

CORRUPTION in TURKEY

WHY
HOW
WHERE

The Results of Public Opinion Survey

TI-Turkey (Uluslararası Şeffaflık Derneđi) was founded in 2008 by voluntary efforts. The association aims to set the rule of transparency, integrity and accountability principles in all segments of the society for the democratic, social and economic development of the country. TI-Turkey predicates on collaboration of public sector, businesses, unions, universities, professional chambers and non-governmental organizations in the scope of its anti-corruption efforts. It expects legibility, integrity, legal conformity, accountability and traceability from all individuals and institutions in society who constitutes the social structure and/or holds public power, and conducts its activities within the frame of these principles. TI -Turkey shares the principles and visions of Transparency International (TI). TI-Turkey is the national representative of TI, the global coalition against corruption which has national chapters in more than 100 countries.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 55% of the population in Turkey believes that the level of corruption has increased over the past two years. With an additional 13% who believe that the level of corruption has stayed the same, the study reveals that 67% of the population perceives corruption to be rampant. This figure shows the level of mistrust the people hold for the various institutions of the state. Another figure demonstrating the same issue is the 45% who believe reporting bribery and improper solicitation of gifts by public officials does little to help improve these problems after facing such demands, and in fact, could result in negative outcomes. The problems with reporting corruption and the belief that the paths to reporting corruption are blocked are further evidenced by the 9% of the respondents who either don't know where and how to report or dissuaded by the length of the legal process. These ratios are directly tied to the culture of immunity and impunity that is becoming more visible.

The recent cases of grand corruption scandals that went uninvestigated, on the contrary, the punishment of the public officials and journalists who brought these allegations into daylight, have harmed trust in the rule of law and facilitated the spread of the aforementioned culture of impunity. When asked to identify the causes of corruption, the answers "immunities and corruption cases that go unpunished" (64%), "the lack of public awareness" (61%), "the lack or inadequacy of anti corruption agencies" (55%), and "social acceptance of corruption" (50%) show the trust issues among the populace. In the same vein, other frequently given answers such as the "relationship between politics and the private sector" (48%) and "partiality of the justice" (48%) point out to these trust issues to focus around the politics, justice, and business triangle. The perceived mistrust in justice

can also be explained through the mismatch between law and practice; that is, the legal framework that allows for anti-corruption measures fail in practice.

The respondents identified institutions in which corruption is the most rampant as the media, political parties, local governments, and the parliament, in decreasing order. Such high perceptions of corruption in the media, alongside the political apparatus, highlight the issues with the freedom of speech and the freedom to obtain information. In addition to the issue of trust in institutions, the study also highlights the lack of belief that combating corruption will prove to be successful in the eyes of the public. 60% of the population believes that levels of corruption will not decrease in the next two years, while 41% comment further that these levels will rise. Other international and cross-national studies back these sentiments: Transparency International's annual study Corruption Perceptions Index results show that Turkey is among countries with the sharpest decline for the past four years. In the 2015 study, Turkey ranks behind states with non-consolidated democracies and autocracies such as Amman, Ghana, Kuwait, Rwanda, UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

The polarization of politics harms conventional wisdom and prevents identification of problems from an objective standpoint and resolution of said issues. 56% of the respondents who believe that the government is taking effective measures in combating corruption juxtapose the pessimistic outlook drawn from earlier results. The finding that 79% of the AKP constituents who responded as such further support the interpretation that political polarization is one of the core issues. The clear divide between the respondents who answered "very effective" (30%) and "very ineffective" (29%) is an indi-

cator that further supports this assertion. Nevertheless, when a similar question is proposed without a direct emphasis on the liability of the government, 47% of the incumbent party voters have answered that corruption has not decreased in the past two years. Along the same lines, 42% of AKP voters do not believe that corruption will decrease in the next two years. Further supporting the political polarization argument is the result that 42% who claim their vote would not be swayed by allegations of corruption. The result that allegations of corruption would influence party votes in the case of an economic downturn (57%) highlights the primary role economics play in voting behavior.

The results also reveal the significant role the level of education plays in determining perceptions of corruption. Almost two-thirds of university graduates believe that the level of corruption has increased over the past two years. University graduates also rank the highest (74%) when asked if they would change their voting behavior in the case of alleged corruption in politics. This response falls off to 67% among high school graduates and 49% for the respondents with primary education.

Common and petty corruption is on the decline in Turkey, yet the same claim cannot be made for grand corruption cases. This claim, which has been alluded to in academic studies and field researches in the recent years also finds support in this study. When asked to identify the public operations with the highest corruption hazard, the participants have responded with public procurements (50%), planning and zoning (48%), and customs and foreign trade operations (44%), which reveal that the public does not trust such bureaucratic operations with high risk of corruption and fraud. Another finding that supports this argument is the 81% of the respondents with the belief that the private sector is unsusceptible to such cases of fraud. As mentioned in the introductory paragraph “the relationship between politics and the private se-

ctor” (48%) and “public procurement practices” (48%) among reasons that increase corruption also demonstrates that the public does not believe cases of grand corruption can be effectively identified.

A significant portion of the population faces side payment requests and improper solicitation of gifts from public officials during access to social service. The responders list education, public works, local governments, and health services as the institutions with the highest rates of such petty corruption incidents. The responses fluctuate between 6-9 percent for each institution, which are high numbers relative to consolidated democracies. In total, the participants who did not claim they clearly haven’t faced any side payment or gift requests from public officials stands at over 20%. In another question, which asked if the participants had to resort to using personal connections to expedite access to social services, the response rate stands at over a quarter, further revealing the lack of uniformity in access to public service. These figures make it evident that common and petty corruption, although on the decline, is yet to be eradicated.

The relatively positive responses are; “the prior knowledge of corrupt practices of a business affecting future actions” (84%) and “personal efforts being able to make a difference in combating corruption” (75%). It is striking to see that the awareness for corruption cases that directly affect personal finances (i.e. punishing businesses that are known to be corrupt) are not present for political corruption allegations in determining voting behavior. The rift between these results point out to the public opinion that corruption does not affect the individuals as a whole; and that the multifaceted effects of corruption usually evade public awareness.

Another striking result of the research is that “lack of collective consciousness” and “acceptance of corruption,” listed among reasons of corruption is more prevalent among the younger population. Among the questions to

measure perception of corruption “Is tipping or giving a gift to a public official an instance of corruption?” earned a negative response from only 29% of the 18-24 year old age group, and the same ratio being slightly above 10 percent among 65 and older paints a grim picture for the future. The establishment of a culture of impunity and corruption among the youth is reflective of the socio-political landscape of the culture and education system as a whole.

The premier step in order to overcome trust worries regarding corruption should be the realization of a political ethics law. The absence of such legal framework causes unavoidability of conflict of interest and the absence of effective auditing mechanisms for political financing, electoral campaigns in particular. In addition, monitoring political affect in other fields is a challenge due to the absence of a legal framework that regulates lobbying activities. Aside examples on the use of politics as a tool for personal gain, such interpretations show the strong public perceptions in this direction.

