



**EUROPEAN UNION &  
NATO**

## **TURKEY'S PULSE MARCH 2022**

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The March Turkey's Pulse survey was carried out using the stratified sampling and weighting method on 1,535 people in 28 provinces based on the 26 regions of Turkey's NUTS 2 system between March 10 and 15. The survey used CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) methodology with a margin error of 2.5 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence.

Margin of Error: Overall: +/- 2.5, AKP: +/- 3.89, CHP: +/- 5.36, MHP: +/- 7.72, HDP: +/- 7.75, İYİ Party: +/- 8.14

With very best wishes,

Prof. Dr. Özer Sencar

# Summary

## **EU MEMBERSHIP**

For the first time in three years, support for EU membership has fallen below 50%. As of today, backing stands at 49%. At 40%, opposition is the highest in five years. It's intriguing to see this take place at a time when the government is shifting from conflict to cooperation in foreign policy and seeking rapprochement with Armenia and Israel. It may be that the perceptions of the Ukraine crisis and the fact that a country seeking closer ties with the West was invaded have driven some away from the EU.

## **IS THE ECONOMY READY FOR THE EU?**

The public does not think that Turkey is ready for EU membership. Rising inflation, the cost of living, and the recent falls in standards of living mean the country is economically not ready to join. That said, half of AK Party voters believe the economy is ready. This falls to 12% among CHP and İYİ Party voters.

## **DOES TURKISH DEMOCRACY MEET EU STANDARDS?**

Not only is Turkey's economy seen as unprepared for EU membership. A majority see the democracy as insufficient too: 62% say it falls short of EU standards. Meanwhile, 60% of AK Party voters think it meets EU standards. This falls to 10% among opposition party voters. Aside from government voters, no one else, including the undecided, thinks Turkey's democracy meets EU levels.

## **IS THE EU BIASED AGAINST TURKEY?**

It is a view often expressed that the European Union treats Turkey differently to other candidates and is prejudiced for religious and cultural reasons. This is a view held by three quarters of the Turkish electorate. In fact it's common ground on which people from different political parties can agree. There's complete agreement between opposition and government voters here.

## **WILL THE EU ACCEPT TURKEY?**

That perception of bias may be one reason why most people do not expect Turkey to be accepted into the EU. Only 29% think that Turkey will be admitted when it meets membership criteria. Another 63% think the EU will never admit Turkey. This too is a matter on which there is cross-party accord. Only among HDP voters do slightly more than half think Turkey will be able to join.

## **IS EU MEMBERSHIP A GOVERNMENT GOAL?**

So in these circumstances, does the government seek to make Turkey an EU member? Sixty percent think not. Interestingly, 45% of AK Party voters agree. Only 41% of AK voters think EU membership is a genuine government goal, along with 19% of the CHP and 16% of the İYİ Party.

## **SHOULD TURKEY LEAVE NATO?**

Is an issue that has been revitalized by the Ukraine conflict, but most Turkish voters do not want to leave NATO. Sixty percent want Turkey to remain in the alliance, while 28% favor quitting.

It's notable, however, that even at a time when people are observing how NATO has provided deterrence and security for Europe against Russia, there has been no increase in the alliance's popularity within Turkey. In fact, those wanting to remain have fallen to 60% from 61% in January, while those wanting to leave rose four points over the same period. We can explain the fact that belief in NATO has not risen despite the Ukraine war and rising threat from Russia by pointing to the fact that NATO is frequently blamed for the conflict on Turkish media.

## **US-EU OR RUSSIA-CHINA?**

In January we found a small majority favoring the Russia-China bloc in terms of foreign policy priorities. In a Turkey that has for years had close ties with the Western bloc in security and economy, 39% wanted closer relations with Russia and China, while 38% favored the West.

In the wake of the Ukraine crisis, there's been almost a ten-point fall for the Russia-China bloc, down to 30%, while those favoring the US-EU rose to 39%. This is a shift stemming from the Ukraine attack and the growing perceptions of Russian threat.

However, it's not hard to find deep doubts about the West either. In terms of party electorates, those favoring the West only achieve a majority among the CHP and HDP.

## **BIGGEST THREAT**

The US is seen as the biggest threat to Turkey. This has risen four points since January to 52%.

