

KONDA

Human Rights Association Perception Study on Prisons and Prisoners

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1. ABOUT THE REPORT

This study was conducted by KONDA Research and Consultancy Inc. for the Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği -İHD).

The aim of this study was to afford an insight into the Turkish society's perspective on prison conditions, the justice system, its contact with the penal system, and its view of discrimination and ill-treatment in prisons.

The study was conducted between 18 and 20 June 2021 through telephone interviews with individuals who had consented to be a part of the KONDA **Mediated Panel**. The panelists volunteered to be a part of KONDA's panel system. Interviews were conducted with 3,285 individuals within the scope of the study.



2. SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE ON PRISONS AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

2.1. İHD's 2020 Prisons Monitoring Report

According to data provided by the Directorate General of Prisons and Detention Houses, there were a total of 369 penitentiary institutions in Turkey as of 2 February 2021, including 264 closed prisons, 78 detached open prisons, 4 education houses for children, 9 closed prisons for women, 7 open prisons for women, 7 closed prisons for children. The total capacity of these prisons was 244,896 persons.

According to İHD activists and lawyers, though, under *normal* circumstances these prisons should have been holding 2/3 less prisoners than the given figure.

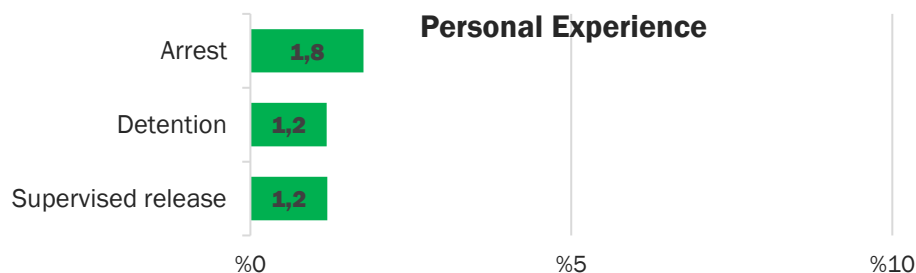
Prison capacity in Turkey has been raised by 188,437 persons by building about 40 new prisons within the last year according to official figures. The authorities are planning to further increase prison capacity up to 500,000 persons through new prisons to be built in the upcoming years.

According to official figures released by the Directorate General of Prisons and Detention Houses, there were 292,074 prisoners as of 30 September 2021. This figure included about 50,000 prisoners whose enforcement of sentences has been suspended within the scope of measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹

2.2. Society's Contact with the Penal System

Our past research shows that the primary factor that forms perceptions on any issue or situation is contact. The first factor that affects perspectives on prisons and the penal system is yet again contact. We did, therefore, ask the participants of the study whether they had any direct contact with the penal system along with whether anyone they knew had any such contact.

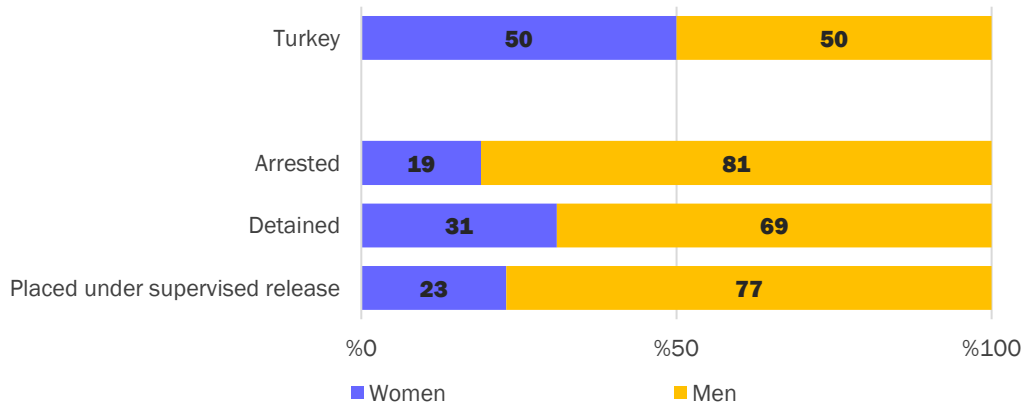
"Have you ever been arrested, detained or placed under supervised release?"



¹ <https://cte.adalet.gov.tr/Resimler/Dokuman/istatistik/istatistik-1.pdf>

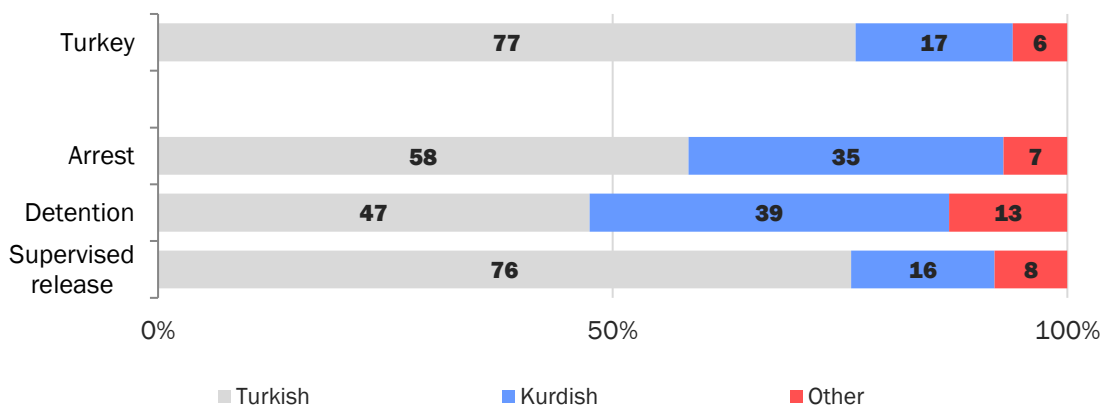
1.8% of the participants stated that they themselves had been arrested [gözültü: taken into custody], while 1.2% stated that they had been detained [tutuklama: imprisonment] and 1.2% indicated that they had been placed under supervised release [denetimli serbestlik: probation]. When we looked into which groups faced such situations more often, it was seen that there were certain differences among the groups as per gender, ethnic background, education level, and economic class.

Contact with the Penal System as per Gender



When we looked into contact with crime and the penal system as per gender, it was observed that men faced arrests, detention and supervised release more often than women. Men account for 81%, 69% and 77% of previous arrests, detentions and supervised release respectively. We can argue that the demographic factor that affects contact with the penal system most is gender.

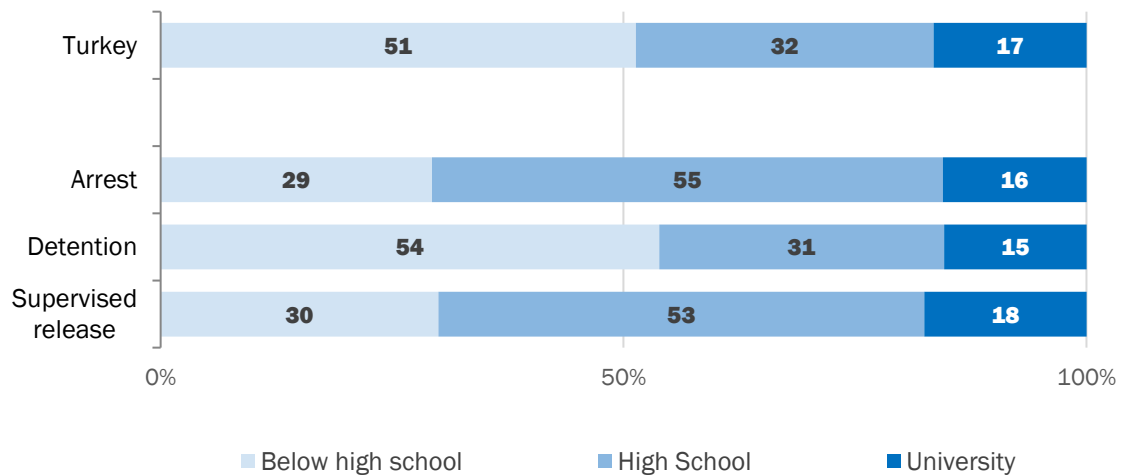
Contact with the Penal System as per Ethnic Background



58% of those arrested were Turkish, 35% were Kurdish, 7% were Arab, Zaza and from other ethnic backgrounds. When the ethnic backgrounds of those detained were studied, it was seen that 47% were Turkish while 39% were Kurdish. Nevertheless, when we take into account the fact that Kurds account for 17% of the population in Turkey, 35% arrest and 39% detention rates remain quite high.



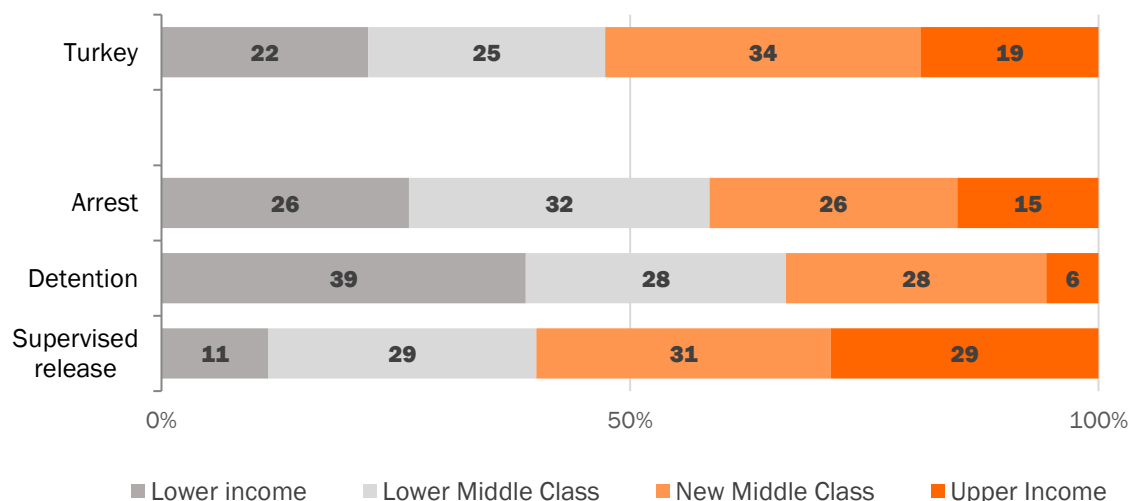
Contact with the Penal System as per Education Levels



Educational level, too, is among the demographic factors that affect arrest, detention and supervised release the most. Our data revealed that half of those who faced arrest and supervised release were high school graduates. While one in three persons in Turkey are high school graduates, the fact that one in two persons who faced these two situations were high school graduates draws attention.

While 54% of the detained did not attend or graduate from high school, 31% were high school, 15% were university graduates.

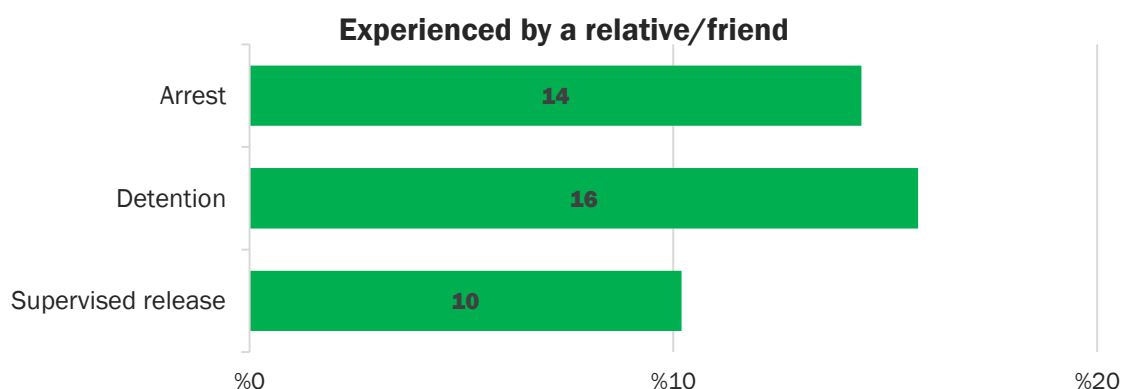
Contact with the Penal System as per Economic Classes



Economic class proved to be another demographic factor that had quite an impact on all these three situations. When we looked into the economic classes of those who had been detained, it was seen that a significant portion making up 39% were from the lower-income group, while

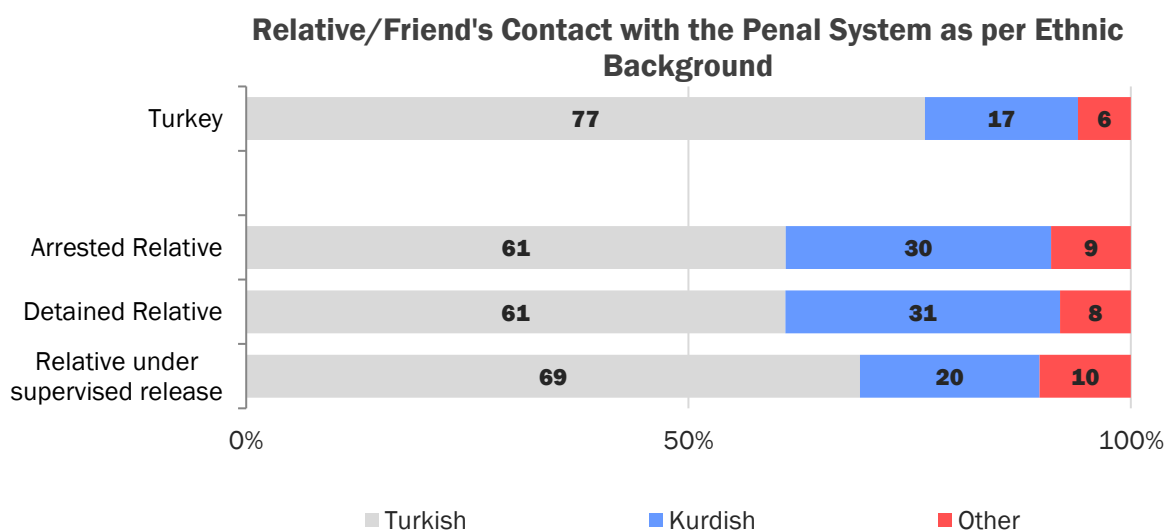
only 6% were from the upper-income group. When we studied the economic classes of those who had been placed under supervised control, it was seen that 11% were from the lower-income group while 29% were from the upper-income group.

“A relative/friend of mine was arrested, detained or placed under supervised release”



14% of the interviewees stated that a relative/friend of theirs had been arrested, while 15% stated that a relative/friend had been detained, and 10% said that a relative/friend had been placed under supervised release.

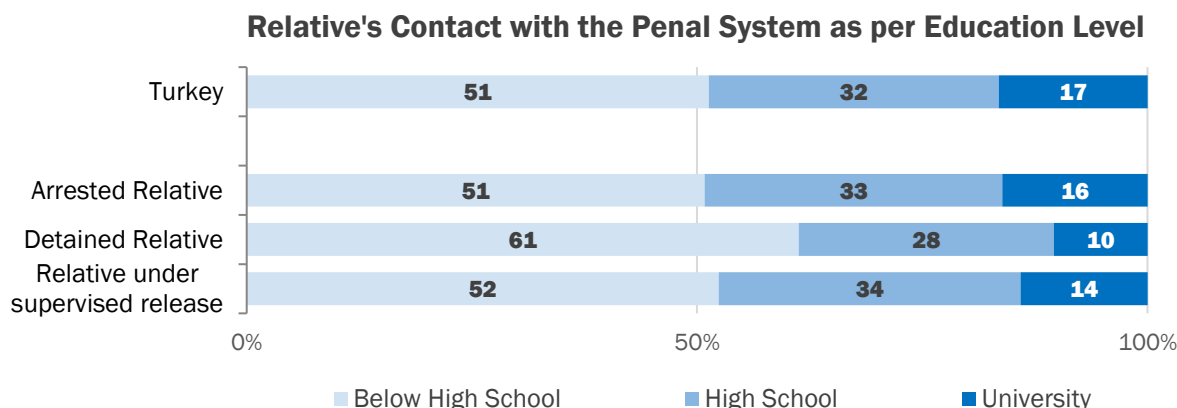
Arrest, detention, and supervised release concepts can be technical and confusing for the interviewees especially when in connection to their relatives, friends and acquaintances. It would, therefore, be more fitting to consider total size or quantity instead of comparing response rates.



