

# **KURDISH YOUTH'20**

## **SIMILARITIES**

## **DIFFERENCES**

## **CHANGES**



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## **Abstract:**

Kurdish youth, who make up a significant part of Turkey's young population, play a key role in the transformation of both Kurdish politics and Turkish politics in general. The current study aims to illustrate the political and social preferences of Kurdish youth and young adults from Turkey. In this context, this research highlights the similarities and differences of the Kurdish youth between each other and the youth in general in Turkey, and also outlines the concerns, expectations, future plans, and preferences of the Kurdish youth.



# CONTENTS

+ Key Findings	3	5.3. Religion	42
+ 1. Introduction	5	5.4. Native Language	46
+ 2. Methodology	8	5.5. Political preferences and expectations from politics	47
a. Exploratory Study	8	5.6. Political Party Preferences	50
b. Quantitative Research	8	5.7. Attitude Towards Political Leaders	53
c. Qualitative Research	9	5.8. Radicalization and Violence	56
+ 3. Demographics, Education Status, Employment	11	+ Young Kurdish women and their unique experiences	59
+ 4. Sociocultural Orientations and Preferences	15	+ Conclusion	61
4.1. Life Satisfaction	15		
4.2. Concerns and Dreams	17		
4.3. Daily Habits, Media Habits	20		
4.4. Art, Sports Preferences	22		
4.5. Private Life Preferences	24		
4.6. Identity	26		
4.7. Social Life Preferences	29		
+ 5. Basic Problems and Political Preferences	35		
5.1. Migration	35		
5.2. Discrimination	38		



# Key Findings

- + Kurdish youth living in Turkey show serious similarities in their political and social preferences. However, all these similarities are more dominant in certain groups, depending on ideology, city and gender variables. Therefore, it is important that this heterogeneous structure is taken into account in the study of Kurdish youth.
- + Young Kurds show a serious promise for vertical social mobility. They're much more educated than their parents. However, they have serious problems in terms of employment. A serious proportion of them are unemployed. In addition, a large part of the young people employed are unskilled workers. Women are also disadvantaged in employment.
- + Young people are not happy. The unhappiness is higher in men and those living in the West.
- + The biggest problem of Kurdish youth is unemployment and the economic future. Their dreams are also in this direction. They want to improve their individual welfare levels and quality of life.
- + Young people are much more interested in political developments when compared to the general population of Turkey. It is understood that their active use of Twitter is related to this interest.
- + Kurdish youth are libertarian at a level above the Turkish average. This trend is largely shaped by young people who support the CHP and HDP.
- + Muslim, Kurdish, libertarian and world citizen identities are widely accepted by young people. The identity of Turkish citizenship is not prominent.
- + Discrimination is the biggest problem for young people. They suffer from discriminatory and exclusionary practices and discourses both in the major cities where they migrated and in the media.
- + As a reaction to the discrimination they experience, young people's tolerance for other identities is very low. They prefer social networks where they can use their own language and culture as much as possible. This preference ranges from the election of a mayor to choice of a lover/spouse.
- + Young people think that Turkey has very serious problems, especially with regard to women's rights, the economy and justice. They are distant but interested in politics.
- + They see education, discrimination and education in their native language as problem areas for Kurds.
- + The trend of radicalization has decreased among Kurdish youth. In addition, there appears to be an increase in demands related to the emphasis on Kurd and Kurdish identity. It is observed that while the trend towards radicalization has decreased, interest in civic politics has become much higher.
- + HDP is very popular among young people. The interest in AK Party is decreasing. CHP is on the rise. They are satisfied with the transformed face of the CHP and approach the CHP much less biased than their parents.
- + Demirtaş is the most popular leader among Kurdish youth. İmamoğlu, on the other hand, is showing a rising trend.



# INTRODUCTION



# 1 Introduction

Turkey is one of the countries with the highest young population, both in the world and Europe; the population in the 15-29 age group is approaching twenty million. This number, which amounts to 23.2% of Turkey's population, shows us that Turkey will continue to have a significant young demographic in the next half century. With this feature, Turkey occupies an important place in youth issues within the European Union and becomes an important area of research and monitoring for youth works.

On the other hand, the proportion of the Kurdish population in the total population, which accounted for about 8% of the population in the 1927 census - when ethnic and religious affiliation was asked for the last time in Turkey - has been steadily increasing to date. The Kurdish population of Turkey is estimated to be between 15 and 18 million, of a total population of 83 million people in Turkey as of December 2019, according to Turk Stat.

In cities and regions where the Kurdish population is dense in Turkey, this figure is higher when compared to Turkey as a whole. In 18 cities where the Kurdish population is dense, the young population in the 15-29 age group is 28.1%. In the rest of Turkey, this figure is 22.4%. We can say that the six-point difference will be much higher when the Kurdish population in metropolitan areas such as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Adana, Mersin and Antalya is included.



**GRAPHIC 1: THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION IN 15-29 AGE GROUP IN TURKEY BY CITIES**



In the map of the population of children under the age of 18, the provinces with the highest proportion of the population under the age of 18 are the Kurdish provinces or the provinces where the Kurds have heavily migrated. It is also observed that the districts of the provinces of Southern and Western Turkey where there is a density of children are the places mainly settled by Kurds.



According to Turk Stat<sup>1</sup> data released in 2019, all of the top 10 provinces with the highest fertility rate consist of Kurdish cities. Again, the same data shows that apart from Şırnak and Urfa, there is no Kurdish city which takes part in the top 10 provinces in terms of the population growth rate.

Ağrı, which is second in the fertility rate, and Muş, which is the fifth, are two of the 10 cities whose population is declining the most. The population of Ağrı, whose population under the age of 18 is 47%, is decreasing year by year. In the light of this data, it is seen that the proportion of the Kurdish population in the general population of Turkey is increasing rapidly, however, the Kurdish population is intensely flowing into the Western metropolitan cities of Turkey.

**This study, which is the product of the projects “Promoting Dialogue and Sustainable Conflict Resolution in Turkey” run by the YADA foundation and supported by the British Embassy and “To Be a Young Kurd in Turkey: Knowing and Understanding Youth” project run by “Kurdish Studies Center” and supported by the Heinrich Böll Foundation Turkey Representation and field interviews of which were conducted by Rawest Research, aims to recognize young Kurds within the 18-30 age group living in Turkey more closely. In this context, the similarities and differences between Kurdish youth and the general youth of Turkey, the future plans and worldviews of Kurdish youth constitute the main theme of the research. We would like to thank the British Embassy and Heinrich Böll Stiftung for their support and all their colleagues who have paid all their efforts in the scope of the research.**

Of course, the position of Kurdish youth within the elections of Turkey is not just their number. Along with the transforming political structure and political debates of Turkey, Turkish society is also transforming with all its colors and bringing new political and social preferences to the agenda. Kurdish youth are also manifested among these colors. The evolving political and social preferences of Kurdish youth have a critical, potential impact on the future of both Turkish politics and the Kurdish issue. The current research was carried out precisely to draw the framework and content of this effect.

1. Turk Stat: Birth Statistics, 2019. <https://tuikweb.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=33706>



METHODOLOGY



## 2 Methodology

The research was conducted in a total of 8 provinces, 4 of which were Kurdish provinces and 4 of which were provinces in the west of Turkey. The population of the study was divided into 3 regions demographically, and the cities were determined accordingly. The first of these regions is the region that covers cities known as Kurdish cities. From this region, the metropolitan cities of Diyarbakır, Mardin and Urfa were selected. The second region, which we can describe as close migration provinces, is composed of Adana and Mersin, which are neighbors to the Kurdish provinces and receive Kurdish migrants at the same time. Istanbul and Izmir, the two major metropolitan cities in the west, which are remote migration provinces in Turkey, were also selected as the third demographic region. In addition to collecting data by quantitative method, data was also collected by qualitative method and a three-stage research process was planned.

### a. Exploratory Study

The exploratory study aimed to provide preliminary information on the lives of both young people and Kurdish youth in Turkey before the Field Research. It is planned to reveal the widest possible picture in the field research, both through interviews with young people and by scanning written and visual literature on this subject. The research design has been provided in

the widest possible framework on issues such as the plans of young people for the future, their practices of socialization and politicization, their relations with their families and other segments of society.

### b. Quantitative Research

During the quantitative research phase, up-to-date data was collected on the socio-democratic clusters and cultural structures of young people, how they build and make sense of the identities with which they define themselves, what values they adopt, what they think about the politics in Turkey and the Kurdish issue in particular. This data was then grouped based on variables such as age group, research area, gender, occupation and political parties they were close to, and in this way, the similarities and differences were compared.

During the quantitative research phase, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 1,473 young people in the 8 cities listed above and surveys prepared within the scope of the research were applied. The rates

of young people within the 18-30 age group in the research population were approximately calculated based on Turk Stat data. Using the studies conducted on the ethnic and demographic distribution in Turkey, the proportion of Kurdish population in these cities was approximately determined and it was estimated that the research population could be 1,993,403 people in the 8 cities in question. This number is approximately 33% of the total number of young people between the ages of 18 and 30 in the research population. The sample of the research represents the population with a margin of error of  $\pm 2.5$  and a confidence range of 95 percent. The sample was distributed taking into account the proportion of the Kurdish youth between the ages of 18 and 30 in these cities.

	SAMPLE	PROPORTION
Diyarbakır	281	19.1%
Mardin	138	9.4%
Urfa	253	17.2%
Van	226	15.3%
Adana-Mersin	152	10.3%
İzmir	153	10.4%
İstanbul	270	18.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1473</b>	<b>100%</b>

The quantitative phase of the research was conducted with a questionnaire structured in a broad framework. In the design of the survey form, the specific characteristics of Turkey and the Kurds in Turkey, including socio-demographic, political, cultural and social values, were taken into account. Questions were prepared by the research team and in order for the data to be comparable, some of the questions included in the youth research conducted in Turkey were included in the questionnaire. Interviews were conducted face-to-face using tablet computers and smart devices, and each interview lasted about 30 minutes. The data obtained at the quantitative stage was analyzed using SPSS, JASP, MS Excel and similar software programs.

## c. Qualitative Research

The aim of the qualitative research is to discuss the issues such as the lives of the Kurdish youth in Turkey as well as their identities, socialization, future predictions, their attitudes towards politics and their relations with non-Kurds and to collect in-depth data on how these issues become meaningful through the construction of these attitudes.

At this stage, the sample interviewed was grouped based on variables such as age, gender, region, educational status, political tendencies, socio-demography, and thus the widest scale of Kurdish youth was ensured to be represented. The qualitative phase of the research was conducted in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group meetings.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS	
Province	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED
Diyarbakır	30
Van	10
Adana-Mersin	20
İstanbul	30
İzmir	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS		
GROUP FEATURE	NUMBER OF MEETINGS	
	REGION	WEST
Student	1	1
Employee	1	1
NEET	1	1
Female	1	1
General	1	1



DEMOGRAPHICS,  
EDUCATION  
STATUS,  
EMPLOYMENT

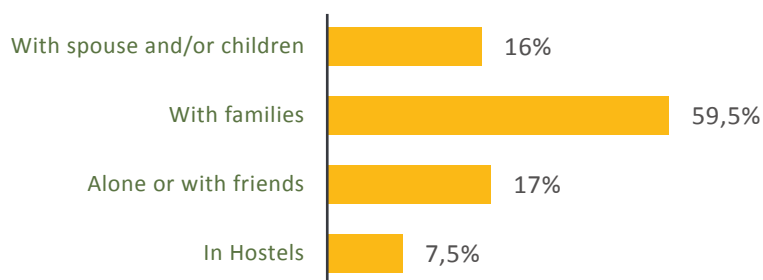
### 3 Demographics, Education Status, Employment

In Turkey, Kurds are often treated as a homogeneous political group, and therefore differences within the Kurds themselves are ignored. Especially outside of political life, differences in the social area remain directly out of interest. In this section, the heterogeneous structure of Kurdish youth participating in the research is discussed from a socio-demographic point of view.

We can start studying this heterogeneous structure from the households. According to research results, about 75% of Kurdish youth live with their families. About 60% of them are made up of young people who are single and living with their extended families. On the other hand, 16% are married and are living with their spouses and children. The proportion of Kurdish youth living alone or with friends or apart from their families is 17%. Young people who stay in a hostel or dormitory make up a small minority, with a rate of 7%. As shown by this distribution, a significant majority of Kurdish youth live with their families.

This trend is also evident in the average household size. According to Turk Stat data, the average household size in Turkey is 3.4. According to research results, this figure is up to 5.2 among Kurdish youth. This figure does not only support the fact that Kurdish youth live with their families, but also points to the high number of households in these families. In other words, the majority of Kurdish youth live with their large, crowded families.

GRAPHIC 2: HOUSEHOLD STATUS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH



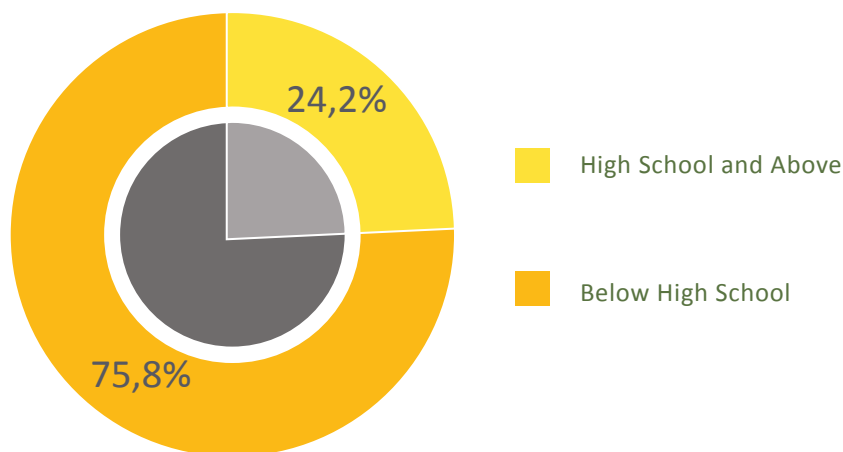


The most basic requirement for vertical social mobility is undoubtedly education. Kurdish youth seem to be aware of this situation. Approximately 76% of the parents of these young people are below high school level. Half of the young people are already students. Only 29% of non-students has an education level below high school.

There is a striking transformation between the two generations in terms of education level. Young Kurds are much more educated than their parents. In other words, the education level of the families of Kurdish youth clearly separates the two generations.



