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# THE PERCEPTION OF DISCRIMINATION IN TURKEY

Types • Agents • Dimensions





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Printing Press: Ceylan Matbaası  
İSTANBUL - 2019

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## Acronyms

<b>AKP - AK PARTY</b>	Justice And Development Party
<b>AMER</b>	Association for Monitoring Equal Rights
<b>BBP</b>	Great Unity Party
<b>CHP</b>	Republican People's Party
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
<b>HDP</b>	People's Democratic Party
<b>KAOS-GL</b>	Kaos Gay And Lesbian Cultural Research And Solidarity Association
<b>KPSS</b>	Public Personnel Selection Examination
<b>LGBTI+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
<b>MAZLUM-DER</b>	The Association for Human Rights And Solidarity Association
<b>MHP</b>	Nationalist Movement Party
<b>MRG</b>	International Minority Rights Group
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>TEPAV</b>	Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

## Preface

Discrimination, which frequently blends in with various rights violations, is a common phenomenon, especially for the groups which are more at risk, despite being prohibited in many international conventions and national legislation. Discriminatory practices which prevent disadvantaged groups from accessing human rights are increasingly “absorbed” by these groups and as a result, are perceived as part of daily life.

Facilitating the visibility of discrimination which has become a phenomenon we encounter as part of the ordinary course of daily life and do not think too much on, as well as combatting it, is crucial to ensure equality. However, issues such as the social internationalization of discrimination, the lack of effective prevention and compensation mechanisms for the victims, and the lack of utilization of existing means of remedies or seeking rights, all contribute to rendering discrimination invisible.

The complex networks of relationships on discrimination, and patterns where the lines between the person subject to discriminatory practices and the perpetrator often blur together, when contexts change, the “victim” might become the perpetrator, makes it difficult to monitor and combat discrimination. The question of how to make these patterns a bit more comprehensible was the driving force behind conducting a research about discrimination across Turkey. We have tried to plan this research, also by taking into consideration that, there has been no research done which encompasses all prohibited grounds of discrimination in Turkey.

The aim of the research is to reveal, how discrimination takes place in the minds of people, what they understand from discrimination, to whom and on what basis discrimination is practiced, and what positions the victims take in the face of discriminatory practices. For this purpose, we have identified the sample group and the number of provinces to undertake the research, so as to represent a general overview of Turkey.

The research is not only focused on the perpetrators or those who are exposed to discrimination, on the contrary, it aims to discover the experience, feelings and thoughts of each group with regards to discrimination as well as reaching to a conclusion which can be functional in combating discrimination through this vein.

We hope, this research will provide a framework for those who undertake work on discrimination such as non-governmental organizations, academics and decision-makers as well as the wider public in general.

We would like to thank the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, without whose financial support, this research would not have been possible. We would like to thank to research assistant Seçil Doğuç and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cem Özatalay, who planned and reported this field research and to Bulgu Research Company, which implemented the field research.

# 1. Introduction

The concept of discrimination, just like the concept of othering, has frequently appeared in the media and public sphere for some time. Even a quick media search on the Internet for news published between October 20-27, 2018 shows how often discrimination has become a commonly used concept. On October 26 2018, the headline of the news announcing the ruling party's strategy for local election nomination was "The AK Party Will Apply Positive Discrimination to Women Candidates"<sup>1</sup>. On October 25, 2018, the sports media announced that the tickets of the Fenerbahçe's Anderlecht match in Belgium sold by looking at individuals' ID cards with the title of "Ugly Discrimination Against Fenerbahçe"<sup>2</sup>. On October 20, 2018, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's "Anyone who discriminates based on ethnicity in our country will have to face us first."<sup>3</sup> speech brought to the headlines by the media. Again, on October 20, 2018, a news headline that appeared on the sports pages: "Attention-Grabbing Event for Discrimination in Sport from Green Crescent"<sup>4</sup>.

The fact that the concept of discrimination is used so frequently in the media may suggest that this concept is a priority title of social research. However, reality does not confirm this idea. Indeed, using the concept of discrimination in social science researches in Turkey is a relatively new phenomenon. Moreover, this situation is not only limited to Turkey but also includes continental Europe.

Although the introduction of the concept of equality into legal texts dates back to the times of French Revolution, the introduction of discriminatory attitudes causing inequality into legal documents was only possible with the emergence of the struggle for Human Rights in the post-World War II period.

Even though the articles 2 and 7 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights do not use the concept of discrimination, they include emphases on anti-discrimination. The 88-page report<sup>5</sup> on the *Main Types and Causes of Discrimination* issued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1949 can be considered as one of the founding texts on this issue. According to definition in the report, discrimination defined "as unequal and adverse treatment leading to inequality between members of the privileged category and non-members, by denying the rights or social advantages of members of a particular social class,

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1 Akşam, October 26, 2018, <<https://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/ak-partide-kadin-atagi/haber-787326>>

2 Fanatik, October 25, 2018, <<https://www.fanatik.com.tr/fenerbahceye-cirkin-ayrimcilik-2019640>>

3 Anadolu Ajansı, October 20, 2018, <<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gunun-basliklari/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-etnik-ayrimcilik-yapan-karsisinda-once-bizi-bulur/1287847>>

4 Hürriyet, October 20, 2018, <<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yerel-haberler/manisa/yesilaydan-sporda-ayrimciliga-dikkat-ceken-etk-40993204>>

5 [https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1638125/files/E\\_CN-4\\_Sub-2\\_40\\_Rev-1-EN.pdf](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1638125/files/E_CN-4_Sub-2_40_Rev-1-EN.pdf)

or by imposing special conditions on them; or by providing a variety of advantages to members of another category."

However, the inclusion of discrimination in universal legal texts should not be understood, as if the concept has become one of the priority subjects of social sciences. Primary subjects of studies in post-war Europe firstly focused on the efforts to reach an explanation framework of the experiences of fascism left behind. Also, at the same time, it focused on the problems of transition to consumer society and issues caused by modernization in industry. At this point, the United States of America (USA) is an exemption.

The African American Civil Rights Movement, which emerged primarily in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s, brings the issue of discrimination not only to the agenda of politics but also to the agenda of social sciences. Discrimination starts to be considered together with the concept of power relations. Accordingly, discrimination at the social level, which brings about the formation of majority and minority groups, serves to reproduce structural power relations.<sup>6</sup> However, as we have said, such academic interest in the issue of discrimination is almost exclusive to the United States.

One of the main reasons for the situation is that the concept of discrimination become meaningful within the perspective of "equality of opportunity" which is the founding notion of justice of the USA. In post-war Continental Europe, inequalities are discussed around the question of the reproduction of power relations in favour of the (economic, cultural, social capital) capital owners. In other words, differentiating from the United States, the problem of structural inequality of positions become prominent in Europe, not the inequality of opportunities between individuals or groups. Reduction of the differences between positions- the wage gap between manager and employee, or the value gap between the diploma of an elite school and vocational school- is at the centre of public debate. As such, the concept of discrimination cannot take its place in the dominant discussion of inequality of positions in Europe until the 1990s. The situation will almost follow the same path in Turkey. And what could be the reason for this? What changes after the 1990s that the concept of discrimination comes into prominence? Of course, there is no single answer to this question. However, even by touching on one of the answers, we may have some explanations.

For our discussion, the most important consequence of the neoliberal transformation and marketization, which gained momentum in the 1980s, would be

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6 Bereni, L., ve V.-A. Chappe. 2011. "La Discrimination, de La Qualification Juridique à l'outil Sociologique." *Politix*, 94 (2): s. 16.

the prevention of the channels of intervention by the public power in the area of redistribution of positional inequalities. When a public response is cut off, competition, which is the primary institution of the market, becomes the main determinant of justice and injustice in all areas of life (school, work-life, sports, art, etc.). Thus, by the 1990s, the "equality of opportunity" and related subject discrimination become the focus of justice debates in the public sphere not only in the USA but also in Europe and Turkey.

The perspective of equality of opportunity accepts the inequality of class positions as given. It is not questioned why person X occupying the position A gains more than the person Y occupying position B and does not examine the differences in access to resources between these two positions. Instead the differences in opportunities between person X, who strives to reach the status of A, and person Y is concerned. The concept of discrimination will be functional at the exact moment of the observation and investigation of these differences. This transformation does not mean that there was no discrimination before neoliberalism. It merely points out that with the process of neo-liberalization, discrimination has become much more perceptible than the previous periods since all kinds of exchange between people - the ability to access a partner, a diploma or a commodity - become subject to competition.

Discrimination based on race, ethnic identity, gender, and religious beliefs and discriminatory practices begins to be questioned and investigated. There is no doubt that the tendency of the cultural turn in the social sciences in the early 1990s and the right based struggles of disadvantaged groups had impacts on this investigation process. However, as we mentioned above, in the emergence of all these tendencies and struggles, we think that the discriminatory practices embedded in the competitive market justice play a vital role.

