Ten Million New Turkish Voters in 2011: Where they Come From? How They Voted? What It Means For The Future?

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Abstract:
Between 2007 and 2011 the number of registered voters in Turkey increased by more than ten million, partially due to population increase but mainly due to a change in the voter registration system. Together with nearly three million DP and GP supporters who deserted their parties, the new voters constituted about a quarter of the electorate who participated in the 2011 election. Through descriptive statistics at national, regional and provincial levels, the geographical, demographic, socio-economic and political characteristics of these voters are explored. Then through systems of party vote equations, estimated separately for different regions of the country, how they voted is investigated. The BDP was the main beneficiary of the rise in the registered voters, which were disproportionately located in the Central-east and South-east. This occurred at the expense of the ruling AKP. The DP and GP votes, which were concentrated in the western and central parts of the country, and the new voters in these regions moved mainly to the AKP and CHP. In central provinces, the MHP captured a slice of the new voters and former DP supporters too, but it lost a portion of its own supporters to the CHP in the West.

Key Words: *Elections, Vote Behavior, Party Choice, Political Geography, Turkey*

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1.   Introduction

Number of registered voters increased by 10.2 million, or 24 percent, between the 22 July 2007 and 12 June 2011 Turkish parliamentary elections. Almost one out of every five voters who cast a valid vote in 2011 was a new voter. Beside population increase, the switch to a system of automatic registration of all citizens eligible to vote was responsible for this. Still it raised eyebrows and made many to wonder whether an impropriety was involved, as the rise was a multiple times the corresponding increase between 3 November 2002 and 22 July 2007 parliamentary elections, which was only 1.3 million, or 3 percent. Why the change in the electorate was so high between the last two elections is one of the questions that need to be addressed to understand the outcome of the 2011 election and to predict future ones. Whether the participation rate changed after involuntary registration of so many people, whether the demographic and socio-economic make-up of the new voters, their geographical distribution, and their political leanings were similar to the rest of the electorate, are some others.

The voters up for grabs in the last election were not limited only to the new voters. In addition, 1.1 million people who supported the Young Party (GP) in 2007 had to make another choice in 2011 when their party did not enter the election and disappeared from the political scene. Furthermore, about 1.6 million of the 1.9 million people who supported the Democrat Party (DP) in 2007 deserted the party in 2011.[2] Collectively, these constituted more than 6 percent of the valid votes cast in 2011. Understanding where they ended up is quite important also.

Although a number of recent studies analyzed the outcome of the 2011 election, such as Akarca (2011a, 2011b and 2011c), Aslan-Akman (2012), Başkan and Güney (2012), Çarkoğlu (2011 and 2012), Çınar (2011), Kubicek (2011), and Tezcür (2012), only the last one of these dealt with the issue of the new voters. Tezcür drew attention to the fact that in the south-eastern provinces the growth rate of the electorate was far more than the growth rate of the population and suggested correctly that this has worked against the incumbent party and in favour of the Kurdish nationalists. However, he did not go beyond that. None of the studies listed addressed how the

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[2] The GP, formed by a business tycoon and had a populist and Turkish-nationalist program, received 7.2 percent of the votes in the first election it entered in 2002 when voters ousted all of the parties which entered the parliament in the previous election. Akarca and Tansel (2012), who analyzed the inter-party vote traffic in that election, show that the GP captured about a third of the supporters of the center-left and nationalist Democratic Left Party (DSP). The vote share of the DSP which was the incumbent party then declined from 22.2 percent in 1999 to 1.2 percent in 2002. The center-right DP which was named True Path Party (DYP) until 2007, held the premiership between 1991 and 1995. The party's vote share was declining ever since. The political realignment process which led to the demise of the DP, DSP, and other parties is discussed in Akarca (2010, 2011b, 2011c) and is beyond the scope of the present study.

former DP and GP voters were shared between the remaining parties and how the new voters in other areas voted.