On the other hand before the Ukraine invasion in January 5% saw Russia as the biggest threat to Turkey. Now it is 19%. The Turkish public's historical suspicion of Russia has risen slightly, but still not to levels of the US. Half of the public see NATO ally the United States as the biggest threat, while threat perception of the country that invades neighbors and historically occupied Turkish lands remains limited. This is a success for Russia public diplomacy.

Also note that perceptions of Israel as a threat have fallen to 2% from 10%. Threat perceptions have fallen sharply as the governments start dialogue and mutual visits.

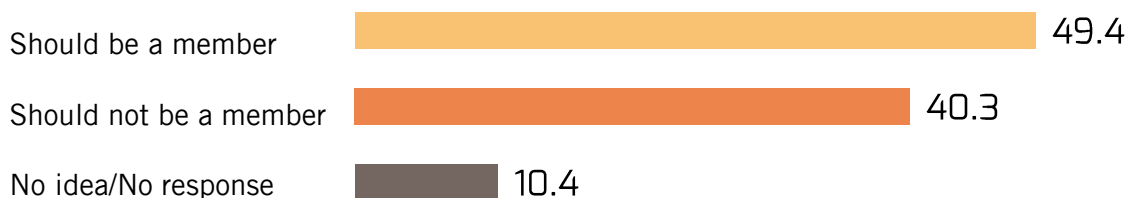
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# SUPPORT FOR EU MEMBERSHIP

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As of March 2022, support for Turkey's membership of the EU was 49%, with the strongest backing coming from HDP voters (71%). Opposition to membership ran at 40%.  
Opposition to membership ran at 40%.

## Should Turkey be a European Union member, or not?



## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

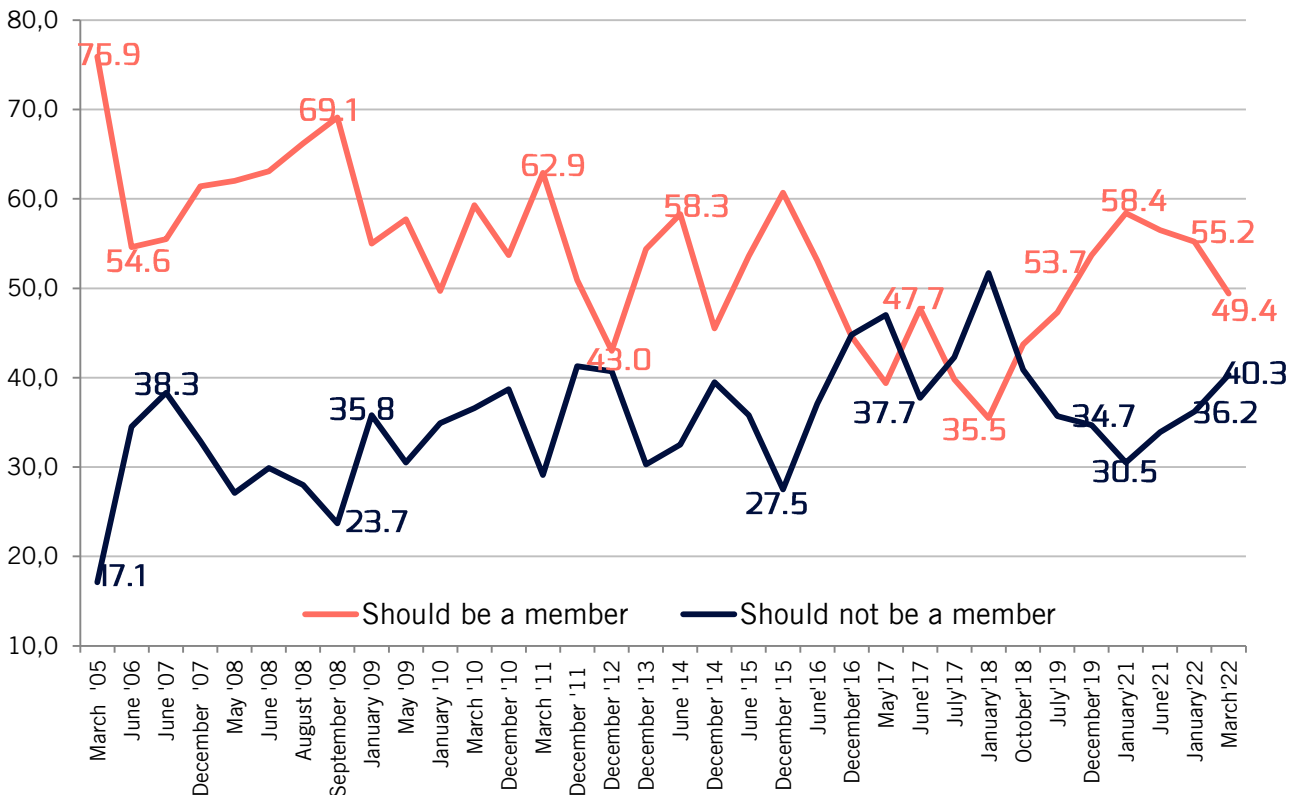
	Should be a member	Should not be a member	No idea/No response	Total
AKP	38.7	49.2	12.0	100
CHP	67.5	24.2	8.3	100
İYİ Party	43.6	51.4	5.0	100
HDP	71.2	22.0	6.8	100
MHP	47.0	48.5	4.5	100
SP	57.9	42.1		100
DEVA	72.4	10.3	17.2	100
Other party	59.3	31.5	9.3	100
Undecided	39.4	45.2	15.4	100
Protest vote	34.5	55.2	10.3	100
No response	40.3	31.9	27.8	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>100</b>