**GRAPHIC 3: PARENTAL EDUCATION STATUS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

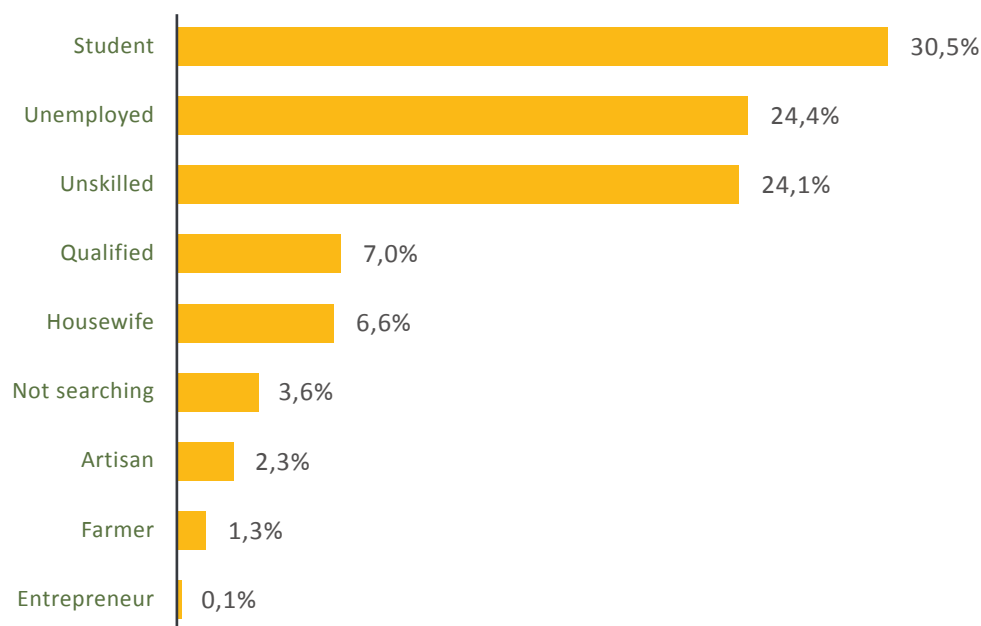


Although the education levels of Kurdish youth are promising for the future, the employment data is drawing a worrying picture. Only about 34% of the young people interviewed are working. Moreover, 24% of this proportion consists of unskilled workers. In other words, only 10% of Kurdish youth work in a qualified job. The rest are either unskilled workers or unemployed.

When we compare this data with the Turkish average, the disadvantage Kurdish youth face becomes even more evident. About one in two young people in Turkey has a job. This figure is about one in three among Kurdish youth. In other words, the employment rate of Kurdish youth remains significantly below the general average of Turkey. Moreover, about one in every three Kurdish youth are neither in education nor in employment (NEET). The NEET rate is 26.5% on the Turkish scale when compared to 34.6% among Kurdish youth. In other words, the NEET ratio of Kurdish youth is 8 point higher than the Turkish average.



**GRAPHIC 4: EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION STATUS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**



When the gender distribution in employment is examined, it is seen that the disadvantaged position of women is worsened among Kurdish youth. However, in other parameters, there is also a disadvantage for young Kurdish women. Among Kurdish youth, the rate of women in education is 3 points lower than that of men, and the rate of employment is 16 points lower. In other words, although women are not far behind their male contemporaries when they receive education, they are seriously left behind when it comes to finding a job. On the other hand, the NEET ratio of Kurdish young women is only 3 points above the Turkey average.

However, the NEET ratio of Kurdish young men is more than twice the Turkey average. This marks a serious idleness among Kurdish young men. As mentioned above, this data becomes more significant when considering the high proportion of unskilled workers among Kurdish youth. Kurdish young men working in unskilled jobs, who will be most affected by the economic crisis and upheavals, are indeed affected by all these economic fluctuations in a much more negative sense than their Turkish peers.

**TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT RATES AMONG KURDISH YOUTH AND NEET DISTRIBUTION ON TURKEY SCALE**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN		SAMPLE	TURKEY
Education	30.5%	32.3%	28.9%	Women	43.1%	39.8%
Employment	34.9%	43.1%	27.0%	Men	27.0%	13.8%
Neet	34.6%	24.6%	44.1%	Average	34.7%	26.5%



# SOCIOCULTURAL ORIENTATIONS AND PREFERENCES

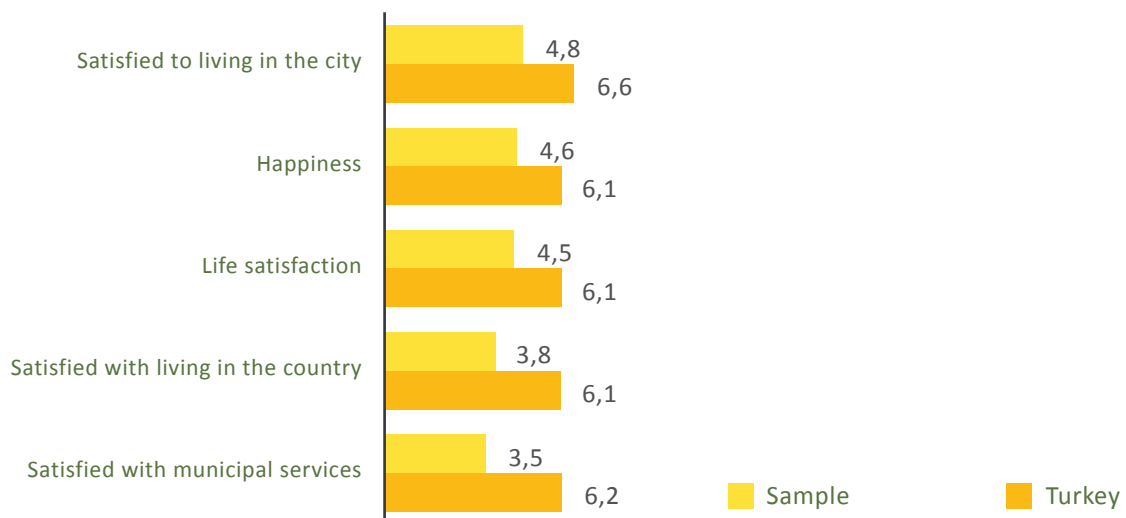
# 4 Sociocultural Orientations and Preferences

## 4.1. Life Satisfaction

Kurdish youth are greatly differentiated from their peers by the level of satisfaction. The overall satisfaction level of Kurdish youth is significantly lower than the Turkey average. Given both the above-mentioned employment rates and the political and social incidents experienced by Kurds over the past five years, this orientation may not be surprising. However, it is very thought-provoking that Kurdish young people are less satisfied with their lives than their peers, and that this dissatisfaction can be observed in all areas of life. Kurdish youth are not happy to live in both the cities where they are residing and to live in Turkey.

The average happiness levels of Kurdish youth assessed on a scale of 1-10 remains at 4.6. This figure is 6.1 in Turkey. The average level of satisfaction with living in the country is 3.8, while this figure rises to 4.8 in cities. However, the satisfaction rate of Kurdish youth with municipal services is 3.5. All these data are usually two points lower than the Turkey average and are always on the dissatisfaction side.

**GRAPHIC 5: GENERAL AND REGIONAL SATISFACTION RATES OF KURDISH YOUTH**





Comparing the satisfaction rates of Kurdish youth with the satisfaction rates in Turkey's main metropolitan cities also reveals an interesting picture. Kurdish youth are more unhappy than their peers living in major

cities. The happiness rate assessed on a scale of 1-10 is at least 1.5 points lower for Kurdish youth than their peers in metropolitan cities.

**TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF THE SATISFACTION RATES OF KURDISH YOUTH WITH THE GENERAL TRENDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN TURKISH METROPOLITAN CITIES**

	SAMPLE	İSTANBUL	ANKARA	ANTALYA	İZMİR
Satisfied with living in the city	4.78	6.26	6.26	6.64	7.13
Happiness	4.64	5.95	5.63	6.26	6.64
Life satisfaction	4.52	5.91	5.56	6.27	6.47
Satisfied with living in the country	3.82	6.03	6.05	6.09	6.05
Satisfied with municipal services	3.51	6.10	5.45	6.29	6.84

Moreover, the decreasing rate of dissatisfaction among Kurdish youth towards the West also points to a different trend. Although the difference is not high, the satisfaction rate of the Kurdish Youth living in the Western metropolitans is consistently lower than the satisfaction rate of Kurdish youth living regions mostly settled by Kurds.

Men are unhappier and more dissatisfied than women. In parallel, those in the NEET group are also unhappier than students and employees. When we take into account the share of men in the NEET group, we can also say that an important reason for dissatisfaction is the economy. As a matter of fact, the concerns and dreams of Kurdish youth point out this direction.

**TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF SATISFACTION AND CRISIS PERCEPTION AMONG YOUTH**

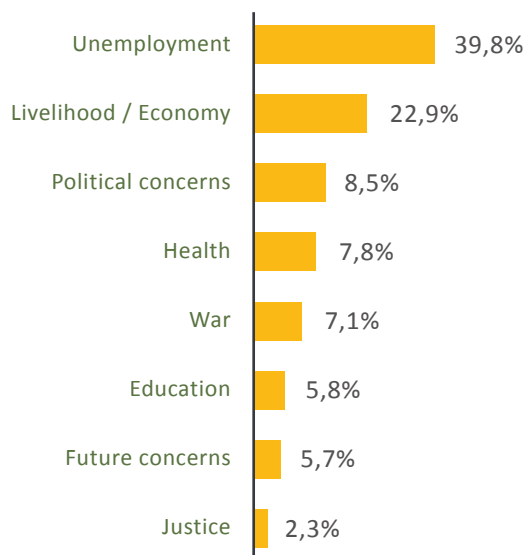
	TOTAL	CITY (2)		GENDER		EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
		REGION	WEST	WOMEN	MEN	NEET	STUDENT	EMPLOYED
Is there an economic crisis?	4.14	4.06	4.27	4.14	4.14	4.04	4.23	4.17
Happiness	4.64	4.74	4.49	5.01	4.31	4.48	4.92	4.56
Life satisfaction	4.52	4.59	4.41	4.80	4.27	4.33	4.74	4.51
Satisfied with living in the country	3.82	4.05	3.46	4.01	3.65	3.81	3.74	3.90
Satisfied with living in the city	4.78	4.99	4.46	4.91	4.67	4.78	4.81	4.76

## 4.2. Concerns and Dreams

The biggest source of concern for Kurdish youth is the economy. The proportion of young people who see unemployment and lack of livelihood as their most important concern exceeds 62%. If we consider the youth who have the future as their main concern is 5.7% and the education category with 5.8% as related to the economy, we can definitely say that the most dominant cause of concern for Kurdish youth is the economy. Besides linking their economic situation to politics, young people also express their direct political concerns.

When political concerns such as war and justice are added, the proportion of those who directly express their political concerns covers a slice of 20% on the concern map of the Kurdish youth. Although young people show lesser interest in hot political issues and express direct political concerns after categories such as the economy and unemployment, they place all their concerns in a political context. Social concerns such as political order, justice and health play a significant role in the map of concern of Kurdish youth.

**GRAPHIC 6: CONCERNS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**



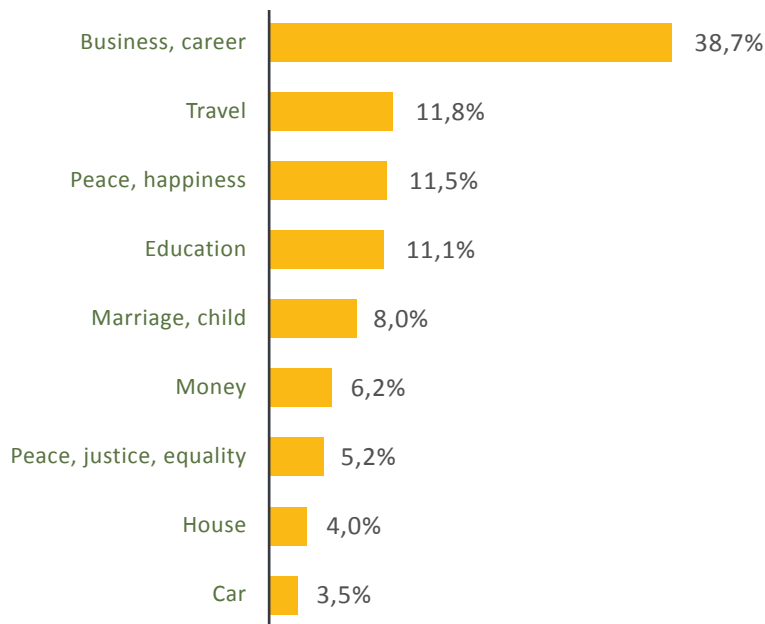
The unpredictability of the country's justice system makes young people worried. In particular, young people who emphasize their Kurdish identities are concerned that something will happen to them because of their identity due to the experienced injustices. On

the other hand, young people think that, although they have personal concerns, they will somehow overcome them and succeed. They don't trust society and the system. They are concerned about the potential for this to affect their own future.



The dreams of Kurdish youth are also concentrated in more individual agendas as are their concerns. 50% of young people count a job, career, home or car among their initial dreams. Travel stands out as the second common dream with 12%, while the dream of peace and happiness ranks third with a similar proportion. Just as they think that their concerns are inherently political, the young people also think that their dreams will be made possible by a political normalization. For this reason, it is possible to see social goals within individual dreams. Many young Kurds want to make a good career abroad and become economically independent on this occasion. Young people want to travel the world after getting things done economically and contribute to social change by doing things that will be good for people. Therefore, when we look at the content of the individual dreams, it is possible to see the social goals as well.

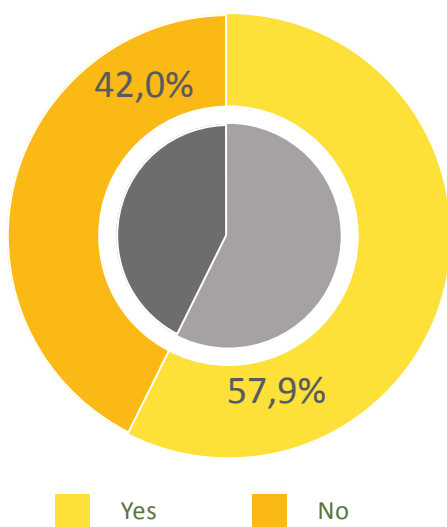
**GRAPHIC 7: DREAMS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**



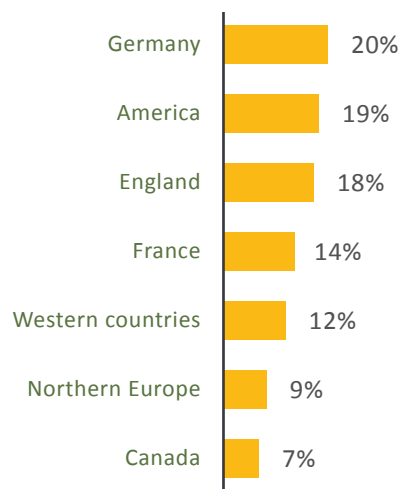
Another important point is the demand for travel. The desire to live abroad is not just the result of a sense of escaping and getting out of the country. Seeing and getting to know other places, cultures, traveling, trying to find an opportunity in terms of jobs or income are also effective. But, of course, the fact that they do not feel comfortable in the country, and their dissatisfaction also seems to have strengthened their tendencies to live abroad. Desires such as emigration to Western countries are fed by economic concerns rather than political ones, as seen from the '90s to the early 2000s, and they plan to return after deeming themselves successful in their goals.

