Turkish Perceptions of the European Union

2022
Research Method

❖ Field research was carried out between March 2 to 26, 2022 with 2180 participants from urban and rural areas of 27 provinces representing the 18+ population of Turkey, via face-to-face interviews.

❖ The study’s margin of error is 2 percent, based on the simple random sampling method.

❖ Field research was carried out by the Infakto RW.
Foreign Policy
When you think of international relations in the broadest context, which country do you consider to be Turkey’s most important partner?

The Most Important Partner (2 Responses)

- **Azerbaijan**: 47.2% 46.1%
- **Qatar**: 18.8% 9.8%
- **Germany**: 15.4% 13.5%
- **Russia**: 18.6% 13.8%
- **Pakistan**: 6.1% 6.8%
- **USA**: 6.0% 6.6%
- **China**: 3.8% 3.6%
- **None**: 17.6% 10.1%

"When you think of international relations in the broadest context, which country do you consider to be Turkey’s most important partner?"
“Which country or international community is the biggest threat to Turkey’s national interests according to your opinion?”

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Opinions of Leaders (Percentage of «Positive» Answers)

“How positive is your opinion of the following leaders?”

- German Chancellor Angela Merkel/ Olaf Scholz: 13.3% (2021), 10.7% (2022)
- President of Russia Vladimir Putin: 9.6% (2021), 4.9% (2022)
- President of France Emmanuel Macron: 4.7% (2021), 4.0% (2022)
- US President Joe Biden: 5.2% (2021), 3.4% (2022)
- Prime Minister of Israel Naftali Bennett: 2.4% (2021), 1.0% (2022)
Turkey’s Role in the International Arena (2 Answers)

“I will now read you specific future roles Turkey could play in the international arena. Which role do you think is the most appropriate for Turkey to play? Which is the second most appropriate role?”

An economically developed country
A politically influential country
A militarily influential country
A country where citizens of other countries are willing to live
A model country for the Turkic Republics
A model country for Muslim countries
Other
None
Whom Should Turkey Cooperate Most Closely with on International Issues?

«Among the countries that I will read to you, with which of them should Turkey cooperate most closely on international issues?»

- Countries of the European Union: 33.1% (Overall), 44.4% (18-24)
- China: 6.8% (Overall), 5.9% (18-24)
- United States of America: 4.7% (Overall), 4.9% (18-24)
- Russia: 5.6% (Overall), 4.9% (18-24)
- All: 21.1% (Overall), 21.8% (18-24)
- None, should act alone: 24.6% (Overall), 21.8% (18-24)
- Don’t know / No answer: 4.1% (Overall), 2.6% (18-24)

*Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022*
Which Countries Should Turkey Cooperate Most Closely with on International Issues?

“Among the countries I mention, which should Turkey cooperate most closely on international issues?”
“In general, which leadership would yield better results for the majority of humanity in solving global problems?”
The Best Way to Ensure Peace...

“Some people believe the best way to ensure peace is primarily military force, while others think the best way to ensure peace is to resort to negotiations for resolving disputes. Which one of these views resonates with you the most?”

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Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022

- **Military force**: 39.1% (2021) vs. 34.0% (2022)
- **Negotiations**: 56.5% (2021) vs. 63.9% (2022)
- **DK/NA**: 4.4% (2021) vs. 2.1% (2022)
The Role Turkey Should Play in Russia’s War Against Ukraine

“As you know, there has been military tension going on between Russia and Ukraine for some time. Which of the following best describes the role Turkey should play in this conflict?”

- Turkey should act together with Russia: 4.4% (Overall Population), 5.3% (18-24)
- Turkey should act together with Ukraine: 8.5% (Overall Population), 8.0% (18-24)
- Turkey should play a mediatory role between the parties: 43.7% (Overall Population), 45.7% (18-24)
- Turkey should avoid conflict and remain neutral: 40.1% (Overall Population), 38.6% (18-24)
### Solution to the Syria Crisis

**When you think about the latest developments in Syria, which of the following would you prefer to happen?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Overall Population</th>
<th>18-24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return to the pre-civil war situation in Syria under the Assad leadership</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep integrity of the Syrian state, but demand Assad's resignation</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition groups gain their own territory</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know / No answer</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022*
**Trust in International Institutions – Percentage of Participants Who “Trust”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Overall Population</th>
<th>18-24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Organization of Islamic Cooperation</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

« To what extent do you trust the international institutions that I will read to you? »
Trust in International Institutions – Percentage of Participants Who “Trust”

“To what extent do you trust the international institutions that I mention?”

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart illustrates the percentage of participants who trust various international institutions, showing a trend of increased trust in some institutions from 2021 to 2022.

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
The European Union
A Hypothetical Referendum on Turkey’s EU Membership

«If there were a referendum this Sunday on full membership of Turkey to the European Union, how would you vote?»