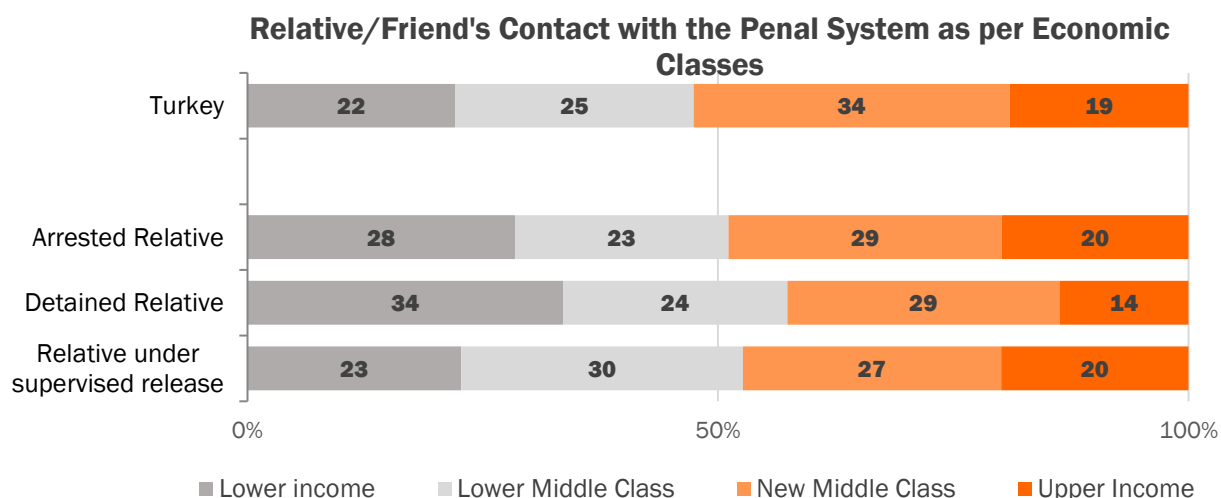
When we looked into the ethnic backgrounds of those whose relatives or friends faced either of these three situations, it was seen that 61% were Turkish, 30% were Kurdish and 9% were from other ethnic backgrounds. 61% of the interviewees whose relatives or friends had been



detained were Turkish, while 31% were Kurdish and 8% were from other ethnic backgrounds. 69% of the interviewees whose relatives or friends had been placed under supervised release were Turkish, while 20% were Kurdish and 10% were from other ethnic backgrounds.



When we looked into the distribution of those whose relatives or friends faced arrest, detention or supervised release as per their education levels, the fact that 61% of those whose relatives or friends had been detained were not high school graduates. While 51% of the society does not have a high school diploma, such rate shows that education level is indeed a factor that affects contact with the penal system.



Analyzing the economic classes of those whose relatives or friends faced either of these three situations bears significance in order to understand the degree to which economic factors affect these issues. 28% of those whose relatives or friends had been arrested were from the lower-income group, 23% were from the lower middle class, 29% were from the new middle class and 20% were from the upper-income group.

When we looked into those whose relatives or friends had been detained, the lower-income group stood out. While 34% of those whose relatives or friends had been detained comprised the lower-income group, 24% were from the lower middle class, 29% from the new middle class and 14% were from the upper-income group. While the lower-income group accounts for 22%

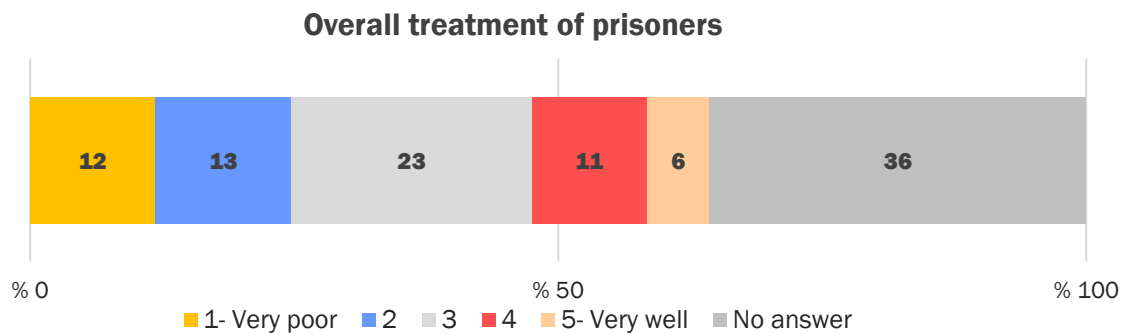
in Turkey, the fact that 34% of those whose relatives or friends had been detained is in this cluster shows that people in the lower-income group have more contact with crime.

When we looked into those whose relatives or friends had been placed under supervised release, we see a distribution more similar to the average figure in Turkey. 23% of those whose relatives or friends had been placed under supervised release were from the lower-income group, 30% were from the lower middle class, 27% were from the new middle class, and 20% were from the upper-income group.

2.3. Society's Evaluation of Prison Conditions

2.3.1 Treatment of Prisoners

We asked the interviewees what they thought about issues like the overall conditions in prisons, whether prisoners were treated well, whether prisons were rehabilitation centers following questions on how much contact they and their relatives or friends had with the penal system.

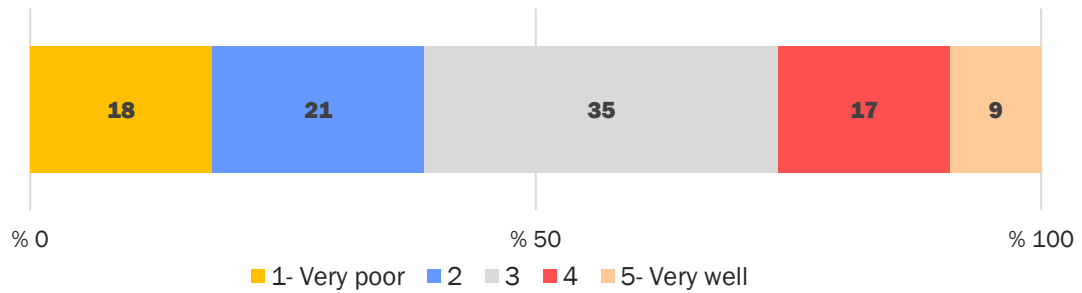


While 25% of the society thought that the overall treatment of prisoners was poor or very poor, 17% thought the treatment of prisoners was well or very well. 23% of the society, on the other hand, thought that the overall treatment of prisoners was neither bad nor well. It was also observed that a large group making up 36% did not respond to this question.

More than one third of the interviewees did not want to respond to this question, the aim of which was to understand the perception on the overall treatment of prisoners. The high rate of no response to questions posed to the subjects on some issues indicates either they had no idea about the issue or they had other reservations. It is common for the interviewees to prefer to stay in the gray area or not to convey their ideas at all when asked about political issues. The high rate of no response to this question is related to the fact that the interviewees had no information about the issue rather than avoiding political debates.

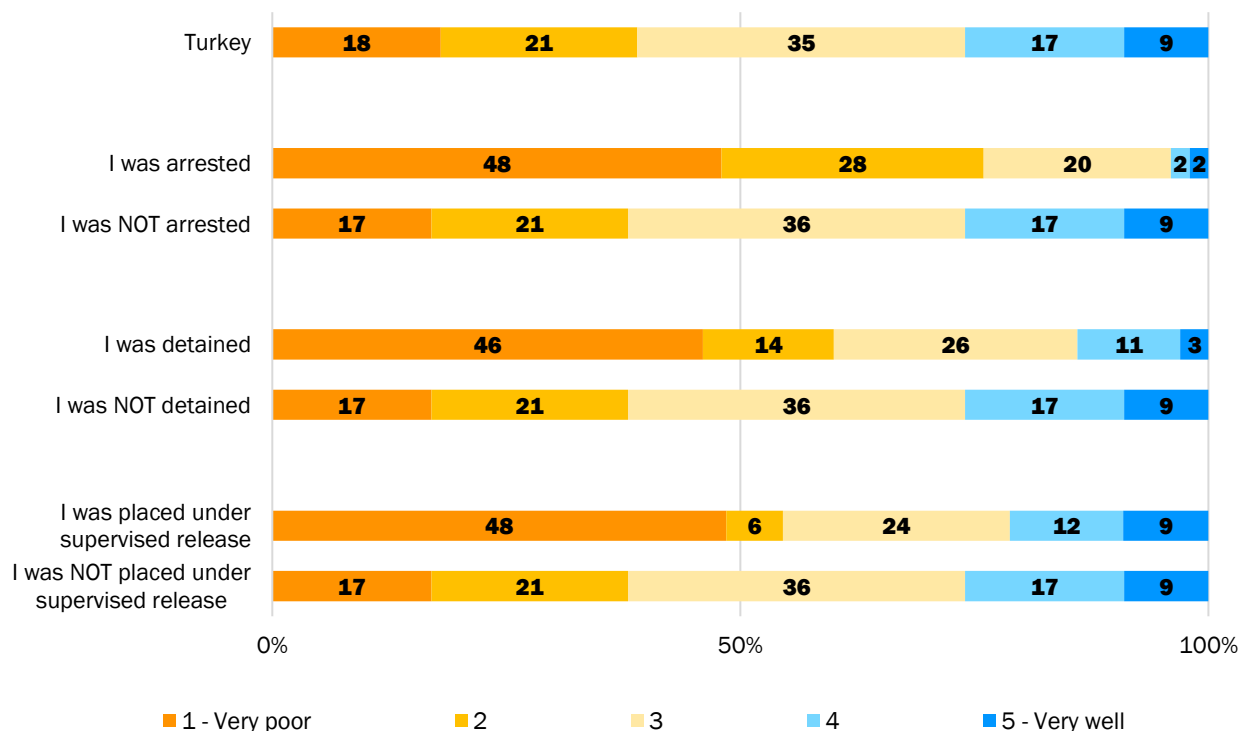


Overall treatment of prisoners



When we took into account only those who responded to this question it was seen that 39% of the responders thought that the overall treatment of prisoners was poor or very poor, while 26% thought that the overall treatment of prisoners was well or very well. The rate of those who indicated that the overall treatment of prisoners was neither poor nor well was 35%.

Overall Treatment of Prisoners

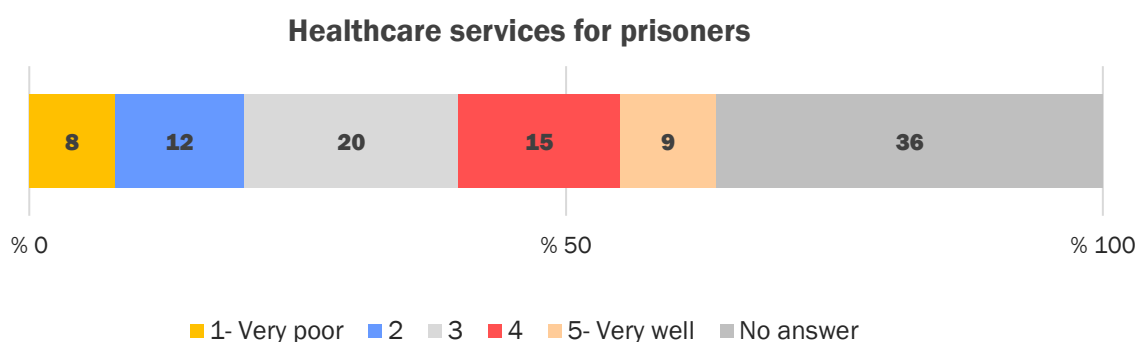


There is a significant difference between the ideas of those who were subjected to the aforementioned practices (arrest, detention, supervised release) and those who were not. While 76% of these who were arrested, 60% of those who were detained, and 54% of those who were placed under supervised release thought that the overall treatment of prisoners was poor or very poor, 38% of those who did not face these situations agreed.

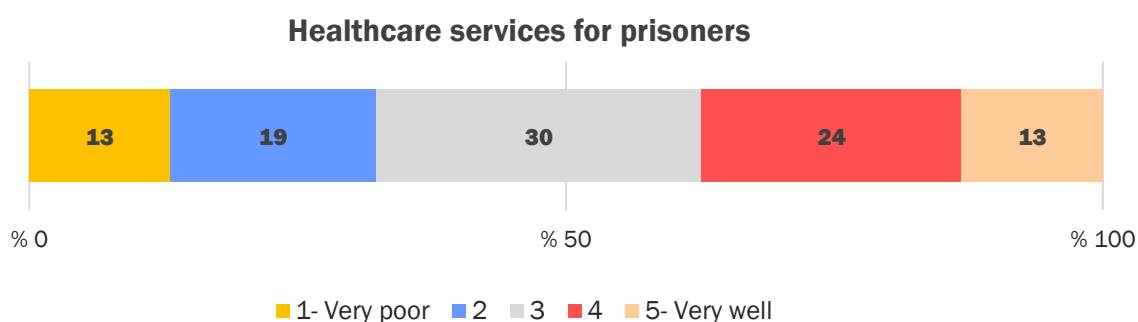
The group least inclined to think that the prisoners were treated well or very well was those who had been arrested before. Only 4% of those who had been arrested indicated that prisoners were treated well or very well. While the rate of those who agreed and had been detained before was 14%, the rate was 21% among those who had been placed under supervised release. 26% of those who had not experienced these situations thought that prisoners were treated well or very well.

2.3.2 Access to Healthcare Services in Prisons

An important detail that stood out in questions about healthcare services, healthy food and other prison conditions was the fact that the interviewees mostly did not respond to these questions.



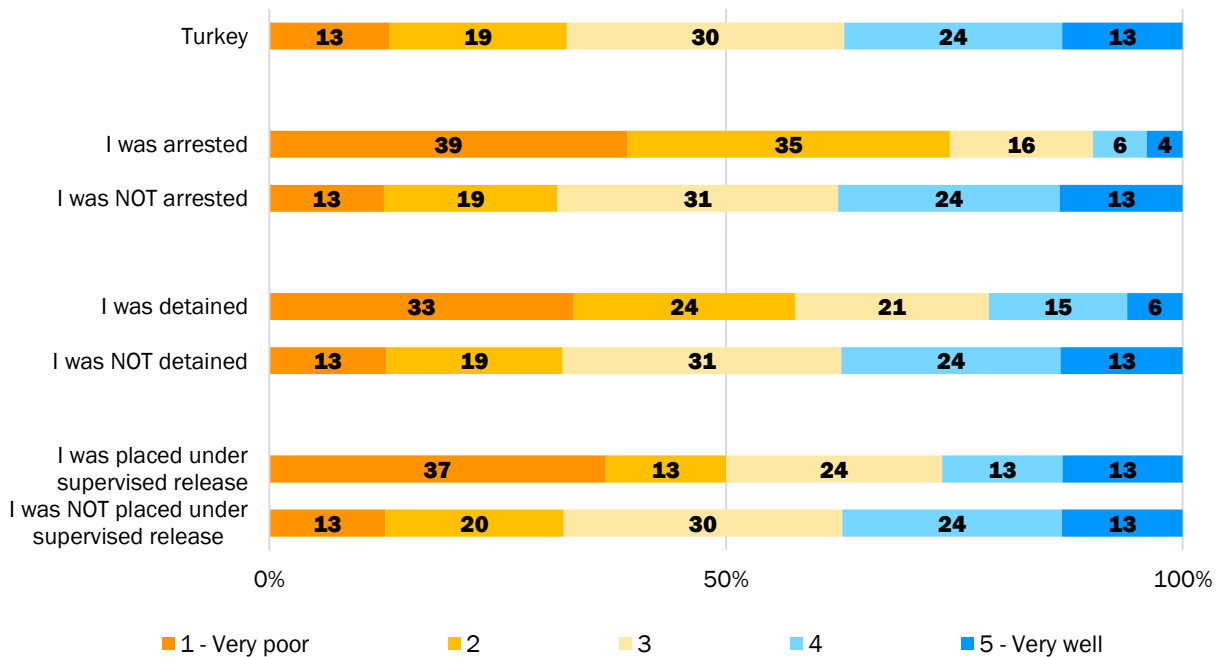
When we looked into the responses to whether healthcare services for prisoners was good or poor, it was seen that 20% of the society thought that it was poor or very poor while 24% said it was well or very well. The rate of those who preferred not to answer this question was 36%.



While the rate of those who answered this question and thought that healthcare services for prisoners was poor or very poor was 32%, those who thought it was well or very well was 37%. Those who evaluated that healthcare services for prisoners was neither poor nor well accounted for 30%.



Healthcare Services for Prisoners

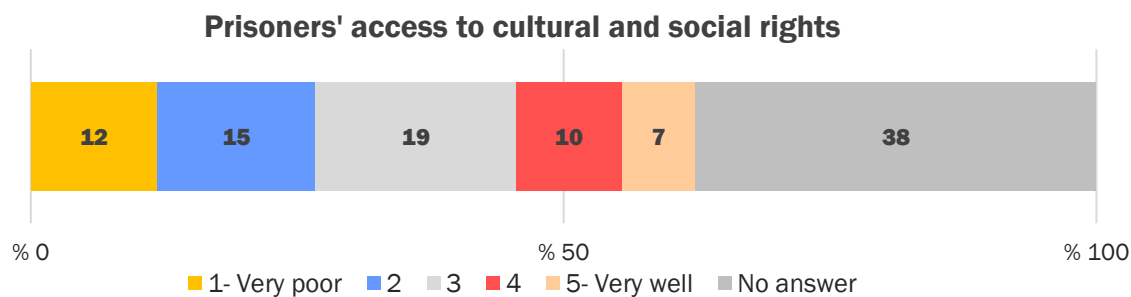


We observed that there was also a significant difference of opinion about healthcare services for prisoners between those who had experienced either of these three situations and those who had not. While 74% of those who had been arrested before, 57% of those who had been detained and 50% of those who had been placed under supervised release indicated that healthcare services for prisoners was poor or very poor, one in third persons who had not experienced these stated that healthcare services for prisoners was poor or very poor.

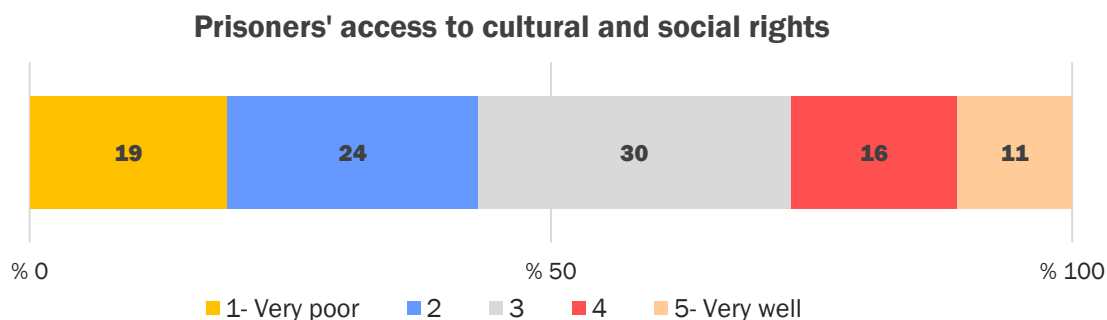
When we looked into the tendency for evaluating healthcare services for prisoners was well or very well, we saw that only 8% of those who had been arrested, 21% of those who had been detained and 26% of those who had been placed under supervised release had such tendency.