To capture the discrimination practices better today, we would like to include a recent definition of discrimination. "Discrimination is an unequal treatment based on the application of an illegitimate criterion. On the one hand, the treatment requires a tangible and continuous outcome- not an idea but action-; on the other hand, it should be based on an argument unacceptable for society- obviously that changes according to moral references every society makes while constructing the difference between social beings-.<sup>7</sup> We believe that this definition is important because, it emphasizes that to accept an unequal behaviour as discriminatory in any society, the reference on which that behaviour is based on must be illegitimate to society. For example, we know that the media organizations that we cited

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7 Fassin, D. 2002. "L'invention Française de La Discrimination." *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 52 (4): 403-423.

the headlines that carry rejection to the discrimination at the beginning of this chapter, also carry many discriminatory slogans to their headlines. To find examples of both cases, -a quick look to the Hrant Dink Foundation's Hate Speech and Discrimination Discourse reports, regularly published since 2009, will be sufficient. These reports are clear examples of the fact that members of the majority group in any country complain of discrimination when they feel victimized and continue to discriminate when they are privileged. Moreover, their reference frames do not allow them to see that as a contradiction.

Therefore, to define discriminatory acts as discriminatory requires a struggle - often by minority group members- to ensure that the basis of the action is illegitimate for the majority as well, since it is performed mostly by the majority or dominant group. In this sense, just as the "old" frame of reference, which causes discrimination, is a construction, the "new" frame of reference that makes it possible discrimination to be grasped in a consciousness level also needs to be constructed.

In Turkey, the civil society organizations which struggle for human rights initiated this act of construction. The foundation of the Human Rights Association in 1986, and the Human Rights Foundation in 1990; followed with the establishment of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly in 1993. We know that these organizations started with the activities aiming to prevent the state from the violation of the constitutional rights of individuals and to promote the development of democratic rights in the country. On the other hand, the 1980s were the years when the independent feminist movement was getting organized. In 1987, The Women's Organization Against Discrimination was explicitly established to fight against gender-based discrimination. In 1985, Turkey being a signatory country of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1979, had affected The Women's Organization Against Discrimination to identify the aims of their struggle. By the time the association mentioned above starts fighting for the realization of Convention objectives. In other words, while non-governmental organizations weakening the "old" reference framework based on discrimination in the country by carrying out activities for the implementation of the international legal texts signed by the state and fighting against the violation of rights; the discriminatory norms, and the agents of these norms try to maintain the "old" reference framework.

We witness that this confrontation highly escalated after the 2000s. Between 2001 and 2004, the Turkish Grand National Assembly legalized eight EU harmonization packages and two constitutional packages aiming at entering the European Union. Some of these include regulations that aim to prevent discrimination. The European Commission has been also offering various funds to identify and

change the status of social categories of victims of discrimination. At the same time, new NGOs aiming to fight against discrimination were founded in Turkey. We see that comprehensive reports on discrimination in Turkey also starts to be published followingly. Some of these publications are as follows: "Discrimination, Racism, and Hate Crimes" report by Human Rights Agenda Association in 2005; Discrimination Monitoring Reports on four different areas ("Racial or Ethnic Origin", "Religion or Belief", "Disability", "Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity") prepared separately by Istanbul Bilgi University Human Rights Law Research and Application Centre and released at different dates in 2010 and 2011; "Discrimination Report on Turkey from the Perspective of Alevis" report which was published with the collaboration of Alevi Cultural Associations, Middle East Technical University, and Hacı Bektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation in 2010; "Ethnic Discrimination Report in Turkey" by The Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed (Mazlum-Der) published in 2011; "Discrimination and Right Violations Against Disabled in Turkey Report" prepared by Association for Monitoring Equal Rights, published in 2011; "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity-Based Human Rights Watch Report" an annual report starting from 2013 by Pink Life LGBTI Solidarity Association and the Kaos Gay and Lesbian Cultural Research and Solidarity Association (Kaos GL); "Ratings for Gender Equality for 81 Cities, and Equality in Education Monitoring Project" bi-annual report which was published by Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) since 2014; International Minority Rights Group (MRG), with the partnership of the History Foundation published the report titled "Colour, Ethnicity, Language, Religion and Faith-based Discrimination in Turkish Education System" in 2015. Within the same period, we also see that the issue of discrimination has gained importance in academic publications, too. In particular, a tremendous amount of literature started to form on gender-based discrimination in work-life, and apart from that, there was increasing attention to examining hate speech and discriminatory discourse in the media. We can also say that there is a significant increase in the researches about groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI+), disabled, and elderly, groups that were subjected to discrimination has started to be expressed and recognized after the 2000s.

The research report you are reading aims to contribute to this literature. At this point, it can be said that this report differs from the researches of discrimination, which has been conducted by using quantitative and qualitative analysis of discrimination cases or learning the experiences victims of discrimination, by widely including the perpetrators and potential perpetrators of discrimination into the research space. The main objective of this research is learning the experiences, feelings and ideas of potentially perpetrators or victims of discrimination in Turkey, and to reach some findings which would be functional and beneficial to use in struggle for non-discrimination.

## 2. Methodology and the Fieldwork

This research aims to understand thoughts, feelings, and experiences of potential perpetrators and victims of discrimination in Turkey, and thus, targeting to reach some findings will be operational in the struggle against discrimination. The research conducted by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods gradually.

In the first stage, a sample of 1064 people from 26 cities resembling Turkey has been formed. The questionnaire is used as a method to learn the overall trend of Turkey. In the first part of the questionnaire, the aim was to learn the perceived discrimination practices of the people in the research space and their opinions about the target groups. In this framework, two scales have been used based on the concept of “perceived discrimination”. The first scale is “Major Experiences of Discrimination”, and the second one is the “Everyday Discrimination Scale.”<sup>8</sup>. The first set of questions seeks to find out whether people experience discrimination against themselves or others in the workplace, at school, in their neighbourhood, and in-service sector. If they have experienced any discrimination, researchers asked subjects opinion on the reason(s) of the discrimination. With these questions, research aims to understand which types of discrimination are more prominent and where and for whom they are applied more widely depending on ethnicity, religious belief/disbelief, being a refugee/migrant, physical and/or mental disability, being young or old, gender, sexual identity<sup>9</sup> (sexual orientation/gender identity/gender expression/gender characteristics) and political reasons. The second set of questions examines how everyday life discrimination expressed in behaviours. It also questions the basis on which types of discrimination this gets out. That is to say, this research aims to learn the prevalence and reasons of discriminatory practices such as not being respected by others, being called with humiliating nicknames, being treated as if they were not smart enough, unreliable, lower than others and getting exposed to insulting behaviours, threat or harassment practice in their daily human relationships. The same scales in the previous question set were used as the reasons for discriminatory practices. Finally, an extended version of the “Major Discrimination Experiences” question set was used in order to measure the frequency of discrimination experienced by the interlocutors. While the researchers increased the diversity of questions about discrimination in the workplace, school, and neighbourhood, they also added questions about the

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8 See. Williams, D. R. “Measuring Discrimination Resource.”, June 2016, <[https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/davidrwilliams/files/measuring\\_discrimination\\_resource\\_june\\_2016.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/davidrwilliams/files/measuring_discrimination_resource_june_2016.pdf)>

9 In this report, Sexual Identity is used as a common phrase for the terms of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, gender characteristics.

frequency of discriminatory treatment in state institutions (police, judiciary, etc.) to the questionnaire. In the following sections of the study, there are questions to understand people's feelings and behaviours after being subjected to discriminatory treatment(s). In the last section, questions aim to grasp the social positions of subjects to evaluate their perceptions of discrimination and their behaviours against discriminatory behaviours. These are questions about educational background, gender, age, occupation, income, place of birth, ethnicity, religious belief/disbelief.

In the second stage of the field research, a focus group discussion is conducted to learn more about the reasons for the impressive results of the quantitative analysis. It was decided that only in this way, the role of ethnic origin, political view, gender and class differences' in the perception of discrimination could be understood in full terms. Within this framework, four focus group discussions- all in Istanbul- were held. Two focus group discussions organized separately for women and men with participants from different political perspectives. In doing so, the researchers envisaged to facilitate the understanding of the impact of the gender differences in the perception of discrimination and to prevent the occurrence of male domination during focus group discussions. The other two focus group discussions were designed to analyse the impact of socio-economic status differences on the perception of discrimination. While the first group includes the people who have a higher status in the social hierarchy in terms of occupation, education, income level, living environment, housing type and property ownership level; the second group includes people who have a lower status in the social hierarchy according to the same criteria. Thus, it is aimed to deepen the results obtained from quantitative data analysis with the results of qualitative data analysis.

### 3. Perceived Discrimination in Turkey

Different than the concept of prejudice, expressing unexperienced convictions and feelings towards a group, discrimination requires concrete actions and experiences. For the same reason, researches on discrimination often give priority to examine concrete and measurable cases. However, in terms of social consequences, it is both impossible and inaccurate to distinguish prejudice and discrimination from each other. Thus, these two phenomena playing roles in the construction of social separation and hierarchy nourish and complement each other.

