

POLITICAL MATTER IN HISTORICAL GOVERNMENT OF TURKIYE'S ELECTION

Muhammet Ebuzer Ersoy
Istambul University, Turkiye
ebuzer_ersoy@hotmail.com

Abstract

After two decades in power and more than a dozen elections, Turkey's authoritarian leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan knows how to work a room. At a taxi drivers' convention in Istanbul, they could not get enough of him. He controlled the crowd like the conductor of an orchestra. They cheered and clapped - and booed the opposition - on cue. The venue was a waterside convention centre in Istanbul, built during his time as mayor of the city. The rally reached a crescendo as the president delivered his parting shot: "One Nation, One Flag, One Motherland, One State." This research aims to know the political issue in Turkiye's election from history of their modern nation and government regulation especially in the voting and choose the president. This study uses a sociological juridical approach, namely research based on normative law (regulations) as well as observing the workings of these regulations in society which make relationship with the political and international issue. The result show President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has won re-election according to the country's Supreme Election Council and unofficial data from the state-run Anadolu Agency. With 100 percent of ballot boxes opened in the run-off, Erdogan has 52.18 percent of the vote, and challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu has 47.82 percent.

Keywords: *Election; Government; Politic; Voting.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Presidential elections were held in Turkey in May 2023, alongside parliamentary elections, to elect a president for a term of five years¹. It marks the first time a Turkish presidential election has gone to a run-off. The election had originally been scheduled to take place on 18 June, but the government moved them forward by a month to avoid coinciding with the university exams, the Hajj pilgrimage and the start of the summer holidays. It is estimated that a total of 64 million voters had the right to cast their votes in elections, 60.9 million in Turkey and 3.2 million abroad.

Incumbent president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) ran for re-election as the joint candidate of the People's Alliance, which includes the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)

1 Andersen, R., and J. Curtis., The Polarizing Effect of Economic Inequality on Class Identification: Evidence from 44 Countries, *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2012, page.129–141. see Beck, N., and J. N. Katz., What to do (and not to do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 3, 1995, page.634–647

and two other smaller parties. The Nation Alliance, composed of six opposition parties including the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), fielded CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu as its presidential candidate. Though not part of the alliance, the pro-Kurdish Party of Greens and the Left Future (YSGP) and the Labour and Freedom Alliance (of which it is a member) endorsed Kılıçdaroğlu. Two other minor candidates, namely Homeland Party leader Muharrem İnce and anti-immigration ultranationalist Ancestral Alliance nominee Sinan Oğan, also reached the required 100,000 signatures to stand; however, three days before the election, İnce withdrew from the election citing consistent slander and smear campaigns against him by rival candidates, though he still appeared on ballots².

The main campaign issues revolved around the deadly³ February 2023 Turkey–Syria earthquake, which left over 50,000 people dead and threatened to postpone the election date. The government was criticised for its slow response to the earthquake and land amnesties prior to it that critics claimed left buildings more vulnerable. The economy also featured prominently due to the rapidly rising cost of living. In most polls, voters identified the economy as their prime area of concern.

In the first round, Erdoğan and Oğan outperformed expectations to receive 49.5% and 5.2% of the vote respectively. Meanwhile, Kılıçdaroğlu won 44.9%, while Muharrem İnce (who remained on the ballot despite withdrawing) received 0.4%. Since Erdoğan's vote share was 0.5% short of winning outright, he and Kılıçdaroğlu contested a run-off vote on 28 May. Oğan endorsed Erdoğan, causing a split with the Ancestral Alliance, as Victory Party leader Ümit Özdağ – the leader of the alliance's largest party – endorsed Kılıçdaroğlu. Erdoğan was re-elected in the second round with 52.18% of the vote to 47.82% for Kılıçdaroğlu.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a sociological juridical approach, namely research based on normative law (regulations) as well as observing the workings of these regulations in society. The research specifications are analytical descriptive while the types of data used are primary data and secondary data. The data collection method was carried out by field studies and literature studies. Methods of data analysis using qualitative analysis.