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Will You Personally Benefit from Turkey’s EU Membership?

2021 – 2022 OVERALL POPULATION

“Do you think you will personally benefit from Turkey’s EU membership?”

- **Yes, I will**
  - 2021: 56.7%
  - 2022: 55.7%

- **No, I won't**
  - 2021: 36.8%
  - 2022: 37.9%

- **Don't know / No answer**
  - 2021: 6.5%
  - 2022: 6.4%

2021 – 2022/ 18 – 24 AGE GROUP

- **Yes, I will**
  - 2021: %67.2
  - 2022: %73.9

- **No, I won't**
  - 2021: %26.4
  - 2022: %22.4

- **Don't know / No answer**
  - 2021: %6.4
  - 2022: %3.6

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Attitudes Toward Europeans

«All things considered, is your attitude toward Europeans positive or negative?»

- Overall Population: 60.2% Positive, 35.0% Negative, 4.8% DK/NA
- 18-24: 76.6% Positive, 20.6% Negative, 4.8% DK/NA

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Opinion on Turkey’s Accession to the EU

«From the opinions I will read to you, which one is closer to yours regarding Turkey’s EU membership?»

- If Turkey accomplishes the tasks as required, it can easily join the European Union.
  - 2021: 21.5%
  - 2022: 15.5%

- Turkey is not ready for the EU membership even if EU is willing to admit Turkey right away.
  - 2021: 22.9%
  - 2022: 26.7%

- European Union does not have the intention of letting Turkey in. It is just trying to delay the accession.
  - 2021: 52.1%
  - 2022: 53.0%

- Don’t know / No answer
  - 2021: 3.5%
  - 2022: 4.8%

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Factors that will Facilitate Turkey’s Full EU Membership (2 Answers)

Which one of the following will facilitate Turkey’s full EU membership?

- Economy improving in Turkey: 49.6% (Overall Population), 56.2% (18-24)
- Improving human rights in Turkey: 40.4% (Overall Population), 45.6% (18-24)
- Realization of required legal reforms in Turkey: 34.7% (Overall Population), 42.5% (18-24)
- US support for Turkey’s full EU membership: 16.6% (Overall Population), 18.1% (18-24)
- Turkey’s waiver of its citizens’ right to work in the EU countries: 9.8% (Overall Population), 10.9% (18-24)
- None. It will never become member: 8.3% (Overall Population), 16.1% (18-24)
- Don’t know / No answer: 3.6% (Overall Population), 0.3% (18-24)

“Which one of the following will facilitate Turkey’s full EU membership?”
The Most Important Benefit of EU Accession for Turkey

- Improved economy, decrease in unemployment and cost of living
  - Overall Population: 19.4%
  - 18-24: 19.1%
- Free movement of Turkish citizens in the European Union countries
  - Overall Population: 14.5%
  - 18-24: 16.4%
- Improved democracy, widespread participation of the people in the administration
  - Overall Population: 19.8%
  - 18-24: 14.6%
- Increase of Turkey’s power in the international arena
  - Overall Population: 17.4%
  - 18-24: 14.4%
- Increase in social peace
  - Overall Population: 10.5%
  - 18-24: 9.7%
- Decrease in bribery and corruption
  - Overall Population: 8.8%
  - 18-24: 8.4%
- State treating citizens more equally and fairly
  - Overall Population: 6.3%
  - 18-24: 6.3%
- Other
  - Overall Population: 1.9%
  - 18-24: 1.1%
- Don’t know / No answer
  - Overall Population: 6.4%
  - 18-24: 2.2%

“What will be the most important benefit of EU accession for Turkey?”
Approval for EU Reforms
(Percentage of Participants who “Approve”)

- Establishment of necessary conditions for freedom of thought and freedom of expression: 43.4%
- Establishment of conditions necessary for expression of freedom of religion and liberty of conscience so as to cover all: 41.5%
- Abolition of laws prohibiting education in native languages of citizens: 38.3%
- Abolition of laws prohibiting radio and television broadcasts in native languages of citizens: 37.6%
- Abolition of capital punishment for anyone and any crime: 30.4%
- Solution of problems with Greece by means of mutual compromises: 18.7%
- Solution of existing problems in Cyprus by means of mutual compromises: 17.7%

“There are some changes that Turkey adopted as part of the EU accession process. Could you indicate your level of approval for each of these changes on a scale of 1 to 10; “1” being “Do not approve at all” and “10” being “Fully approve”?"
Views on Turkey’s Relations with Europe (Percentage of Participants who “Agree”)