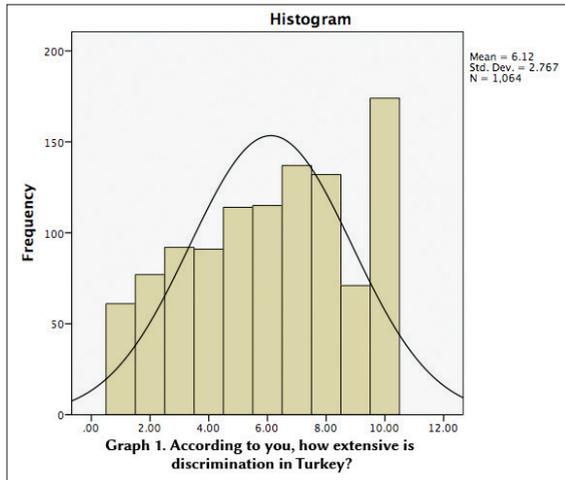
Therefore, to examine the perception of discrimination, including concrete prejudices, as well as mutual prejudices among the members of different social groups constituting society, makes it possible to reach findings on the construction of social distinctions. These findings also enable us to identify some of the priorities necessary to struggle against discrimination and established prejudices. For example, it is not always easy for the ones experiencing discrimination at the level of perception to prove it. Let us assume that a person has made an application for a qualifying position. We know that this application may not result positively for various reasons. However, let us assume that the person whose application denied thinks that it arises from her/his/their sexual identity or ethnicity. This person will not be able to record her/his/their experience as a case of discrimination due to the lack of apparent evidence. That is also possible that the person not being hired is not to be related to discrimination. However, the person who is not hired thinking and feeling that is related to discrimination will be decisive in his/her/their subsequent decisions and steps s/he/ they will take. In other words, the consequences of the perception of discrimination will be no different from publicly discriminatory behaviour. The same situation is valid for an advantageous group member as well. If one thinks that he/she/they employed for being a member of an advantageous group, this perception will determine his/her/their future attitudes and behaviours, and these attitudes and behaviours will lead to the construction of a discriminatory social hierarchy.

For this reason, we should say that some of the findings obtained in this study measuring the perception of discrimination, is prejudice. However, due to the reasons we mentioned above, we believe that prejudices should not be underestimated considering their role in the construction of a hierarchical social environment based on discrimination.

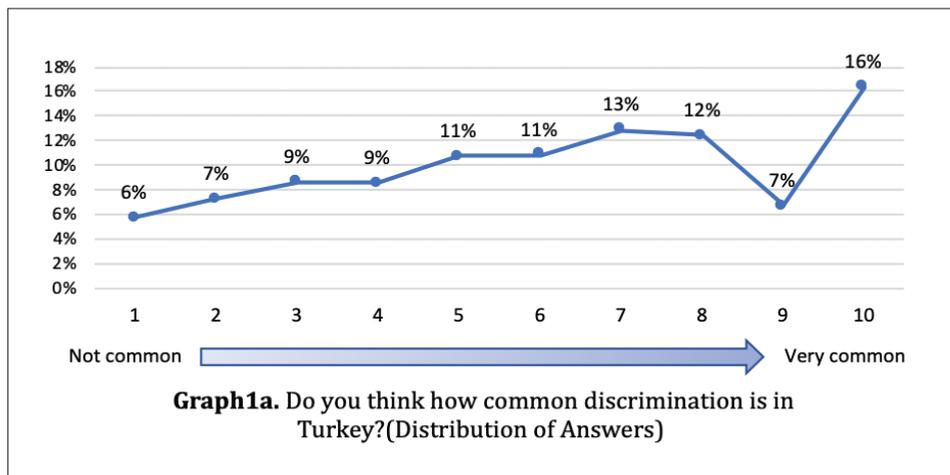
#### 3.A. Prevalence of Discrimination

Let us begin our investigation by reviewing our perception of the pervasiveness of discrimination in Turkey. The frequency of the markers of 10 on the scoring

scale of 1 to 10 can be observed in Graph 1. It shows us that people who believe that discrimination is very common in Turkey is quite high. This group constitutes 16.4 per cent of the total sample. If we add the ones marking 9, we can say that a group of 23.1 per-cent thinks that discrimination is pervasive in Turkey.



In the same context, it is possible to constitute the second group of people with the same perception level from those who score the prevalence of discrimination less than 5 and think that discrimination is below the middle. **Those who think that discrimination is not common or less common constitute 30.3 per-cent.** The largest group in Turkey is the ones thinking that discrimination is prevalent in part. **46.8 per-cent of the interlocutors make a prevalence assessment of 5 to 8 points, saying that they believe that discrimination is partly prevalent.**



The interesting data here is that those who mark the highest score (10 points) as the most common level of discrimination constitute the peak value (mode) of the data set. **The median value is 6 and the average value is 6.12, with a peak of 10, indicating that a group that thinks discrimination is very common differs from the rest of the country in this regard.**

And which characteristics distinguish this group from the rest? We observe that especially four variables are related to the perception of discrimination: income level, education level, religious belonging, and ethnic belonging.

### **3.A.1. Relationship Between Income and Education Level and Perception of Discrimination**

There is a strong relationship between income level and the perception of the prevalence of discrimination.<sup>10</sup> **In other words, while the perception of the prevalence of discrimination in low-income individuals is higher than expected, it is the opposite for high-income individuals.**

When we look at the level of education, we find a significant relation but in the opposite way.<sup>11</sup> **While the perception of the prevalence of discrimination is higher in high school and university level educators, it is a common belief that discrimination is not widespread in those with lower education levels.** In this context, when it comes to the perception of the prevalence of discrimination, we see that education level and income level are in the opposite direction. Application of the Pearson correlation analysis also confirms this opposite relationship between the income level, education level and the prevalence of discrimination.<sup>12</sup>

However, in the focus group discussions conducted to understand the nature of the difference in this issue, we observed that the level of education provided a rhetorical advantage to the interlocutors regarding the definition of discrimination, but there is no direct reflection of it in their attitudes towards discrimination. For example, a male educator with graduate degree differentiates himself from the rest of the group by answering "what is discrimination?" question as "othering". However, during a discussion in the group on the Syrian migrants, the same person justifies discrimination towards Syrians by saying "because they stink"<sup>13</sup>. This example shows that there is a gap between rhetoric and attitude when concrete situations are concerned. In the same focus group meeting, it was observed that an interlocutor- a woman wearing a headscarf, also with a graduate degree and often references to the experiences of her relatives living as workers in European countries, was the one who made the most severe objections to the discriminatory discourses expressed in the debate, although she did not use the right concepts in describing discrimination.

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10  $\chi^2(4, N = 966) = 41.52, P = < 0.01$

11  $\chi^2(2, N = 1056) = 6.68, P = < 0.05$

12 While the correlation between the perception of the prevalence of discrimination and education level is strong and co-directional ( $r = .089, p < .01$ ), the correlation between the perception of the prevalence of discrimination and income level is strong and opposite ( $r = -.112, p < .01$ ).

13 Bulgu Araştırması, 3rd Focus Group Meeting on August 2, 2018

**In other words, it is possible to say that experiencing discrimination rather than recognizing it as a concept is a more crucial determinant in the formation of sensitivity about discrimination.** For the same reason, it can be thought that the relative advantage in terms of income level reduces the likelihood of experiencing discrimination itself and brings insensitivity to discrimination practices. However, we should note that the survey results point to an awareness of one's ethnic or religious affiliation that goes beyond the differentiation of the income variable.

### 3.A.2. The Relationship Between Perception of Discrimination and Religious and Ethnic Belonging

14.2 per-cent of the interviewees stated that the language spoken at home was generally a language other than Turkish. Of course, it is not possible to determine one's ethnic origin based solely on this data. There might be people even though they always or commonly speak Turkish at their homes; they do not identify themselves as Turkish being asked about their ethnicity. However, even though they generally speak Turkish in their house, we can conclude that there are people who prefer to write a language other than Turkish to underline their ethnic differences. Therefore, the person's choice in answering this question stands out as an indicator of the ethnic identity of that person.

While 23 per-cent of interlocutors think that discrimination is prevalent in Turkey, it has increased to 38.4 per-cent among the ones speaking a language other than Turkish at their house. **Thus, two out of every five people speaking a language other than Turkish at their house perceives that discrimination is very widespread in Turkey. Only 42.4 per-cent of Turkish-speaking people in the house think that discrimination is less common in Turkey.** The relationship between the language spoken at home and the perception that discrimination is widespread is also confirmed statistically.<sup>14</sup>

Members of the majority group have a weaker perception of the prevalence of discrimination on ethnic belonging, whereas, in the case of religious belonging, a similar trend does not occur. In contrast, we can say that views on the prevalence of discrimination among the Sunni Muslims, representing the majority, is relatively high considered proportionally. **While 54.3 per-cent of the group declaring that they are not Sunni Muslims expressed that the discrimination is less common, it is 39.9 per-cent for Sunni Muslims<sup>15</sup>.** It is fruitful to emphasize the relation of religious belonging with discrimination perception, which does not show a statistically significant difference in perception of discrimination as much as language.

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<sup>14</sup>  $\chi^2(2, N = 1056) = 23.577, P = < 0.01$

<sup>15</sup>  $\chi^2(2, N = 1056) = 6.68, P = < 0.05$

Firstly, researchers observed that the participants in the focus group discussions were relatively sensitive to discrimination. Particularly the religious participants have a strong belief that women wearing headscarves still face discrimination in business and daily life- though not as much as before. They also believe that there is general discrimination towards Muslims in the World.