Likewise, the weakness of internal democratic principles in political parties and the strong influence of leaders swing parties away from transparency. The clear split between law and practice drives the negative public perception. Thus, efforts must be made to ensure that separation of powers is not just on paper, but is practiced. In order to establish a strong mechanism to carry out corruption prosecutions and oversight, the influence of the Executive over the Judiciary has to be restrained. Immunities covering the safeguards, even against corruption allegations, are the factors driving the high corruption perceptions for political parties and the Parliament. The media also ranks high on the corruption perception scale, which creates problems for the very institution in charge of criticizing and investigating political processes. As such, measures to ensure transparency in media-politics relationship, prevent monopolization of media, and publicize media owners’ activities

in other businesses are required to establish a media that is both accountable for its actions, and is able to hold others accountable in the face of corruption.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The main objective of the research is to measure and assess Turkey's public opinion and experiences on corruption cases regarding the following subjects

- Corruption-Prone Areas/Institutions with the Highest Level of Corruption
- The Reasons of Corruption
- Corruption and Voting Preferences
- Personal Experiences Related to Corruption
- The Most Trusted Institutions in the Fight Against Corruption

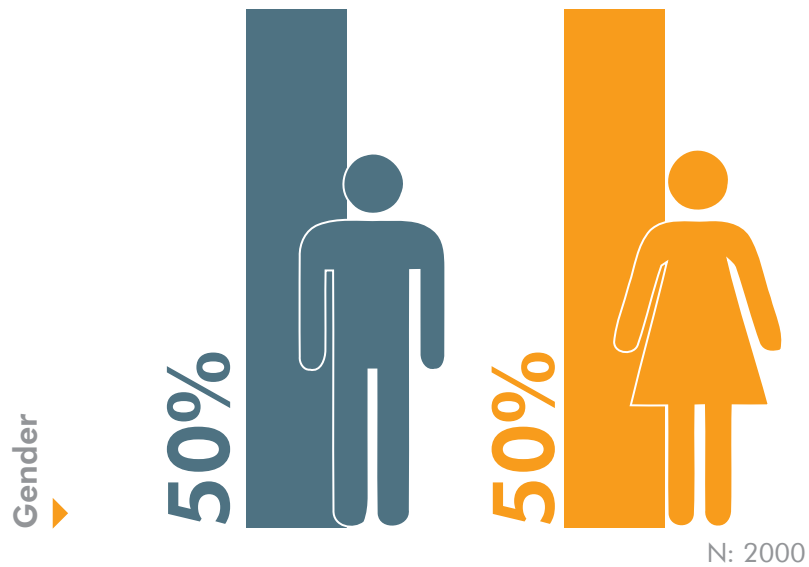
METHOD of the RESEARCH

- ▶ The research has been conducted by IPSOS - Social Research Institute.
- ▶ The research has been conducted with 2000 people over the age of 18 through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).
- ▶ The results have been wighted along gender, age and education levels to represent the population in acoordance with TurkStat's address-based population registration system (ADNKS).
- ▶ The interviews were conducted at the NUTS 1 classification levels.
- ▶ At the 95% confidence interval, the margin of error is $\pm 2,1\%$ for the research.
- ▶ Interviews were conducted with households selected based on stratified random household selection rules and were carried out between 8th and 22nd February 2016.



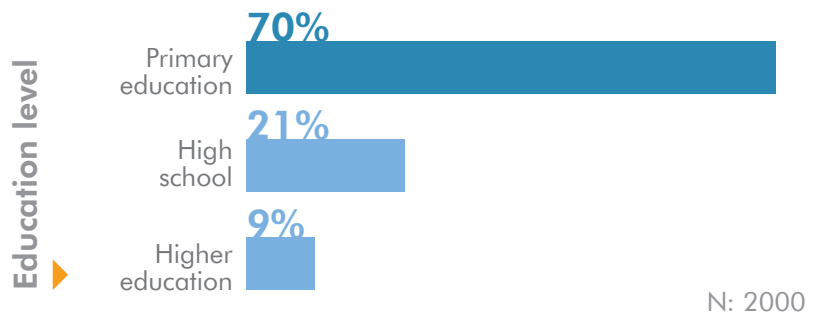
RESEARCH SAMPLE

Gender distribution of the sample is in line with the distribution among Turkey's population.



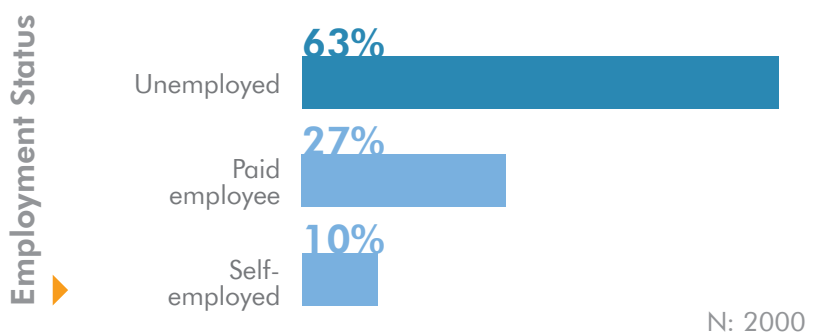
%70

70% of the responders have primary education or lower



%63

37% of people who were interviewed are employed while 63% is unemployed

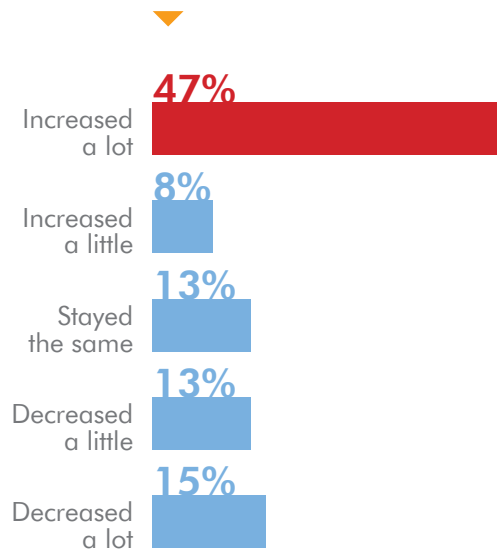


RESEARCH FINDINGS

55%

55% of respondents think corruption has increased while 28% think it has decreased.

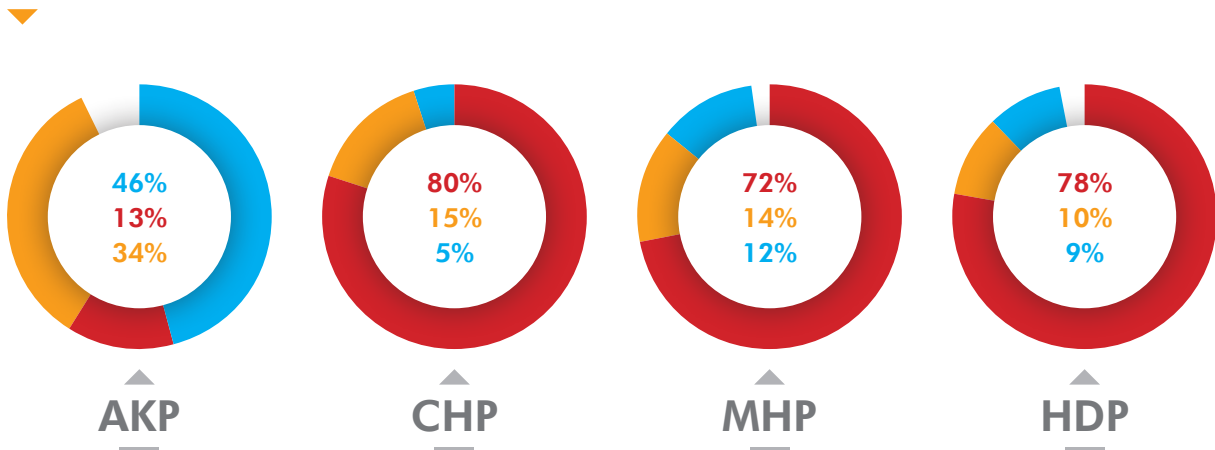
Over the past two years how has the level of corruption in Turkey changed?