About 58% of Kurdish youth want to study abroad. However, there is no common or dominant country. The countries where young people want to study are mostly North American and European countries.

**GRAPHIC 8: TENDENCIES OF KURDISH YOUTH TO STUDY ABROAD**



**WHICH COUNTRIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO STUDY IN?**



The concerns of young people also undermine their hopes for the future. They are trying to be hopeful by saying: “I’m hopeful just for motivating myself” and “I can’t give hope to those around me if I’m not so.” Many young people think they can cope with life and are individually strong. However, they also feel strongly that they are disadvantaged because they are Kurds and that their “hands are tied” somehow. They express the need for a future that will address their concerns in terms of family, personal and economic matters, and they hope that the process will be as they hope so. Among Kurdish youth, on the other hand, there are those who say that young people in general will be promising with their new generation methods of struggle. One participant says:

“ For example, the date of the exam was changed due to touristic reasons and young people, in turn, dropped the rating of the mobile application of the tourism company owned by the Minister of Tourism by giving a score of 1 together. This gives me hope.



## 4.3. Daily Habits, Media Habits

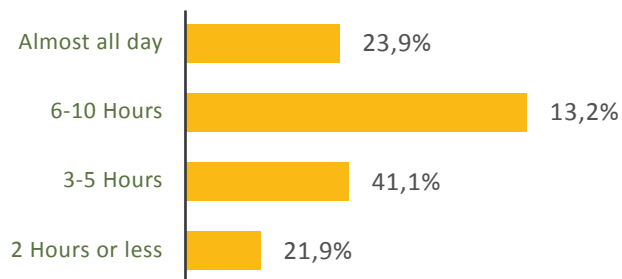
The daily habits of Kurdish youth are similar to those of Turkey. Half of the young people say they smoke, a third say they drink alcohol and 5% say they use drugs. All these rates are close to the Turkey average. Youth smoking is one point below the Turkey average, while alcohol use is 4.5 points higher. There is also a 1-point positive difference in drug use. Smoking, hookah, alcohol and/or drug use are mostly seen among male and/or single participants.

**TABLE 4: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE USE COMPARISON**

	SAMPLE	TURKEY
Smoking	48.6%	49.6%
Alcohol	35.4%	30.7%
Drugs	5.0%	4.1%

Kurdish youth are pretty good with the internet. 24% of the young people say they use the internet almost all day. 41% say they use the internet 3-5 hours a day. We can say that 78% of Kurdish youth spend at least two hours a day on the internet.

**GRAPHIC 9: INTERNET USE OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**



Kurdish youth use the internet both frequently and differently. Twitter usage among Kurdish youth is well above the Turkey average. Twitter usage, which is 30% among Turkish youth, is increasing up to 44% among Kurdish youth. Considering that Twitter has a much more political character than other social media platforms, we can say that this preference of Kurdish

youth lies in the fact that they follow Twitter as an alternative to the mainstream media and are more interested in the political agenda than their peers. As a matter of fact, it can be explained in this context that the use of internet dictionaries, where political debates often occur, is higher in Kurdish youth when compared to the Turkey average.



**TABLE 5: SOCIAL MEDIA USE OF THE YOUNG POPULATION**

Which social media platforms do you subscribe to?	SAMPLE	TURKEY
Instagram	83.4%	80.0%
WhatsApp groups	54.1%	50.7%
Twitter	43.7%	29.7%
Facebook	41.3%	44.4%
YouTube channels	17.0%	20.6%
Spotify	9.6%	3.9%
TicToc	6.5%	6.7%
Pinterest	6.1%	2.9%
Dictionaries	3.5%	1.5%
Own blogs	1.4%	0.9%
Tinder	0.3%	0.5%

**2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS**

	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Fox TV	31.2%	19.9%	39.4%	34.5%
I don't watch news on TV.	28.0%	23.7%	30.9%	26.4%
I don't watch TV.	19.2%	15.5%	17.0%	18.9%
A News / ATV	7.0%	28.2%	0.0%	1.1%
Stêrk TV, Ronahî TV, Medya Haber etc.	6.6%	0.7%	5.3%	12.0%
NTV / CNN Türk	3.5%	5.2%	6.4%	1.7%
TRT Channels	2.7%	6.5%	0.0%	1.7%
Artı TV	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
Halk TV	0.4%	0.3%	1.1%	0.6%

TV watching habits of Kurdish youth also differ from the youth trends in Turkey. Although the parody, comedy, action and casual TV series watching habits of the Kurdish youth show similar trends with the Turkey average, they stand distant to the TV series telling stories of local and feudal lives. The rate of Kurdish youth watching feudal TV series is five points lower than the Turkey average.

Again, it was observed under the scope of the research that they often found patriotic-themed series fed on the Kurdish issue to be “nationalist and militaristic” and that they stand distant to these series. These young people complain about the lack of understanding of Kurds politically and socially. In addition, they complain about the fact that the situations that bother them are spread through the hands of the media and through series with a populist approach.



“ I like TV series about social issues. For example, I don’t like TV series like “Diriliş Ertuğrul” and “Kurtlar Vadisi.” In my opinion, these are series that encourage social conflict.

“ ...I watched the first two seasons of Diriliş Ertuğrul, but then I quit when I saw the increase in the nationalistic enthusiasm of the crowd watching this series.

“ My least favorite series is local or feudal series. I don’t like it because it may have happened before, but now these are all gone.

**TABLE 6: TV PREFERENCES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE**

	SAMPLE	TURKEY
Parody shows	43.4%	43.5%
Comedy shows	38.8%	36.6%
Action series	29.1%	35.6%
Parody series	28.9%	32.5%
Period series	22.0%	21.7%
Historical series	19.9%	29.7%
Romantic comedy series	14.7%	26.8%
Patriotic series	14.6%	29.3%
Feudal, tribal, east-oriented series	14.5%	20.9%
Daily series	14.3%	20.1%
Romantic dramas	13.8%	25.3%
Family Series	13.0%	21.2%

## 4.4. Art, Sports Preferences

Political developments and discrimination in Turkey also affect the daily life, socialization and entertainment habits of the young people. Young people who experience discrimination feel the need to work and socialize in physical or virtual environments, where there are mostly Kurds.

As a result of this orientation, young people who are discriminated against in migrated cities prefer to live and share social life with those who had similar experiences. Thus, the habits of listening to Kurdish music, speaking Kurdish and supporting Kurdish teams are growing in parallel with this trend. One participant summarizes this situation as follows:

**“ I keep those who repeat [discrimination] at bay ... I prefer to narrow my own areas. I prefer to socialize in areas where there are more Kurds. Or I prefer to meet people who can understand what it means to be Kurdish or to be the other. (Istanbul, Female)**

Artists liked by Kurdish youth also show similarities with the preferences of Turkish youth in a scope ranging from Ahmet Kaya to Sezen Aksu, Müslüm Gürses to İbrahim Tatlıses, Yıldız Tilbe to Tarkan. However, Kurdish youth also listen to singers such as Ciwan Haco, Şivan Perwer, Mem Ararat, Şakiro and Aynur.

In terms of the musical repertoire, young people differ from both the Turkish youth of their generation and from the previous Kurdish generation by listening to artists such as Aynur and Mem Ararat.

**TABLE 7: KURDISH YOUTH'S SINGER PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO THEIR POLITICAL PARTY ORIENTATIONS**

	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Ahmet Kaya	19.6%	19.4%	13.5%	21.4%
Sezen Aksu	7.3%	5.7%	13.5%	5.4%
Ciwan Haco	5.2%	0.7%	4.5%	8.1%
Müslüm Gürses	3.9%	5.7%	5.6%	2.2%
Şivan Perwer	3.1%	0.7%	1.1%	5.5%
Mem Ararat	3.1%	1.4%	0.0%	4.7%
İbrahim Tatlıses	2.5%	6.0%	1.1%	1.1%
Neşet Ertaş	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%	1.4%
Şakiro	1.7%	0,4%	1.1%	3.0%
Selda Bağcan	1.7%	2.1%	1.1%	1.6%
Yıldız Tilbe	1.5%	2.5%	0.0%	0.9%
Aynur Doğan	1.4%	2.5%	0.0%	1.4%



Another effect of shrinking areas of socialization is manifested in sports team preferences. Amedspor is of particular interest among Kurdish youth who follow the sport. Amedspor gathers more fans in cities where the Kurdish issue gets more intense on the agenda, as well as in remote metropolises such as Istanbul and Izmir. Moreover, 2 out of every 10 young people supporting HDP and 1 out of every 10 young people supporting CHP are fans of Amedspor, while this rate is very low among young people close to the AK Party.

**TABLE 8: SPORTS TEAM PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

Supported Team	Total	Diyarbakır, Van, Mardin	İstanbul, İzmir	Adana, Mersin	Urfa
Galatasaray	40.5%	40.2%	35.2%	40.5%	48.2%
Fenerbahçe	23.6%	21.0%	20.2%	34.5%	29.0%
Beşiktaş	22.2%	23.2%	23.5%	20.7%	18.8%
Amedspor	11.9%	13.2%	18.6%	4.3%	3.6%
Foreign Teams	1.8%	2.4%	2.6%	0.0%	0.4%

	TOTAL	WOMEN	Men	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Galatasaray	40.5%	39.4%	41.3%	48.0%	34.6%	35.9%
Fenerbahçe	23.6%	25.0%	22.5%	27.6%	27.2%	20.6%
Beşiktaş	22.2%	26.5%	18.8%	22.4%	27.2%	21.9%
Amedspor	11.9%	8.1%	14.9%	1.6%	11.1%	19.2%
Foreign Teams	1.8%	0.9%	2.6%	0.4%	0.0%	2.4%

## 4.5. Private Life Preferences

More than a third of Kurdish youth have a girlfriend/boyfriend and about a third of them say that if they had a lover, they would hide it from their families and their surroundings. As expected, women are hiding their relationship more than men.

**TABLE 9: PRIVATE LIFE STATUS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE**

	SAMPLE	TURKEY
I have a lover	35.5%	40.3%
I do not have a lover	64.5%	59.7%

While Kurdish youth accept situations such as being lovers, flirting and holding hands as usual, they begin to set clear boundaries beyond these. The most flexible ones are the young people from the CHP while the most conservative ones are from the AK Party.

HDP youth are located between these two, in a spot close to those from the CHP, but relatively more conservative. When sorted according to the city, those who live in the West also seem to be more flexible than those who live in the region. Women look more positively at the first stages, such as flirting and dating than men, while men are more flexible at the following stages.

**TABLE 10: PRIVATE LIFE PREFERENCES OF KURDISH YOUTH**

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS					
Not proper before marriage	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP	
Having sexual intercourse	61.6%	92.4%	38.3%	51.8%	
Living together	56.6%	87.2%	34.0%	46.7%	
Making out	37.4%	62.2%	22.3%	28.4%	
Flirting	18.7%	29.3%	10.6%	15.0%	
Holding hands	17.7%	28.6%	10.6%	12.8%	
Being in a relationship	15.2%	26.0%	10.6%	10.5%	

Which can be done? n/10	TOTAL	CITY (2)		GENDER	
		REGION	WEST	WOMEN	MEN
Flirting	3.75	3.64	3.92	3.85	3.66
Being in a relationship	3.83	3.72	4.00	3.88	3.79
Holding hands	3.79	3.67	3.97	3.81	3.76
Making out	3.17	2.95	3.53	3.08	3.26
Having sexual intercourse	2.37	2.10	2.80	2.20	2.53
Living together	2.57	2.37	2.90	2.37	2.75

Majority of the Kurdish youth cite the native language problem and discrimination among the most important political problems. Although the daily use of native language is declining, young people who are discriminated against as a result of their identity preferences are becoming more possessive of both their native language and their identity. Similarly, identity preferences affect young people's socialization experiences and even their choice of marriage. The desire to marry a Kurdish person is emanated from the desire to marry someone from the same culture and maintain that culture, and sometimes from getting closer to Kurds due to the discrimination he/she has suffered. In young people's marriage, one or more of the factors of common faith, common culture, or common language often stand out. One participant summarizes his / her marriage preferences:

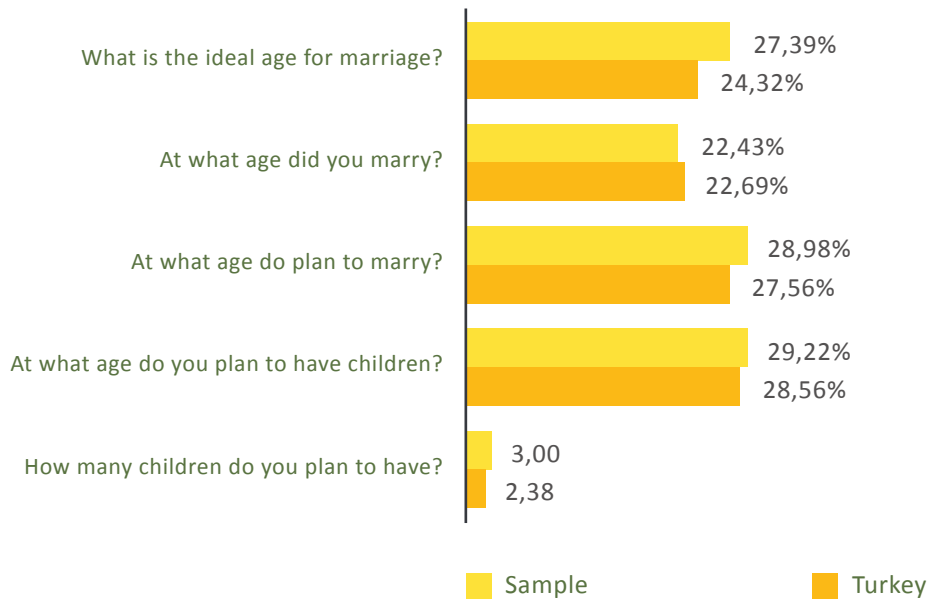
“ *The religious dimension is very important, I am a Muslim, and he/ she should also be a Muslim as well. If the political opinion is not very opposite, two people can get along with each other, but they should not be completely opposite. Ethnic identity is also important to me, that is, because of the cultural difference.* ”



Kurdish youth do not want to get married early compared to the average in Turkey. The average preference for the ideal marriage age of Kurdish young people is 3 years above the average in Turkey. However, the average age of Kurdish young people who marry is almost the same as the average in Turkey. Similarly,

the planned age of marriage and the age at which they want to have children are very close to the average in Turkey. However, the preference of Kurdish youth for the number of children is higher than the Turkey average.