The following discussion in a focus group meeting between an executive assistant 29-year-old S. who is a Republican People's Party (CHP) supporter and not wears headscarf, and, a 32-year-old E. in-distance university student who is also getting prepared for Public Personnel Selection Examination (KPSS) with a political view of the MHP-AKP-BBP band and wearing hijab is meaningful in this respect:

*S: For example, I recently went to social services. I couldn't see any women without a headscarf.*

*E: Is this bothering you?*

*S: No, I wasn't bothered. I just thought. Why not?*

*E: Yes, I admit that veiling has accepted by the public sector, but I still do not understand why it is not the case for the private sector. There is a big problem with that. For example, when we apply to some workplaces, we can get the answer "unfortunately we cannot work with people in veils due to our customer portfolio."<sup>16</sup>*

From this conversation, we understand that E. sees public institutions' recruitment of women with headscarves as an effort to secure justice. At the same focus group meeting, E. says that she and her husband had been treated differently from other customers in a luxury restaurant in the previous days. She evaluates that this is the result of restaurant staff seeing them in a low status because of their clothing.

In another focus group meeting, we can see that the male participants from the conservative-nationalist groups frequently recalled women who face discrimination because of their headscarf. We can also identify that the same male participants stated that Muslims in the world face discrimination. In other words, there is a strong perception of discrimination in the religious segments of society related to the political polarization both in the country and the world and the ruling party's widespread appeal to the discourse of discrimination within this polarization. On the other hand, participants close to the opposition parties share the same idea that there is a political discrimination. Since this research was conducted just before and after the presidential election, the effects are undeniable. Moreover, the CHP presidential candidate, Muharrem İnce, who established his entire electoral discourse on the goal of "eliminating discrimination" also take part in it.

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16 Bulgu Araştırma, 1st Focus Group Meeting on August 1, 2018

**However, it is seen that the group with a high awareness of discrimination against wearing headscarves and Muslims, and also the group with a high level of awareness about political discrimination in public, can share the discriminatory language when it comes to Kurds, Syrian refugees, and LGBTI+'s.**

For example, after a participant from Ağrı origin stating that the labelling of all Kurdish and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) executives and members as "terrorists" is a great example of discrimination, statements of nationalist-conservative E. and CHP supporter S is a quite noteworthy if we consider their above-mentioned conversation on the employment of wearing headscarves in the social services institution.

*"E: To tell the truth, I find discrimination against HDP people just. At the end of the day, it's baby-killer's party. (...)*

*S: I find it wrong to label the Kurds as terrorists for myself. Because I think the PKK is not Kurdish but Armenian.<sup>17</sup>"*

As a result, when it comes to the perception of the prevalence of discrimination, we can say that there are three positions:

- 1.Affinitive Perception of Discrimination:** It is the perception of the group discriminated for being a minority/subaltern based on the identity group and / or worldview; but may also be affinitive with other discriminated groups, expressing discrimination is widespread in Turkey.
- 2.Ego-centric Perception of Discrimination:** It is the perception of the group that can only distinguish the discrimination towards their identity group and remain insensitive to the discrimination to other groups- sometimes even the discrimination is done by their group as well. The ones with this form of perception differentiate discrimination as fair/unfair discrimination and think that discrimination is partially widespread in Turkey.
- 3.Exceptional Perception of Discrimination:** It is the perception of a group belonging to the majority and does not accept there is discrimination against minority/subaltern identity groups. They only perceive concrete cases that cannot be denied but think they are exceptional. This group acknowledged that discrimination is less widely in Turkey.

We can now have a closer look to how these different forms of perception eval-

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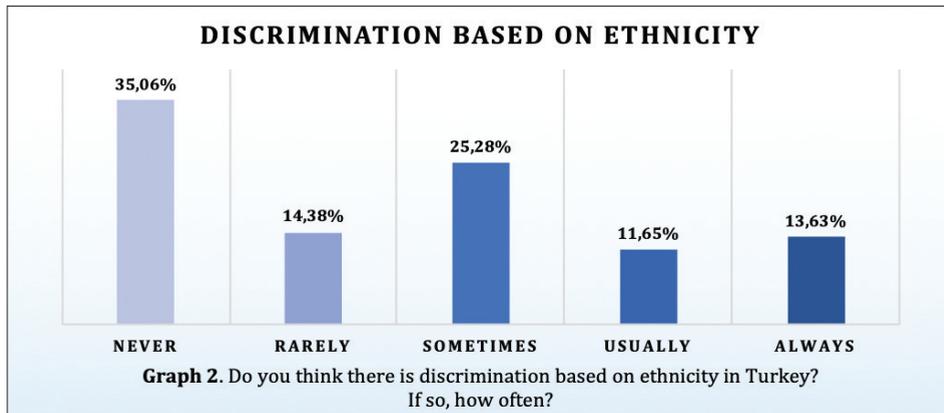
uate discriminatory practices in different fields and their understanding of the causes of discrimination.

### 3.B. Major Experiences of Discrimination and Main Reasons for Discrimination in Turkey

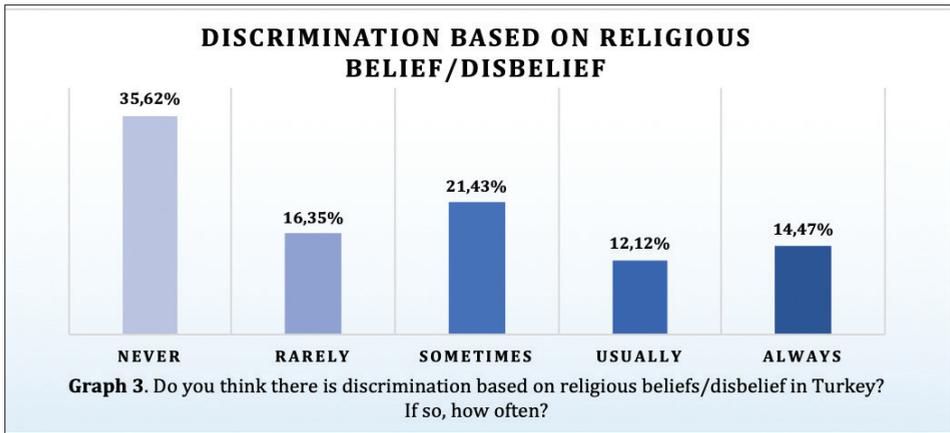
We have already stated that the "Major Discrimination Experiences" Scale and the "Daily Discrimination Scale" are the main scales of this research. The first scale aims to understand interlocutor's observations and evaluations on discrimination in social life, where, how often and for what reason it is experienced. The second scale, on the other hand, aims to learn how people evaluate their own discriminatory experiences.

#### 3.B.1. Which Segments of Society Are Discriminated?

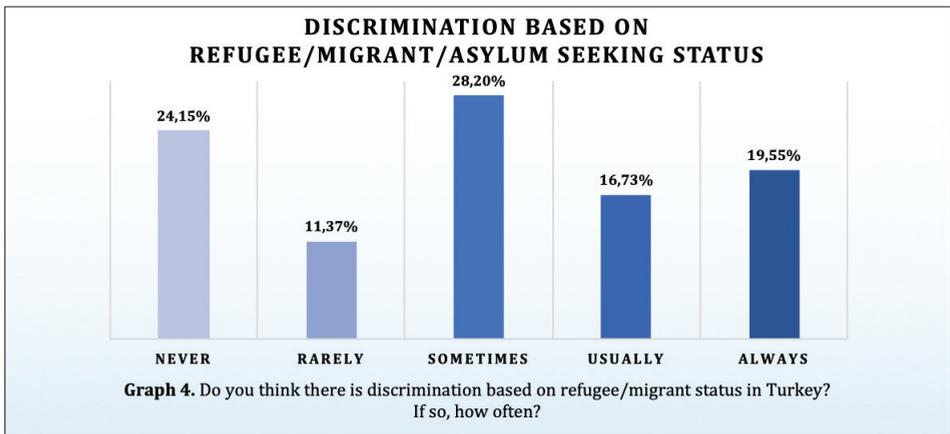
25.28 per-cent of the population indicates that discrimination based on ethnic origin is high. While 25.28 per-cent of the interlocutors stated that ethnic discrimination experienced sometimes, 49.14 per-cent expressed that ethnic discrimination was rarely or never experienced. (See Graph 2.)



When we ask whether there is any discrimination concerning religious belief, we see that the answers are distributed almost as in the case of ethnic discrimination. 26.59 per-cent of the interlocutors think that discrimination based on religious belief is experienced all the time or mostly. 21.43 per-cent think that sometimes there is discrimination based on religious beliefs, and 51.97 per-cent of the interlocutors think it never or rarely happens. In other words, different from ethnic discrimination, 1.3 per-cent of the interlocutors who mark the "sometimes" response to discrimination based on religious belief/disbelief seems to shift mostly or always to the side, and 2.8 per-cent changed into the side that rarely or never happens. (See. Graph 3).



The difference between the results in ethnicity and belief observed is in responses to discrimination against refugees/migrants. The percentage of interlocutors saying discrimination against refugees/migrants is never or rarely experienced remains at 35.52 per-cent. Interlocutors who say that discrimination against refugees /migrants experienced usually and always increase to 36.28 per-cent, while the ratio of those answering with sometimes increase to 28.20 per-cent. (See Graph 4).



