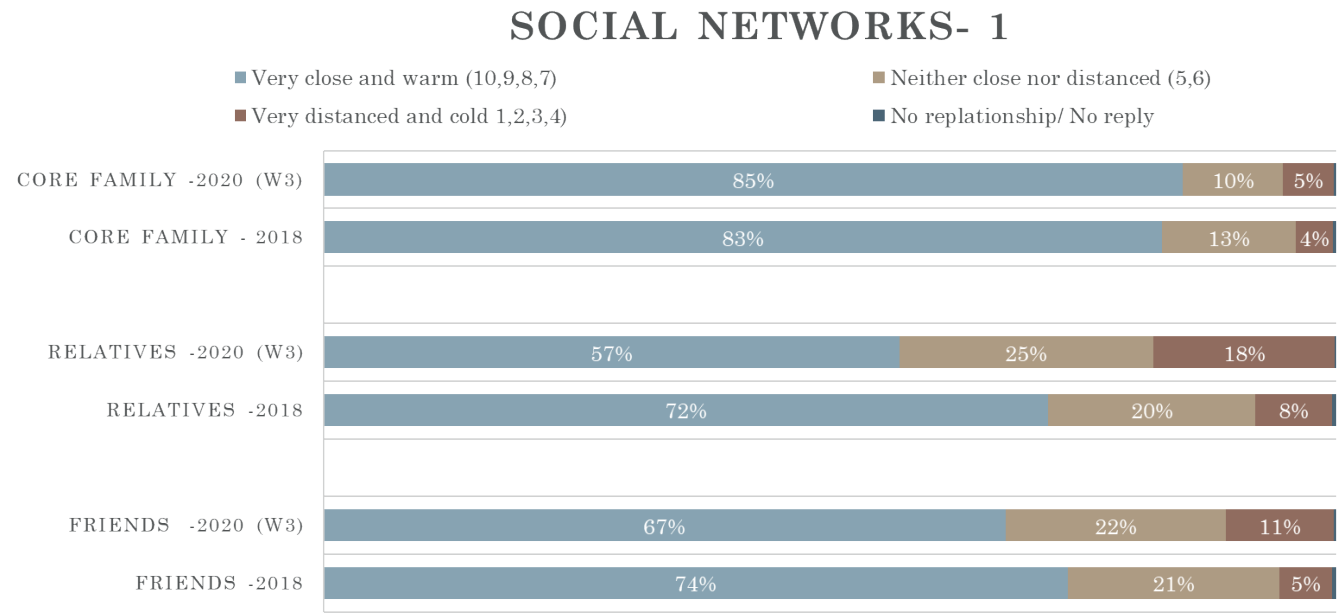


Social Relationships

The 2018 study found the following about the social relations landscape in Turkey: there were close and warm relationships within close circle of core family, relatives, and friends; and relatively lower level of social attendance to thematic groups such as hobby groups, religious groups, and volunteer groups.

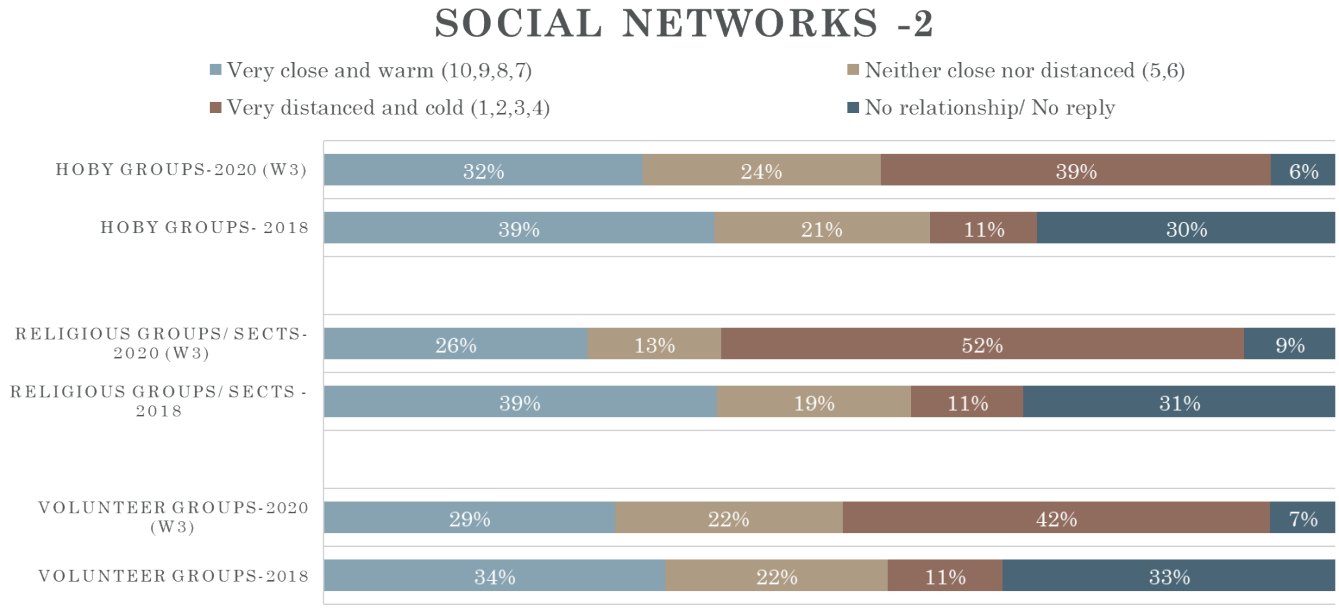
2.1 Social Networks

The pandemic seems to had affected first-circle relationships, although it does not change the main characteristics of social networks. Core family kept its importance, while closeness and warmness of relatives and friends significantly regressed in 2020.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Second-circle relationships including hobby groups and volunteer groups were affected negatively by pandemic due to a certain level of disconnection. When it comes to religious groups, considering further findings of survey, the pandemic seems to be not the only reason of regression in relationship with religious groups. There is a tendency observed in overall results pointing out distancing towards religious groups in society.