2.3.3 Social, Cultural and Other Rights

It is not possible to see the rights violations prisoners are subjected to unless information about prison conditions and incidents reach the outside world through media channels. Other than this, limitations on the information shared with the public by the related directorate general or the fact that information is not shaped in accordance with the demands of either prisoners' relatives or the related civil society organizations do not render it possible for us to have an idea about practices in prisons.



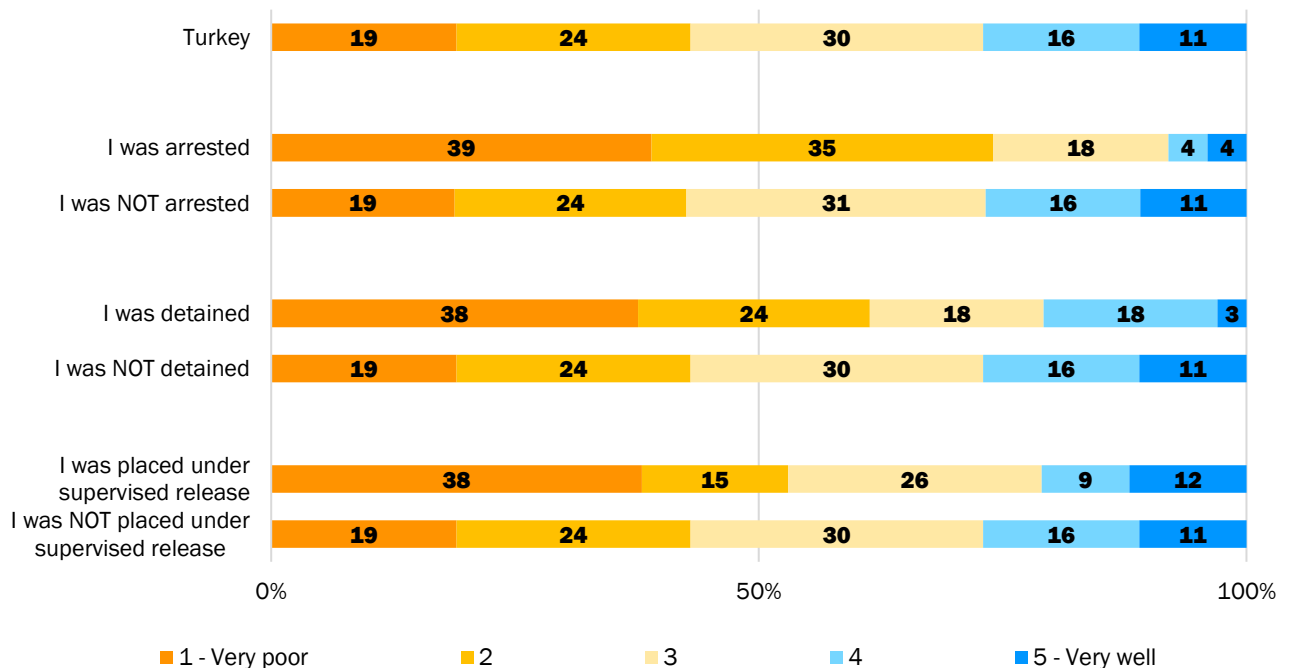
27% of the society said that prisoners' access to cultural and social rights was poor or very poor, while 17% stated that it was well or very well. We see that a large portion of the interviewees making up 38% avoided answering this question as was the case in previous matters.



Among those who answered this question the rate of those who thought that prisoners' access to cultural and social rights was poor or very poor was 43%, while those who were of the opinion that it was well or very well was 27%. Further, 30% of those who answered this question evaluated this issue as neither well nor poor.

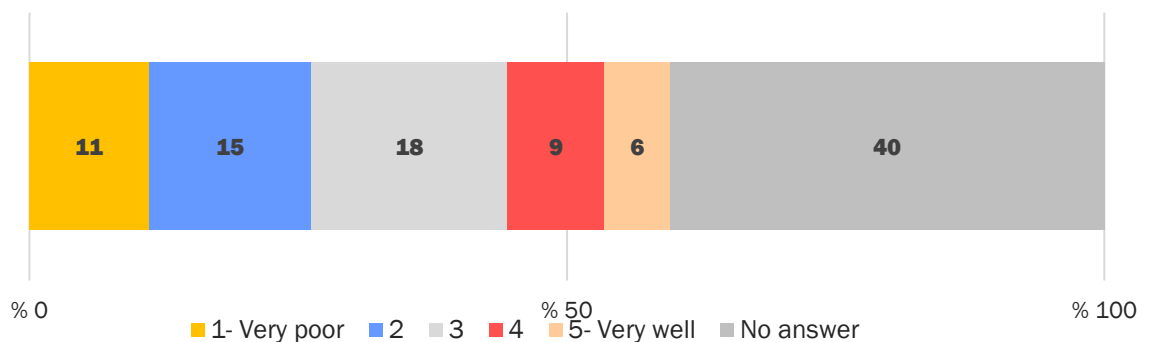


Prisoners' Access to Cultural and Social Rights



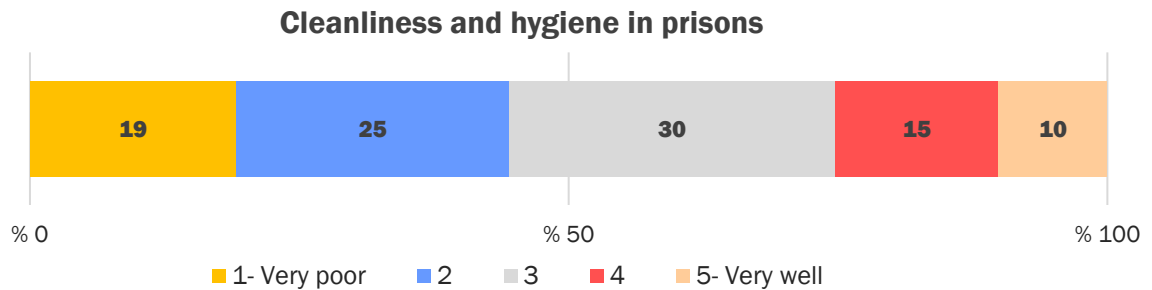
Opinions about prisoners' access to cultural and social rights reveal a significant difference between those who had been arrested, detained or placed under supervised release and those who had not -as was the case with other matters. While 2 in 5 persons who had not experienced these stated that prisoners' access to cultural and social rights was poor or very poor, 74% of those who had been arrested, 62% of those who had been detained and 53% of those who had been placed under supervised release indicated that cultural and social rights offered to prisoners were poor or very poor.

Cleanliness and hygiene in prisons

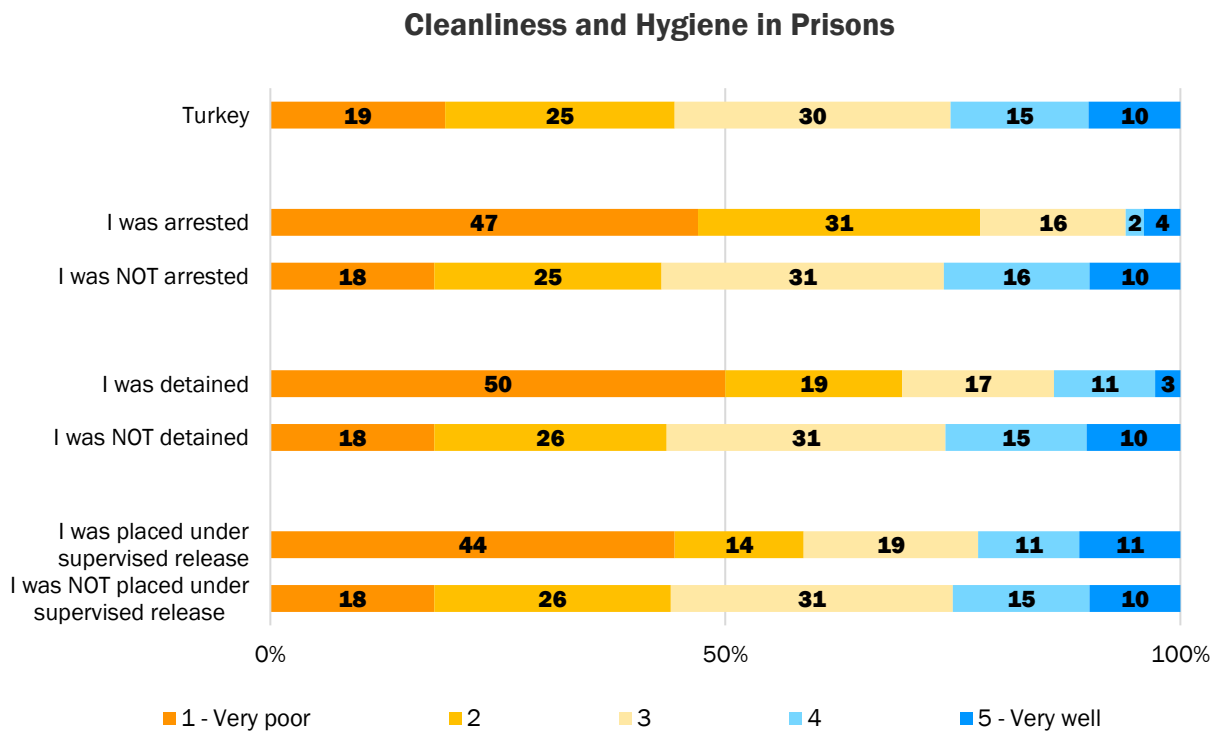


One of the questions posed to the interviewees about prison conditions was how cleanliness and hygienic conditions were like. 26% of the society thought that cleanliness and hygienic

conditions in prisons were poor or very poor, while 26% thought that they were well or very well. We also saw that 2 in 5 persons did not respond to this question.



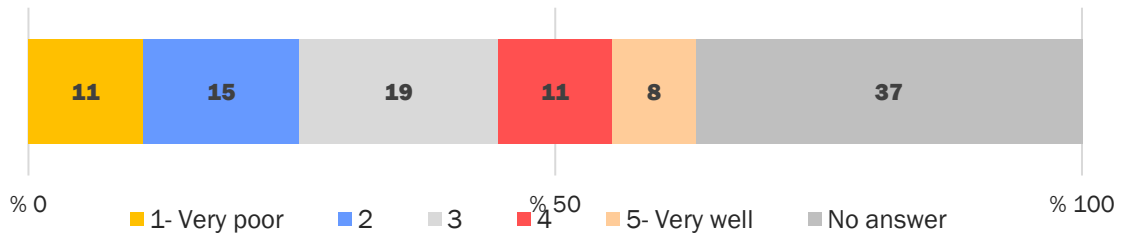
44% of those who answered the question indicated that cleanliness and hygienic conditions in prisons were poor or very poor, while the rate of those who thought that they were well or very well was 25%. We observed that 30% of those who answered this question evaluated cleanliness and hygienic conditions in prisons as neither poor nor well.



We also observed that the opinions about cleanliness and hygienic conditions in prisons varied between those who had experienced the situations in question and those had not. 68% of those who had been arrested, 69% of those who had been detained and 58% of those who had been placed under supervised release thought that cleanliness and hygienic conditions in prisons were poor or very poor. Those who had not experienced these situations adopted a similar attitude to that of the average figure in Turkey.

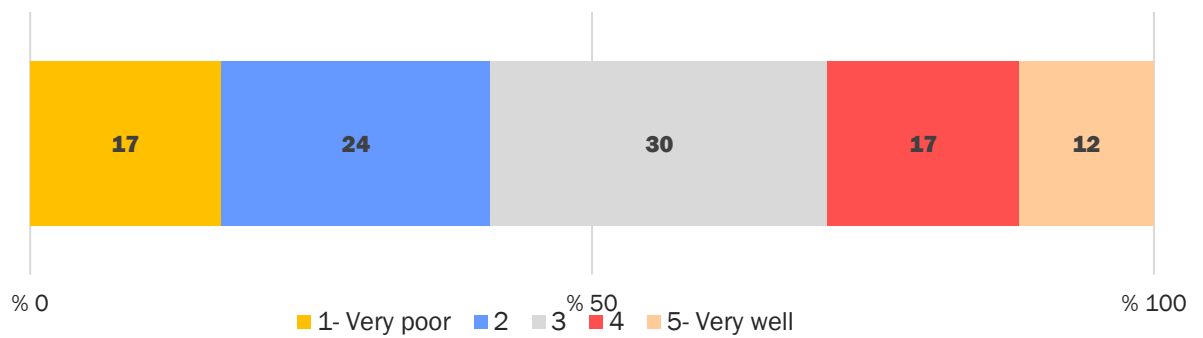


Prisoners' access to communication-correspondence and information



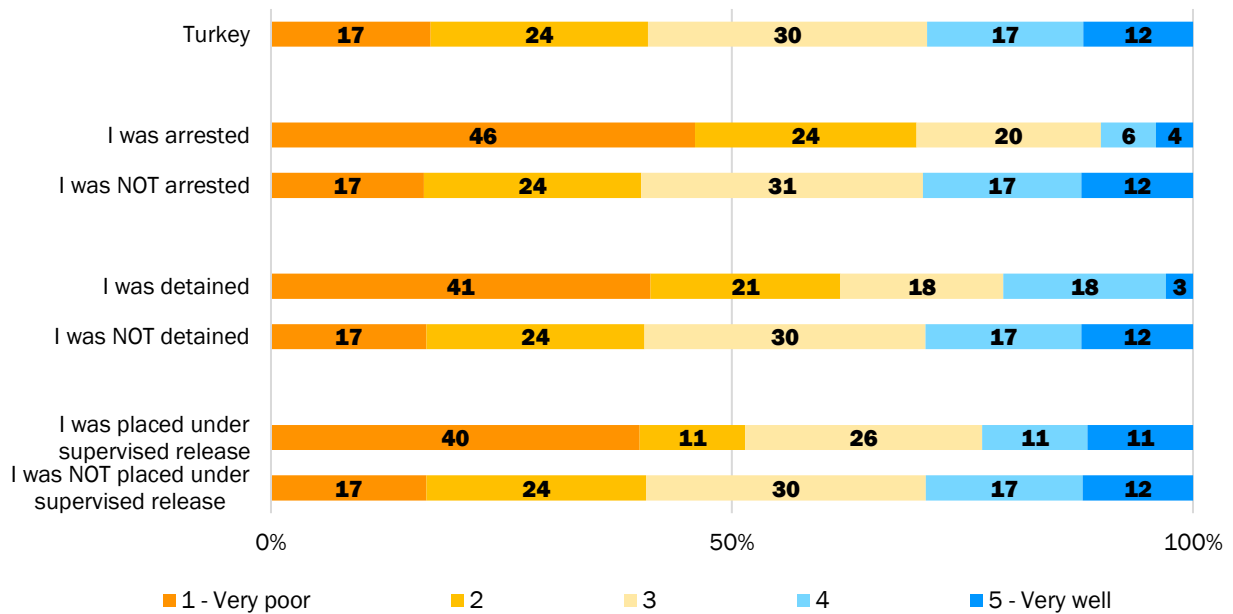
26% of the population indicated that prisoners' access to communication-correspondence and information was poor or very poor, while 19% stated that it was well or very well. About one in three persons did not respond to this question either.

Prisoners' access to communication-correspondence and information

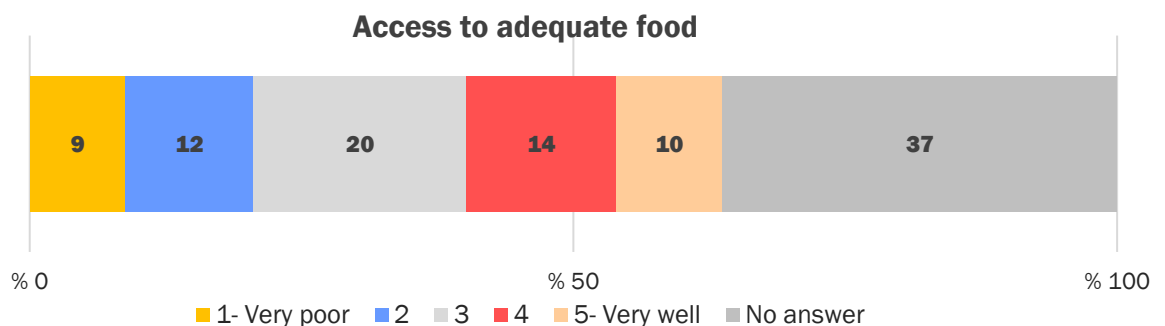


When we excluded the non-responders, it was seen that 41% of those who answered this question thought that prisoners' access to communication-correspondence and information was poor or very poor. The rate of those who stated it was well or very well was 29%.

