



Pluralism Confronts Radicalization in Türkiye:

TEPAV Surveys on Religion and Radical Attitudes in a Muslim Majority Country

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) conducted extensive field research on ethnic backgrounds, religious attitudes, and social tolerance in Türkiye since 2011. Large-scale surveys in 2016 and 2020 involved face-to-face interviews with representative samples of 6,989 and 7,280 individuals. The surveys explored religious identity, religiosity levels, and tolerance towards differences in beliefs and ethnic/religious backgrounds. Additionally, the study aimed to identify groups exhibiting radical religious attitudes. Summary highlights of the report are outlined below.

Religious identity

A majority of the Turkish population is Muslim, with a large portion of this subscribing to Sunni Islam (84% and 87% in 2016 and 2020, respectively). Within Sunni Islam, Hanafism is the most widespread sect (69% and 73% of respondents in 2016 and 2020, respectively). Shafi'ism, another Sunni school of thought that Kurds in Türkiye represent, maintained a smaller yet noteworthy presence. Alevism holds a presence, although it seems to be underreported in the surveys.

The majority of respondents, however, claimed not to be aware of their creed, which includes understanding the Islamic theological *aqeedah*. In 2016, 59% stated they did not know their creed, and this percentage increased to 71% in 2020. The declining trend may reflect negative feelings towards separationist trends in Islam in the aftermath of the 2016 coup d'état attempt in Türkiye, which implicated the religious community (or *cemaat*) of Fethullah Gulen.

The perceived importance of religion

A majority of interviewed respondents considered religion to be important in their lives (85% of those interviewed in both 2016 and 2020) although there were notable regional variations. In 2016, high percentages of respondents in eastern regions (Middle East Anatolia, Northeast Anatolia, Southeast Anatolia and Western Black Sea) reported that religion is very important in their lives compared to those in the western and middle parts of the country (Aegean, Western Marmara, Istanbul, Western Black Sea and Middle Anatolia). In 2020, there was a notable shift in some regions. There was a significant increase in respondents from Western Marmara reporting that religion was very important in their lives. Additionally, there was an uptick in respondents in Istanbul and Western Black Sea expressing the importance of religion. Meanwhile, the Mediterranean, Middle Anatolia, and Western Anatolia experienced a notable decrease in the reported importance of religion.

Kurdish respondents were more prone to consider religion very important or important in their lives compared to Turks in both 2016 and 2020. Moreover, in 2016, Kurds in eastern provinces (Southeast Anatolia and Northeast Anatolia) were more likely to consider religion to be very important compared to those in Istanbul, Aegean, and the Mediterranean. In 2020, there was

a similar trend with the notable exception that Kurds in Istanbul were much more likely to report religion to be very important compared to 2016.

Following a similar pattern with Kurds, in both 2016 and 2020, Shafi'is, exhibited a higher level of religious devotion compared to Hanafis. Conversely, a substantial majority of those identifying as Alevis view religion as unimportant/very unimportant, or as neither important nor unimportant.

The perceived importance of religion decreased as the level of education increased in both 2016 and 2020. Illiterate respondents, those with a primary school degree, and respondents who are literate without a degree were more likely to report that religion is very important. For middle school, high school, and university graduates, there was a progressive decrease in those reporting religion as very important. Moreover, high percentages of university and high school graduates reported religion to be neither important nor unimportant in their lives

Similarly, respondents from younger age cohorts, especially the youngest age cohort of 18-24, were less likely to consider religion to be very important compared to older age groups, suggesting a generational difference in attitudes towards religion. While both the 2016 and 2020 survey followed a similar trend with respondents reporting religion as very important progressively increasing in older age cohorts, differences between younger and older age cohorts were less pronounced in 2020.

In 2016, students and working respondents were less likely to consider religion to be very important compared to those not working, including housewives, the retired, or unemployed. Similarly, in 2020, students continued to be the least likely to emphasize the importance of religion, while housewives were the most likely to consider religion as very important. Unlike 2016, emphasis on religion was low among the unemployed, and differences in perceived importance of religion were negligible among the retired and working respondents.

Practice of wearing the headscarf

The percentage of women who wear headscarves has been fluctuating over the years, remaining relatively high, with more than half of them choosing to wear headscarves in 2020. Between 2013 and 2015, female respondents reported wearing headscarves decreased from 60% to 56%. In 2016, it increased to 61%, and then dropped to 54% in 2020.

Despite its continued prevalence, the practice of wearing the headscarf appears to be less common among younger age cohorts in both 2016 and 2020, indicating a generational shift.

Furthermore, there was a decrease in the incidence of wearing a headscarf with higher education levels and among working women in both 2016 and 2020. For instance, in 2016, as high as 77.7% of housewives reported wearing the headscarf compared to 40.5% of female respondents who were working. In 2020, there was a similar decline among women who wore the headscarf for both groups, with 71.5% and 35.6%, respectively.

In 2016, the prevalence of the practice of wearing the headscarf was higher in more conservative eastern regions while lower in western provinces including Istanbul. It was also common in Anatolia as well as the Mediterranean though lower than eastern parts of the country.

In 2020, there were some notable changes in regional patterns of wearing the headscarf although the general east-west pattern persisted. Notably, there was a significant increase in the prevalence of wearing the headscarf in Istanbul.

Private religious practices and religiosity

The survey data highlights that private religious practices, including fasting during religious months, daily prayers, and the study of the holy book (Kur'an'ı Kerim), continue to be common in Türkiye. In 2020, 60% of respondents reported fasting every day, 36% prayed five times a day, and nearly half read the Kur'an'ı Kerim outside of prayer activities, with 75.2% reading it in Arabic.

However, there's a declining trend in fasting during religious months and prayer. In 2011, 70% reported fasting regularly, which decreased to 68% in 2015 and further to 63% in 2015. In 2016, the proportion declined further, reaching (54%), and 2020, it stood only slightly higher at 55%.

Since 2013, there has been a declining trend in respondents reporting that they pray regularly five times a day. In 2011, the figure was 38%, which increased to 44% in 2013 but has been progressively decreasing since. It declined to 42% in 2015, further to 40% in 2016, and in 2020, it fell below 2011 levels, dropping to 36%.

Similar to the trend observed with wearing the headscarf, fasting, and praying appear to be less common among younger age cohorts in both 2016 and 2020, indicating a generational shift.

In both 2016 and 2020, survey results revealed higher rates of regular fasting among individuals who do not work including housewives and retired individuals. On the other hand, public servants, private sector workers, and students consistently showed lower rates of regular fasting. While those unemployed but seeking employment reported a high rate of fasting in 2016, this group reported lower rates in 2020, placing them on par with students.

Furthermore, women are more likely to engage in fasting and prayer compared to male respondents. This may be attributed to the fact that a significant proportion of women identified as housewives in the two surveys, with female respondents reporting as housewives comprising 55% in 2016 and 51% in 2020.

Based on findings above on the religious practices, we constructed a religiosity measure⁴. According to this measure, in 2016, 36.5 % of respondents are considered religious. In 2020, the percentage of respondents who are considered religious dropped to 32.5 %.

Sources of religious knowledge

The 2020 survey results highlight the significant role of the family environment in religious learning. Approximately two-thirds of respondents reported that they learn about religion through their families.

A very low percentage rely on the Diyanet, the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Türkiye (6.47%), and even much lower rely on private religious associations or foundations (2%).

Moreover, trust in the Diyanet's information varies among respondents. In 2020, 58% of respondents stated that they trust the accuracy of information provided by the Diyanet regarding calendar calculations for prayer times, Ramadan, and holiday dates. However, nearly one third (30%) were uncertain or unsure, and 11% expressed distrust in the Diyanet for such information. Trust in religious fatwas issued by the Diyanet, which are opinions on religious matters, was lower with 46% of respondents trusting them, 35% stating that they partially trusted them, and 16% stated that they do not trust them.

Preference for living in a secular and democratic state

Overall, a majority of respondents prefer living in a secular state, and there has been an increasing trend in this preference between 2016 and 2020 (from 75% to 81%). Similarly, a majority of respondents are satisfied with living in a democratic state. In 2016 and 2020, only 22 % and 17 % of respondents, respectively, stated that they would prefer the legal system to be applied according to sharia law.

Religious identity and tolerance

The surveys show the people in Türkiye to be generally *pluralistic* (versus *exclusionist*) in their view of those with different beliefs and backgrounds and between 2016 and 2020, this pluralistic trend has shown an increase.

Pointing to a soft attitude toward religion in Türkiye, only 21% of respondents in both 2016 and 2020 stated that a person who is not religious cannot be moral. This figure was low even among religious respondents (at 24% in 2020).

Respondents' views regarding people who do not adhere to religious practices has also decreased between 2016 and 2020. The percentage of respondents who stated that a person neglecting religious duties like prayer is a sinner dropped from 35% in 2016 to 27% in 2020.

⁴ Respondents identified by the religiosity measure are those who practice all their daily prayers and fast during religious months.

However, a notably higher percentage of religious respondents stated that a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner or is an infidel (56.4% of religious respondents in 2016), and this figure remained high in 2020 at 50.2%.

Pointing to the increase in pluralism, between 2016 and 2020, there was a decline in the percentage of respondents who stated that their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing Islam, dropping from 47% to 36%. A similar decline can be observed among religious respondents.

Additionally, in 2020, only a few respondents (23%) said they keep their distance from people who do not live according to their beliefs, and even fewer (16%) said they cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than them.

On the other hand, a higher percentage of respondents (63% in 2016) stated that they give advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, though giving advice may be considered a social practice in Türkiye. Notwithstanding, possibly pointing to the decline in emphasis on religion, the percentage of respondents reporting to give advice dropped to 43% in 2020.

Variation by gender: The 2020 survey data underscores gender differences in exclusionary tendencies. Notably, the findings imply a higher prevalence of exclusionary attitudes among women. One explanation may be the difference in labor force participation, with a notable proportion of women being homemakers. This may lead to lower levels of social engagement and economic interaction that may contribute to the observed trend in exclusionary tendencies.

Variation by age: The survey data suggests a noteworthy generational shift in exclusionary tendencies, which diminishes among younger respondents compared to their older counterparts, evident in both the 2016 and 2020 datasets. The starkest differentials manifest between the youngest age cohort and the older ones. Nevertheless, disparities in age groups are less prominent when respondents are confronted with the notion of distancing themselves from individuals whose lifestyles diverge from their beliefs, and in regarding the negative sentiment towards those with different lifestyles and beliefs.

Variation by level of education: The survey data collected in both 2016 and 2020 shows a consistent trend wherein higher levels of education attainment correspond to a greater acceptance of others, reflecting less exclusionary tendencies. The most pronounced differences become apparent when comparing the least educated respondents, which include illiterate individuals, those with limited formal education but literacy skills, and primary school graduates, against high school and university graduates. In certain questions, university graduates consistently show a markedly lower inclination towards exclusionary attitudes.

Engagement with people from other religious schools

Most Sunni respondents are comfortable interacting with Alevis, but the nature of these interactions leans more toward public or financial engagements than personal ones. In

2020, 71% of Sunnis were comfortable having an Alevi neighbor, though acceptance has declined since 2016. Similarly, in 2020, 69% expressed willingness to rent their apartment to an Alevi, but this willingness has decreased since the 2015 and 2016 surveys.

Conversely, a lower proportion (54%) would consider having Alevis as business partners, with acceptance showing a declining trend since the 2015 and 2016 surveys. About half (48%) of Sunni respondents would accept an Alevi bride/groom into their family. This percentage fell from 46% in 2015 to 42% and then increased again in 2020.

There are notable variations in education levels of respondents in their willingness to collaborate with Alevis as business partners, with higher levels of education pointing towards greater acceptance.

There is also a notable gender difference with women expressing less willingness to collaborate with Alevis as business partners or to have Alevis as brides/grooms in their family. As discussed above, there is a higher prevalence of exclusionary attitudes among surveyed women.

Regionally, Sunni respondents in western and/or more industrialized regions are more willing to collaborate with Alevis as business partners. These include Western Marmara and the Aegean as well as regions with industry including Southeast Anatolia and Western Anatolia (including Ankara, the capital, and Konya, an industrial hub. In Istanbul, the largest city and commercial hub, the willingness was slightly below the average, possibly reflecting diverse opinions within this mega city.

Conversely, in Middle Anatolia, and in relatively less industrialized regions such as East Anatolia, and Western Black Sea, Sunnis were more likely to express apprehension about working with Alevis. Interestingly, in the Mediterranean, respondents were less likely to prefer an Alevi business partner.

From the opposite perspective, a higher proportion of Alevi respondents are open to various interactions with Sunnis, including public, financial, business, and personal engagements. In 2020, 87% of Alevis expressed a willingness to rent their apartment to a Sunni, while 85% stated they would not be bothered by having a Sunni neighbor. Although acceptance of more personal interactions was slightly lower (70% expressed readiness to accept a Sunni bride/groom into their family, and 75% said they would be open to having Sunnis as business partners), it still significantly surpasses the Sunnis' views on Alevis.

Engagement with Syrians

In 2020, the willingness to interact with Syrians among the respondents was very low, especially in personal and business transactions. Only 23% would accept a Syrian bride/groom into their family, or consider Syrians as business partners. Merely 31% said they would want to have their child educated in the same class as a Syrian child and 36% said they

would consider renting their apartment to a Syrian. However, acceptance in public interactions was somewhat higher, with 51% expressing that they would not be bothered by having a Syrian neighbor.

Respondents' willingness to engage in business with Syrians appears to be influenced by the proportion of Syrians in the total population of a province and its metropolitan status.

In mega cities like Istanbul and Izmir, where Syrian populations are sizable but comparatively low in proportion to the provincial population, there is higher acceptance of Syrian business partners.

In provinces with relatively low Syrian proportions, like Denizli and Diyarbakır, respondents also displayed a positive inclination. However, in Bursa, where the Syrian population is low, a lower percentage of respondents held a positive view of business partnerships with Syrians. This could be attributed to local workers possibly perceiving competition for jobs with Syrians in Bursa with a significant industrial sector.

Conversely, in regions with a very high proportion of Syrians in the total population, such as southeastern cities like Sanliurfa and Gaziantep, and in Hatay, Mersin, and Adana, respondents exhibited negative sentiments towards business partnerships. Notably, in Mardin, respondents displayed a positive attitude towards business partnerships with Syrians, despite the province having a relatively high number of Syrians in its population.

There are notable variations in perceptions towards business partnerships with Syrians, though this doesn't necessarily imply that respondents with higher education are less likely to discriminate. The highest willingness to collaborate with Syrians as business partners was observed among respondents lacking formal education but who are literate, followed by university graduates and illiterate respondents. Below-average percentages were reported for primary school and high school graduates while middle school graduates were the least likely report their willingness to collaborate with Syrians as business partners.

The survey results indicate that women are less inclined to collaborate with Syrians as business partners or to have Syrians as brides/grooms in their family.

Finding on trends in radical religious attitudes

According to the constructed ideological radicalism index, in 2016, 4 % of respondents were considered to have radical religious attitudes. This percentage dropped to 2% in 2020.

Radical attitudes tendencies were assessed using different measures with the following results:

The impact of social exclusion on the manifestation of radical religious attitudes is significant, but has been decreasing. In 2016, 19% of socially excluded respondents exhibited radical religious attitudes, contrasting with only 3% among those who did not feel socially

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excluded. By 2020, the rate of radical religious attitudes among socially excluded individuals dropped to 12%, in contrast to the 2% observed among those not experiencing social exclusion.

The decrease in radical religious attitudes among those who feel socially excluded between the two survey years occurred despite an overall increase in respondents identified as socially excluded.

Religiosity also had an impact on the manifestation of radical religious attitudes. In this study, respondents identified as religious are those who practice all their daily prayers and fast during religious months. According to this measure, religious respondents were more likely to show radical religious attitudes, with 6% in 2016 and 3% in 2020. Among non-religious respondents, the rate of radical religious attitudes was 3% and 2% in 2016 and 2020, respectively.

Ethnicity and Radical Tendencies: In 2016, Zazas and Arabs had the highest rate of respondents with radical religious attitudes (12% each). In 2020, the rates were lower for Zazas and Arabs, and those with radical religious attitudes were most common among Laz and Circassian respondents. However, the sample size of the latter two ethnic groups is low, making it difficult to draw conclusions in 2020.

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) has carried out extensive field research on ethnic backgrounds, religious attitudes and social tolerance trends in Türkiye since 2011. Earlier surveys focused on ethnic backgrounds. Two large-scale surveys carried out in 2016 and 2020 included qualitative questions designed to understand religious identity and attitudes towards religion in Turkish society including extent of religiosity and the degree to which differences in beliefs and ethnics/religious backgrounds are tolerated. A second aim of the study was to identify groups within Turkish society that deviate from the norm to exhibit radical tendencies (captured by the practice takfir or declaring someone as an infidel (*kafir*). Notably, the 2016 and 2020 surveys mark the first instance of a qualitative survey on these topics conducted in a Muslim country.

This report focuses on the 2016 and 2020 surveys, each comprising face-to-face interviews with representative samples of 6,989 and 7,280 individuals, respectively. Both surveys employed similar methodologies, allowing for the tracking of changes over time in attitudes toward identity, religion, and social tolerance. The samples covered all regions of Türkiye and were distributed regionally to align with overall population trends, with slight variations between national statistics and survey years. Educational backgrounds of respondents in 2016 and 2020 were consistent with national trends, though slightly more educated overall. The age distribution mirrored national figures, with a slightly younger overall sample profile. Reflecting the general trend in Türkiye, a majority of surveyed respondents identified as Hanafis in both 2016 and 2020.

Chapter 1 of the report focuses on the meaning, perception, and practice of religion in Türkiye by comparing survey data from 2016 and 2020. The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how religion is perceived and practiced in Türkiye and how it has evolved over time. In Chapter 2, we aim to establish the degree to which differences in beliefs and religious/ethnic backgrounds are tolerated in Türkiye and how these attitudes vary across religious groups, regions, gender, age, and education levels, and how they evolved over time based on survey data from 2016 to 2020.

Finally, in Chapter 3, we aim to identify respondent groups with radical religious attitudes. This tendency is captured by the practice of takfir or the differentiation of the other as an infidel (*kafir*). In this regard, an ideological radicalism index is constructed to evaluate survey findings with the following identified indicators: 1) Willingness to observe what is perceived to be Islamic law (e.g. cutting of the hand for theft) over existing law 2) Enforcing Islamic practices on non-practicing Muslims 3) Holding the view that a person neglecting religious duties is an infidel; 4) Considering participating in traditional religious practices shirk i.e. reciting the Mevlit and the use of the evil eye.

The key findings of the report are summarized below:

One, findings of the report reveal that religion in Türkiye is primarily a cultural practice rather than being doctrinal with a strong institutional basis. The survey data highlights that private religious practices, including fasting during religious months, daily prayers, and the study of the holy book (Kur'an'ı Kerim), continue to be common in Türkiye.

Most individuals rely on family or conduct their own research to gather information about religion. A very low percentage rely on the Diyanet, the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Türkiye, and even lower rely on private religious associations or foundations. In fact, in 2020, trust in the Diyanet and its fatwas was not unanimous. This was the case, regarding calendar calculations for prayer times, Ramadan, and holiday dates.

Furthermore, in both 2016 and 2020, a low percentage of respondents stated that they want to live in a state where sharia is applied. Majority of respondents prefer living in a secular state, a tendency, which showed an increase between 2016 and 2020. Similarly, a majority of respondents are also satisfied with living in a democracy.

Findings also point to a decreasing trend in religious affiliation. A majority of participants identified as Hanafis but did not identify with a specific religious creed, and there was a noticeable decline in creed identification between the two survey years. Similarly, there was also a decrease in the number of respondents endorsing the belief that Muslims should be part of a sect between 2016 and 2020. This decline in religious affiliation may also stem from negative sentiments towards sects post the 2016 coup attempt in Türkiye, implicating Fethullah Gulen's religious community (or cemaat), leading to a broader disillusionment and distancing from specific religious affiliations.

Two, the survey data points to a decline in the prevalence of religious practices such as performance of daily prayers and fasting during religious months and wearing of headscarf among female respondents. According to the religiosity measure constructed for this report, which is based on the prevalence of religious practices⁵, the percentage of religious respondents dropped from 36.5 % in 2016 to 32.5 % in 2020.

Furthermore, the prevalence of religious practices are lower among working respondents as well as those in younger age cohorts and those with higher levels of education.

Three, survey results show the people in Türkiye to be generally pluralistic (versus exclusionist) in their view of those with different beliefs and backgrounds. This is in a population where 99% of interviewed respondents are Muslim with 87% Sunni and 75% Hanafi (in 2020) and where 85% consider religion to be important or very important in their lives (in both 2016 and 2020). In 2020, only 23% of respondents said they keep their distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs and 16% said they cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me while only 21% of respondents in both 2016 and 2020 stated a person who is not religious cannot be moral. Between 2016 and 2020, this pluralistic trend has

⁵ Respondents identified by the religiosity measure are those who practice all their daily prayers and fast during religious months.

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shown an increase with fewer respondents stating their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing Islam.

Furthermore, the surveys also point to an emerging emphasis on national identity while there is a retreat in ethnic identity. In 2020, there was a notable increase in respondents identifying as Turkish (84%), compared to 75 % in 2016 and decrease in those identifying as Kurdish. This decline in ethnic identity aligns with negative attitudes toward Syrian refugees, who could not be included in the Turkish identity. The reluctance to engage with Syrians is notably pronounced in personal and business transactions, especially in eastern provinces where the proportion of Syrians in the total population of a province is high.

Finally, the prevalence of radical religious attitudes among respondents is low and has been on a decreasing trend. We utilized an ideological radicalism index to identify individuals with such attitudes, leading to the following key findings:

- In 2016, 4% of respondents were categorized as having radical religious attitudes, which decreased to 2% in 2020.
- Social exclusion significantly influenced the manifestation of radical religious attitudes in both 2016 and 2020.
- Despite an overall increase in respondents identified as socially excluded, rising from 5% in 2016 to 6% in 2020, there has been a decrease in radical religious attitudes among those who feel socially excluded between the two survey years.
- Religiosity (as defined by the practice of religious practices) played a role in radical religious attitudes, particularly in 2016, albeit with a lesser impact than social exclusion.
- In 2016, Zazas and Arabs exhibited the highest rates of respondents with radical religious attitudes (12% each), but these rates decreased in 2020.

In an upcoming project, TEPAV will conduct a factor analysis to identify the impact of various factors, including income, employment, and welfare perception, on radical religious attitudes. Further research is recommended to explore the potential genesis of radical Islam in a pluralistic environment, such as Türkiye.

METHODOLOGY AND RESPONDENT PROFILE

The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) has carried out extensive field research on ethnic backgrounds, religious attitudes and social tolerance trends in Türkiye since 2011. Earlier surveys focused on ethnic backgrounds while two large-scale surveys carried out in 2016 and 2020 additionally tried to capture religious attitudes, and social tolerance and radicalization trends. This report largely focuses on the thematic public opinion survey carried out in 2020, but also draws on findings of the 2016 survey to track changes in attitudes towards identity, religion and social tolerance between 2016 and 2020. Both surveys included in depth questions that were conducted face to face with representative samples of 6989 and 7280 individuals, respectively, covering all regions of Türkiye. The two surveys followed a similar methodology allowing for a comparative analysis of respective results.

The 2016 survey was conducted in May of that year, using face-to-face interviews with a sample that represented the national electorate population, aged 18 and over. TEPAV collaborated with A&G, a professional public opinion research company based in Istanbul, to design the survey. A&G researchers with experience conducted the interviews, and a total of 6,989 respondents, aged 18 or older, were interviewed from 7 regions, 49 provinces, and 396 neighborhoods. The sample was chosen using multistage, stratified cluster-sampling procedures with age and gender quotas, and the survey is both nationally and regionally representative, with a margin of error of $\pm 1.5\%$ within confidence limits. In determining the provinces, districts, and neighborhoods to be visited, the weights of the adult population living in geographical regions, as well as rural-urban and metropolitan areas, as provided by TURKSTAT data, were taken into account. The streets visited were determined using the land-land unit values provided by the Ministry of Finance.

The field research for the 2020 survey was conducted between December 2019 and February 2020, using face-to-face interviews with a total of 7,280 subjects in 49 provinces across Türkiye. The sampling was based at the household level, with household addresses compiled from TURKSTAT, and had a margin of error of ± 1.13 within a confidence limit of 0.95. The survey results were weighted based on the probability of being selected for the cluster and the probability of the household being selected, to ensure accurate representation of the population.

Regional distribution of sample

The survey samples were distributed regionally in a way that reflects the overall population trends in Türkiye, with only slight variations between national statistics and the two survey years.

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Figure 1. Regional distribution of survey sample, 2016

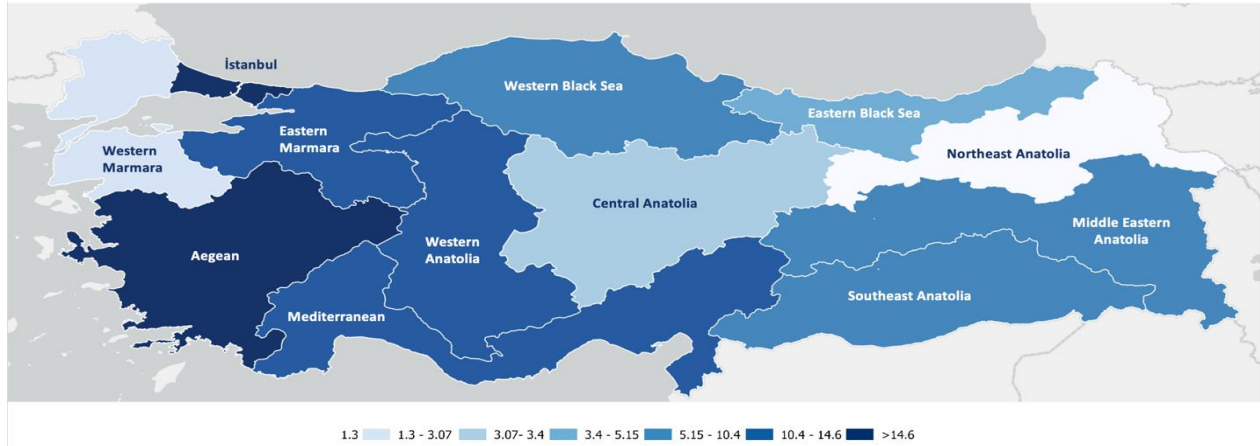


Figure 2. Regional distribution of survey sample, 2020

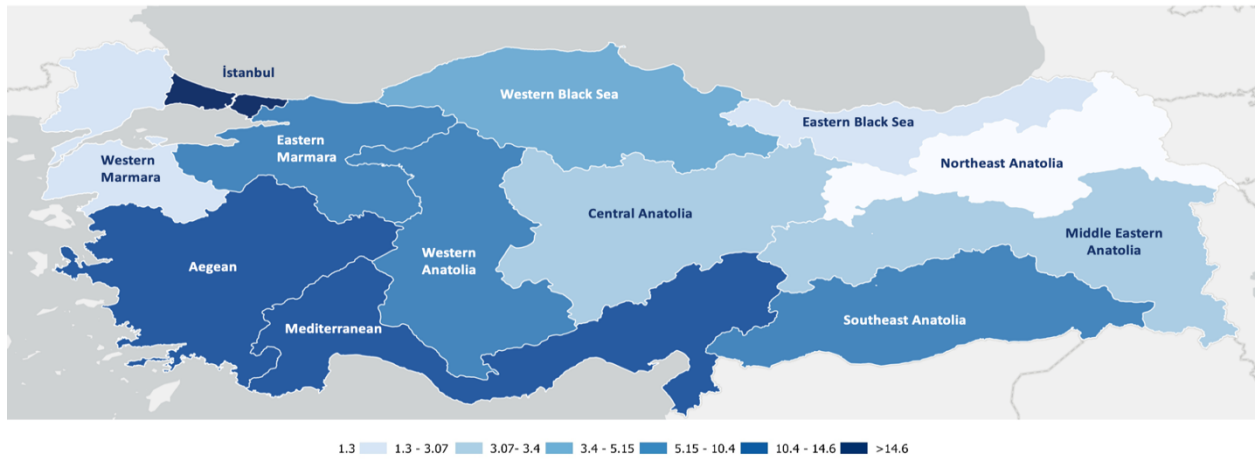


Table 1. Regional distribution of survey sample and national statistics, 2016 and 2020

	Survey distribution 2016	Official distribution 2016	Survey distribution 2020	Official distribution 2020
İstanbul	17,57	18,75	22,57	18,69
Aegean	14,68	13,29	14,66	13,17
Mediterranean	12,99	12,65	14,20	12,78
Eastern Marmara	10,77	9,80	10,47	9,98
Western Anatolia	10,76	9,84	10,26	9,87
Southeast Anatolia	6,87	9,67	8,60	9,97
Western Black Sea	8,41	5,90	5,15	5,74
Central Anatolia	3,31	4,97	3,46	4,91
Middle Eastern Anatolia	5,64	4,55	3,27	4,52
Eastern Black Sea	4,85	3,43	3,08	3,31
Western Marmara	2,85	4,51	2,95	4,52
Northeast Anatolia	1,30	2,64	1,33	2,54

Source: TURKSTAT, 2016 and 2020 survey data, TEPAV calculations.

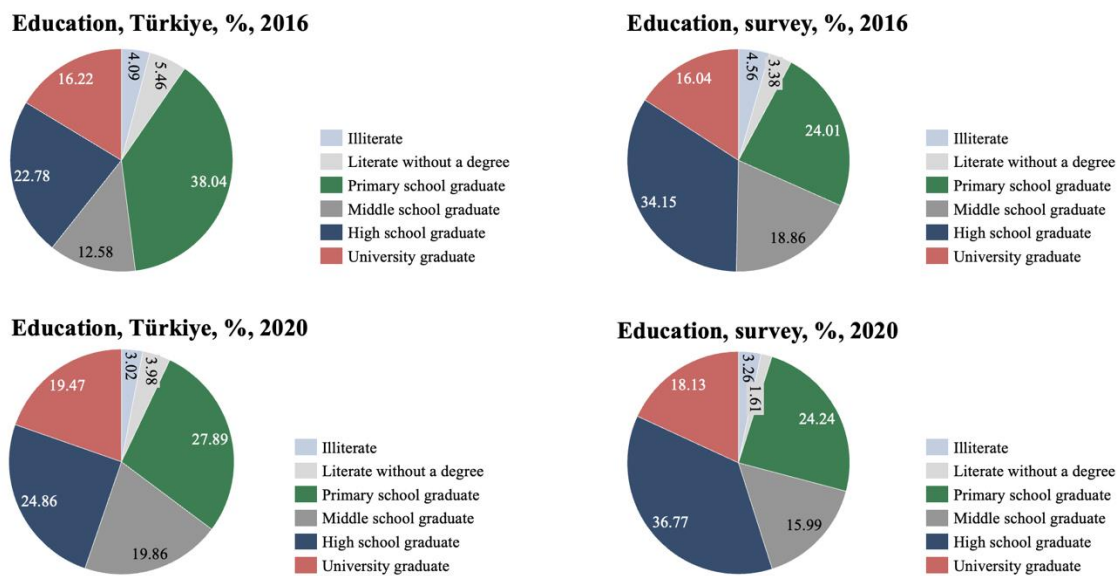
Note: For national statistics, the population of 15+ was taken into account.

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Education background

The educational background of survey respondents in both 2016 and 2020 was largely consistent with national trends in Türkiye, although the sample profiles were slightly more educated overall. In both surveys, the largest education group was high school graduates, accounting for more than one-third of respondents, while nationally high school graduates constitute slightly less than one quarter. According to national figures, 12.6% and 19.9% of the population were middle school graduates in 2016 and 2020, respectively. These make up 17.9% and 16% of the samples in 2016 and 2020, respectively. In both samples, approximately one-fourth had completed primary school, which is lower than the national average of 38% and 28% in 2016 and 2020, respectively. The percentage of respondents with a university degree was 16% in the 2016 sample (compared to 16.2% in national figures) and increased slightly to 18% in 2020 (compared to 19.5% in national figures). The percentage of illiterate respondents was quite low, with only 4.6% in 2016 and 3.3% in 2020, consistent with national figures of 4% and 3% in 2016 and 2020, respectively.

Figure 3. Education level distribution, %, 2016 and 2020 samples and national statistics



Source: TURKSTAT, 2016 and 2020 survey data, TEPAV calculations.