N: 2000

Voting Preferences

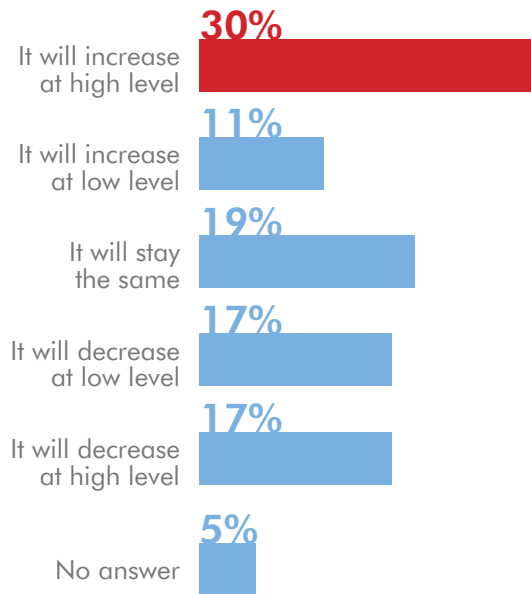
■ Increased ■ Stayed same ■ Decreased



How will the level of corruption in Turkey change in the next two years?

41%

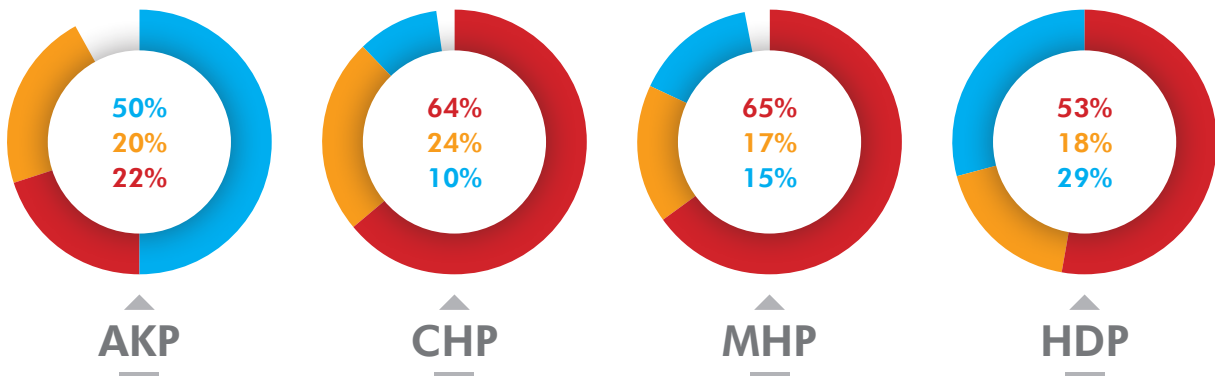
41% of respondents think corruption will increase while 34% think it will decrease.



N: 2000

Voting Preferences

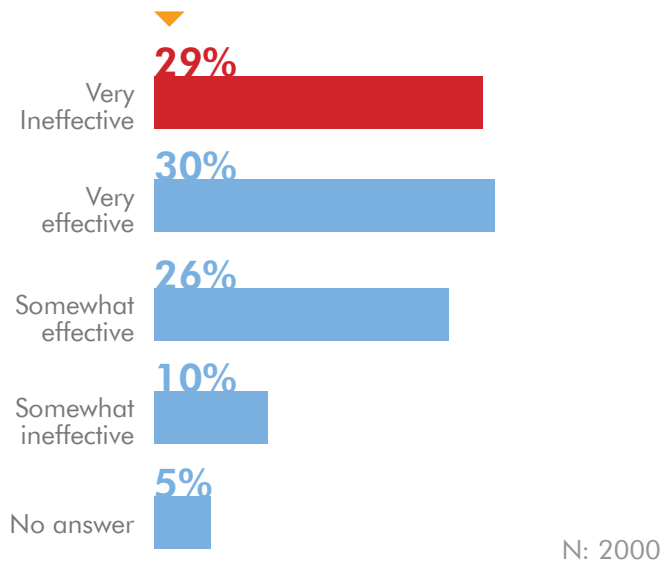
■ Will increase ■ Will stay same ■ Will decrease



39%

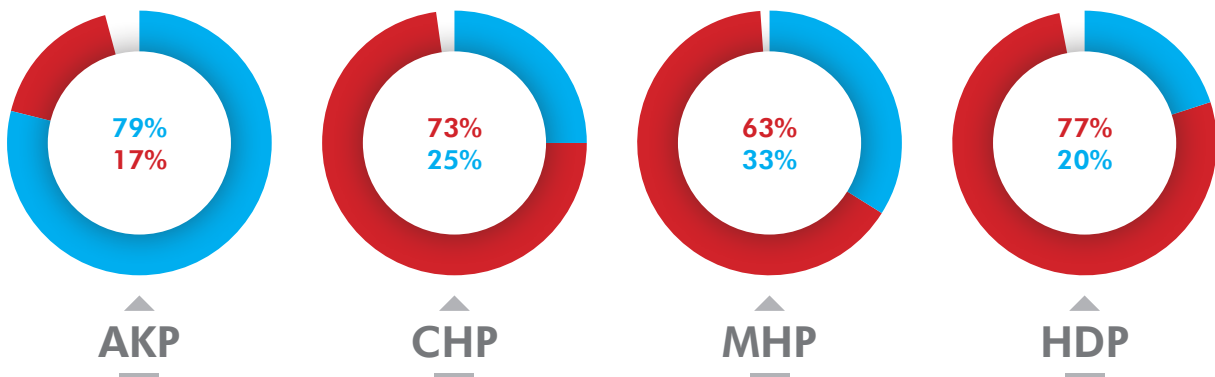
39% off all respondents find the efforts of government in fight against corruption ineffective.

To what extent do you think the current government's efforts in fighting against corruption are effective?