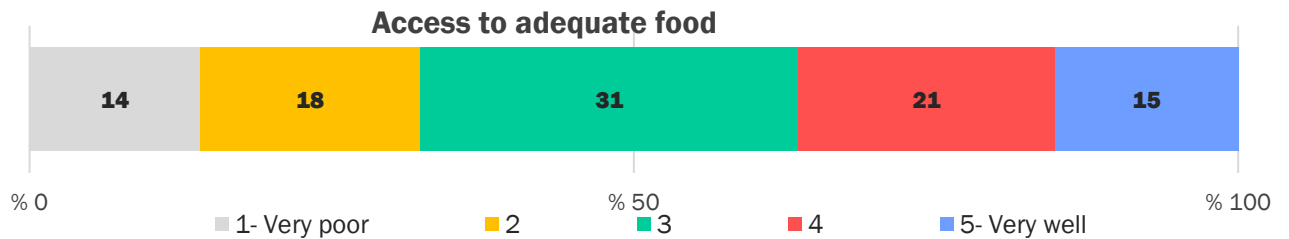
Prisoners' Access to Communication-Correspondence and Information



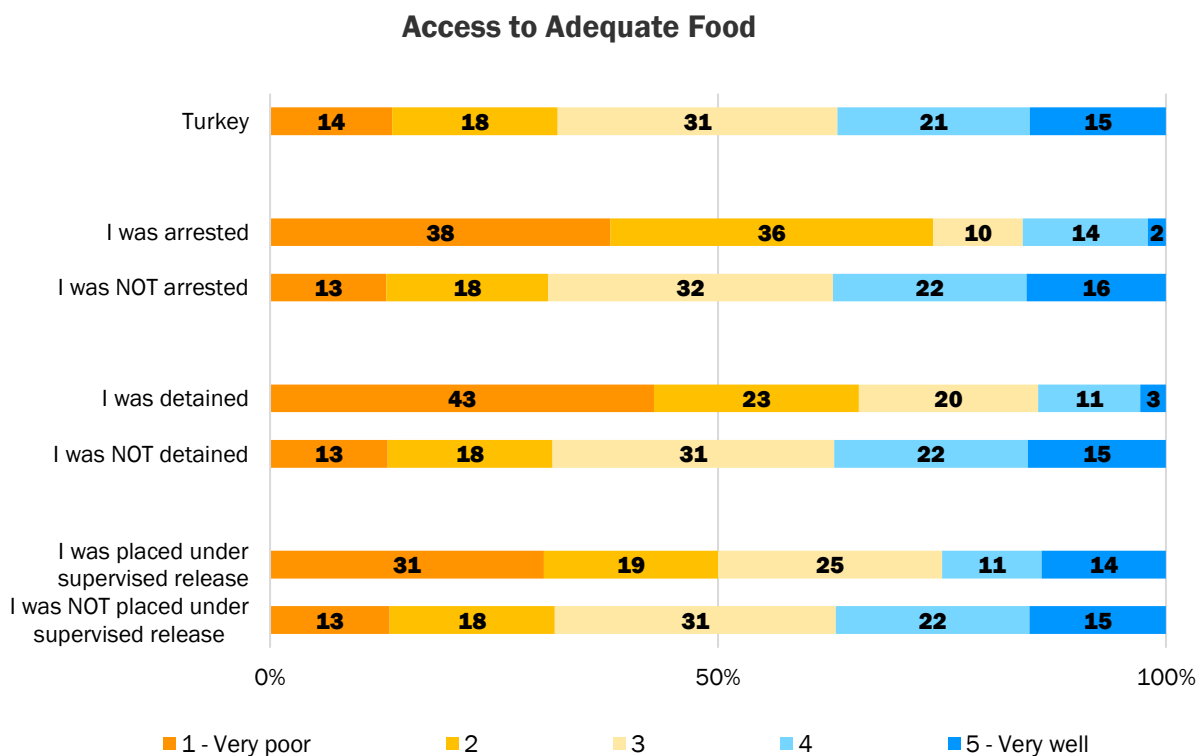
We saw that there was a difference in approach to communication and correspondence between those who had experienced arrest, detention and supervised release and those who had not as is the case in other matters. 70% of those who had been arrested before, 62% of those who had been detained, and 51% of those who had been placed under supervised release thought that communication and correspondence opportunities were poor or very poor. 41% of those who had not experienced either of these, on the other hand, were of the same opinion.



21% of the society said that prisoners' access to healthy and clean, adequate food was poor or very poor, while 24% thought that it was well or very well. The rate of non-responders was 37%.



While 32% of those who responded to this question thought that prisoners' access to adequate food was poor or very poor, those who indicated that it was well or very well was 36%.



Those who had been arrested, detained or placed under supervised release adopted a different attitude than those who had not in terms of access to prisoners' access to adequate food and generally stated that such opportunities were poor or very poor. 74% of those who had been arrested, 66% of those who had been detained and 50% of those who had been placed under supervised release indicated that prisoners' access to adequate food was poor or very poor.



2.4. Non-Responders to Questions on Prison Conditions

We had previously stated that the number of those who preferred not to respond to the six questions on prison conditions were quite large. It would, therefore, be useful to analyze those who did not respond to these questions in order to understand whether this fact was based on lack of information or avoidance.

Of the 3,285 interviewees, we saw that;

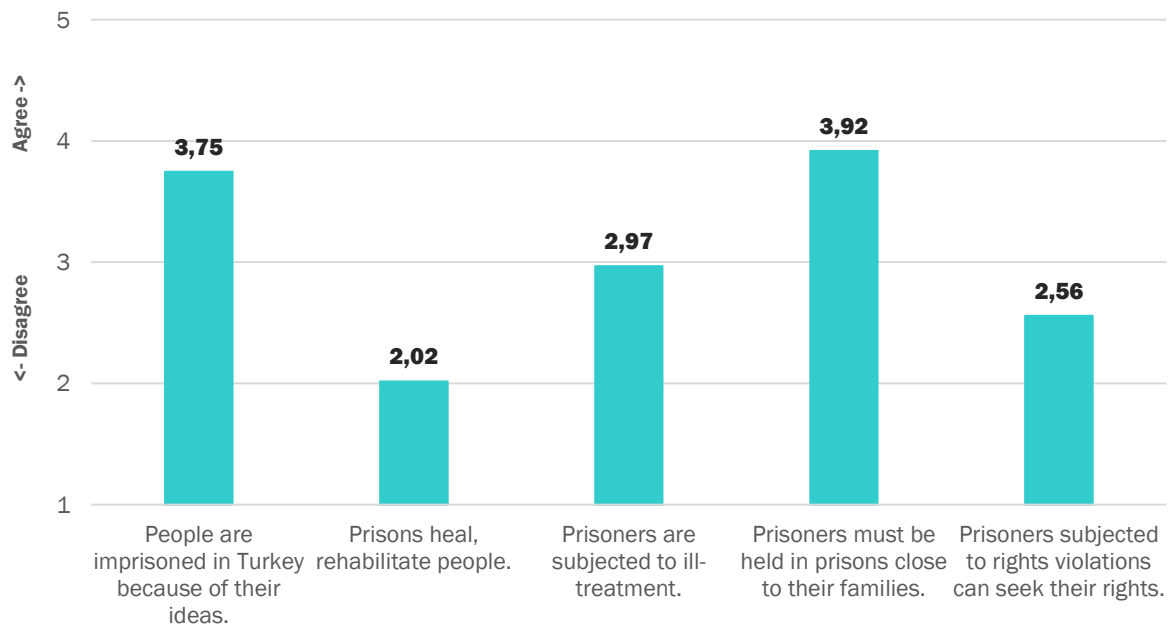
- 1,178 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Overall treatment of prisoners”
- 1,169 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Prisoners’ access to healthcare”
- 1,233 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Prisoners’ access to cultural and social rights”
- 1,302 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Cleanliness and hygiene in prisons”
- 1,211 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Prisoners’ access to communication-correspondence and information”
- 1,202 did not evaluate and respond to questions on “Prisoners’ access to adequate food.”

The same 950 interviewees did not respond to any of the above questions which reveals that 29% of the interviewees did not have an opinion on these matters.



2.5. Do prisons rehabilitate people?

Within the scope of overall perspective on prisons, issues like whether these centers function like correctional/rehabilitative spaces, repetition of crime after being released from prison when a criminal offense is mentioned and whether prisons could treat or heal individuals make up the content of many political debates. We, thus, wanted to identify perspectives on whether prisons rehabilitate prisoners within the framework of our study.

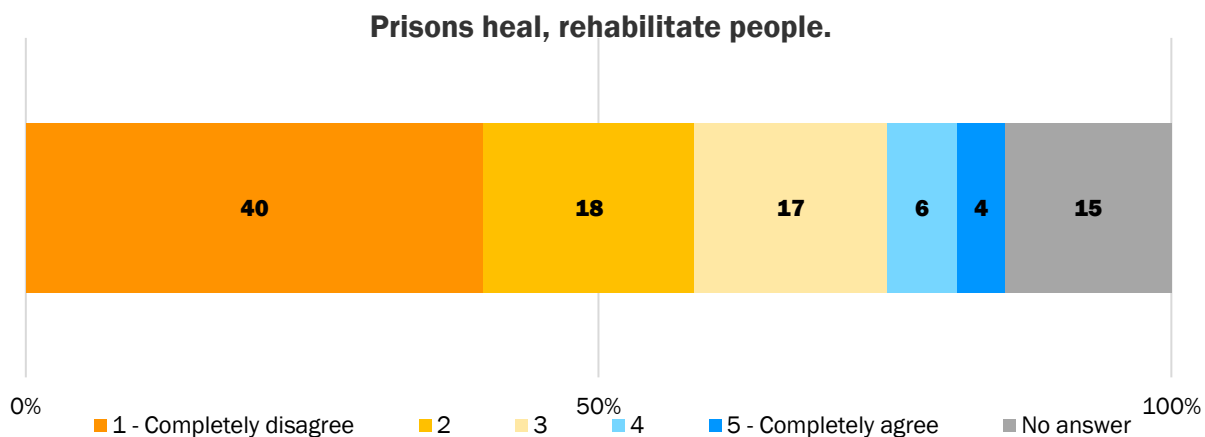


When we asked the participants to tell us how much they agreed with five sentences we read to them scoring these between 1 and 5, we saw that the public generally tended to disagree with the idea “Prisons heal, rehabilitate people.” (Mean 2.02)

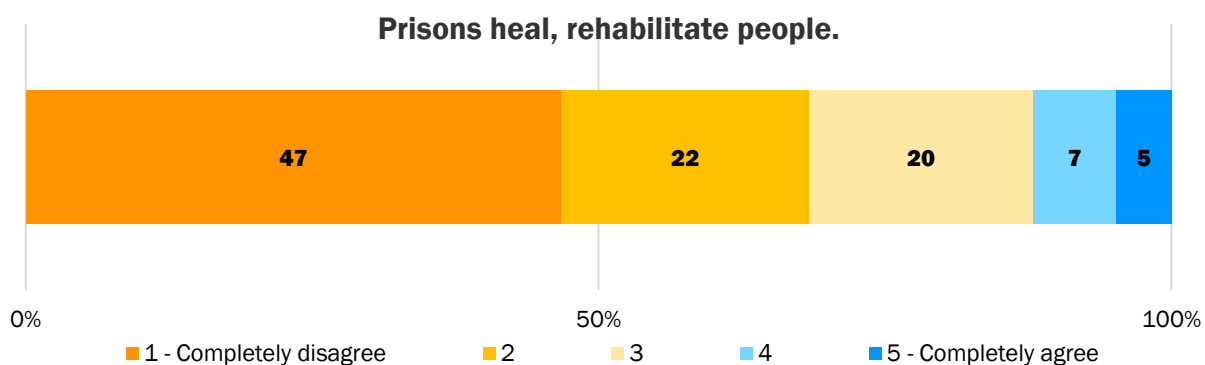
The idea that “People who are subjected to rights violations in prisons can seek/claim their rights” is one that people generally tended to disagree with. We saw that the mean figure for the tendency to agree with this idea by the society at large between 1 and 5 was 2.56.

We observed that the idea the society agreed with most was “Prisoners’ placement in prisons close to their families.” We can say that the mean figure for the society’s agreement with this idea was 3.92 over 5. We saw that the mean figure for people’s tendency to agree with the idea “People are imprisoned because of their ideas in Turkey” was 3.75 over 5.

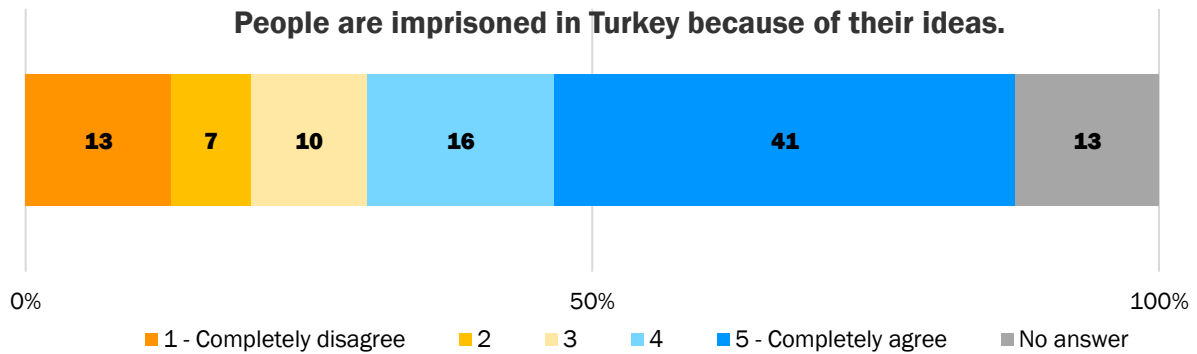
We can also state that the society at large tended to neither agree nor disagree with the statement “Prisoners are subjected to ill-treatment” which is a more specific issue. (Mean 2.97)



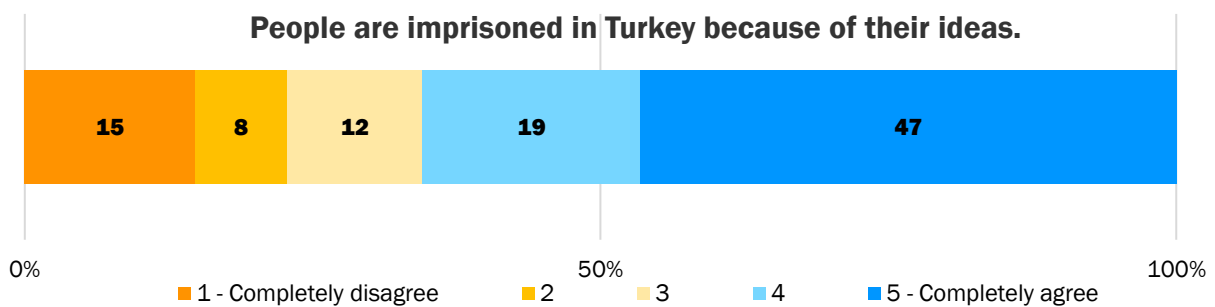
We had stated that the idea that prisons healed, rehabilitated people was one that the society generally disagreed with. When we analyzed opinions about this issue in detail, we saw that 58% of the society did not agree with it, 17% neither agreed nor disagreed with it, while 10% agreed with it. Non-responders to this question made up for 15% of the society.



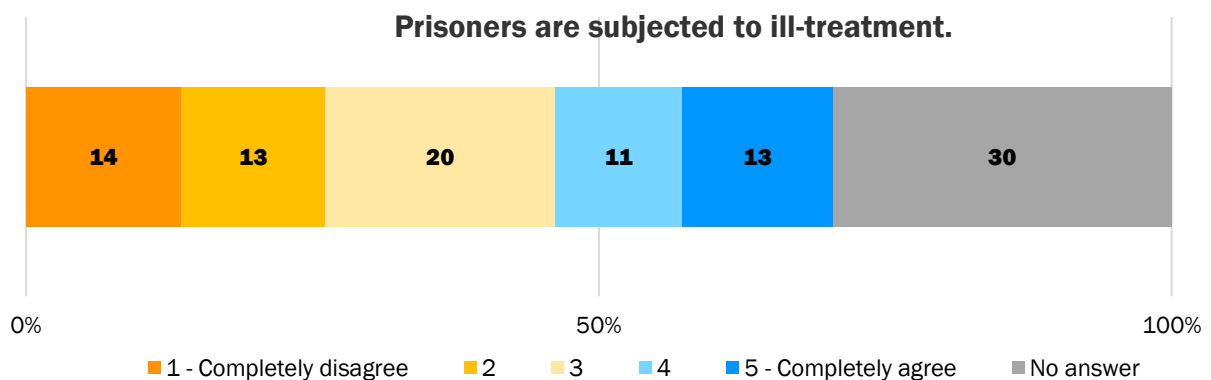
When the non-responders were excluded, we saw that the idea that prisons did not heal, rehabilitate people was prevalent at as high a rate as 69%. Only 12% of those who answered the question agreed with the idea that prisons healed, rehabilitated people.



57% of the society thought that people were imprisoned because of their ideas in Turkey, while 20% disagreed. The rate of non-responders to this question was 13%.

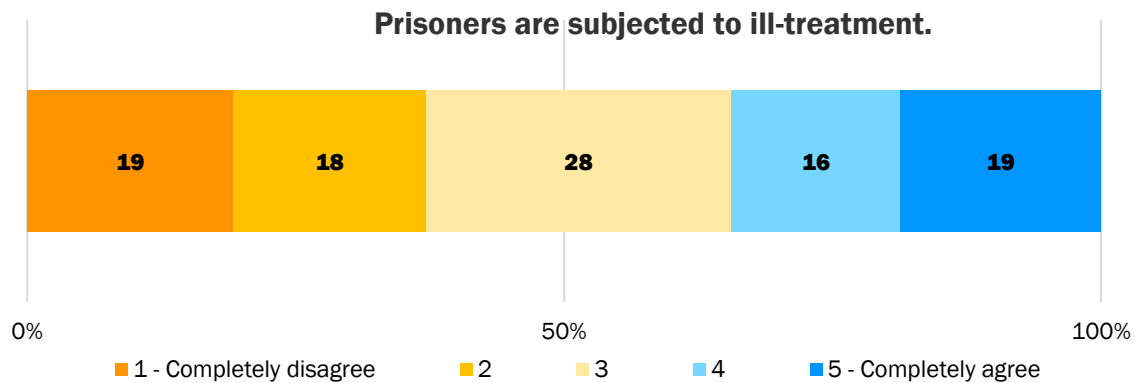


Among those who responded to this question the rate of those who agreed with the idea that people were imprisoned because of their ideas was 66%, while the rate of those who disagreed was 23%. Further, 12% of those who responded to the question stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposition.