**GRAPHIC 10: MARRIAGE PREFERENCES OF THE YOUTH**



## 4.6. Identity

Kurdish youth maintain a Kurdish identity and connect with universal identities at the same time. In the meantime, they also put an emphasis on religious faith. Muslim and Kurdish identities are the most widely accepted. This is followed by libertarian, world citizen and egalitarian identities respectively. However, these identities show a different distribution with regard to their political party preferences. Four out of every five people in the AK Party emphasize their Muslim identity, while this emphasis is one-third in the HDP and one-fifth in the CHP. Two out of every three HDP supporters put an emphasis on the Kurdish identity, while this is emphasized by one out of every three AK Party members. Among the three parties, Kurdish identity is least emphasized by the CHP supporters. Kurdish youth from the CHP and HDP consider themselves libertarians within a band of 35-40%, while this figure falls to 13% among Kurdish youth from the AK Party. The emphasis on World Citizenship and egalitarianism is strongest among young people supporting CHP. Therefore, in the general landscape, the Muslim emphasis of Kurdish youth comes from the AK Party, the Kurdish emphasis comes from the HDP, the libertarianism emphasis comes from the HDP and CHP, and the world citizenship emphasis comes from the CHP.

Unclaimed identities are as important as accepted identities. The lowest emphasis on both Kurdish and religious identities comes from Kurdish youth from the CHP. Patriotic and Turkish Republic citizenship identities are almost never owned by young people from the HDP, while owned by young people from the CHP at a weak proportion. Even among AK Party Kurdish youth, who make the strongest emphasis, this figure does not reach 30%.

Although the Kurdish youth of the HDP are defining themselves as an individual of Turkey and assuming their futures to be here, the proportion of having the identity of a citizen of the Republic of Turkey is quite weak. This can be explained with geography or considered as an indication that the general intimacy with society is not felt in the public sense.

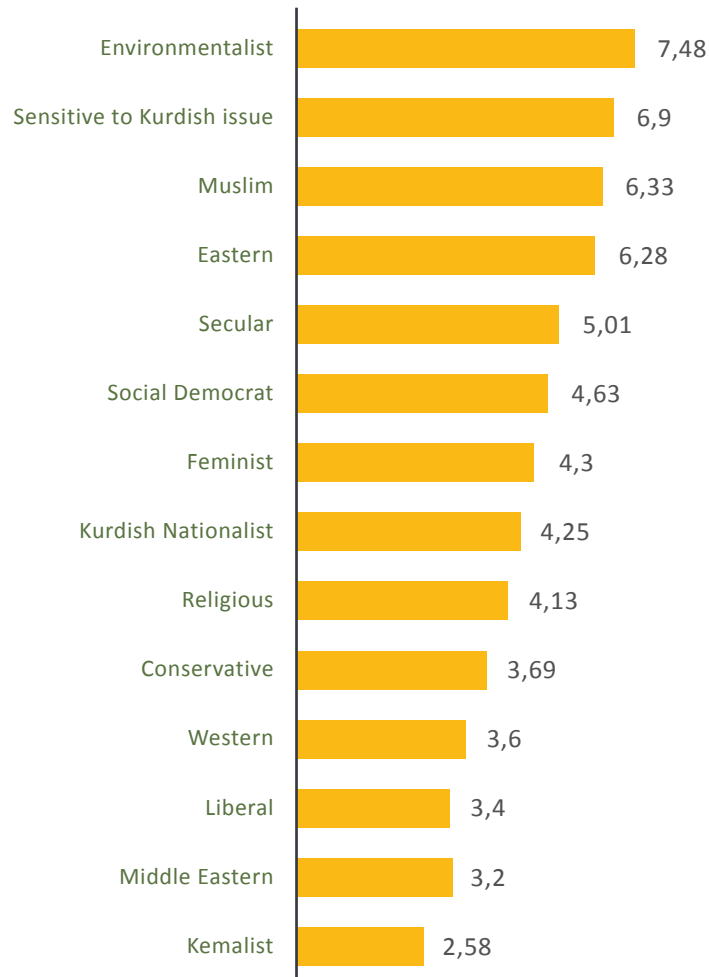
When certain identities are asked alone, more different intersections appear there. "Environmentalist," "sensitive to the Kurdish issue," "Muslim" and "Eastern" identities are those expressed with the most positive views. Although the secular identity gets an average score of 5 on a scale of 1-10, the Kemalist identity gets an average score of 2.6. More international identities, such as "Middle Eastern" and "Western," are also not in demand by Kurdish youth.

**TABLE 11: IDENTITY PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
With what identities would you like to be called?	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Muslim	47.6%	80.9%	19.3%	34.5%
Kurdish	46.6%	28.6%	17.4%	63.0%
Libertarian	33.8%	13.5%	36.0%	40.7%
World citizen	33.6%	20.9%	44.3%	33.3%
Egalitarian	32.7%	26.1%	39.1%	33.4%
Citizen of Turkish Republic	13.1%	27.5%	12.8%	5.4%
Patriot	12.5%	28.7%	15.3%	4.4%
Democrat	10.0%	4.4%	12.9%	12.9%
Revolutionist	7.6%	0.7%	6.0%	10.6%
Secular	7.2%	3.6%	20.0%	5.5%
Religious	6.7%	12.7%	2.4%	5.0%
Socialist	6.6%	1.8%	8.3%	8.5%
Modern	6.0%	5.1%	8.3%	4.2%
Leftist	5.1%	1.1%	9.4%	6.8%
Conservative	3.8%	8.6%	2.4%	2.1%
Social Democrat	3.0%	1.1%	7.1%	3.6%
Liberal	1.7%	0.0%	3.6%	1.6%
Alawite	1.6%	0.7%	2.4%	2.1%



## GRAPHIC 11: IDENTITY PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH



Despite all these differences and heterogeneous preferences, Kurdish youth show a Turkish profile. Kurdish young people who were born in the west or emigrated to western provinces with their families are culturally Turkified, regardless of their experience and political position. A significant part of them hope to hold on to life in Turkey. 30% of Kurdish youth prefer Diyarbakır if the same living conditions are provided.

In addition, Izmir is in high demand with 26% and Istanbul with 24%. Erbil, on the other hand, remains at about 4%. In other words, the future plans of a significant majority of Kurdish youth except for those who plan a future in their homelands focus on Turkey and especially Western Turkey. This is not a direct result of the HDP's policy of being a part of Turkey, but the policy and discourse of the HDP seem to have contributed to this compromising of the Kurdish youth.



**TABLE 12: CITY PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH FOR WORKING**

If you get two job proposals that will provide the same living conditions, which one would you choose?	
Erbil	3.7%
İstanbul	24.3%
Diyarbakır	30.5%
Van	8.4%
İzmir	26.7%
Ankara	6.4%

On the other hand, despite the identity of being a part of Turkey, almost half of the Kurdish youth do not want to have a Turkish lover because of the discrimination they experience. Although there is an intention and plan to live in Turkey and build a future in the western provinces, the height in the proportion of those who do

not want to have a Turkish lover is noteworthy in that it shows that discrimination and its influence are building walls between them. This also shows that there is a Kurdish habitat in which Kurds and especially Kurdish youth can live in western provinces, and having such a habitat makes it easier to move away.

## 4.7. Social Life Preferences

Kurdish youth have a libertarian attitude on issues such as gender and freedom of faith. About 65% of young people say that women can go out at any time, while about 58% support the recognition of djemevs as a place of worship. The proportion of those who support mandatory religious lessons and who advocate banning of abortion remains at 30%. However, these preferences also have a heterogeneous character. The attitudes of Kurdish youth with different political preferences on these issues are also changing. For example, those who support women going out at any time are largely made up of young people supporting CHP with 80% and HDP with 73%. Similarly, those who support the recognition of djemevs as a place of worship are young people from the CHP and HDP, with a support of about 70%. In the meantime, 37% of the Kurdish Youth supporting AK Party are also supporting the recognition of djemevs as places of worship while 60% of them are in favor of mandatory religious classes. In short, the pro-freedom tone of Kurdish youth is largely made up of CHP and HDP voters.

From a regional point of view, we see that young people living in the West are in more of an open position than young people living in cities with a Kurdish population. Women, on the other hand, are either as libertarian as men or more liberal than men in all topics.

Especially on issues that directly concern women, such as abortion, women's participation in business, the libertarian attitude of women becomes much more evident. So, as well as political preferences, the city and gender are categories that influence young people's attitudes about social issues.



**TABLE 13: SOCIAL PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Women should be able to go outside at any time	64.6%	38.2%	79.8%	72.5%
Djemevs should be recognized as a place of worship	58.4%	36.8%	67.0%	70.9%
Students can stay in the same house as boys and girls	37.3%	5.6%	45.7%	51.4%
It is right that religion courses are compulsory	30.2%	60.5%	14.9%	18.8%
I don't want to eat in restaurants with alcohol	29.0%	52.6%	12.8%	17.9%
Abortion should be banned	28.5%	50.3%	14.9%	19.7%
State laws must comply with the Koran	27.2%	51.6%	10.6%	15.6%
If there is a shortage of employment in a place, men should be preferred first	21.5%	38.5%	6.4%	15.2%
Women can work in places where they only come into contact with women.	10.5%	18.4%	4.3%	7.5%
A boy must go to high school / university first if only one child in the family can go	7.9%	12.8%	4.3%	5.9%

	TOTAL	CITY (2)		GENDER	
	TOTAL	REGION	WEST	WOMEN	MEN
Abortion should be banned	2.42	2.75	1.91	2.33	2.51
I don't want to eat in restaurants with alcohol	2.39	2.60	2.06	2.43	2.35
State laws must comply with the Koran	2.45	2.67	2.10	2.41	2.49
It is right that religion courses are compulsory	2.49	2.69	2.18	2.53	2.45
If there is a shortage of employment in a place, men should be preferred first	2.08	2.40	1.59	1.89	2.26
A boy must go to high school / university first if only one child in the family can go	1.49	1.63	1.27	1.34	1.63
Women can work in places where they only come into contact with women.	1.64	1.80	1.40	1.42	1.84
Djemevs should be recognized as a place of worship	3.64	3.56	3.76	3.57	3.70
Students can stay in the same house as boys and girls	2.75	2.56	3.03	2.69	2.80
Women should be able to go outside at any time	3.84	3.76	3.97	4.16	3.55

	TOTAL
Women should be able to go outside at any time	3.84
Djemevs should be recognized as a place of worship	3.64
Students can stay in the same house as boys and girls	2.75
It is right that religion courses are compulsory	2.49
State laws must comply with the Koran	2.45
Abortion should be banned	2.42
I don't want to eat in restaurants with alcohol	2.39
If there is a shortage of employment in a place, men should be preferred first	2.08
Women can work in places where they only come into contact with women.	1.64
A boy must go to high school / university first if only one child in the family can go	1.49

**TABLE 14: SOCIAL DISTANCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH BASED ON IDENTITIES**

	NOT TO BE MY TEACHER	NOT TO BE MY MAYOR	NOT TO BE MY LOVER
Sect member, religionist	83.4%	85.1%	89.6%
Gay	77.6%	77.8%	85.0%
Atheist	66.9%	68.7%	72.5%
Syrian	61.7%	67.5%	67.1%
Arab	52.4%	58.8%	59.3%
Armenian	45.8%	50.9%	51.4%
Turkish	42.8%	47.0%	44.0%
Greek	36.5%	45.6%	40.3%
American	35.9%	42.9%	40.1%
Japanese	30.6%	39.2%	39.9%
Norwegian	29.5%	39.1%	39.2%
German	29.3%	38.8%	36.2%
Alawite	18.4%	23.8%	35.1%
Wearing scarf	18.1%	14.9%	35.0%
Woman	9.1%	11.8%	34.4%



The libertarian attitude reflected in the general frame of Kurdish youth does not manifest itself in their social distance towards different identities. The tolerance of young people for different identities is very low. In particular, they do not want teachers, mayors and lovers with sectarian, gay, atheist, Syrian and Arab identities. The negative outlook for these identities is over 50%, and for some it is up to 80%. About half of young people don't want an Armenian, Arab or even Turkish person to be their teacher, mayor or lover. Although the perception of Kurdish youth about Arab identity is negatively affected by the rising negative wave of asylum seekers in Turkey, the effects of ethnic and political tension caused by living together, especially in places such as Mardin and Urfa, are also felt intensely.

Social distance preferences of the youth are also intertwined with political trends. Young people who are CHP and HDP voters are much more distant towards sect members, while young people from AK Party are more distant towards gay and atheists. While the AK Party supporters are very distant towards the Armenians, this identity is Syrians for the CHP supporters and Turks for the HDP supporters. In any case, the practical equivalent of the libertarian statements discussed in the previous section is welcomed with a very complex and thought-provoking social intolerance.