The main purpose of the present study is to shed more light on the questions posed above. This will be done in section 2 with the aid of descriptive statistics. Then in section 3, through rigorous econometric methods, how the new votes cast in 2011 and votes cast by former supporters of the DP and GP were distributed among the major parties, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the Republican People's Party (CHP), the Democratic Left Party (DSP), Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) will be studied.[3] Finally in the last section, conclusions reached will be discussed. Our analysis will be based on data at the national, regional and provincial levels. Another purpose of our study is to show how macro data can provide an alternative to micro data in answering the questions mentioned.

2. Source of New Voters

Those who reached voting age in 2011 (14 to 17 years olds at the time of the 2007 election), made up a large portion of the increase in registered voters. However another reason for the increase was the switch in 2008 to a system of automatic registration of all citizens eligible to vote without any effort on their part.[4] Consequently, many people who usually do not or cannot participate in the political process got registered. Of them, 2.4 million were citizens residing abroad. Until now, such persons are allowed to vote only in parliamentary elections and only if they happen to enter or exit Turkey during one-month period preceding the election. Before 2011, only those expats who were able to vote were considered registered. In 2007 this figure was 228 thousand. In 2011 on the other hand, all of the 2.6 million potential voters living abroad were registered, of which only 129 thousand

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[3] Of these the AKP is a conservative party. Although its leaders were once Islamists, they have disavowed it and behaved during their reign since 2002, as a conservative democratic center-right party would. Thus it would be correct to refer to them as Islamist-rooted rather than Islamist. The CHP and DSP are center-left parties which have become increasingly Turkish-nationalist. The MHP and the BDP are Turkish-nationalist and Kurdish nationalist parties, respectively. The former is right-wing and the latter is left-wing ideologically.

[4] Since 2008, the electoral registers in Turkey are prepared and updated regularly by the state which does not require voluntary registration. This is accomplished by matching of two databases through the identification numbers each citizen is assigned. One of the databases, known, as "Merkezi Nüfus İdare Sistemi" (the Central Population Registration System) or with its Turkish acronym MERNİS, contains information such as births, deaths, marriages, divorces, adoptions. The other one, known as "Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi" (the Address Based Population Registration System) or with its Turkish acronym, ADNKS, covers addresses of all citizens. For more details about the databases mentioned and how they are matched, the reader is referred to Taştı (2009).

actually voted.[5]   Considering only domestic residents, we can see from Table 1 that the rise in registered voters during the 26 months from March 2009 to July 2011 was 2.2 million. Since, in both elections, all voters eligible were registered under the new system, this figure can be attributed to addition of people reaching voting age (minus the already registered voters who died). If we assume that the corresponding rate of change was the same between July 2007 and March 2009, then people reaching voting age during this period should be estimated at around 1.6 million. This implies that roughly 3.9 million of the 5.5 million additional voters registered during the same period were those who were eligible to vote in 2007 but failed to register.

Although this figure may appear as extraordinarily high, it makes sense once one notices that, despite more than three-year's worth of population increase between March 2004 and July 2007, the number of registered voters actually decreased by one million. Thus the question should not be how come the number of registered voters was so high in 2011, but how come it was so low in 2007.[6]   Had the electorate increased between 2002 and 2007 elections at the same rate as it did in between the 1999 and 2002 elections, it would be about 3.9 million higher at the time of the 2007 election than the figure reported in Table 1. In short, we can crudely guess that 2.4 million of the newly registered voters in 2011 were citizens living in foreign countries, about 3.8 million were domestic residents who turned 18 between 2007 and 2011, and 3.9 million of them were those who failed to register in the 2007 election despite being eligible.

Even though many of them were registered involuntarily, it is remarkable that the participation rate of the domestic electorate in 2011 was even higher than in 2007 (87 percent vs. 84 percent). A lesson that can be drawn from this is that registering people is a more effective way of making them vote than forcing them to vote, with threats of fines, after they register, as was the case in Turkey between 1983 and 2008. The participation rate for citizens living abroad on the other hand, was only 5 percent. This figure would rise in the future when expats will be able to vote in the countries they reside. One other point worth noting is the fact that the proportion of invalid votes cast in 2011 was less than in 2007 (2.2 percent vs. 2.8 percent). Thus the downward trend in that regard continues.