- Europe has assisted strengthening of separationist organizations such as PKK in Turkey: 69.8% Overall Population, 62.1% 18-24
- European countries are willing to divide and disintegrate Turkey just like they did to the Ottoman Empire in the past: 62.4% Overall Population, 51.8% 18-24
- Westernization efforts in Turkey could not go beyond imitating the West: 58.0% Overall Population, 50.6% 18-24
- What is behind the European attitudes against Turkey is the crusader spirit: 52.2% Overall Population, 44.0% 18-24
- The reforms conducted for EU accession are no different than the capitulations: 50.5% Overall Population, 43.0% 18-24
- The reforms demanded from Turkey by the EU are similar to the ones mentioned in the Sevrés Treaty in the past: 46.6% Overall Population, 37.6% 18-24

«Now, I will read to you some of the views supported with regard to our relations with Europe. Could you indicate your preference about each view by selecting “I totally agree”, “I agree”, “I do not agree” or “I totally disagree”?»
"As you know, Turkey and European Union signed a Customs Union agreement in 1995. Do you think such cooperation has benefited Turkey's economy or not? Has it done so fully or partially?"

**Customs Union: Beneficial or Harmful for Turkey?**

- Beneficial: 28.3%
- Harmful: 11.8%
- Don't know / No answer: 59.9%
- Very harmful: 5.9%
- Partially harmful: 5.9%
- Partially beneficial: 14.4%
- Fully beneficial: 13.9%

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
“Within the framework of updating the Customs Union between Turkey and European Union, would you support or oppose the mutual inclusion of services, public procurement and agriculture sectors within the Customs Union?”

Support for Customs Union Modernization

- Support: 37.0%
- Oppose: 19.3%

Don’t know / No answer: 43.8%
Definitely oppose: 10.9%
Somewhat oppose: 8.4%
Somewhat support: 22.5%
Definitely support: 14.5%
Common Interests between Turkey and the EU

"Now, I will read some foreign policy issues Turkey currently faces. Do you think Turkey has common or contradicting interests with Europe on these issues?"
What Would Improve EU-Turkey Relations? (3 Responses)

“Now, I will read some actions that might improve relations between Turkey and the European Union. Which of these actions do you think would make the most positive contribution to the relationship? Which ones are the second and third most important?”

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Support for the Criteria Turkey needs to Fulfill for Visa Liberalization

- Harmonization of the legislation on the protection of personal data with EU standards
  - 2021: 50.9%, 2022: 66.8%
- Adopting the measure for the prevention of corruption stipulated in the Road Map
  - 2021: 50.5%, 2022: 62.8%
- Ensuring effective judicial cooperation with all EU member states on criminal matters
  - 2021: 52.7%, 2022: 62.0%
- Review of legislation and practices on terrorism in light of European standards
  - 2021: 51.8%, 2022: 60.5%
- Conclusion of an operational cooperation agreement between Turkey and Europol
  - 2021: 48.4%, 2022: 60.2%
- The full implementation of the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement
  - 2021: 48.0%, 2022: 55.3%

"Turkey needs to fulfill remaining 6 criteria in order to conclude a visa liberalization agreement with the European Union. Now, I will read to you these criteria one by one. Do you support or oppose to fulfillment of these criteria?"
How to Solve the Cyprus Problem

What do you think should happen to solve the Cyprus problem our country is facing?

- A single EU member state under the name of the Republic of Cyprus: 11.2% (Overall Population), 12.9% (18-24)
- A bi-communal and bi-zonal EU member state under the name of Republic of Cyprus: 11.6% (Overall Population), 14.4% (18-24)
- Two states solution: 32.1% (Overall Population), 32.9% (18-24)
- Annexation of Northern Cyprus to Turkey: 39.4% (Overall Population), 33.4% (18-24)
- Don't know / No answer: 5.8% (Overall Population), 6.4% (18-24)

Turkish Perceptions of the EU Survey 2022
Climate Change
There are two different viewpoints about economic growth and the environment. Which one of these is closer to your opinion?

Environmental protection should be prioritized, even if it causes slow economic growth and job losses

- Overall Population: 75.6%
- 18-24: 77.7%

Even if the environment is harmed, creating economic growth and job opportunities should be a priority

- Overall Population: 22.2%
- 18-24: 20.8%

Don’t know / No answer

- Overall Population: 2.3%
- 18-24: 1.5%

"There are two different viewpoints about economic growth and the environment. Which one of these is closer to your opinion?"
“In your opinion, how important a threat is climate change to our world? Could you please indicate your answer in the scale that I will show you where 0 means “not a significant threat at all” and 10 means “a very important threat”?”

Overall Population
Don’t know / No answer: 4.3%
Not a significant threat: 2.4%
Neither important nor not: 30.7%
A very important threat: 62.6%

Youth 18-24
Don’t know / No answer: 3.7%
Not a significant threat: 1.8%
Neither important nor not: 26.9%
A very important threat: 67.6%