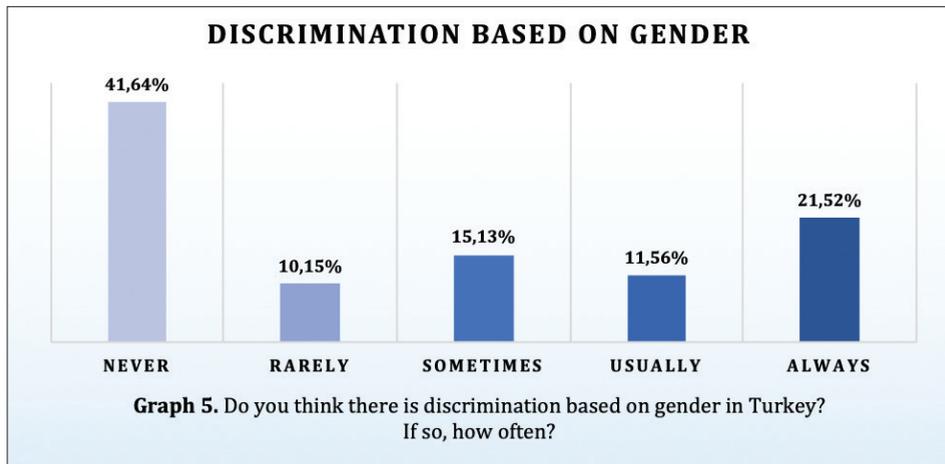
This situation occurred in almost all focus group meetings. The following statements frequently expressed are; Syrians are traitors for leaving their country, Turkish State gives extreme privileges to them, it is no good for Turkey to give homes to Syrians since nobody would never want to become a neighbour with them.

A 41-year-old male participant Z. from Sivas, working as administrative staff at a university starting from the beginning of the focus group meeting stated that some people artificially create discrimination, and it is necessary to love all the creatures

because of the creator. However, in the different stages of the focus group meeting, Z. has made the following sentences that we connect with the marker (...):

"It is a great injustice to differentiate people based on their race, class, and social status. They divide people on this basis. (...) But Syrians are much more prioritized in our country. (...) Go to the street at 11:00-12:00. There are many Syrians on the roads. At ATM's, they're trying to protect themselves from the cold. Why do you let them in this country? Why do you put us in risk? (...) They have heroin, marijuana, all kinds of nasty things. The best practising Muslims are Turks. It has been created an image that the Arabs are good practising Muslims. Then what happens? We pity the Arabs. As doing that, we become pitiful ourselves." <sup>18</sup>

**Another crucial and thought-provoking finding obtained from the field-work is that there are a large number of people who have a strong opinion that there is no discrimination against women.** 41.64 per-cent of the interlocutors stated there is no discrimination against women, and 10.15 per-cent of them said that discrimination against women rarely observed in Turkey. On the other hand, there is no statistical significance on the relationship between the perception of gender-based discrimination and the gender of the interlocutors. While almost half of the sample was women, they do not think there is discrimination against women. (See Graph 5).

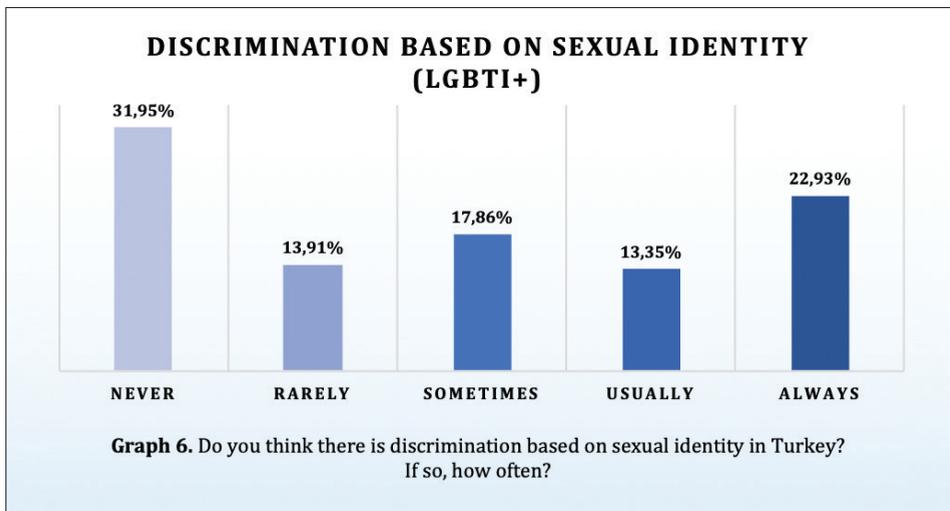


In the focus group meetings, most of the women did not object to the arguments that rather than being subject to discrimination, women prioritized in the business life and even, men face discrimination. That implies campaigns

18 Bulgu Araştırma, 2nd Focus Group Meeting on August 1, 2018

on women murders, sexual harassment, violence against women, insufficient representation of women in politics and business could have a minimal impact on the constitution of perception of discrimination. The fact that pioneering feminist figures fighting with discrimination against women not finding any place except HDP within the political institutions, and the fact that other parties with 85-88 per-cent voting potential do not vitalize the issue in the production of political discourse seems to be factors of the situation.

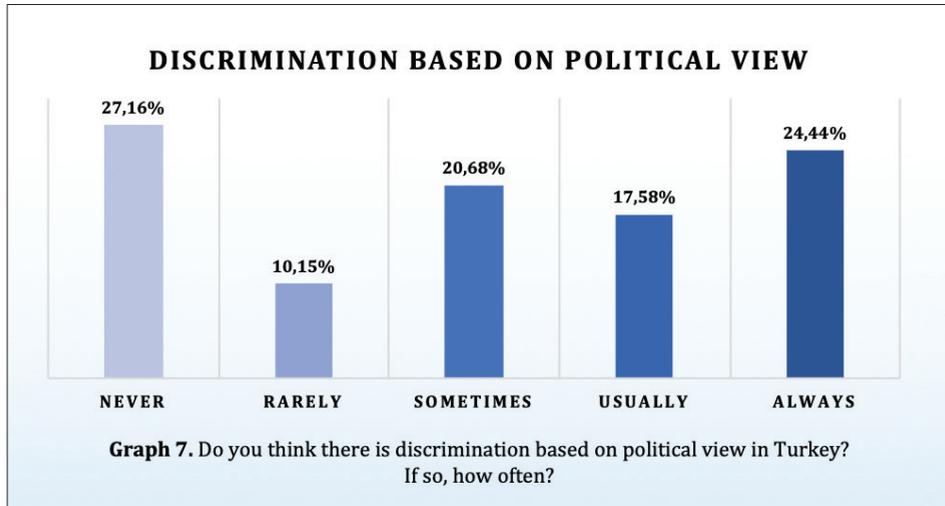
LGBTI+s constitute another group that they are subjected to discrimination in common belief. 36.28 per-cent says that LGBTI+s are always or usually discriminated. This ratio is the same as refugees/migrants being subjected to discrimination at always or usually. While 17.86 per-cent states LGBTI+s are sometimes discriminated; 45.86 per-cent says they are rarely or never subjected to discrimination.



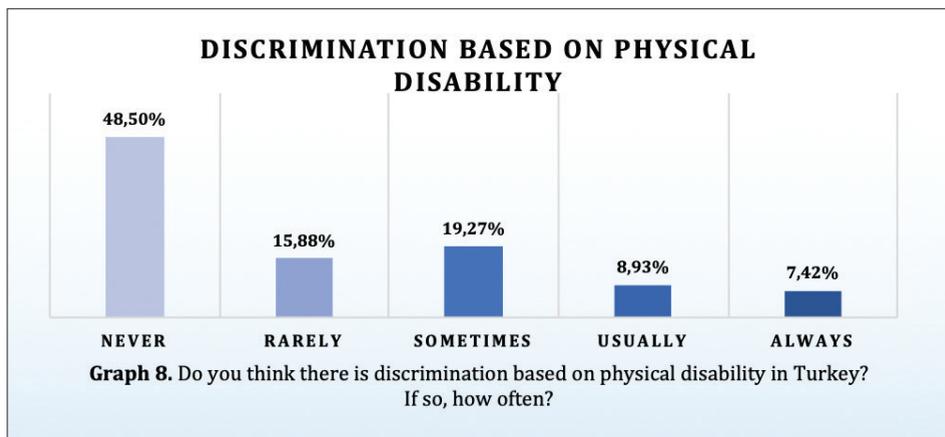
In the focus group meetings, people answered "to whom you will not rent your house?" question as refugees/migrants and LGBTI+; with the same ratio. Interlocutors used sentences like; "they harm the house", "you cannot know who will come and go from the neighbourhood", "immorality will be dispersed everywhere".