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
I don't want to have a teacher who is .....	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Sect member, religionist	83.4%	70.9%	91.1%	90.7%
Gay	77.6%	89.9%	70.8%	78.4%
Atheist	66.9%	86.8%	60.0%	62.3%
Syrian	61.7%	76.8%	84.6%	65.0%
Arab	52.4%	50.0%	56.5%	63.0%
Armenian	45.8%	74.7%	50.0%	37.5%
Turkish	42.8%	34.1%	9.1%	63.6%
Greek	36.5%	58.7%	41.2%	36.7%
American	35.9%	61.9%	35.7%	29.2%
Japanese	30.6%	52.8%	30.8%	32.4%
Norwegian	29.5%	53.7%	40.0%	26.5%
German	29.3%	56.1%	35.7%	23.9%
Alawite	18.4%	43.2%	16.7%	15.0%
Wearing scarf	18.1%	9.4%	28.6%	27.8%
Woman	9.1%	9.4%	9.1%	13.1%

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
I don't want to have a mayor who is .....	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Sect member, religionist	85.1%	76.4%	90.9%	91.9%
Gay	77.8%	91.6%	70.8%	78.5%
Atheist	68.7%	80.9%	87.9%	69.5%
Syrian	67.5%	86.2%	55.0%	62.6%
Arab	58.8%	69.9%	54.5%	66.2%
Armenian	50.9%	78.4%	52.9%	43.5%
Turkish	47.0%	31.7%	23.1%	69.6%
Greek	45.6%	72.7%	61.1%	37.2%
American	42.9%	68.6%	41.2%	37.8%
Japanese	39.2%	66.7%	42.9%	31.9%
Norwegian	39.1%	66.2%	46.7%	31.5%
German	38.8%	65.2%	38.5%	33.3%
Alawite	23.8%	50.0%	16.7%	15.0%
Wearing scarf	14.9%	3.3%	33.3%	27.9%
Woman	11.8%	12.5%	9.1%	17.5%

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
I don't want to have a lover who is .....	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Sect member, religionist	89.6%	93.8%	95.6%	91.4%
Gay	85.0%	74.7%	91.0%	91.8%
Atheist	72.5%	86.9%	65.2%	70.9%
Syrian	67.1%	78.9%	86.1%	67.7%
Arab	59.3%	68.4%	58.3%	69.5%
Armenian	51.4%	76.8%	43.8%	45.3%
Turkish	44.0%	68.9%	50.0%	38.8%
Greek	40.3%	20.0%	9.1%	64.8%
American	40.1%	33.3%	50.0%	56.6%
Japanese	39.9%	64.7%	42.9%	40.0%
Norwegian	39.2%	69.4%	43.8%	33.8%
German	36.2%	63.2%	30.8%	32.4%
Alawite	35.1%	50.0%	50.0%	39.5%
Wearing scarf	35.0%	64.2%	30.8%	31.4%
Woman	34.4%	58.3%	43.8%	32.4%



# BASIC PROBLEMS AND POLITICAL PREFERENCES

# 5 Basic Problems and Political Preferences

## 5.1 Migration

More than half of Kurdish youth have immigration experience in their lives. Half of those who migrated said they had emigrated alone. On the other hand, 2 out of every 5 young people living in the western provinces of Turkey were born and raised in the West. Again, 1 out of every 5 young people has lived in this city for more than 10 years. They share that young people are mostly migrating for work or education

**TABLE 15: MIGRATION DEMOGRAPHY OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

Ever lived in a village or district				
Never lived		57.5%		
1-10 years		23.4%		
11 years and more		19.1%		

How many years in the city?	TOTAL	REGION	WEST
10 years and less	34.5%	31.1%	39.8%
More than 10 years	17.9%	16.4%	20.3%
Living in the city since birth	47.6%	52.6%	39.8%

Reason	TOTAL	REGION	WEST
Health and marriage	6.5%	8.2%	4.5%
Education	42.9%	41.8%	44.2%
Work	44.8%	41.8%	48.4%
Natural disasters / conflict/ compulsory migration	5.8%	8.2%	3.0%

Migrated with whom	WEST
Alone / with friends	49.1%
My family	50.9%



The phenomenon of immigration affects many things in young people's lives in various forms. The life of young people who were born in the West or emigrated there many years ago begins with the adventure of "reminding of the fact that they are Kurds" in their first encounters at school, work, friendship relationships. Young people who mostly experience the feeling that they are "not from there" live in a state of ambiguity, which is combined with the feeling of being separated from their hometown. So immigration and discrimination are beginning to intertwine and continue together. One participant summarizes this situation as follows:

**“ I feel more like I am from Istanbul because I have spent more time in İstanbul, but I miss Başkale because my childhood was past there and my relatives were there.**

On the other hand, the need to hold on to the city economically leads the youth to search for the necessary opportunities to hold on as well. In this quest, young people come into contact with Islamic communities, popular culture environments, and circles consisting of Kurdish youth and try to hold on to these communities. Especially in immigration provinces, young people use the city's football teams as a tool to hold on to the city. Adana and Izmir stand out as two cities where these tools are intensely used. The following examples reflect this trend:

**“ I am supporting Göztepe, which is the team of Izmir. My second team is Galatasaray.**  
*(İzmir, female)*

**“ I am supporting Karşıyakaspor. I don't have a second team.** *(İzmir, male)*

**“ I am supporting Göztepe.** *(İzmir, male.)*

**“ I am supporting Galatasaray and secondly Göztepe because I live here.** *(İzmir, male)*

**“ I've loved Fenerbahçe since I was little. I support Adanaspor and Adanademirspor locally.** *(Adana, male)*

**“ I support Galatasaray because it is popular. My second team is Adana Demirspor.**

However, if young people living in their hometown are interested in football, they support Amedspor, which has gained a regional identity, and if it is popular, the team of their own city. But Kurdish young people living in the West also support and follow the teams of their hometown, because it is a tool that maintains a connection with the hometown and represents the longing for the hometown.

**The intention and desire of young people in migration provinces to return to their homeland changes in relation to their socio-economic situation in that city. Young people with low income want to return to their homeland, while those with a middle-class and higher status have a vision of a future that centers on the province in which they live. The following examples summarize these trends:**



“ I think I would live more comfortably in Diyarbakır. I currently live in Izmir to work, but if I had the opportunity to do the job I have there I would certainly live in Diyarbakır, I wouldn't come here. (Izmir, male)

“ I would like to live in Mardin, but we live here because the business opportunities here are better. (Izmir, female, textile worker)

“ If there was a job, I'd certainly prefer the East, and I'd like to live where I was born. Living in Sirnak, that is, in my own hometown, is the best... (Istanbul, male, worker)

“ I would like to live in Diyarbakır because it is my own hometown and because I am more free there. (Istanbul, Male, Worker)

Among the young people born and living there in the West, even those who are disconnected from their hometown have begun to wonder about their hometown and have traveled there for the last five years. At the same time, the peace with being Kurdish and the regret of not speaking Kurdish began to manifest itself. In this period, Kurdish becomes an identity that is rediscovered and possessed, rather than something that is reminded from outside and wrapped in a reactionary reflex against it. The most obvious output of this process, which began with the Kurdish initiative and peaked at the June 7 elections with the share of votes received by the HDP, is the rise of Kurdish consciousness. It can be said that the most tangible gain of this period is the relative legitimacy of the Kurdish language and that Kurdish has become “a dress worn despite those who do not like it.”

Both the experience of immigration and the process that has transformed devastatingly from a political solution to an armed conflict have dispersed the emotional environment between 2013-15, but being Kurdish is not a reversible process, like a genie coming out of a bottle, and negatively affects relationships such as friendship and love, triggering discrimination. The social distances of Kurdish youth with others are increasing due to the social circles formed by those who are discriminated against. Among the Kurdish youth, who say “I will not have a Turkish lover” there are mostly those who have emigrated and those who have been discriminated against. Two participants describe:

“ I never, ever flirt with a Turkish person. It could be an Arab, Armenian, Syrian, but not Turkish. (Female, Istanbul)

“ In bilateral relations, especially if there is a situation where you are thinking of getting married, cultural harmony is also necessary. Ideology is on one side, but 90% of Turks have a clear attitude towards the Kurds. I think culture, family structure, and faith are important in marriage. (Male, İzmir)



## 5.2 Discrimination

Although they think the same way about Turkey's problems with regard to topics such as unemployment, economy, justice, education, the Kurdish issue distinguishes Kurdish youth from others. About 7 in 10 young people say they are discriminated against, rarely or often. According to a Youth Study named Next Generation Turkey<sup>2</sup> the proportion of young people who say they have been discriminated against in Turkey is 5%. Even the proportion of those who say they are too often discriminated against, among Kurdish youth, is more than double that. This shows that Kurdish youth are too exposed to discrimination in everyday life and have to spend a lot of time and effort to deal with discrimination. Kurdish youth are most exposed to discrimination in a university environment.

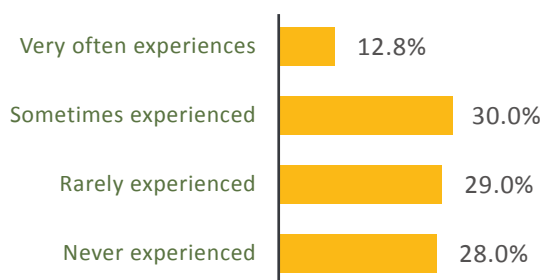
“ I’ve been discriminated against several times. When I was in 6th grade in middle school, inspectors would often come and go and talk to students. As soon as an inspector entered the class, he encountered my name [which is Kurdish] on the list. He wanted to see who I was, so I went up to the board. I was a confident kid. I got to the board very comfortably and thought I’d answer the questions he asked. He asked me who my father was, and that question was very strange to me. I thought he knew my father. I told him about my father. He cut me off halfway through my speech and turned me towards the board and said “Raise your head.” When I looked up, I met Atatürk and he told me that he was my father. I didn’t know what to say right now or then. (Female, Istanbul)

“ For example, if you are a student in Sivas, like every Kurdish student, if you speak Kurdish on campus, the next day you will be stopped, or warned... (Male, Mardin)

“ In the face of a situation, our Kurdish identity is constantly at the forefront. When they find out that you’re Kurdish or that you’re from the East, there’s always a different attitude towards you. For example, I was living in a dorm at University [in the West]. There, nationalist friends entered the room and said, “we do not want Kurds here.” Or I even heard that the client who came to my workplace asked the boss to fire me just because he found out I was Kurdish. I mean, this is a situation we experience because of our identity. (Male, Van)

2. Next Generation Turkey: Listening to the Voice of the Youth, Yaşama Dair Vakıf, İstanbul, 2017.  
<https://yada.org.tr/yayinlar/next-generation-turkiyedeki-genclerin-sesi-arastirmasi/>

**TABLE 16: KURDISH YOUTH'S EXPERIENCE OF DISCRIMINATION**



DISCRIMINATION EXPERIENCE	REGION	WEST	TOTAL
Never experienced	65.8%	34.2%	100%
Rarely experienced	61.8%	38.2%	100%
Sometimes experienced	60.1%	39.9%	100%
Very often experiences	50.5%	49.5%	100%

Young people believe that there is a prejudice against Kurds in the West and therefore they are discriminated against. They also attribute the reason for this prejudice and discrimination to the misrepresentation of Kurds by Turkish TV. In addition, social media is seen as one of the places where discrimination occurs most. Discrimination is also expressed in sport, which has become more pronounced since the establishment of Amedspor. The participants' statements are as follows:

“ I support Diyarbakırspor, they didn't sell us water when we went to an away match. (Diyarbakır, Male)

“ My family and I went on vacation to the Black Sea. The waiter asked with a smile where we were from. When we said Diyarbakır, the expression on the man's face suddenly changed. His face fell off. He left without saying anything. (Diyarbakır, Female)

“ If something about Kurds has been on the agenda on social media, bad things are written mostly. (Adana, Male)

“ In Adana's promotional video, 2-3 people talk. They're in the Yüreğir district ... the boy wrote under it, 'they're not from Adana, they wouldn't do that if they were from Adana, they're people from the East.' I didn't like it. These people were forced to emigrate. (From Mardin, Student in Mersin, Male)



“ When I want to rent a house, they ask me where I’m from. When I say I’m from Mardin they say ‘we don’t normally rent houses to the people from Mardin’. Or they ask “Are you from Syria?” (Adana, Male)

“ I’m good with everyone at the school where I work. But, for example, when the Dağlıca attack happened, they were cursing especially in front of me. (Istanbul, Female)

“ When they ask where I’m from, I say I’m from Bingöl, they say I don’t look like from there. They are so deluded to think that they’re telling me something good in their own way. Why is it a good thing not to look like a Kurd? (Istanbul, Male)

The fact that there is a crisis in the transition from “Cultural Kurdism” to “Political Kurdism” is reflected in the statements of young people who are experiencing this transition. Young people who later became acquainted with the Kurdish identity or later attached a political meaning to this identity describe how reactions to being Kurdish have changed. These young people say that if being Kurdish is an invisible thing, it is not a problem, but when it begins to be shown and seen, they start having problems:

“ I was in a bit of a conservative environment until I went to college. I was a reasonable Kurd until high school ended. I had no resistance about my Kurdish identity. I didn’t have a desire to reflect my language, my culture, my life. In this case, it is unlikely that I will face much discrimination, because you live in a Turkified environment. So you’re not a problem at all. But my college period was a little different, I embraced my Kurdish identity a little more there. That’s when things start to change. For instance, when all languages are saluted at graduation ceremonies, I wrote in a Facebook post to the Yearbook Committee ‘add Kurdish, you can say it like this.’ It was a very simple thing for me at the time. The next day, I suddenly started to be pointed at school. The more you care about your language and culture, the more you are exposed to discrimination in Turkey. It is still like that. (Female, Istanbul)

“ In general, saying that you are a Kurd in any city of Central Anatolia, or even saying a few words in Kurdish, will immediately expose you to discrimination. Sometimes we want to be appointed somewhere else. I choose Diyarbakır or İstanbul. I think that only İstanbul [In the West] can tolerate me. Because I speak Kurdish with my daughter on the street, in the park, in the market. And I think an inner Anatolian city does not tolerate it, for example. I can't live comfortably and I'll always have an eye on me. Actually, it's all discrimination. They don't have to insult you, sometimes the look is discrimination. (Female, İstanbul)

The overall happiness of young people changes in relation to the extent to which they are subjected to discrimination. The ones with the lowest levels of happiness are the ones who say they are often discriminated against. Young people living in western provinces are more likely to feel discriminated against individually, while young people living in Kurdish provinces feel that they are victims of a state-oriented collective discrimination.

As men try to deal with discrimination in some way, the discrimination that women suffer and have to deal with, caused by being “both a Woman and a Kurd,” becomes deeper and more multidimensional.

“ There's a challenge we're having. My ethnic identity has been problematic from the beginning. But other than that, I have other concerns. Like rape and child rape. Like the trials where the rapist and the children were put on at the same time. Even the thought of it is terrible. I have great concerns over children... The same goes for women. When someone goes missing, the first thing that comes to mind without an age difference is rape. And that's something that a person's heart can't handle. My greatest concern is in this direction. Economic difficulties or similar things seem manageable to me, but such crimes frighten me very much. (Istanbul, Female)

“ I don't think there are any women in the eastern and southeastern regions who say they have not been discriminated against in terms of gender. Even people who are economically welloff are discriminated against by society, if not by their family. Because we live in a patriarchal society. We feel it much more in the East. For studying, for what we are doing, actually, we do the same thing as men, but when women do it, it attracts the reaction of society. From time to time, when we go to western provinces, this time we are subjected to discrimination because of our political thoughts. (Diyarbakır, Female)



## 5.3. Religion

Contrary to the popular belief that Kurds are more religious, the research findings do not support the view that Kurdish youth are more religious than other young people. Kurdish youth are similar to the General Turkey average in terms of religiosity and performing religious rituals. However, there is a correlation between religiosity and party relations, as expected: Those who voted for the AK Party have a higher rate of prayer. Nearly two-thirds of young people who voted for the AK Party and more than one-quarter of young people who voted for the HDP say they often pray.

**TABLE 17: RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

		SAMPLE	TURKEY
Scarf	Wearing	47.6%	27.7%
	Not wearing	52.4%	72.3%
Prayer	Often	36.9%	37.1%
	Sometimes	45.1%	48.9%
	Never	18.0%	14.0%

PRAYER	AK PARTY	HDP
Often	62.5	27.0
Sometimes	33.9	49.7
Never	3.6	23.3

A more religious profile is observed in: those living in Kurdish provinces than those who migrated to the west; in married than singles; in people living with their family than those living with friends or alone; in living with crowded families than those living with smaller families; in those who lived in the village for a long time than those who lived less; in those with low economic status and low income than people with high income.