Voting Preferences

Effective Ineffective

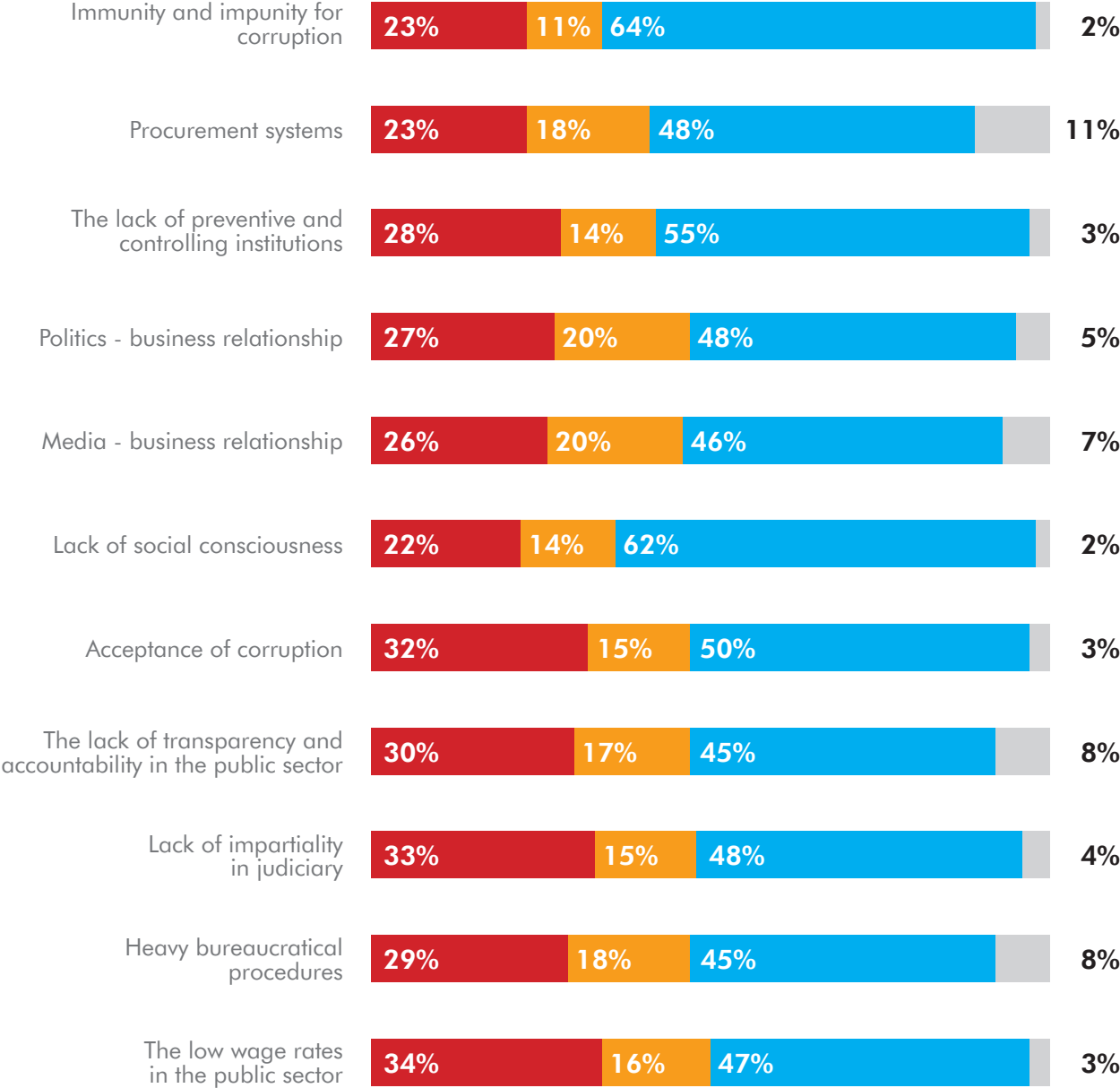


The Reasons of Corruption

Could you evaluate the impact of the factors I will read to you as the reasons of corruption by rating them with a value between 1 and 10?



Could you evaluate the impact of the factors I will read to you as the reasons of corruption by rating them with a value between 1 and 10?