The last topic is politics, which is thought as one of the biggest causes of discrimination. **42.02 per-cent considers that there is always or usually political discrimination in Turkey.** While 20.68 per-cent of the interlocutors think that sometimes there is discrimination, 37.1 per-cent believe that there is rarely or never political discrimination. As we mentioned above, conducting fieldwork just before the Presidential Election may have an impact on the proportion of those who think there is usually or always political discrimination. However,

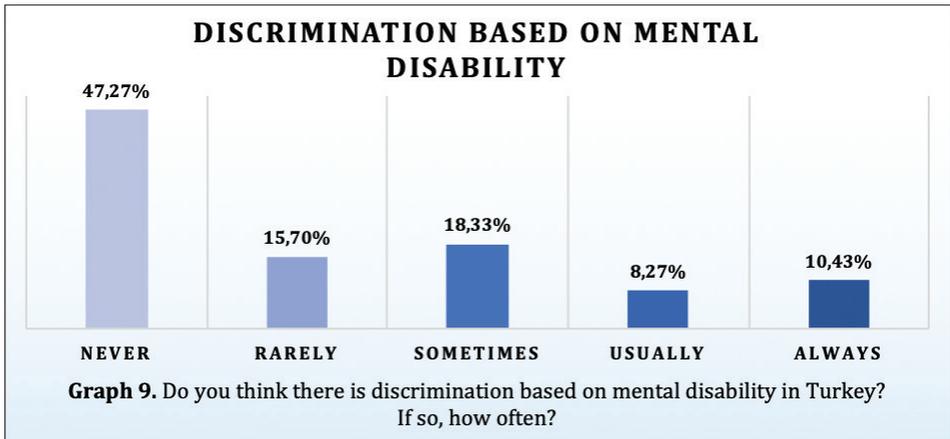
even if this effect is removed, it is clear that 42.02% is quite high. Apart from this, the opinions about the ratio of discrimination based on mental and physical disability, being young and old are not high.



While the total proportion of interlocutors responding always and usually to the discrimination based on physical disability is 16.35%, the ratio for discrimination based on mental disability increases to 18.70%.



While the perception of interlocutors about discrimination in society is such, we can continue in the analysis by looking at their capacity to tolerate discrimination against different identity groups.



### 3.B.2. Justified Discrimination

Attitudes of people towards different types of discrimination show variety as much as their perceptions. Between question 2 and 7, our questionnaire seeks to understand whether some discriminatory practices tolerated or not. The questions are about various spheres of life: looking for a job, waiting for a promotion in the workplace, renting a house, receiving education, receiving health care, seeking justice in the courthouse, reporting someone to the police, filing a bank loan, and so on. The individuals answered eight areas that discrimination based on different reasons as; (1) I find it wrong in all circumstances, (2) I do not see it very wrong depending on the circumstances.

The answers to these questions are essential because although people are in principle against discrimination, they can approve discriminatory attitudes and practices in concrete situations. For example, in one of the focus group discussions, a participant persistently disagrees with discriminatory attitudes towards Syrians, claiming Syrians are very hardworking people, wavered with the intervention of another participant saying “well, do you rent a house to Syrian, you rent it for four people, they become 18 people”.

Here we would like to compare two profiles: the ones opposing all forms of discrimination everywhere without exception and the ones can tolerate all forms of discrimination according to the circumstances. Thus, we wanted to identify the ruptures in how discrimination is experienced at the social level. To this purpose, we have established a discriminatory attitude score to measure how many areas of life a participant can tolerate a specific type of discrimination. For example, if a person can tolerate gender-based discrimination in work, school and health care-according to circumstances- but does not tolerate gender-based discrimination in other areas, his/her/their attitude score on gender-based discrimination is 3. Like-

wise, if a person can tolerate gender-based discrimination in all spheres of life, her/his/their attitude towards gender discrimination is eight; if they do not condone this type of discrimination in any area of life, the attitude score will be zero.

First of all, we should note that the attitude scores for discrimination do not reflect normal distribution, but on the contrary, they appear quite skewed to the left. There is only one exception to the normal distribution. The exception is the attitude data on discrimination against refugees, in terms of the Z value of normality (1.12) and its appearance on the histogram, which gives the impression that it is closer to normal. **In other words, when it comes to refugees, there is a convergence of discriminatory attitudes. The attitudes towards other subjects are generally differentiated.**

For a more detailed look, let us first examine the two different scores in Table 1. The values in the first column show the proportion of people tolerating the mentioned discrimination type in all spheres of life-, that shows the portion of those scoring eight in the attitude score for a particular kind of discrimination in the total sample. The values in the second column give the percentage of people intolerable to discrimination in any area of life, that shows the ratio of zero attitude score in the total sample. (See Table 1).

**Table 1. Weight of Individuals in Total Sample who Accepts Discrimination If Necessary and Who Always Oppose**

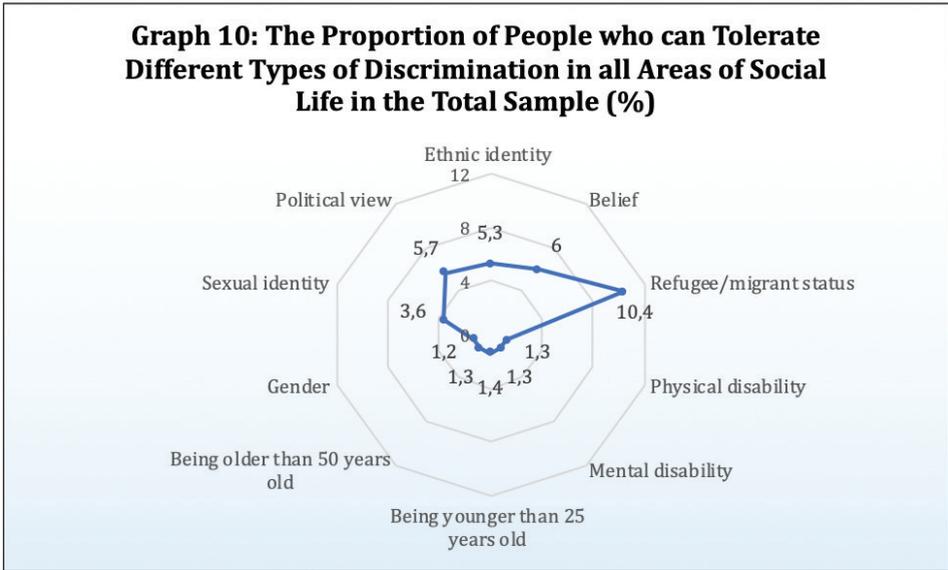
	The proportion of those who tolerate discrimination in all areas of life in the total sample (%)	The proportion of those who are intolerable to discrimination in any area of life in the total sample
Ethnic Identity	5.3*	61.8
Belief	6*	63
Refugee/ Migrant	10.4*	32.2*
Physical Disability	1.3	66.2
Mental Disability	1.3	49.3*
Being younger than 25 years old	1.4	66.7
Being older than 50 years old	1.3	61.6
Gender	1.2	76.3
Sexual identity	3.6	53.3*
Political View	5.7*	59.4*
Average	3.75	53.6
Median	1.4 and 3.6	61.6 and 61.8

At first glance, it is seen that those tolerate discrimination against young people, the elderly, women and physically disabled people are below the average and the median of those who can accept discrimination in all areas under certain conditions. Furthermore, we find that interlocutors intolerable to these types of discrimination are higher than the general average and the median of those who do not tolerate any discrimination in any sphere of life. **In other words, we can mention that there is a relatively high sensitivity to discrimination against young people, the elderly, women and physically disabled people.**

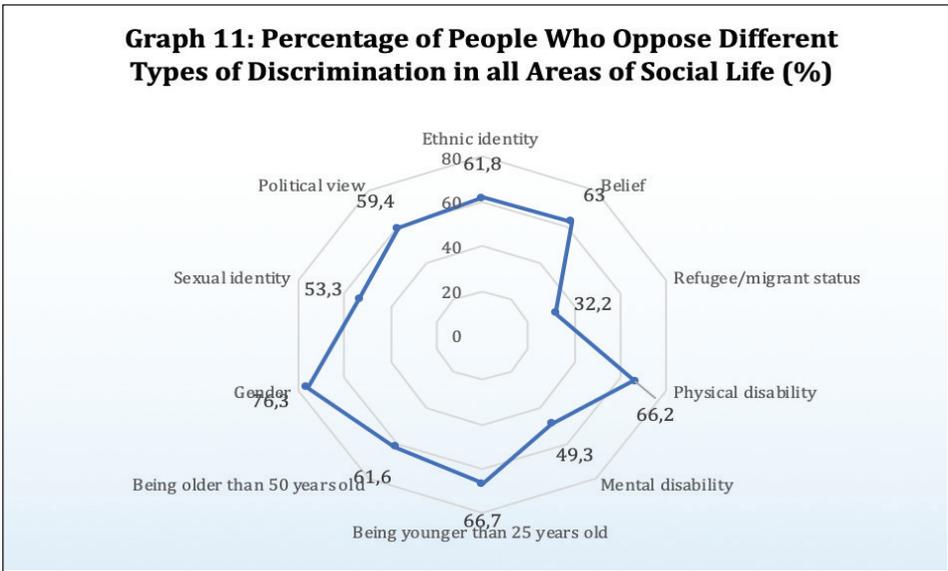
Although the proportion of those who tolerate discrimination based on mental disability and sexual identity is lower than the average and median values of the general sample, we see that the rate of not tolerating discrimination against the same groups without compromise are below the sample average. **In other words, we understand that discrimination against mentally disabled people and discrimination based on sexual identity are more tolerable in certain areas of life (work, neighbourhood, etc.) than the general average.**

On the other hand, in both columns, the values show that the proportion is more insensitive than the average regarding the discriminatory attitude towards refugees. When we examine the other types of discrimination, we see that the proportion of interlocutors tolerating discrimination based on ethnic identity and belief in different spheres of life is above the average/median values of the sample. However, then, we also see that the interlocutors' proportion that does not tolerate these types of discrimination in any spheres of life is above the average value and around the median value of the sample. **On the one hand, there is a group that tolerates ethnic and religious discrimination more than average in all fields. On the other hand, there is another group above average that does not condone the same forms of discrimination in any spheres of life. Therefore, we can say that discrimination forms based on ethnic identity and belief constitute a field of division/conflict.**

Graph 10 visualizes the data presented in the first column of Table 1 with the radar graph/spider graph. With this visualization, we can see that the least tolerable forms of discrimination (types of discrimination based on gender, old age, youth, mental disability and physical disability) under certain conditions are in the inner circle. Discrimination based on a sexual identity that appears above the second polygon from inside- out seems to be close to median and mean values. Political view, ethnic identity and belief are the types of discrimination whose values are above the third polygon, and the probability of being tolerated is higher than the other types of discrimination. Finally, discrimination against refugees come close to the outermost perimeter as it is seen as more acceptable in all spheres of life compared to all other forms of discrimination.