# EU MEMBERSHIP OVER TIME

When accession talks began in March 2005, backing for membership was 76%. Levels of support have fluctuated over the years and stood at 49% in March 2022.

## Should Turkey be a European Union member, or not?

Comparative graphic - %



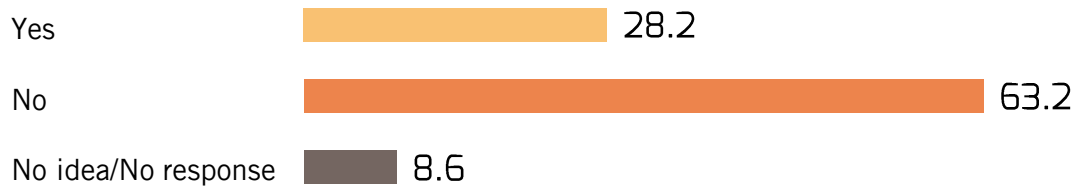
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# IS THE ECONOMY READY FOR THE EU?

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For 28% of voters, the Turkish economy meets EU standards, but for 63% it falls short.

**Do you think the Turkish economy is ready for joining the EU?**



**Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %**

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	51.4	37.4	11.2	100
CHP	12.3	82.5	5.2	100
İYİ Party	11.9	86.2	1.8	100
HDP	15.8	76.3	7.9	100
MHP	40.9	54.5	4.5	100
SP	10.5	89.5		100
DEVA	20.0	66.7	13.3	100
Other party	32.1	67.9		100
Undecided	28.2	54.8	17.0	100
Protest vote	28.3	66.9	4.8	100
No response	22.2	52.8	25.0	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>100</b>



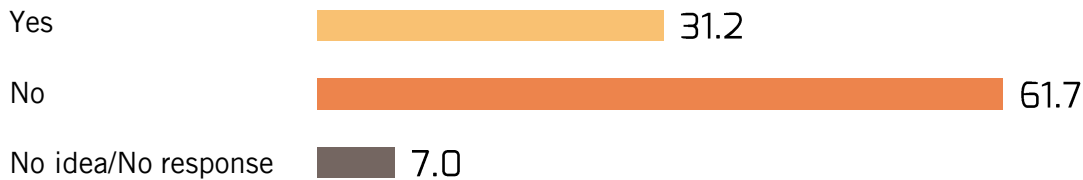
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# DOES OUR DEMOCRACY REACH EU STANDARDS?

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Similarly, 31% think that Turkish democracy meets EU standards, but 62% feel it falls short.