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[5] The reason behind registering citizens residing abroad was to have them vote in the countries where they reside but the Supreme Council of Elections decided that there was not sufficient time to arrange a mechanism that would allow it for the 2011 election.

[6] The reason why the registration was so low in the July 2007 election is beyond the scope of the present study. However conditions under which that election was scheduled can be given as the culprit. Due to a political crisis and to avoid a take-over by the military, the 2007 election was called abruptly a few months earlier than the date mandated by the constitution. The election ended up being scheduled at a time when many people in urban areas take their vacations and many people in warm rural areas move temporarily to cooler highlands.

How the new voters and the former GP and DP supporters who switched parties were distributed across the country can be seen in Figures 1 and 2. It appears that the new voters were disproportionately concentrated in the south-east, central-east, northwest and south, and the former DP and GP supporters in the west. To understand the reasons for this and what it implies, it will be useful to compare figures 1 and 2 with figure 3, where a 3-way partition of the country obtained by Akarca and Başlevent (2010), applying cluster analysis to the outcomes of five parliamentary and local administrations elections held between 1999 and 2009, is displayed.[7] Although their partition is based on voting patterns, from Table 2 it can be seen that they also capture the divisions in the country from human development point of view. The clusters in Figure 3 are numbered to make referring to them easier. Going from west to east, the first cluster which is painted black, follows the Mediterranean, Aegean and Marmara coasts (except Bursa province on the latter) and juts out from eastern Marmara Sea inland all the way to Kırşehir. It also includes provinces which are adjacent to the coastal ones along the Aegean, and a few provinces scattered along the Black Sea coastline. The 29 provinces in this group, where 59 percent of registered voters resided in 2011, represent the wealthiest, most-modern, most-educated, most-urbanized and most cosmopolitan part of Turkey as can be observed in Table 2. The third cluster, painted light gray, covers a triangular corner of south-eastern and central-eastern Anatolian provinces. It includes 14 provinces where 9 percent of the registered voters lived in 2011. This region is relatively the poorest and least developed part of Turkey, populated heavily by ethnic Kurds. The second cluster, coloured dark grey, is composed of 38 provinces where 32 percent of the registered voters were located in 2011. It lies in between the other two regions not only geographically, but in regards to income and education levels, modernity, and conservatism as well.

The proportion of valid votes received by political parties in 2007 and 2011 are given in Table 2 for the entire country and in Table 3 for the three clusters mentioned. CHP and DSP are treated as if they are one party (CHP+DSP) because they participated in the 2007 election as partners, under the CHP banner.[8] Table 3 shows that the AKP is the only party with significant presence across the board but its support is highest in cluster 2. The party receives significant challenges from the Turkish-nationalist MHP and CHP+DSP in cluster 1 and from the Kurdish-nationalist BDP in cluster 3. The vote share of the CHP+DSP in cluster 2 is half of that in cluster 1 and fraction of it in cluster 3. The MHP vote is distributed evenly

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[7] Despite the country going through a major political realignment during 1999-2009, it is remarkable that Akarca and Başlevent (2010) found that each of the three clusters which emerged in each election during this period contained almost the same provinces. This implies that provinces within each cluster tend to move in tandem when political changes occur in the country.

[8] However the DSP's share in the two-party vote is negligible anyway. The percentage of valid votes cast for the DSP was 1.22 in 2002, 2.12 in 2004, 2.85 in 2009, and 0.25 in 2011.

between clusters 1 and 2 but is almost non-existent in cluster 3. The BDP is clearly a regional and ethnic-based party, receiving its votes almost exclusively in region 3 where the Kurds are concentrated. Between 2007 and 2011, the party was able to raise its vote share substantially in that cluster. This came mainly at the expense of the AKP. Although the AKP raised its vote share between last two parliamentary elections, nationally and in clusters 1 and 2, its vote share declined in cluster 3. The combined vote share of the CHP and the DSP rose nationally and in Clusters 1 and 2. On the other hand, vote share of the MHP declined slightly in cluster 1 but remained about the same in the rest of the country.