Said Nursi is the name most frequently mentioned by Kurdish youth as the leader of religious opinion. It is followed by the names of Ali Şeriati, Malcolm X and Mustafa İslamoğlu. The names of İhsan Eliaçık, Nihat Hatipoğlu, Nurettin Yıldız, Caner Taslaman and Alparslan Kuytul are mentioned a little.

On the other hand, the proportion of those who do not believe in any religion is higher among Kurdish youth than the Turkey average, i.e. 17.5%. According to 2017 data of Konda<sup>3</sup>; while the proportion of those who identify as non-believers across all age groups in Turkey was 3 percent, this figure was found to be 11 percent among HDP voters. On the other hand, according to MAK Consultancy's 2020 Turkey-wide Youth Survey<sup>4</sup> the proportion of young people who do not have any faith is 7.7 per cent, while the proportion of those who do not believe in the afterlife is recorded as 11.7 per cent.

3. Konda Voter Clusters: HDP Voters, May 2018. <https://konda.com.tr/tr/rapor/secmen-kumeleri-hdp-secmenleri/>

4. Turkey-Wide Youth Research, MAK Consulting, September 2020. <https://www.makdanismanlik.org/mak-danismanlik-genclik-arastirmasi/>

Atheist identity is rare among Kurdish youth close to the AK Party, while a quarter of Kurdish youth close to the CHP and HDP identify themselves as atheists/deists/agnostics. In total, three-quarters of young people who make these remarks consider themselves close to the HDP. The separation from religion in HDP youth compared to the scale of Turkey is noted in the context of the relationship between political ideology and religious faith. This finding partially confirms the general belief that young people who are close to Kurdish politics represented by the HDP are “moving away from religion and becoming secular.” Secularization in Kurdish youth manifests itself as a process that moves faster than other young people, while the fact that secularization has accelerated among generations is also associated with political attitude.

**TABLE 18: RELIGIOUS PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

How do you define yourself in terms of faith?	TOTAL	CITY (2)		GENDER	
		REGION	WEST	WOMEN	Men
Sunni	12.6%	13.6%	11.1%	9.7%	15.2%
Hanafi	19.4%	22.0%	15.3%	23.0%	16.1%
Shafii	47.0%	51.7%	39.7%	48.1%	46.0%
Alawite/Caferi/Shia	3.7%	1.6%	7.0%	4.1%	3.2%
Atheist/Agnostic/Deist/All	17.3%	11.1%	27.0%	15.0%	19.4%

2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS				
How do you define yourself in terms of faith?	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Sunni	12.6%	19.4%	13.8%	11.0%
Hanafi	19.4%	34.2%	21.3%	10.2%
Shafii	47.0%	45.1%	38.3%	49.2%
Alawite/Caferi/Shia	3.7%	1.0%	13.8%	3.8%
Atheist/Agnostic/Deist/All	17.3%	0.3%	12.8%	25.8%

However, the rate of those who have a religious belief among the youth voting for the HDP is about three times those who do not. Again, the rate of those who pray regularly among young people close to the HDP is higher than those who never pray. About half of these young people share that they sometimes pray, albeit irregularly. Therefore, although the distance from religion among HDP youth is higher than the Turkey average and secularization is faster, it should not be overlooked that the vast majority of these young people are religious. This result shows that the myth that young people close to HDP are irreligious and secular is also problematic.

Among Kurdish youth who define themselves as atheist, agnostic and deist, the proportion of men is higher than women. Three women for every four men identify themselves with these identities. On the other hand, it seems that young women draw a more religious and conservative profile, and *it is observed that the proportion of young Kurdish women wearing headscarves is significantly higher than the average in Turkey.*





Kurdish youth express that their religiosity has decreased compared to five years ago. Most young people know and express that they are at different points with their families in terms of religious faith and piety. Those who identify themselves as Muslims and do not regularly perform worship express this as a deficiency. A significant number of those who have moved away from religion prefer not to talk about it with their families or hide it from them, as they think they will have a conflict with their families.

Kurdish youth also attribute the distance from religion or the decline of religiosity to what is happening on the individual and family planes and the feeling caused by the public representation of the religion. Young people explain the adventure of distance from religion by factors such as individual readings, changing friend environments, family pressure, and on the other hand, they express the impact of the representation of religion in a political lane or the close relationship of religious organizations with politics. Both the approach of Islamic communities and their affiliated organizations to the Kurds and the Kurdish issue and their close relationship with the state and power also have an effect that distracts young people from these structures and therefore from piety and religion.

There are two different actors who reinforce the tendency of Kurdish youth to distance themselves from religion in relation to political attitudes. First, Kurdish youth believe that the AK Party benefits from Islam on the scale of Turkey, and their opposition to the AK Party becomes a factor that distracts them from religion. Second, on the regional plane, they recall the atmosphere in which ISIS and other Islamic armed organizations in Syria attacked Kobani, or underline that in places like Afrin today, these organizations treated the Kurds in a bad way. These organizations' claims of Islamic representation are causing an effect that accelerates young people's movement away from religion.

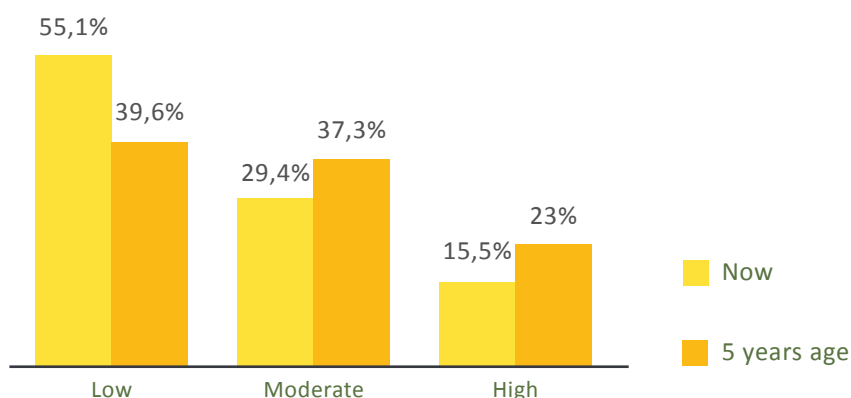
**“ I believe in Islam, but I don't fully practice Islam. Of course, I was a more religious person before. In general, we are changing because the elders are making pressure on this issue. The more we read, the more we experience ourselves, the more our own thoughts change. We have religious beliefs, we have differences between brothers, but because our parents are so dominant in this regard, most of them have cooled off from Islam because of the pressure.**

**“ I believe there is a creator because I have no other explanation. I have no connection to any religion other than that. I come from a family that believes in Islam, I learned the Koran, I almost became Hafiz. And then when I opened up to the outside world, when I came out of my own family, I guess I rejected something. There are also many differences between my family and me in terms of religion and thought. I think the reason for the difference is purely developmental. I grew up meeting different people during school, knowing that there were different views. So I had the opportunity to question, but my parents didn't have the opportunity.**



- “ It is very wrong for the parents to say to their young girls and boys pray, do this, do that, wear a scarf!’ in religious matters. I think they should explain that religion well, from the very beginning, down to the details, and leave it to them to wear a scarf or not.”
- “ I can say that I’m skeptical. In the last five years, it has been even more outweighed, I would say that the reason I have changed compared to five years ago is because I have encountered different points of view and increased my knowledge.
- “ I feel agnostic. In the last five years, I have changed and started to look at religions more as a cultural lifestyle. I had more religious views before. I have a mother and father who grew up with Islamic culture, and they were more exposed to religious teachings from their own families than I was. They’ve been in more religious settings. I was not exposed to these. I had opportunities to think more independently and freely.
- “ Five years ago, I had more faith. Politics deceived people with religion, I didn’t like it, it drove me away.
- “ I believe that Allah exists, but I do not believe in any Muslim on earth. If you look at 5 years ago, politics could not have entered mosques, but now politics is in the mosques. The use of Allah in politics 24/7 by religious people... because of this, there has been a change...
- “ ...You are a member of a community and a non-governmental organization, you got along well both financially and morally at that time, but you and the people who are members of it suffer due to the problems that arose afterwards. The biggest example of this is the FETÖ terrorist organization.

GRAPHIC 12: PIETY LEVELS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH





## 5.4. Native Language

Although half of young people say they know their native language well, they don't use the language much in everyday life. At least one-fifth of Kurdish youth know very little Kurdish and hardly use the language anymore. Although some of those who do not speak Kurdish say that they were never taught by their parents, a significant number of them say that the use of Kurdish has decreased over time and the language has been forgotten. A significant portion of those who say they know the language moderately or well, mostly speak Turkish. Those who know Kurdish mostly speak to their parents. The rate of those who speak Kurdish mostly or completely with their parents is around one third. The language of communication with siblings, friends and spouses / lovers is mostly Turkish.

**TABLE 19: KURDISH USAGE HABITS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

	WITH MOTHER	WITH FATHER	WITH SPOUSE / LOVER	WITH SIBLINGS	WITH FRIENDS
Only Turkish	17.9%	18.6%	49.7%	32.4%	36.1%
Mostly Turkish, sometimes a native language	25.9%	25.4%	21.7%	26.7%	31.7%
Turkish and native language equally weigh	14.4%	14.0%	11.7%	15.1%	19.3%
Mostly native language, sometimes Turkish	21.3%	21.2%	12.4%	17.5%	11.4%
Native language only	20.5%	20.8%	4.4%	8.3%	1.5%

Despite the fact that the barriers to Kurdish language and identity have been remarkably decreased when compared to the previous generations, the use of the language is rapidly declining, and in particular, Zazaki is among the languages that face disappearance, leading to fears that political demands will decrease along with this cultural assimilation in a significant part of the Kurds. On the other hand, it is generally accepted that this is the expected final goal of the ongoing assimilation policies. But although the decline in the use of language continues as an effect of assimilation, the research findings show the fallacy of thinking that this will result in the abandonment of identity and the political demands associated with it.

Contrary to what the Kurdish public fear and the nationalist bureaucracy of the State hope, the Kurdish young generation of today is more clearly expressing and demanding things such as education in the native language and the acceptance of Kurdish as an official language than previous generations. Almost all young people think that Kurdish should be the language of education alone in schools or in combination with Turkish.

**TABLE 20: OPINIONS OF THE KURDISH YOUTH ON EDUCATION IN NATIVE LANGUAGE**

In your opinion, what should be the language of education in schools for non-Turkish speakers	TOTAL	AK PARTY	HDP
Education language should only be native language	10,2%	7.2%	14.0%
Education language should be dual, both Turkish and native language	64.7%	49.3%	76.1%
Education language should be Turkish, native language should be taught separately at school	19.8%	31.6%	8.6%
Education language should be Turkish, there is no need to teach a native language at school	5.4%	11.8%	1.4%

In your opinion, what should be the language of education in schools for non-Turkish speakers	TOTAL	REGION	WEST	FEMALE	MEN
Education language should only be native language	10.2%	9.7%	11.0%	11.3%	9.2%
Education language should be dual, both Turkish and native language	64.7%	65.8%	63.0%	62.8%	66.4%
Education language should be Turkish, native language should be taught separately at school	19.8%	18.7%	21.4%	19.6%	19.9%
Education language should be Turkish, there is no need to teach a native language at school	5.4%	5.8%	4.7%	6.3%	4.5%

Problems of Kurds	TOTAL	DİYARBAKIR, VAN, MARDİN	İSTANBUL, İZMİR
Native Language	38.4%	36.7%	51.7%

Young people who emigrate to the west seek refuge in the need for mother tongue as both a reflex against discrimination and a lightning rod to avoid submission to dominant nationalism, as they are influenced by the nationalist character of the discrimination they experience and the political environment they are dealing with. They see the consequences of the loss of their mother tongue more easily in a non-Kurdish city.

However, despite these trends, there is no significant difference between Kurdish provinces and western provinces, although Kurdish voters living in western provinces look more warmly at native language education. Similarly, there is no significant difference in preference between men and women.

## 5.5. Political preferences and expectations from politics

Kurdish youth, like other youth, see politics as the source of everyday life's problems. For this reason, they are interested in politics, but they are not close to politics. Politics doesn't attract young people. It doesn't appeal to them. They think politics is in a vicious circle.



Factors that distinguish Kurdish youth from others are more structural problems of politics. Kurdish youth say that the general political climate was good for them during periods when the Kurdish initiative was on the agenda and they were more peaceful and concerned with politics, but they believe that the general functioning of Turkish politics today, when the issue is not addressed in the context of an initiative but in the context of conflict and security, includes discrimination against Kurds. Kurdish youth, especially close to the HDP, think that they can open a lane and exist in the cultural sphere and realize themselves, while they think that what appears in the political sphere is “the battering and suffering of Kurds.” In this context, it can be said that one of the reasons why Kurdish youth show interest in the cultural sphere is their escape from the political sphere where they are “tormented,” pushing them to the cultural sphere.

Problems for Kurdish youth are divided into two headings as problems of Turkey and Kurds. Although there are similar problems in these two titles, mother tongue and discrimination emerge as two important problem areas that separate Kurdish youth.

In the eyes of Kurdish youth, Turkey is in a bad situation in almost everything. Kurdish youth, who list the worst topics as women’s issues, the economy and justice, see a more pessimistic view when assessing Turkey’s situation than anyone else and other young people across Turkey.

**TABLE 21: EVALUATION OF TURKEY BY THE KURDISH**

How good is Turkey in the following areas? (1/10)	KURDISH YOUTH	YOUTH-TURKEY GENERAL	ALL-TURKEY GENERAL
Solutions to women’s problems	1.94	2.6	3.16
Economy	2.06	2.53	3.09
Justice	2.21	2.85	3.46
Freedom of expression	2.31	3.02	3.66
Education system	2.34	3.01	3.51
Media	2.38	3.13	3.64
External Affairs	2.57	3.25	3.8
Urbanization	2.84	3.72	4.07
Solutions to environmental problems	2.85	3.22	3.73
Agriculture	2.93	3.31	3.62
Art and culture	3.15	3.76	4.23
Health system	3.51	4.07	4.43

	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
There is an economic crisis	77.5%	55.6%	87.2%	87.5%
Turkey will not be a member to EU	77.5%	55.9%	78.7%	90.4%
I don’t think the Syria policy is right	73.2%	44.1%	78.7%	90.4%

Kurdish youth find it wrong for politicians to fight with each other when there are problems such as women's problems in Turkey as well as injustice, a poor education system and bad economy. According to them, politicians should set aside ideologies and act solution-oriented. Young people expect justice, equality, honesty and an embracing attitude from politicians.