2 Alesina, A., Devlesschauwer, A., Easterly, W., Kurlat, S., and Wacziarg R., Fractionalization, *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2003, page.155–194., see Alesina, A., and E. Zhuravskaya., Segregation and the Quality of Government in a Cross Section of Countries, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 101, No. 5, 2011, page.1872–1911

3 Benoit, K., and J. Hayden., Institutional Change and Persistence: The Evolution of Poland's Electoral System, 1989–2001, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 2004, page. 396–427, see Bernardi, F., and M. Ares., Education as the (not so) Great Equalizer: New Evidence Based on a Parental Fixed Effect Analysis for Spain, *EUI Working Papers*, Vol. 6, 2017, page.1–47, see Best, R. E., The Declining Electoral Relevance of Traditional Cleavage Groups, *European Political Science Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2, page.279–300

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Turkiye Election System and The Reality

The previous Turkish general election took place on 24 June 2018. The election marked the country's transition from a parliamentary system to a presidential one, as narrowly endorsed by voters in the controversial 2017 constitutional referendum. That election resulted in a victory for incumbent president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who had held the position since 2014. Meanwhile, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) lost its absolute majority in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey for the first time since June 2015, forcing it to rely on its coalition partner, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) of Devlet Bahçeli, to pass legislation⁴.

The regular scheduled date for the first round of the elections was set for 18 June 2023. However, the electoral system allowed for moving the date forward. In 2020, there was speculation about a snap election prior to the regular one in 2023. At the time, Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of coalition partner MHP, ruled them out. In a written statement, he said that elections would not be held before 2023. He also confirmed that the current coalition between AKP and MHP will remain intact and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will be their joint nominee for President.

In early January 2023 the AKP mentioned eventual snap elections to take place on either on 16 or 30 April or on 14 May. But the so called "Table of Six" composed by six opposition parties announced that they would not agree to snap elections after 6 April. On 18 January 2023, Erdoğan, the President of Turkey, signalled that the elections will be held earlier than the scheduled date, specifically on 14 May 2023, in a symbolic reference to the election victory of former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes on 14 May in the 1950 Turkish general election, defeating the candidate of the then governing CHP party. On 22 January 2023, Erdoğan stated that the elections will be held on 14 May. In view of that date, the "Table of Six" announced that Erdoğan cannot run for president without parliamentary consent⁵.

After a devastating earthquake struck the country in February 2023, Erdoğan announced a state of emergency for 10 affected provinces, which would end a week ahead of the election date of the 14 May. The opposition voted against the imposition in parliament. Then on 13 February 2023, Bülent Arınç, a former AKP Member of Parliament, alleged the elections could not be held in the current situation in either May or June, and the elections should be postponed. AKP spokesperson Ömer Çelik responded that Arınç's statement is his own personal view

4 Weidmann, N. B., J. K. Rod, and L.-E. Cederman., Representing Ethnic Groups in Space: A New Dataset, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 47, No. 4, 2010, page.491–499

5 Bormann, N. C., and M. Golder., Democratic Electoral Systems Around the World, 1946–2011, *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 2013, page. 360–369. see Brambor, T., W. R. Clark, and M. Golder., Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2006, page.63–82. see Clark, W. R., and M. Golder., Rehabilitating Duverger's Theory: Testing the Mechanical and Strategic Modifying Effects of Electoral Laws, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 6, 2006, page.679–708

and does not bind the party. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu from the opposition party Republican People's Party (CHP) responded to Arınç's statement that the constitution would not provide a possibility to postpone the elections except in the case of war. Further, Mustafa Tolga Öztürk from the Good Party reasoned only the parliament has the authority to postpone elections and Selahattin Demirtaş from the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) suspected such a measure would result in a political coup.

The Supreme Election Council announced the following election calendar for the 2023 presidential elections and the parliamentary elections.

- a. 18 March: The Supreme Election Council announces the official start of the election cycle.
- b. 19 March: Submission of candidacy applications to the Supreme Election Council.
- c. 20 March: Independent presidential candidates can apply until 17.00. Applications of independent candidates are examined by the Supreme Election Council and the candidates will be notified if their application is missing documents or other shortcomings as of 23:00.
- d. 21 March: Independent presidential candidates whose application has been rejected by the Supreme Election Council, can appeal and request a re-examination until 17:00.
- e. 28 March: Announcement of the temporary list of presidential candidates and start of appeal applications.
- f. 31 March: Announcement of the final list of presidential candidates.
- g. 1 April: Presentation of ballot paper with the presidential candidates.
- h. 12 April: Finalization of the domestic and international voter registers.
- i. 27 April: Start of voting procedures at customs gates and abroad.
- j. 9 May: Deadline for voting abroad.
- k. 13 May: End of election campaigning and start of election silence at 18:00.
- l. 14 May: Voting day. Announcement of the temporary results of the presidential election at 23:59.
- m. 19 May: Announcement of the final election results by the Supreme Election Council.

In case of a two-rounded presidential election:

- a. 15 May: Start of election campaigning for the second round of the presidential election.
- b. 20 May: Start of voting procedures at customs gates and abroad.
- c. 24 May: Deadline for voting abroad.
- d. 27 May: End of election campaigning and start of election silence at 18:00.
- e. 28 May: Voting day. Second round of the presidential election.
- f. 29 May: Announcement of the temporary results of the presidential election.