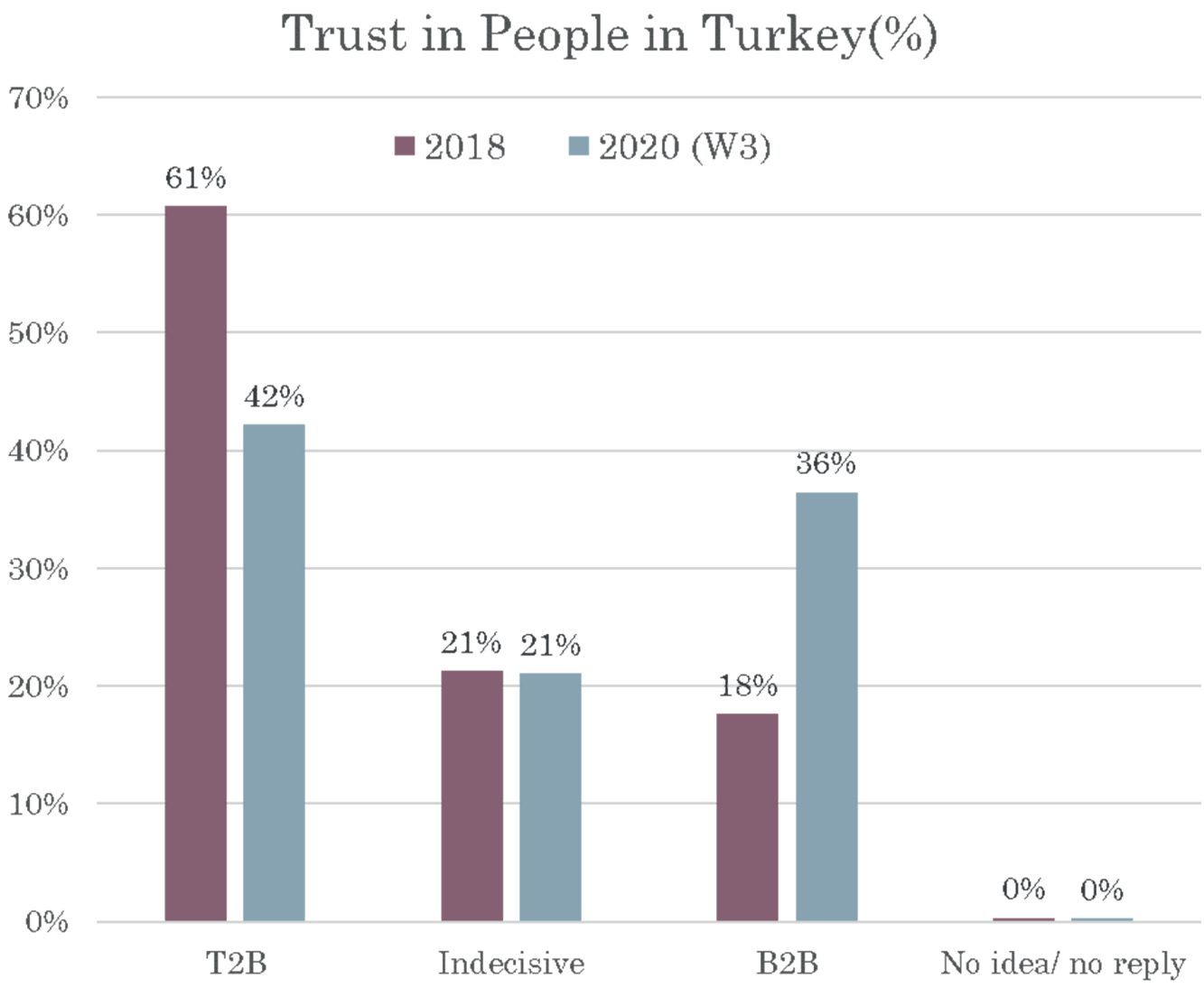


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

2.2 Trust in People

Trust towards people living in Turkey decreased significantly, and the distrusting population doubled in 2020 compared to 2018 to 36%. These changes were statistically significant. These findings underline the loss of trust in society at an individual level in 2020 compared to 2018.

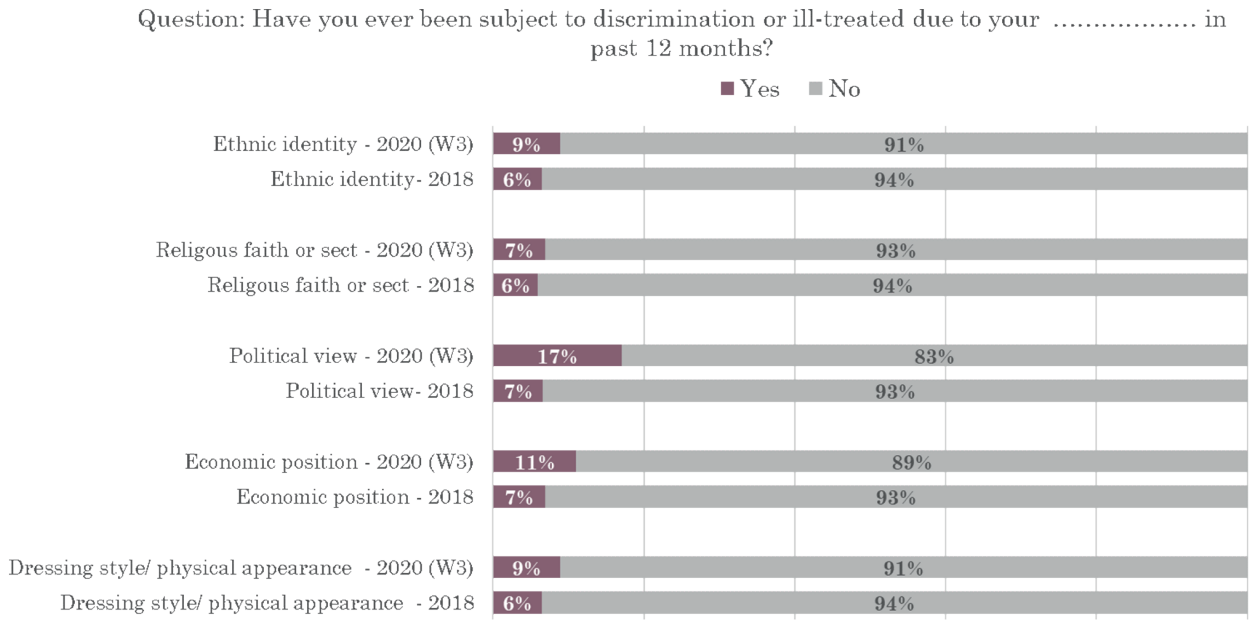
Question: Considering people in Turkey, how would you rate your trust towards them?



T2B: Trust completely+ Somewhat trust
Indecisive. Indecisive
B2B: Do not trust very much+ Do not trust at all

2.3. Acceptance of Diversity

Discrimination and ill-treatment have not been common phenomenon in Turkey. The large majority of society did not have such experiences in both 2018 and 2020. However, the number of people who faced discrimination or ill-treatment increased statistically significantly in 2020 among all questioned area except for religious faith, which remained pretty much in same level. In this area, the difference was statistically insignificant when compared to 2018. The discrimination ratio increased the most in due to political view and reached 17%.

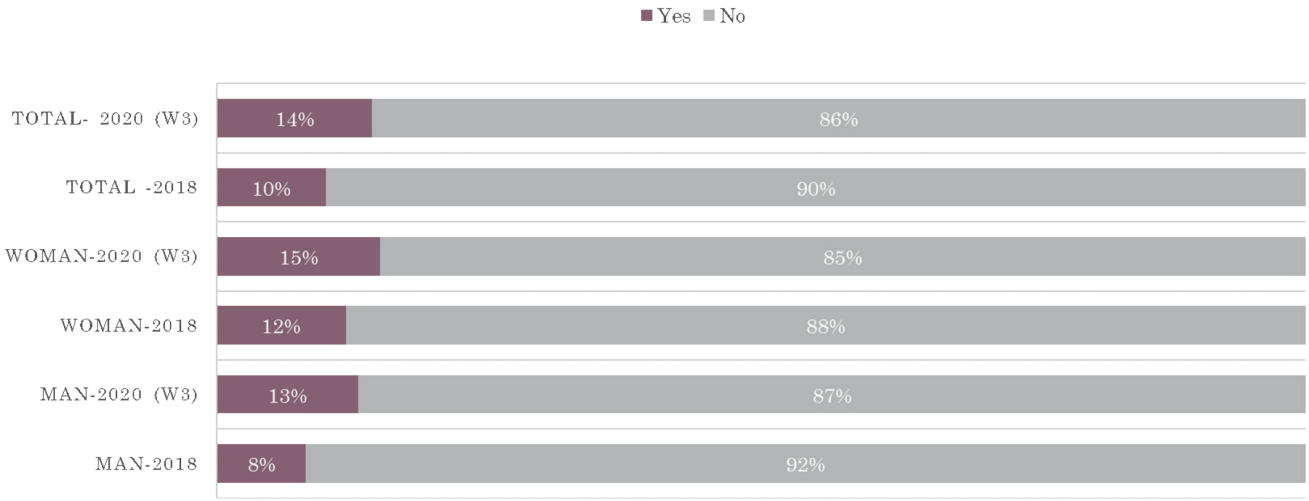


Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Physical and verbal violence experiences in public seems to be rare in daily life in Turkey. However, such experiences increased statistically significantly in 2020 compared to 2018, both among men and women. This indicates raising tension and aggression is spreading to public area. Social tension is reflected more on women than men, highlighting that more women have been subject to violence than men.