That the clusters based on 1999-2009 voting patterns are still very relevant can be seen in the maps presented in Figure 4. In those drawn for the AKP, CHP+DSP and MHP, the provinces in which the party's vote share in 2011 was higher than its national average are painted in black. In the case of the BDP, provinces coloured black and dark grey are the ones where the party's provincial vote share exceeded its nationwide vote share. Comparing maps in Figures 3 and 4, one can see that Clusters 1, 2, and 3 essentially overlap with the provinces where the relative strengths of the CHP+DSP, AKP and the BDP are concentrated, respectively.

Comparing Figures 1 and 3, and referring to Table 5, one can observe that the proportion of new voters was predominantly higher in cluster 3. New votes cast in 2011 made up 18.4 percent of the valid votes cast nationally but this proportion was about 50 percent higher than the national average in cluster 3, 25 percent lower in cluster 2 and about the same in cluster 1. New voters constituted more than a fifth of the electorate in 10 of the 14 provinces in cluster 3, and 15-20 percent in three of them. Although there are such provinces in other clusters as well, these are provinces which receive large numbers of migrants from other parts of the country. Thus most of the "new" voters in these were not really new but people who have voted in previous elections in other provinces. In other words, the make-up of the new voters is likely to vary across the clusters. In cluster 3, where the population growth is high, the median age is low, and the net migration rate is negative, young people who have just reached the voting age will be a larger portion of the new voters than in clusters 1 and 2, especially in cluster 1. With the help of Table, 5 and comparing Figures 2 and 3, on the other hand, one can see that the DP and GP supporters who switched to other parties were primarily residing in cluster 1 provinces. However their presence in Cluster 2 provinces was not negligible. The votes of DP and GP in 2007 summed to 6.9 percent of all valid votes cast in 2011 nationally, and 7.8, 6.0, and 3.8 percent of those cast in clusters 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

It is clear from the information presented above that a lot of new voters and the voters lost by the DP and the GP were up for grabs in the 2011 election. It is also clear that the AKP and the CHP+DSP captured bulk of them in Clusters 1 and 2 and the BDP in Cluster 3. What is not so obvious however is how the former DP and

GP supporters and new voters got distributed among the AKP, CHP+DSP, MHP, and BDP. Which party or parties captured the votes lost by the MHP in cluster 1 is not obvious either. To gain a better insight on these, a more rigorous econometric analysis is needed such as the one which will be described in the next section.

3. Modelling the Vote Movements

Our econometric analysis is based on a set of vote equations, each of which expresses 2011 votes of a major party as a function of its and other parties' 2007 votes, and the new votes cast in 2011. These equations are estimated jointly as a system, applying Zellner's (1962) Seemingly Unrelated Regressions procedure to cross-provincial data. Different sets of vote equations are specified and estimated for each of the provincial clusters discussed in the previous section. The approach utilized allows estimation of vote shifts to a party from other parties and from the new voters, controlling for similar vote movements between other parties.[9] Notes to Table 3 list the sources of the data, and give details about it. Notes to Figure 3 list the provinces which compose each cluster. Henceforth, a party's 2011 vote will be denoted by the party's acronym followed by "11" and its vote in the 2007 election, by its acronym followed by "07". For the reasons discussed in the previous section, CHP and DSP are treated as if they are one party. BDP is treated as the successor party to the Democratic Society Party (DTP), as the former was established by the leadership of the latter, in anticipation of its closure by the Constitutional Court, and shared the same base.[10] The number of new votes cast in 2011 (the difference between the valid votes cast in 2011 and 2007) will be referred to as "NV". All of the variables (including those with "07" in their name) are measured as a proportion of the valid votes cast in 2011, and are expressed in percentage points. Equations are estimated for AKP11, CHP11+DSP11, MHP11, and the BDP11. The combined vote of these parties amounted to 94.7 percent of the valid votes cast in Turkey in 2011 (Table 3). The independent variables used in the equations are the following: AKP07, CHP07+DSP07, MHP07, DP07, GP07, DTP07, and NV. These, excluding NV, summed to 94.0 percent of the votes cast nationwide in 2007 (Table 3).