- g. 1 June: Announcement of the final results of the presidential election.

The President of Turkey is directly elected through the two-round system, under which a candidate must obtain a simple majority (more than 50%) of the popular vote to be elected. If no candidate secures an overall majority outright, then a runoff is held between the two most voted-for candidates from the first round, the winner of which is then declared elected⁶. The first direct election to the Turkish presidency was held in 2014, after a referendum in 2007 abolished the previous system under which the head of state was elected by the legislature chamber, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. The President of Turkey is subject to term limits, and may serve at most two five-year terms. If snap elections were held before the end of the second term, a third term would be permitted. Snap elections can be held either with the consent of 60% of the MPs in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey or ordered by presidential decree. Only snap elections via the consent of the Grand National Assembly during a president's second term can allow the president to serve a third term.

Prospective presidential candidates must be at least 40 years old and must have completed higher education. Any political party that has won 5% of the vote in the previous parliamentary election can put forward a candidate, although parties that have not met this threshold can form alliances and field joint candidates as long as their total vote share exceeds 5%. Independents can run if they collect 100,000 signatures from the electorate. Elections are overseen by the Supreme Election Council (YSK).

We can spot Turkey's global strategic significance - which has starkly increased against the backdrop of the Ukraine war - by the A-list potpourri of world leaders who rushed to congratulate Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his election win on Sunday night. First out of the box was Russian President Vladimir Putin. He was so keen to stroke the ego of his Turkish counterpart and fellow "strongman" leader that he didn't even wait for the official results of the vote before singling out Mr Erdogan's "independent foreign policy" as a reason for his victory⁷.

We can safely assume the Turkish policy that Russia is particularly fond of is Mr Erdogan's refusal to ostracise the Kremlin after its full-scale

6 D'Hooge, L., P. Achterberg, and T. Reeskens., *Imagining Class: A Study Into Material Social Class Position, Subjective Identification, and Voting Behavior Across Europe*, *Social Science Research*, Vol. 70, 2018, page. 71–89. see Draganova, L. 2019. *Historical Index of Ethnic Fractionalization Dataset (HIEF)*, Harvard Dataverse, Vol.1, 2019. see Duverger, M., *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, New York, John Wiley, 1954

7 Elgie, R., Cristina Bucur, Bernard Dolez, and Annie Laurent., *Proximity, Candidates, and Presidential Power: How Directly Elected Presidents Shape the Legislative Party System*, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 3, 2014, page.467–477. see Erikson, R., and J. H. Goldthorpe., *The Constant Flux*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993. see Evans, G., *Testing the Validity of the Goldthorpe Class Schema*, *European Sociological Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1992, page.211–232.

invasion of Ukraine, even as Turkey's allies in Nato imposed sanctions and slashed their energy reliance on Russia. Trade between Turkey and Russia even increased significantly since the start of the war in Ukraine. But also hot on Mr Putin's congratulatory heels on Sunday were US President Joe Biden and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron. Despite their dislike of Mr Erdogan's cosying up to the Kremlin and his slashing of free speech and democratic norms at home during his first two decades in power, to them Turkey is a crucial - if difficult and unpredictable - ally of the West⁸.

Turkey is a key member of the Nato military alliance, taking part in all its missions. Mr Erdogan may maintain close ties with Russia - but he also provides military aid to Ukraine. He famously brokered a deal whereby Russia ended a blockade on Ukraine grain supplies⁹, allowing them to flow to parts of the world that rely on them. He also - after long hesitation - gave his official approval to Russia's neighbour Finland joining Nato. Once a passionate advocate of Turkey joining the EU, Mr Erdogan these days speaks of "making Turkey great again". For him, that has entailed having a more independent foreign policy. Over the years, he's developed highly transactional relationships with all his allies¹⁰.

Media caption, Watch: Erdoğan victory speech: 'Today nobody has lost' The White House has made no secret of its impatience to try to persuade Mr Erdogan to approve Nato membership for Sweden too. Sweden would provide important Baltic Sea cover for the alliance against Russia. The West hopes the dire state of Turkey's economy - and the likelihood that Mr Erdogan will have to concentrate on stabilising finances and attracting foreign investment - could prove a soft spot to push for Sweden's Nato accession as a quid pro quo. Turkey and Hungary are the only Nato countries still blocking Stockholm's membership¹¹.