The idea that prisoners were subjected to ill-treatment was one of the issues with no general social consensus. While 27% of the society thought that there was no such practice, 24% thought

that prisoners were subjected to ill-treatment. 30% of the society, on the other hand, did not respond to this question.



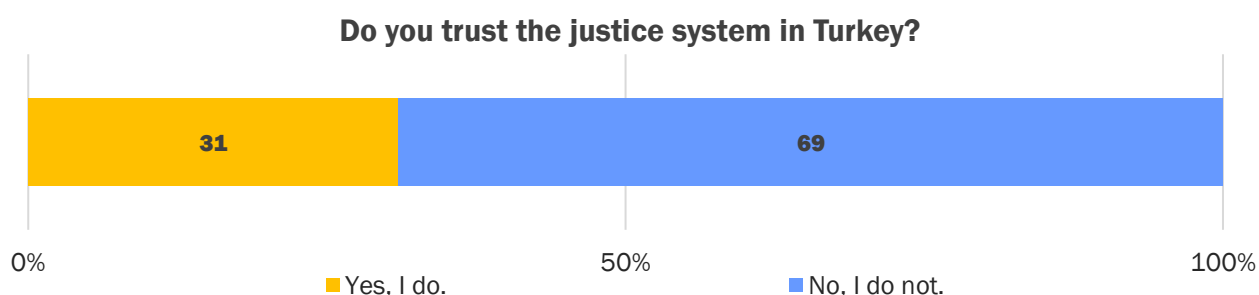
While 37% of those who answered this question indicated that they disagreed with the statement “Prisoners are subjected to ill-treatment,” 37% stated that they agreed. We also saw that 28% responded as “I neither agree nor disagree.”



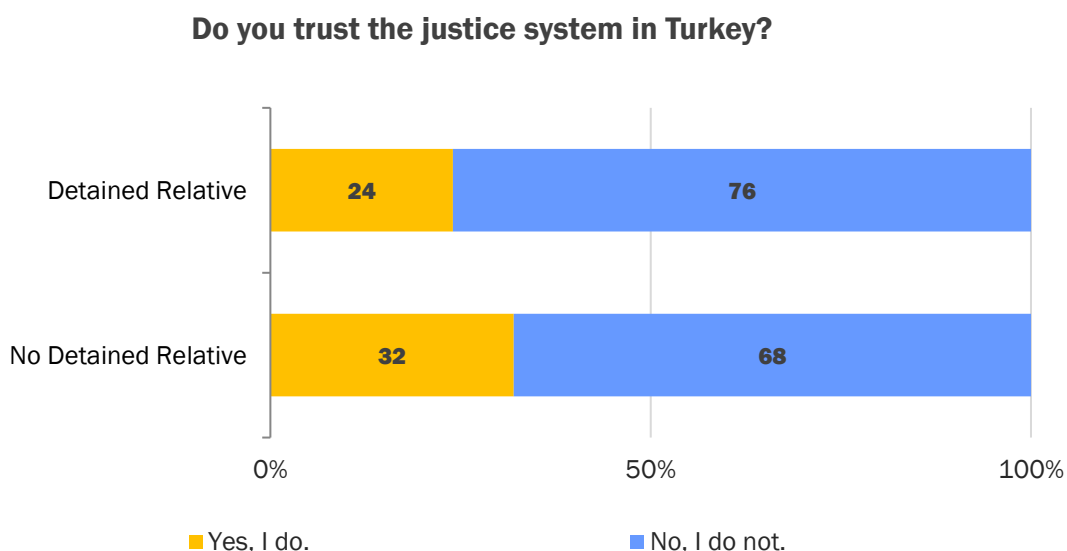
3. SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

3.1. Trust in the Justice System in Turkey

We asked the interviewees whether they trusted the justice system in Turkey, whether people were imprisoned because of their ideas in Turkey, and whether more people have been imprisoned in recent years in Turkey.

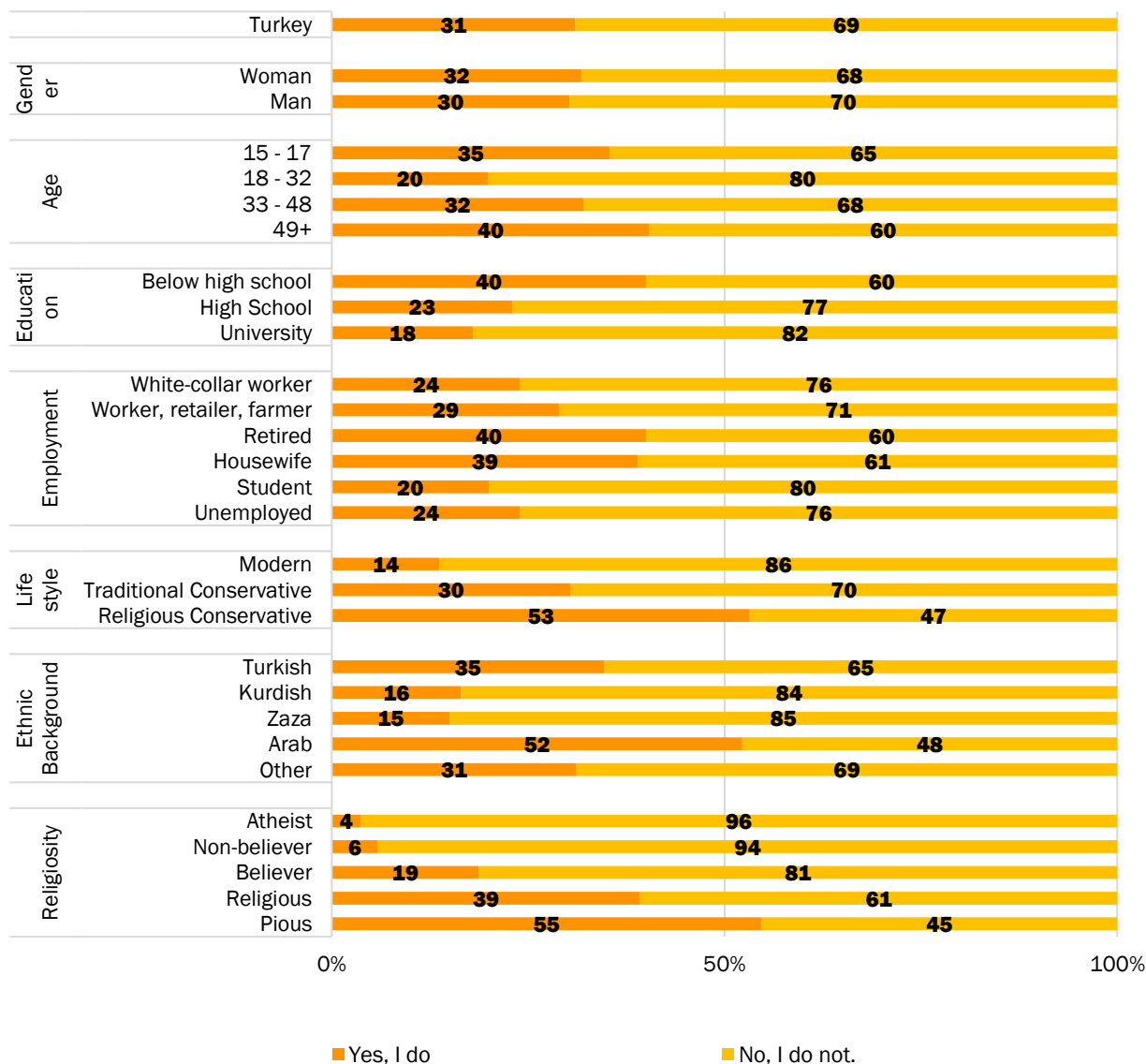


69% of the society indicated that they did not trust the justice system in Turkey, while 31% stated that they did.



We can argue that those whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had been detained before trust the justice system less than those who had no such experience. While 76% of those whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had been detained before did not trust the justice system, 68% of whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had not been detained before did not trust the justice system.

Do you trust the justice system in Turkey?

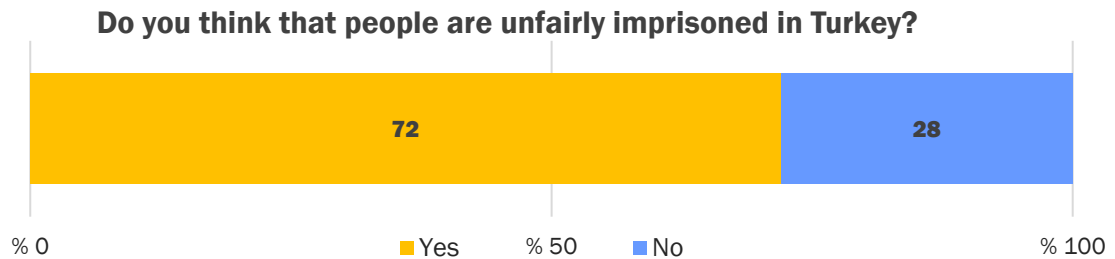


When we analyzed trust in the justice system in Turkey as per different demographic factors, we saw that the situations that made the most difference were religiosity and life style. We can argue that as level of faith and conservatism went up so did trust in the justice system. While only 14% of the moderns stated that they trusted the justice system, this rate went up to 30% among traditional conservatives and 53% among religious conservatives.

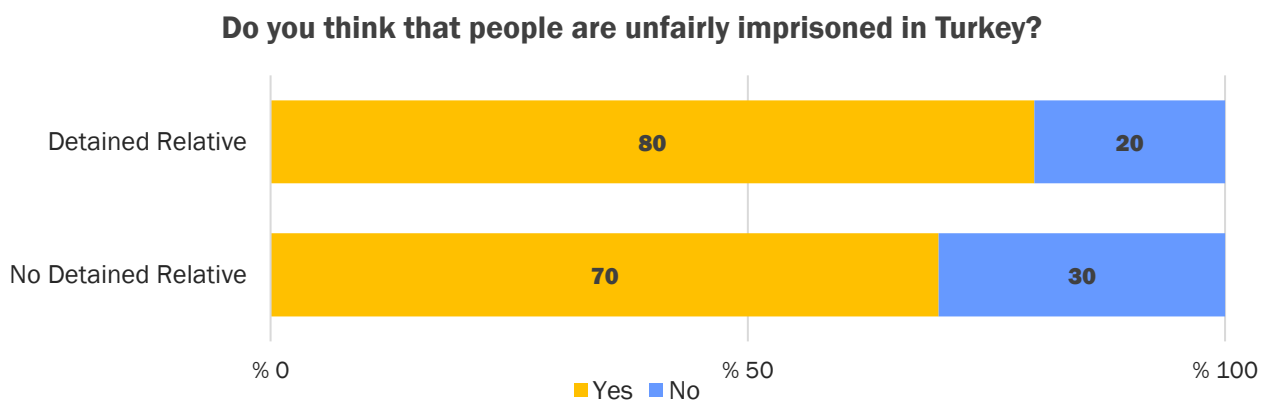
When we analyzed the data according to the level of religiosity, the rate of trust in the justice system among those who did all that was called for in their religion was 55% while this rate was merely 4% among atheists. The fact that differences of opinion between opposite groups in the society was this keen reveals that social polarization is on the rise.



3.2. Unfair Imprisonment



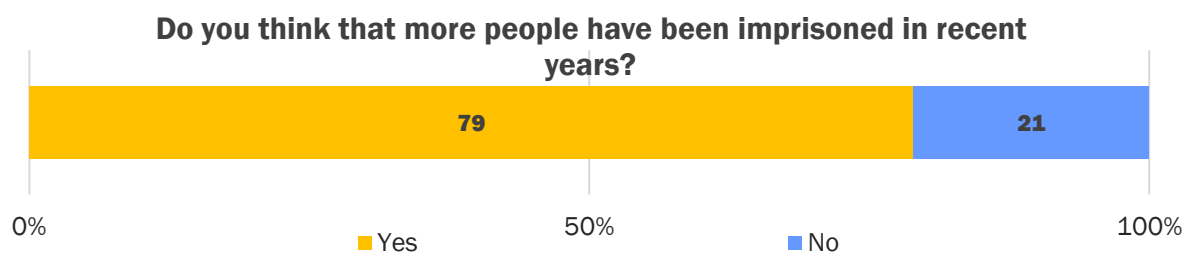
One of the most important causes of distrust in the justice system within the general public was the idea that people were unfairly imprisoned in Turkey. 72% of the society believe that people are unfairly imprisoned.



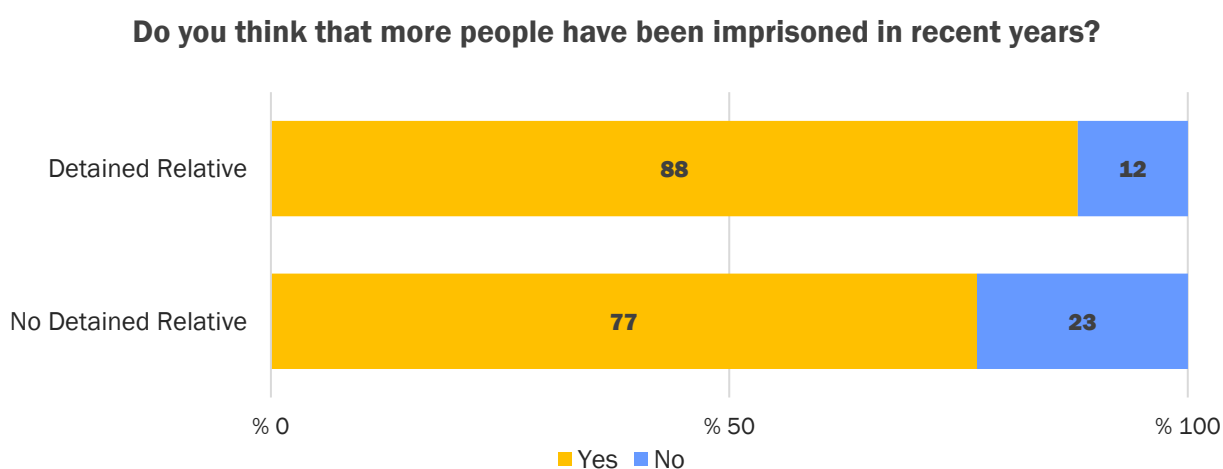
80% of those whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had been detained thought that people were imprisoned unfairly in Turkey. This rate was 70% among those who had no such experience.

3.3. Has the number of prisoners increased over the years?

After we asked the interviewees whether they themselves or a relative/friend of theirs had been arrested or detained, we asked them whether there has been an increase in the number of prisoners in Turkey especially in recent years.



79% of the interviewees stated that more people were imprisoned particularly in recent years, while 21% said that there was no such increase.



While 88% of those whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had been detained before believed that more people have been imprisoned in recent years, the rate of those were of the same opinion among those whose relatives/friends/acquaintances had not been detained before was 77%.

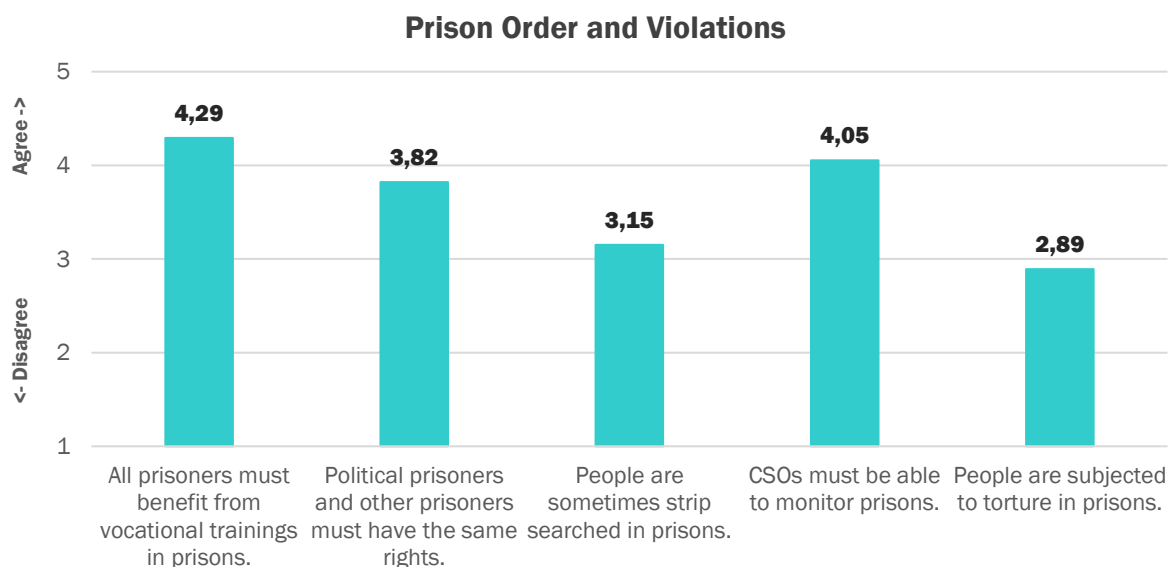
We can argue that generally those whose relatives/friends had been detained before are a bit more critical and distrustful of the justice system and legal processes in Turkey than those whose relatives/friends had not been detained before.