 It is not feasible to have 2007 vote shares of all parties on the right hand sides of each equation, as this will lead to multi-colinearity. Consequently some of them need to be

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[9] Since our aim is not to find the determinants of the vote transfers but to determine the magnitude and direction of vote movements, whatever were the reasons behind them, no economic performance variables are included in the equations. Data on such variables do not exist at the provincial level since 2001 anyway, when the Turkish Statistical Institute stopped reporting provincial GDP figures. However Akarca (2011a, 2011b and 2011c) estimates the impacts of per capita GDP growth and inflation rate, using nationwide time-series data.

[10] These parties did not enter, respectively, the 2007 and the 2011 elections officially. Instead their candidates ran as independents to circumvent the nationwide 10 percent threshold the political parties are required to surpass to be represented in the parliament. The votes cast for the independent candidates supported by these parties are treated as if they are cast for them.

excluded. Fortunately, the vote share of the AKP increased between 2007 and 2011 in every single province in clusters 1 and 2, and that of CHP+DSP, in all but a couple in which its vote loss was negligible. Thus AKP07 can be eliminated from all equations for clusters 1 and 2, except the ones for AKP11, and the CHP07+DSP07 can be eliminated from all equations, except the ones for CHP11+DSP11. Furthermore, the MHP07 variable can be removed from cluster 2 equations except the one for MHP11, as the MHP lost votes only in a very few provinces in that cluster and the losses involved were very small. Dummy variables are included in the cluster 2 equations for the provinces of Rize and Sivas. In these provinces, respectively the leaders of the Motherland Party (ANAP) and the Grand Unity Party (BBP) ran as independent candidates in 2007 to circumvent the 10 percent nationwide threshold a party needs to surpass to get representation in the parliament. As native sons they both received significant amount of votes. When the former did not run in 2011 and the latter got deceased in 2009, the votes they received in 2007 moved to other parties in 2011. For clusters 1 and 2, because the vote shares of BDP in 2011 and DTP in 2007 were very small, no vote equations for BDP11 are considered, and DTP07 is not included as an independent variable in the vote equations of other parties. Due to limited number of observations in cluster 3, and the small sizes of the shares of the parties other than the AKP and the BDP (DTP in 2007), vote equations are estimated only for AKP11 and BDP11, and these included on their right hand sides only AKP07 and DTP07 as independent variables. However dummy independent variables for Hakkari and Şanlıurfa are added, as these observations appeared in the estimation process as outliers.[11]

The systems of equations estimated for each cluster are given in Tables 6, 7, and 8. Each system fits the data quite well. Considering only the significant parameter estimates, the results can be interpreted as follows. In cluster 1, the AKP and the CHP+DSP, besides maintaining their supporters from the previous election, each received about 40 percent of the new votes cast, and about half of the voters who deserted the DP. The CHP+DSP captured in addition, all of the 2007 supporters of GP and a quarter of those of MHP. The MHP on the other hand kept only three-fourths of its supporters and was not able to capture any noticeable portion of the new voters or voters who left the DP and GP. In cluster 2, all of the major parties kept their 2007 bases. The AKP captured in addition about 57 percent of those who did not vote in 2007, and 47 and 38 percent of those who voted for the DP and the GP, respectively. The corresponding proportions for the CHP+DSP were a fifth, a third, and a half. Slightly more than a third of the voters who supported the DP in 2007 and about a

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[11] Although the AKP's vote share increased in 78 provinces and declined only a little in two, the party's vote share declined significantly in Hakkari. Also the increase in BDP's votes in this province was phenomenal and highest of all provinces in the country. The rise in AKP's vote share in Şanlıurfa was not only highest in the country it was substantially higher than what the party experienced in other provinces in the region.