The expectations of Kurdish youth from politics include general and individual demands such as ending corruption and nepotism, including young people in decision-making mechanisms, implementing technology-oriented development projects in which young people will be employed, as well as more collective demands such as giving the Kurdish language a public status and strengthening local governments.

The fact that the primary problems and concerns of the Kurdish people and especially the Kurdish Youth who voted for the HDP are primarily shaped by the Kurdish issue, and the fact that AK Party continued to receive votes from Kurds despite the recent backward Kurdish policy, leads to the misconception that the Kurds who voted for the AK Party are insensitive to the Kurdish issue and therefore to the problems of the Kurds. The results of the study show that young people who vote for parties other than the HDP are also significantly sensitive to the problems of Kurds.

**TABLE 22: KURDISH YOUTH'S VIEWS ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE KURDS**

		TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
<b>Kurds in Turkey compared to 5 years ago ...</b>	In better condition	22.4%	46.7%	24.5%	11.6%
	Not changed	47.8%	42.8%	53.2%	44.9%
	In worse condition	29.8%	10.5%	22.3%	43.5%
<b>Kurds in Turkey after 5 years ...</b>	They will be in better condition	28.9%	51.0%	30.9%	20.7%
	It won't change, they'll stay the same	48.5%	39.8%	53.2%	46.4%
	They'll be even worse.	22.6%	9.2%	16.0%	32.9%

Problems of Kurds	TOTAL	DİYARBAKIR, VAN, MARDİN	İSTANBUL, İZMİR	ADANA, MERSİN	URFA
Mother tongue	38.4%	36.7%	51.7%	28.2%	25.2%
Discrimination	24.0%	25.6%	18.5%	25.8%	28.6%
Education	12.5%	10.6%	12.1%	14.5%	17.6%
Unemployment	9.8%	8.7%	4.7%	16.9%	17.6%
Freedom of thought	7.4%	9.3%	5.3%	7.3%	5.7%
Injustice	5.5%	6.4%	4.0%	6.5%	5.2%
Identity problem	2.4%	2.8%	3.7%	0.8%	0.0%



Problems of Kurds	FEMALE	MALE	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Native Language	36.1%	40.5%	29.3%	30.2%	46.4%
Discrimination	27.9%	20.5%	23.7%	25.6%	21.4%
Education	11.7%	13.3%	20.5%	15.1%	8.4%
Unemployment	8.5%	10.9%	14.5%	8.1%	7.8%
Freedom of thought	10.2%	4.8%	6.0%	15.1%	6.2%
Injustice	3.6%	7.2%	5.2%	4.7%	7.3%
Identity problem	2.0%	2.8%	0.8%	1.2%	2.6%

Young people, especially in the West, mainly face the problem of discrimination and eventually forget their language, which is the most defining element of being Kurdish, due to both discrimination and lack of use in the public sphere. For this reason, according to Kurdish youth who voted for both the AK Party and the CHP, the most important problems of Kurds are the question of native language and discrimination. These young people also support native language education at a

significant rate. Even young voters close to Huda-Par seem to have close demands with young people from the HDP, such as Kurdish being the official language and education in native language. Although one of the factors determining the political position of HDP youth is Kurdish and the demands related to it, especially CHP and AK Party youth see the native language issue as a problem and support the demand, but their political positions are not shaped by the Kurdish language.

## 5.6. Political Party Preferences

The relations of Kurdish youth with the AK Party and CHP are not based on historical narratives and patterns, but on their own experiences. The belief that the CHP has a built-in negative image of the Kurds and that the AK Party is the second party of the HDP Kurds is information that was agreed until recently, while today's young people find this opinion wrong. For HDP youth, the AK Party's alliance with the MHP and its return to the method of solving the problem by military methods, by removing political settlement efforts on the Kurdish issue from its agenda, have created a distance for the AK Party among Kurdish youth, and this distance continues to be enlarged.

On the other hand, the HDP's support of the CHP in western Turkey in the March 31 elections and the language of the CHP candidates, who take care not to hurt the Kurds, combined with the opposition's victory, seem to have opened the door to change in Turkey. Since the traditional negative image of the CHP, which has become an important actor of this change, is based on the narrative, not on the experience for young people, they opened an important credit to the CHP, which they personally experience, not the CHP in the historical narrative. The rise of the CHP is fueled by these factors, making the CHP the second party of Kurdish youth. As a result of this process, Ekrem İmamoğlu seems to have gained significant popularity among Kurdish youth.

Half of HDP youth see CHP as their second party. It is possible to read this as an indication that alliance relations are bringing the parties' bases closer, whether explicit or implicit, in the light of the above-mentioned outputs. Because, although it is not at the same intensity as the HDP youth getting closer to the CHP, a similar process is seen in the AK Party youth getting closer to the MHP. The AK Party has also managed to bring even a significant proportion of its young Kurdish voters closer to the MHP. Among young Kurds who voted for the AK Party, the proportion of those who see the MHP as their second party is 33.3 percent.

**TABLE 23: POLITICAL PARTY PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

		2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS			
		TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
If there were elections on this Sunday?	AK Party	18.3%	79.9%	0.0%	0.6%
	CHP	7.5%	2.0%	64.9%	2.6%
	HDP	45.3%	3.7%	11.7%	87.3%
	Other	19.6 %	10.4%	17.0%	7.8%
	I will not vote	9.3%	4.0%	6.4%	1.7%

		CLOSEST PARTY		
		AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Second closest party	AK Party	0.0%	8.7%	6.2%
	CHP	12.3%	0.0%	50.0%
	MHP	33.3%	1.6%	0.9%
	İYİP	1.5%	11.0%	0.7%
	HDP	26.5%	49.6%	0.0%
	None	13.3%	18.9%	28.4%

Closest Party	AK Party	22.0%
	CHP	8.6%
	HDP	51.6%
	None / Other	17.8%
Second Closest Party	AK Party	5.3%
	CHP	29.5%
	MHP	8.2%
	HDP	12.2%
	None / Other	44.8%
Most distant party	AK Party	31.0%
	CHP	10.1%
	MHP	31.2%
	İYİP	2.6%
	HDP	6.7%
	SP	4.8%
	None / Other	13.6%





However, the rapprochement of young people from the HDP to the CHP and young people from the AK Party to the MHP seems to be due to the positive impact of alliances. But this rapprochement also seems periodical for CHP and especially for the MHP. It seems too early today to say that this political rapprochement has created social change. Because the Kurdish youth, who have become close to the MHP, attribute this to the fact that the AK Party has taken the MHP into the People's Alliance for the sake of the AK Party, and they express their opinion more on the requirements. On the other hand, young people close to the HDP give positive credit to the CHP's current "self-improvement" and "Democrat" identity, as well as remembering the historical image of the CHP.

“ [CHP] ... it was pretty awful in the old days. And today I think it is open to self-improvement.

“ It was at a Kemalist point in its past, it was being pronounced as the party of Atatürk. [Today] it is trying to make an alliance with the İyi Party on the one hand and the HDP on the other and there is a Saadet factor. It has a structure that is more open to dialogue in this last 5-6 years.

Kurdish youth, who have become close to the CHP, keep its past in mind, but care about the change of the CHP, which began with the 2018 general elections and passed through an important threshold with the 2019 local elections. The fact that they wanted the AK Party to lose in the local elections led the HDP to give interest and support to the CHP candidates, especially Ekrem İmamoğlu. Because of the situation and attitude that has brought both the CHP and HDP and the voters of these parties closer together so far, Kurdish youth believe that the CHP has evolved from its position of supporting the abolition of immunities and cross-border memorandums towards a different position, albeit slowly. In an election that may be in 2023 or earlier, it seems that young people can support CHP without difficulty if the CHP's candidate has a profile like İmamoğlu. On the other hand, Mansur Yavaş, who won the election in Ankara with the CHP logo, seems to have been able to attract the attention of Kurdish youth thanks to his performance with other CHP metropolitan municipalities.

Young people who know that Yavaş is a former nationalist / MHP member also recognize that he performs a relatively Social Democratic administration within the CHP identity while putting a reservation mark on his former nationalist origin. As part of all these narratives, Kurdish youth are aware of the negative reflection of the historical memory of the CHP with the Kurds, but they think that this change in the CHP should continue. They expect the Kurdish issue to be shared by actors such as the CHP, rather than just the HDP. Even though there are young people who emphasize that they will not compromise with the CHP by highlighting the historical problem with the ideology of Kemalism, the majority of young people show strong signs that if the CHP shares this burden, the distance between them and the CHP may be decreased more, and the connection they have established with the CHP based on their experience, not the history of the party, will be strengthened.

“ I support the CHP because of the fact that the CHP has recently taken steps [regarding the Kurds] and their approach to people is positive. If it continues like this, I can continue to support it.



As the Deva and Gelecek parties had not yet been established at the time of quantitative research, interest in these parties had not been measured. But from the qualitative interviews or focus group meetings held since then, it seems that Deva and Gelecek parties have managed to attract the attention of the young people who are supporters of the AK Party. Young people who are aware of these parties and have been close to the AK Party in the past are watching Deva and Gelecek parties as a possibility that can satisfy their discomfort with the AK Party.

## 5.7. Attitude Towards Political Leaders

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Kurdish youth have a general apathy towards the old or aging actors of politics. These actors, including the actors that young people consider themselves close to today, do not arouse excitement in young people. Mansur Yavaş, who can be considered an older generation politician, also receives appreciation from a certain segment of Kurdish youth as the visibility of CHP municipalities increases and the ability to govern in Ankara moves into the public sphere.

Kurdish youth close to the AK Party and Erdogan are linked through past actions, the safe political space provided by being on that side, and loyalty, rather than the excitement of today's politics and performance.

On the other hand, the HDP is considered an important focus of attention among Kurdish youth close to both the CHP and the AK Party. A quarter of young people close to the AK Party see the HDP as their second party. Half of the Kurdish youth close to the CHP cite the HDP as their second party. But young people from the HDP and CHP do not have a similar interest in the AK Party.

A fifth of Kurdish youth who voted for the AK Party in 2018 say they will not vote for the AK Party again. This discomfort is explained by the AK Party's moving away from its reformist identity.

**“** *The AK Party has really brought a lot of innovation. If we can wear headscarf right now, thanks to Erdogan, I'm a Kurd and if I can talk, thanks to him. He brought a lot of innovation. I was absolutely closed to other parties, there was only the AK Party for me. Now it's gone. As party leader, I used to look up to our president a lot, but recently I left him, I'm not what I used to be, I also left that view.*

Although the leaders liked by the Kurdish youth are shaped according to the political positions of the people, İmamoğlu and Demirtaş are two names liked by those who do not belong to their parties. As a prominent actor in Kurdish politics after a long time, Demirtaş is decidedly the most admired political leader. Demirtaş, mentioned by almost all Kurdish youth close to the HDP, is the name that Kurdish youth who vote for other political parties also admired at the highest level among politicians belonging to another political party.



**“ I like Selahattin Demirtaş politically. He’s telling the truth, he’s got a politician’s spirit, although I’m from a different party, I’m in favor of the truth.**

**“ Selahattin Demirtaş is especially someone who can appeal not only to his own political environment, but also to all political circles, a much-needed political character.**

Young people have given the names of Demirtaş, Erdogan and İmamoğlu to the open-ended question of who they want to be the president. It is noteworthy that 16% of Kurdish youth have cited İmamoğlu as the first option. The rapid entry of İmamoğlu and rise in the political scene evokes the period when Demirtaş’ popularity rose among Kurdish youth. The fact that İmamoğlu was able to attract the attention of voters who are not closely related to politics, far from the hot debates of politics, again resembles the profile of Demirtaş during the presidential candidacy period for these young people. Factors such as İmamoğlu being a young generation politician like Demirtaş, the positive messages of the two actors about each other, their sportive and dynamic images and their “warmth,” lead to the establishment of a parallel link between İmamoğlu and Demirtaş in Kurdish youth.

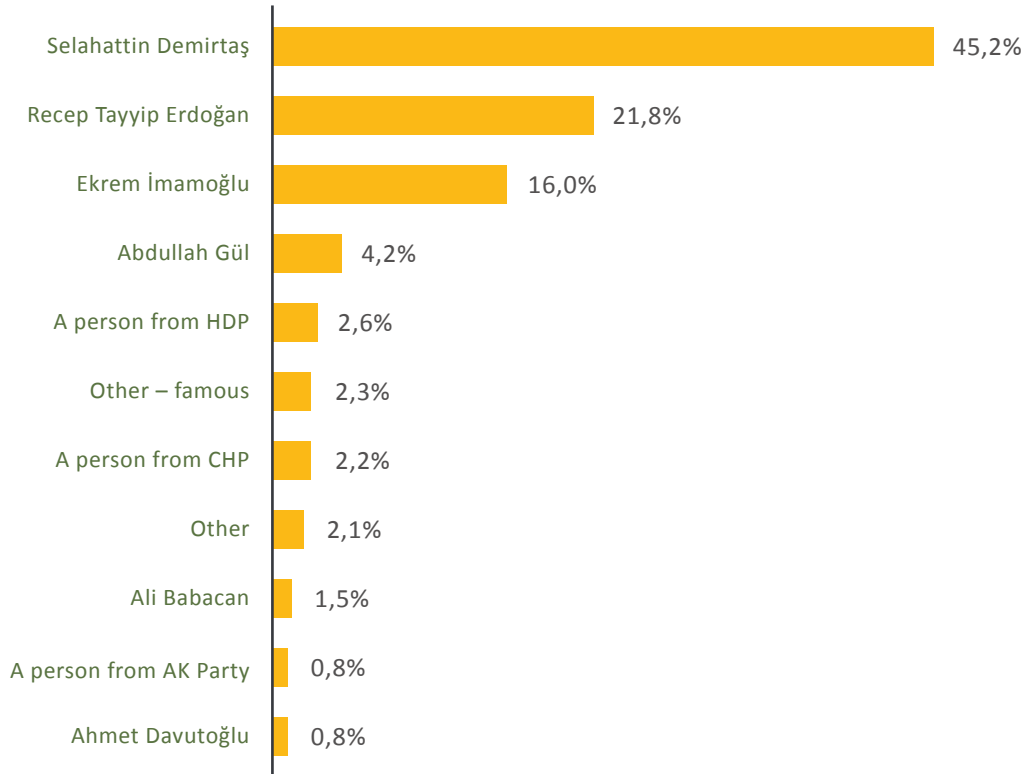
In addition to the personal characteristics of the leaders, the approach that brings family lives to the public sphere, especially in social media, makes everyday life details such as the meetings of Dilek İmamoglu and Başak Demirtaş more visible, while this relationship between the spouses strengthens the opinion of the Demirtaş-İmamoğlu parallelism among Kurdish youth. It is understood that İmamoğlu’s communication policy, which includes new media tools and addresses a greater sense of hope, and his campaign aimed at young people, also affects young Kurds who live in metropolitan areas and are moving away from their traditions, especially active users of social media. On the other hand, Kurdish youth are filling the void of Demirtaş, who has lost contact with them due to his imprisonment with İmamoğlu. İmamoğlu, who has received significant support after Selahattin Demirtaş, has twice as much support as Erdogan in an equation that Demirtaş does not exist.