3.4. Perspectives on Strip Search and Torture

Disputes on “Strip search and ill-treatment in prisons” formed another base of our field research. Such dispute was put on the agenda by members of the parliament, who were not from the current ruling party but from the opposition political parties, and became a public debate in everyday life.



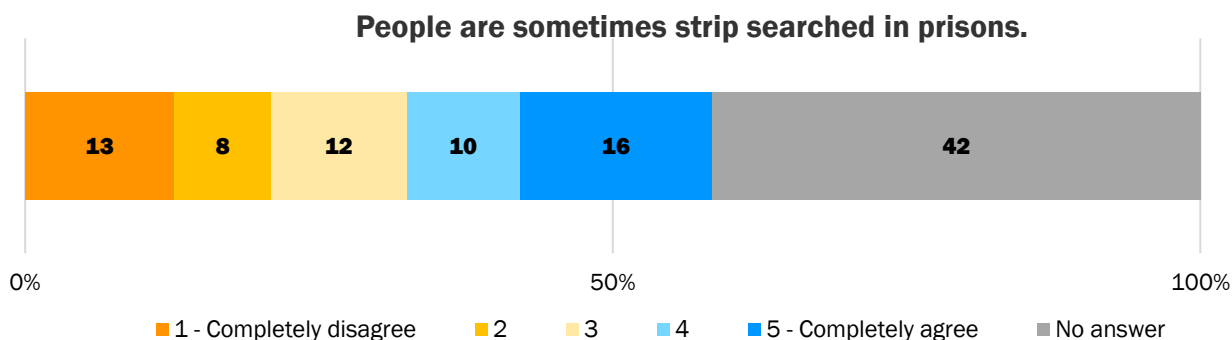
Although the rate of responses to questions posed under this heading was high, the distribution of the interviewees' responses revealed that they did not have much information about prison conditions or avoided commenting on such issues when it came to strip search and torture.



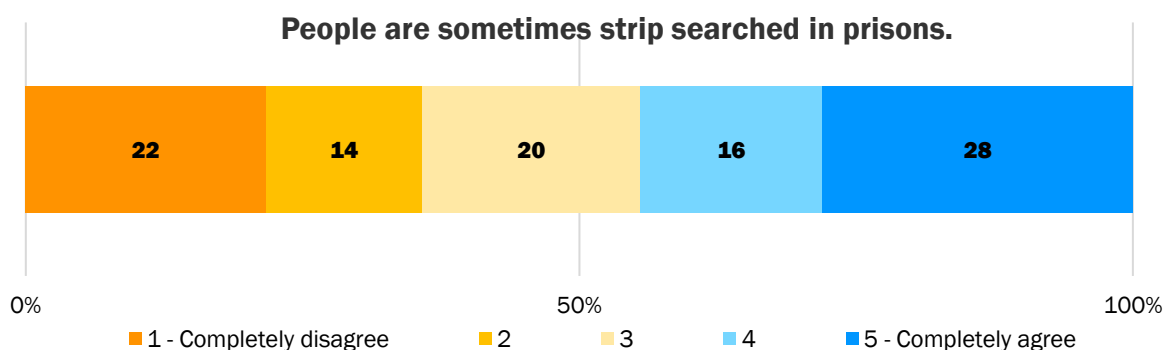
We asked the interviewees how much they agreed with the five statements we read to them by grading these between 1 and 5 in order to understand the society's overall conviction about order in prisons and violations. The responses to these questions revealed that the idea that prisoners should be treated more humanely and fairly was prevalent within the society.

We can also say that the idea "All prisoners should benefit from vocational trainings in prisons" without any discrimination was prevalent within the society (mean 4.29). Moreover, the idea that prisons should be available for the monitoring of civil society organizations (CSOs) was one that was generally agreed with and supported by the society (mean 4.05).

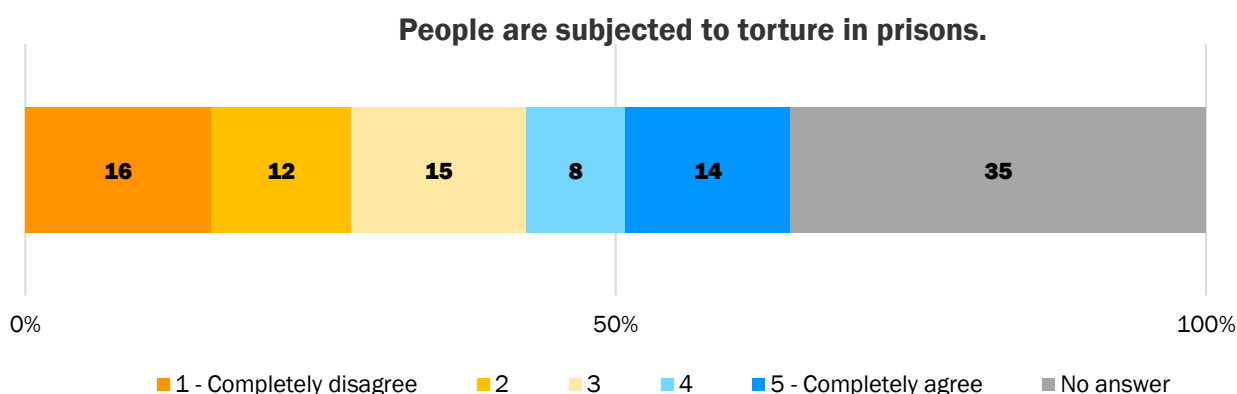
Strip search, which has often been voiced and has had quite wide media coverage recently, proves to be one of the issues that the society generally had no clear-cut idea and did not show any clear tendency to either agree or disagree with the fact that whether strip search was conducted or not (mean 3.15). Whether people were tortured in prisons is also another issue, just like strip search, that the society had not much information on or avoided expressing their opinions (mean 2.89).



While 26% of the society thought that people were strip searched in prisons, 21% disagreed. Non-responders on this issue accounted for 42% of the society.



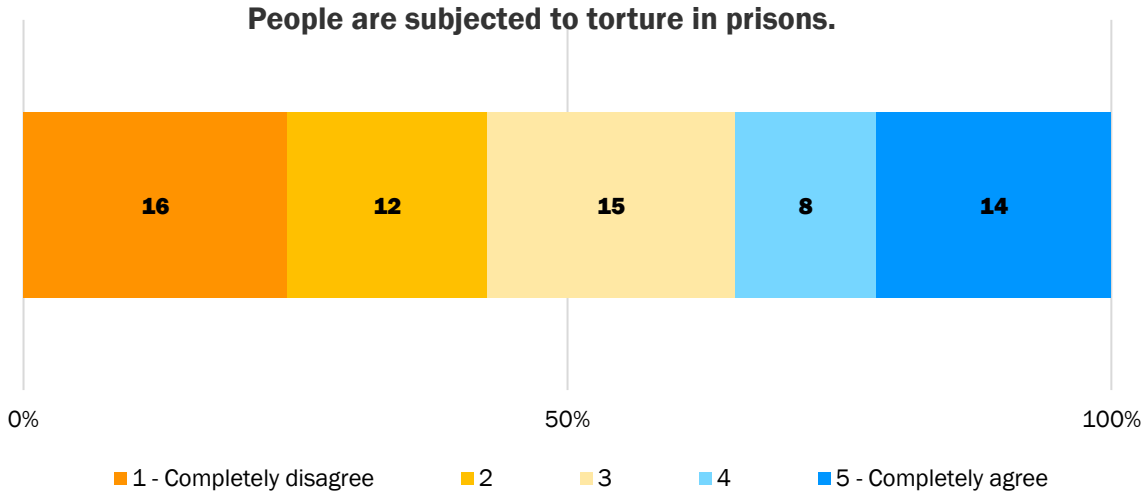
While 44% of those who responded to this question believed that people were strip searched in prisons, 36% disagreed. 20%, on the other hand, stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the idea that people were strip searched in prisons.



When we looked into ideas about torture, we saw that one in every three persons in the society did not respond to this question. 28% of the society stated that they disagreed with the argument



that people were subjected to torture in prisons, while 22% believed that people were subjected to torture in prisons.



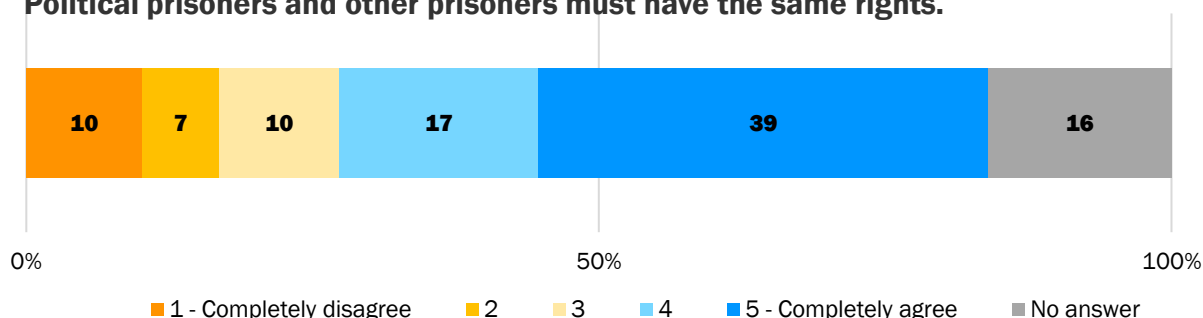
When we excluded the “no answer” option, we saw that 42% of the responders believed that people were not subjected to torture in prisons while 35% believed that people were tortured in prisons.

4. SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE ON DISCRIMINATION

4.1. Distinction between Political and Other Prisoners

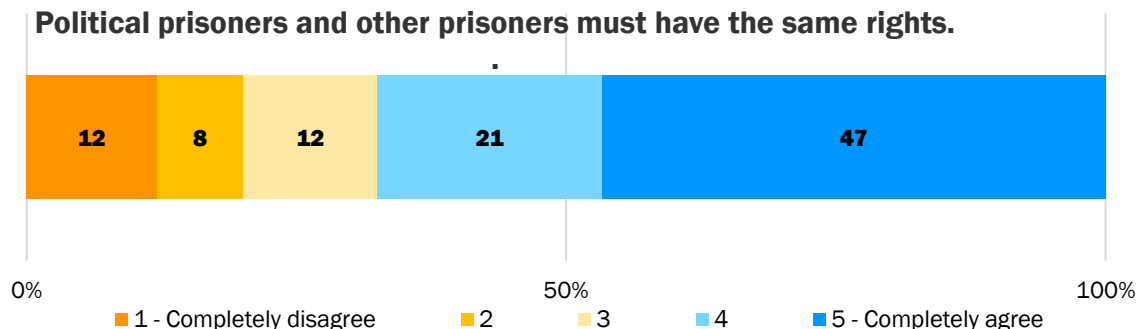
We asked the interviewees about what they thought about discrimination against political prisoners and rights violations along with their ideas about the need for political prisoners to have the same rights as other prisoners within the scope of another base of the study.

Political prisoners and other prisoners must have the same rights.



While 56% of the society believed that political prisoners should have the same rights as other prisoners, 17% of the society disagreed. The rate of those who did not respond to this question was 16%.

Political prisoners and other prisoners must have the same rights.

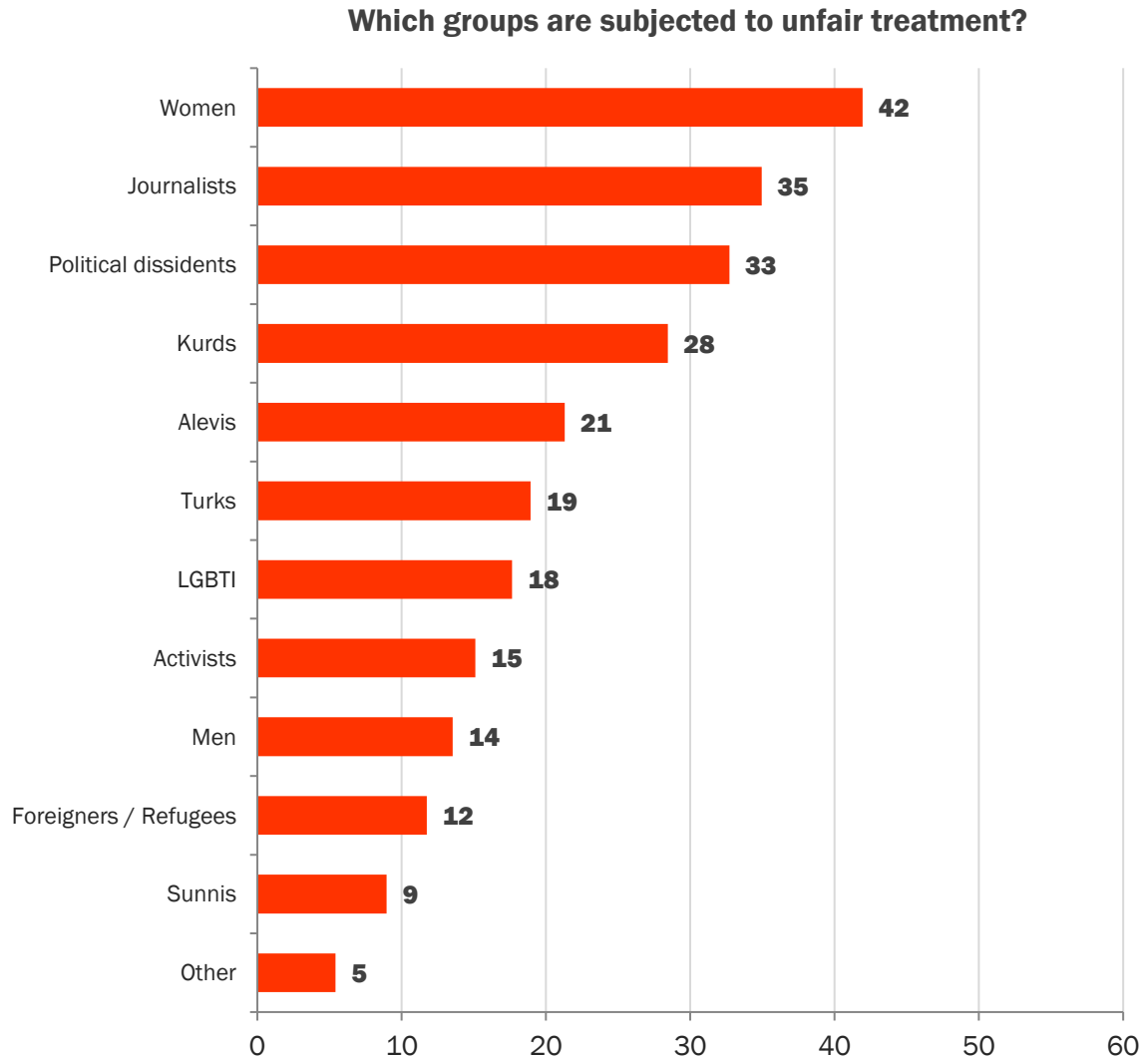


When we only looked into those who answered this question, it was seen that 68% percent of the interviewees believed that political prisoners should have the same rights as other prisoners while 20% disagreed.



4.2. Groups Subjected to Unfair Treatment the Most in Turkey

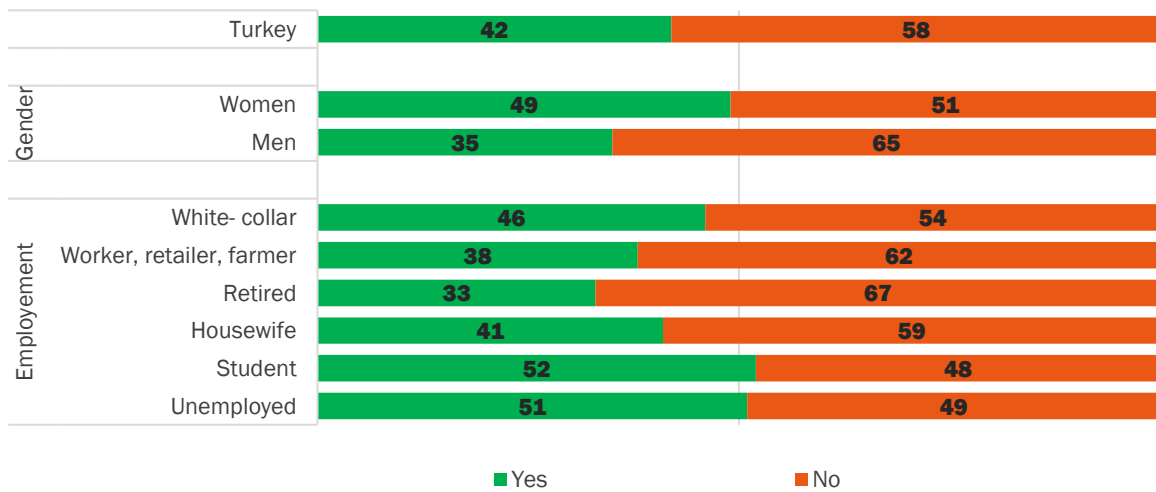
We asked the interviewees about their ideas on whether the justice system in Turkey was equitably applied to all citizens in order to avoid limiting the study to merely the justice system, conditions in prisons and prisoners as would be due in a comprehensive study.