-
- 8 Elff, M., Social Structure and Electoral Behavior in Comparative Perspective: The Decline of Social Cleavages in Western Europe Revisited, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007, page.277–294., see Stoll, H., *Changing Societies, Changing Party Systems*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2013. see van der Waal, J., P. Achterberg, and D. Houtman., Class Is Not Dead—It Has Been Buried Alive: Class Voting and Cultural Voting in Postwar Western Societies (1956–1990), *Politics and Society*, Vol. 35, No. 3, 2000, page.403–426.,
- 9 Evans, G., The Continued Significance of Class Voting, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2000, page.401–417. see Fearon, J. D., Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country, *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2003, page. 195–222. see Franklin, M. N., How the Decline of Class Voting Opened the Way to Radical Change in British Politics, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1984, page.483–508.
- 10 Knutsen, O., The Decline of Social Class?, In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, edited by R. J. Dalton and H.-D. Klingemann, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, page.457–480, see Laakso, M., and R. Taagepera., Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1979, page.3-27
- 11 Hadzic, D., D. Carlson, and M. Tavits., How Exposure to Violence Affects Ethnic Voting, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2020, page.345–362. see Hout, M., C. Brooks, and J. Manza., The Democratic Class Struggle in the United States, 1948–1992, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 60, No. 6, 1995, page.805–828. see Jansen, G., G. Evans, and N. D. de Graaf., Class Voting and Left-Right Party Positions: A

President Macron, meanwhile, worries about migration to the EU and hopes to win assurances from President Erdogan as soon as possible. During the migration crisis of 2015 more than a million refugees and asylum seekers - mainly from Syria - made the perilous journey across the Mediterranean to the EU in people-smugglers' boats. Brussels subsequently made a deal with Turkey¹². In exchange for a large sum of money and visa-free travel for Turks into the EU - the latter never fully arrived because of EU objections to Mr Erdogan's jailing of critics and political opponents - the Turkish president would do his best to prevent migrants without papers leaving Turkish waters to reach the bloc.

But swelling numbers of Syrian refugees at home proved extremely unpopular with Turkish voters. This month, every political party running in Turkey's parliamentary elections promised to take action to solve "the migrant issue". The EU frets about the prospect of refugees being pushed back by Turkey into Syria at risk to their safety - and of Turkey allowing people smugglers free rein again to send boats of asylum seekers and other migrants over the Mediterranean. Brussels is also on the defensive as EU member Greece is involved in a number of disputes with Mr Erdogan centred on the Aegean Sea, while EU member Cyprus is still seething after Mr Erdogan called for a two-state solution (Greek and Turkish) to decades-long divisions there following a Turkish invasion nearly 50 years ago¹³.

The West used to describe Turkey's strategic importance as the bridge between Europe and the Middle East - but Russia's invasion of Ukraine has transformed Turkey's status. Few expect big foreign policy surprises from Mr Erdogan as he enters his third decade in power. But Ankara's strategic allies are watching very closely indeed¹⁴.

Comparative Study of 15 Western Democracies, 1960–2005, *Social Science Research*, Vol. 42, 2013, page.376–400. see Kitschelt, H., and P. Rehm. Occupations as a Site of Political Preference Formation, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 12, 2014, page.1670–1706.

- 12 Gingrich, J., and S. Häusermann., The Decline of the Working-Class Vote, the Reconfiguration of the Welfare Support Coalition and Consequences for the Welfare State, *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2015, page.50–75. see Golder, M., Presidential Coattails and Legislative Fragmentation, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2006, page.34–48. see Goldthorpe, J. H., Modelling the Pattern of Class Voting in British Elections, 1964–1992, In *The End of Class Politics?: Class Voting in Comparative Context*, edited by G. Evans, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, page.59–82
- 13 Lago, I., and J. R. Montero., Coordination between Electoral Arenas in Multi-Level Countries, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2009, page.176–203. see Lijphart, A., The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 1990, page.481–496. see Lipset, S. M., and S. Rokkan., Cleavage Structure, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction, In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, New York, Free Press, 1967, page.1–64
- 14 Moser, R. G., and E. Scheiner., *Electoral Systems and Political Context: How the Effects of Rules Vary Across New and Established Democracies*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012. see Oesch, D., Coming to Grips with a Changing Class Structure, An Analysis of Employment Stratification in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland, *International Sociology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2006, page.263–288.

The election marked the country's transition from a parliamentary system to a presidential one, as narrowly endorsed by voters in the controversial 2017 constitutional referendum. That election resulted in a victory for incumbent president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who had held the position since 2014.