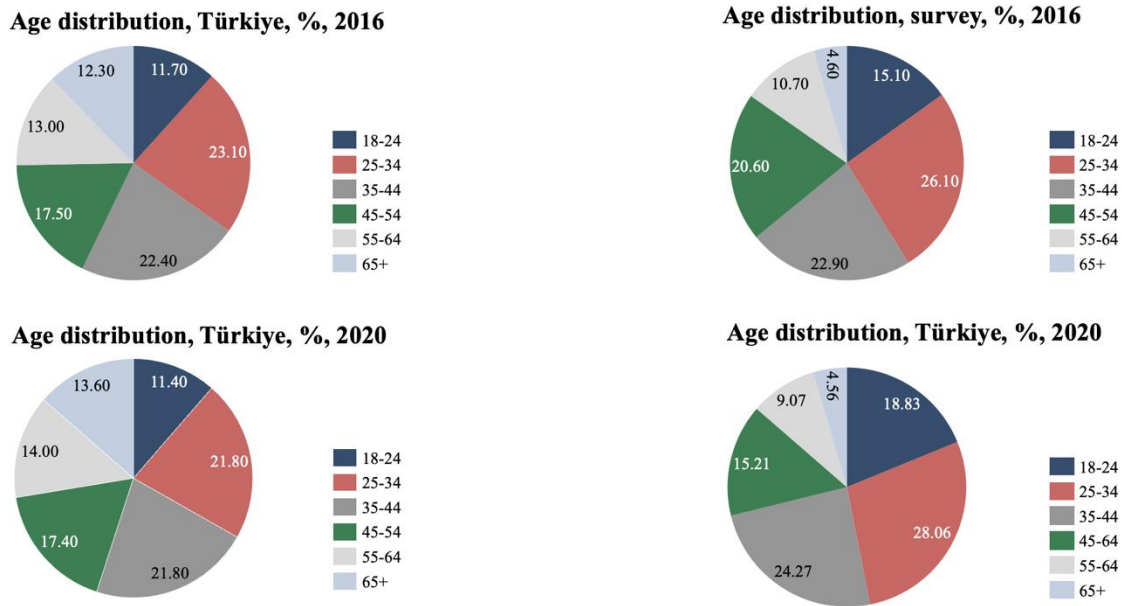
Age

The age distribution of survey respondents in both 2016 and 2020 were generally consistent with national figures in Türkiye, albeit with a slightly younger overall sample profile. In both surveys, the representation of the youngest age cohort was slightly higher than the national figures (15.1% in 2016 compared to 11.7% in the 2016 national figures; and 18.8% in 2020 compared to 11.4% in the 2020 national figures). The highest percentage of respondents was from the second age cohort, 25-34, as is the case with national figures, but with slightly higher representation (26.1% in the 2016 survey compared to 23.1% in the 2016 national figures and 28.1% in 2020 compared

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to 21.8% in the 2020 national figures). The percentage of the third age cohort, 35-44, was consistent with national figures in 2016 (at about 22%) but slightly above the national figure in the 2020 survey. In the 2016 survey, representation of the 45-54 age cohort was slightly above the national average, while the two oldest age cohorts, 55-64 and 65 and over, were below the national average. In 2020, the 45-54, 55-64, and 65 and over age cohorts were all below the national average.

Figure 4. Age distribution, %, 2016 and 2020 surveys and national statistics



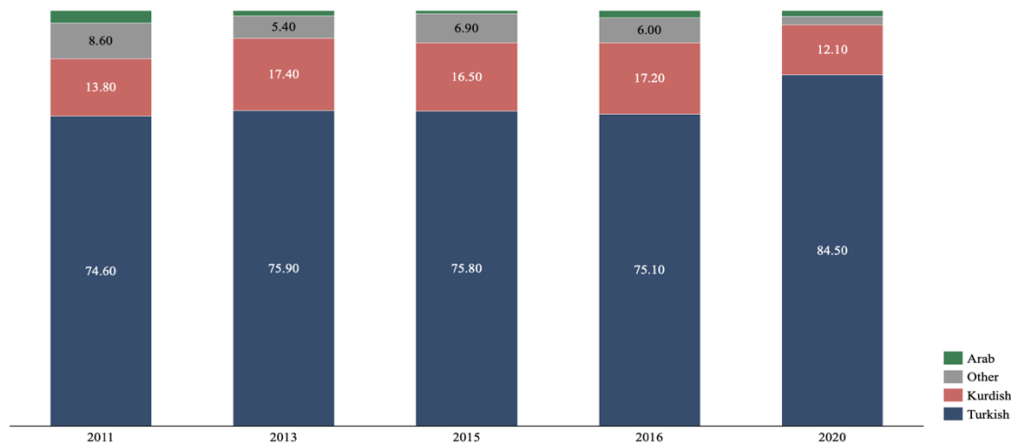
Source: TURKSTAT, 2016 and 2020 survey data, TEPAV calculations.

Ethnic Identity

As mentioned earlier, TEPAV has carried out extensive field research on ethnic backgrounds in Türkiye since 2011. The reported ethnic identities of surveyed respondents in the years 2011, 2013, 2015, 2016, and 2020 are provided below. Annex 1 provides a detailed analysis of respondents identifying as Kurdish, focusing on their regional and city distribution, as well as their age groups, occupations, education levels, and income levels in comparison to those identifying as Turkish. Additionally, the profiles of Kurds who report Turkish as their mother tongue are examined.

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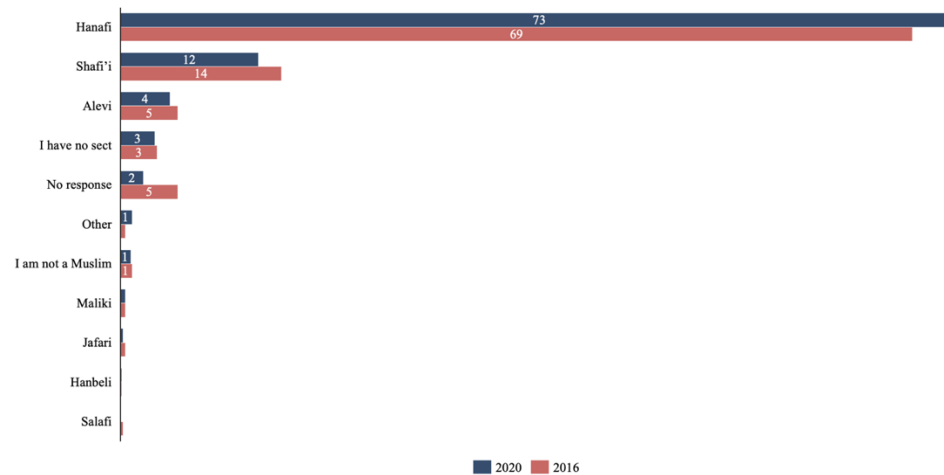
Figure 5. Ethnicity/Identity Distribution, %, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2020



Religious Identity

In terms of religious identity, a majority of surveyed respondents identified as Hanafis in both 2016 and 2020. Shafi'ism, another Sunni school of thought, maintained a smaller yet noteworthy presence, albeit with a slight decline. Alevism also holds a presence, although it may be underreported in the surveys. Specifically, 5% and 4% of respondents identified as Alevis in 2016 and 2020, respectively.

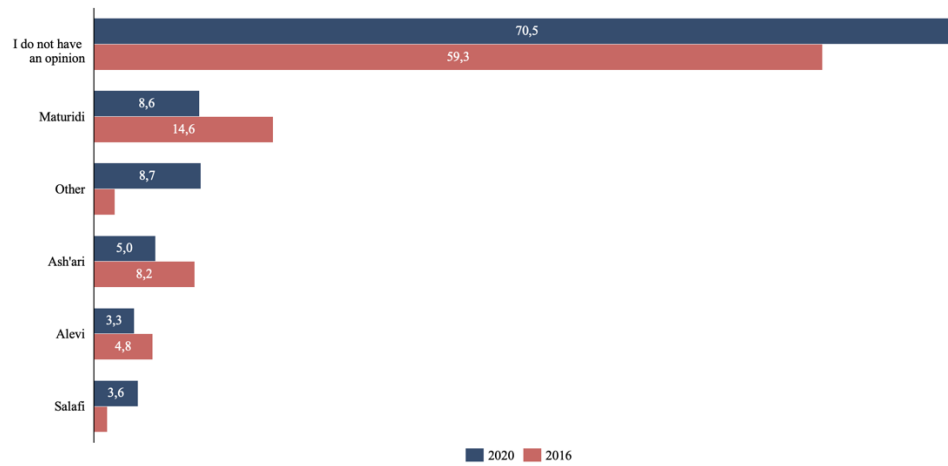
Figure 6. Religious identity, %, 2016 and 2020



In both the 2016 and 2020 surveys, a majority of respondents reported not knowing their creed. In 2016, 59% stated they did not know their creed, and this percentage increased to 71% in 2020.

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Figure 7. Religious creed, %, 2016 and 2020



Annex 2 provides an analysis of religious identities and any changes observed between 2016 and 2020, and examines Alevi and Salafi profiles in detail.

CHAPTER 1 - RELIGIOSITY AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES IN TÜRKİYE

Chapter 1 delves into the meaning, perception, and practice of religion in Türkiye by comparing survey data from 2016 and 2020. The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how religion is perceived and practiced in Türkiye.

The first section explores perceptions of the importance of religion and examines how these attitudes are influenced by various regional and demographic factors, including ethnic and religious identity.

The second section investigates the practice of wearing headscarves among different regions and demographic groups.

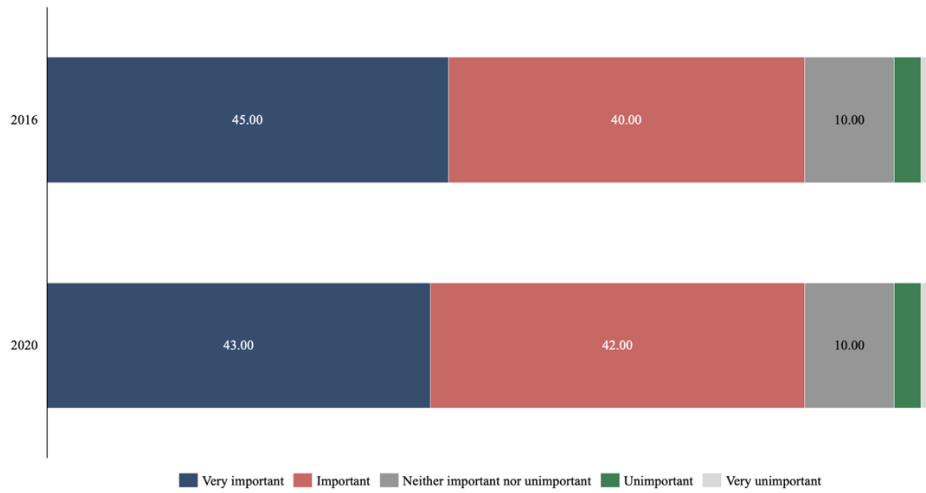
In the following sections the prevalence of private religious practices, including fasting during religious months, prayer, and the study of holy books, are examined. Based on practicing religion, we introduce a *religiosity measure* to identify a specific group for whom religion is of paramount importance, distinct from those who merely consider religion important.

The final section of the chapter examines the sources from which individuals acquire religious knowledge and trust in religious institutions.

1.1 The perceived importance of religion

A majority of the respondents considered religion to be important in their lives (85% of those interviewed in both 2016 and 2020). On the other hand, a small percentage of the respondents in both surveys (5 % and considered religion to be unimportant or very unimportant and 10 % considered it to be neither important nor unimportant).

Figure 8. The perceived importance of religion, %, 2016 and 2020



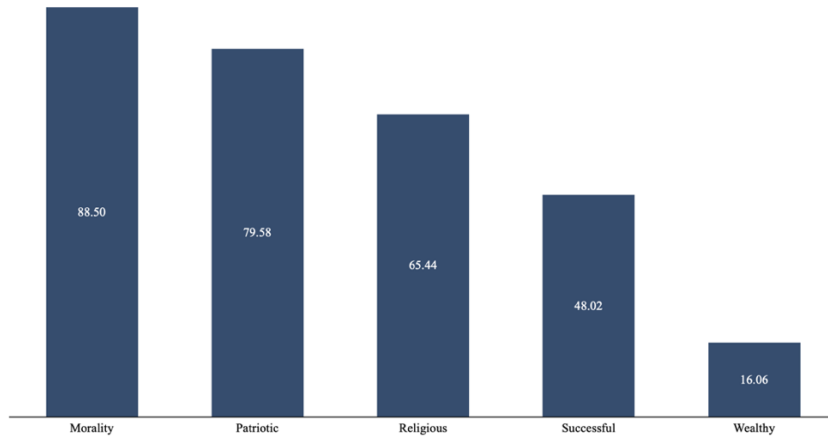
Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

BOX 1. Importance of ethical and religious values emphasized by parents

The results of the 2020 survey⁶ indicate that Turkish parents emphasize ethical, religious, and national values and expectations for their children. In 2020, the top quality that most respondents wished for their children was being ethical (89%), followed by being patriotic (80%) and religious (65%). Although qualities such as success and wealth were mentioned, they were less emphasized compared to the importance of character and values. This may suggest the significance of these qualities in Turkish society and the influence of religion and national identity in shaping these values.

On the other hand, Alevi respondents were less likely to emphasize religiosity as a quality they would like their children to have, with only 42% expressing this sentiment. In line with overall trends, the top qualities that Alevis wished for their children were being ethical (83%) and patriotic (71%), followed by success (54%), while a smaller percentage mentioned wealth (16%).

Figure 9. Qualities Turkish parents emphasize for their children, %, 2020



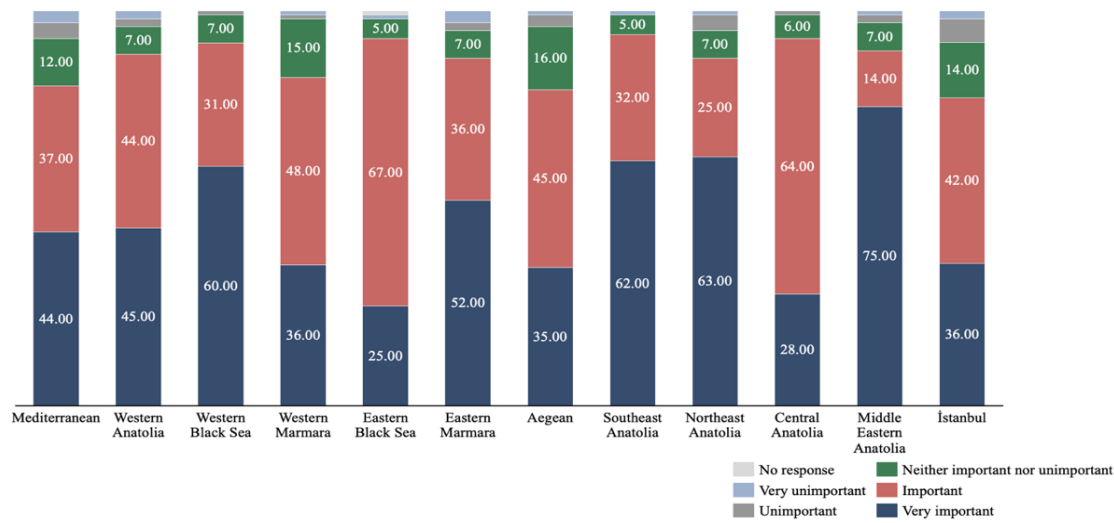
Note: Respondents were asked "Can you list the three most important characteristics that you would want your child to have?" and were asked to mark the three most important options as "1, most important", "2, second most important", "3, third most important".

In 2016, there was a regional divide, largely an east-west one, with high percentages of respondents in eastern regions reporting that religion is very important in their lives compared to those in the western and middle parts of the country. In 2016, respondents from Middle East Anatolia (75%), Northeast Anatolia (63%), Southeast Anatolia (62%), and Western Black Sea (60%) reported that religion was very important in their lives. The highest percentages of those reporting that religion is neither important nor unimportant were in the Aegean (16%), Western Marmara (15%), and Istanbul (14%). The percentage of respondents reporting religion to be very important was also low in these regions.

⁶ The question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

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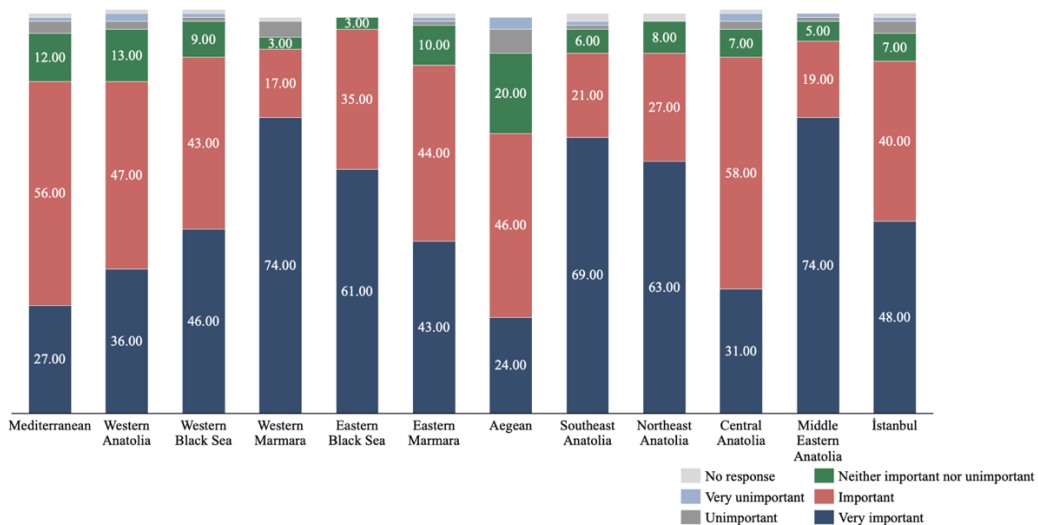
Figure 10. The perceived importance of religion, by region, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

In 2020, there was a notable shift in some regions, although respondents in eastern regions were again more likely to report religion to be very important in their lives. In contrast to 2016 results, a very high percentage of respondents in Western Marmara (75%) reported religion to be very important. There was also an increase in respondents in Istanbul and Western Black Sea reporting religion to be very important, while the percentage in the Mediterranean, Middle Anatolia, and Western Anatolia experienced a significant drop. High percentages of respondents in eastern regions (Middle East Anatolia, Northeast Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia) continued to report that religion was very important in their lives. The Aegean was again the least religious.

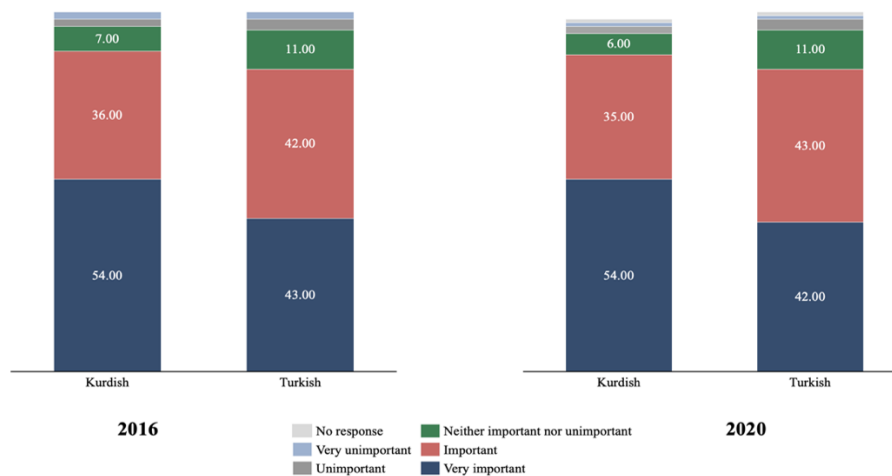
Figure 11. The perceived importance of religion, by region, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

Kurdish respondents were more prone to consider religion very important or important in their lives compared to Turks in both 2016 and 2020. Specifically, in both 2016 and 2020, 85% of Turks reported that they consider religion to be important or very important, whereas 89% and 90% of Kurds, respectively, expressed the same view.

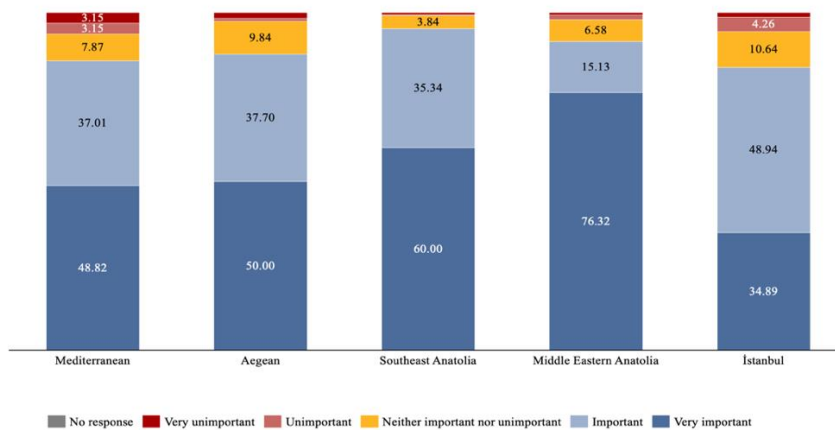
Figure 12. The perceived importance of religion, by ethnicity, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

Moreover, in 2016, Kurds in eastern provinces of Southeast Anatolia and Northeast Anatolia were more likely to consider religion to be very important (60% and 76%, respectively) compared to those in Istanbul, Mediterranean and the Aegean (35%, 49% and 50%, respectively)⁷.

Figure 13. The perceived importance of religion among Kurdish respondents, by region, %, 2016



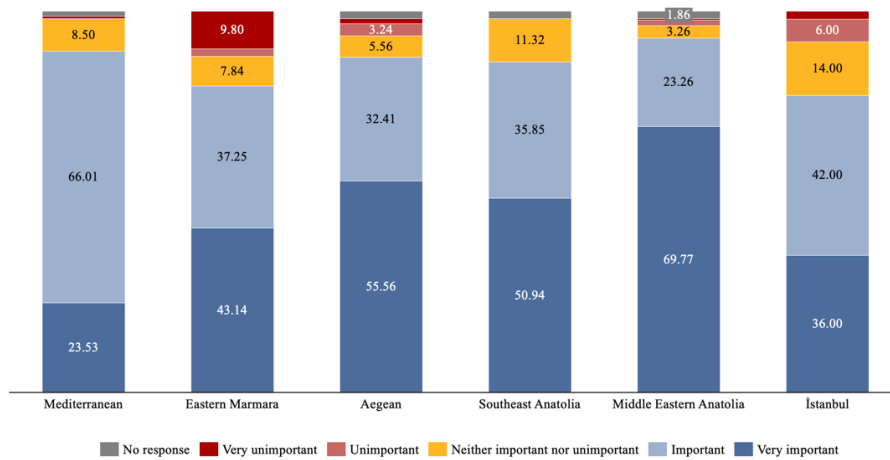
Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

⁷ The sample size of Kurds in other regions is too small and therefore have not been included in the analysis.

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In 2020, there was a similar trend with the notable exception that a significantly higher percentage of Kurds in Istanbul (70%) reported religion to be very important in their lives compared to 2016.

Figure 14. The perceived importance of religion among Kurdish respondents, by region, %, 2020



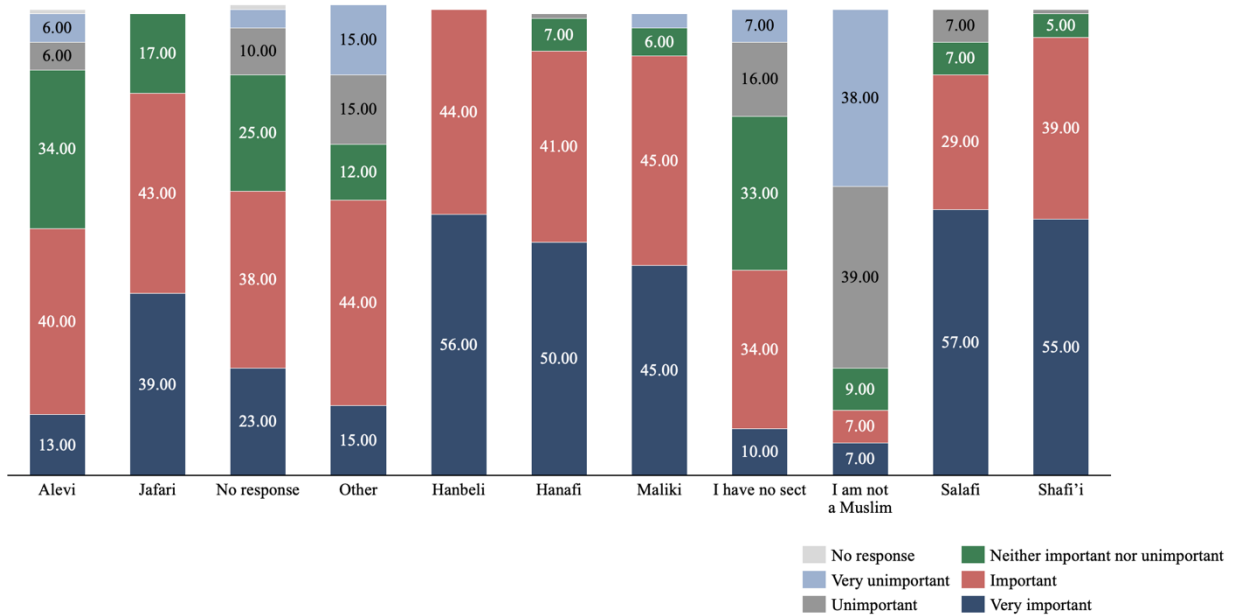
Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

Consistent with the trend observed among Kurds, Shafi’is exhibited a higher level of religious devotion compared to Hanafis. The Shafi sect of Sunni Islam, predominant among Türkiye's Kurdish population, is known for its strict orthodoxy. In both survey years, a majority of Kurds identified with the Shafi School, comprising 55% in 2016 and 60% in 2020. In 2016, 55% of Shafi’is considered religion to be very important in their lives, compared to 50% of Hanafis. By 2020, this gap widened.

A notable percentage of those identifying as Alevis view religion as unimportant/very unimportant (12 % in 2016 and 16% in 2020), or as neither important nor unimportant (34% in 2016 and 21% in 2020).

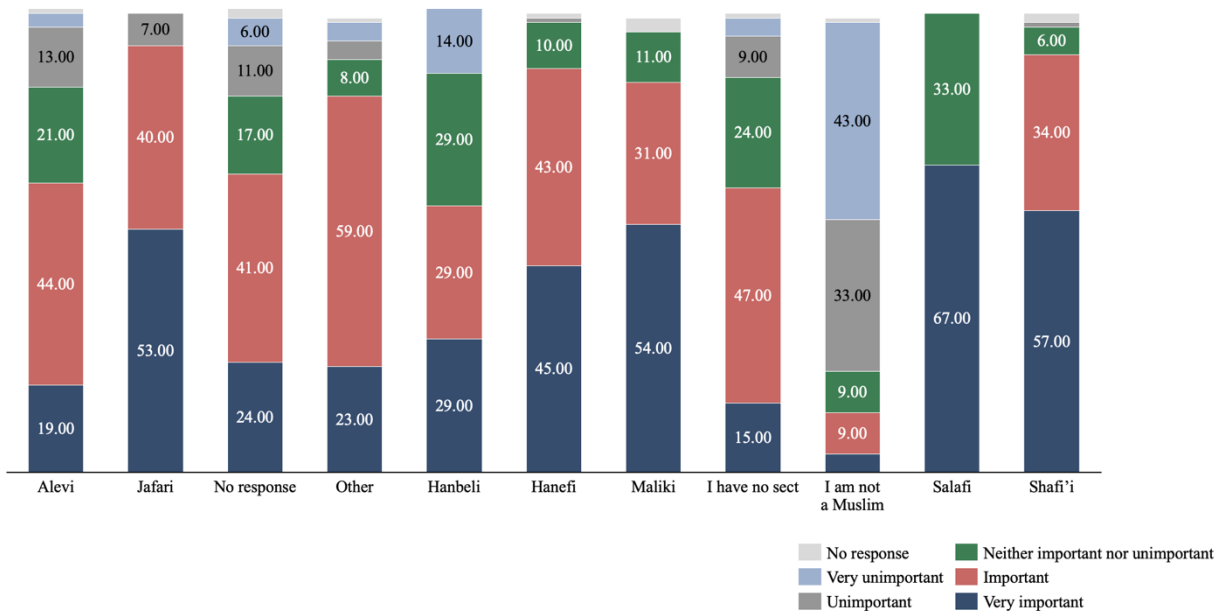
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Figure 15. The perceived importance of religion, by religious identity, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

Figure 16. The perceived importance of religion, by religious identity, %, 2020

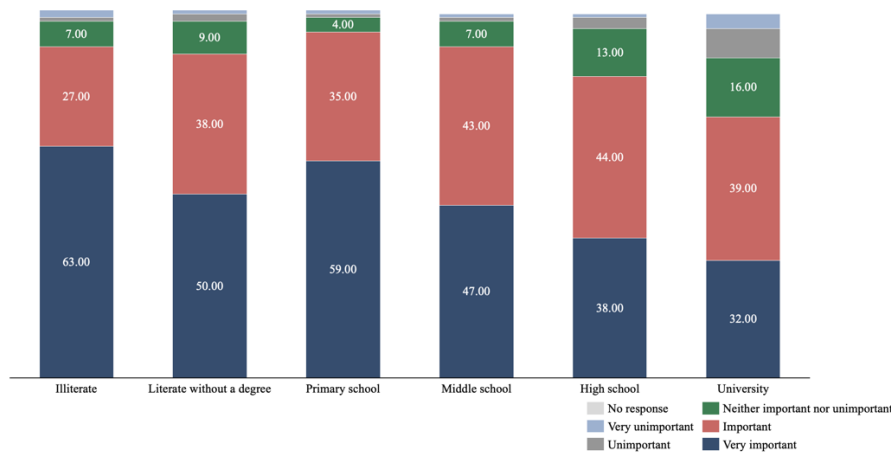


Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

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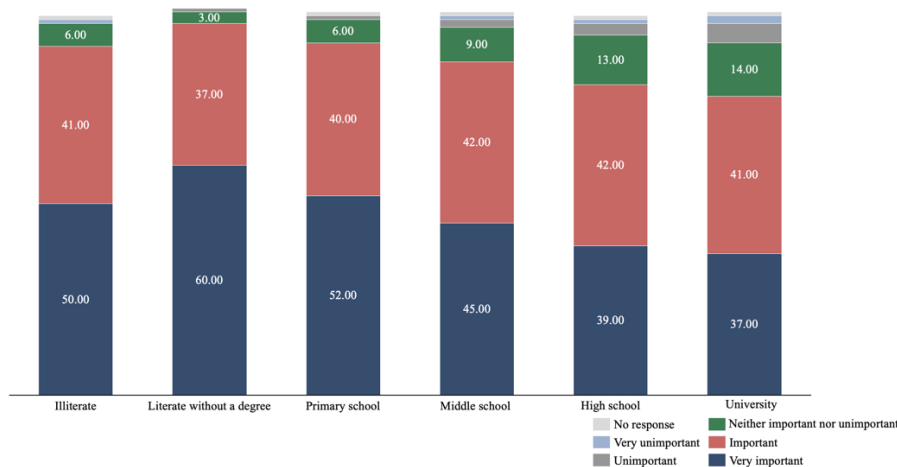
The survey data suggests that as the level of education increases, the perceived importance of religion decreases. In both 2016 and 2020, a higher percentage of respondents with lower levels of education reported that they consider religion to be very important compared to those with higher levels of education. Furthermore, higher percentages of respondents with university and high school degrees reported religion to be neither important nor unimportant compared to those with lower levels of education. This aligns with global trends associating higher education with increased secularism. However, it's noteworthy that a significant percentage of individuals with university degrees still find religion to be important in both 2016 and 2020.