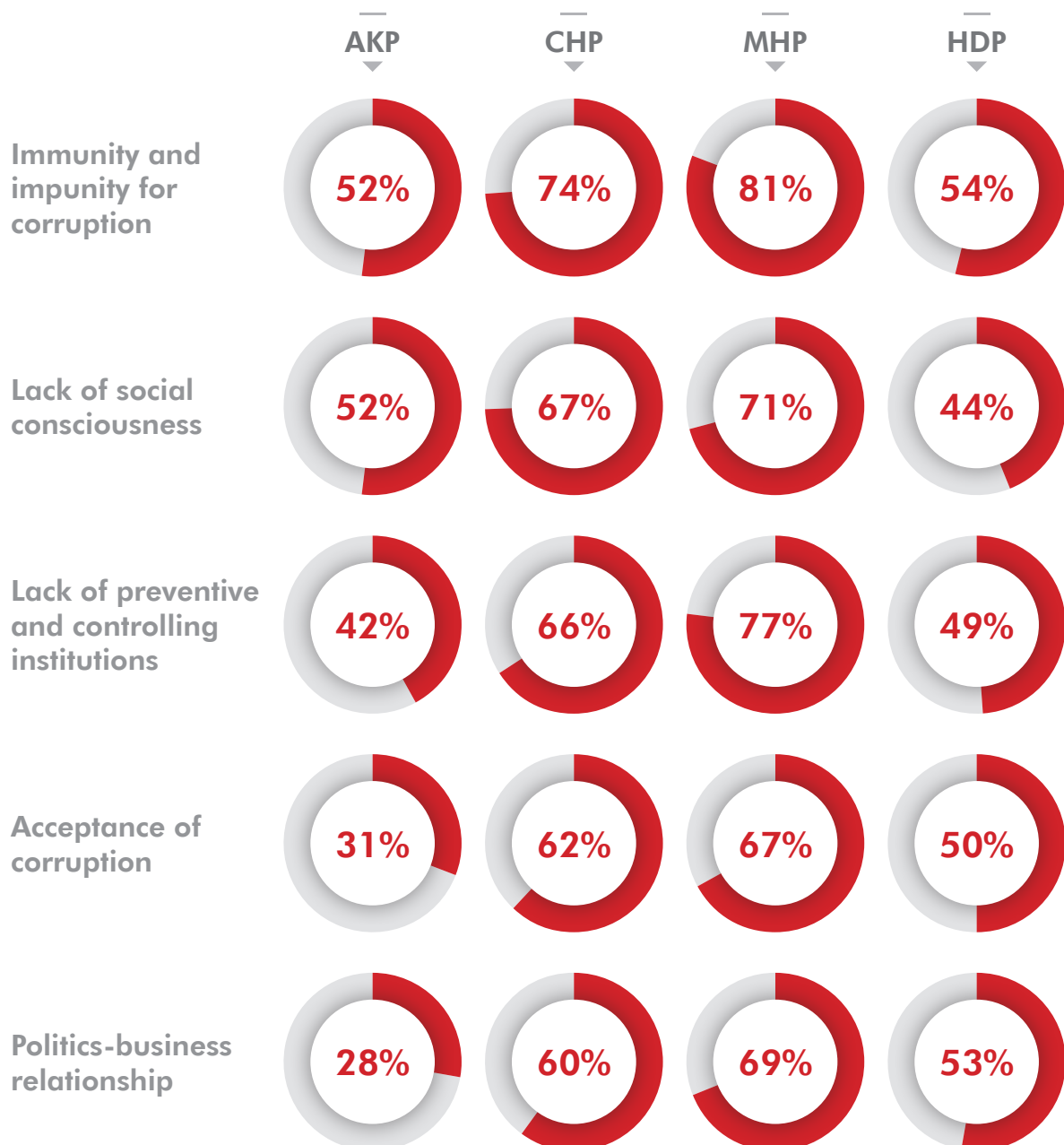


■ Effective(7-10) ■ Neutral (5-6) ■ Ineffective (1-4) ■ No answer

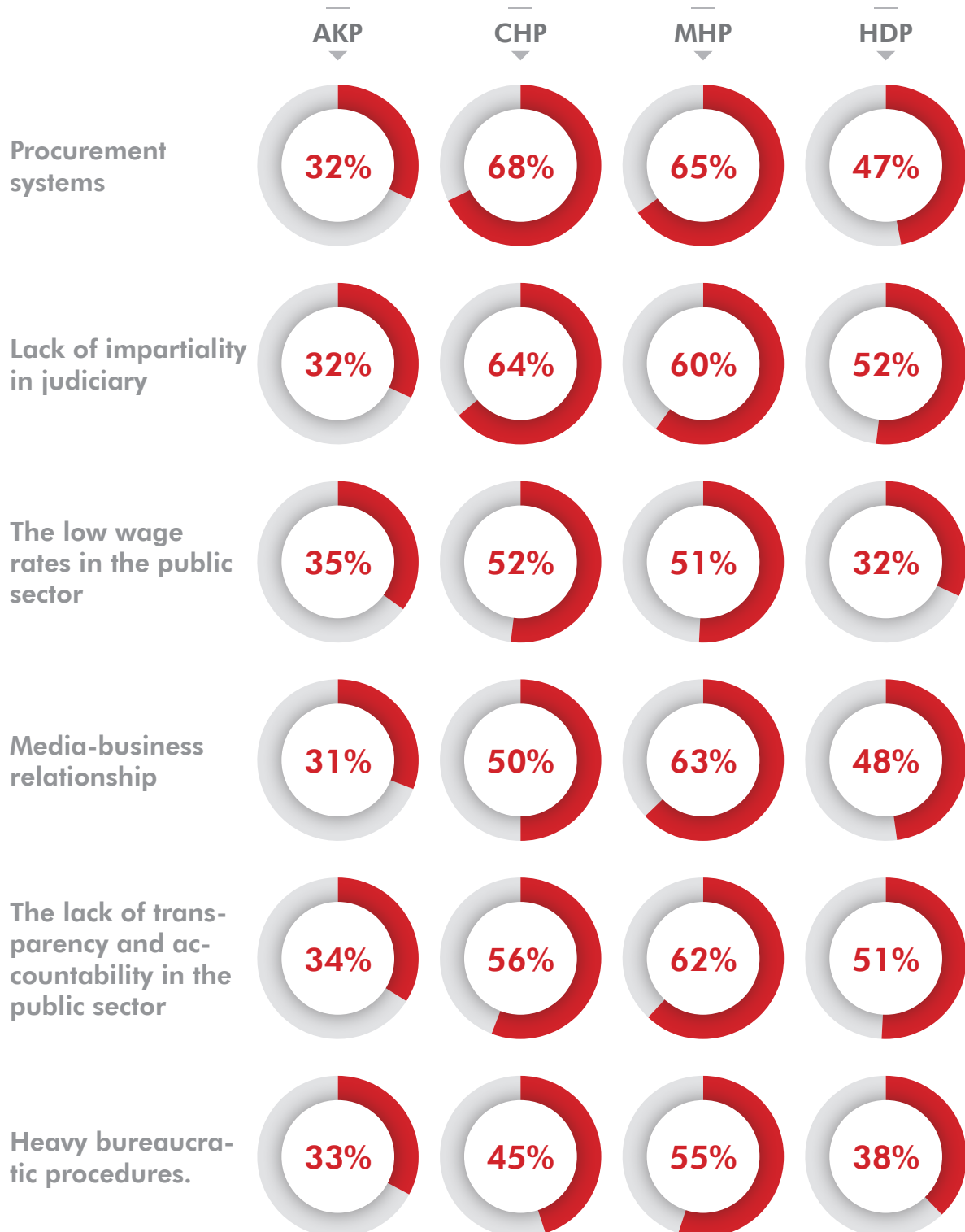
Reasons of Corruption

Could you evaluate the impact of the factors I will read to you as the reasons of corruption by rating them with a value between 1 and 10?

Responses 8-9-10 are shown in the graph



Reasons of Corruption

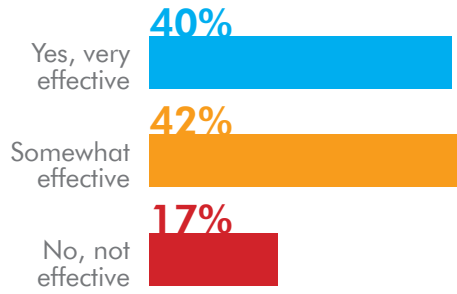


N: 2000

82%

More than half of respondents think private sector is influential on public operations and legal arrangements by giving bribes and gifts.

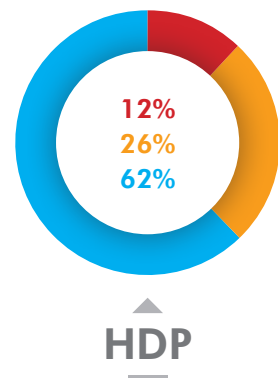
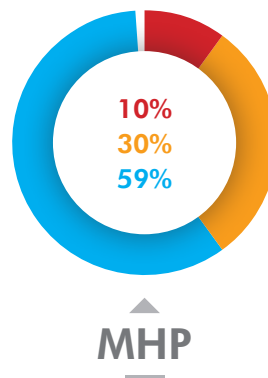
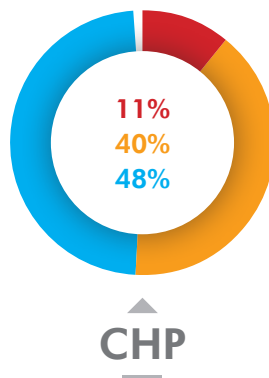
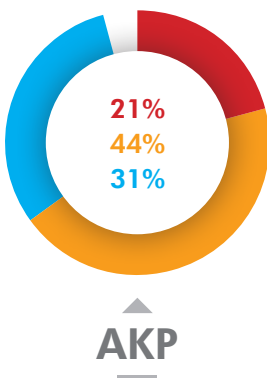
Do you think private sector is influential on public process and legal arrangements by giving bribes and gifts?



N: 2000

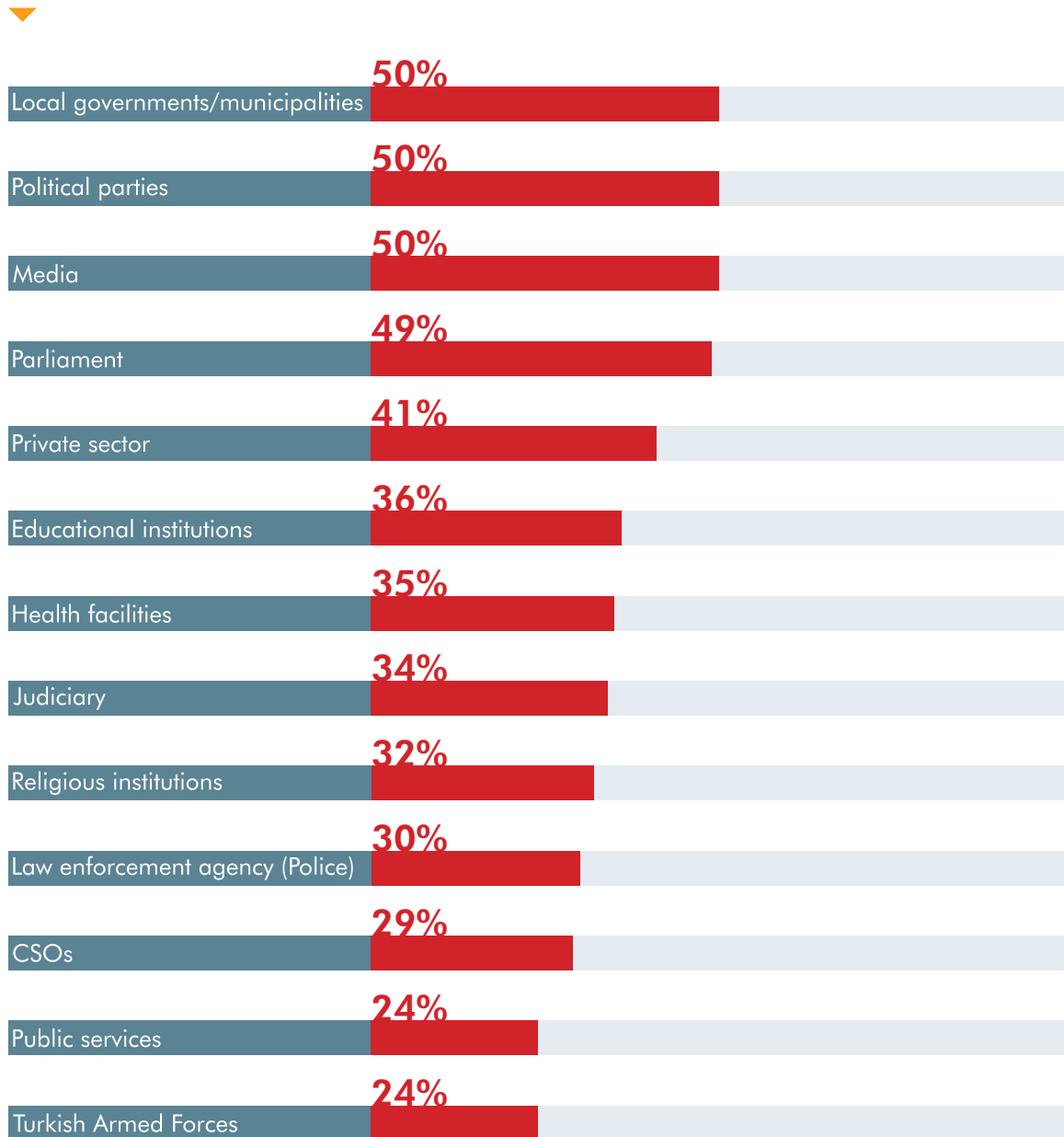
Turkey Profile

Very effective Somewhat effective Not effective



Could you rate the corruptness of the institutions I will read to you between 1-No corruption and 10-Highly corrupt?