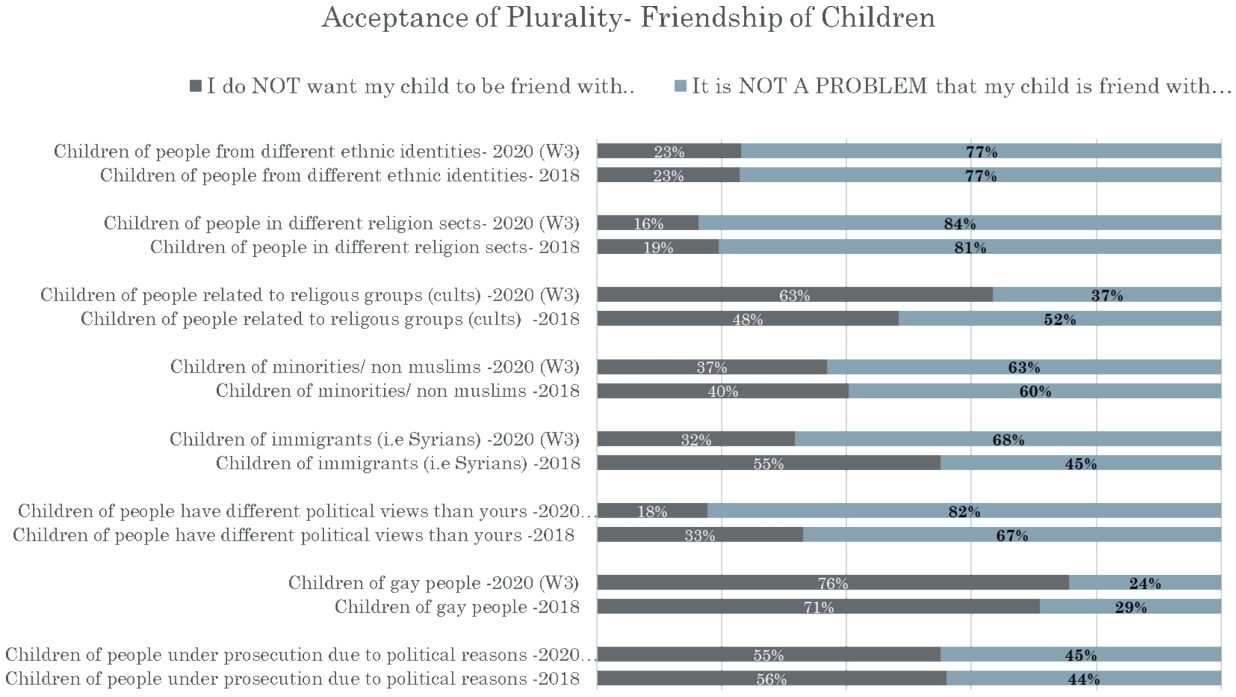
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

BEING SUBJECT TO VERBAL OR PHYSICAL VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC (BY GENDER)



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

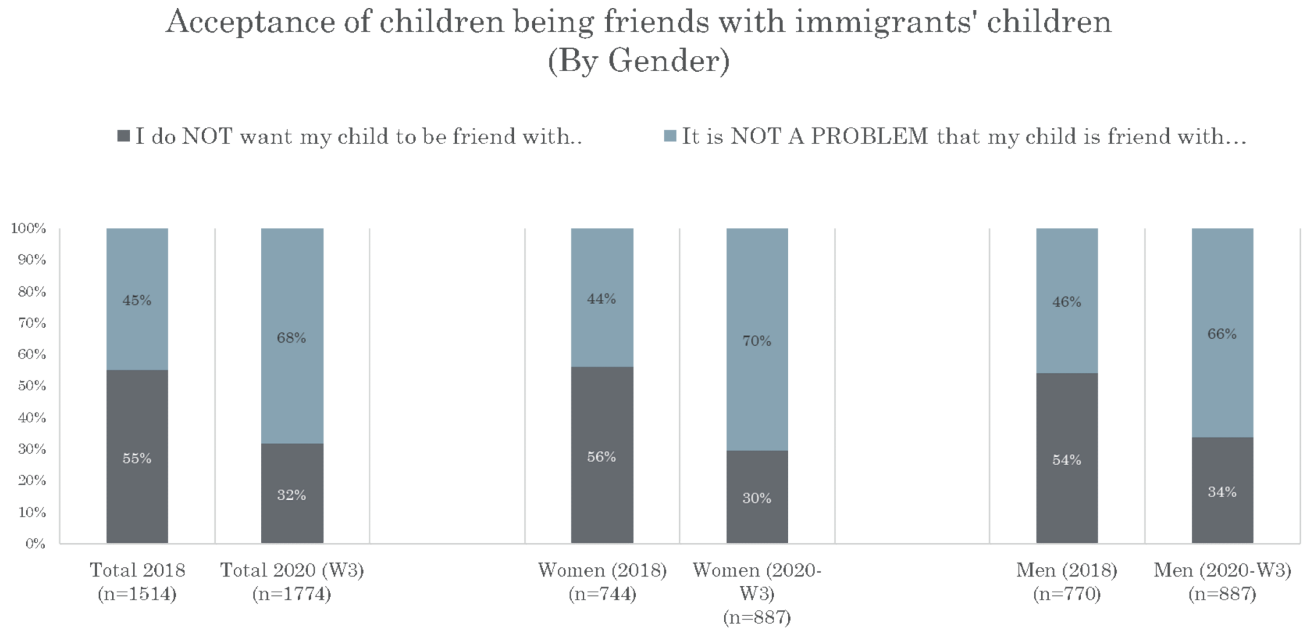
Another dominant characteristic of Turkish society is the general tendency to accept plurality. Being one of the widely accepted indicators of accepting diversity, approving children's friendship among different social groups is widely accepted in many areas by society. This tendency increased significantly in most of the areas (i.e. among religious sects, minorities, immigrants, people with different political views) in 2020 compared to 2018, except for religious groups and gay people, where tolerance decreased significantly. The majority of society is now not willing their children to be friends with children of people those are related to religious groups. The gay community has been the one of the notably distanced groups by majority of society both in 2018 and 2020. Another distanced group is people under prosecution due to political reasons, where the distance remains the same in 2020.