Figure 17. The perceived importance of religion, by education level, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

Figure 18. The perceived importance of religion, by education level, %, 2020



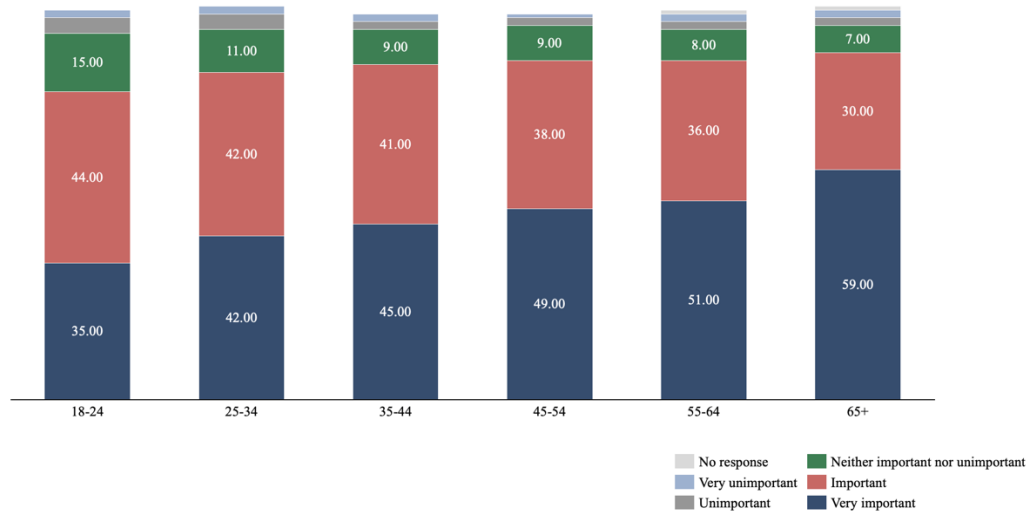
Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

In both 2016 and 2020, respondents from younger age cohorts, especially the youngest age cohort of 18-24, were less likely to consider religion to be very important compared to

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older age groups, suggesting a generational difference in attitudes towards religion. In 2016, only 35% of 18-24 year olds reported that they consider religion to be very important, and this rate progressively increased in older age cohorts, with as high as 59% of those aged 65 and over reporting so. Additionally, in 2016, a notable percentage of 18-24 year olds and 25-34 year olds reported that they consider religion neither important nor unimportant in their lives.

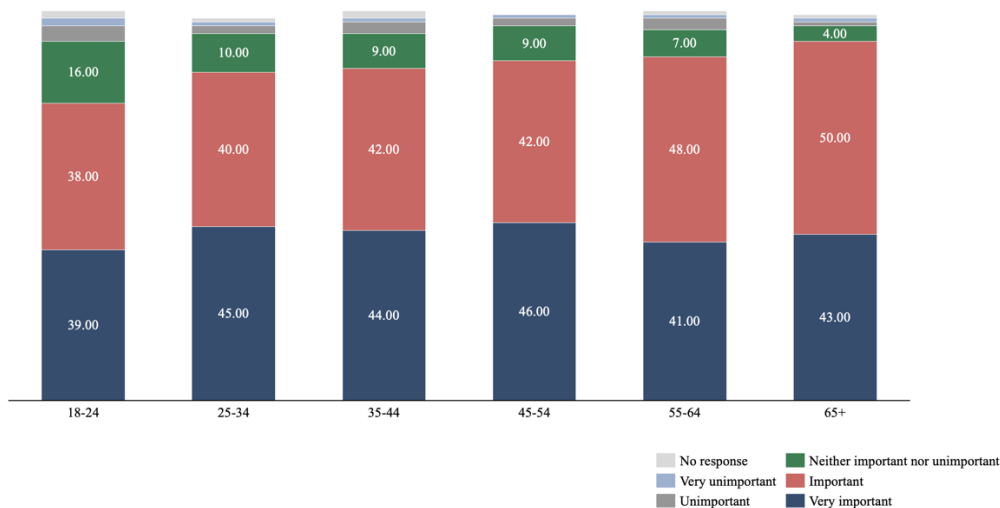
Figure 19. The perceived importance of religion, by age groups, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

The 2020 survey followed a similar trend with the rate of respondents reporting religion as very important progressively increasing in older age cohorts although differences between younger and older age cohorts were less pronounced compared to 2016.

Figure 20. The perceived importance of religion, by age groups, %, 2020

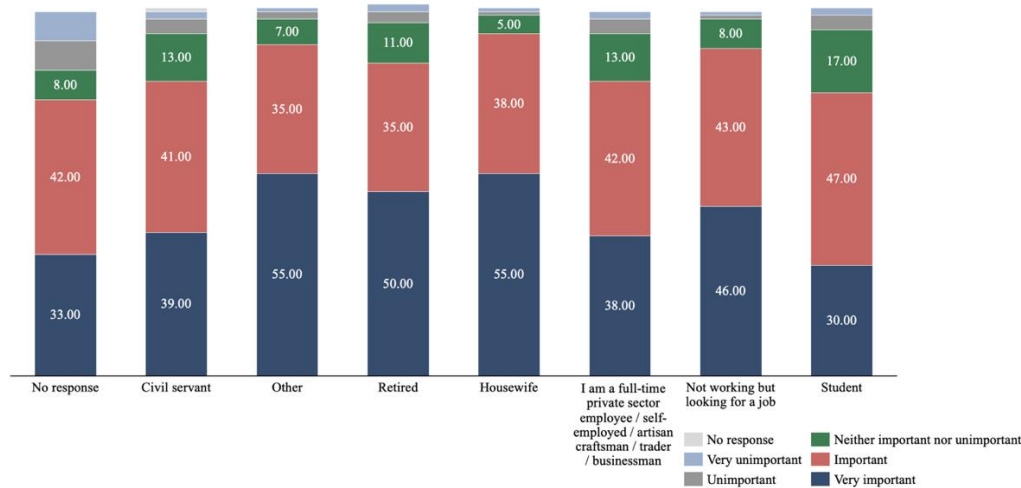


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Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

In 2016, the perceived importance of religion was lower among students and working respondents compared to those not working, including housewives, the retired, or unemployed. Working respondents and students were also more likely to report that they consider religion neither important nor unimportant in their lives.

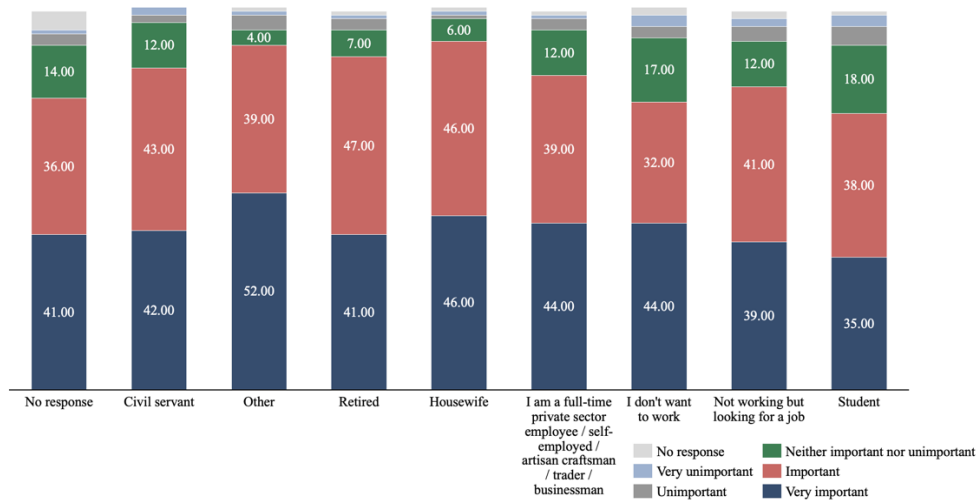
Figure 21. The perceived importance of religion, by occupation, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

In the 2020 survey, differences among occupation groups were less pronounced. While the percentage of public sector and private sector workers/businessmen, as well as students, reporting religion as very important increased, there was a decrease in housewives, the retired, or unemployed reporting so. Overall, students and the unemployed were least likely to report religion as very important in 2020. Housewives were still the most devoted, but to a lesser extent, with 46% reporting religion to be very important compared to 55% in 2016. Once again a considerable percentage of public sector and private sector workers/businessmen also reported religion as neither important nor unimportant in their lives.

Figure 22. The perceived importance of religion, by occupation, %, 2020

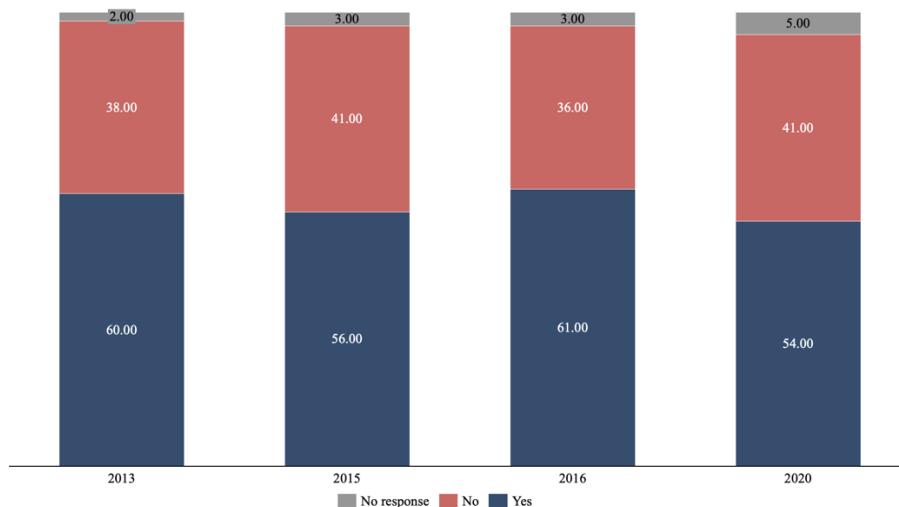


Note: Respondents were asked “How important is religion in your life?”

1.2 Practice of wearing of the headscarf

The percentage of women who wear headscarves has been fluctuating over the years, remaining relatively high, with more than half of them choosing to wear headscarves. Between 2013 and 2015, the percentage of female respondents reported wearing headscarves when going outside their homes or familial settings decreased from 60% to 56%. In 2016, it increased to 61%, and then dropped to 54% in 2020.

Figure 23. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, %, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2020



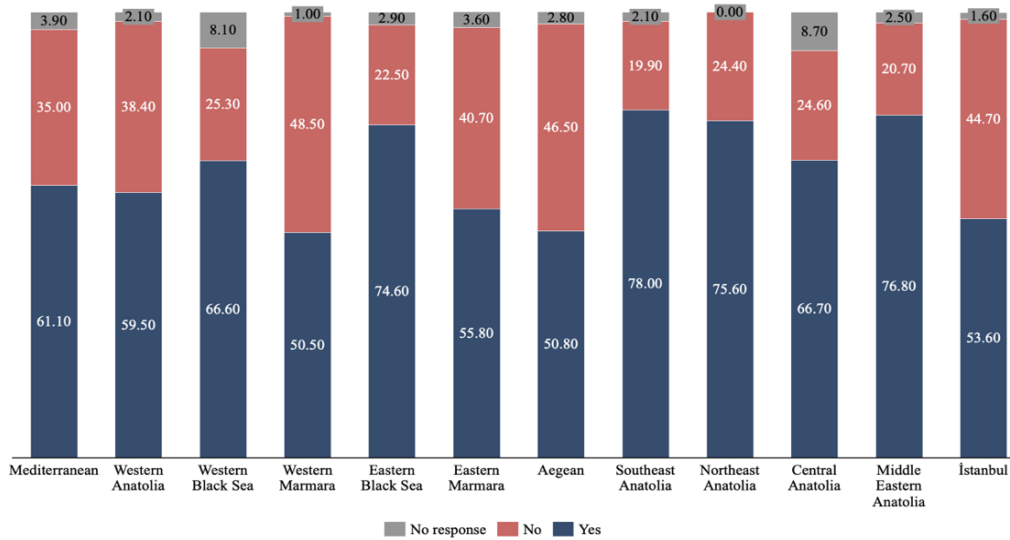
Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In 2016, the prevalence of the practice of wearing the headscarf was higher in more conservative eastern regions while lower in western provinces including Istanbul. It was

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also common in Anatolia as well as the Mediterranean though lower than in eastern parts of the country.

Figure 24. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by region, %, 2016

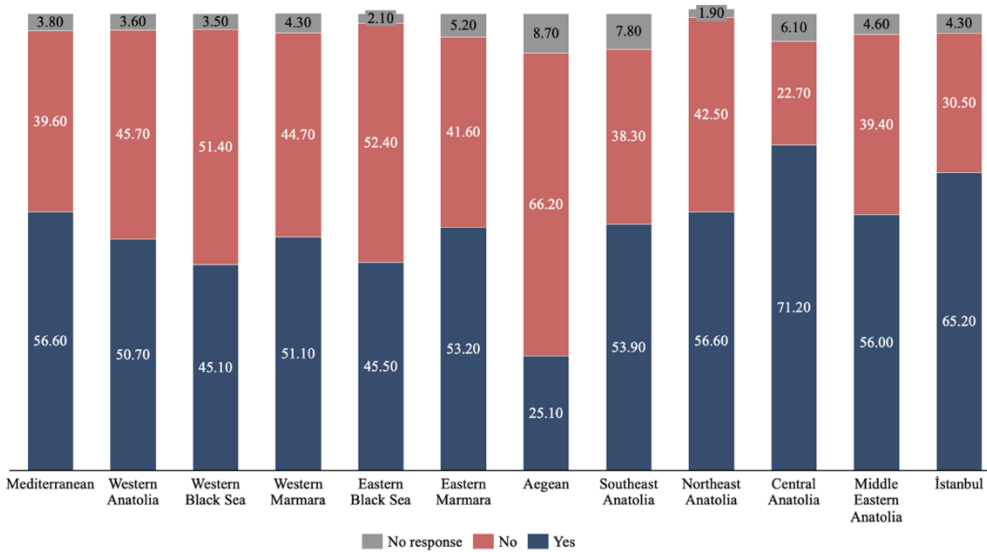


Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In 2020, there were some notable changes in regional patterns of wearing the headscarf although the general east-west pattern persisted. Middle Anatolia and Istanbul experienced a notable increase in the incidence of wearing headscarves, while all other regions saw a decline. A notably lower proportions of respondents reported wearing headscarves in eastern provinces such as Northeast Anatolia, Southeastern Anatolia, and Middle East Anatolia, although the rates remained above average in 2020. There was also a reduction in the Mediterranean (57%), although the prevalence exceeded the average. The prevalence of wearing headscarves saw a significant decline in Western Anatolia, the East Black Sea and West Black Sea. Similar to the 2016 survey, the percentage of respondents reporting to wear headscarves was again the lowest in the Aegean region, albeit at a much lower rate than in 2016, with about one-fourth reporting to do so in 2020.

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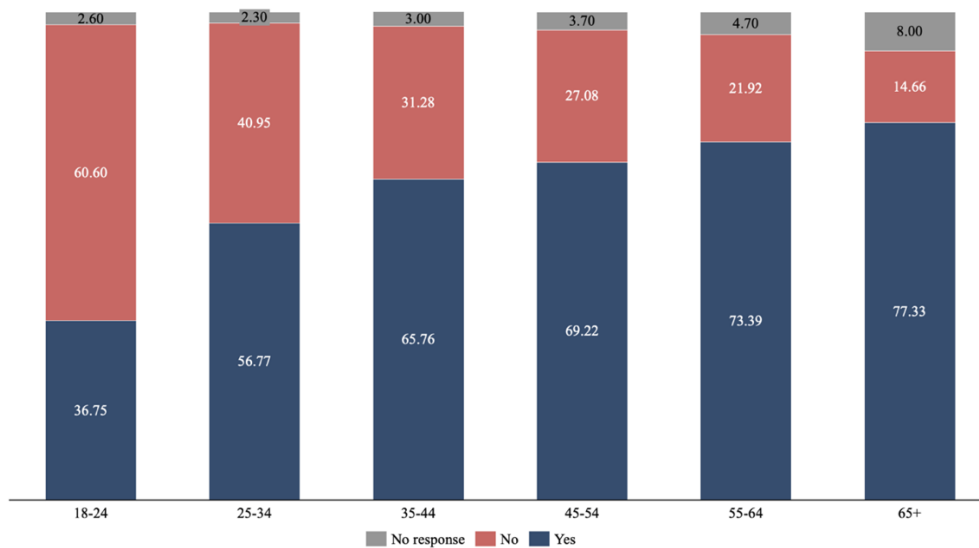
Figure 25. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by region, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In both 2016 and 2020, the practice of wearing a headscarf is less common in younger age cohorts, showing a significant difference between the youngest and oldest age groups. In 2016, just 36% of the youngest age cohort reported wearing a headscarf, compared to 77.3% of those aged 65 and over and 73.4% of those aged 55-64.

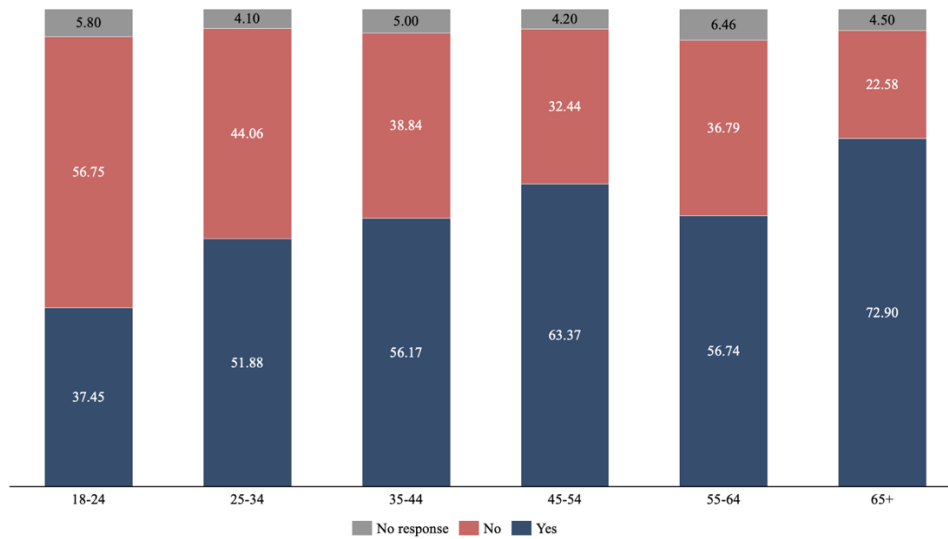
Figure 26. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by age groups, %, 2016



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In 2020, while a similar pattern emerged, there was a declining trend in wearing it among all age groups (except for the youngest 18-24, where there was only a slight increase).

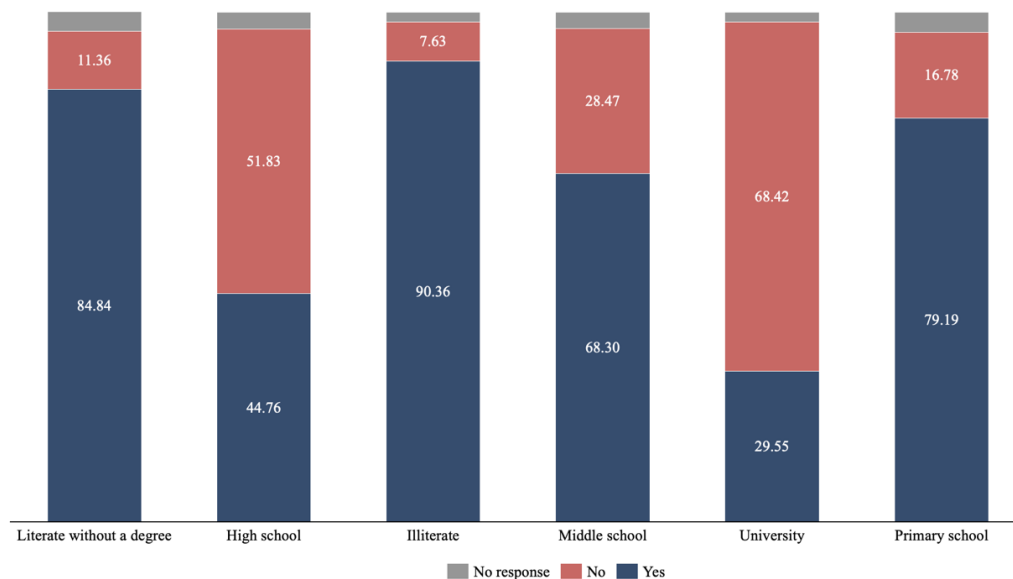
Figure 27. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by age groups, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In both 2016 and 2020, the practice of wearing a headscarf decreased with higher education levels. For instance, in 2016, 90 % of illiterate respondents lacking formal education reported wearing a headscarf compared to less than half of high school graduates and just 30% of university graduates.

Figure 28. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by level of education, %, 2016



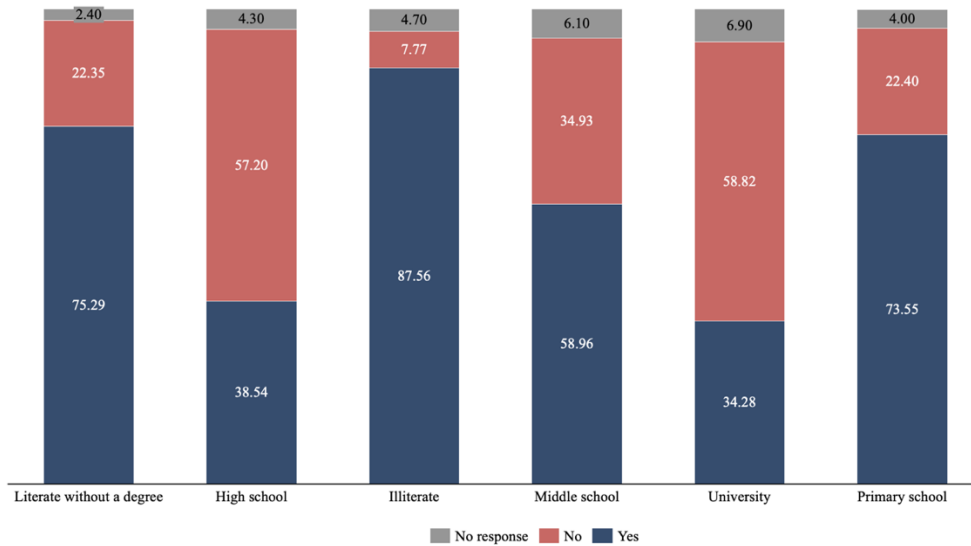
Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In 2020, a similar pattern emerged, but the differences were slightly less pronounced. There was a decrease in the percentage of respondents with lower levels of education wearing the

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headscarf, while the percentage of university graduates reporting wearing a headscarf slightly increased.

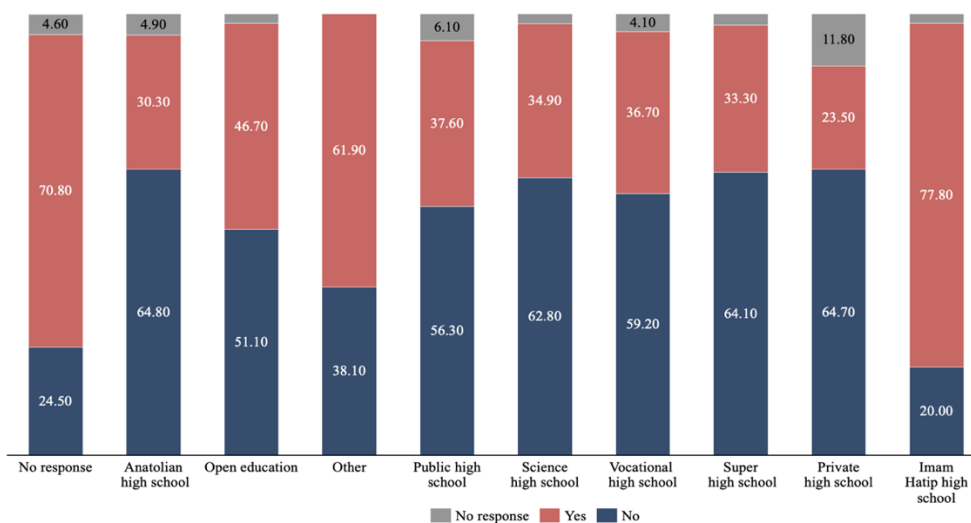
Figure 29. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by level of education, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

In terms of the type of school, as expected, female respondents who graduated from Imam Hatip schools, a vocational high school with Islamic syllabus, were more likely to wear a headscarf. Specifically, in 2020⁸, 78% of those who graduated from Imam Hatip schools reported wearing a headscarf. A high percentage of female respondents (47%) who participated in open education programs also reported wearing a headscarf.

Figure 30. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by type of school, %, 2020

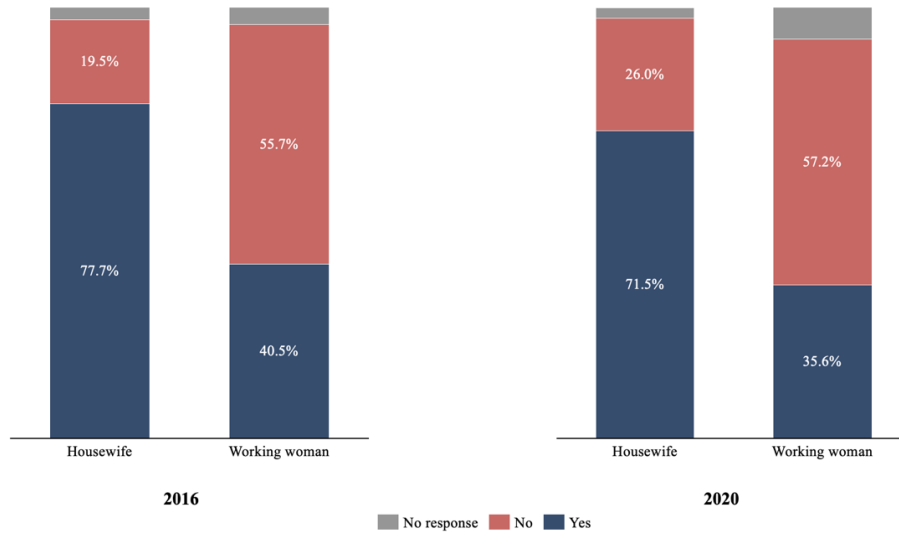


Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

⁸ The question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

In both 2016 and 2020, a significantly higher percentage of female respondents who are housewives reported wearing the headscarf compared to those who are working. In 2020, there was an almost equal decline among women who wore the headscarf for both groups.

Figure 31. Prevalence of wearing the headscarf, by occupation, %, 2016 and 2020



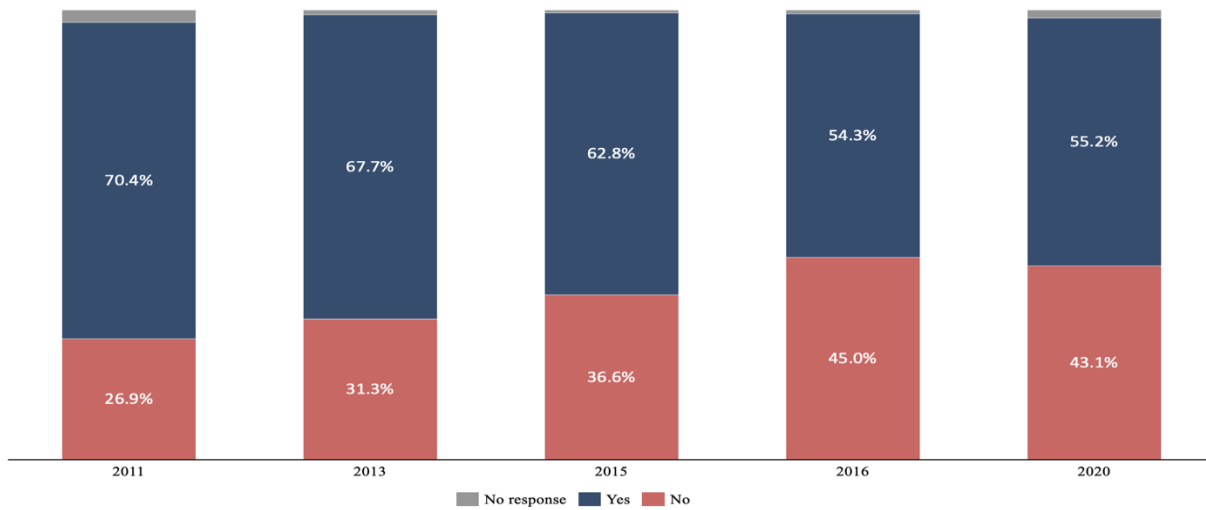
Note: Respondents were asked “Do you wear a headscarf?”

1.3 Observance of religious practices

1.3.1 Fasting during religious months

Surveys since 2011 show that fasting has been declining. In 2011, the proportion of respondents who reported that they fast regularly during religious months was at of 70%. In 2013 and 2015, it declined to 68% and 63%, respectively. In 2016, the proportion of respondents who reported fasting regularly during religious months declined further, reaching 54%. In 2020, it stood only slightly higher than 2016, at 55%.

Figure 32. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, %, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2020

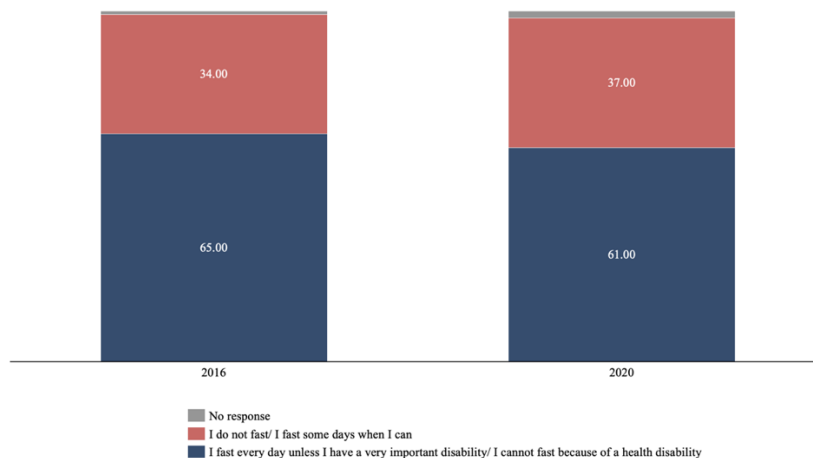


Note: Respondents were asked “Do you fast?”

For the remainder of this report, respondents who answered the question "I cannot fast due to health reasons" are treated the same as those reporting they fast regularly. This assumption is based on the idea that both groups are equally devoted to religious practices, but the latter is not able to fast due to health constraints.

In total, combining those who cannot fast due to health reasons with those who fast every day, the reported figures were 65% and 61%, respectively, in 2016 and 2020.

Figure 33. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you fast?”

Female respondents were more likely to fast regularly. In 2016, a higher percentage of female respondents (68% %) reported fasting regularly compared to male respondents (62%). A similar

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gender difference was observed in the 2020 survey, where 64% of female respondents reported fasting compared to 57%) of males.

In both 2016 and 2020, respondents reporting fasting was lower in younger cohorts. Notwithstanding, more than half of the youngest age cohort (18-24) also reported that they fast regularly in both years. Differences between age groups were more pronounced in 2016 than in 2020.