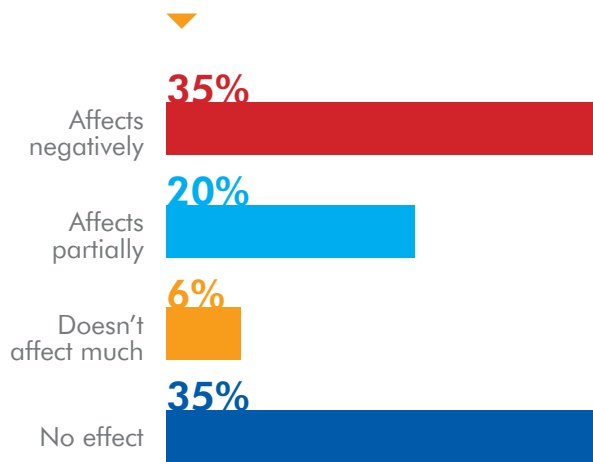
Percentage of responders with answers between 7 and 10



55%

More than half of the respondents indicate that the corruption allegations will affect their vote preferences negatively.

To what extent the corruption allegations about the political party you voted before are effective in your choice for the next elections?

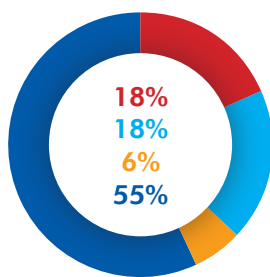


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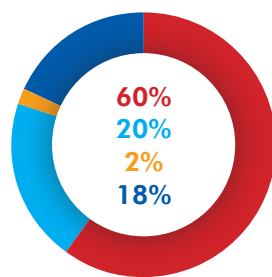
Voting Preferences



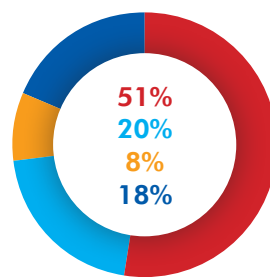
■ Affects negatively
 ■ Affects partially
 ■ Doesn't affect much
 ■ No effect



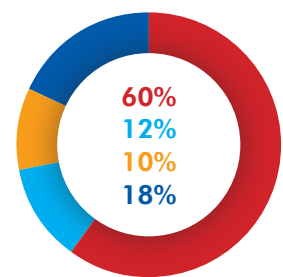
AKP



CHP



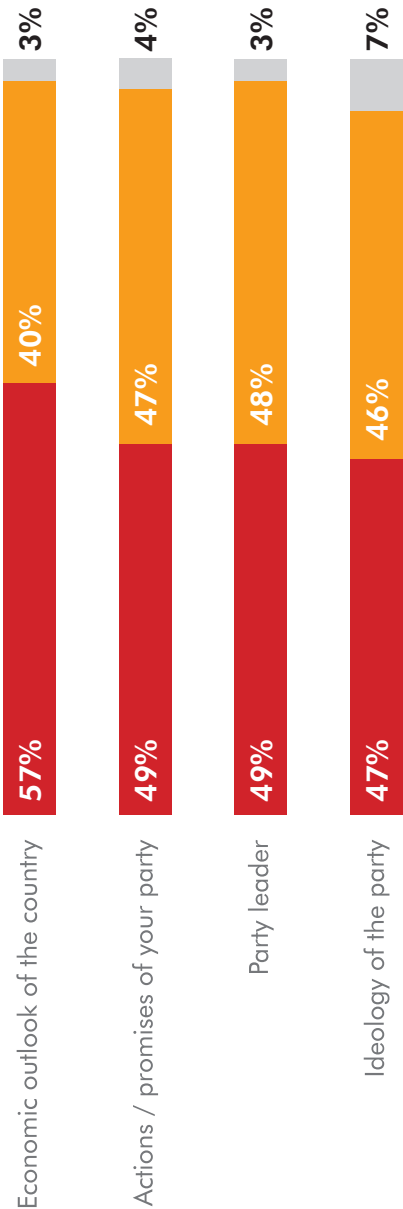
MHP



HDP

The Effect of Corruption Allegations on Voting Behavior

In the case of corruption allegations, which of the below would influence your voting behavior



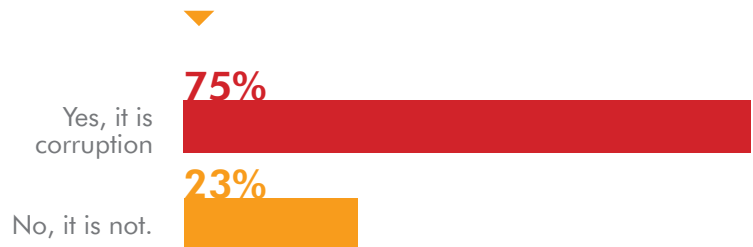
N: 2000

■ Affects negatively ■ No effect ■ No answer

75%

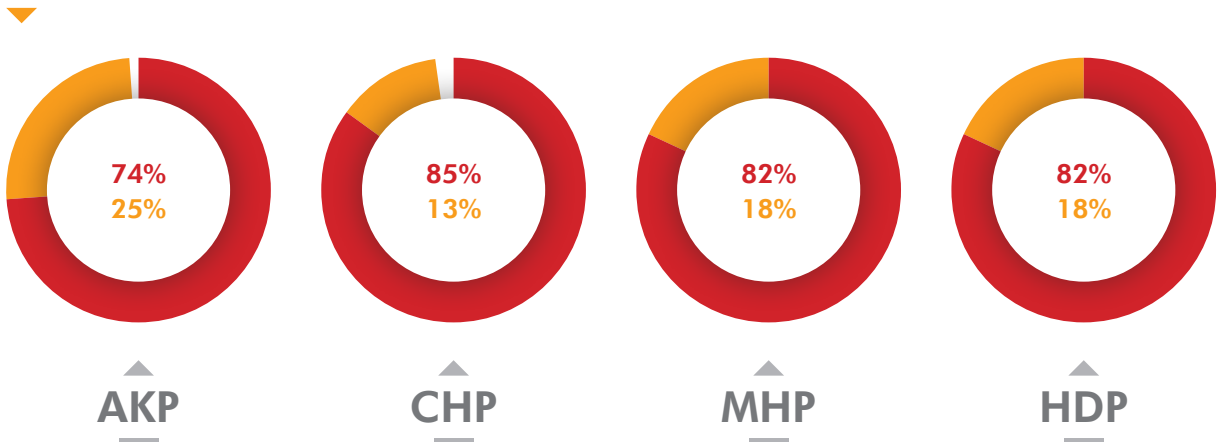
Majority of the respondents think that giving gifts (or tip) to a public official is corruption.

Is giving gifts (or tip) to a public official corruption?