## Do you think democracy in Turkey matches EU standards?



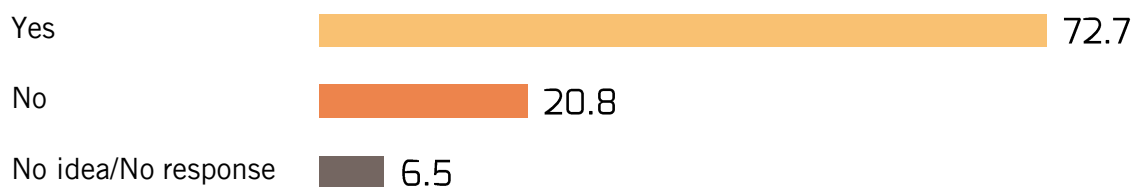
## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	60.3	31.3	8.4	100
CHP	12.5	81.7	5.8	100
İYİ Party	10.1	88.9	0.9	100
HDP	13.6	79.1	7.3	100
MHP	63.1	36.9		100
SP	15.8	84.2		100
DEVA	3.4	75.9	20.7	100
Other party	22.2	75.9	1.9	100
Undecided	35.1	52.7	12.2	100
Protest vote	25.5	66.9	7.6	100
No response	30.6	54.2	15.3	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>100</b>

# IS THE EU BIASED AGAINST TURKEY?

Almost three quarters think that the EU discriminates against Turkey, while 21% disagree.

## Do you think the EU discriminates against Turkey in the accession process?



## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	78.0	15.5	6.5	100
CHP	67.9	27.2	4.9	100
İYİ Party	77.4	20.7	1.8	100
HDP	57.4	37.5	5.1	100
MHP	81.8	12.1	6.1	100
SP	89.5	10.5		100
DEVA	86.2	13.8		100
Other party	83.3	16.7		100
Undecided	67.0	18.6	14.4	100
Protest vote	75.2	18.6	6.2	100
No response	67.6	12.7	19.7	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>72.7</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>100</b>

## Distributed according to response on whether Turkey should join the EU -%

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
Yes, it should	71.4	24.9	3.7	100
No, it should not	77.7	16.8	5.5	100
No idea/No response	59.3	16.5	24.2	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>72.7</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>100</b>

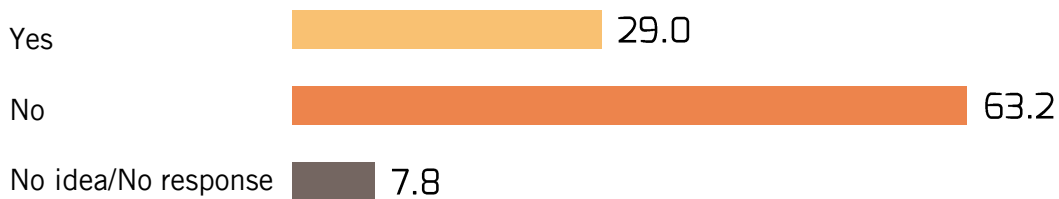
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# WILL THE EU ACCEPT TURKEY AS A MEMBER?

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Twenty-nine percent think that Turkey will be accepted as a member of the EU when it meets all the conditions. By contrast, 63% think that even if it meets the criteria, Turkey will still not be admitted.

**Do you think that if Turkey meets all the conditions the EU will accept Turkey as a member?**



**Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %**

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	26.7	64.9	8.4	100
CHP	31.3	62.9	5.8	100
İYİ Party	16.6	79.3	4.1	100
HDP	53.4	37.5	9.1	100
MHP	26.2	73.8		100
SP	31.6	42.1	26.3	100
DEVA	30.0	66.7	3.3	100
Other party	25.9	72.2	1.9	100
Undecided	25.7	63.1	11.2	100
Protest vote	26.0	65.1	8.9	100
No response	29.2	52.8	18.1	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>100</b>

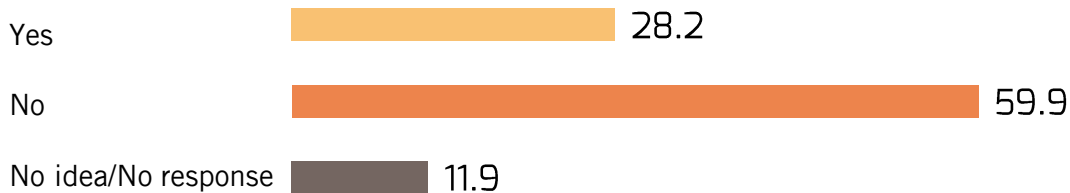
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# IS THE EU A GOVERNMENT GOAL?