Party	Candidate	Daily signatures						Result
		22 March ^[41]	23 March ^[42]	24 March ^[43]	25 March ^[44]	26 March ^[45]	27 March ^[46]	
Homeland Party	Muhamem Ince	28,235	51,367	76,901	✓ 104,357	109,745	114,657	✓ Nominated
	—	15,573	25,924	39,317	63,027	✓ 102,667	111,502	✓ Nominated
New Welfare Party	Fatih Erbakan ^[48]	27,910	46,725	69,079	69,159	69,200	69,255	✗ Not nominated
Patriotic Party	Doğu Perinçek	6,679	11,792	16,192	20,400	23,776	27,055	✗ Not nominated
	—	993	1,645	2,031	2,462	2,780	3,137	✗ Not nominated
—	Erkan Trülden	397	755	1,116	1,604	1,940	2,588	✗ Not nominated
—	Ahmet Özal	237	567	807	1,025	1,311	1,544	✗ Not nominated
Justice Unity Party	İrfan Uzun	176	319	447	698	1,001	1,263	✗ Not nominated
	—	119	211	285	369	444	538	✗ Not nominated
	—	80	151	225	333	405	478	✗ Not nominated
	—	34	68	92	106	111	122	✗ Not nominated
Totals		80,413	139,524	206,494	263,540	313,380	332,139	

Picture 1: The Candidacy Process in Favour of Erdoğan

Oğan said that "Turkish nationalists and Atatürk supporters will be the decision-makers in the second round". Oğan demanded that he doesn't want any party, that he considers connected to terrorism, to have any role in the government. He is against the presence of a Kurdish party in the "political equation". He mentioned two parties specifically: HÜDA PAR, a Kurdish Islamist party allied with Erdoğan, and the pro-Kurdish HDP, which supported Kılıçdaroğlu¹⁵. If Kılıçdaroğlu signed a protocol he would not make concessions to the HDP, he could receive Oğan's support. On 19 May, Kılıçdaroğlu visited the headquarters of the Victory Party and met with its leader Özdağ. The same day, Oğan met Erdoğan for negotiations, while Erdoğan told CNN International he "would not bow to Oğan's wishes", adding he's "not the kind of person who likes to bargain like this". Bahçeli published a message on the occasion of the Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day; alluding to Oğan, he said "those who pretend to have non-existent political power and turn politics into a horse market are opportunistic weaklings". On 22 May, AKP deputy chairman Numan Kurtulmuş visited Özdağ at Victory Party headquarters, where he stated that they shared similar ideas with the Victory Party on various issues such as national security and noted they hoped the party would support Erdoğan in the second round. The same day, Özdağ and Kılıçdaroğlu came together for the second time. During the meeting, Özdağ presented a memorandum of understanding to Kılıçdaroğlu. Özdağ's main terms included

15 Lublin, D., Electoral Systems, Ethnic Heterogeneity and Party System Fragmentation, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 2017, page.373–389. see Luke, D. A., *Multilevel Modeling*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2004. see Montalvo, J. G., and M. Reynal-Querol., Fractionalization, Polarization and Economic Development, *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 76, No. 2, 2005, page.293–323.

"continuation of the trustee practice for the fight against terrorism" and "forcibly returning the immigrants within a year if necessary". He also said that they're "still trying to close the gates of hell", referring to Oğan's old quote¹⁶.

On 21 May, it was announced that Kılıçdaroğlu would visit the Justice Party headquarters on 22 May. The same day, its leader Vecdet Öz announced his support of Kılıçdaroğlu, saying "it is essential to get rid of the current government", and adding that "staying neutral means giving indirect support to the current government". Later, Öz announced that the alliance has officially ended.

On 22 May, Oğan announced his endorsement of Erdoğan for the second round, while Özdağ stated that Oğan's statement doesn't bind the Victory Party. Later Erdoğan thanked Oğan, and added that there was "absolutely no bargaining" between them. On 24 May, Özdağ announced his support for Kılıçdaroğlu. They signed a seven-point protocol, which reads as follows:

- a. The first four articles of our Constitution and the definition and content of Turkish Citizenship in Article 66 will be preserved.
- b. The national-unitary-secular state established in 1924 will never be compromised.
- c. All asylum seekers and fugitives, especially Syrians, will be sent back to their countries within one year at the latest.
- d. All terrorist organizations targeting the existence and integrity of the state, especially FETÖ, PKK and ISIS, will be fought effectively and decisively. Within the framework of the fight against terrorism, the practice of appointing state officials instead of local administrators whose links with terrorism are proven by legal evidence will continue within the framework of judicial decision.
- e. Terrorism will be fought, not negotiated. No political and legal arrangements targeting the national and unitary state structure of Turkey will be allowed.
- f. In assignments to be made in all units of the state, it will be ensured that merit, not loyalty, is the basis.
- g. All corruption will be dealt with very effectively within the framework of the law.
- h. It is fully agreed that the state should be transparent and open to its citizens.