tenth of the new voters seem to have voted for the MHP. About two-thirds of the people in Rize who supported Mesut Yilmaz, the former leader of the ANAP who ran as an independent in 2007 have gone to the AKP and about one-third to the CHP+DSP. On the other hand, about a half of the votes received by Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, the deceased leader of BBP, who ran as an independent candidate in 2007 in Sivas, moved to the AKP and the rest remained in his party. In cluster 3, both the AKP and the BDP kept their 2007 supporters, but surprisingly all of the new votes went to the BDP and none of it to the AKP. One exception to the general pattern observed in cluster 3 is Şanlıurfa, where the AKP captured an extra fifth of the electorate that would have gone to the BDP had the pattern in other cluster 3 provinces prevailed. The situation in Hakkari however was the reverse. There the BDP captured an extra fifth of the vote, 60 percent of which came at the expense of the AKP.

Looked from another angle, in cluster 1, about four fifths of the new votes cast got shared almost equally by the AKP and the CHP+DSP. In cluster 2, the AKP received almost three fifths of the new votes, the CHP+DSP, about a fifth, and the MHP a tenth. In cluster 3, the new votes went all to the BDP. The voters who left the DP got shared by the AKP and the CHP+DSP in cluster 1, with the latter party receiving a slightly larger share. In cluster 2 there was a three-way split of similar votes, with the AKP getting slightly larger share than the CHP+DSP and the MHP. All of the GP votes in cluster 1 went to the CHP+DSP. In cluster 2, the CHP+DSP received half of the GP votes, with two-fifths going to the AKP. The DP and the GP had negligible votes in cluster 3, and the small numbers of observations in that cluster makes it impossible to determine their distribution reliably.

4. Conclusion

Between the 2007 and 2011 elections, the Turkish electorate increased by about ten million. In 2011, new voters cast nearly one out of every five votes. Besides routine increase in the population over 18, this is attributable to the unusually low registration in 2007 and to the change in the voter registration system which now registers automatically all eligible citizens, even those permanently residing abroad. This many additional voters can be a game-changer and should be studied. Although micro studies are needed also to get detailed information about the backgrounds of new voters and how they voted, an effort is made here in that direction, using macro data.

As usual, only a fraction of citizens living abroad voted in 2011. However, in the next election, when they will be allowed to vote in the countries they reside, their participation is expected to be higher. Amazingly, despite involuntary registration of millions of voters, the participation rate of domestic residents not only did not suffer, it actually increased. Thus we can say "if you register, they will vote". According to our results, the new voters were located disproportionately in the south-eastern and central-eastern provinces of the country (cluster 3) and in that region essentially all

voted for the BDP. The AKP, the other major player in the area received no noticeable portion of them. This was the main reason behind the increase in the BDP's vote share and parliamentary representation. In other regions of the country, the proportions of new voters who supported the AKP, CHP+DSP and MHP, compared to the regional vote shares of these parties in 2007, were about the same for the AKP and lower for the MHP, but a little higher in the case of the CHP+DSP. Thus the CHP can be described as another beneficiary of the new voter registration system, even though it was not as big a winner as the BDP.

In the near future, the BDP's vote share may move closer to the ten percent national threshold a party must surpass to enter the parliament, if it continues to capture bulk of the new voters in the south-eastern and central-eastern provinces, where population growth rate is high. The probability of that happening will be even higher if the party manages to raise the turnout in the region which is relatively low now. The BDP sympathizers outside its strongholds, many of whom now vote strategically for their second choice, may then choose to vote for their favourite. Thus it should not be surprising to see in the near future the BDP or its successor to enter elections formally rather than fielding independent candidates. The party may have to do that anyway to get a slice of the votes that will be cast abroad.[12]

During 2007-2011, the country experienced also the deaths of the Young and the Democrat parties, the former literally and latter for all practical purposes. These parties did not have significant presence in the south-east and central-east of the country (cluster 3). In other parts, their votes essentially got split between the AKP, CHP+DSP and the MHP. The votes shed by the DP in the northwest-west-south-west region (cluster 1) went mainly to the AKP and CHP+DSP, with the share of the latter being a little larger. In the north-northeast-central section of the country (cluster 2), besides the two parties mentioned, the MHP got a piece of the DP votes as well. However the AKP's portion was a little more than that of the almost equal shares of the other two parties. All of the GP votes in the northwest-west-southwest, and half of them in the north-northeast-central section of the country, went to the CHP+DSP. The AKP got about two-fifths of it in the latter region.