**“ İmamoğlu is a person who appeared after the imprisonment of Selahattin Demirtaş. So I think [we] Kurds are trying to fill the void of Selahattin Demirtaş with İmamoğlu.**  
(Diyarbakır, Female)

CHP youth do not see the risk of abandoning their positions in supporting Demirtaş, and HDP people do not see the risk of abandoning their positions in supporting İmamoğlu, while Kurdish youth from the AK Party do not ignore that their interest in Demirtaş contradicts their position. Favoring İmamoğlu or Demirtaş is not a problem because one of them is not replaced by the other, while the Erdogan-Demirtaş comparison forces the young people of the AK Party who are making this comparison. These young people have to cover up or distance their interest in Demirtaş. Therefore, Demirtaş seems likely to be an important political figure and a center of attention for Kurdish youth in the post-Erdogan era of the AK Party.

**TABLE 24: LEADER PREFERENCES OF THE KURDISH YOUTH**

**Who do you want to be the president?**



	TOTAL	AK PARTY	CHP	HDP
Abdullah Gül	7.1%	8.2%	8.5%	6.3%
Ekrem İmamoğlu	38.4%	5.3%	81.9%	53.5%
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	18.2%	76.0%	0.0%	0.5%
I am uncertain	11.0%	5.9%	4.3%	9.0%
I will not vote	25.3%	4.6%	5.3%	30.8%

Kurdish youth believe that hope and/or excitement are produced by new and younger generation political actors. In this context, apart from Demirtaş, they refer to the names such as İmamoğlu and partly Babacan. It is observed that Babacan, who has not yet formed a party in November 2019 and whose awareness was low, has aroused interest in the younger generation as his visibility has increased. Apart from Demirtaş, Babacan's popularity also seems to be rising among Kurdish youth together with İmamoğlu. However, it is also emphasized that the hoped-for actors have not yet proven sufficient confidence.



Kurdish youth think that Babacan should “prove himself” as they remember his past in the AK Party and they want to see reassuring steps as to whether the CHP politicians elected with the support of the Kurds will maintain a positive attitude towards the Kurds.

“*Erdogan is a very good leader, they need to come up with really down-to-earth things in order to stand up against them, and we will see how much they will be enough and how brave they will be.*”

“*I feel close to Babacan, because Babacan is younger and thinks more radically.*”

“*CHP [today] is a libertarian party. If there was no HDP, we would vote for the CHP. They are successful thanks to the votes of the Kurds, but they do not appreciate the value of it. If the HDP is blamed for any situation, there is no support ... CHP should also defend Kurds.*”

## 5.8. Radicalization and Violence

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Some of the words that Kurdish political actors have uttered in past years have taken place in our lives as generic expressions. Statements such as “we are the last generation to be reconciled,” and “the storm children are coming” were widely discussed and adopted by the public, especially in left-liberal circles. It is possible to say that this approach and form of expression is a myth today. It can be said that Kurdish youth today tend to move away from Old Wave political habits and develop a more open attitude to reconciliation, and the distance between them and radicalization is opened.

The trend of radicalization, which has increased due to the strengthening of the YPG by 2015-16, especially in Rojava, seems to have declined significantly both after the economic and social transformation experienced by the Kurdish youth over the past decade and after the destruction caused by the great wave of violence in 2015 and after. At the same time, the rising popularity of Demirtaş and the expansion of the field of civic politics through Demirtaş are also factors that feed this trend. The fact that the previously existing understanding of charismatic leaders in political Kurdish youth is now focused on legal Kurdish political actors, rather than armed figures, also makes sense that this myth is wrong for today. On the other hand, the decrease in radicalization can also be attributed to

the narrowing of the field of armed struggle in Turkey today and the decrease in the visibility of PKK actions compared to previous years, except for reasons such as the younger generation seeing processes such as the Kurdish initiative process and the success of the HDP in passing the election threshold.

It is worth noting that radicalization here is mostly perceived as non-legal/forms of armed struggle, and is considered within the framework of whether violence can be used as a tool. Because, as mentioned, there is little decline in political demands. It seems that there is no direct link between the rise and prominence of political demands and violence.

The declining trend that applies to Kurdish/left radicalization can also be said for Kurdish youth in the Islamic Community. Rising radicalization in 2011-15, driven by the Syrian war, had increased interest and participation in Salafi organizations. The defeat of these organizations seems to have halted the radicalization of these young people and put them on a downward trend. Again, young people who sympathize with the Hezbollah tradition have also enlarged their distance with weapons compared to their previous generations and identify themselves with Huda-Par rather than Hezbollah.

**TABLE 25: VIEWS OF KURDISH YOUTH ON THE SOLUTION PROCESS (1-5)**

	TOTAL	CITY (2)		GENDER	
		REGION	WEST	FEMALE	MALE
The solution process for the Kurdish issue must start again.	3.91	3.96	3.84	3.86	3.97

	TOTAL	EDUCATION STATUS			SES			
		BELOW HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY	AB	C2	C1	DE
The solution process for the Kurdish issue must start again.	3.91	3.91	3.96	3.84	3.86	3.97	3.86	3.97

	TOTAL	2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS			HOW MANY YEARS IN THE CITY		
		AK PARTY	CHP	HDP	10 YEARS AND LESS	MORE THAN 10 YEARS	SINCE BORN
The solution process for the Kurdish issue must start again.	3.91	3.49	3.71	4.28	3.86	3.97	3.86

The actors blamed by young people for the breakdown of the previous solution process present a landscape associated with party closeness. But young people close to the HDP also criticize the PKK and the HDP, while young people close to the AK Party avoid giving such an image. Even if they vote for different political parties and even if there is a serious intellectual division between the actors they blame for the deterioration of the previous solution process, the majority of Kurdish youth are in favor of starting a solution process again.

“ I think both sides had their share. As much as reflected in us, the soldiers were also looking positively, but I think it was done to protect the AKP's authority against the votes it lost on June 7. The PKK has also crossed the line. The fact that it has to come to the city, take tribute from people, set up a court should not have happened. (Adana Male HDP)



**“ It is not right to blame only the state, the PKK also has its share, but the fact that the AKP is afraid of the rise of the HDP in politics is the biggest reason. (Istanbul, Male HDP)**

**“ It’s over because of the CHP and HDP. The HDP acted with the rhetoric of the PKK. The AKP and the state are not to blame. I wish it wasn’t like this. (Mersin Female AK Party)**

**“ It was the best years of Turkey, (the solution process) but god damn whoever broke it. It would be really nice if it continued. I think it was the most promising thing that people wouldn’t die. I think Kandil broke it or the Secret state. (Diyarbakir Female)**

Young people note that the language that bears the Kurdish identity is being eroded, and they want the problems of Kurds to be solved due to their experience of discrimination. On the other hand, the fact that young people are affected by the conflicts in the city, witness the rise of civil politics, and the decrease in the visibility of violence on the scale of Turkey are also among the elements of de-radicalization. The high vote of the HDP on June 7 and its presence as an important actor in Turkish politics since then have increased young people’s interest in civic politics, while Selahattin Demirtaş stands out as the most prominent actor of this interest.

Based on all this, it seems that young people expect a solution process in which civic politics plays a stronger role as an actor. Young people want the HDP to take a more active role, as well as the CHP to show more clearly that it is taking a greater responsibility in solving the Kurdish problem.

# Young Kurdish women and their unique experiences

## The most basic concern is economic problems

Regardless of which region of Turkey they are from, the primary concern of all Kurdish young women is unemployment and the deterioration of the economy. But the unemployment problem in the region is even more pronounced. The belief that the existing business areas are limited and that there are not enough opportunities to enter business life as a result of the education received stands out among the concerns.

## Being a woman stands out in stories of discrimination

When asked about their experience of discrimination, women speak primarily by referring to their feminine identity, sharing the discrimination they experience because they are women. This theme is followed by ethnic identity and then political dissent, respectively. Religiosity, on the other hand, especially stands out as a layer of the experience of femininity:

*"I went abroad for a while, and after I came back from there, I was discriminated against by my kind. I've heard things like "how can you be comfortable and respected as a woman with your religious stance?"*

Their discrimination against them being politically opposed is most evident in the Western provinces.

## Childcare is a marked barrier to entry and attendance to work

Having children brings serious difficulties in women's participation in public life and in business life in private, given economic conditions. At the same time, the experience of women with children is markedly different from other women who are in the same age group. They don't even rate themselves in the category of the "young."



### **Kurdish women in headscarves experience “being in the middle”**

Especially women in headscarves express their grievances about homogenization. Women in headscarves who support the HDP express that they are subjected to criticism over the secular and “anti-religious” image of the HDP from outside, and on the other hand, they are being told that they could not support the opposing party because they are wearing headscarves. Women in headscarves who do not support the HDP also express that this time their headscarves are a layer in discrimination related to their Kurdish identity.

### **Family connection in the region is expressed as a matter that differs from the “Western provinces”**

Observations were shared that the family was more decisive for young women living in the region when it came to making decisions about their everyday issues or their future, acting in accordance with these decisions, or making changes in their lives. It is also possible to think about this on the axis of tradition: young people in the Western provinces are seen as more distant from their traditions, while the region has a tighter bond with tradition. This, in turn, returns to women in the region as more traditional “burdens” and inequality, especially in their daily lives.

### **Women in the region establish themselves from belonging, women in the “Western provinces” from opposition**

While those living in the region identify themselves more with traditions and cultural values related to being Kurdish, women residing in the provinces they categorize as “Western provinces” have clearer expressions of opposition to high politics and policies related to the Kurdish issue.

### **Expectations from politicians are limited**

When we asked the participants what they would like if a politician were in front of them, one of the answers summed up the general picture: “If he really came to listen to me in the first place, he had achieved everything.” There is a fundamental hesitation about the existence of politicians who listen to the needs of young people, especially Kurdish youth and young women.



# Conclusion

This research, which focused on Kurdish youth in Turkey, was conducted at a time when the debates on Generation Z were also active. For this reason, similarities and differences between Kurdish youth and young people in the rest of society became important agendas of both research and post-research meetings. On the other hand, given that what has happened around the Kurdish issue over the past five years has greatly affected the lives of young people like everyone else, the results of the research have become even more important. The cultural structures of young people, their daily lives, their emotional and public ties with Turkey, their forms of identity building and publicization, their religious beliefs and lives, the discrimination they experience, their relationship with native language and their expectations of native language, and of course their view of the political institution and their way of dealing with politics were important topics of the research. Thus, it was attempted to understand the similarities, differences and changes of young people both with the rest of Turkey and with the previous Kurdish generations.

It is one of the main results of the study that Kurds and Kurdish youth, who are generally considered a monolithic and homogeneous group in Turkey, actually have a heterogeneous structure and this generalizing approach is problematic. On the other hand, it was observed that young people have different sides from both groups, even if they have similar aspects with both the previous generation of Kurds and the Turkish youth. This finding shows that young people cannot be evaluated by old-fashioned judgments, and that the differences of both young people in Turkey and Kurdish youth should be taken into account by civil society, politics and policy makers.

Although young people draw a Turkish profile and culturally reveal a Turkey-oriented future projection, they are noticeably separated from other young people because they are Kurds. Although there are similarities in topics such as cultural structures, socialization and consumption of popular culture, and the ways in which the structural problems of politics disrupt their daily lives, Kurdish youth exhibit different trends due to factors such as identity and migration and discrimination.

About half of Kurdish youth have experienced migration. There is a significant young population living as second-generation immigrants in the western provinces of Turkey. Westward migration from cities in the region still continues. This means that young people are deprived of a qualified education and employment opportunity in their home cities. The lack of these opportunities becomes an obstacle to the return of young people to their homeland, even if they have problems in the West. A significant number of young people emphasize that they would live in their homelands if they had the opportunity.

Despite the fact that Kurdish youth are not socio-culturally far from the essence of being Turkish and the fact that those who emigrated to the West a generation ago lived in a more Turkish culture, the important problems that young people experience because of being Kurdish also weaken their ties of belonging. Young people say that they have been discriminated against and are upset by the rapid decline in the use of the Kurdish language. Discrimination stands out as the most important problem of Kurdish youth. 7 out of every 10 young people share that they have experienced discrimination. These two situations together show that even if young people follow a cultural and geographical course in Turkey, their political and public affiliation with Turkey is weakened due to discrimination and other problems caused by being Kurdish. Young people say that discrimination decreased



when the Kurdish issue was on the agenda around settlement discussions, but then increased in a gruesome way when the issue moved away from the solution and became an agenda with an axis of violence/operations. Therefore, the context in which the Kurdish issue, which is a hot topic of politics, is addressed, significantly affects the lives of young people.

It is possible to say that Kurdish youth are one of the groups which suffer most from youth unemployment in Turkey. Only one-third can work in a job, but a large part of that includes unskilled employees. Only one in every 10 Kurdish youth can work in a qualified job. Turkey, which ranks above the OECD average and first among OECD countries in the ranking of youth unemployment, presents a more negative landscape for Kurdish youth. Young people explain the lack of employment with discrimination as well as economic reasons.

Young Kurdish women, on the other hand, are both more disadvantaged in employment and experience more discrimination in general. The unique experience of young women also manifests itself in the field of politics. For example, women in headscarves and supporting HDP are uncomfortable with both the “secular” image attributed to the HDP and the perception that they can’t take part in a dissident party “especially” in the HDP due to their images.

Young people are uncomfortable with the political establishment, away from the hot agenda of politics, but they are interested in politics. They are following the AK Party getting closer to the traditional codes of the state, the CHP entering a path that seeks to change from its classic position and the new parties coming out of the AK Party. They are building their relations with politics not under the influence of traditional schools, but with the period and individual stories they are witnessing.

In short, at a time when the world is changing rapidly, it is possible to say that the Kurdish youth are more affected by the change because of the fact that they are a more dynamic group. On the other hand, research data also reveals what will be missed if the Kurds are evaluated as a monolithic group. Young Kurds vary depending on whether they are men and women, live in their own cities or in the West, are religious or secular, are close to the HDP, AK Party or other politics. The fact that assessments and policies about young people take into account this heterogeneous structure is one of the important factors that will affect the health of communication with young people. This study was carried out with the intention of holding a magnifier on the world of Kurdish youth in Turkey and making a positive contribution to this communication. Once again, thank you to the participants and supporters who have helped to understand the world of young people more closely.