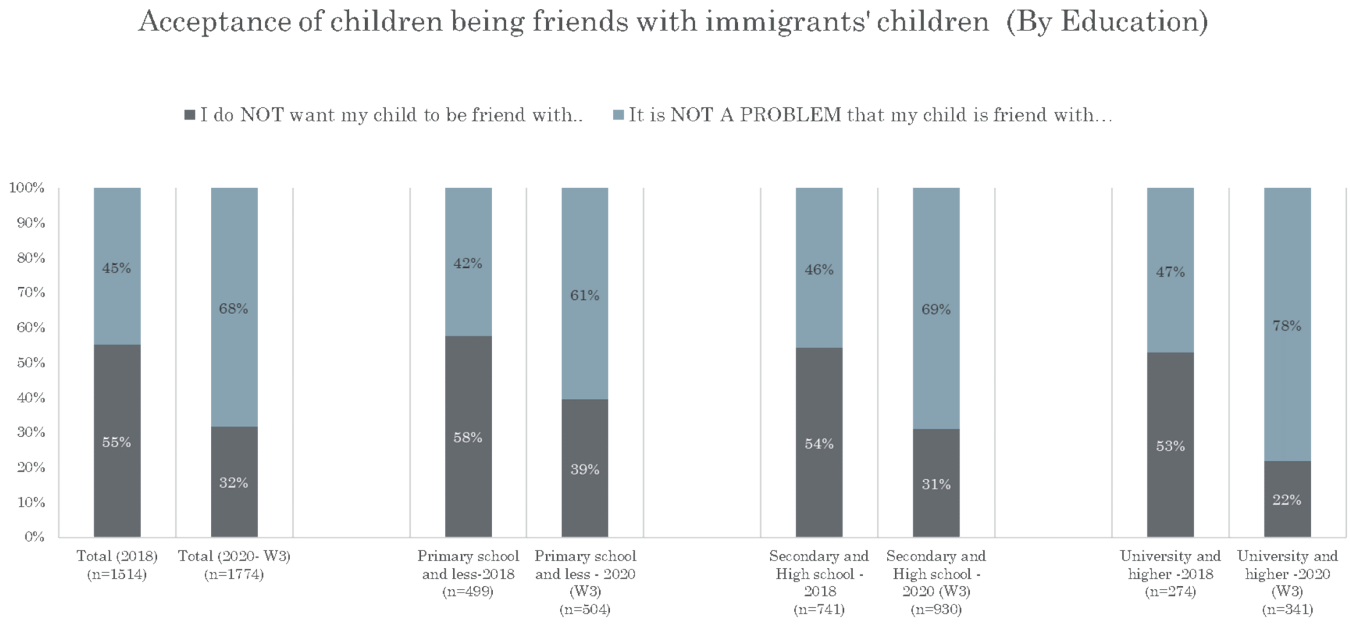


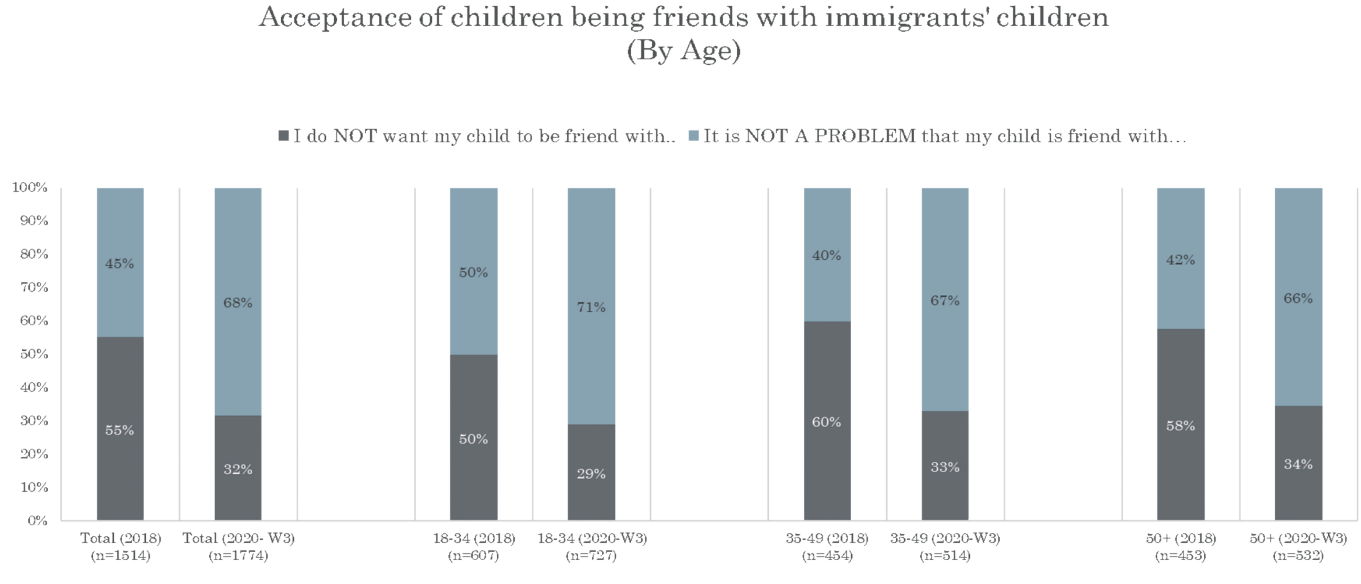
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Immigrants

Tolerance of immigrants – followed by the indicator of acceptance of children being friends – increased in 2020 compared to 2018. Such tolerance increased both among women and men, but more so in women. The higher the education, the higher the tolerance and similarly, the younger are the people, the higher the tolerance.



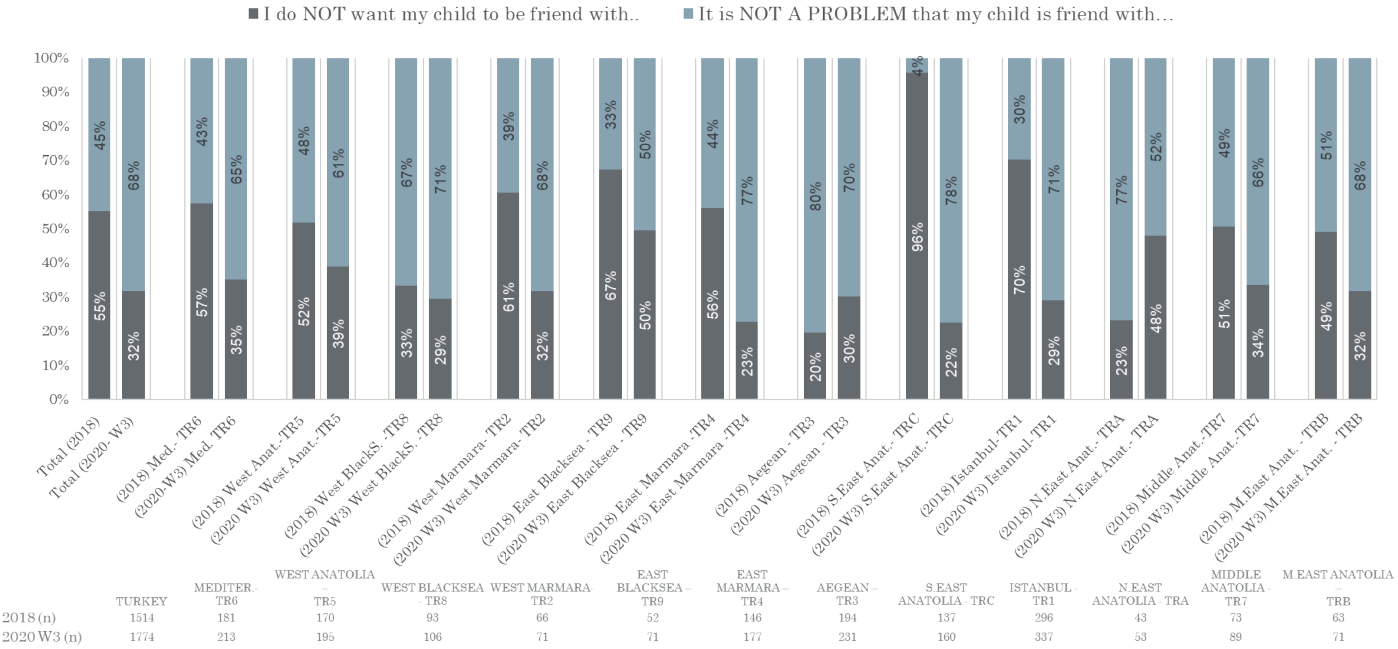




Regional results point out different levels of tolerance across the country. As a general trend, tolerance increased among all regions other than Aegean (Izmir, Aydin, Manisa) and Northeast Anatolia (Erzurum, Ağrı) where it has dropped (statistically) significantly. Shifting from strong negative opinion to dominant positive opinion in Southeast Anatolia (Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Mardin) and Istanbul, where the immigrant population concentrated are remarkable and indicating adaption affords of national and international civil society and government institutions paid off.