We saw that women, journalists, political dissidents, Kurds and Alevis were respectively among the groups that the society in general believed to have been subjected to unfair treatment the most. 42% of the population in Turkey pointed to women as the group subjected to unfair treatment the most.

“Journalists” with 35% and “political dissidents” with 33% followed women. The group that the interviewees believed to have been subjected to unfair treatment the least was “Sunnis” with 9%.

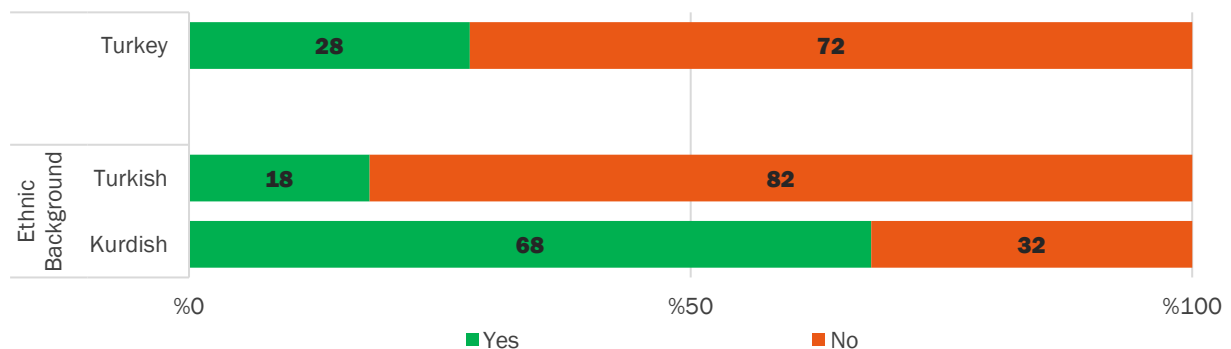
Are Women Subjected to Unfair Treatment?



Approaches to whether women were subjected to unfair treatment varied according to genders and employment statuses. While 49% of the women believed that women were subjected to unfair treatment, the rate of men who agreed with this opinion was 35%.

When this issue was studied as per professional clusters, we observed that 33% of the retired, 38% of workers, small business owners and farmers, 41% of housewives, 46% of white-collar workers, 51% of the unemployed and 52% of students believed that women were subjected to unfair treatment.

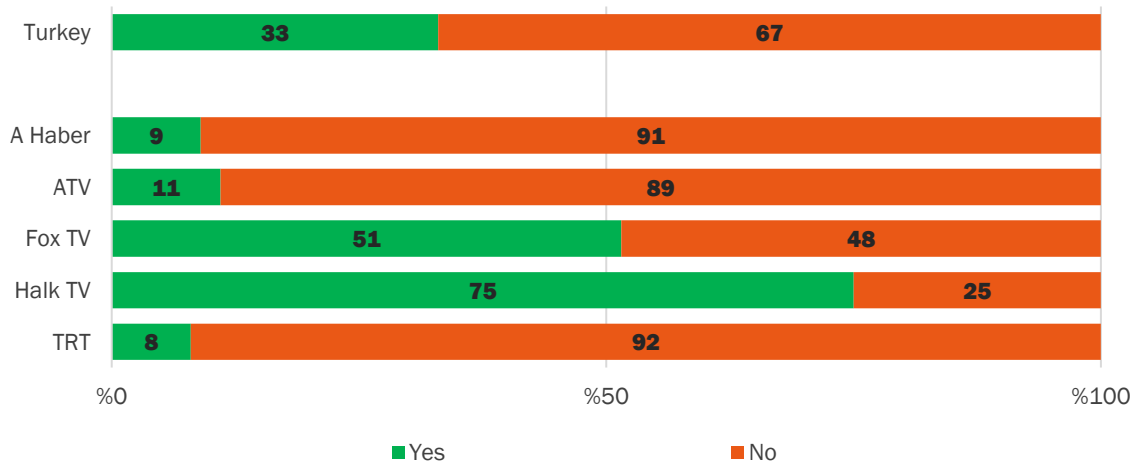
Are Kurds subjected to unfair treatment?



When we analyzed the opinions according to ethnic background on whether Kurds, the fourth group believed to have been subjected to unfair treatment with a 28% rate by the society at large, were treated unfairly we saw that Turks and Kurds had completely different opinions on this matter. While 68% of the Kurds believed that Kurds were subjected to unfair treatment, only 18% of Turks agreed with this argument.



Are political dissidents subjected to unfair treatment?



When we studied the general opinions of the society, we observed that journalists and political dissidents made up two of the three groups that were believed to have been subjected to unfair treatment the most. The impact of TV channels that people watched the news from is also quite important in order to understand the power of the media. We can argue that the opinions of people who watched the news on pro-government channels and those on dissident channels are polar opposites.

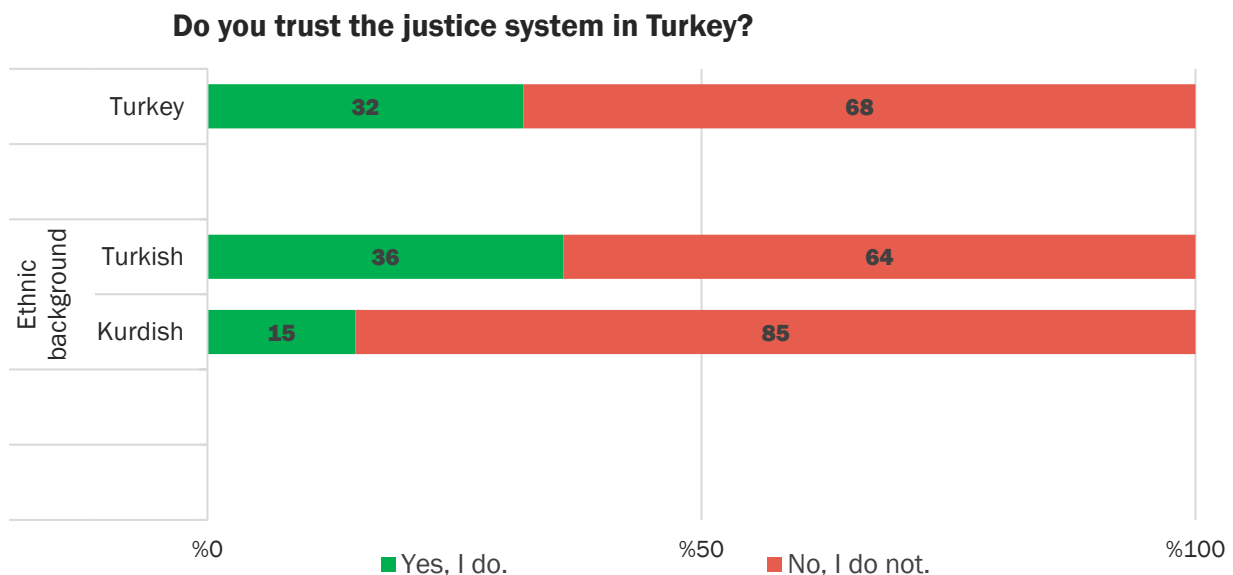
One in ten people who watched the news on A Haber, ATV or TRT believed that political dissidents were not subjected to unfair treatment. Yet 51% of those who watched the news on FOX TV and 75% of those who watched the news on Halk TV believed that political dissidents were subjected to unfair treatment.

5. SOCIAL TENDENCIES ON THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

It goes without saying that believing that prisoners are treated badly or well requires political consciousness or political atmosphere, maybe a family, one has already born into. Seen in this light, one can argue that almost each individual in the society has certain ideas based on a certain background. Many factors like religious faith, ethnic background and gender have significant impacts on our political views and sensitivities.

5.1. Ethnic Background

We see that there is a significant difference of opinion on trust in the justice system between Turks and Kurds in responses to the question “Do you trust the justice system in Turkey?”



We see that 85% of Kurds did not trust the justice system in Turkey, while 64% of Turks stated that they did not trust the justice system.

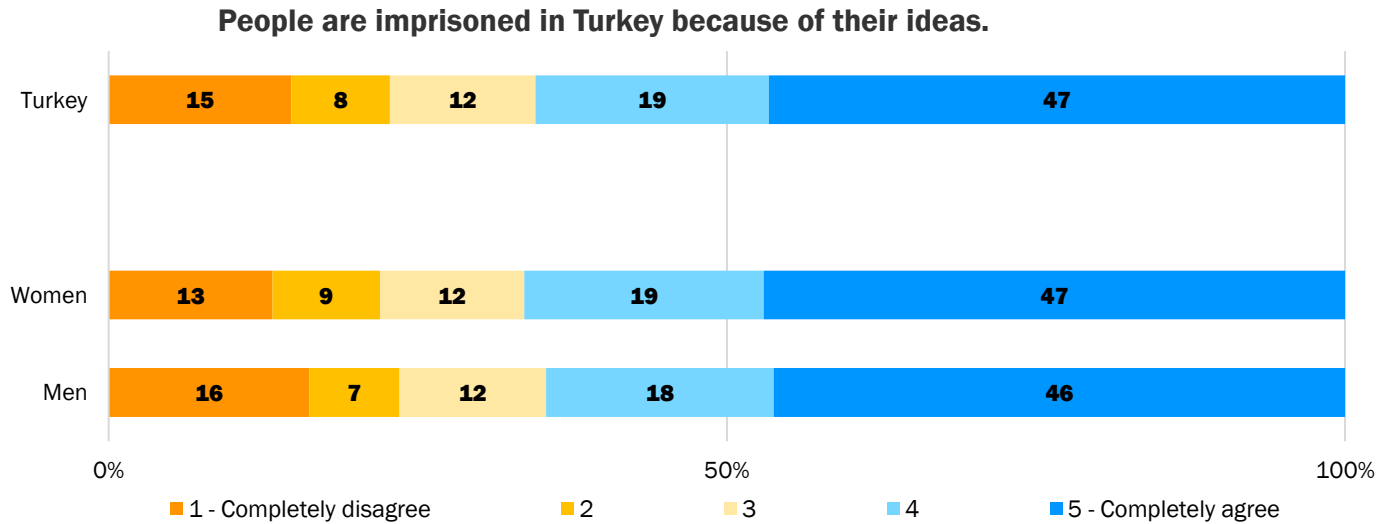
We had reported that 68% of Kurds believed that people from their own ethnic background were subjected to unfair treatment and the ethnic background that more often encountered penal systems was the Kurds. These two situations explain Kurds' distrust in justice.

5.2. Impact of Gender and Age

Gender is undoubtedly a factor that affects ideas about the justice system, penal system and incarceration conditions. The results of our study, however, revealed that gender did not shape ideas about many issues on its own. It would also be useful to take into account the age factor when analyzing ideas about the issues in question since particularly young women

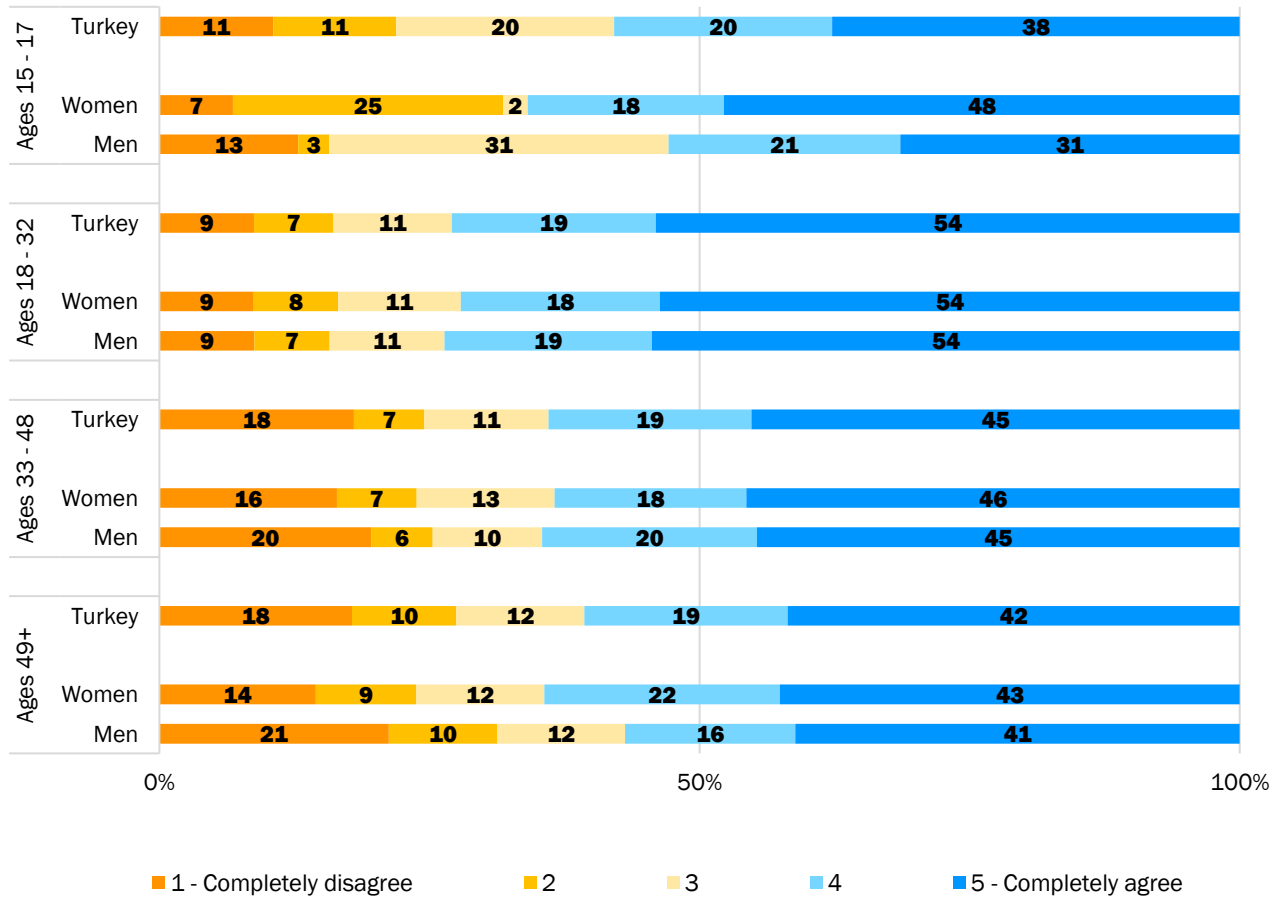


both have more awareness and raise awareness about social issues with the recent rise of the women's movement in Turkey.



When we first looked into how only gender affected ideas about the statement “People are imprisoned in Turkey because of their ideas,” we saw that women were a bit more inclined to agree with this statement than men did. While 66% of women stated that they agreed with this statement, 64% of men agreed. The rate of women who disagreed with the statement was 22%, while the rate for men was 23%.

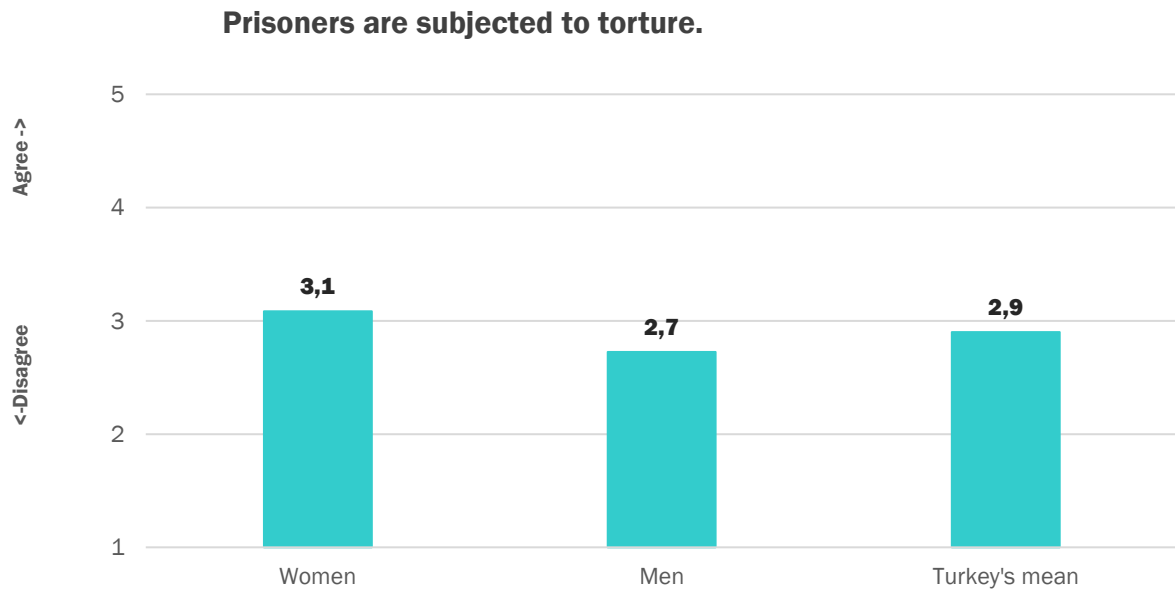
People are imprisoned in Turkey because of their ideas.



When we analyzed this data, which the gender factor was not able to explain on its own, taking into account the age factor, we saw that as the age went up tendency to agree with the statement went down. Yet the actual remarkable issue here was that women and men in the 18-32 and 33-48 age groups had a similar approach to the issue, while women in the 49+ age group had more conscious approach to the issue in comparison to men in the 49+ age group.

65% of women in the 49 and + age group thought people were imprisoned in Turkey because of their ideas, this rate went down to 57% for men in the 49 and + age group. The rate of those who disagreed with this idea was 23% and 31% for women and men respectively.

Such panorama shows us that awareness and sensitivity about social and political incidents have increased within the society in time and a more akin attitude between the ideas of women and men has started to form.