Figure 34. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, by age group, %, 2016

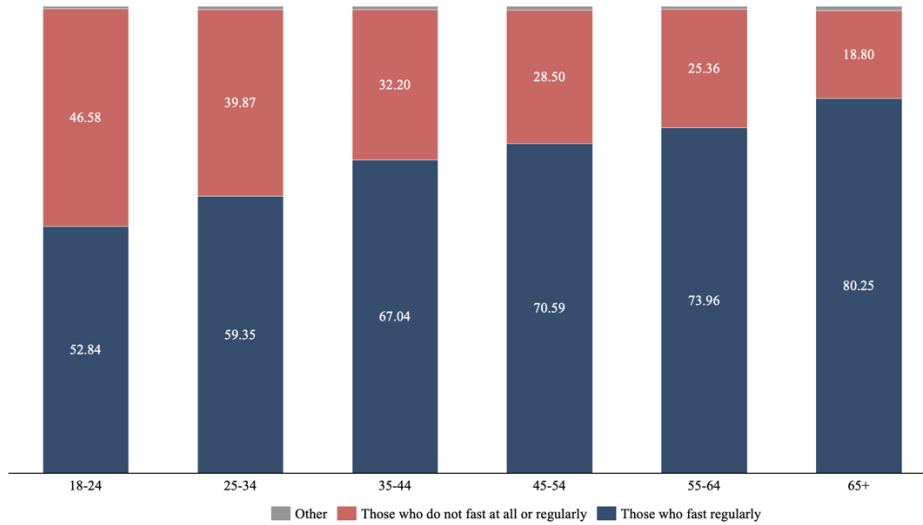
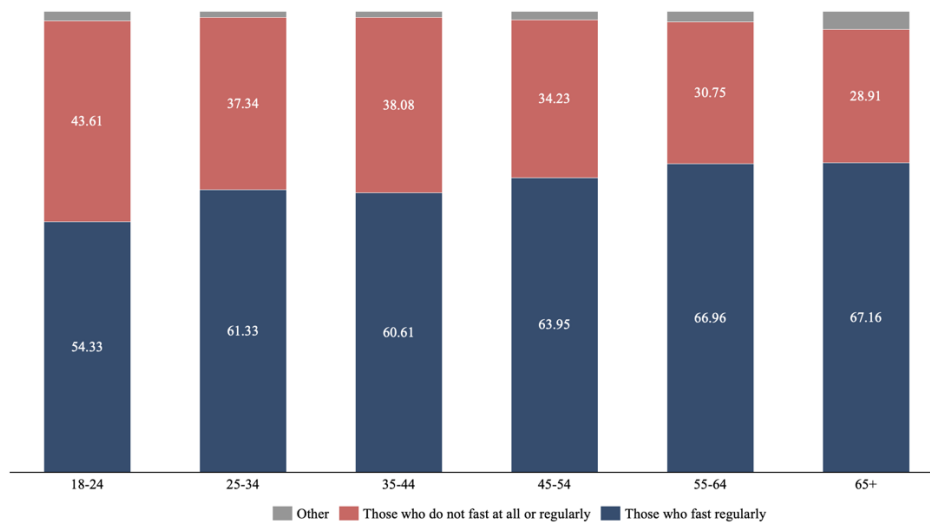


Figure 35. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, by age group, %, 2020

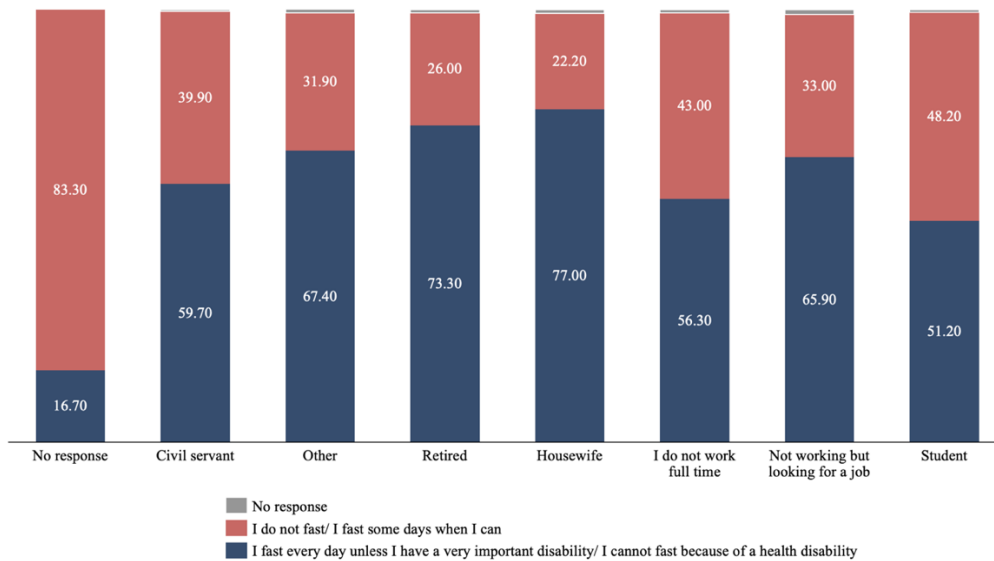


Note: Respondents were asked “Do you fast?”

In both 2016 and 2020, survey results indicated higher rates of regular fasting among those who do not work. In 2016, housewives and retired individuals were particularly likely to report fasting regularly, and fasting was also common among those unemployed but seeking employment. Conversely, lower rates of regular fasting were observed among public servants, private sector workers, and students.

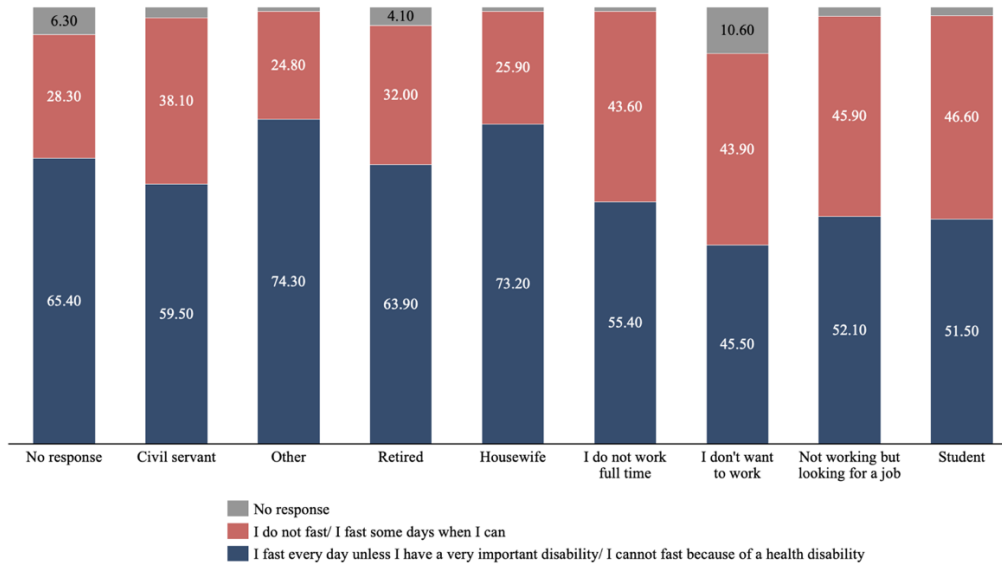
In 2020, a similar pattern emerged, though with some differences. Housewives and retired individuals continued to have the highest rates of fasting among occupational groups, although slightly lower than in 2016. Those unemployed but seeking employment reported lower rates of fasting in 2020, putting them on par with students. Fasting rates remained consistent for public servants, private sector workers, and students.

Figure 36. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, by occupation group, %, 2016



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Figure 37. Prevalence of fasting during religious months, by occupation group, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you fast?”

1.3.2 Prayer

Since 2013, there has been a declining trend in respondents reporting that they pray regularly five times a day. In 2011, the figure was 38%, which increased to 44% in 2013 but has been progressively decreasing since. It declined to 42% in 2015, further to 40% in 2016, and in 2020, it fell below 2011 levels, dropping to 36%.

Figure 38. Prevalence of daily prayer, %, 2011, 2013, 2015

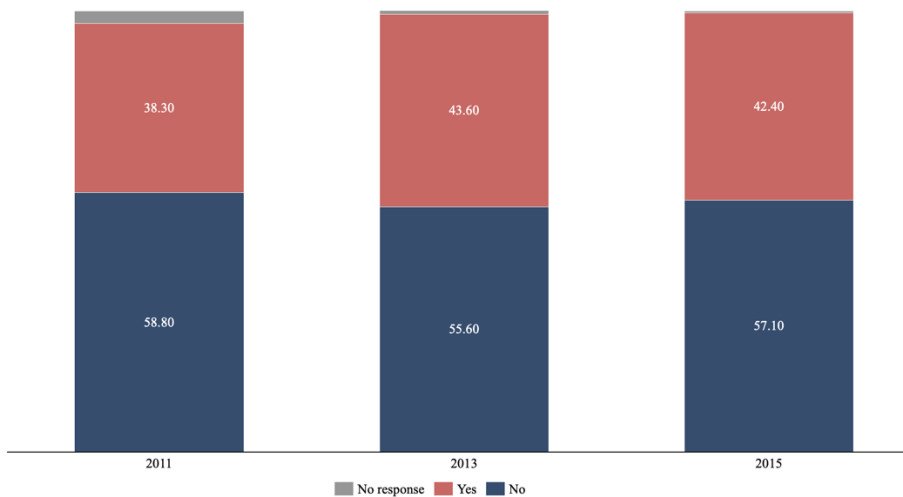
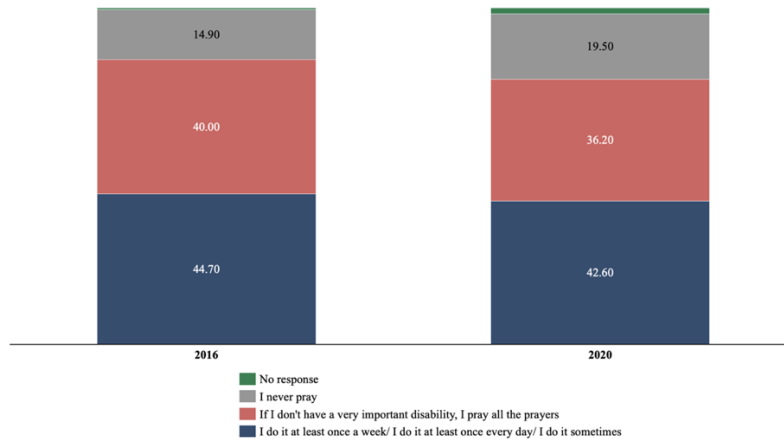


Figure 39. Prevalence of daily prayer, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: In 2011, 2013, and 2015, the survey question was asked as "Do you pray regularly five times a day?" The format changed in 2016 and 2020, with respondents being provided a set of answer options as indicated in the graph.

Similar to the results for fasting, female respondents were more likely to pray five times a day. In 2016, 44.7% of female respondents reported praying five times a day when there are no obstacles compared to 35.2% of male respondents. A similar gender difference was observed in the 2020 survey, where 40.7% of female respondents reported praying compared to 31.3% of males.

In both 2016 and 2020, respondents reporting praying five times a day progressively increased in higher age cohorts. Conversely, those reporting they do not pray at all decreased in older age cohorts.

BOX 2. Religiosity measure: For whom is religion really important?

According to Koenig and Büssing (2010), the individual religiosity has multiple dimensions as sanctuary attendance⁹, private religious activities such as prayer, meditation or holy book study and the importance of religion for life and decision-making.

To construct a measure of religious identity, we employ a methodology that focuses on the practice of private religious activities. The available dimensions of Muslim religiosity in the 2016 and 2020 surveys are as follows:

1. "How often do you fast in religious months?" If respondents provide the answers:
 - "If there is no significant obstacle, I fast every day."
 - "I cannot fast due to a health impediment."
2. "How often do you pray?"
 - "If there is no significant obstacle, I perform all obligatory prayers."

Therefore, the religious group used in the remainder of the report is as follows:

- Respondents that affirmed "If there is no significant obstacle, I fast every day" or "I cannot fast due to a health impediment" and "If there is no significant obstacle, I perform all obligatory prayers" and "I read the Quran other than during prayers."

According to the constructed religiosity measure, in 2016, 36.5 % of respondents are considered religious. In 2020, the percentage of respondents who are considered religious dropped to 32.5 %.

1.3.3 Holy book study and its Interpretations

In 2020, almost half of respondents reported reading the Kur'an'ı Kerim (the holy book of Muslims) outside of their prayer activities¹⁰. A substantial portion of respondents (75%) have acquired the ability to read it in Arabic, either through educational programs offered by Diyanet or private courses. Moreover, approximately half (53%) of the respondents believe it is necessary to refer to a commentary or a scholar to comprehend the Quran. This reliance on external sources for understanding the Quran can be attributed to factors such as a lack of proficiency in the Arabic language.

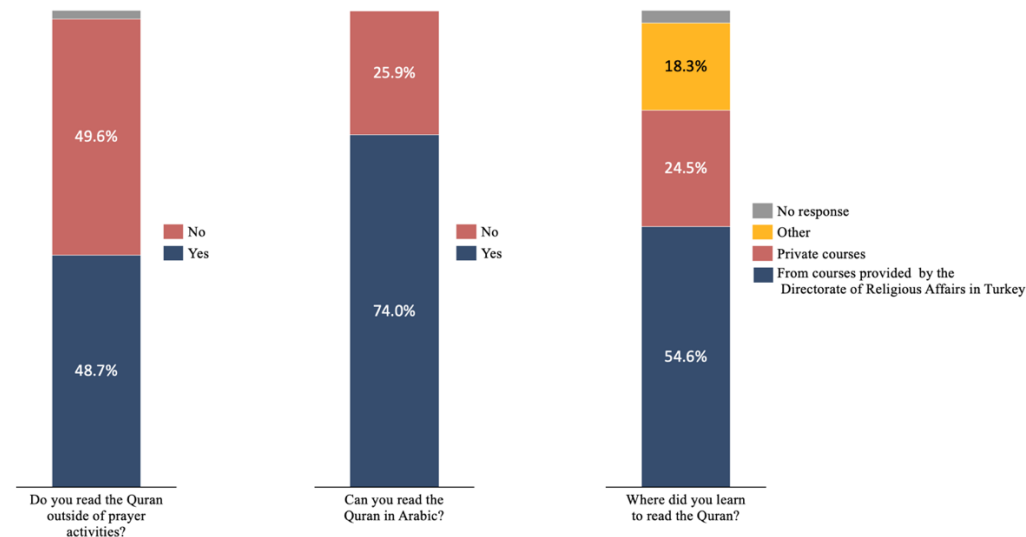
⁹ For example, this could be church attendance for Christians, mosque attendance for Muslims.

Koenig, H. G. and Büssing, A. (2010). The Duke University Religion Index (DUREL): A Five-Item Measure for Use in Epidemiological Studies. *Religions*, 1:78–85.

¹⁰ The same question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

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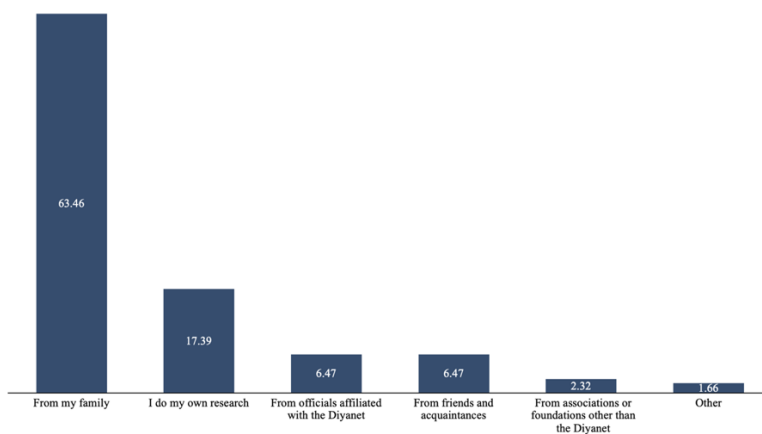
Figure 40. Prevalence of holy book study



1.4 Sources of religious knowledge¹¹

The 2020 survey results highlight the significant role of the family environment in religious learning. Approximately two-thirds of respondents (63%) reported that they learn about religion through their families, indicating the family's influence in shaping religious beliefs and practices. Some respondents also engage in individual research to further their understanding of religion. In contrast, a relatively small percentage of respondents mentioned learning from the Diyanet, which is the official religious authority in Türkiye (6%).

Figure 41. Sources of religious knowledge, %, 2020



Note: In 2020, the survey question was asked as "From which sources do you acquire religious knowledge?"

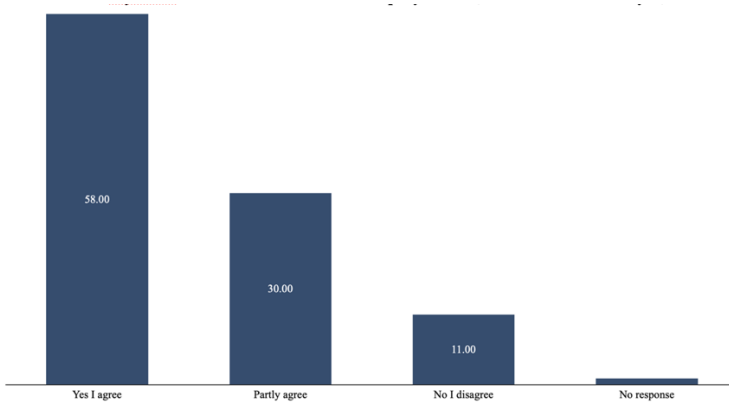
Note: *Diyanet* is the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Türkiye.

¹¹ Questions analyzed in this section were not asked in the 2016 survey with the exception of the individuals (such as journalists, writers, scholars, or opinion leaders), whom respondents rely on for religious knowledge or whose views on Islam they have considered.

Religious learning from associations or foundations, although relatively low at 2%, was more prevalent among specific groups and in certain provinces. For instance, in Erzurum and Şanlıurfa, 9% and 7% of respondents reported obtaining religious information from associations or foundations. Additionally, individuals who graduated from science and Imam Hatip schools were more likely to learn from such associations or foundations, with 5.7% and 5.9% of these groups, respectively, using this source for religious education.

Trust in the Diyanet's (the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Türkiye) information varies among respondents. In 2020, 58% of respondents stated that they trust the accuracy of information provided by the Diyanet regarding calendar calculations for prayer times, Ramadan, and holiday dates. However, nearly one third (30%) were uncertain or unsure, and 11% expressed distrust in the Diyanet for such information.

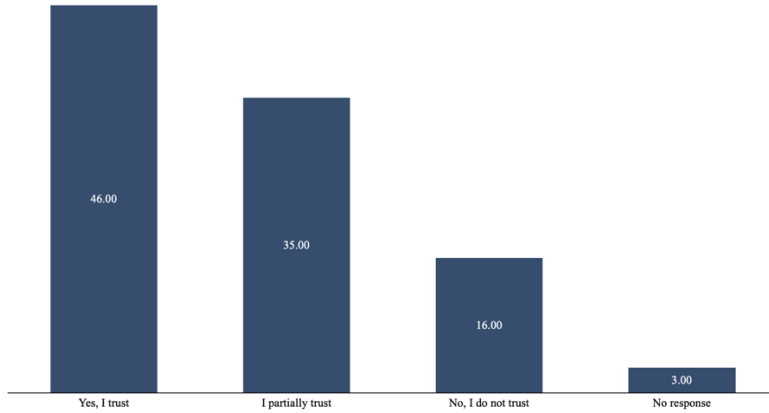
Figure 42. Trust in the Diyanet's calculations for prayer times, Ramadan, and holiday dates, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Do you agree with the statement "I trust the Diyanet's calculations for prayer times, Ramadan, and holiday dates"?"

A significant percentage of respondents also expressed varying levels of trust in religious fatwas issued by the Diyanet, which are opinions on religious matters. While 46% of respondents expressed trust in these fatwas, 35% stated that they partially trusted them, and 16% stated that they do not trust them.

Figure 43. Trust in the Diyanet's religious opinions (fatwas), %, 2020



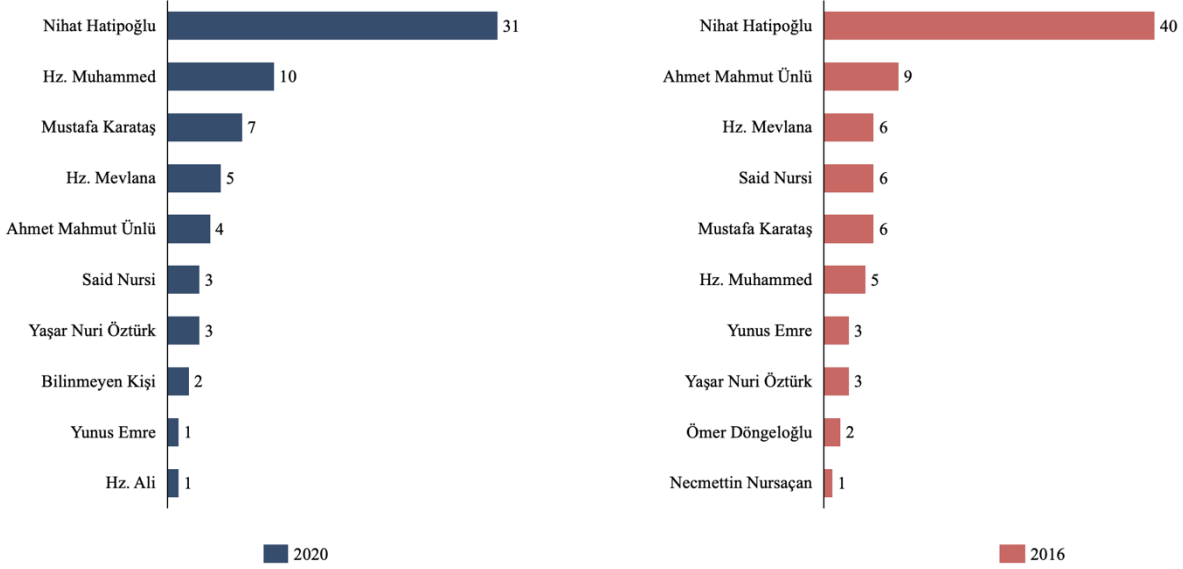
Note: Respondents were asked “Do you trust the religious opinions (fatwas) expressed by Diyanet on religious matters?”

Respondents were asked to name three individuals, whether they are currently alive or not, such as journalists, writers, scholars, or opinion leaders, from whom they have learned religious knowledge or whose views on Islam they have considered. **In both 2016 and 2020, the majority of respondents relied on or considered Nihat Hatipoglu, a public religious figure, for his views on Islam, although the number of respondents relying on him has declined since 2016.**

In 2016, as many as 40% mentioned Nihat Hatipoglu, as the figure they relied on for his views on Islam, followed by Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü (Cübbeli Ahmad Hodja, which literally means “Ahmet the robed cleric”), another public religious figure. Historical Islamic scholars like Hz Mevlana or Hz Muhammad, the Prophet himself, were mentioned less frequently.

In 2020, the reliance on Nihat Hatipoglu for his views on Islam decreased to 31%, while there was an increase in respondents mentioning Hz Muhammad.

Figure 44. Most relied on individuals for religious knowledge, %, 2016 and 2020



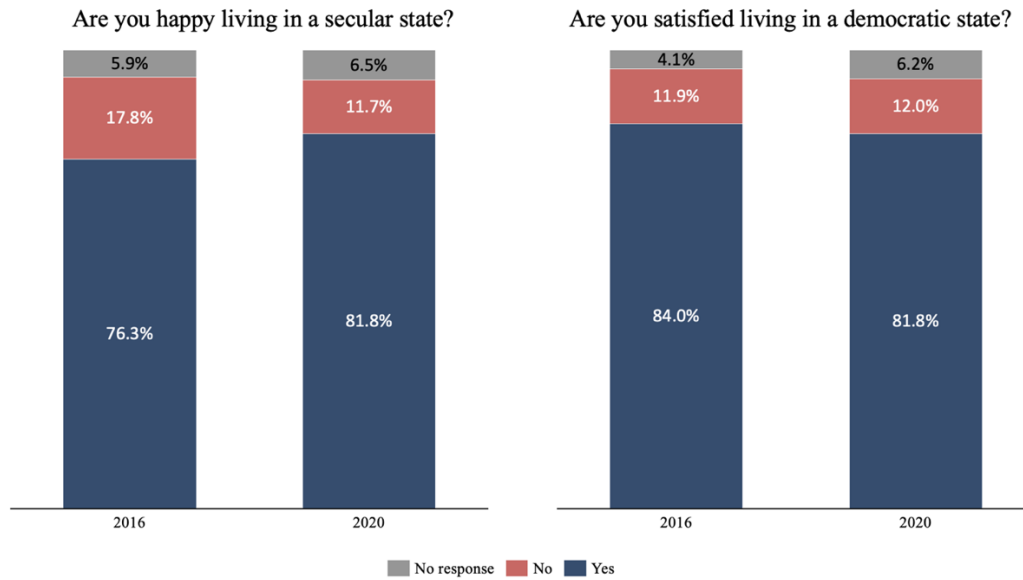
Note: Respondents were asked "Can you name three individuals, whether alive or deceased, among journalists, writers, scholars, or opinion leaders who you have learned about Islam and whose opinions you take into consideration?"

1.5 Attitudes towards the law and governance of democratic secular state

Overall, a majority of respondents prefer living in a secular and democratic state, and there has been an increasing trend in their preference in living in a secular state between 2016 and 2020. In 2016, 75% of respondents expressed their contentment with living in a secular state, while in 2020, this figure increased to 81%. While there was a slight decline in those stating they were content with living in a democratic state (from 84% to 81% between 2016 and 2020), 12% of respondents reported that they were not content living in a democratic state in both years. In 2020, the percentage of those reporting they do not know was slightly higher.

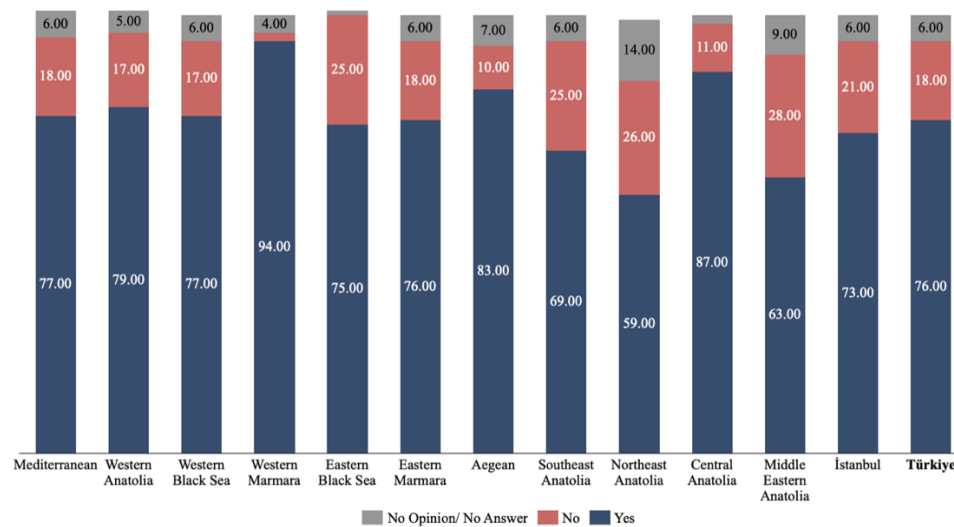
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Figure 45. Views on living in a secular and democratic state, %, 2016 and 2020



In 2016, the highest percentage of respondents expressing discontent with living in a secular state were in the eastern regions of Türkiye. The highest percentage of respondents expressing contentment were in western regions of Western Marmara and Aegean, as well as in Middle Anatolia.

Figure 46. Views on living in a secular state, by region, %, 2016



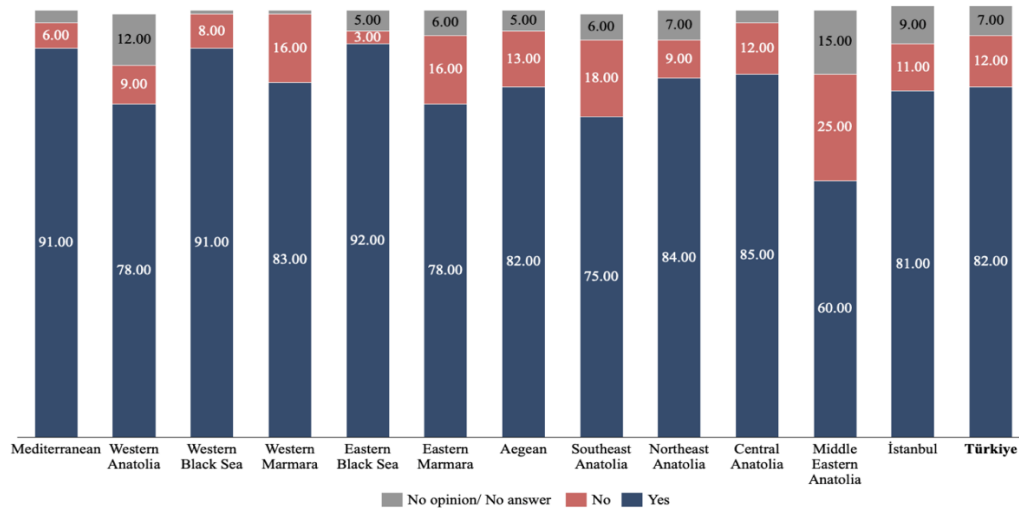
Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a secular state?”

In 2020, notable regional shifts were observed. The Eastern Black Sea, the Western Black Sea, and the Mediterranean emerged as regions where the highest percentage of respondents reported contentment with living in a secular state. Notably, the proportion of respondents

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expressing contentment with living in a secular state was considerably lower in 2016 in these regions, at about three-fourths. Furthermore, there was a significant increase in the percentage of respondents reporting happiness in living in a secular state in Northeast Anatolia and Istanbul. Conversely, there was a notable decrease in respondents expressing contentment with living in a democratic state in Western Marmara. Consistent with 2016 results, the percentage of respondents reporting contentment with living in a secular state remained low in Middle East Anatolia and again low but slightly higher than 2016 in Southeast Anatolia.

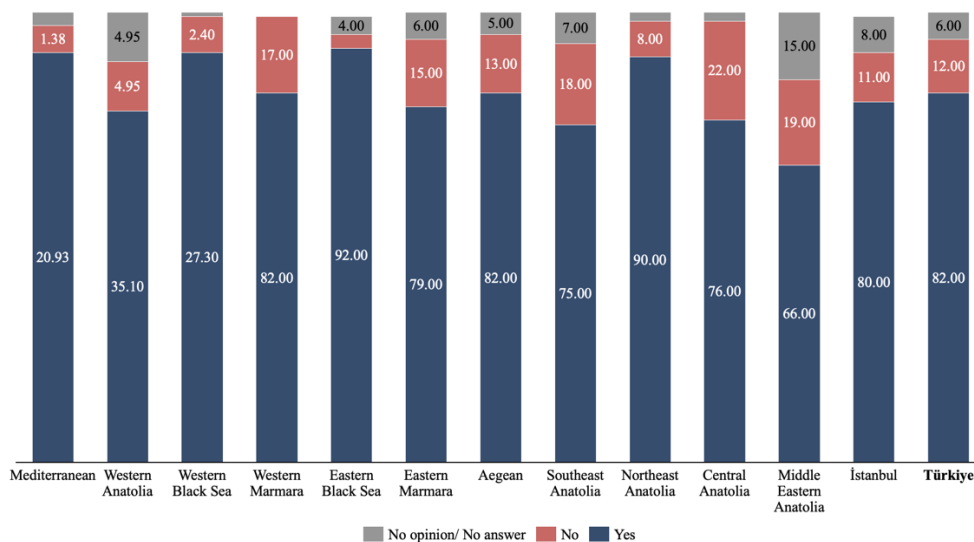
Figure 47. Views on living in a secular state, by region, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a secular state?”

In both 2016 and 2020, regional trends for respondents expressing contentment with living in a democratic state closely mirrored those reporting satisfaction with a secular state.

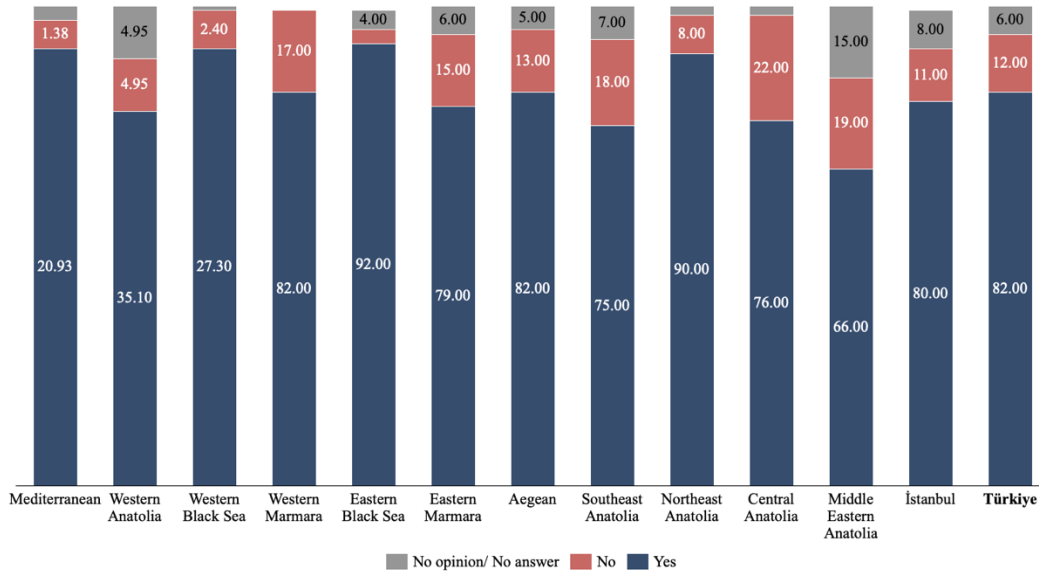
Figure 48. Views on living in a democratic state, by region, %, 2016



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Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a democratic state?”