Graph 11 illustrates the data presented in the second column of Table 1. In this graph, the values that are closest to the outermost wall indicate the types of discrimination which are more likely to be opposed in any field compared to other kinds of discrimination such as gender-based discrimination, discrimination based on physical disability and discrimination against young people. The possibility of objection to discrimination based on ethnic identity, belief, sexual

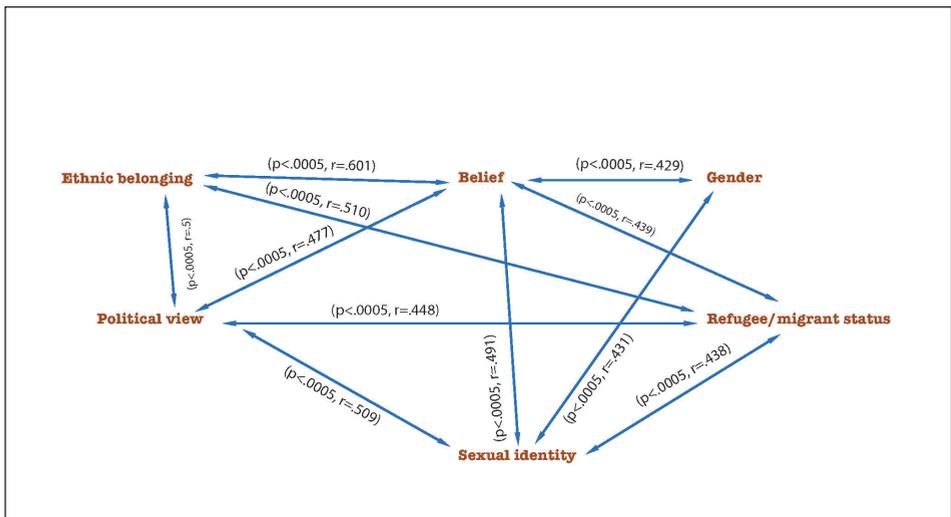


identity and the political view is around or slightly below the average values. Discrimination against refugees and mentally disabled people is the least likely to be tolerated in different spheres of life, with the values corresponding to the polygons on the inner walls of the graph.

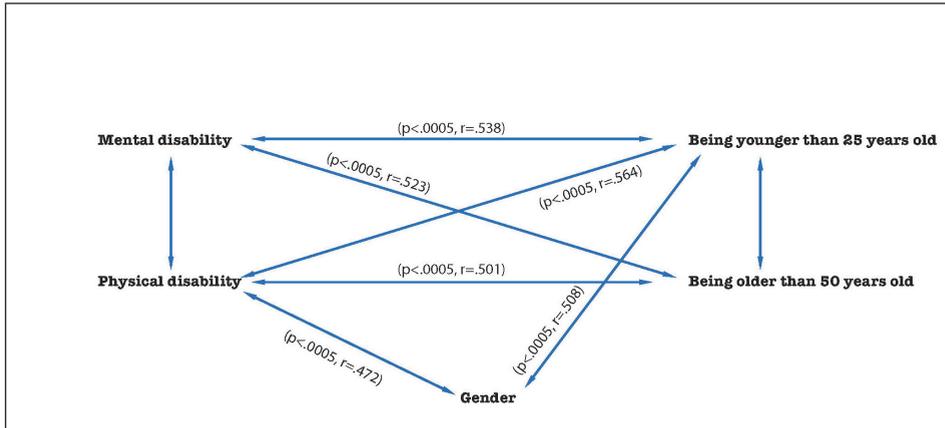
### 3.B.3. Interrelated Attitudes Against Discrimination

To question the relationship between attitudes towards these types of discrimination, we measured the correlation values between each with the Kendall's Tau-b test. This test showed a statistical significance ( $p < .0005$ ,  $N = 1060$ ) and a positive relationship between attitudes towards each type of discrimination and attitudes towards other types of discrimination. However, only some of these relationships indicate a medium-strength correlation ( $0.4 < r < 0.7$ ), while the rest have a statistically significant and positive but weak correlation. Based on the types of discrimination, which have a moderately strong and positive relationship concerning the correlation coefficient, we can group the attitudes that are related to each other in two groups.

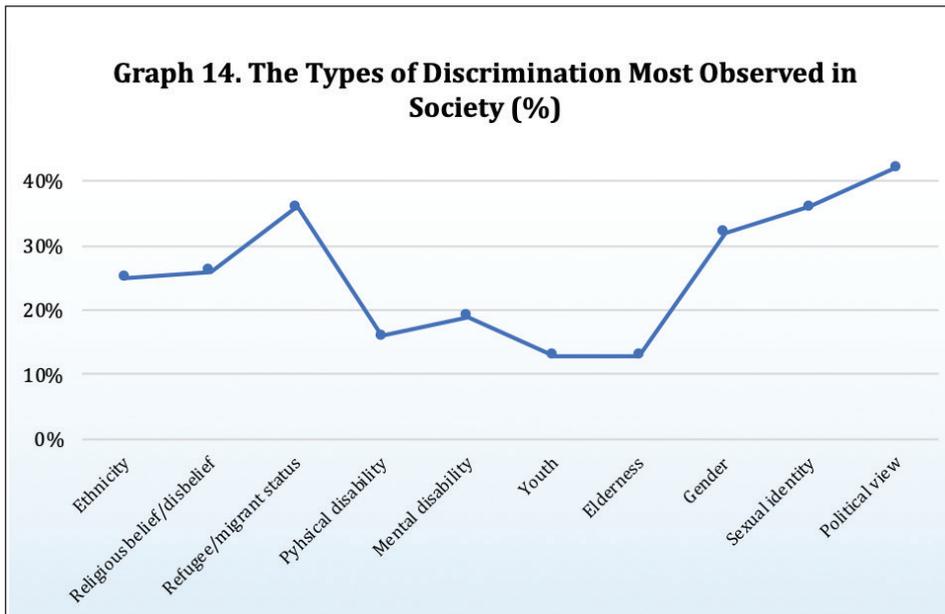
The first group consists of the attitudes through discrimination based on sexual identity, political opinion, belief, ethnic belonging, refugee/migration. Gender-based discrimination is related to both groups. (See Graph 12)



The other group in correlation with each other, includes discrimination against young people and the elderly, and attitudes towards discrimination based on mental disability, physical disability and gender. (See Graph 13)



As such, we can assume that we have two different understandings and attitudes toward discrimination. The first indicates a sensitivity towards discrimination based on belonging, thus has more political/cultural aspects; the other reveals a sensitivity to the types of discrimination that are not included in the lines of natural and political conflict. Sensitivity to gender-based discrimination can be found within both groups. Some people consider gender as a difference that exists in nature and should not lead any discrimination. For some, gender-based discrimination is political and opposing it appears to be a political attitude.



Let us handle these sensitivity scores and their classification regarding types of discrimination considered to be the most common in society. When we asked the participants about which types of discrimination occur and how often, we have seen that the most frequent types of discrimination based on political views, refugee/migration status, sexual identity and gender. According to the participants, discrimination based on ethnicity and belief observed at an average level. At the other extreme, there are types of discrimination frequently or rarely observed. These include mental disability, physical disability, elderliness and youth.

The types of discrimination declared to be the most frequent occur to be the ones corresponding to the causes of discrimination that are more likely tolerated -except for gender-based discrimination-. The ratio of those thinking discrimination based on political opinion, migration status and sexual identity is widespread and always occurs above the average and the median. This trio is also among the reasons for discrimination, which is more likely to be tolerated in certain situations.