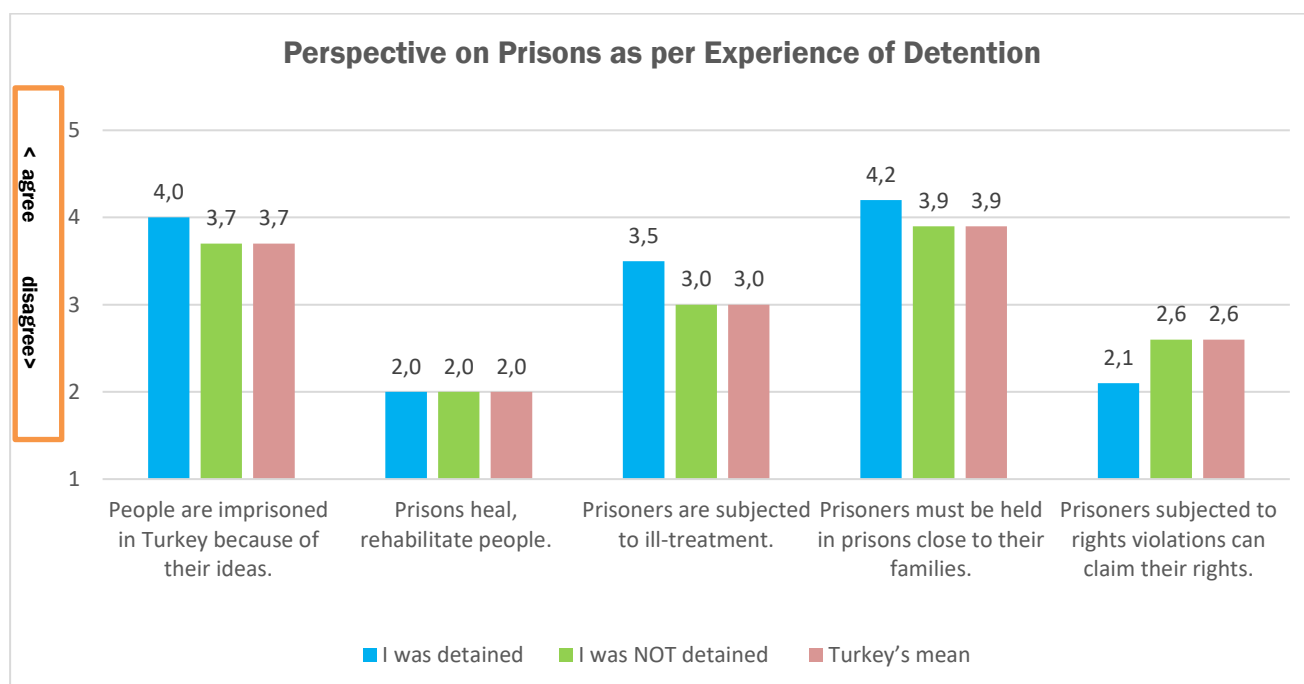


We saw, along with the above-mentioned situation, that the issue that women and men most disagreed with was whether people were subjected to torture in prisons. We also observed that women were more aware or were more inclined to agree with the statement “Prisoners are subjected to torture” when they were asked to state whether they agreed with the statement grading their response between 1 and 5 than men. While the mean figure for agreement with the statement among women was 3.1, it was 2.7 among men and the overall mean for Turkey was 2.9.



6. FORMER PRISONERS' PERSPECTIVE ON JUSTICE AND PENAL SYSTEMS

Answers by former prisoners among our interviewees varied in parallel with such experience. While persons who had been detained before agreed less with positive premises about prisons than those who had not been detained before, the former agreed more with negative premises about prisons. We also saw that the only premise that did not create a difference between the two groups was “Prisons rehabilitate, heal people.”



The fact that persons who had been detained before expressed more negative views on situations in prisons shows that prison conditions are not known well enough by the rest of the society and even if they are known people avoid voicing them in a radical manner. “Prisoners are subjected to ill-treatment” and “People subjected to rights violations in prisons can claim their rights” stand out as the issues that people who had been detained before and those who had not most disagreed with.

Persons who had been detained before were more inclined to think that prisoners were subjected to ill-treatment than those who had not. We observed that persons who had been detained before tended to agree with the idea that prisoners were subjected to ill-treatment at mean 3.5 between grades 1 and 5, while those who had not been detained before had the same mean with Turkey's (mean 3.0).



We also saw that persons who had been detained before agreed with the statement “People subjected to rights violations in prisons can seek their rights” less than those who had not been detained before. We can argue that both persons who had been detained before and those who had not do not generally agree with this statement. While the agreement mean for this statement within those who had been detained before was 2.0, the figure for those who had not been detained before was 2.6, which was the same for the overall Turkey mean.



7. STUDY INFO

7.1. Overall Description of the Study

The study, on which this report was based, was conducted by KONDA Research and Consultancy Inc. for the Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği -İHD).

The study was conducted between 18 and 20 June 2021 through telephone interviews with individuals who had consented to be a part of KONDA's **Mediated Panel**. The panelists volunteered to be a part of KONDA's panel system. Age and center quotas were implemented while collecting data.

7.2. Sampling

The study was designed and conducted in order to ascertain and follow-up the tendencies and changes in the study subjects' preferences who would represent adult population over 15 years of age in Turkey. The margin of error in the study findings was +/- 1.43 at the 95% confidence interval, while it was +/- 1.88 at the 99% confidence interval.

Sampling was done by layering data on the 24 June 2018 general election results from neighborhoods and villages and on population sizes and education levels of neighborhoods and villages based on data collected from the Address-Based Population Registration System. Residential areas were first differentiated as rural/urban/metropolitan and the sampling was determined based on 12 regions.

3,285 persons in 383 districts including the central districts of 68 cities were interviewed through telephone within the scope of the study.

	Level 1 (12 regions)	Study Cities
1	İstanbul	İstanbul
2	Western Marmara	Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Edirne, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ, Kocaeli
3	Aegean	Afyonkarahisar, Aydın, Denizli, İzmir, Kütahya, Manisa, Muğla, Uşak
4	Eastern Marmara	Bilecik, Bolu, Bursa, Düzce, Eskişehir, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova
5	Western Anatolia	Ankara, Karaman, Konya
6	Mediterranean	Adana, Antalya, Hatay, Isparta, Kahramanmaraş, Mersin, Osmaniye
7	Central Anatolia	Aksaray, Kayseri, Kırşehir, Muş, Nevşehir, Niğde, Sivas, Yozgat
8	Western Black Sea	Amasya, Çorum, Karabük, Kastamonu, Samsun, Sinop, Tokat, Zonguldak
9	Eastern Black Sea	Artvin, Giresun, Ordu, Rize, Trabzon
10	Northeastern Anatolia	Ağrı, Erzincan, Erzurum
11	Mideastern Anatolia	Bitlis, Hakkari, Malatya, Van
12	Southeastern Anatolia	Adıyaman, Batman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Şırnak



8. ALL ANSWER DISTRIBUTIONS

8.1. Subject Profiles

Interviewee gender	Percent
Women	50.0
Men	50.0
Total	100.0

How old are you?	Percent
15-17 years of age	4.0
18 - 32 years of age	32.0
33 - 48 years of age	32.0
49+ years of age	32.0
Total	100.0

Your education level, what is the last school you graduated from?	Percent
Illiterate	4.0
Literate without a diploma	4.0
Elementary school graduate	26.0
Elementary / Secondary school graduate	18.0
High school graduate	32.0
University graduate	16.0
M.A. / M.Sc. / Ph.D.	1.0
Total	100.0

Your education level, what is the last school you graduated from? (clustered)	Percent
Below high school	51.0
High school	32.0
University	16.0
Total	100.0



Did you work at a job to earn money last week? If so, what is your profession?	Percent
Civil servant	4.0
Private sector	4.0
Worker	15.0
Retailer	7.0
Merchant / businessman	1.0
Self-employed	1.0
Farmer, agriculturalist, stockbreeder	2.0
Employed, other	9.0
Retiree	10.0
Housewife	28.0
Student	12.0
Unemployed	6.0
Unable to work (disabled, elderly, ill, etc.)	1.0
Total	100.0

Did you work at a job to earn money last week? If so, what is your profession? (grouped)	Percent
White-collar employee	10.0
Worker, retailer, farmer	33.0
Retiree	10.0
Housewife	28.0
Student	12.0
Unemployed	7.0
Total	100.0

How many people live in this house / residence (including children)?	Percent
1-2 people	21.0
3-5 people	67.0
6-8 people	11.0
9 and more people	1.0
Total	100.0

Where did you grow up?	Percent
Village	33.0
Town/District	21.0
City	21.0
Metropolis	25.0
Total	100.0

Which one of the below do you consider yourself to be a part of in terms of LIFE STYLE?	Percent
Modern	31.0
Traditional Conservative	43.0
Religious Conservative	27.0
Total	100.0

We are all citizens of the Republic of Turkey but we may come from different ethnic backgrounds. What do you think or feel your identity is?	Percent
Turkish	77.0
Kurdish	17.0
Zaza	2.0
Arab	2.0
Other	2.0
Total	100.0

Which one of the below is the religion and sect you feel you belong to?	Percent
Sunni (Hanafi or Shafii) Muslim	90.0
Alevi Muslim	6.0
Other Muslim	1.0
Other	3.0
Total	100.0

Which one of the below do you identify with in terms of religiosity?	Percent
Atheist	3.0
Non-believer	3.0
Believer	33.0
Religious	52.0
Pious	9.0
Total	100.0

Which social media platforms do you use?	Percent
Facebook	52.0
Twitter	23.0
WhatsApp	88.0
YouTube	54.0
Instagram	64.0
TikTok	7.0
Other	5.0
I surf the internet but I do not use social media.	2.0
I never surf the internet.	7.0



Which TV channel do you prefer to watch the news?	Percent
I do not follow the news on TV	11.0
I do not watch TV	4.0
I do not follow the news	6.0
A Haber	9.0
ATV	9.0
CNN Türk	3.0
Fox TV	31.0
Haber Türk	2.0
Halk TV	3.0
Kanal 7	1.0
Kanal D	2.0
NTV	2.0
Show TV	6.0
Star TV	1.0
TRT	9.0
Ulusal Kanal	0.0
Other channels	1.0
Total	100.0

Do you have a car that belongs to this household?	Percent
Yes	56.0
No	44.0
Total	100.0

What is the monthly total income of your household? What is the average income of your household including all earnings by all members?	Percent
2000 TL and less	6.0
2001 - 3000 TL	16.0
3001 - 5000 TL	34.0
5001 - 8000 TL	29.0
8001 - 10000 TL	5.0
10001 TL and more	10.0
Total	100.0

Economic classes	Percent
Lower income	22.0
Lower middle class	25.0
New middle class	34.0
Upper income	19.0
Total	100.0

Type of residence	Percent
Shanty house / Apartment without external plastering	1.0
Detached, traditional house	25.0
Apartment flat	60.0
In an apartment complex	14.0
Very luxurious building, villa	1.0
Total	100.0

8.2. Perception and Information on Prisons

Which one of the below happened to a relative/friend of yours within the last five years?	Percent
Arrest	14.0
Detention	16.0
Supervised release	10.0

Which one of the below happened to you within the last five years?	Percent
Arrest	1.8
Detention	1.2
Supervised release	1.2

Do you trust the justice system in Turkey?	Percent
Yes, I do.	31.0
No, I do not.	69.0
Total	100.0

Do you think that people are unfairly imprisoned in Turkey?	Percent
Yes	71.9
No	28.1
Total	100.0



Which group or groups do you think are subjected to unfair treatment?	Percent
Turks	19.0
Kurds	28.0
Political dissidents	33.0
Journalists	35.0
Alevis	21.0
Sunnis	9.0
Women	42.0
Men	14.0
LGBTI	18.0
Activists	15.0
Foreigners – refugees	12.0
Other	5.0

Overall treatment of prisoners	Percent
1 – Very bad	18.0
2	21.0
3	35.0
4	17.0
5 – Very well	9.0
Total	100.0

Healthcare services for prisoners	Percent
1 – Very poor	13.0
2	19.0
3	30.0
4	24.0
5 – Very well	13.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners' access to cultural and social rights	Percent
1 – Very poor	19.0
2	24.0
3	30.0
4	16.0
5 – Very well	11.0
Total	100.0

Cleanliness and hygiene in prisons	Percent
1 – Very poor	19.0
2	25.0
3	30.0
4	15.0
5 – Very well	10.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners' access to communication-correspondence and information	Percent
1 – Very poor	17.0
2	24.0
3	30.0
4	1.0
5 – Very well	12.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners' access to adequate food	Percent
1 – Very poor	14.0
2	18.0
3	31.0
4	21.0
5 – Very well	15.0
Total	100.0

Do you think that more people have been imprisoned in recent years?	Percent
Yes	79.0
No	21.0
Total	100.0



People are imprisoned in Turkey because of their ideas.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	13.0
2	7.0
3	10.0
4	16.0
5 – Completely agree	41.0
No answer	13.0
Total	100.0

Prisons heal, rehabilitate people.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	40.0
2	18.0
3	17.0
4	6.0
5 – Completely agree	4.0
No answer	15.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners are subjected to ill-treatment.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	14.0
2	13.0
3	20.0
4	11.0
5 – Completely agree	13.0
No answer	30.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners must be held in prisons close to their families.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	9.0
2	5.0
3	10.0
4	20.0
5 – Completely agree	41.0
No answer	14.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners subjected to rights violations can seek their rights.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	22.0
2	15.0
3	16.0
4	10.0
5 – Completely agree	9.0
No answer	28.0
Total	100.0

All prisoners must benefit from occupational trainings in prisons.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	4.0
2	4.0
3	9.0
4	19.0
5 – Completely agree	55.0
No answer	9.0
Total	100.0

Political prisoners and other prisoners must have the same rights.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	10.0
2	7.0
3	10.0
4	17.0
5 – Completely agree	39.0
No answer	16.0
Total	100.0

People are sometimes strip searched in prisons.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	13.0
2	8.0
3	12.0
4	10.0
5 – Completely agree	16.0
No answer	42.0
Total	100.0



Prisons must be available for civil society organizations' monitoring.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	5.0
2	4.0
3	12.0
4	18.0
5 – Completely agree	40.0
No answer	21.0
Total	100.0

Prisoners are subjected to torture.	Percent
1 – Completely disagree	16.0
2	12.0
3	15.0
4	8.0
5 – Completely agree	14.0
No answer	35.0
Total	100.0

DICTIONARY OF TERMS

All findings in barometer reports are based on questions posed to interviewees in face-to-face surveys within the scope of field research. Some questions and options are afterwards shortened or simplified and expressed in the report in terms used in everyday language. For instance, the report uses the term “believer” for a person who indicated that he/she was a “believer but cannot quite do what religion requires” to the question how religious they thought they were. This section was prepared for both first-time readers of a barometer report and those who need definitions for the terms used. The first table incorporates terms and their definitions followed by others that present question and answer texts providing the basis of these terms.

	DEFINITION
Alevi Muslim:	A person who identifies themselves / their sect as Alevi Muslim
Lower-Middle Class:	Segment with income per capita within the middle 60% but does not own a car
Lower Class:	Segment in the 20% with the lowest income per capita
Arab:	A person who identifies their own ethnic background as Arab
Head-scarved:	A person who states that they wear a head scarf or a man who states that his wife wears a head scarf
Burqa:	A person who states that they wear a burqa or a man who states that his wife wears a burqa
Religious:	A religious person who tries to do what the religion requires
Religious Conservative:	A person who identifies their own life style as religious conservative
Traditional Conservative:	A person who identifies their own life style as traditional conservative
Believer:	A person who believes in a religion but cannot quite do what religion requires
Non-believer:	A person who does not quite believe in what religion requires
Urban:	Residential areas with a population of more than 4,000 (different than the administrative definition)
Rural:	Residential areas with a population of less than 4,000 (different than the administrative definition)
Kurdish:	A person who identifies their own background as Kurdish
Metropolis:	Residential areas along the borders of integrated city centers of 15 cities with the highest population (different than the administrative definition)
Modern:	A person who identifies their life style as modern
Pious:	A religious person who does all that is required by religion
Sunni Muslim:	A person who identifies themselves / their sect as Sunni Muslim
With Hijab:	A person who states that they wear a hijab or a man who states that his wife wears a hijab
Turkish:	A person who identifies their own background as Turkish
Upper Class:	Segment in the 20% with the highest income per capita
New Middle Class:	Segment with income per capita within the middle 60% and owns a car
Zaza:	A person who identifies their own background as Zaza



8.3. Questions and Data for the Terms

Which one of the three listed below do you consider yourself to be a part of in terms of life style?

Modern

Traditional Conservative

Religious Conservative

We are all citizens of the Republic of Turkey but we may come from different ethnic backgrounds. What do you think or feel your identity is?

Turkish

Kurdish

Zaza

Arab

Other

Which one of the below do you identify with in terms of religiosity?

Someone who does not quite believe in what religion requires

Someone who is a believer but cannot quite do what religion requires

Someone who is religious and tries to do what religion requires

Someone who is religious and does all that is required by religion

Which one is the religion and sect you feel you belong to?

Sunni Muslim

Alevi Muslim

Other

Residential Code (Data from sampling)

Rural

Urban

Metropolis

Do you or your spouse cover your head when you go out? How do you cover your head?

None

Head scarf

Hijab

Burqa

Single man

Economic classes (Determined by using the number of persons in the household, household income, and car ownership)

Lower class

Lower-middle class

New middle class

Upper class



1986

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