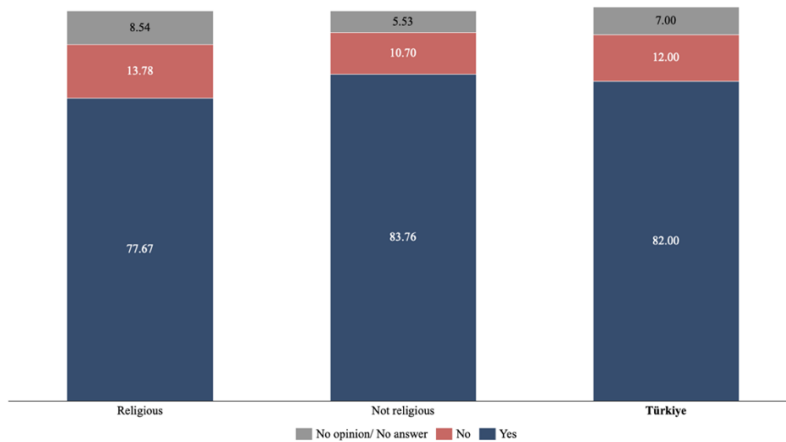
Figure 49. Views on living in a democratic state, by region, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a democratic state?”

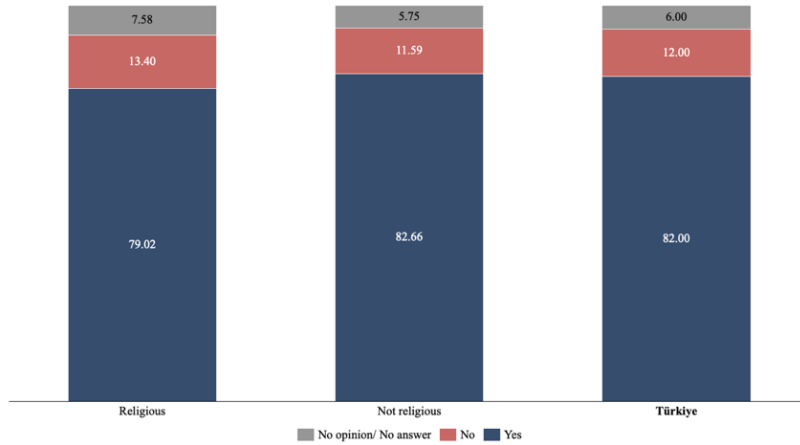
In 2020, religious respondents were less likely to report being content living in both a secular and democratic state compared to their non-religious counterparts.

Figure 50. Views on living in a secular state, by religious vs. not religious, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a secular state?”

Figure 51. Views on living in a democratic state, by religious vs. not religious, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a democratic state?”

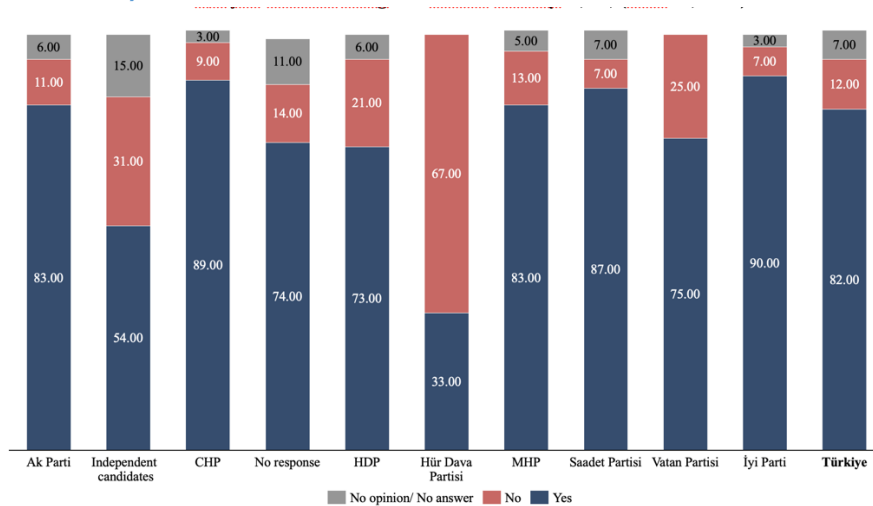
In terms of political party affiliation, in 2020, the highest percentages of individuals expressing contentment living in a secular state were among voters of İyi Parti (Good Party) and CHP (Republican People's Party) (90% and 89% respectively). CHP is known for its stance as a mainstay of secularism. Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party), an Islamist political party, also exhibited a high percentage at 87%.

Among voters of AK Part (Justice and Development Party), the ruling party, and MHP (Nationalist Movement Party), the coalition partner of AKP, 83% expressed contentment.

Conversely, the lowest percentages of contentment were reported among voters of Vatan Partisi (Patriotic Party) (75%), HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party), the pro-Kurdish party (72%), and Hür Dava Partisi, a Kurdish Sunni Islamist political party (33%).

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Figure 52. Views on living in a secular state, by party voted for (as per the June 24, 2018 elections), %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a secular state?”

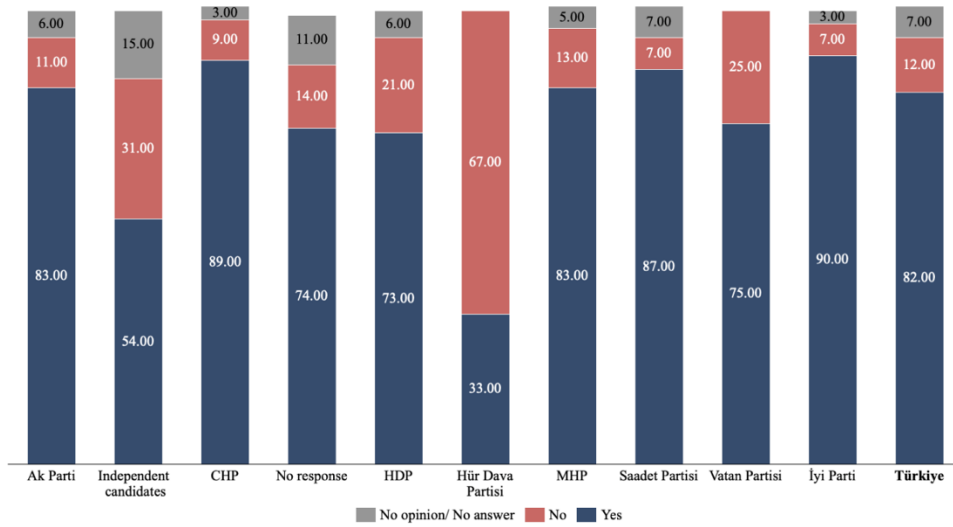
In terms of satisfaction with residing in a democratic state based on political party affiliation, there were certain parallels with contentment in living in a secular state, albeit with notable distinctions. The highest percentage of individuals expressing contentment living in a democratic state was observed among voters of Saadet Partisi (93%). İyi Parti also exhibited a substantial percentage at 89%, aligning closely with the rates reported for secularism. Among Vatan voters, who demonstrated lower satisfaction with secularism, there was a noteworthy increase in contentment with living in a democratic state, reaching 88%.

Conversely, among CHP voters, there was a diminished level of contentment for democracy compared to secularism, aligning with the levels reported by voters of AKP and MHP, with 85% expressing satisfaction with living in a democratic state.

The lowest percentages of satisfaction with living in a democratic state were again reported among voters of HDP, the Kurdish party (69%), and Hür Dava Partisi (33%).

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Figure 53. Views on living in a democratic state, by party voted for (as per the June 24, 2018 elections), %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Are you happy living in a democratic state?”

CHAPTER 2 - PLURALISM IN TÜRKİYE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THOSE WITH DIFFERENT BELIEFS AND BACKGROUNDS

Chapter 3 aims to establish the degree to which differences in beliefs and ethnics/religious backgrounds are tolerated in Türkiye and how these attitudes vary across religious groups, regions, gender, age, and education and how they evolved over time based on survey data from 2016 to 2020.

The first section explores respondents' views on and engagement with people who hold different beliefs and who are not religious. The second section focuses on willingness to engage among followers of different religious schools, particularly Sunnis and Alevis, and engagement with Syrians examining various types of interactions, including financial, business, and personal interactions.

2.1 Religious identity and tolerance

In both 2016 and 2020, respondents were asked detailed questions about their views on individuals with different beliefs, practices, and lifestyles, as well as about individuals who neglect their religious duties or are not religious. This section explores respondents' perspectives in 2016 and 2020 based on their profiles, including religiosity¹², gender, age, and education¹³

Pointing to a soft attitude toward religion in Türkiye, only 21% of respondents in both 2016 and 2020 stated that a person who is not religious cannot be moral. This figure was low even among religious respondents (at 29% of religious respondents claiming that a non-religious person cannot be moral in 2016) and fell further in 2020 to 24%, which is close to the average.

¹² The definition for the religiosity measure encompasses practices such as daily prayer and fasting during religious months.

¹³ The analysis is based on answers to the questions below:

1) "Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?"

2) "What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?"

Respondents were provided with the following answer choices: a) 'A person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner.' b) 'A person who neglects religious duties like prayer is not just a sinner but is actually an infidel.' c) 'A person who neglects religious duties like prayer is simply someone who neglects their religious duties.' d) 'I do not know.'

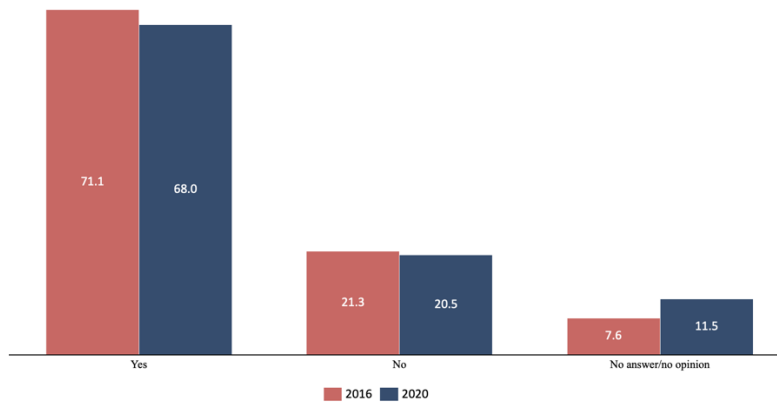
3) Reactions to the statement "My sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam."

4) Reactions to the statement "I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs." (The question was only asked in 2020)

5) Reactions to the statement "I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me." (The question was only asked in 2020)

6) "Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?"

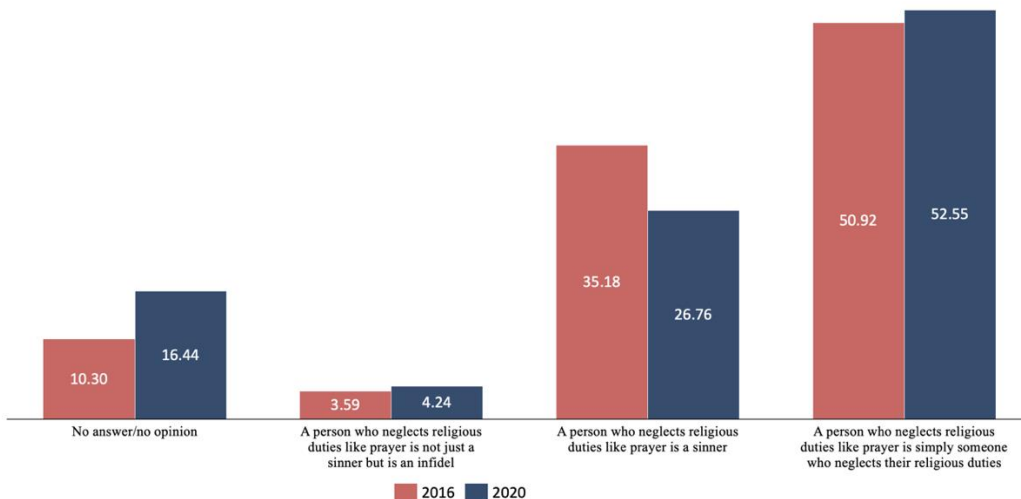
Figure 54. Views on people who are not religious, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?”

While judgment of people who do not adhere to religious practices is higher, it decreased between 2016 and 2020. However, a notably higher percentage of religious respondents stated that a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner or is an infidel (56.4% of religious respondents in 2016), and this figure remained high in 2020 at 50.2%.

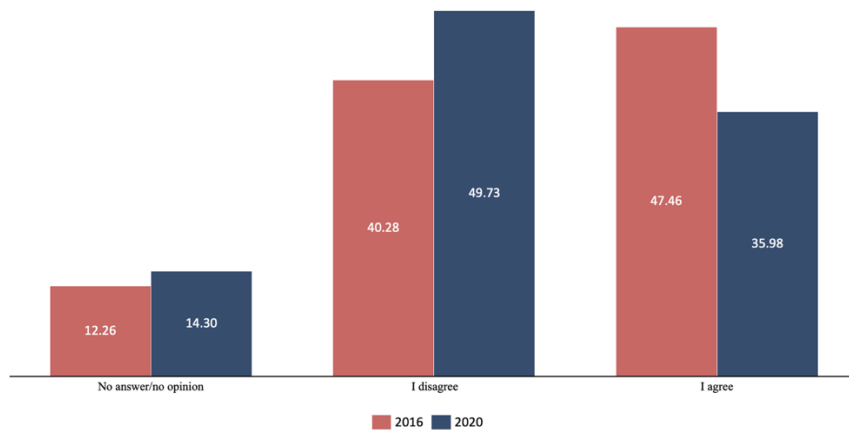
Figure 55. Views on people who do not adhere to religious practices, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?”

Pointing to the increase in pluralism, between 2016 and 2020, there was a decline in the percentage of respondents who stated that their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing Islam. A similar decline can be observed among religious respondents, as those who stated they believe that their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing fell from 58.4% to 44.1% in 2020.

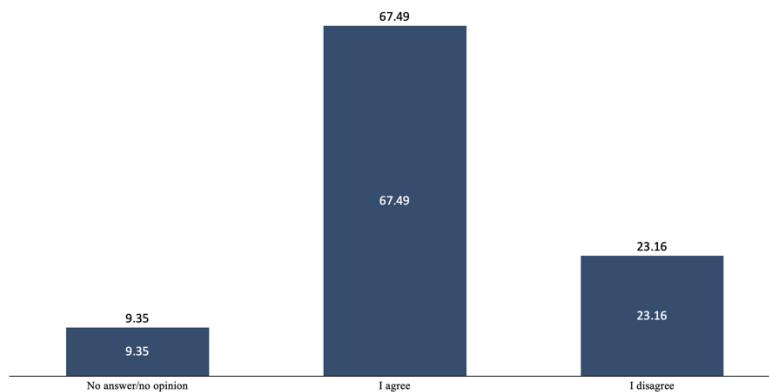
Figure 56. Belief that one's own beliefs and practices are the most accurate way of practicing Islam, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “My sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.”

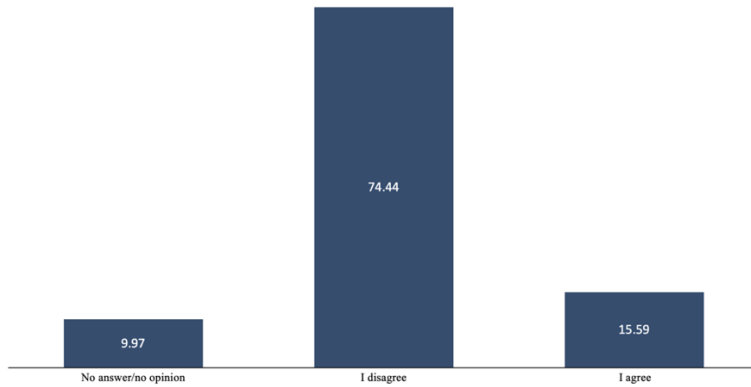
Additionally, in 2020, only 23% said they keep their distance from people who do not live according to their beliefs, and even fewer (16%) said they cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than them. Religious respondents were more inclined to express a preference for keeping away from those who do not align with their beliefs (32.3%). On the other hand, only a slightly higher percentage of religious respondents declared that they cannot stand people who have different lifestyles and beliefs than them (19.4%).

Figure 57. Views on interacting with people who live according to different beliefs, % 2020



Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs.” The question was only asked in 2020.

Figure 58. Views on people with who have different lifestyles and beliefs, % 2020

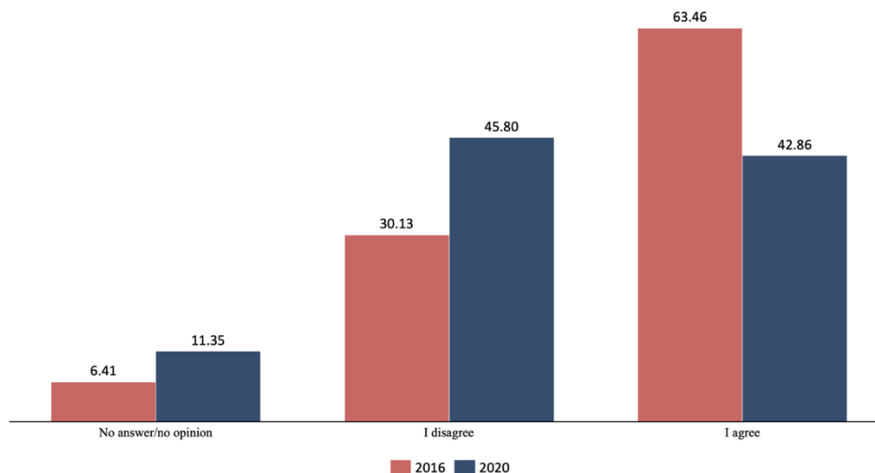


Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.” The question was only asked in 2020.

On the other hand, a high percentage of respondents stated that they give advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, though giving advice may be considered a social practice in Türkiye. In 2016, as high as 63% said they gave advice, compared to 30% who said they do not.

Notwithstanding, possibly pointing to the decline in emphasis on religion, the percentage of respondents reporting to give advice dropped in 2020, below those who said they did not give advice. Among religious respondents, this percentage dropped from a whopping 85.6% in 2016 to 61.1%, which is still considerably high.

Figure 59. Views on giving advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, % 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?”

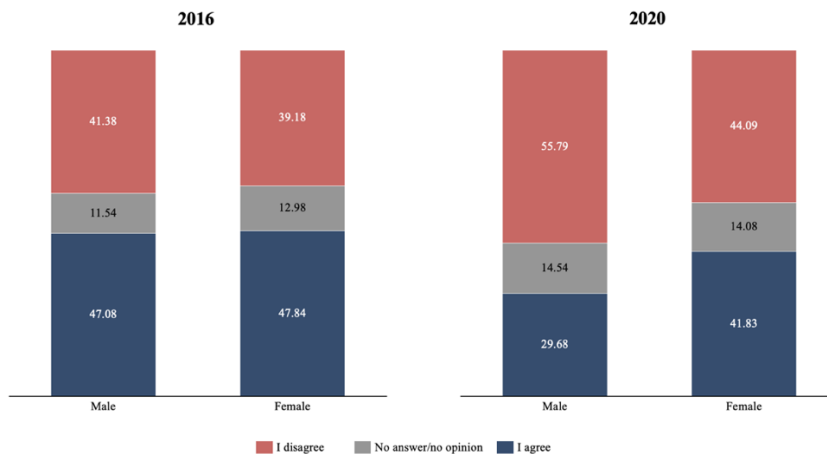
2.1.1 Variation by gender

The 2020 survey data underscores a higher prevalence of exclusionary attitudes among women. One explanation may be the difference in labor force participation, with a notable proportion of women being homemakers. This may lead to lower levels of social engagement and economic interaction that may contribute to the observed trend in exclusionary tendencies.

The 2020 survey data suggesting more exclusionary tendencies among women is as follows:

- In 2020, female respondents were also more likely to state that their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing.

Figure 60. Belief that one's own beliefs and practices are the most accurate way of practicing Islam, by gender, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “My sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.”

- Similarly, in 2020, a higher percentage of female respondents (26%) agreed with the statement 'I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs,' compared to 20.2% of male respondents.

On the other hand, this trend did not apply for other questions. Results for these are detailed in **Annex 3**.

2.1.2 Variation by age

The survey data suggests a noteworthy generational shift in exclusionary tendencies. Such tendencies diminish among younger respondents compared to their older counterparts, evident in both the 2016 and 2020 datasets. The starkest differences are between the youngest age cohort and the older ones.

Nevertheless, disparities in age groups are less conspicuous in some instances, for instance, when respondents are confronted with the notion of distancing themselves from individuals whose lifestyles diverge from their beliefs. Only the 18-24 age cohort displays a notably lower level of concurrence, while other age groups exhibit relatively consistent agreement levels.

Similarly, regarding the negative sentiment towards those with different lifestyles and beliefs, the youngest and oldest age cohorts surprisingly converge, each expressing a 13.8% agreement with the statement.

The results are detailed in **Annex 4**.

2.1.3 Variation by level of education

The survey data reveals that higher levels of education attainment correspond to a greater acceptance of others, reflecting less exclusionary tendencies. The most pronounced differences are when comparing the least educated respondents, which include illiterate individuals, those with limited formal education but literacy skills, and primary school graduates, against high school and university graduates. In certain questions, university graduates consistently show a markedly lower inclination towards exclusionary attitudes. The results are detailed in **Annex 5**.

2.2 Tolerance towards followers of different religious schools and backgrounds.

In the first section of this chapter, respondents exhibited a more moderate and tolerant approach, with a majority not displaying a strong inclination to enforce their beliefs on others or distance themselves from people who hold different beliefs. In 2020, a very small percentage of respondents (16%) agreed with the statement "I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me." Similarly, only 23% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs." This section explores the willingness to engage between followers of different religious schools, specifically Sunnis and Alevis, as well as engagement with Syrians.

2.2.1 Engagement with people from other religious schools

A majority of Sunni respondents have no issue with interacting with Alevis; however, the nature of these interactions varies, with a greater inclination towards public or financial interactions rather than personal ones. In 2020, 71% of Sunnis stated that they would be comfortable having an Alevi neighbor, although acceptance has decreased since 2016. Similarly, in 2020, 69% expressed willingness to rent their apartment to an Alevi, although this willingness has declined since the 2015 and 2016 surveys.

Conversely, a lower proportion (54%) stated they would consider having Alevis as business partners. Acceptance of considering Alevis as business partners has shown a declining trend since the 2015 and 2016 surveys. About half (48%) of Sunni respondents stated they would

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accept an Alevi bride/groom into their family. This percentage fell from 46% in 2015 to 42% and then went up again in 2020.

Table 2. Sunni views on engaging with Alevis, %

Group asked	Group asked about	Relationship type	2015	2016	2020
Sunni	Alevi	Marriage of children	46,1	41,9	47,7
Sunni	Alevi	Landlord - tenant	73,6	71,9	68,6
Sunni	Alevi	Neighbor	82,9	84,5	71,1
Sunni	Alevi	Business partnership	64,3	60,8	54,1

The willingness of Sunni respondents to collaborate with Alevis as business partners reveals significant regional variations across Türkiye. Generally, greater acceptance is observed in the western and/or more industrialized regions, while lower acceptance is noted in poorer and socially conservative areas.

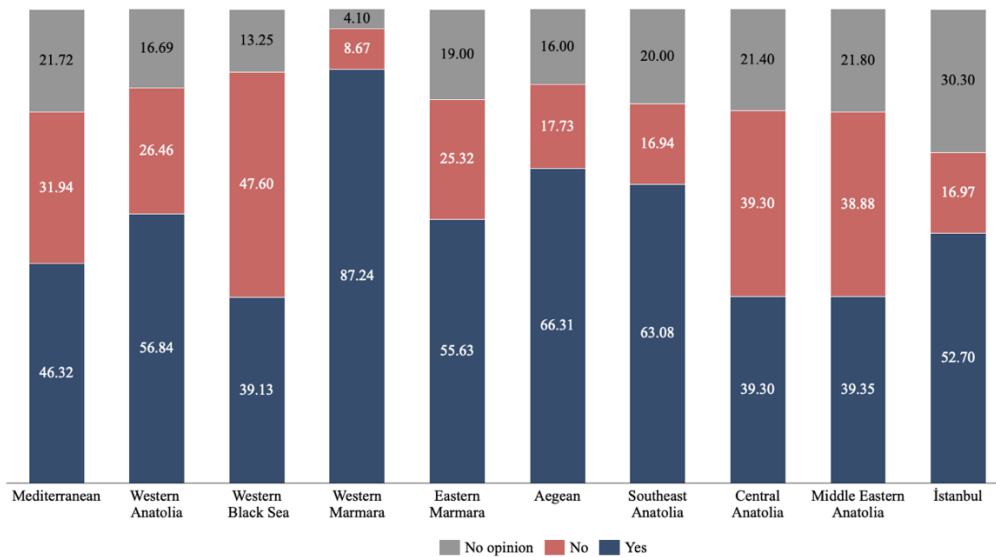
For instance, respondents in Southeast Anatolia, which has industry, and other western industrial regions, such as Western Anatolia (including Ankara, the capital, and Konya, an emerging industrial hub), West Marmara (home to industrial provinces of Bursa and Kocaeli), and in the Aegean displayed a higher-than-average willingness to collaborate with Alevis.

In Istanbul, the largest city and commercial hub, the willingness was slightly below the average, possibly reflecting diverse opinions within this mega city. Sunni respondents in Istanbul also exhibited the highest level of uncertainty, with as much as 30% indicating they do not know whether they would consider having Alevis as business partners.

Conversely, in relatively less industrialized regions such as Middle Anatolia, East Anatolia, and Western Black Sea, Sunnis were more likely to express apprehension about working with Alevis.

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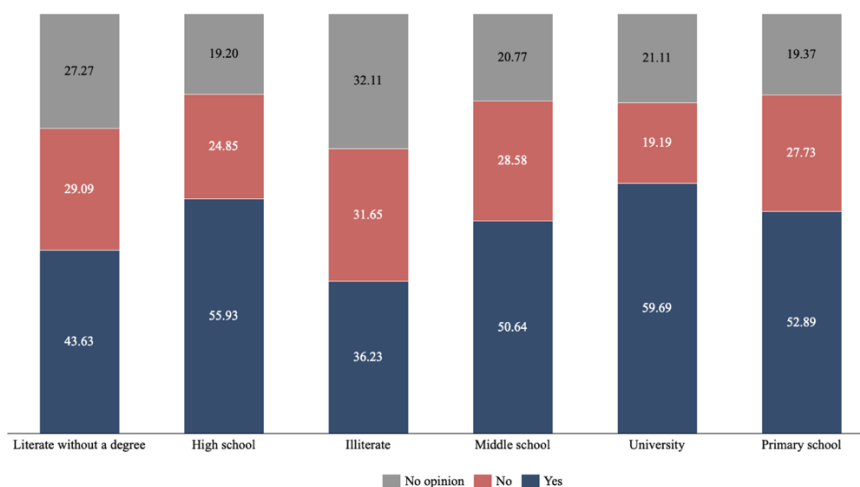
Figure 61. Sunni views on engaging with Alevi as business partners, %, by region, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Imagine that you are going to establish a company, and you need to find a business partner. Would you consider someone of Alevi background as a business partner?"

The survey results indicate that there is no significant age variation in the willingness of Sunni respondents to collaborate with Alevi as business partners. However, there are notable variations based on education levels, with higher levels of education pointing towards greater acceptance.

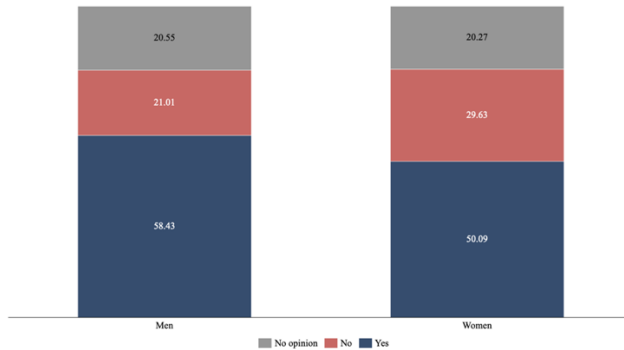
Figure 62. Sunni views on engaging with Alevi as business partners, %, by level of education, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Imagine that you are going to establish a company, and you need to find a business partner. Would you consider someone of Alevi background as a business partner?"

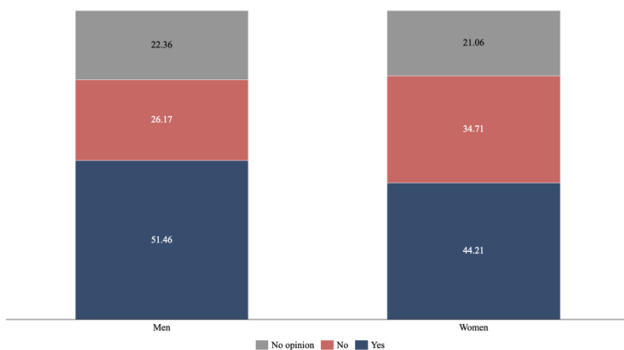
The survey results reveal notable gender differences in the willingness of Sunnis to engage with Alevi, with women expressing less willingness to collaborate with Alevi as business partners or to have Alevi as brides/grooms in their family.

Figure 63. Sunni views on engaging with Alevi as business partners, %, by gender, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Imagine that you are going to establish a company, and you need to find a business partner. Would you consider someone of Alevi background as a business partner?"

Figure 64. Sunni views on marriage with Alevi, %, by gender, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "If your child were to marry, would you accept a son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Alevi background?"

Looking at it from the opposite perspective, a higher proportion of Alevi respondents are open to engaging in public, financial, business and personal interactions with Sunnis. In 2020, as high as 87% of Alevi indicated a willingness to rent their apartment to a Sunni, while 85% stated they would not be bothered by having a Sunni neighbor. Although acceptance of more personal interactions was lower (70% expressed readiness to accept a Sunni bride/groom into their family, and 75% said they would be open to having Alevi as business partners), it still significantly surpasses the Sunnis' acceptance of Alevi.

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Table 3. Alevi views on engaging with Sunnis, %

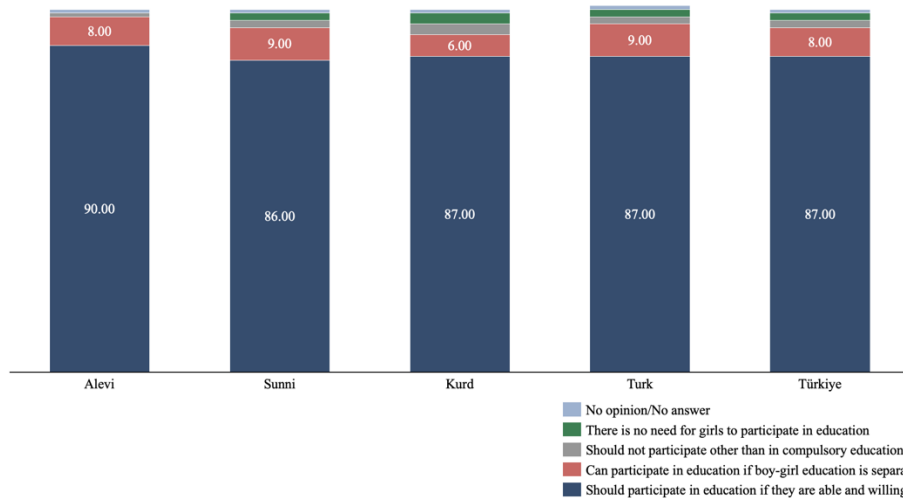
Group asked	Group asked about	Relationship type	2020
Alevi	Sunni	Marriage of children	70
Alevi	Sunni	Landlord - tenant	86,5
Alevi	Sunni	Neighbor	85,2
Alevi	Sunni	Business partnership	74,5

In terms of gender differences, there was no significant variation. The sample size for respondents identifying as Alevis is too small to draw conclusions about regional differences, as well as differences among age and education groups.