The opposite of this relationship confirmed except for mental disability. Although discrimination based on youth, elderliness and physical disability are intolerable, the dominant opinion is that there is no discrimination against them in society. However, declaring the opposition against discrimination based on youth, elderliness and physical disability on the rhetorical level does not eliminate objective discrimination on these topics. We observed this also during the focus group discussions. Notably, we observed that people who do not have a disabled person in their family not take any action other than showing sensitivity. Expressed in such forms, the position of antidiscrimination unintegrated into actual practice generally does not disrupt the continuity of the current situation reproducing discrimination. On the other hand, there seems to be no discrimination in these titles where the majority seem to agree on the antidiscrimination attitude. **In other words, although there is a so-called objection to reasons of discrimination such as physical disability, old age and youth, which are not the object of political and cultural conflict, and do not require the parties to take part of this conflict, in a country like ours where there is hardly any inclusive practices for these segments of society, it would be more accurate to speak of the existence of ignorance and insensitivity to the discrimination that these groups live and may experience.**

If we mention the reasons for discrimination different than these two tendencies, discrimination based on gender and mental disability, become prominent topics. The scope of the group that does not accept gender-based discrimination

under any circumstance is above average, and the ones defining it acceptable in all conditions is very low. On the other hand, it is not a rare form of discrimination, such as the causes of discrimination based on youth, elderliness and physical disability. **The proportion of those who say gender-based discrimination is frequent or always remains above the average/median. That means it is observed (the most common cause of discrimination after political opinion, refugee and sexual identity) but not tolerated.** Discrimination based on political views, refugeeness and sexual identity is also seen as reasonable by social consensus, gender-based discrimination doesn't take place as a result of such an agreement. On the other hand, gender-based discrimination is not invisible or neglected as other discriminations based on 'natural differences'. This is due to the fact that the feminist movement keep this agenda alive. **Therefore, no discrimination that does not form a position in political struggles is visible, on the other hand, as soon as it enters a field of struggle makes itself apparent, the agreement that 'all forms of discrimination are wrong' is beginning to deteriorate.**

The second topic is a mental disability. The ratio of people who say that they will not tolerate discrimination against the mentally disabled in any case is at the lowest levels, coming immediately after the refugeeness. On the other hand, discrimination based on mental disability is not considered among the most common types of discrimination. **Unlike other types of discrimination that are more acceptable, mental disability is not a type of discrimination that has a high level of acceptance in all areas. In other words, the discrimination of mentally disabled people in certain areas is seen as natural or a necessity.** Herein, the lack of awareness of the diversity of mental disability and how broad the concrete health status of the people under this definition can be is likely to be effective. For example, it is seen normal that people mental disabilities cannot receive bank loans. However, it seems unlikely for them to think that a mentally disabled person who is in a position to fulfil the application condition may also benefit from a bank loan.

#### **3.B.4. Spheres Where Discrimination Partially Tolerated and Not Tolerated**

In our research, we try to answer the question in which areas discrimination is more or less tolerated in Turkey. For this, we scored interviewees' attitudes towards intolerance of discrimination in different areas (education, health, business, finance, neighbourhood life, etc.). If a person does not tolerate any discrimination in an area, we give it a score of 10 out of 10. Thus, we tried to find out how much of the total sample of the interlocutors scored 10 points in each field. (See Table 2)

**Table 2. Fields where Discrimination is Rejected at Most**

%73,1	Discrimination in the field of health
%56,1	Discrimination by law enforcement
%53,6	Discrimination in education
%50,5	Discrimination in court / police office
%46,9	Discrimination in work-life (low-wage employment)
%46,9	Discrimination in accommodation
%41,8	Discrimination in work-life (non-employment)
%40,9	Discrimination in the field of finance (rejection of loan application)

When we look at the ranking of attitude scores on whether to tolerate different types of discrimination in various spheres of social life, **we observe that discrimination in areas directly related to government services is less acceptable. In the fields related to civic life and the private sector, the level of tolerance is likely to increase.**

While the study shows that the least tolerable type of discrimination in all areas is discrimination based on gender, it also shows that discrimination against refugees is most tolerated in all spheres of life.

## 4.Result

The research we conducted on the dimensions, agents and types of discrimination indicates that discrimination continues to maintain its existence embedded in the social value system. In fact, on the one hand, discrimination appears as a functional element with the role it plays in the process of reproduction of social domination, and on the other hand, it is also the basis for those who want to move from disadvantaged to an advantageous position in the social hierarchy to legitimize their actions.

At this point, those who are disadvantaged by their ethnic/identity and/or class positions are personally affected and harmed by the consequences of discrimination in physical and emotional terms. Those who are partially or fully advantageous in the given relations of domination either instrumentalise discrimination in an egocentric way or, deny it or take it lightly especially when responsibility should be taken.

The first finding of the study aims to interpret the diversity of different forms of discrimination in society. Accordingly, we can distinguish three different positions. (1) **Affinitive Perception of Discrimination** (2) **Ego-centric Perception of Discrimination**, (3) **Exceptional Perception of Discrimination**.

The first refers to the people who are subjected to discrimination based on their identity group(s), class position or world view, and therefore can quickly capture the discrimination faced by others. The first position constitutes a 15- 16 per cent of the research sample, that is formed to represent Turkey in small scale.

**Ego-centric Perception of Discrimination is widespread in the society of Turkey. It expresses a selective perception of discrimination. A person is empathetic about discrimination on issues s/he/they think that they can harm herself/himself/themselves and is unconcerned with discrimination s/he/they believes does not directly concern her/him/them. A very selfish way of being.** That may also bring the idea to support discrimination actively or passively.

The Exceptional Perception of Discrimination reveals in the form of underestimating all kinds of discrimination. Among the individuals adopting this position, the tendency to evaluate the cases of discrimination which are undeniably concrete as exceptional is very common.

How these perceptions differentiate? We can answer this question arguing that the existing relations of domination in Turkey have two dimensions: Ethnic/identity and class. The dominant position crystallizes in the combination of the following qualities: Turkish, Sunni, Native, Male, Heterosexual, Middle-aged, Non-disabled, Wealthy, supporter of the current status quo. Individuals having more of these qualities, either from birth or acquired later, are more likely to approach the Exceptional Perception of Discrimination. Again, those who have least of the same qualifications approach the Affinitive Perception of Discrimination. On the other hand, especially for those not belonging to the advantageous groups in the class hierarchy but favoured in the ethnic / identity hierarchy, the Ego-centric Perception of Discrimination is relatively strong.

In the struggle against discrimination, it is crucial to obtain the active contribution of those who have the Affinitive Perception of Discrimination. However, it should not be forgotten that this group is a small minority. Interactions with Ego-centric Perception of Discrimination can have meaningful consequences in combating discrimination. This group is more likely to understand the situation of other discriminated groups than those who have the Exceptional Perception of Discrimination due to their experience of discrimination.

On the other hand, another phenomenon that we observed during the research is that awareness of discrimination develops in connection with experience and necessity. The fact that a person or his/her/their family is being subjected to discrimination due to certain qualities that have not been acquired and making constant efforts to deal with it makes it easier for him/her/them to look at all types of discrimination from a point transgressing prejudice. However, the experience that enables awareness on discrimination is not necessarily a result of obligation. The person experiencing incidental experiences with the people he/she/they have prejudices about make it easier for him/her/them to overcome discriminatory attitudes.

Another important finding of the study is the differentiation of discrimination types among themselves. Perception of forms of discrimination based on ethnicity, religion and gender etc., which are related domination relations reflected in political and cultural conflicts, are not parallel with the perception of discrimination against elderly, young people and disabled people. Discrimination based on ethnicity, religion and gender stands out as the more known forms of discrimination due to their integration to politics. However, being aware of discrimination on a subject does not necessarily mean having an attitude against that discrimination. As we mentioned above, the position in ethnic/identity and/or class relations determines the attitude of one's awareness of these discriminations as justified or unjustified.

However, **in the case of the elderly, young people and disabled people, awareness of discrimination is diminished and differentiation according to the identity and class position observed in the previous types of discrimination disappears.** In other words, the perception revealed in these types of discrimination is relatively homogeneous in the society of Turkey. Even though they are not just attitudes, discrimination based on age and disability status may be seen as inevitable according to the research. Notably, the tendency to find discriminatory attitudes these issues in work-life inevitably and to tolerate them becomes more powerful. On the other hand, discrimination based on age or disability is homogeneously not tolerated when it comes to public service - especially when receiving health care. However, **while tolerating discrimination in the market or working life for the same group, intolerance to discrimination in public service itself should be considered as the expression of socially internalized discriminatory attitude.**

Two types of discrimination - against the refugees - particularly Syrian refugees- and against the groups that do not conform to heteronormativity due to their gender identities, can be considered as most common forms of discrimination in the society of Turkey. Attitudes against discrimination targeting these two groups do not vary significantly according to ethnic/racial identity belonging and/or class position. The findings obtained by both quantitative and qualitative research techniques clearly show that negative prejudices against both groups are deeply rooted.

**Therefore, while fighting against discrimination based on age or disability, it is necessary to give priority to the struggle to raise social awareness, and it is required to focus on breaking established prejudices while combating discrimination based on refugeeness and sexual identity.**

Another striking of the research is that there is a group of people who thinks that political discrimination is prevalent in the society of Turkey. It is also one of the cases that the perception is almost homogeneous. However, the research points out that there is a group thinking that political discrimination is justifiable. More precisely, there is a group that considers clientelism emerging as political discrimination, as an attempt to justify former discriminatory practices. This approach predominant in the religious-nationalist groups. **There is a firm conviction regarding political discrimination, especially in the groups who are not religious-nationalist and have no relationship with the current political power.**



# THE PERCEPTION OF DISCRIMINATION IN TURKEY

Types • Agents • Dimensions



**ESHİD**  
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