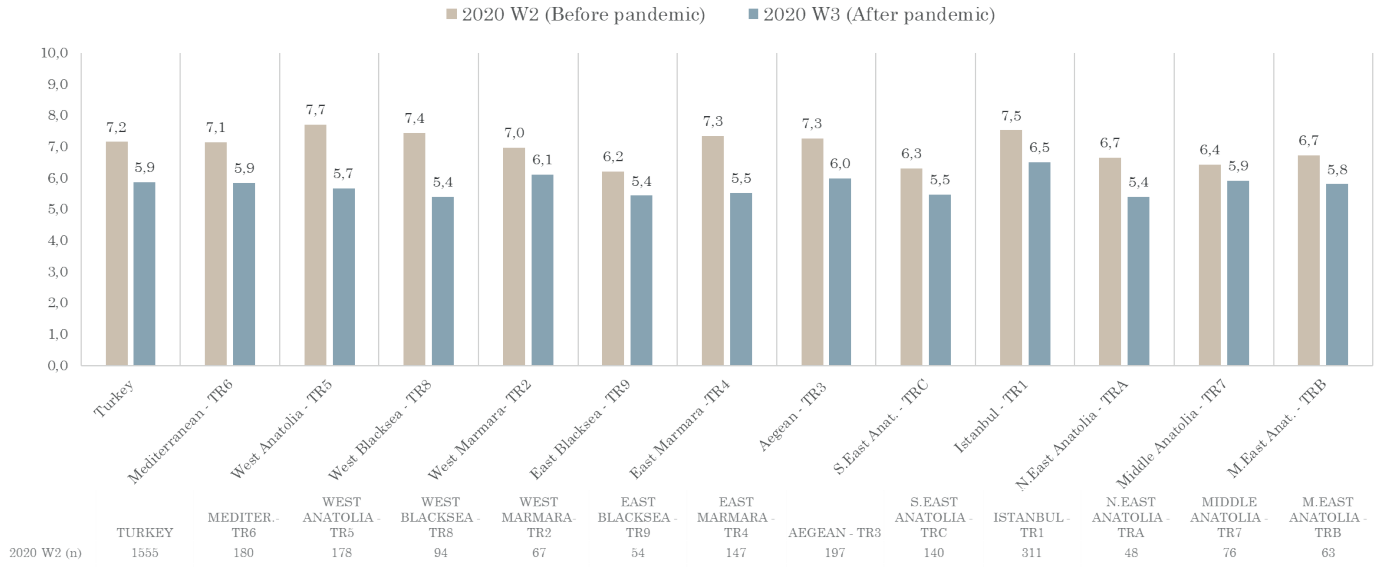
The Human Development Monitor is following polarization issue regularly. Comparing the evaluations before and after pandemic in 2020, the results highlighted the effect of pandemic is minimizing the tension between Turkish and Syrians.

Acceptance of children being friends with immigrants' children (By Region)



	TURKEY	MEDITER.- TR6	WEST ANATOLIA - TR5	WEST BLACKSEA - TR8	WEST MARMARA - TR2	EAST BLACKSEA - TR9	EAST MARMARA - TR4	AEGEAN - TR3	S.EAST ANATOLIA - TRC	ISTANBUL - TR1	N.EAST ANATOLIA - TRA	MIDDLE ANATOLIA - TR7	M.EAST ANATOLIA - TRB
2018 (n)	1514	181	170	93	66	52	146	194	137	296	43	73	63
2020 W3 (n)	1774	213	195	106	71	71	177	231	160	337	53	89	71

Perceived Tension Between Turkish and Syrians (Average) (By Regions)



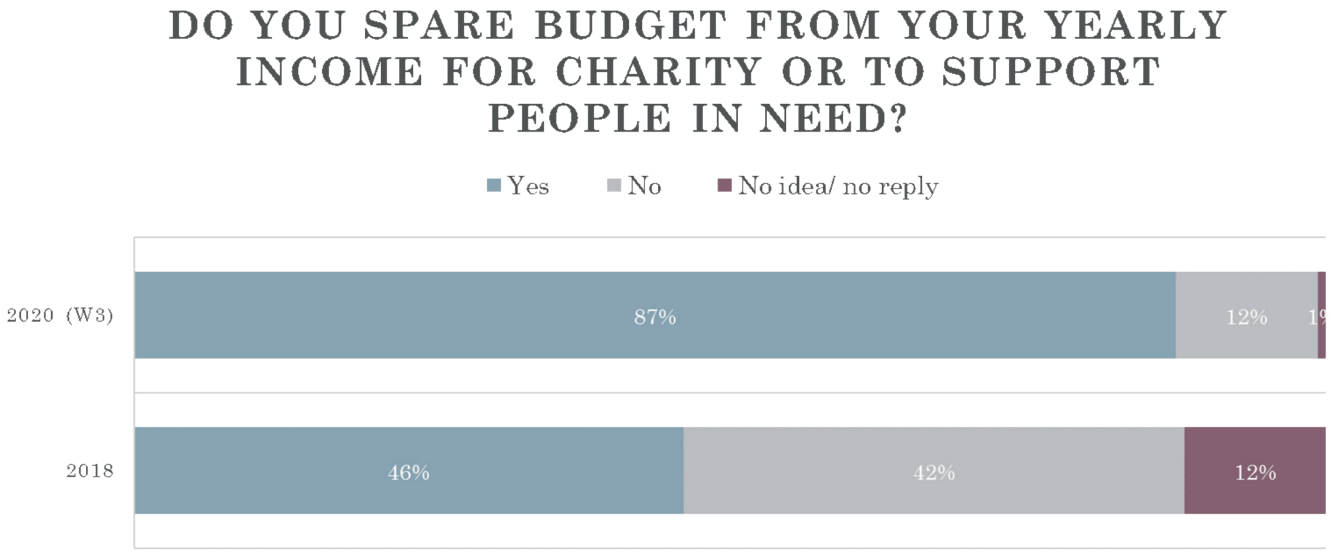
	TURKEY	MEDITER.- TR6	WEST ANATOLIA - TR5	WEST BLACKSEA - TR8	WEST MARMARA - TR2	EAST BLACKSEA - TR9	EAST MARMARA - TR4	AEGEAN - TR3	S.EAST ANATOLIA - TRC	ISTANBUL - TR1	N.EAST ANATOLIA - TRA	MIDDLE ANATOLIA - TR7	M.EAST ANATOLIA - TRB
2020 W2 (n)	1555	180	178	94	67	54	147	197	140	311	48	76	63
2020 W3 (n)	1774	213	195	106	71	71	177	231	160	337	53	89	71

Focus on the Common Good

The focus on the common good was one of the weakest dimensions of social cohesion in Turkey in 2018, in terms of accepting "civilized contract" for coexistence in areas such as following the rules and mutual respect. Solidarity showed itself as relatively common characteristics in previous survey. In 2020 solidarity increased, while the lack of social respect accelerated.

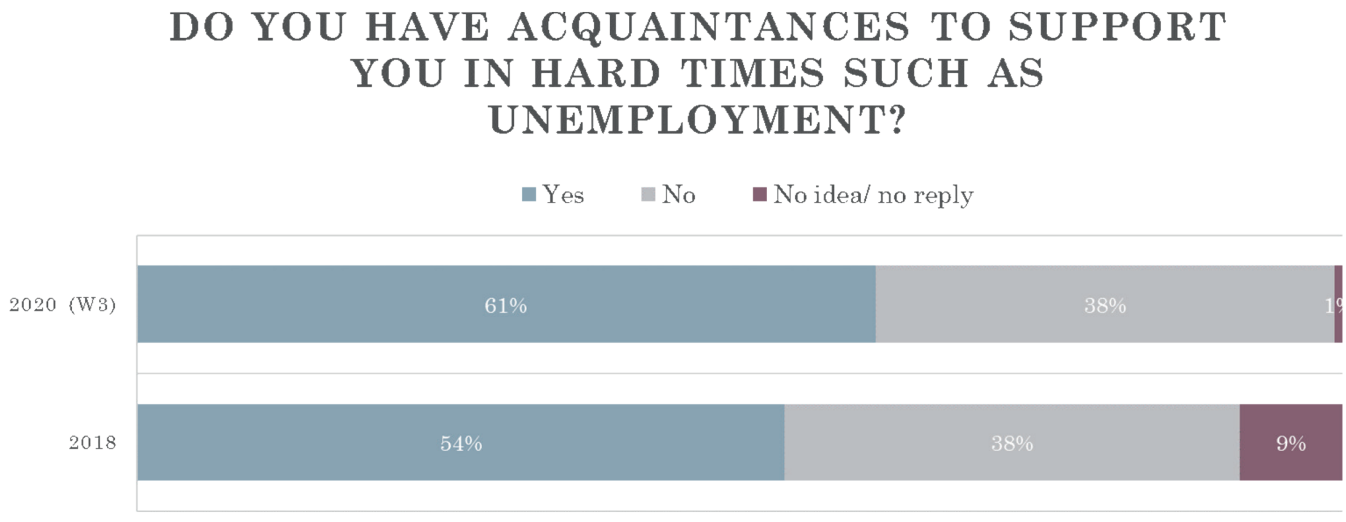
3.1 Solidarity and Helpfulness

Financial solidarity increased significantly in 2020 compared to 2018 where the economic contraction deepened due to the pandemic. According to 2020 findings, 87% of society contributed financially to charity or those in need. This ratio was 46% in 2018.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