In short, the vote shares of the AKP, CHP+DSP and the BDP increased significantly between 2007 and 2011. The rise for the BDP came mainly from the new voters and for the AKP and the CHP, from the decay of the DP and GP. In the case of the CHP, the votes it captured from the MHP and the new voters were contributing factors as well. Had the voter registration system was not changed, the BDP vote share would

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[12] Those residing abroad are allowed to pick a party only. Their ballot is considered to be cast for all of the candidates of that party in the country. The vote total in each province is increased by the proportion of votes cast abroad relative to those cast domestically. The increase is then distributed among the parties according to their shares in the votes cast abroad.

have been lower and the AKP share higher. Had the DP and GP did not disappear, the AKP, CHP and to some extent the MHP vote shares would have been lower.

The ramifications of the new voter registration system will continue in the next parliamentary election, when close to 3 million voters living abroad is expected to vote. They will constitute about 5 percent of the electorate. If the votes cast by the expats at entry/exit points of the country now is any guide, the AKP which received 62 percent of such votes in 2011, and 58 percent in 2007, is likely to be the main beneficiary of the votes to be cast abroad. There is talk now that the ban on voting by nearly half a million conscript soldiers will be lifted.[13] That would favour the AKP also, as the privates come disproportionately from rural and conservative backgrounds.

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[13] Currently, only the officers and non-commissioned officers are allowed to vote.

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Table 1
Number of voters and votes cast

	April 1999 Domestic residents only	November 2002 Domestic residents only	March 2004 Domestic residents only	July 2007 Domestic residents only	March 2009 Domestic residents only	June 2011 Domestic residents only	All
Registered voters	37,429,120	41,291,568	43,552,931	42,571,284	48,049,446	50,237,343	52,806,322
Votes cast	32,589,973	32,652,702	33,211,457	35,828,274	40,932,260	43,785,665	43,914,948
Rate of participation (%)	87.07	79.08	76.26	84.16	85.19	87.16	83.16
Valid votes	31,119,242	31,414, 748	32,268,496	34,822,907	39,988,763	42,813,896	42,941,763
Rate of invalid votes (%)	4.51	3.79	2.84	2.81	2.31	2.22	2.22

Notes:Rate of participation is percentage of registered voters who voted. Rate of invalid votes is the percentage of votes cast which were declared invalid. Figures given for 1999, 2002, 2007 and 2011 are for parliamentary elections, and those for 2004 and 2009 are for provincial council elections.

Sources: Tuncer (1999, 2002, 2007, 2009 and 2011), Tuncer, Kasapbaş (2004) and Tuncer, Kasapbaş and Tuncer (2003).

Figure 1
Proportion of new voters in 2011
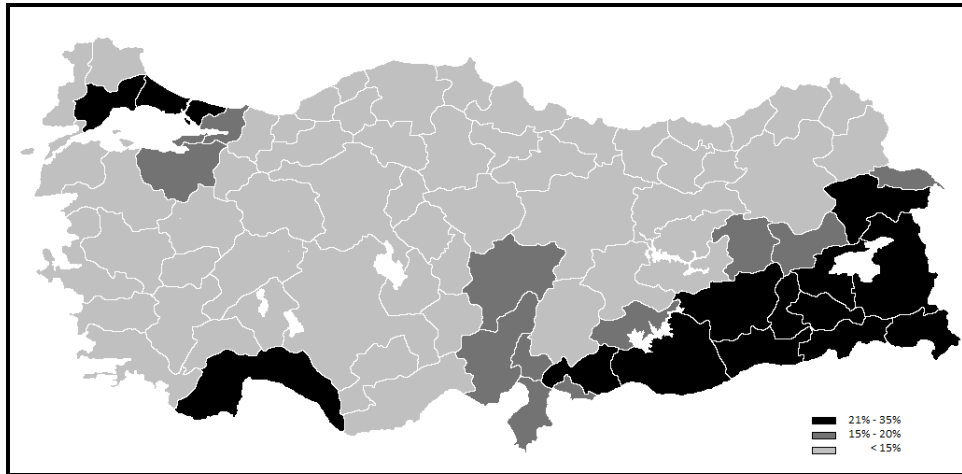
Notes: The percentages reported refer to the differences between registered voters in 2011 and 2007, in proportion to the former.