The fourth article in the protocol, created some concerns especially among HDP voter base and raised the question of whether they will boycott the election. Next day, nevertheless, HDP and Green Left Party have announced that they will continue to support Kılıçdaroğlu in the second round, and said they "will change the one-man regime".

16 Ordeshook, P. C., and O. V. Shvetsova., Ethnic Heterogeneity, District Magnitude, and the Number of Parties, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1994, page.100–123. see Przeworski, A., *Political Institutions and Political Events Dataset*. <https://sites.google.com/a/nyu.edu/adam-przeworski/home/data>, 2013.

HDP co-chair Pervin Buldan said "We never get stuck with Ümit Özdağ's racist and fascist statements. The main thing for us is the promises made by Mr. Kılıçdaroğlu to the society." The Good Party leader Meral Akşener said "there is nothing in that protocol that bothers us". He is scheduled to meet with the victims of recent earthquakes to show his solidarity and commitment¹⁷.

According to journalist İsmail Saymaz, Kılıçdaroğlu was going to adopt a more aggressive language until 28 May and the AK Party would be attacked over the relationship between HÜDA PAR and Hezbollah. A counter stance would be taken regarding terrorism and security policies. The issue of Syrians and illegal immigrants would be highlighted. On 18 May, Kılıçdaroğlu told supporters that the influx of refugees threatens their survival, and vowed to repatriate millions of refugees to their home countries. Kılıçdaroğlu claimed that Erdoğan¹⁸, has "deliberately allowed ten million refugees into Turkey" and has put "Turkish citizenship on sale to get imported votes". Due to the accusations of who was a supporter of terrorists, which both contenders deem the other to be, Kılıçdaroğlu suggested holding a debate, but Erdoğan refused on the grounds that Kılıçdaroğlu wants to become famous.

Before the 2018 elections, Turkish presidents were serving as heads of state within a parliamentary system. After the 2017 constitutional referendum, Turkey adopted a presidential system in which the president serves as the head of government. Some opposition politicians state that since Erdoğan was elected president twice in 2014 and 2018, he cannot be a candidate again unless an early election is called by the Parliament, as stated in Article 116 of the constitution. Some jurists argue that since the presidential system was introduced in 2018 and a new office was formed apart from the similarity in name, the 2018 election was Erdoğan's first term in the new system and that he has the right to be a candidate again¹⁹.

On 10 March, CHP parliamentary group deputy chair Özgür Özel claimed that Kılıçdaroğlu received assassination threats by unknown groups and was offered a minister's armoured vehicle by the government, but he rejected the proposal and kept his official car. On 7 May, Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu was attacked during a rally in Erzurum. His rally was interrupted due to stones thrown from the crowd. After the attack, İmamoğlu supporters rushed to the Sabiha Gökçen Airport in Istanbul to welcome and show support for him. Erzurum's mayor Mehmet Sekmen said that there was no written application made from Republican People's Party's provincial chairmanship to hold a rally in Erzurum, and it was İmamoğlu "was the one who created the chaos by

17 Raymond, C., Explaining the Multiparty Systems of Western Europe Prior to the Adoption of Proportional Representation, *Comparative European Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2016, page.253–272

18 Selway, J. S., The Measurement of Cross-Cutting Cleavages and Other Multidimensional Cleavage Structures, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2011, page.48–65.

19 Singer, M. W., and L. B. Stephenson., The Political Context and Duverger's Theory: Evidence at the District Level, *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3, page.480–491.

rallying in Erzurum". The Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu said that the incident was planned by İmamoğlu to aggravate the crowds. On 12 May, extensive security measures were taken before and during Kılıçdaroğlu's rally in Samsun following the rumours of assassination attempts of Kılıçdaroğlu. Citizens who wanted to attend the rally held in Republic Square were searched twice. Snipers were placed on the roofs of buildings located around the square. İmamoğlu and Kılıçdaroğlu, who took the stage to make their speeches, were seen wearing bulletproof vests. While Kılıçdaroğlu was giving his speech, a large guard group accompanied him on the stage armed.

While visiting the burials of citizens who lost their lives during the earthquake in Adıyaman Province, Kılıçdaroğlu was subjected to a verbal attack while he was reciting Al-Fatiha. The same day, another person attempted a physical attack. Two days after the attack on İmamoğlu, Kılıçdaroğlu's vehicle was attacked with stones in Sakarya. The 15-year-old attacker was released after Kılıçdaroğlu decided not to press charges and he also asked for the anonymity of the child's identity. Erdoğan appeared with the same photograph on the ballot paper as the one he used for the presidential elections in 2014 and 2018.