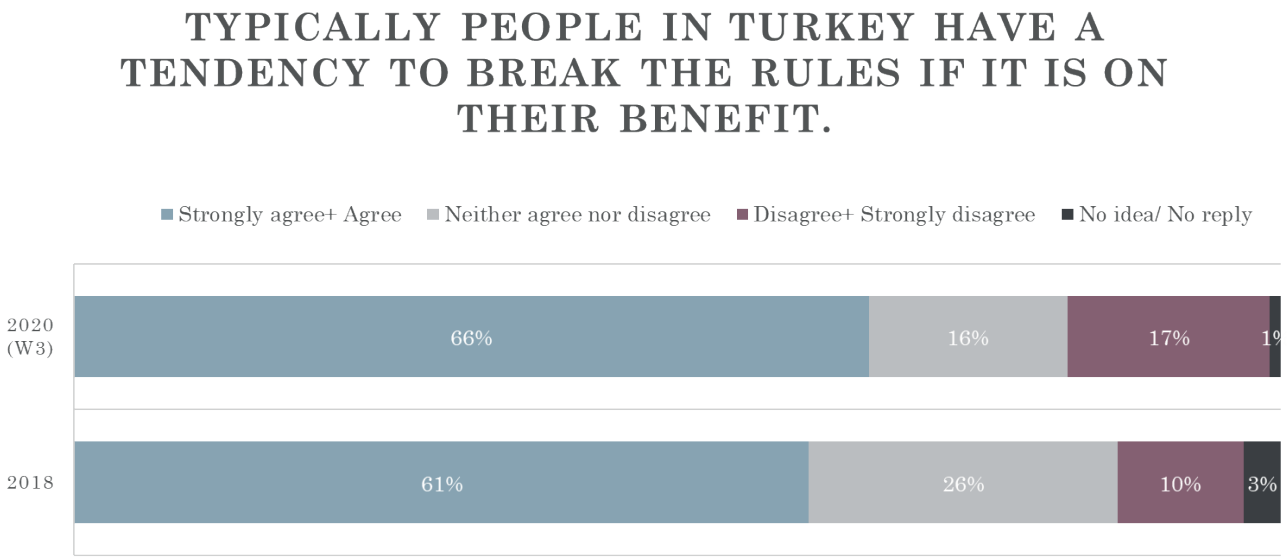
The results indicated that Turkish society was increasing solidarity in case of emergency and more people experienced solidarity during hard times such as unemployment. The reported change was statistically significant.



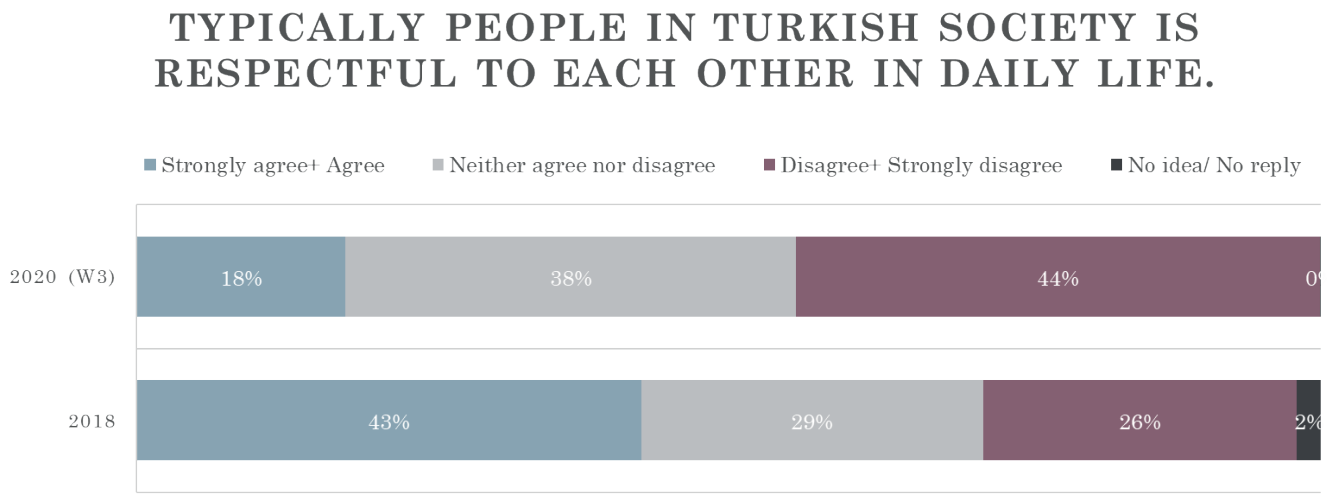
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

3.2 Respect for Social Rules

The tendency to break rules, which was identified as a general characteristic of people in Turkey in previous survey, increased significantly in 2020 compared to 2018. 66% of society believed people in Turkey tend to break the rules if it is on their benefit, while this ratio was 61% in 2018. The reported change is statistically significant.



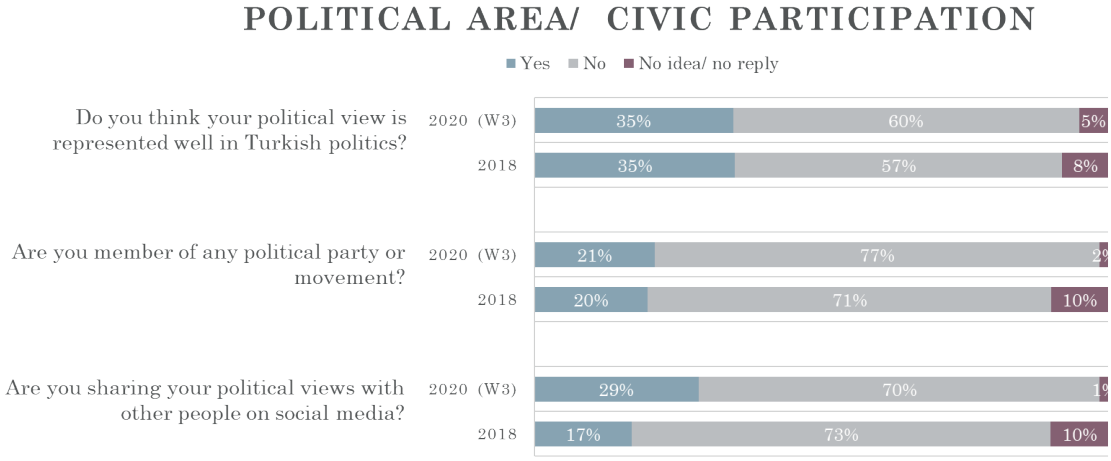
The tendency to be respectful to others in daily life seems to reduce in 2020 compared to 2018. Positive judgement on issue reduced while ambevilant group and negative thoughts enlarged.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

3.3 Civic Participation

Civic participation was identified as one of the weakest areas of society on common good dimension in 2018 and this did not change much in 2020. The majority of the society (60%) believed their political view was not represented well in Turkish politics as of 2020, like 2018 (the change from 57% to 60% from 2018 to 2020 is relative increase and statistically insignificant). Additionally, the tendency of sharing political opinion on social media increased significantly.