BOX 3. Views of Alevis on women’s education and employment

In 2020, while a majority of respondents expressed tolerant views regarding women’s participation in education and the labor force, Alevis exhibited more tolerant views compared to Sunnis, Kurds, and Turks. For instance, 90% of Alevis believe that women can be educated if they are able to and want to, compared to 87% of Turks or Kurds.

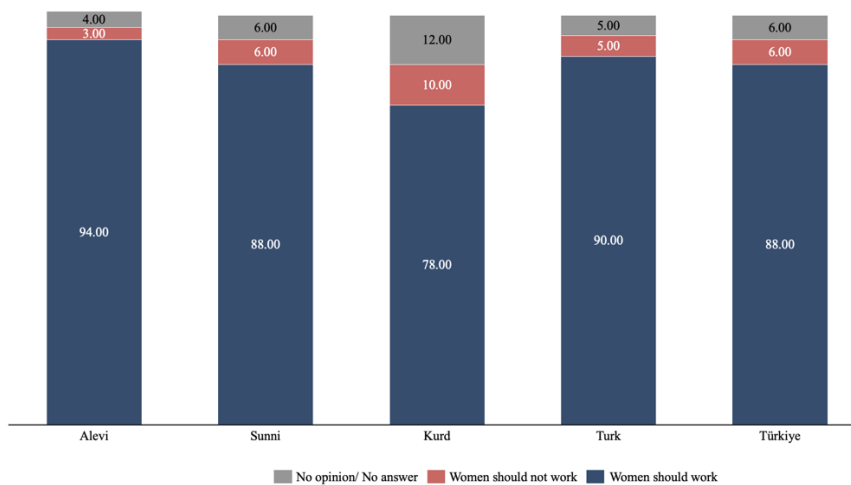
Figure 65. Views on women’s participation in education, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Which of the following opinions do you agree with regarding women’s participation in education?”

The difference was more pronounced for women’s participation in work, with as high as 94% of Alevis stating that women should work. This was lowest among Kurds, where only 78% believe women should work and as high as 10% say women should not work.

Figure 66. Views on women’s participation in the labor force, %, 2020

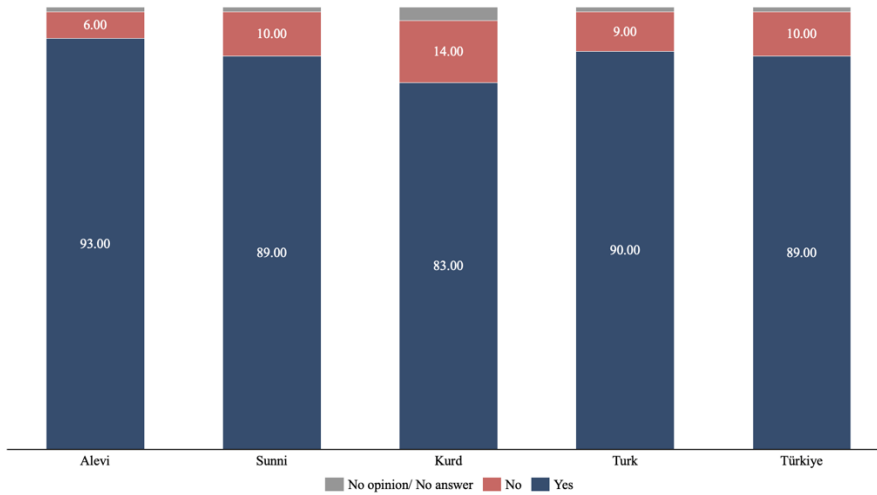


Note: Respondents were asked “Which of the following opinions do you agree with regarding women working?”

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Similarly, 93% of Alevi stated that they would work under the management of a woman, compared to 89% of Sunnis and 83% of Kurds.

Figure 67. Views on working under the management of a female executive, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Would you work under the management of a female executive?"

2.2.2 Engagement with Syrians

In 2020, the willingness to interact with Syrians among the respondents was very low, especially in personal and business transactions.

Table 4. Views on engaging with Syrians, %, 2020

Group asked	Group asked about	Relationship type	2020
Non-Syrian	Syrian	Marriage of children	22,7
Non-Syrian	Syrian	Landlord - tenant	35,5
Non-Syrian	Syrian	Neighbor	50,5
Non-Syrian	Syrian	Business partnership	22,8
Non-Syrian	Syrian	Children's classmateship	31,1

The proportion of Syrians in the total population of a province, as well as the status of being a metropolitan city, appears to influence respondents' willingness to engage in

business with Syrians. In mega cities like Istanbul and Izmir, located in Western Türkiye with large Syrian populations (though comparatively low in proportion to the provincial population), there is a higher acceptance of having Syrian business partners compared to other provinces. Approximately 30.9% and 33.1% of respondents from these provinces expressed a positive attitude towards partnering with Syrians, respectively. It should be noted that the positive attitudes in these two provinces may also be attributed to the influence of being mega cities with bustling commerce, which positively impacts views on business partnerships.

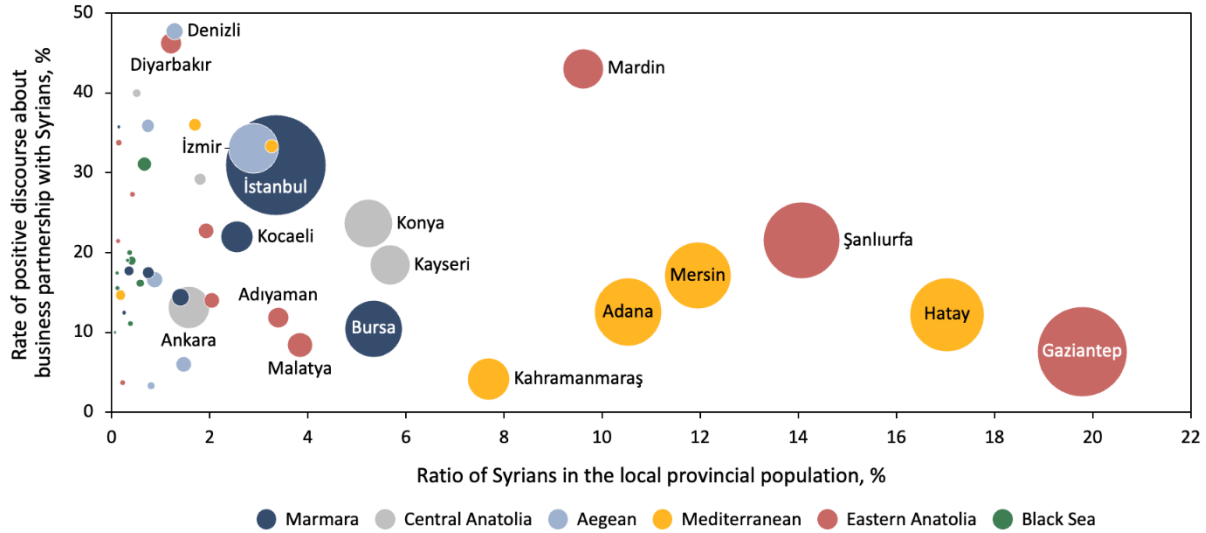
In other provinces, where the proportion of Syrians in the total population is relatively low, such as Denizli in the west and Diyarbakır in Southeastern Türkiye, respondents also displayed a positive inclination.

However, it should be noted that in certain provinces with relatively low proportions of Syrians in the total population, respondents did not express favorable attitudes towards business relationships with Syrians. For instance, in Bursa, a western Turkish province with a relatively low overall Syrian population and proportion (about 5.3% of the total population), only around 10.5% of respondents held a positive view regarding business partnerships with Syrians. This could be attributed to local workers possibly perceiving competition for jobs with Syrians in Bursa with a significant industrial sector.

On the other hand, in regions where the proportion of Syrians in the total population is very high, respondents exhibited a negative inclination towards having business partnerships with Syrians. For example, respondents from southeastern cities like Sanliurfa and Gaziantep, where the Syrian population constitutes 14.1% and 19.8% of the total population, respectively, expressed negative sentiments towards such partnerships. Similarly, Hatay, situated in the Mediterranean but close to the southeast, with a significant Syrian population in relation to its general population, also elicited negative responses. Respondents from Mersin and Adana, located also in the Mediterranean and having a large Syrian population, also viewed such partnerships unfavorably.

However, in Mardin, respondents displayed a positive attitude towards business partnerships with Syrians, despite the province having a relatively high number of Syrians in its population.

Figure 68. Rate of positive discourse about business partnerships with Syrians and Syrian population by province, 2022



Source: Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, TURKSTAT (Turkish Statistical Institute), TEPAV calculations.

Note: Population data for Syrians under temporary protection is as of October 19, 2023, while data for Turkish citizens is based on February 2023 figures.

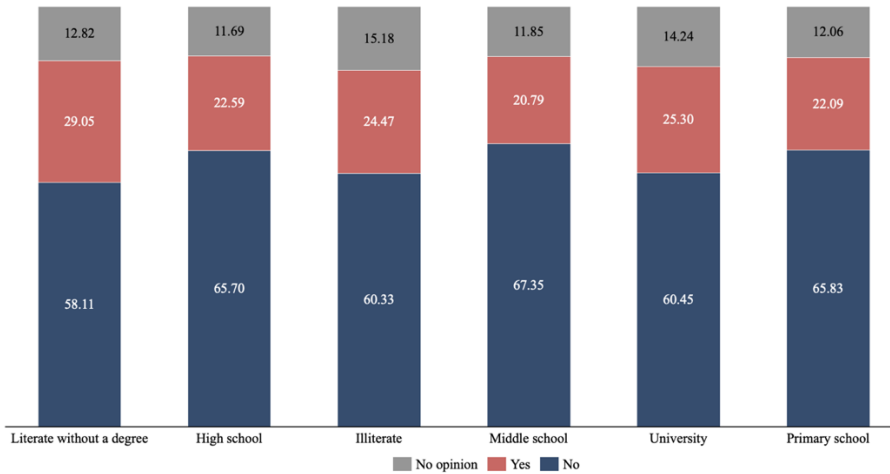
Note: Circle sizes represent the total Syrian population under temporary protection in the province.

Similar to the findings regarding Sunnis' willingness to interact with Alevis, the 2020 survey results suggest no significant age-based variation in respondents' willingness to collaborate with Syrians as business partners.

However, there are notable variations based on education levels, though it's important to note that this doesn't necessarily imply that respondents with higher education are less likely to discriminate. The highest willingness to collaborate with Syrians as business partners was observed among respondents lacking formal education but who are literate, with 29.1% of this group expressing willingness (compared to the 23% average). The second-most willing education group was university graduates, with 25.3% expressing willingness, followed by illiterate respondents at 24.5%. Below-average percentages were reported for primary school and high school graduates, showing a similar level of willingness. Middle school graduates were the least likely, with 20.8% expressing willingness in this education group.

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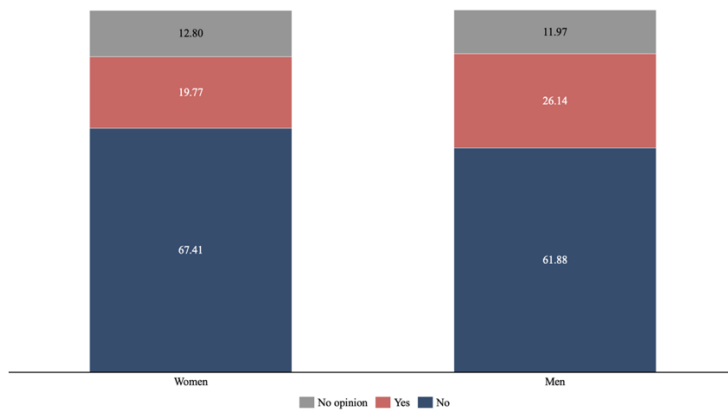
Figure 69. Views on engaging with Syrians as business partners, %, by level of education, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Imagine that you are going to establish a company, and you need to find a business partner. Would you consider someone of Syrian background as a business partner?"

Similarly to the findings regarding Sunnis' willingness to interact with Alevis, the survey results indicate that women are less inclined to collaborate with Syrians as business partners or to have Syrians as brides/grooms in their family.

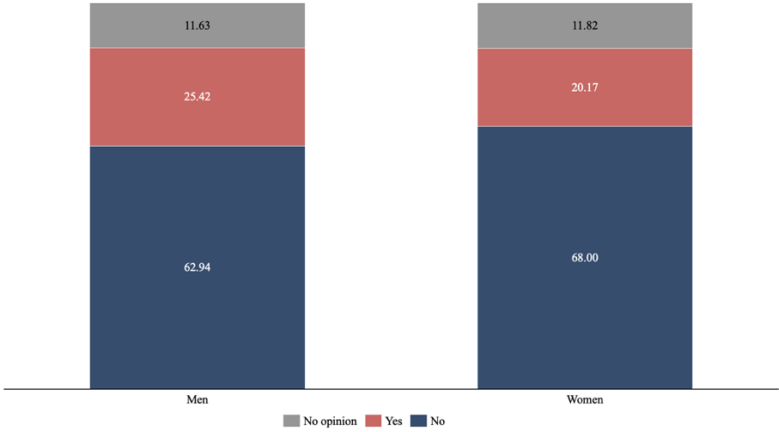
Figure 70. Views on engaging with Syrians as business partners, %, by gender, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "Imagine that you are going to establish a company, and you need to find a business partner. Would you consider someone of Syrian background as a business partner?"

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Figure 71. Views on marriage with Syrians, %, by gender, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked "If your child were to marry, would you accept a son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Alevi background?"

CHAPTER 3 – RADICAL RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES

Chapter 3 aims to identify groups with radical religious attitudes in Türkiye. This attitude is captured by the practice of takfir or the differentiation of the other as an infidel (kafir).

We construct an ideological radicalism index in evaluating the survey findings, identified indicators of differentiation including: 1) Willingness to observe what is perceived to be Islamic law (e.g. cutting of the hand for theft) over existing law 2) Enforcing Islamic practices on non-practicing Muslims 3) Holding the view that a person neglecting religious duties is an infidel; 4) Considering participating in traditional religious practices shirk i.e. reciting the Mevlit and the use of the evil eye.

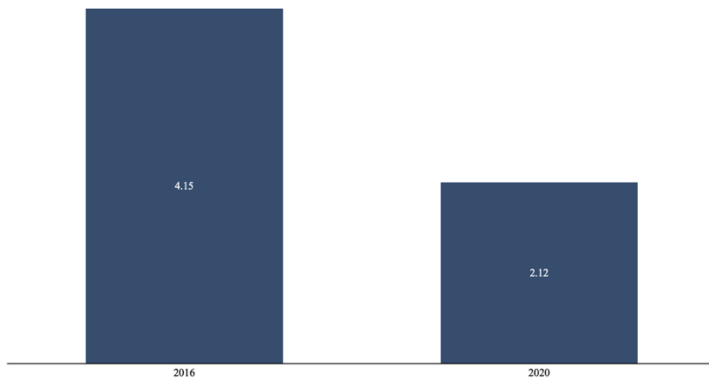
Specifically, respondents were provided with the following statements to agree or disagree with:

1. *'I could break some laws to practice Islam.'*
2. *'If I had the opportunity, I would like to have the hand of a thief cut off.'*
3. *'If I had the opportunity, I would enforce Islamic practices on non-practicing Muslims.'*
4. *'A person who neglects religious duties like prayer is not just a sinner but is actually an infidel.'*
5. *'I do not find the use of the Evil Eye correct, because it is shirk.'*
6. *'I do not find the practice of reciting Mevlit, because it is shirk.'*

In constructing the ideological radicalism index, these six questions are treated as variables that account for radical tendencies. Respondents who agree with at least three of these questions are deemed respondents with radical tendencies.

According to the constructed ideological radicalism index, in 2016, 4 % of respondents were considered radical. This percentage dropped to 2% in 2020.

Figure 72. Respondents with radical religious attitudes, %, 2016 and 2020



BOX 4. Overall trends in identified indicators of differentiation

The overall results for the five questions are treated as variables in 2016 and 2020 are, as follows:

- *'I could break some laws to practice Islam'*: Agreement with the statement was as high as 39% in 2016 but dropped to 19% in 2020. In 2020, 66% indicated that they would **not** break the law (compared to 49% in 2016), and a notable percentage (15%) said they do not know whether they would.
- *'If I had the opportunity, I would enforce Islamic practices on non-practicing Muslims'*: In both years, a low percentage of respondents agreed with the statement, and there was a significant drop in agreement from 2016 to 2020 from 16% to just 9%. In 2020, 81% disagreed.
- *'If I had the opportunity, I would like to have the hand of a thief cut off'*: While agreement with the statement was above one quarter (27%) in 2016, it dropped to just 13% in 2020. In 2020, 76% disagreed, and 11% said they do not know.
- *'I do not find the use of the Evil Eye correct, because it is shirk.'*: In 2020, as high as 6.1% considered it to be shirk. Overall, the level of acceptance for the use of the evil eye was low, with only one-third of the respondents believing it to be correct. One-quarter of the respondents stated its use was wrong because it has no place in religion, and another 19.9% considered its use to be irrational.
- *'I do not find the practice of reciting Mevlit, because it is shirk.'*: In 2020, only 1.37% believed reciting the Mevlit to be shirk while 6.83% did not find it correct because they considered it to have no place in religion. Three-fourths of the respondents (75%) found reciting the Mevlit to be correct, while 11.18% were unsure.

The following examines respondents with radical tendencies based on their perception of social exclusion and religiosity.

3.1 Social exclusion measure

The social exclusion measure was constructed based on respondents' answers to two questions about their feelings of connection to society and neighborhood:

1. "I feel excluded from society."
2. "I do not feel connected to people in my neighborhood."

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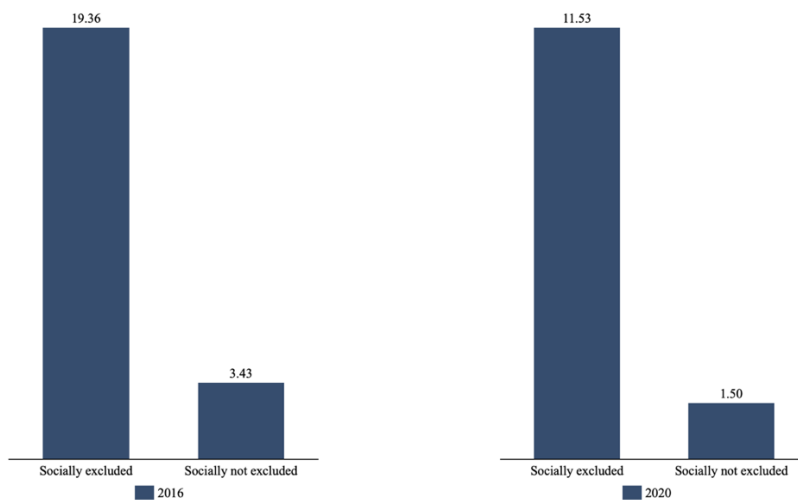
Respondents who agreed with both statements were deemed socially excluded. Social exclusion appears to have a pronounced effect on whether a person exhibits radical tendencies or not.

In 2016, as high as 19% of socially excluded respondents exhibited radical religious attitudes, whereas this rate was just 3% among those who are not socially excluded.

While there was a drop in 2020, radical religious attitudes among those who feel socially excluded remained considerable at 12%.

The decrease in radical religious attitudes among those considered socially excluded between 2016 and 2020 occurred despite the overall increase in respondents identified as socially excluded, rising from 5% in 2016 to 6% in 2020.

Figure 73. Groups with radical religious attitudes, by social exclusion, %, 2016 and 2020



3.1 Religiosity measure¹⁴

Religious respondents exhibit higher radical religious attitudes in both 2016 and 2020. In 2016, among religious respondents, 6% reported radical religious attitudes, while this rate was 3% among non-religious respondents. The rate of those showing such attitudes among religious respondents dropped to 3% in 2020 but remained higher than non-religious respondents.

¹⁴ As detailed in earlier sections, respondents identified by the religiosity measure are those who practice all their daily prayers and fast during religious months..

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Figure 74. Groups with radical religious attitudes, by religiosity, %, 2016

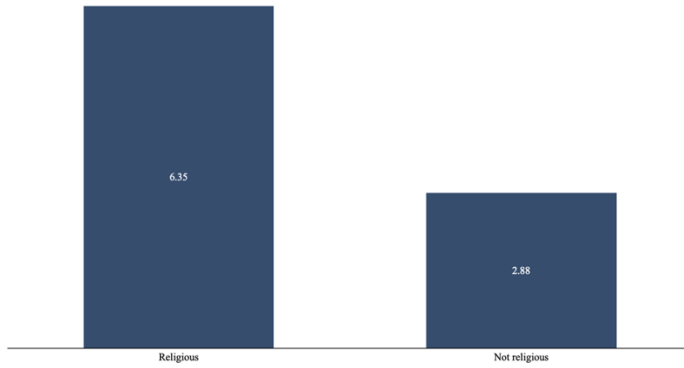
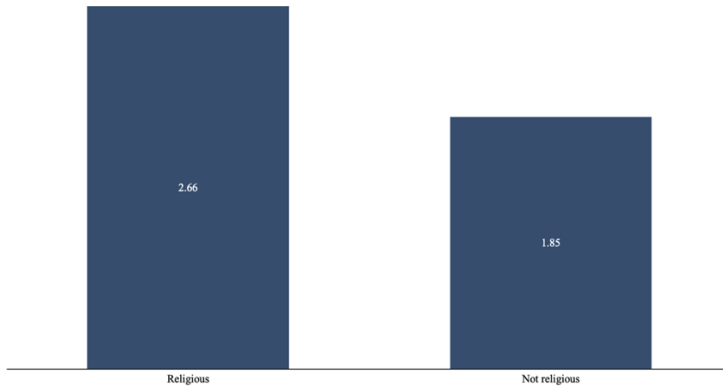


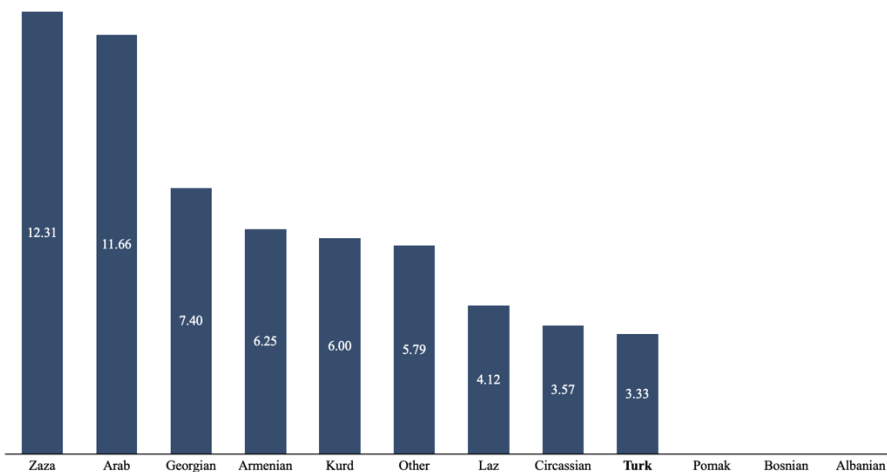
Figure 75. Groups with radical religious attitudes, by religiosity, %, 2020



3.6 Ethnic background

In 2016, those with radical tendencies were most common among Zazas and Arabs, constituting 12% of Zaza and Arab respondents each.

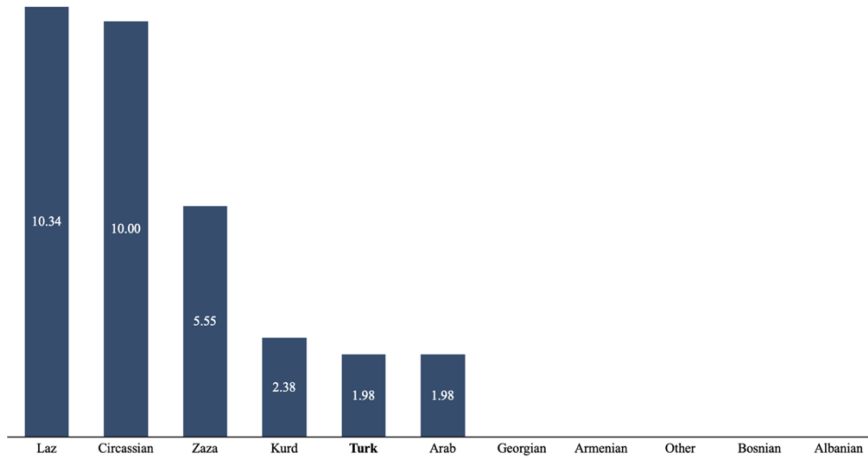
Figure 76. Groups with radical religious attitudes, by ethnic background, %, 2016



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In 2020, these rates were lower for Zaza and Arab respondents. Radical respondents were most common among Laz and Circassian respondents. However, the sample size of these two ethnic groups is low, making it difficult to draw conclusions.

Figure 77. Groups with radical religious attitudes, by ethnic background, %, 2020



CONCLUSION

Religion in Türkiye is predominantly a cultural practice rather than institutionally rooted. Private practice of religion remains widespread; performance of daily prayers, fasting during religious months and the study of the holy book are common practices. Notably, individuals rely on family instruction or their own research to access religious knowledge rather than referring to institutions such as the Diyanet. The preference for a secular state and satisfaction with democracy point to an tendency of a non-religious political landscape.

There is a decreasing trend in religious affiliation to sects. This may also be linked to a distancing from sects in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt in Türkiye, where the religious community (or cemaat) of Fethullah Gulen was implicated.

Findings also reveal a decline in the prevalence of religious practices such performance of daily prayers, fasting during religious months, and wearing of the headscarf, especially among the younger, more educated, and working populations.

Furthermore, the surveys reflect pluralistic attitudes among the predominantly Muslim population where 85% consider religion to be important or very important in their lives (in both 2016 and 2020). There is widespread acceptance of diversity in beliefs and practices and this trend increased between the two survey years. For instance, between 2016 and 2020, the percentage of respondents who stated that their own beliefs and practices were the most accurate way of practicing Islam decreased from 47 % and 36 %. In 2020, only 23% of respondents said they keep their distance from people who do not live according to their beliefs and 16% said they cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs.

A noteworthy shift is observed in the emphasis on national identity, with a rise in respondents identifying as Turkish and a decline in ethnic identity, particularly Kurdish. This is also supported by negative attitudes toward Syrian refugees, who could not be included in the Turkish identity.

Finally, the prevalence of radical religious attitudes among respondents is low and is a decreasing trend. In 2016, 4% of respondents were categorized as having radical religious attitudes, which decreased to 2% in 2020. Social exclusion emerges as a significant factor influencing radical religious attitudes, with religiosity playing a role, albeit to a lesser extent.

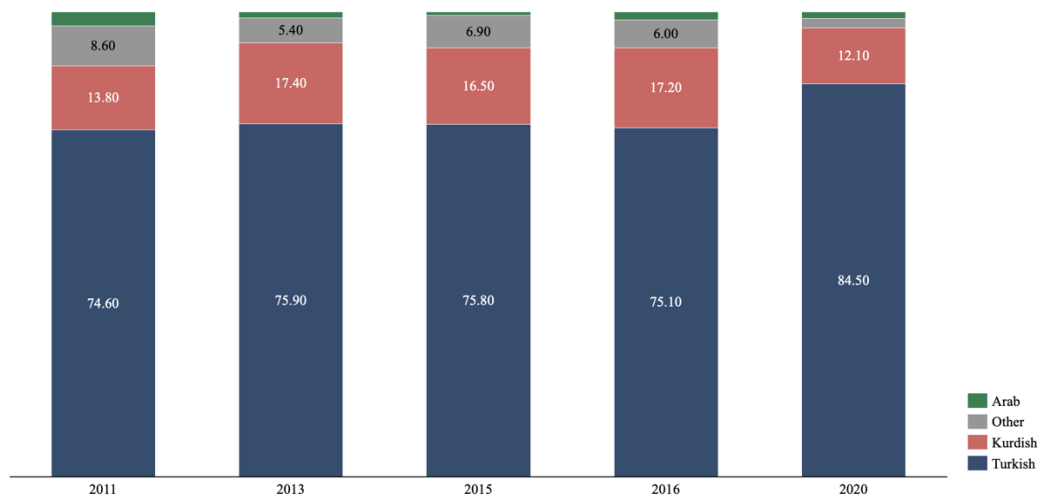
TEPAV's upcoming factor analysis study aims to explore the impact of various socio-economic factors on radical religious attitudes. Further research may also address the genesis of radical Islam in Türkiye's pluralistic environment.

Annex 1. Ethnic identity

Between 2011 and 2013, there was a shift in the self-identification of respondents, with more individuals identifying as Kurds. In 2011, 74% identified as Turkish, while 15% identified as Kurdish and 11% identified as "other". The percentages of Turkish and Kurdish self-identification increased in 2013 (76% and 18% respectively), while the percentage of "other" decreased to 5%. In 2013, the Turkish government started the PKK-Türkiye peace process, which aimed to end the 30-year-long conflict. It may be that Kurdish people after 2013 were less apprehensive about revealing their Kurdish identity. In spite of the peace process collapsing in 2015, subsequent surveys in 2015 and 2016 showed similar results to 2013.

However, in the most recent survey in 2020, there was a shift towards a stronger Turkish identity. In 2020, there was a notable increase in respondents identifying as Turkish (85%) and a decrease in those identifying as Kurdish (12%) and "other" (4%). This shift may be attributed to the several factors among them the 2016 coup d'état attempt and the ongoing conflict with the PKK leading to the rise of nationalist sentiments. This may also have led to increased anxiety about being identified as Kurdish. Other factors such as changes in sampling methods may also have influenced the results.

Figure 78. Ethnicity/Identity Distribution, %



Analysis of the Kurdish population

In 2016, about half of Kurds were located in Southeast Anatolia and Istanbul constituting 30%, and 20%, of the surveyed respondents reporting to be Kurdish, respectively. In the Southeast Anatolian region, the majority were concentrated in Diyarbakır, Batman, and to some extent Şanlıurfa. Additionally, a significant percentage of Kurds were in Middle East Anatolia (13%), the Mediterranean region (11%), particularly in the province of Adana, and the Aegean region (10%), especially in Izmir.

By 2020, there were notable shifts in Kurdish population distribution. While Southeast Anatolia remained the primary region for Kurds (25%), there were changes within this region. Diyarbakır remained the main Kurdish hub, with Mardin seeing an increase, while the number of respondents identifying as Kurdish in cities like Batman and Şanlıurfa declined compared to 2016.

In 2020, Istanbul's share of the Kurdish population increased to 24%. The Mediterranean region also saw a rise, with the Kurdish population reaching 17%. Within this region, Mersin, Adana, and to some extent Antalya were the primary areas where Kurds were concentrated.

Conversely, the Aegean region experienced a decline in the percentage of respondents identifying as Kurdish, dropping from 10% in 2016 to 6% in 2020. In the Aegean, both Izmir and Manisa saw a decrease in the number of respondents reporting their Kurdish identity.

Overall, in 2020, Istanbul, Diyarbakır, Mersin, Van, and Adana hosted the largest proportion of Kurds according to the sample.

Table 5. Kurdish population regional distribution, 2016 and 2020

NUTS - 1	2016, percentage	2020, percentage	2016, value	2020, value
Aegean	10,18	5,80	122	51
Central Anatolia	0,75	0,68	9	6
Eastern Black Sea	0,08	0,00	1	0
Eastern Marmara	4,00	3,30	48	29
Istanbul	19,60	24,43	255	215
Mediterranean	10,59	17,39	127	153
Middle East Anatolia	12,68	10,00	152	88
Northeast Anatolia	4,17	6,02	50	53
Southeast Anatolia	30,44	24,55	365	216
Western Anatolia	5,59	6,02	67	53
Western Black Sea	1,42	0,57	17	5
Western Marmara	0,50	1,25	6	11

The proportion of the Kurdish population in Southeast Anatolia's total population, although still high, significantly declined. In 2016, roughly one-fourth of the region's population identified as Kurdish, but by 2020, this proportion decreased to 35%. In Istanbul, there was a noticeable drop as well, from 19% in 2016 to 13% in 2020.

Conversely, in Northeast Anatolia, the percentage of Kurds in the region's total population remained steady at 55% in both 2016 and 2020. Similarly, in Middle East Anatolia, the Kurdish population accounted for 39% of the region's population in 2016, slightly decreasing to 37% in 2020.