On the Sunday before the elections Erdoğan showed an altered version of an election commercial belonging to his main challenger Kılıçdaroğlu. This commercial was edited with footage of Murat Karayılan, one of the founders of the PKK, in an attempt to link Kılıçdaroğlu with the PKK. In a television interview, Erdoğan was asked about the footage. He replied that it did not matter whether it was manipulated or not, and insisted that the claim the video made was nevertheless true. Similarly, presidential spokesman İbrahim Kalın said "Video edited by a group of witty young people. The elements put together in the video are real". Kılıçdaroğlu called Erdoğan "fraudulent video fabricator". Kılıçdaroğlu also filed a 1 million TRY non-pecuniary damage lawsuit against Erdoğan through his lawyer Celal Çelik. On 25 May, the Ankara 6th Criminal Court of Peace blocked access to a troll account that shared fake footage used by Erdoğan during the election process, on the grounds that it "attacks personal rights".

An allegedly fake sex video purporting to portray Muharrem İnce was circulated before he dropped out of the race. İnce claimed that deepfake technology had been used to make the video and stated he had suffered "character assassination" and blamed the country's journalists and public prosecutors for not protecting him from the "fury of slander". Erdoğan phoned İnce to express his support and condemned the video, calling the video "Gülenist tactics" as seen in the past.

One day before the election, the website Ekşi Sözlük was blocked from access reasoned as "for the protection of national security and public order". On election night, the CHP complained about reports of Erdoğan leading in the polls by the Anadolu Agency and produced its own numbers that held Kılıçdaroğlu as the leading candidate. After Ömer Çelik of the AKP accused the CHP of trying to seize the will of the nation,

Ekrem İmamoğlu of the CHP justified the reports of the opposition as they had learned from the past. Anadolu is known to show the governing AKP as the leader with a large advantage in the first hours. The first results mainly come from smaller rural towns, where Erdogan and his AK party are generally popular.

There were also criticisms directed at the slow pace of counting ballots cast abroad. At the time of 90% of domestic ballots were counted, only 30.8% of ballots from abroad had been counted. Ahmet Yener of the Supreme Election Council said these delays were "normal" and that the increase in the number of ballots and contesting parties slowed counting.

The YSP demanded a repetition of the election for Gaziantep, where according to the YSP two thousand potential YSP voters were not able to vote as they were inscribed as members of the ballot committee by the Patriotic Party (VP) without informing them. The request was deemed an unreasonable objection by the provincial election presidency.

D. CONCLUSION

As no candidate was able to secure a majority of votes, a runoff took place between the top two finishers, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, on 28 May. Erdoğan, the incumbent president coming into the election, received 49.52% of the vote, down from 52.59% in the last elections. Votes for Oğan pushed the race into a run-off. In the second round, the turnout rate in abroad and customs increased from 53.8% to 54.35%, and despite trailing in a dozen opinion polls prior to the first round of the election, the Supreme Election Council declared Erdoğan the winner after 99.4% of the votes were counted in the second round, as the remaining votes to be counted were unable to bridge the difference between him and Kılıçdaroğlu. Erdoğan received 52.18% of the vote.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books:

- Duverger, M., 1954, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, John Willey, New York;
- Erikson, R., and J. H. Goldthorpe., 1993, *The Constant Flux*, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
- Goldthorpe, J. H., 2003, Modelling the Pattern of Class Voting in British Elections, 1964–1992, In *The End of Class Politics?: Class Voting in Comparative Context*, edited by G. Evans, Oxford University Press, Oxford;
- Knutsen, O., 2007, The Decline of Social Class? In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, edited by R. J. Dalton and H.-D. Klingemann, Oxford University Press, Oxford;

Lipset, S. M., and S. Rokkan., 1967, Cleavage Structure, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction, In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, Free Press, New York;

Luke, D. A., 2004, *Multilevel Modeling*, Sage, Thousand Oaks;

Journals:

Alesina, A., Devleeschauwer, A., Easterly, W., Kurlat, S., and Wacziarg, R., Fractionalization, *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 22, 2003;

Alesina, A., and E. Zhuravskaya., Segregation and the Quality of Government in a Cross Section of Countries, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 101, No. 5, 2011;

Andersen, R., and J. Curtis., The Polarizing Effect of Economic Inequality on Class Identification: Evidence from 44 Countries, *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2012;

Beck, N., and J. N. Katz., What to do (and not to do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 3, 1995;

Benoit, K., and J. Hayden., Institutional Change and Persistence: The Evolution of Poland's Electoral System, 1989–2001, *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 2004;