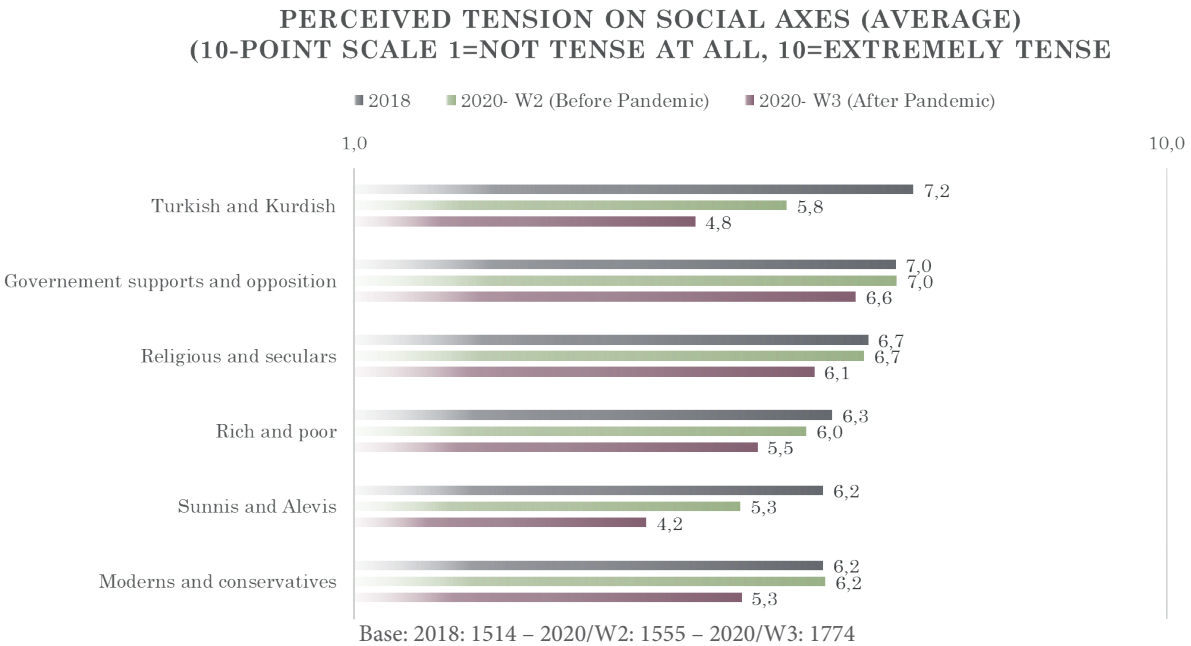
Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W3: 1774

Polarization

Perceived polarization among pre-defined axes lessened by the end of 2020 compared to 2018. While the political area was still polarized, perceived social tension among various social axes showed regression. The lessening of tension was apparent on Turkish- Kurdish and Sunnis- Alevis axis, while the most vivid tension was retained among government supporters and opposition.

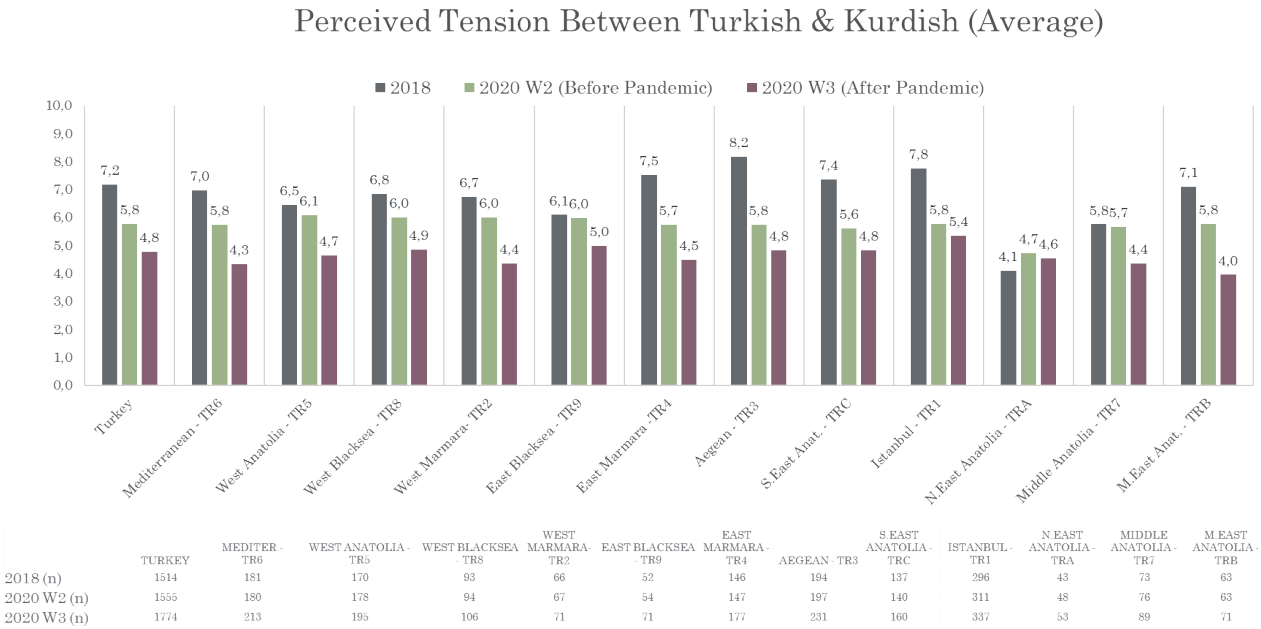
The polarization issue was tracked in Human Development Monitor survey in the beginning of 2020 (W2) and by the end of the year (W3). W2 results were presenting pre-pandemic period when social and economic impacts of Covid-19 was not widely experienced yet, while W3 results are presenting after pandemic period. Comparing the results of 2018 with pre-pandemic and after pandemic period of 2020, polarization evaluations showed that perceived polarization in society had reduced already at the first quarter of 2020 before pandemic, however, pandemic seems to have an accelerating effect of trivializing tension.

Q: How would you evaluate the relationship between the groups I will read in terms of the tension it causes in society? Please rate between 1 to10 where 1=Not tense at all and 10= Extremely tense.



Base: 2018: 1514 – 2020/W2: 1555 – 2020/W3: 1774

Perceived tension between Turkish- Kurdish axis seems relieved among all regions, while the biggest changes have been in Aegean (Izmir, Aydın, Manisa), East Marmara (Bursa, Kocaeli), and Middle East Anatolia (Malatya, Van), from 2018 to 2020 W3. This was seen before pandemic period at all regions, except for North East Anatolia (Erzurum, Ağrı) where tension was already conceived at exceptionally low level (4,1- over 10) in 2018.

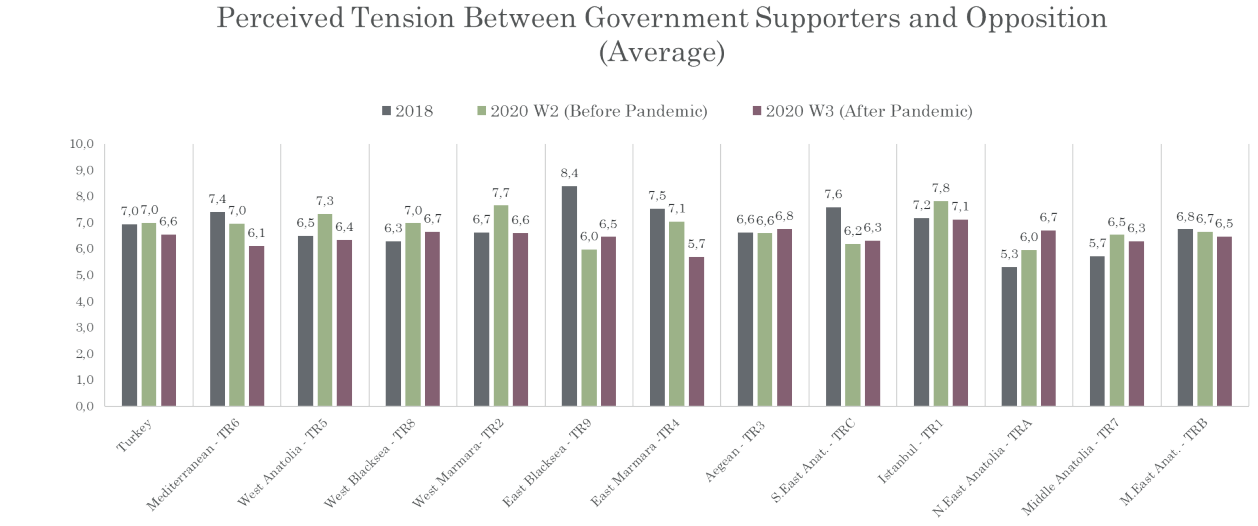


	TURKEY	MEDITER - TR6	WEST ANATOLIA - TR5	WEST BLACKSEA - TR8	WEST MARMARA- TR2	EAST BLACKSEA - TR9	EAST MARMARA - TR4	AEGEAN - TR3	S.EAST ANATOLIA - TRC	ISTANBUL - TR1	N.EAST ANATOLIA - TRA	MIDDLE ANATOLIA - TR7	M.EAST ANATOLIA - TRB
2018 (n)	1514	181	170	93	66	52	146	194	137	296	43	73	63
2020 W2 (n)	1555	180	178	94	67	54	147	197	140	311	48	76	63
2020 W3 (n)	1774	213	195	106	71	71	177	231	160	337	53	89	71

Perceived tension in society between Sunnis and Alevis, which was already one of the least tense axes in 2018, eased before pandemic (from 6,2 to 5,3- over 10, from 2018 to 2020 W2, respectively) and almost resolved after pandemic (from 5,3 to 4,8 – over 10, from 2020 W2 to 2020 W3, respectively). The tension observed between Sunnis-Alevis in 2018 fell by the end of 2020.