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Figure 79. Kurdish population, by region, 2016

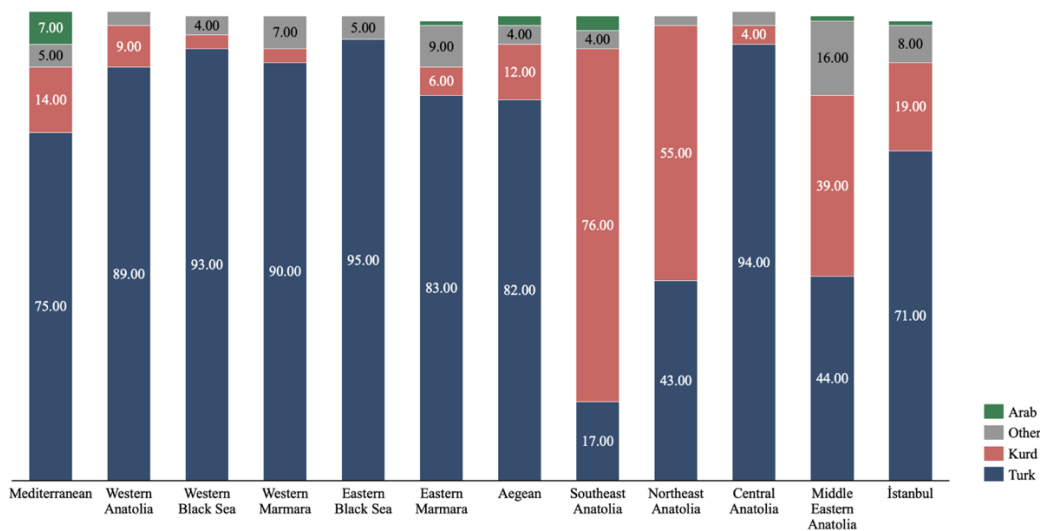
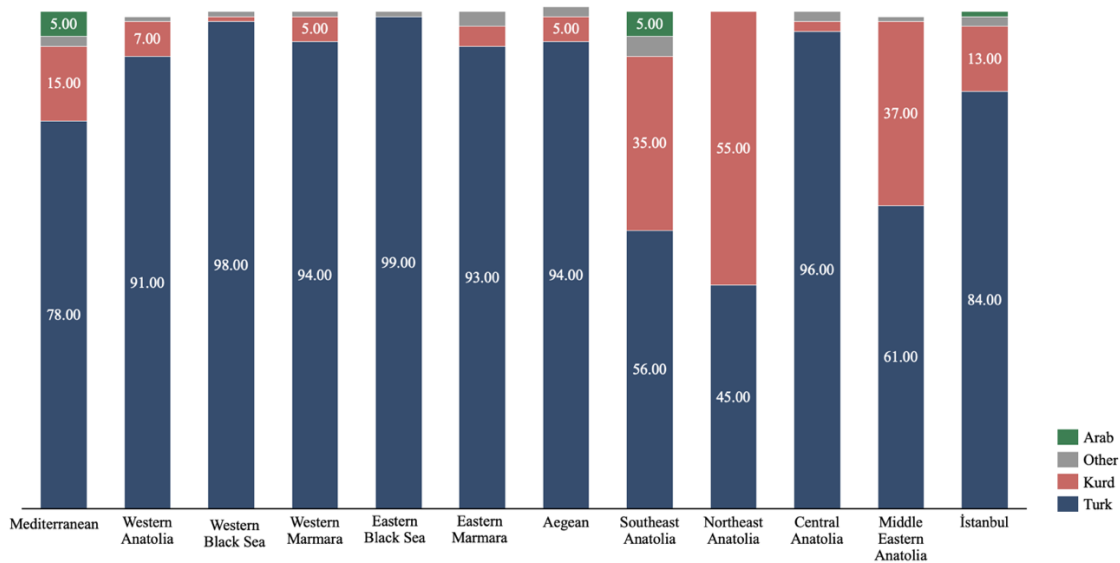


Figure 80. Kurdish population, by region, 2020

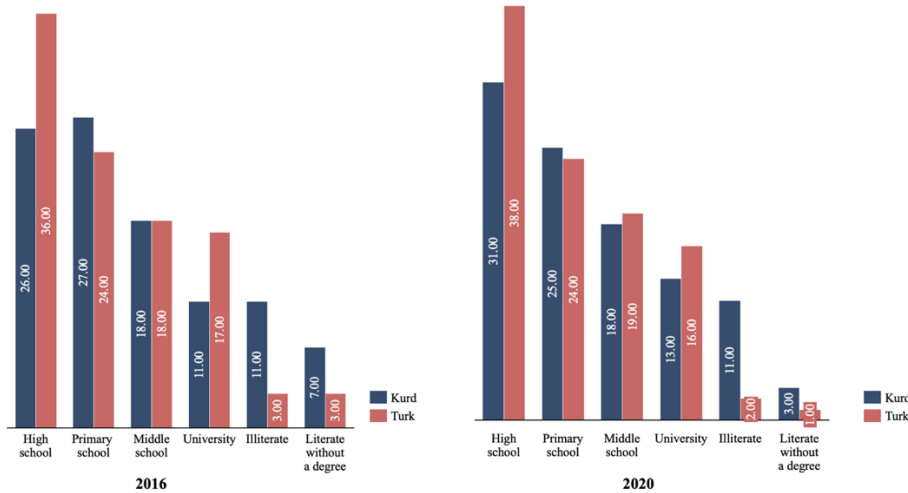


Survey results point to lower levels of educational attainment among Kurds compared to Turks in both 2016 and 2020. In both survey years, among Kurdish respondents, a higher percentage reported being illiterate or literate but without a formal degree compared to those among Turks (e.g., 11% of Kurds reported being illiterate compared to 2% of Turks who reported so in 2020). The percentage of Kurds reporting having a high school degree or university degree was also lower compared to Turks. Notwithstanding, a larger proportion of both Kurds and Turks had either a high school degree or a primary school degree in both survey years.

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However, there were improvements in levels of educational attainment among Kurds between the two survey years. Among Kurds, those with a high school degree increased from 26% in 2016 to 31% in 2020, and university graduates went up slightly while the percentage with primary school degrees dropped slightly.

Figure 81. Kurdish population, by level of education, %, 2016 and 2020



Regionally, in Southeast Anatolia, the percentage of high school graduates among Kurds witnessed a significant increase from 23% in 2016 to 41% in 2020. Similarly, there was a parallel rise in the percentage of Kurds with a university degree, increasing from 11% in 2016 to 21% in 2020.

In contrast, in Istanbul, the educational attainment among Kurds showed a decline. The percentage of high school graduates dropped from 33% in 2016 to 29% in 2020, and those with a university degree decreased from 22% to 9% over the same period.

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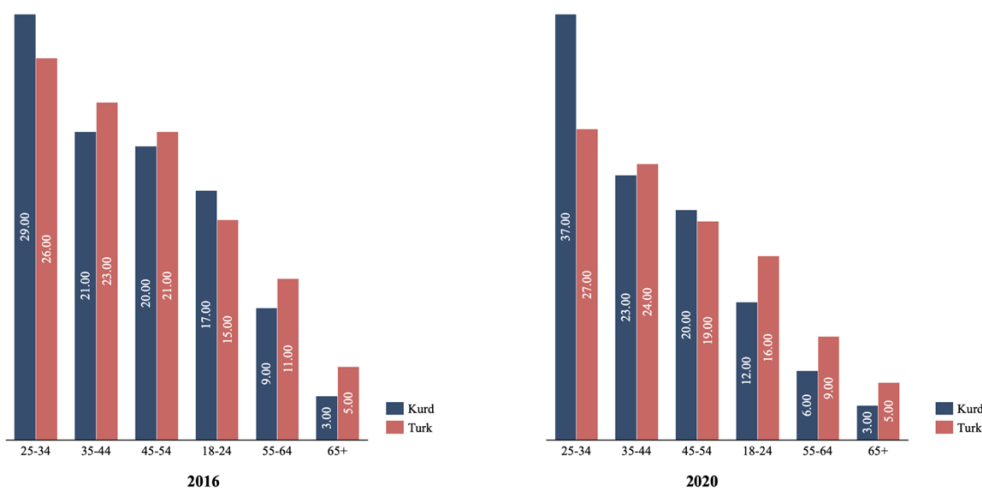
Table 6. Kurdish population, by level of education in different regions, %, 2016 and 2020

		Mediterranean	Western Anatolia	Western Black Sea	Western Marmara	Eastern Black Sea	Eastern Marmara	Aegean	Northeast Anatolia	Central Anatolia	Middle Eastern Anatolia	İstanbul	Southeast Anatolia
2016	Literate without a degree	8,7	3	0	0	0	4,2	10,7	4	0	6,6	5,5	7,4
2016	High school	15,7	26,9	47,1	66,7	100	33,3	22,1	28	33,3	30,3	33,2	22,5
2016	Illiterate	11,8	3	11,8	0	0	12,5	8,2	12	0	11,8	4,7	15,3
2016	Middle school	19,7	17,9	11,8	16,7	0	22,9	18,9	16	22,2	13,8	17,4	19,7
2016	University	3,1	11,9	11,8	0	0	14,6	8,2	12	11,1	4,6	22,1	10,7
2016	Primary school	40,9	37,3	17,6	16,7	0	12,5	32	28	33,3	32,9	17	24,4
2020	Literate without a degree	5,9	0	0	0		3,4	3,9	0	0	4,5	4,2	1,4
2020	High school	19	28,3	0	27,3		48,3	23,5	39,6	33,3	34,1	28,8	40,7
2020	Illiterate	26,1	1,9	0	0		6,9	2	7,5	0	6,8	14	4,2
2020	Middle school	14,4	28,3	60	18,2		6,9	23,5	20,8	50	20,5	14,4	16,7
2020	University	2,6	17	20	9,1		10,3	25,5	15,5	0	10,2	8,8	20,8
2020	Primary school	32	24,5	20	45,5		24,1	21,6	17	16,7	23,9	29,8	16,2

Overall, Kurdish respondents were younger than Turks. In 2016, Kurdish respondents were slightly younger than Turks, with an average age of 38.23 compared to 39.98 for Turks. The age gap widened in 2020, with the average age for Kurds dropping significantly to 34.9, while the Turkish average age slightly decreased to 38.58. It is worth noting that the surveyed respondents, particularly in 2020, were slightly younger than the national statistics. Nevertheless, the data suggests an age difference between those who identify as Kurds and the Turkish average.

A high percentage of Kurdish respondents, like Turks, were concentrated in the second age cohort (25-34) in both 2016 and 2020. While Kurdish respondents were more concentrated in the 18-24 age group in 2016, they fell slightly behind Turks in 2020. Moreover, there is a slightly higher percentage of Turks in the oldest two age cohorts compared to Kurds.

Figure 82. Kurdish population, by age groups, %, 2016 and 2020



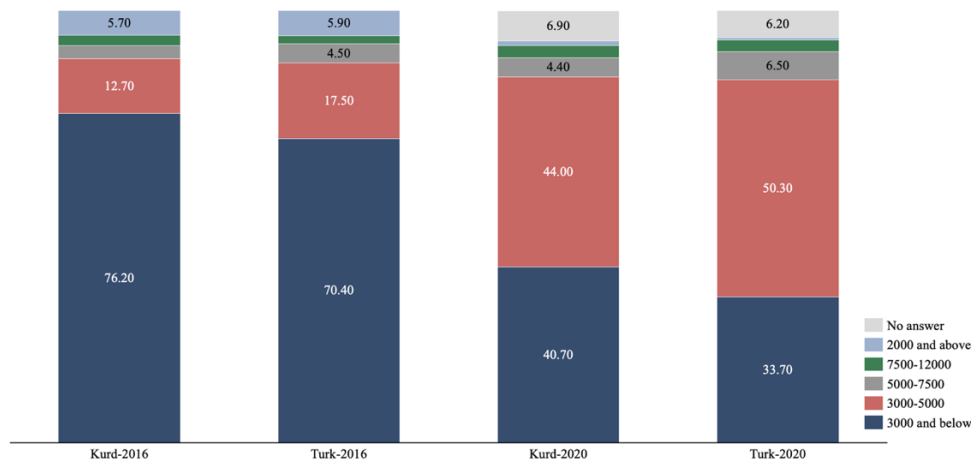
In both 2016 and 2020, Kurds were only slightly behind Turks in terms of employment (in private and public sector jobs) and the gap narrowed between the two survey years. In 2016, 32% of Kurds reported working, compared to 38% of Turks. In 2020, the percentage of Kurdish employed respondents increased to 41%, while it reached 44% for Turkish respondents.

There was also a significant decrease in the proportion of both Kurdish and Turkish respondents reporting "other" occupations, which may include odd or temporary jobs. Among Kurds, this category decreased from 10% in 2016 to 4% in 2020, and for Turkish respondents, it dropped from 7% in 2016 to 1% in 2020. Additionally, there were fewer respondents reporting that they were not working in both the Kurdish and Turkish groups between 2016 and 2020.

In both 2016 and 2020, a larger percentage of Kurds belonged to the lowest income group compared to Turks. It should be noted that the overall decrease in respondents reporting to earn less than 3000 TL between 2016 and 2020 is due to the rapid inflation after 2018.

However, overall, an almost equal percentage of Kurdish and Turkish respondents earned 5000 TL and below in both 2016 and 2020. The difference in earnings was not pronounced in income groups of 5000—7000 TL and above, with Kurds even performing better in some higher income groups.

Figure 83. Kurdish population, by level of income, %, 2016 and 2020



Mother tongue

Between 2016 and 2020, there was a decrease in those who identify Kurdish as their mother tongue while the proportion of respondents who consider Turkish as their mother tongue increased. This may be attributed to several factors, including a decrease in the overall number of individuals identifying as Kurdish due to increased concerns about being identified as such, as discussed above. It may also be influenced by the social and economic integration of Kurds and their migration to larger cities.

Figure 84. Mother tongue, %



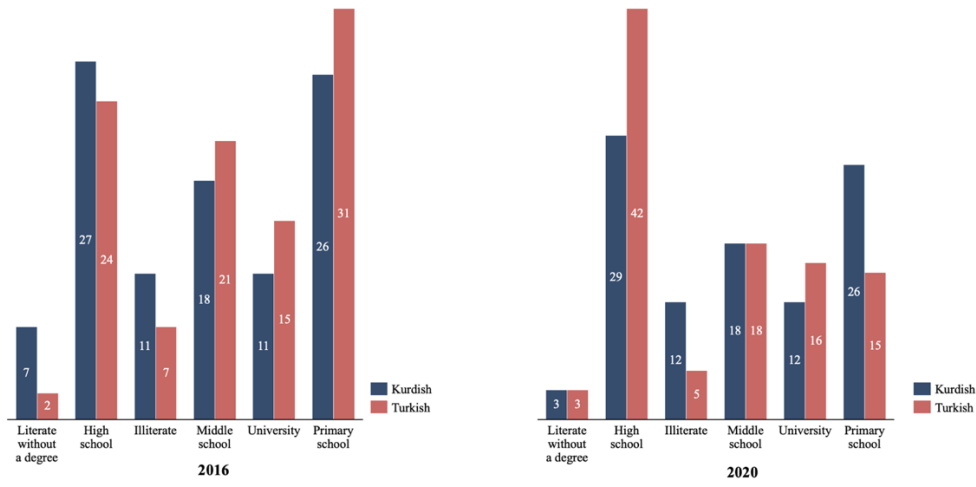
Among Kurdish respondents, there was an increase in those considering their mother tongue to be Turkish. In 2016, 88.4% of Kurdish respondents reported Kurdish as their mother tongue, while 10.3% reported Turkish as their mother tongue. However, in 2020, the percentage of Kurdish respondents considering Turkish as their mother tongue increased to 17.5%, while those identifying Kurdish as their mother tongue dropped to 79.4%.

Kurds who consider Turkish as their mother tongue generally demonstrated higher levels of educational attainment, which is expected due to the language of instruction being Turkish in schools. In 2016, 15% of Turkish-speaking Kurds held a university diploma, contrasting with 11% among Kurdish-speaking Kurds. The latter group also had a higher percentage of illiteracy or literacy without a degree compared to Turkish-speaking Kurds. However, it should be noted that a greater proportion of native Kurdish speakers (27%) held a high school degree compared to native Turkish speakers (24%).

In 2020, the differences were more evident. 42% of Turkish-speaking Kurds held a high school degree, while the percentage was 29% for native Kurdish speakers. Furthermore, 16% of Turkish-speaking Kurds had a university diploma, compared to 12% among native Kurdish speakers.

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Figure 85. Mother tongue, by level of education, %, 2016 and 2020



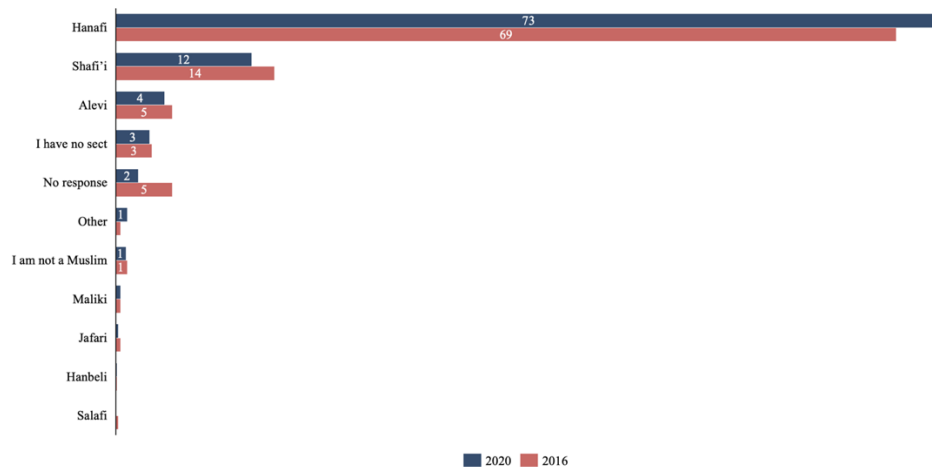
Annex 2 Religious identity

Islamic school of jurisprudence

In Türkiye, Hanafism is the predominant Islamic school of jurisprudence, as confirmed by the survey results. In 2016, the majority of surveyed respondents (69%) self-identified as adherents of Hanafism. In 2020, this figure experienced a slight uptick, with nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents professing their adherence to Hanafism.

Shafi'ism, another Sunni school of thought, maintained a smaller yet noteworthy presence in the region, albeit with a slight decline. In 2016, 14% of respondents identified themselves as Shafi'is, a percentage that marginally decreased to 12% in 2020.

Figure 86. Religious identity, %, 2016 and 2020



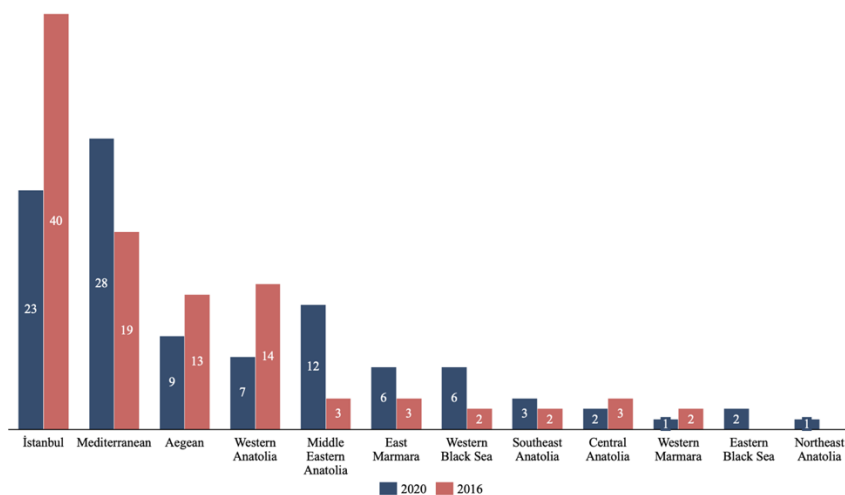
BOX 5. Profile of respondents reporting to be Alevi

Alevism, regarded as distinct from Sunni Islam, also holds a presence in Türkiye, although it may be underreported in the surveys. Specifically, 5% and 4 % of respondents identified as Alevi in 2016 and 2020, respectively.

In Istanbul and the Mediterranean, Alevi seemed more comfortable declaring their identity. In 2016, a majority of respondents reporting to be Alevi were in Istanbul (40%), followed by the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Western Anatolian regions (19%, 13%, and 14%, respectively).

In 2020, the highest proportion of respondents reporting to be Alevi was in the Mediterranean (28%), and although the percentage dropped in Istanbul, it was still significant (23%). In 2020, Middle East Anatolia ranked third in Alevi respondents, accounting for 12% of those identifying as Alevi. On the other hand, the percentage of Alevi in the Aegean and Western Anatolia fell to less than 10% between 2016 and 2020.

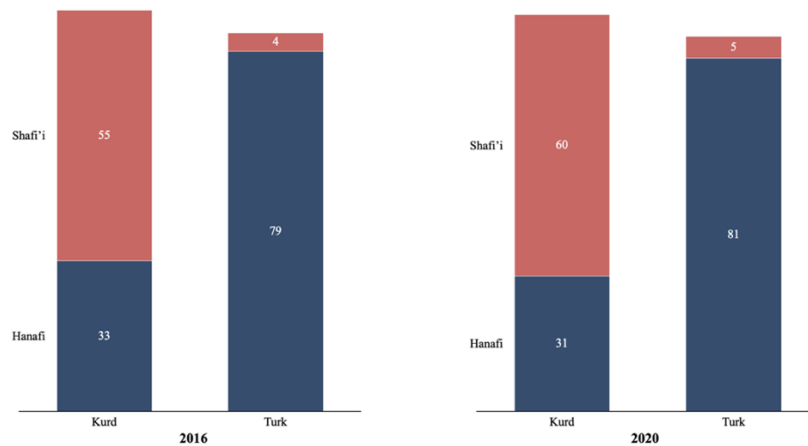
Figure 87. Distribution of Alevi, %, 2016 and 2020



In both 2016 and 2020, there were notable differences in religious affiliation between Turkish and Kurdish respondents. A majority of Kurds subscribed to the Shafi'i school in both 2016 and 2020 (55% and 60%, respectively). On the other hand, Turkish respondents identified themselves as Hanafis (79% and 81% in 2016 and 2020, respectively).

Additionally, 5% of respondents who identified as Turkish also reported being Shafi'i. This group may be Kurds identifying themselves as Turkish in the survey.

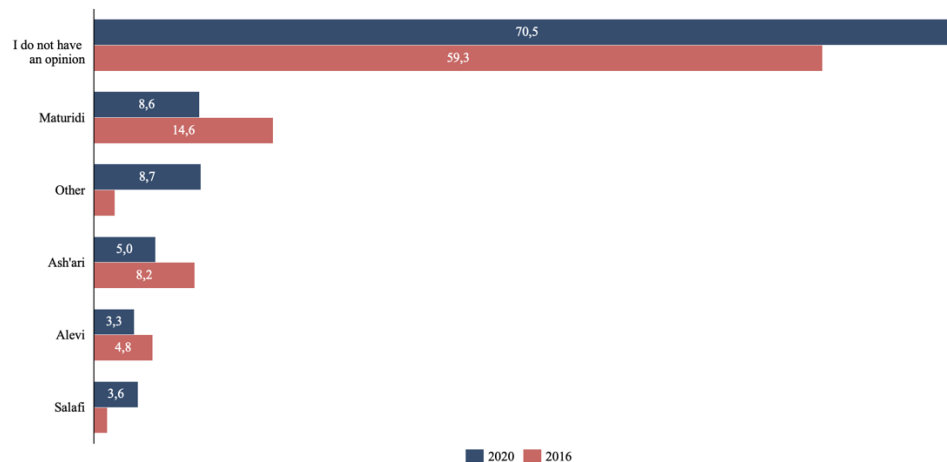
Figure 88. Religious identity of Turks and Kurds, %, 2016 and 2020



Creed

In both the 2016 and 2020 surveys, a majority of respondents reported not knowing their creed. In 2016, 59% stated they did not know their creed, and this percentage increased to 71% in 2020. This trend may be due to the limited importance respondents place on religious identity and/or indicating lack of Islamic literacy. Respondents may also have been influenced by negative feelings towards separationist trends in Islam in the aftermath of the 2016 coup d'état attempt in Türkiye, which implicated the religious community (or *cemaat*) of Fethullah Gulen. (See below **BOX 6: Views on tarikats after July 15th, 2016**).

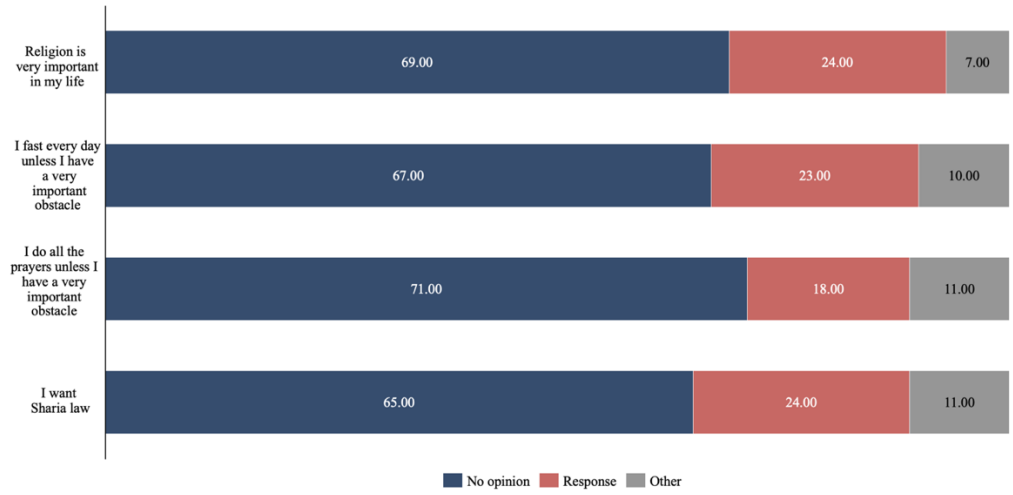
Figure 89. Religious creed, %



In 2020, a lack of knowledge of creed even extends to those respondents who consider religion to be very important in their lives, fast daily, perform all prayers, and express a desire for Sharia law. Similarly, in 2020, as high as 50% of Imam Hatip graduates reported not knowing their creed, although their knowledge of creed was higher compared to graduates from other schools.

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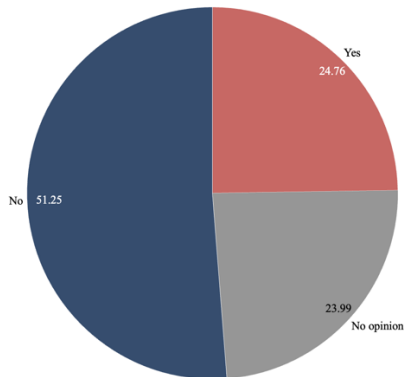
Figure 90. Religious creed, by selected question, %, 2020



BOX 6. Views on *tarikats* after July 15th, 2016

In parallel to the declining trend in respondents who identified with a creed, in 2020, about half of the respondents held the belief that Muslims should not be part of *tarikats*, which are organizations providing guidance on the Quran and religious matters.

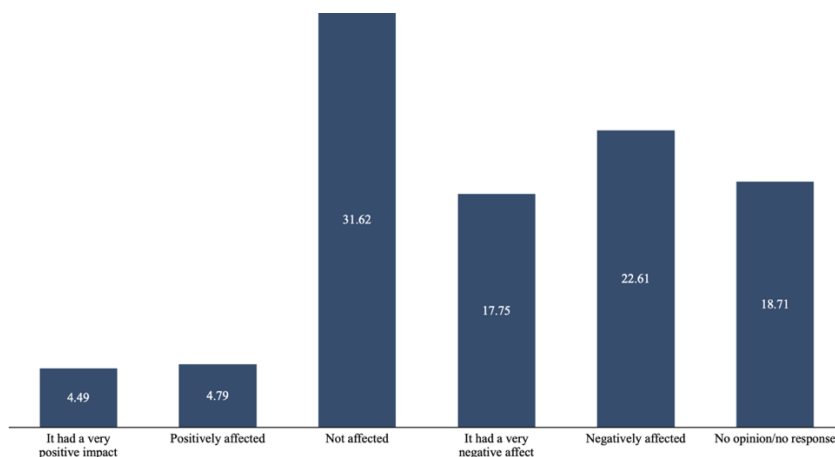
Figure 91. Views on whether a Muslim should be part of a *tarikat*, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Is it appropriate for a Muslim to be part of a religious *tarikat*?”

Moreover, a significant proportion of the respondents, specifically 40.36%, stated that their views on *tarikat* were negatively affected by the coup d'état attempt. On the other hand, about one third reported that the coup attempt did not influence their views on *tarikats* either positively or negatively.

Figure 92. Views on *tarikats* after July 15th, 2016, %, 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Did July 15th, 2016 affect your views on *tarikats*?”

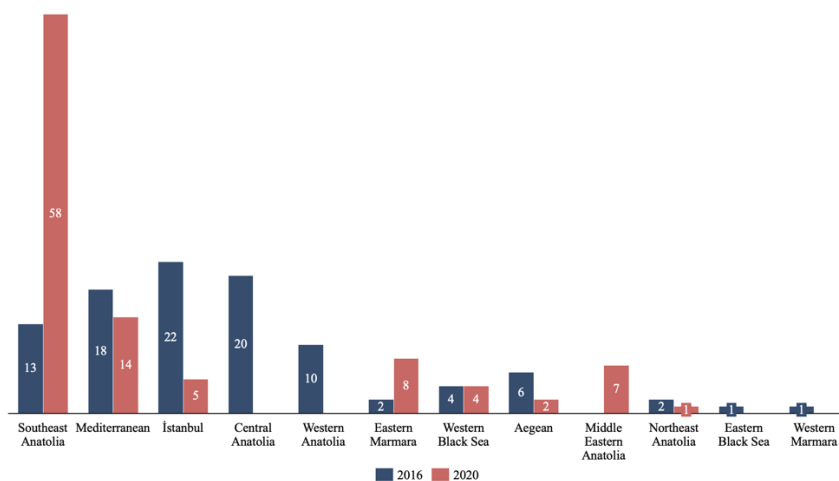
In parallel with the diminishing knowledge of creed, the percentage of respondents aligning themselves with Maturidism and Ash'arism¹⁵ has also decreased between 2016 and 2020. The identification with Maturidism witnessed a notable decline, falling from 14.6% in 2016 to 8.6% in 2020, while Ash'arism saw a decrease from 8% to 5% during the same period.

Between 2016 and 2020, there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who identified themselves as Salafi¹⁶, possibly suggesting the influence of ISIS. Specifically, those identified as Salafi increased from 1.1% to 3.6 % of respondents (a total of 264 respondents in the 2020 sample). (See below **BOX 7. Profile of respondents that identified as Salafi**).

BOX 7. Profile of respondents that identified as Salafi

In 2020, a large majority of respondents reporting to be Salafi were from Southeast Anatolia (58%). The Mediterranean maintained some portion of respondents reporting to be Salafi (14%). All other regions have less than ten percent of those reporting so. Only 5% of respondents reporting to be Salafi were from Istanbul.

Figure 93. Regional distribution of Salafis, %, 2016 and 2020



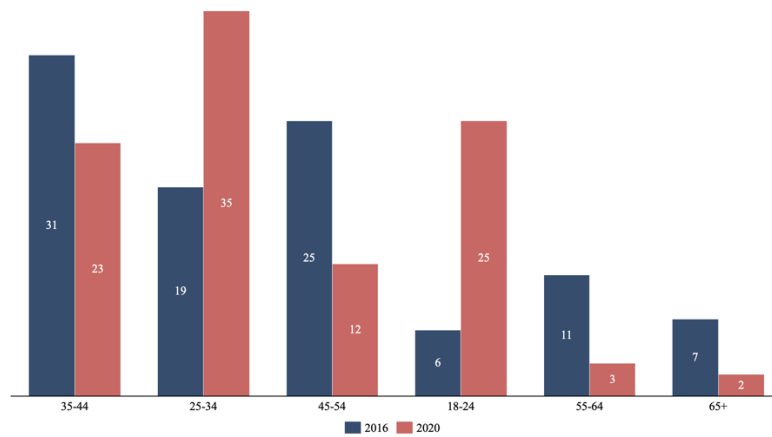
Note: The 2016 sample of Salafis is too small to draw conclusions.