Bernardi, F., and M. Ares., Education as the (not so) Great Equalizer: New Evidence Based on a Parental Fixed Effect Analysis for Spain, *EUI Working Papers*, Vol. 6, 2017;

Best, R. E., The Declining Electoral Relevance of Traditional Cleavage Groups, *European Political Science Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2011;

Bormann, N. C., and M. Golder, Democratic Electoral Systems Around the World, 1946–2011." *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 2013;

Brambor, T., W. R. Clark, and M. Golder, Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2006;

Clark, W. R., and M. Golder, Rehabilitating Duverger's Theory: Testing the Mechanical and Strategic Modifying Effects of Electoral Laws, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 6, 2006;

D'Hooge, L., P. Achterberg, and T. Reeskens., Imagining Class: A Study Into Material Social Class Position, Subjective Identification, and Voting Behavior Across Europe, *Social Science Research*, Vol. 70, 2018;

Drazanova, L., Historical Index of Ethnic Fractionalization Dataset (HIEF), *Harvard Dataverse*, Vol. 1, 2019;

- Elff, M., Social Structure and Electoral Behavior in Comparative Perspective: The Decline of Social Cleavages in Western Europe Revisited, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007;
- Elgie, R., Cristina Bucur, Bernard Dolez, and Annie Laurent., Proximity, Candidates, and Presidential Power: How Directly Elected Presidents Shape the Legislative Party System, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 3, 2014;
- Evans, G., Testing the Validity of the Goldthorpe Class Schema, *European Sociological Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1992;
- Evans, G., The Continued Significance of Class Voting, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2000;
- Fearon, J. D., Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country, *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2003;
- Franklin, M. N., How the Decline of Class Voting Opened the Way to Radical Change in British Politics, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1984;
- Gingrich, J., and S. Häusermann., The Decline of the Working-Class Vote, the Reconfiguration of the Welfare Support Coalition and Consequences for the Welfare State, *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2015;
- Golder, M., Presidential Coattails and Legislative Fragmentation, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2006;
- Hadzic, D., D. Carlson, and M. Tavits., How Exposure to Violence Affects Ethnic Voting, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2020;
- Hout, M., C. Brooks, and J. Manza., The Democratic Class Struggle in the United States, 1948–1992, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 60, No. 6, 1995;
- Jansen, G., G. Evans, and N. D. de Graaf., Class Voting and Left-Right Party Positions: A Comparative Study of 15 Western Democracies, 1960–2005, *Social Science Research*, Vol. 42, 2013;
- Kitschelt, H., and P. Rehm., Occupations as a Site of Political Preference Formation, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 12, 2014;
- Laakso, M., and R. Taagepera., Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 12, Vol. 1, 1979;
- Lago, I., and J. R. Montero., Coordination between Electoral Arenas in Multi-Level Countries, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2009;
- Lijphart, A., The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 1990;

- Lublin, D., Electoral Systems, Ethnic Heterogeneity and Party System Fragmentation, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 2017;
- Montalvo, J. G., and M. Reynal-Querol. 2005. "Fractionalization, Polarization and Economic Development." *Journal of Development Economics* 76 (2): 293–323. doi: 10.1016/j.jdeveco.2004.01.002
- Moser, R. G., and E. Scheiner. 2012. *Electoral Systems and Political Context: How the Effects of Rules Vary Across New and Established Democracies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Oesch, D., Coming to Grips with a Changing Class Structure. An Analysis of Employment Stratification in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland, *International Sociology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2006;
- Ordeshook, P. C., and O. V. Shvetsova., Ethnic Heterogeneity, District Magnitude, and the Number of Parties, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1994;
- Raymond, C., Explaining the Multiparty Systems of Western Europe Prior to the Adoption of Proportional Representation, *Comparative European Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2016;
- Selway, J. S., The Measurement of Cross-Cutting Cleavages and Other Multidimensional Cleavage Structures, *Political Analysis*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2011;
- Singer, M. W., and L. B. Stephenson., The Political Context and Duverger's Theory: Evidence at the District Level, *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 2009;
- Stoll, H., 2013, *Changing Societies, Changing Party Systems*, Cambridge University Press, New York;
- van der Waal, J., P. Achterberg, and D. Houtman., Class Is Not Dead—It Has Been Buried Alive: Class Voting and Cultural Voting in Postwar Western Societies (1956–1990), *Politics and Society*, Vol. 35, No. 3, 2007;
- Weidmann, N. B., J. K. Rod, and L.-E. Cederman., Representing Ethnic Groups in Space: A New Dataset, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 47, No. 4, 2010;

Internet:

- Przeworski, A. 2013. *Political Institutions and Political Events Dataset*. <https://sites.google.com/a/nyu.edu/adam-przeworski/home/data>.