Increasing social solidarity in hard times such as the Covid-19 pandemic, as it is presented in previous findings, seems to have positive impact on relieving tension between rich and poor, liberals and conservatives.

As overall tension shows regression tendency in all pre-defined axes, the highest tension was between government supporters and opposition. Even so, the average rating relatively fell (from 7,0 to 6,6- over 10, from 2018 to 2020 W3, respectively). By the end of 2020 (W3), the tension was rated 6,6 over 10, which indicates a medium level tension. This is still the tensest axis in terms of creating tension in society.



	TURKEY	MEDITER - TR6	WEST ANATOLIA - TR5	WEST BLACKSEA - TR8	WEST MARMARA- TR2	EAST BLACKSEA - TR9	EAST MARMARA - TR4	AEGEAN - TR3	S.EAST ANATOLIA - TRC	ISTANBUL - TR1	N.EAST ANATOLIA - TRA	MIDDLE ANATOLIA - TR7	M.EAST ANATOLIA - TRB
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Tension between government supporters and opposition had a different position in every region. A remarkable drop was observed in East Black Sea (Trabzon) and Southeast Anatolia (Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Mardin) beginning from 2020 (W2), before pandemic period, which remained at a constant level – despite a slight increasing tendency – after the pandemic. Tension fell significantly in one of the most industrialized regions of Turkey, East Marmara (Bursa, Kocaeli), mainly after pandemic. There was a gradual increase in tension in Northeast Anatolia (Erzurum, Agri) over the years, which continued before and after pandemic in 2020. It was the opposite in Mediterranean region (Antalya, Adana, Hatay), where tension gradually decreased from 2018 to beginning of 2020 (W2), a trend that continued after pandemic. Perceived tension in Istanbul remained relatively high, while there had been a slight increase before pandemic period compared to 2018 (from 7,2 to 7,8- over 10) which turned back to 2018 level after pandemic (7,2) by the end of the year.

Summary and Evaluations

A new landscape in Turkey: An erosion of trust.

The social cohesion landscape changed remarkably in Turkey between 2018 and 2020. Evaluations on critical indicators of social cohesion such as social trust and belief in social justice dropped significantly in Turkish society in 2020, which led to erosion in positive national identification.

Institutional corrosion undermining social cohesion.

Institutions losing credit is one of the striking findings of the monitoring survey in 2020. The military, police and hospitals remained trusted institutions by the majority, while institutions such as courts, the media, and the presidency of religious affairs are now less trusted.

Losing faith in social justice and regional equality of opportunities.

In 2018 income justice, equal opportunities and order of merit were issues in public opinion without a dominant view, where positive and negative opinions were balanced by large ambivalent group. However, this landscape changed drastically in 2020. By the end of 2020, a negative evaluation of social justice issues crystalized and became the dominant opinion of society. For instance: 78% of society had a negative opinion about Turkey having fair income distribution, while this ratio was 41% in 2018.

Similarly, the negative opinion on regional equality increased from 27% to 68% from 2018 to 2020. A trade association representative from Southeast Anatolia pointed out that increasing unemployment due to layoffs in the region where effects of pandemic, a contracting economy and relatively underdeveloped regional business environment hit small- and medium-sized enterprises, triggering closures. While some regions felt income inequality more than others, the results indicated that the perception of regional inequality was common among all regions in late 2020.

Individual networks support social security.

Social solidarity increased in 2020 compared to 2018. For instance, in 2020 more people said that they had acquaintances that could support them during hard times such as unemployment. Such an increase is likely to be based on positive experiences during pandemic period.

People in Turkey are typically surrounded by family, relatives, and friends, while at same time procure social security when social state support falls short. This landscape caught the attention of a municipal social services expert. "Trust in relatives in hard times should not be considered as a replacement of social security," she said. A labor union representative pointed out that unemployment incurred by the pandemic emphasizes the importance of the social security system.

Pandemic minimized the tension towards immigrants.

The Social Cohesion Monitoring study had two indicators of tolerance towards immigrants: the acceptance of friendships of children with immigrants, and perceived tension between Turkish and Syrians. Such limited content is not enough to get an overall understanding on issue, but it may still provide an idea of the reality on the ground.

The change in public opinion about the well-known symbolic statement on acceptance of pluralism, approving children's friendship, indicates increasing tolerance towards immigrants' children. The change was most notable in Istanbul and Southeast Anatolia, where the widespread negative opinion turns to positive.

This was largely due to efforts of civil society and government in these two regions, where Syrian immigrants are concentrated.

However, tension between Turkish and Syrians was of the tensest axes with average score 7,2- over 10, at the beginning of 2020. Comparing the results before and after pandemic in 2020 (since it was not covered in 2018 survey), the pandemic minimized the tension towards immigrants. The average scores of perceived tensions between Turkish and Syrians were the highest among all social axes at the beginning of 2020 before the pandemic (7,2- over 10), which regressed (to 5,9- over 10) after pandemic. "We observed quite a high level of tension in the field," said a public officer working for immigrant services in West Anatolia. This may be a sign of ongoing tension that is somehow minimalized because of the pandemic and heavy consequences of it.

Political landscape needs rehabilitation to increase representativeness.

Considering the research findings indicating negative evaluations on political bodies, the Turkish political landscape needs to be rehabilitated to maintain a responsive democracy. By the end of 2020, 60% of society thought that their political views were not represented well in Turkish politics. This ratio was 57% in 2018.

Media losing credit has a negative impact on social cohesion.

Media plays an essential role in democracies as a tool to reach accurate information. However, this institution lost trust drastically in 2020. Public opinion on the media was neither negative nor positive in 2018 as the ambivalent group was the largest. However, in 2020 the conventional media, namely press and television, was believed to be unreliable by a large majority of the society, while trusting and ambivalent groups shrank. Only 10-15% of the society considered conventional media bodies reliable as of 2020. This ratio was at 30-40% in 2018.

In addition to conventional media, news on social media was considered unreliable by an even larger majority (64%) as of 2020. Similar to conventional media, evaluations on reliability of news on social media were negative in 2020, while ambivalent group was largest in 2018. "Such a loss of trust in the media is likely to have the effect of reducing social trust," an academic representative said, emphasizing the importance of reaching right information. "Unlike previous periods, there are numerous media channels now where people are not accessing the same news or in same way (content). We need to approach polarization from this point of view as well, in terms of access to information and the effects of it," said one civil society representative.

Perceived polarization among social groups eased.

Perceived polarization among social groups eased in many axes in 2020 compared to 2018. Comparing results of 2018 with pre-pandemic and after pandemic period of 2020, polarization evaluations showed that perceived polarization in society had already eased in the first quarter of 2020. However, the social and economic consequences of the pandemic seemed to have an accelerating effect on this trend.

Tension between government supporters and opposition was the tensest relationship among all social groups, even it is at a medium range (6,6 - over 10). Tension based on ethnic and religious identity, on the other hand, eased before pandemic and accelerated in late 2020. Society responded to the pandemic and its economic consequences by increasing solidarity, which eventually eased social tension not only in identity-based axes, but also among rich and poor and moderns and conservatives.

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