In 2020, a majority of respondents reporting to be Salafi are concentrated in the youngest three age cohorts, especially 25-34-year-olds. Specifically, 35%, 25%, and 23% of respondents reporting to be Salafi were in the age groups 25-34, 18-24, and 35-44.

¹⁵ Maturidism is school of thought within Hanafism whereas Ash'arism is within Shafi'ism.

¹⁶ Salafism is a conservative and puritanical Islamic movement that emphasizes a return to the practices and beliefs of the early Islamic period.

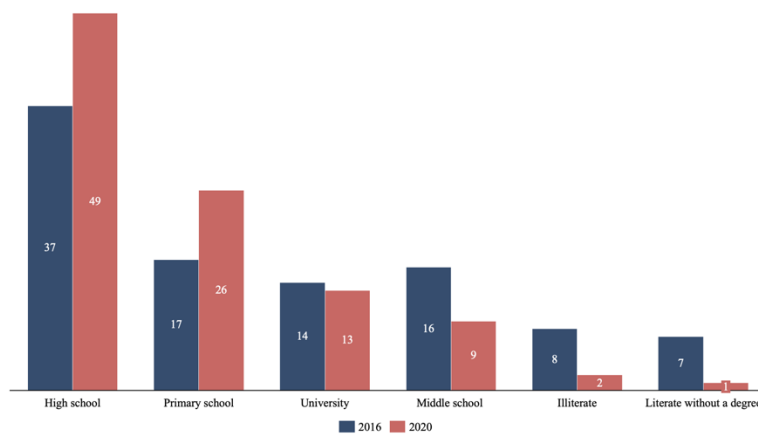
Figure 94. Age distribution of Salafis, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: The 2016 sample of Salafis is too small to draw conclusions.

In 2020, about half of the respondents reporting to be Salafi were high school graduates, and approximately a quarter held a primary school degree. A few Salafi respondents (33) also had a university degree.

Figure 95. Education level distribution of Salafis, %, 2016 and 2020



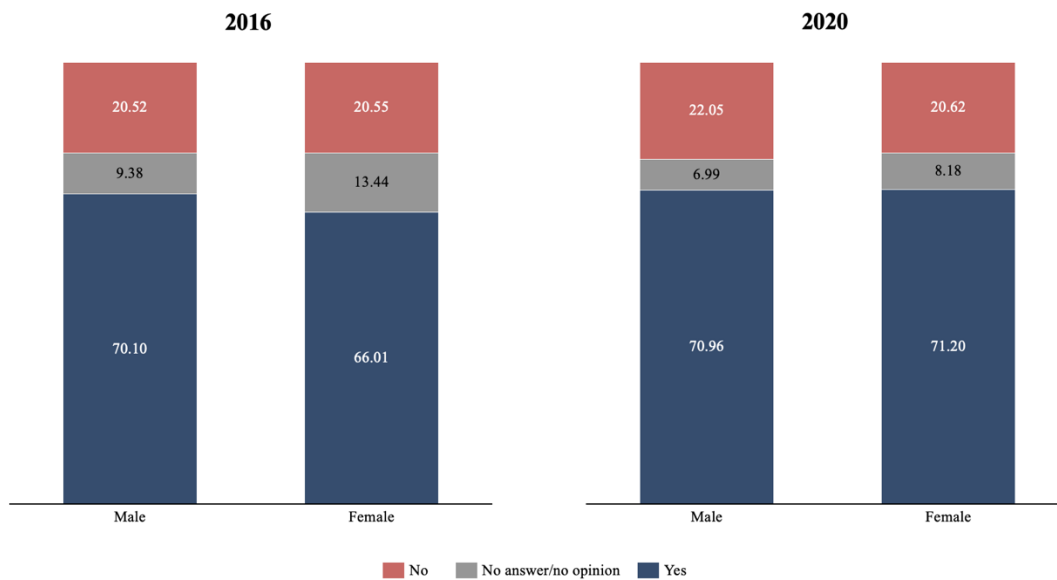
Note: The 2016 sample of Salafis is too small to draw conclusions.

Annex 3 Exclusionary tendencies: Variation by gender

The gender differences regarding views on the morality of a person who is not religious were negligible, although female respondents displayed greater ambivalence, with a higher percentage stating they do not know whether a non-religious person can be moral.

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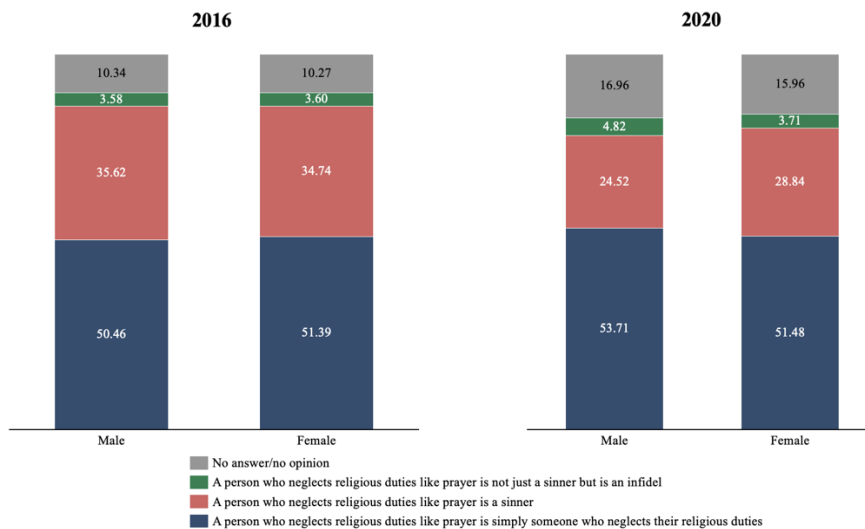
Figure 96. Views on people who are not religious, by gender, %, 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?”

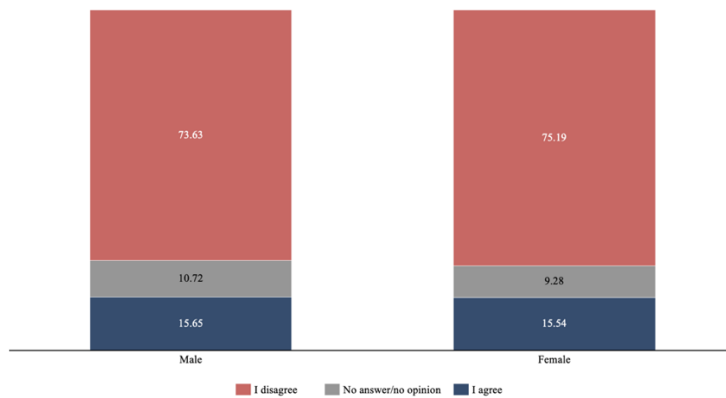
Gender differences in reactions to the statement "a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner" or is an "infidel", and to the statement 'I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me' were negligible. Similarly, the gender difference in responses to the question on whether respondents to give advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations was also negligible.

Figure 97. Views on people who do not adhere to religious practices, by gender, %, 2016 and 2020



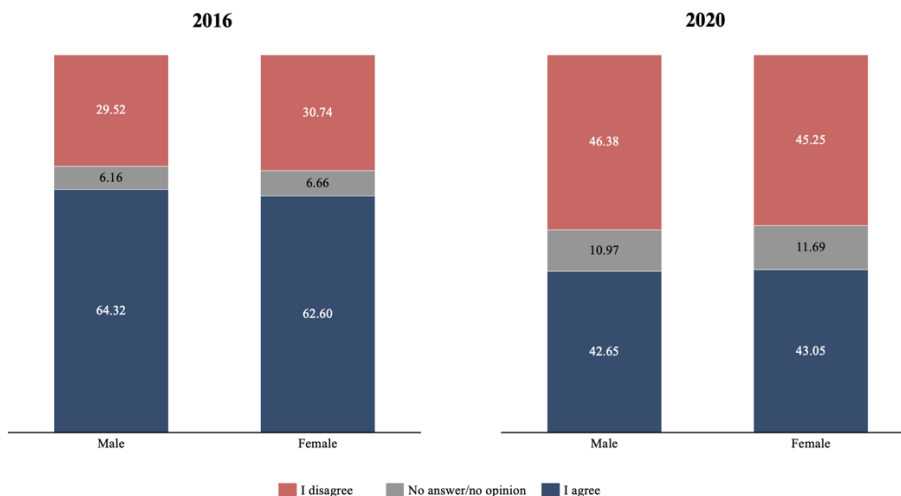
Note: Respondents were asked “What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?”

Figure 98. Views on people with who have different lifestyles and beliefs, by gender % 2020



Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.” The question was only asked in 2020.

Figure 99. Views on giving advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, by gender, % 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?”

Annex 4 Exclusionary tendencies: Variation by age

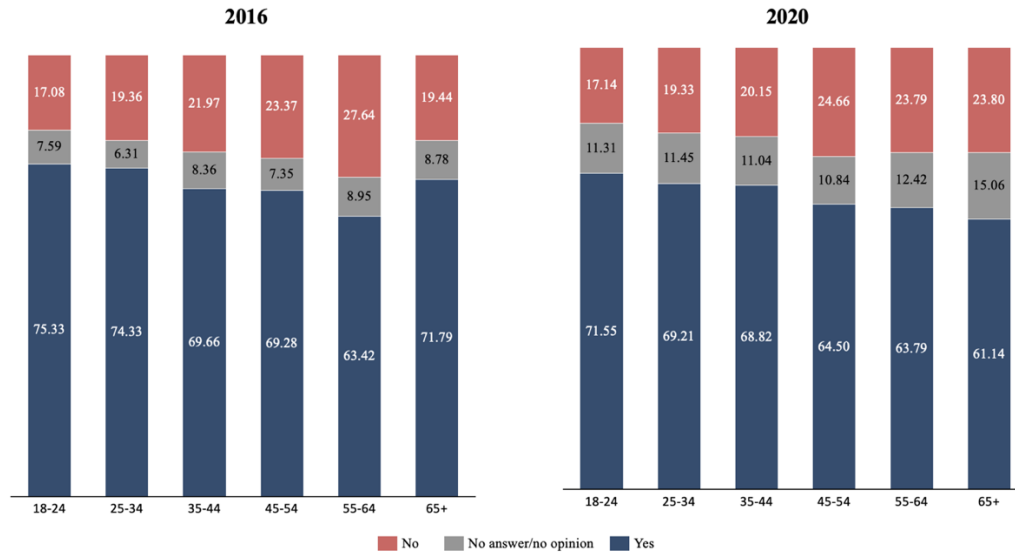
'Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?'

In both 2016 and 2020, the general trend indicates higher levels of respondents asserting that a person who is not religious cannot be moral in older age cohorts. However, in 2016, those aged 65 and over were equally inclined to agree that a person who is not religious cannot be moral as the 25-34 age cohort.

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In 2020, the percentage of respondents asserting that a non-religious person cannot be moral followed a similar trend to 2016. However, notably, the percentage of respondents who asserted so dropped for the 55-64 age cohort while it increased for those aged 65 and over.

Figure 100. Views on people who are not religious, by age, %, 2016 and 2020



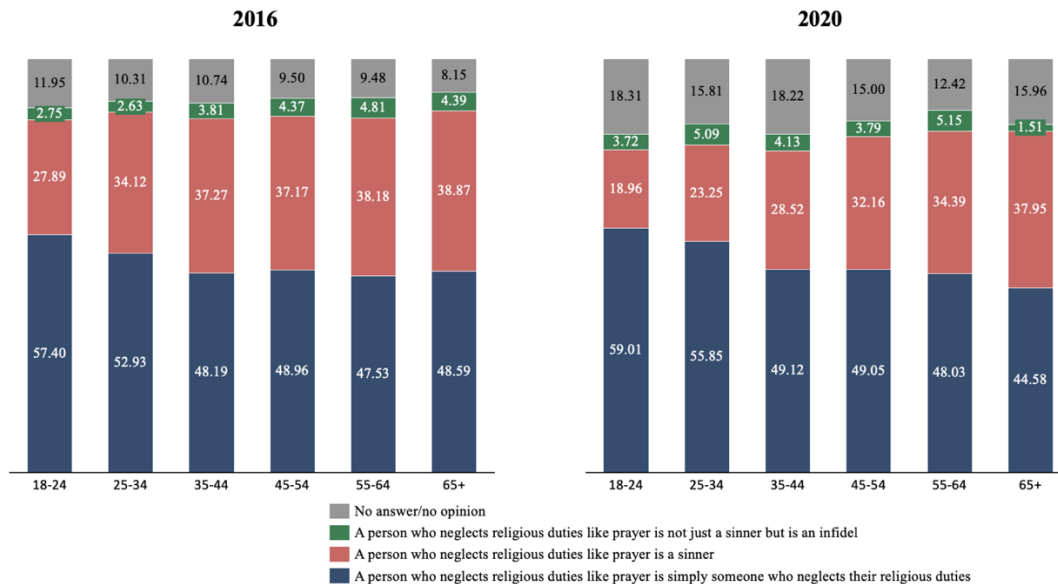
Note: Respondents were asked “Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?”

‘What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?’

In both 2016 and 2020, the proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement "a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner" or is an "infidel" increased with age, with a higher percentage of respondents from older age cohorts agreeing. In 2016, differences were less pronounced among older age cohorts of 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65 and over. In 2020, all age groups were less likely to agree with the statement "a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner" or is an "infidel."

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Figure 101. Views on people who do not adhere to religious practices, by age, %, 2016 and 2020

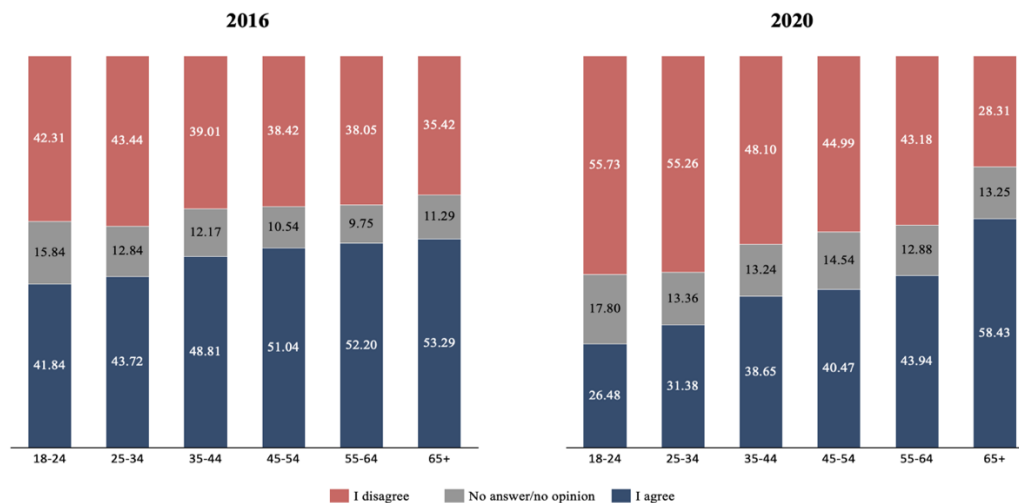


Note: Respondents were asked “What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?”

Reactions to the statement 'my sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.'

In both 2016 and 2020, agreement with the statement increased in higher age cohorts. In 2020, differences between age groups were more pronounced although agreement with the statement was lower among all age groups compared to 2016.

Figure 102. Belief that one’s own beliefs and practices are the most accurate way of practicing Islam, by age, %, 2016 and 2020

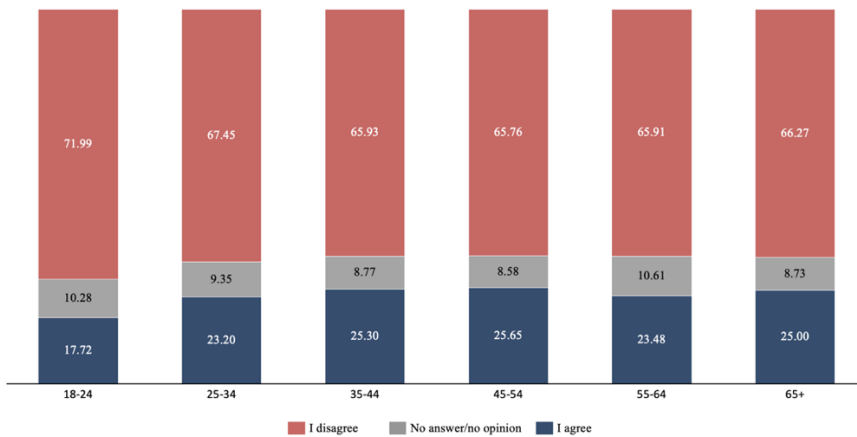


Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “My sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.”

Reactions to the statement ‘I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs.’

There was no significant variation in agreement in terms of age except for the youngest age cohort of 18-24, where a low percentage agreed (17.7%).

Figure 103. Views on interacting with people who live according to different beliefs, % 2020

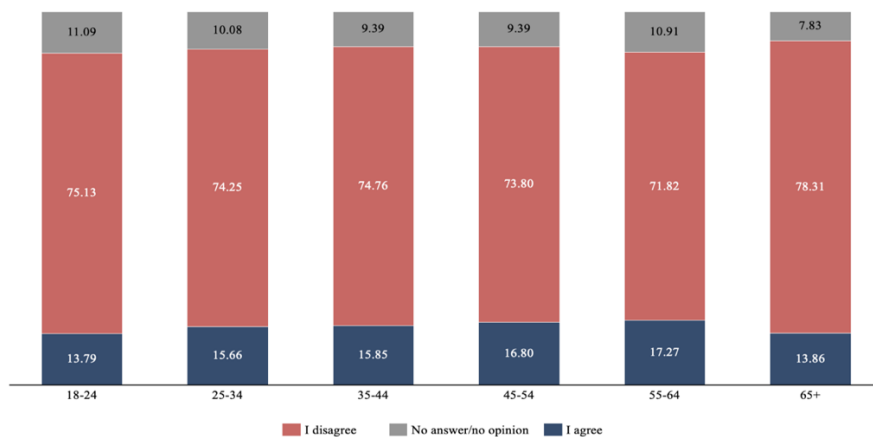


Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs.” The question was only asked in 2020.

Reactions to the statement ‘I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.’

Similarly, there were no significant variations in agreement among age groups. The youngest and oldest age cohorts showed similar levels of agreement. Other age groups in the middle of these two cohorts showed slightly higher agreement and were similar to each other.

Figure 104. Views on people with who have different lifestyles and beliefs, by gender % 2020

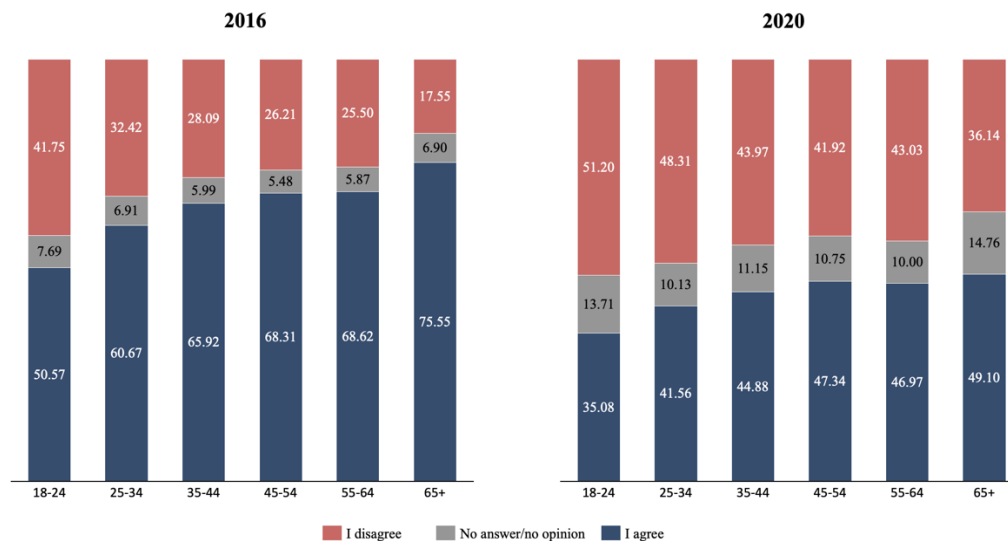


Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.” The question was only asked in 2020.

'Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?'

In both 2016 and 2020, respondents reporting giving advice increased in higher age cohorts almost in a linear fashion. The percentage of respondents stating so was particularly low in the youngest age group. Also, respondents who said they give advice decreased across all age groups between 2016 and 2020.

Figure 105. Views on giving advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, by age, % 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?”

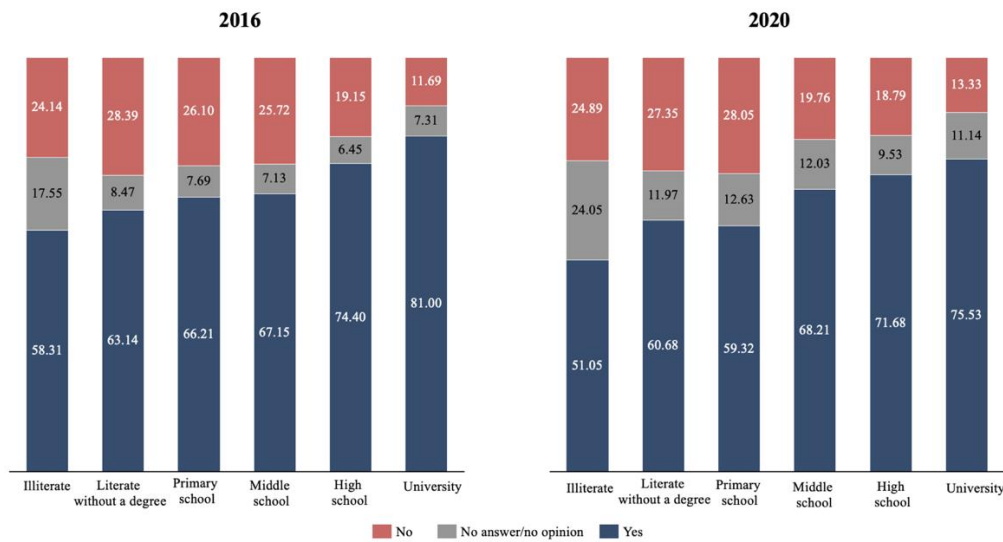
Annex 5 Exclusionary tendencies: Variation by level of education

'Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?'

In both 2016 and 2020, the inclination to assert that a non-religious person cannot be moral generally decreased with higher education levels.

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Figure 106. Views on people who are not religious, by level of education, %, 2016 and 2020

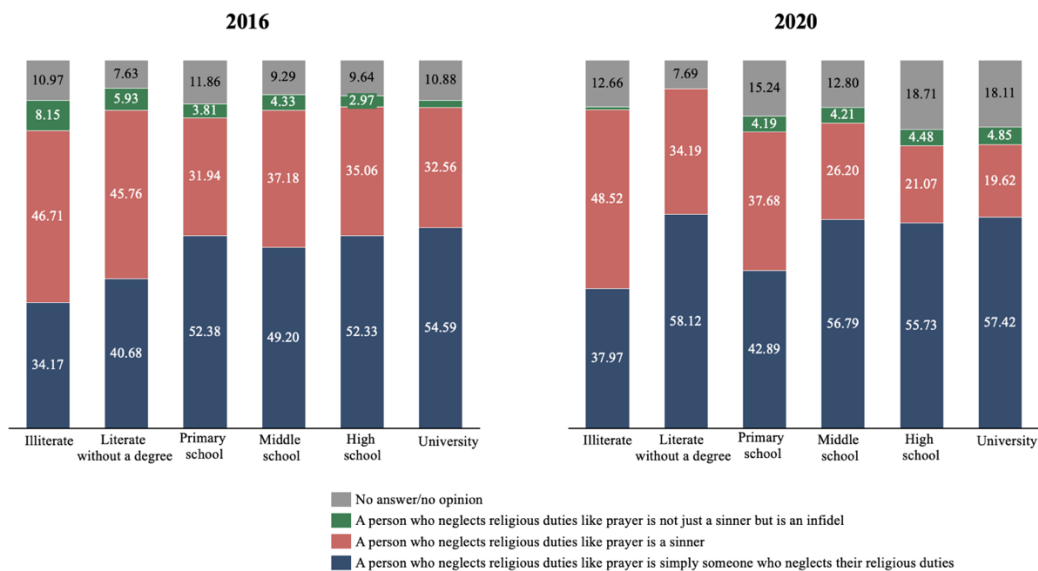


Note: Respondents were asked “Do you think a person who is not religious can be moral?”

‘What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?’

In 2016 and 2020, the proportion of respondents agreeing that a person who neglects religious duties like prayer is a sinner or an infidel generally decreased with higher education levels with some notable exceptions (e.g., in 2016 with primary school graduates showing agreement on par with university graduates). Compared to 2016, in 2020, a lower percentage of respondents from all education groups agreed with the statement, with the exception of primary school graduates, where agreement increased from 2016.

Figure 107. Views on people who do not adhere to religious practices, by age, %, 2016 and 2020



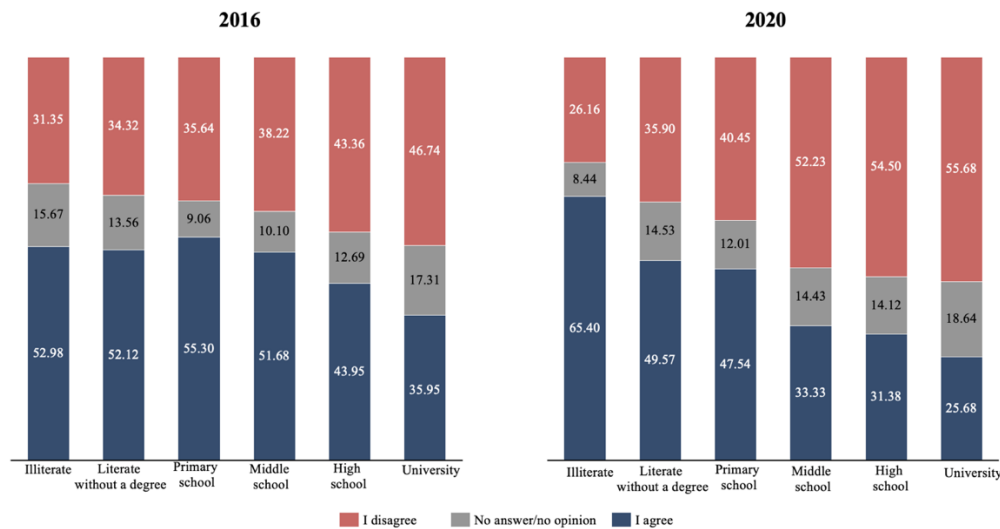
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Note: Respondents were asked “What do you think about someone who does not perform certain religious duties like prayer?”

Reactions to the statement ‘my sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.’

In both 2016 and 2020, agreement decreased with higher education levels. Agreement with the statement decreased between 2016 and 2020, with the exception of illiterate respondents, where the percentage agreeing increased in 2020.

Figure 108. Belief that one’s own beliefs and practices are the most accurate way of practicing Islam, by age, %, 2016 and 2020



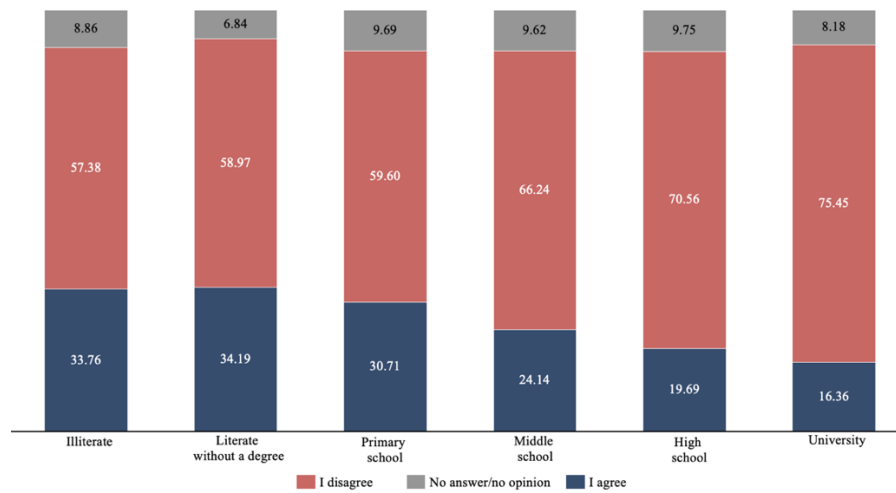
Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “My sect and my way are the most accurate way of practicing Islam.”

Reactions to the statement ‘I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs’ and ‘I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.’

Agreement with both the statements also decreased with higher education levels.

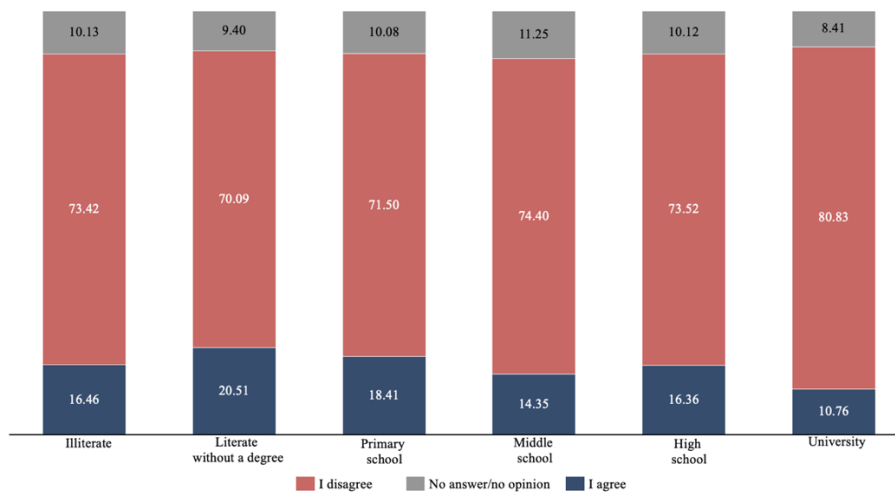
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Figure 109. Views on interacting with people who live according to different beliefs, % 2020



Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I generally keep my distance from people who do not live according to my beliefs.” The question was only asked in 2020.

Figure 110. Views on people with who have different lifestyles and beliefs, by gender % 2020



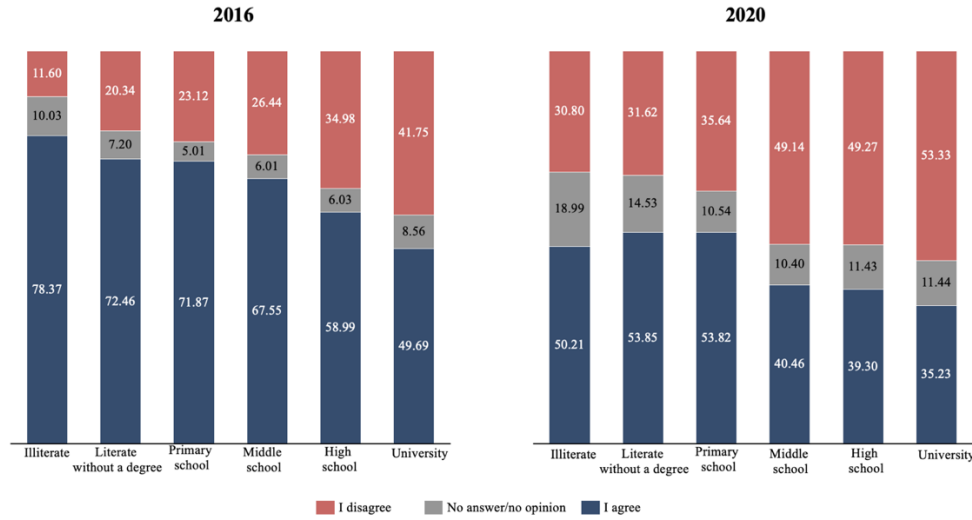
Note: Respondents were asked to react to the statement “I cannot stand those who have different lifestyles and beliefs than me.” The question was only asked in 2020.

‘Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?’

In both 2016 and 2020, educational background played a significant role, with respondents who said they give advice decreasing with higher education levels. In 2020, respondents who said they give advice decreased across all education groups.

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Figure 111. Views on giving advice to Muslims who do not meet Islamic expectations, by level of education, % 2016 and 2020



Note: Respondents were asked “Do you give advice to Muslims not meeting Islamic expectations?”