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Sixty percent think the government does not intend to make Turkey a member of the EU, while 28% believe there is such a goal.

## Do you think the government has a goal to make Turkey an EU member?



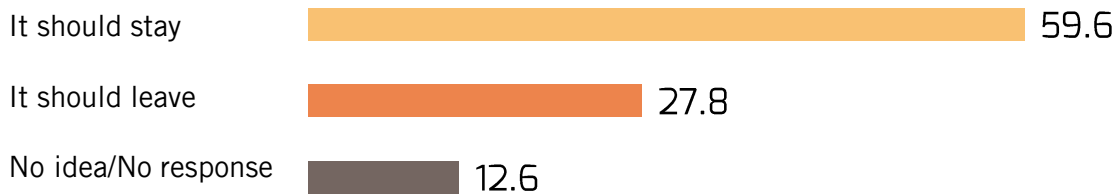
## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

	Yes	No	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	41.1	44.9	14.0	100
CHP	18.7	69.1	12.2	100
İYİ Party	16.1	81.7	2.3	100
HDP	22.6	62.7	14.7	100
MHP	43.1	50.8	6.2	100
SP	52.6	47.4		100
DEVA	23.3	73.3	3.3	100
Other party	20.4	74.1	5.6	100
Undecided	29.3	53.2	17.6	100
Protest vote	25.3	63.0	11.6	100
No response	31.0	47.9	21.1	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>100</b>

# SHOULD TURKEY LEAVE NATO?

Sixty-one percent think Turkey should stay in NATO. Twenty-eight percent want out.

## Do you think Turkey should stay in NATO, or leave?



## Comparative Table - %

	Dec'13	Aug'16	Dec'16	June'17	July'17	July'19	Dec'19	Sept'20	June'21	Jan'22	March'22
It should stay	49.2	51.1	65.7	55.3	51.6	54.4	57.9	61.6	66.9	60.5	59.6
It should leave	27.2	28.3	17.2	25.8	25.3	26.9	28.4	22.0	19.7	24.0	27.8

## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

	It should stay	It should leave	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	59.1	25.4	15.5	100
CHP	58.9	32.2	8.9	100
İYİ Party	57.8	33.5	8.7	100
HDP	67.4	24.6	8.0	100
MHP	80.3	19.7		100
SP	63.2	36.8		100
DEVA	55.2	24.1	20.7	100
Other party	66.7	33.3		100
Undecided	55.3	21.8	22.9	100
Protest vote	49.7	37.9	12.4	100
No response	61.1	9.7	29.2	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>100</b>

# US-EU OR RUSSIA-CHINA?

While 39% want Turkey to prioritize the EU and US in foreign relations, 30% think Russia and China should be the priority.

**In its foreign relations, should Turkey prioritize the EU and US, or Russia and China?**



## Comparative Table - %

	January'22	March'22
EU-US	37.5	39.3
Russia-China	39.4	29.5
No idea/No response	23.1	31.1

## Distributed according to voting intention expressed for an election on Sunday - %

	EU-US	Russia-China	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	28.7	33.8	37.5	100
CHP	54.9	22.7	22.4	100
İYİ Party	35.0	47.5	17.5	100
HDP	70.6	18.1	11.3	100
MHP	33.3	34.8	31.8	100
SP	31.6	31.6	36.8	100
DEVA	50.0	21.4	28.6	100
Other party	33.3	44.4	22.2	100
Undecided	29.8	22.9	47.3	100
Protest vote	28.3	22.8	49.0	100
No response	29.6	23.9	46.5	100
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>100</b>

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# BIGGEST THREAT

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Just over half of the Turkish public see the United States as the biggest threat to the country, followed by Russia on 19%. Four percent of Turks see all countries as a threat.

***Which country poses the biggest threat to Turkey?\****

***(\*Asked as open-ended question.)***

***Comparative Table - %***

	January'22	March'22
US	48.4	51.7
Russia	5.1	19.4
Greece	3.2	2.5
Israel	9.9	1.9
China	0.6	0.9
EU	0.8	0.7
Arab countries	4.8	0.6
Syria	2.5	0.5
UK	1.7	0.5
Iran	0.8	0.4
No country	0.6	0.9
All countries	2.9	3.6
Other	3.6	1.1
No idea/No response	15.0	15.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>