N: 2000

Voting Preferences



Age range

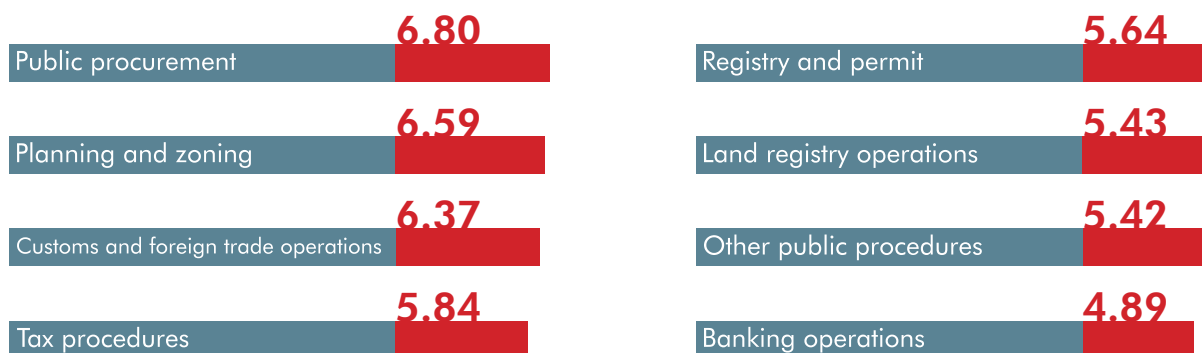


Education level

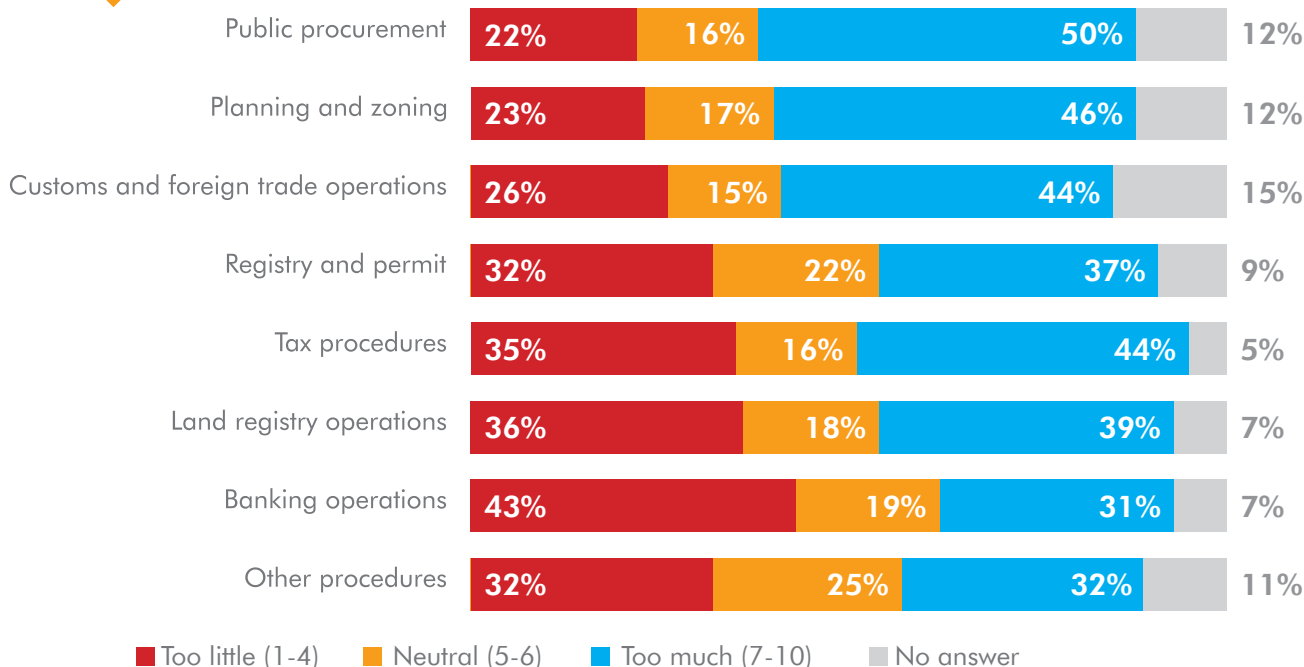


Corruption in Public Operations and Procedures

Could you evaluate the level of corruption on public operations and procedures by rating them with a value between 0 and 10?



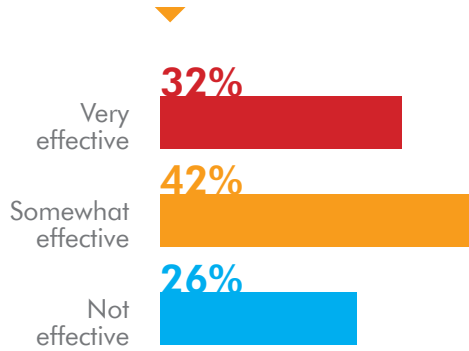
Could you evaluate the level of corruption on public transactions by rating them with a value between 0 and 10?



75%

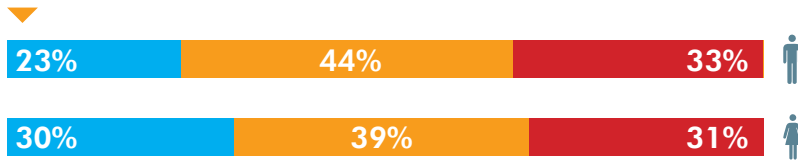
75% of respondents think that personal connections are very effective to handle the process in public institutions.

In access to public services, how effective are your personal connections to facilitate / expedite the process?



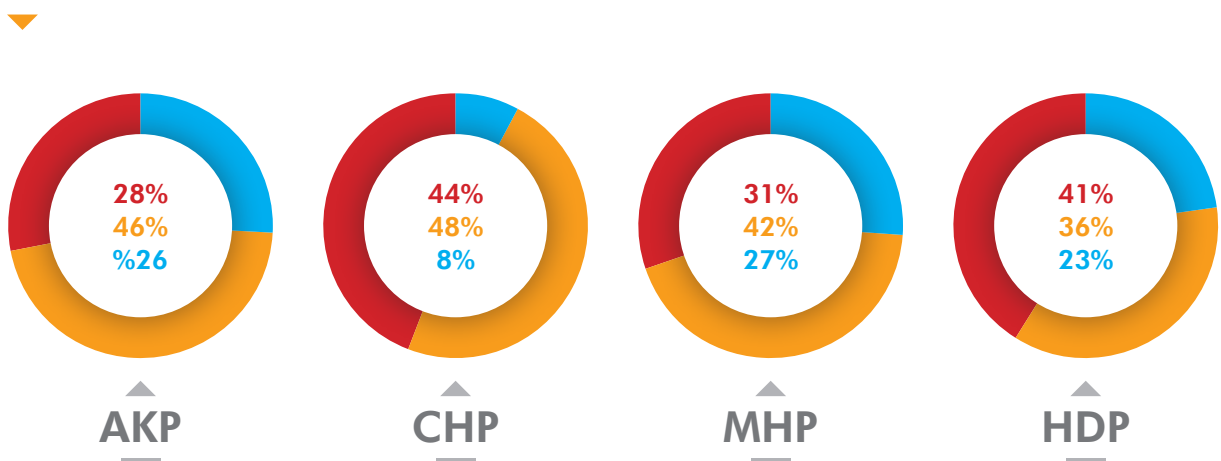
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Gender



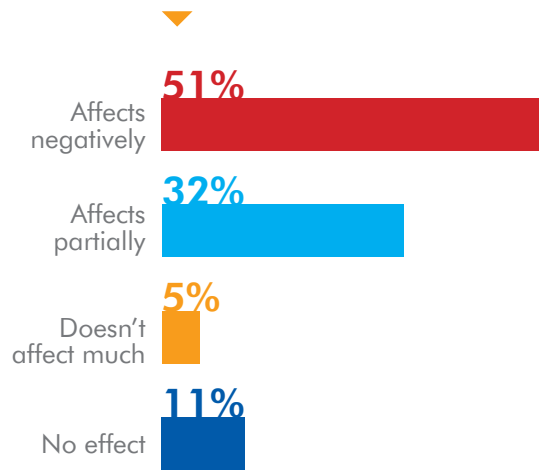
Voting Preferences

Very effective Somewhat effective Not effective



More than half of the respondents indicated that the company's alleged involvement in corruption affects negatively the purchase of goods or services that they will make from that company.

