

How Should We Read the Referendum in Turkey?

American Socialist Tribune

U.S. WORLD OPINION IN DEPTH POLITICS RELIGION HISTORY YOUTH HUMAN RIGHTS ALL

TRENDING TOPICS: French Election, MAGA, War on Yemen, Syria Crisis

WORLD - EUROPE

APRIL 30, 2017 BY HARUN YAHYA

How Should We Read the Referendum in Turkey?



On April 16th, the ratio of yes campaigners of the Turkish referendum which was held about the acceptance of the new Constitution was 51.4 %. Except for a few minor judicial cases, the referendum and the voting process were held without any incidents.

Including the one in force, Turkey has been administered by four different constitutions so far. The constitutions of 1921, 1924, 1961 and 1982 were established under the influence of the army. The last two constitutions were the outright products of military coups and during their referendum processes, heavy propaganda limitations were imposed.

Although the new Constitution was accepted by a narrow margin, that this Constitution was - for the first time - established by the deputies elected by the people is a significant development for the Turkish democracy history.

The Turkish press covered the political surveys put out during the referendum process extensively. Their forecasts varied considerably; there were some that estimated the "yes" votes would reach up to 60 percent while others said the "no" votes would be around 60 percent. Public opinion polls that foresaw a referendum result almost in half were very few. Thus it is possible to say that polling companies were among the losers of this referendum.

Given the results of the last general election of November 2015, the yes votes were far below anticipated. Yet the new constitution was drafted by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in collaboration with Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) that possessed 65 percent of the votes together. Yet the referendum results delivered almost 15 percent loss in these votes from which we infer that both among the AKP and the MHP voters, there were some who disapproved of the new Constitution.

What essentially underlay this loss of votes was a view expressed by some AKP members and the President's advisors; bringing a federal system to Turkey. The MHP is a party that has advocated for the unity and integrity of Turkey against the PKK for many years. Although the President and the Prime Minister refuted these statements about the federal system, they seem to have startled both the AKP and the MHP voters.

Another issue about the MHP is the emergence of an opposing group within the party during the constitution draft negotiations and their efforts to change the party administration. This group later severed its relations with the MHP and conducted a very stern "no" campaign. Another striking consequence of the referendum was the no campaign's success in Thrace, Aegean and Mediterranean regions, despite the AKP's sporadic dominance in these regions during the last general elections. The secular lifestyle widely adopted by the local communities is the shared trait of these regions. Assessing the results of the referendum, political analysts state that people of the coastal regions, where significant tourism centers are located, express more concerns about interference in lifestyles or the curbing of freedoms. Indeed, even the AKP's investments and development plans in these regions do not seem to eliminate these concerns. Apparently for the AKP to be successful in these regions, it must turn to a new tone embracing freedoms and the prevalent lifestyle in these regions. Other regions revealing striking results are the East and Southeast of Anatolia, where Kurdish citizens make up the majority. In these regions the influence of the People's Democratic Party (HDP), backed by the PKK organization, seems to have diminished. The main reason for this outcome is the Turkish state's struggle against the PKK in these regions. Now that the PKK can no longer threaten the local people with weapons, the Turkish citizens could better exercise their free will in the ballot boxes.

In their own way, both the yes and no campaigners of the referendum harbor legitimate concerns, for which reasons we need to respect the opinions of both sides. No matter which Constitution becomes instrumental for it, what Turkey needs to do is to demonstrate that an Islamic country can indeed safeguard its democracy.

Tag: Turkey

WRITER

HARUN YAHYA
Adnan Oktar, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on faith-related, scientific and political issues.

RECOMMENDED

Do You Often Feel Tired and Sluggish? Take Simple Online Quiz.

Masha Ya'alon Admits 'Tacit Israel-ISIS Alliance' Report

Liberia's War Lord Queen: The Bloodstained Career of Eleanor Sirleaf Johnson

Saudi Arabia Channels Bulgarian Weapons Transfer to Terrorists in Syria

Al-Baghdadi's Senior Aide Captured in Syria with a Large amount of Cash

The Balkans Need Reconciliation Instead of Tension

Readings in the Jewish Zionist Control of the United States: Interviews with Francis Boyle...

Wilayah and Imamate of Ahl al-Beyt (a) as the Basis of the Genuine Islam...

Pimping for Israel Remains Undiminished Since US Report Branded It an Apartheid State

On April 16th, the ratio of yes campaigners of the Turkish referendum which was held about the acceptance of the new Constitution was 51.4 %. Except for a few minor judicial cases, the referendum and the voting process were held without any incidents.

Including the one in force, Turkey has been administered by four different constitutions so far. The constitutions of 1921, 1924, 1961 and 1982 were established under the influence of the army. The last two constitutions were the outright products of military coups and during their referendum processes, heavy propaganda limitations were imposed.

Although the new Constitution was accepted by a narrow margin, that this Constitution was - for the first time - established by the deputies elected by the people is a significant development for the Turkish democracy history.

The Turkish press covered the political surveys put out during the referendum process extensively. Their forecasts varied considerably; there were some that estimated the "yes" votes would reach up to 60 percent while others said the "no" votes would be

around 60 percent. Public opinion polls that foresaw a referendum result almost in half were very few. Thus it is possible to say that polling companies were among the losers of this referendum.

Given the results of the last general election of November 2015, the yes votes were far below anticipated. Yet the new constitution was drafted by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in collaboration with Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) that possessed 65 percent of the votes together. Yet the referendum results delivered almost 15 percent loss in these votes from which we infer that both among the AKP and the MHP voters, there were some who disapproved of the new Constitution.

What essentially underlay this loss of votes was a view expressed by some AKP members and the President's advisors; bringing a federal system to Turkey. The MHP is a party that has advocated for the unity and integrity of Turkey against the PKK for many years. Although the President and the Prime Minister refuted these statements about the federal system, they seem to have startled both the AKP and the MHP voters.

Another issue about the MHP is the emergence of an opposing group within the party during the constitution draft negotiations and their efforts to change the party administration. This group later severed its relations with the MHP and conducted a very stern "no" campaign. Another striking consequence of the referendum was the no campaign's success in Thrace, Aegean and Mediterranean regions, despite the AKP's sporadic dominance in these regions during the last general elections. The secular lifestyle widely adopted by the local communities is the shared trait of these regions. Assessing the results of the referendum, political analysts state that people of the coastal regions, where significant tourism centers are located, express more concerns about interference in lifestyles or the curbing of freedoms. Indeed, even the AKP's investments and development plans in these regions do not seem to eliminate these concerns. Apparently for the AKP to be successful in these regions, it must turn to a new tone embracing freedoms and the prevalent lifestyle in these regions. Other regions revealing striking results are the East and Southeast of Anatolia, where Kurdish citizens make up the majority. In these regions the influence of the People's Democratic Party (HDP), backed by the PKK organization, seems to have diminished. The main reason for this outcome is the Turkish state's struggle against the PKK in these regions. Now that the PKK can no longer threaten the local people with weapons, the Turkish citizens could better exercise their free will in the ballot boxes.

In their own way, both the yes and no campaigners of the referendum harbor legitimate concerns, for which reason we need to respect the opinions of both sides. No matter which Constitution becomes instrumental for it, what Turkey needs to do is to demonstrate that an Islamic country can indeed safeguard its democracy.

Adnan Oktar's piece in American Herald Tribune:

<http://ahtribune.com/world/europe/1643-referendum-in-turkey.html>

<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/how-should-we-read-the-referendum-in-turkey>