How does a company's alleged involvement in corruption affect the purchase of goods or services that you will make from that company?

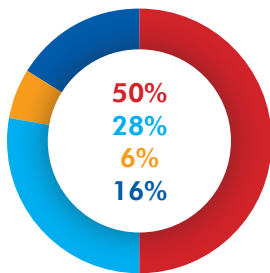


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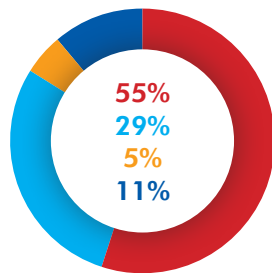
Voting Preferences



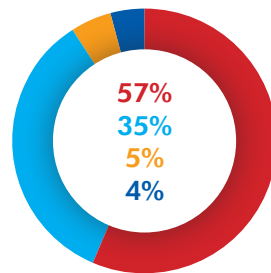
■ Affects negatively ■ Affects partially ■ Doesn't affect much ■ No effect



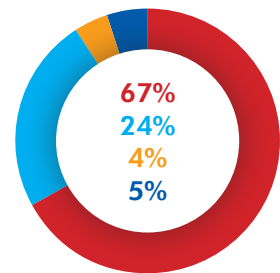
AKP



CHP

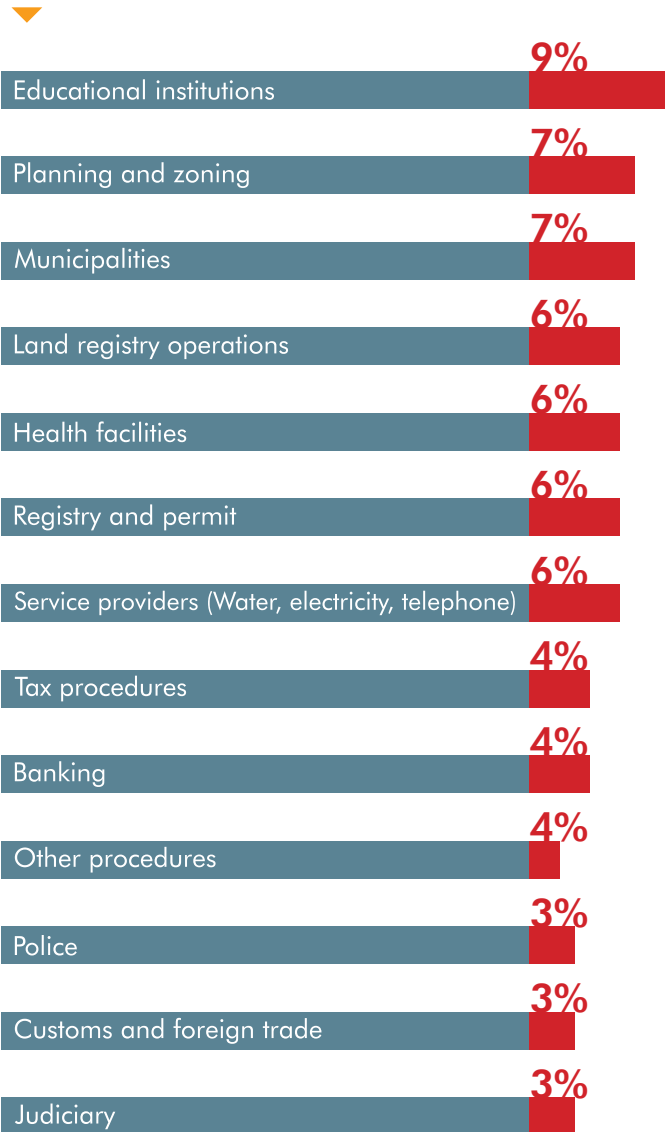
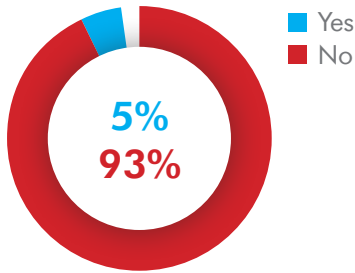


MHP



HDP

Did you or any acquaintance have to make illicit payments or give gifts to the officers in following institutions during last 12 months?



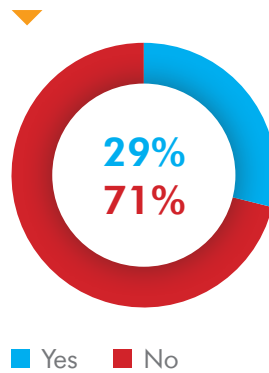
9%

The institution to which respondents made the highest illegal payment or gave gifts is educational institutions with 9%.

71%

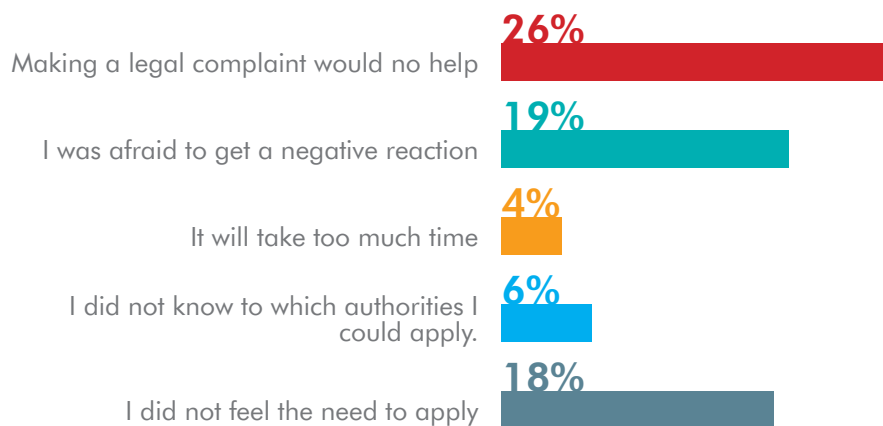
Among the respondents having been asked to make an illegal payment, a majority stated that they did not make any legal complaints.

Did you make any legal complaints if you have been asked to make illegal payments or give gifts in the last one year?



N: 2000

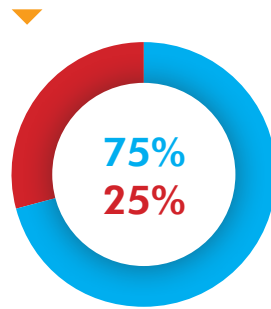
If not, what was the reason for that?



75%

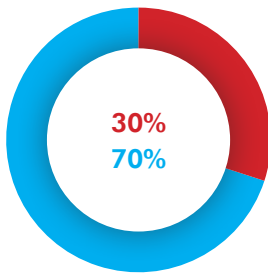
More than a half of the respondents agree with the idea that every citizen's personal efforts can make a difference in fight against corruption.

Do you agree with the idea that every citizen's personal efforts can make a difference in fight against corruption?

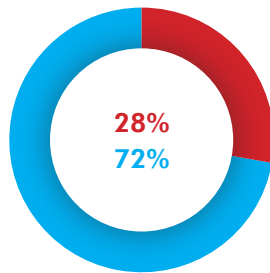


■ Agree ■ Disagree

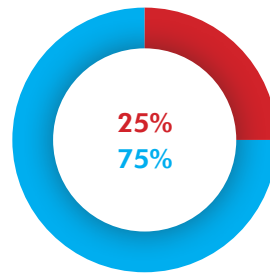
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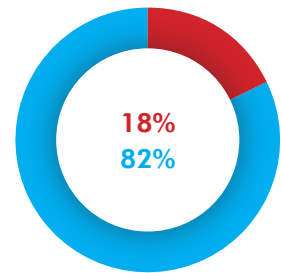
▲
AKP



▲
CHP



▲
MHP



▲
HDP

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The research has been conducted by IPSOS - Social Research Institute