Sources: Tuncer (2007 and 2011).

Figure 2
Decrease in DP + GP votes between 2007 and 2011
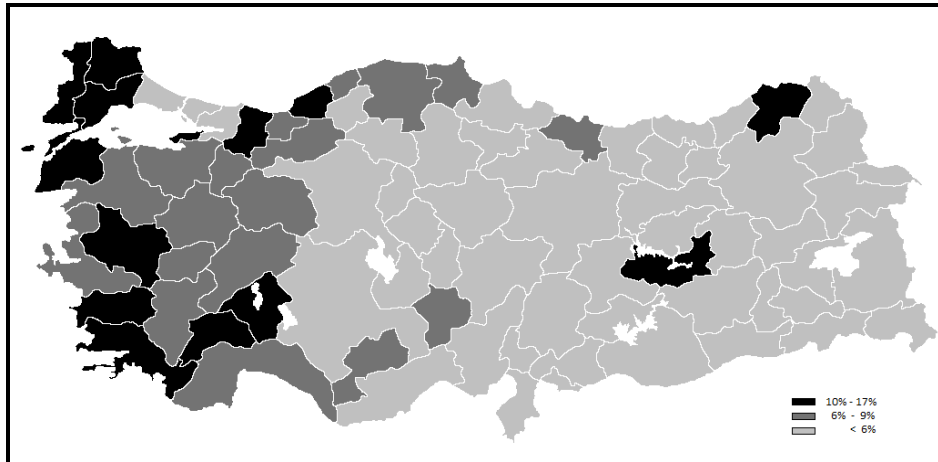
Notes:
The percentages reported refer to the decreases in the aggregate votes cast for the two parties between 2007 and 2011, in proportion to registered voters in 2011

Sources:
Tuncer (2007 and 2011).

Figure 3
Provincial clusters with different voting patterns in Turkey
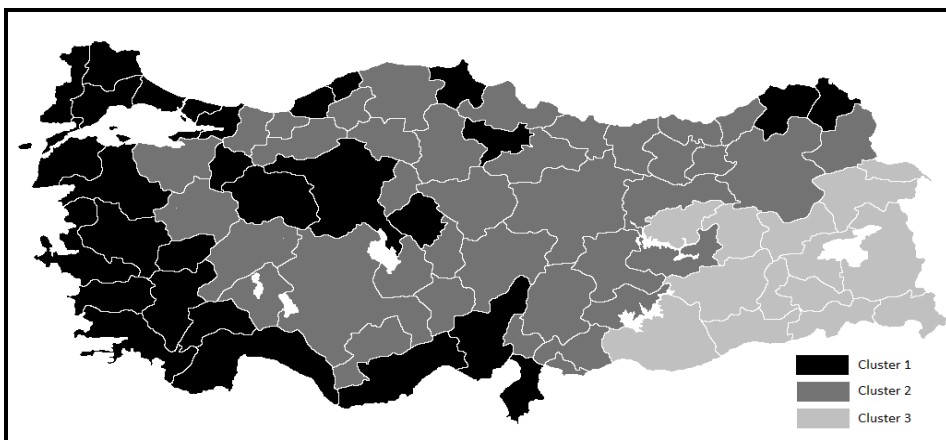
Notes:

For each of the five elections between 1999 and 2009, the provinces are grouped into three, using cluster analysis (k-means method). Going from west to east, the clusters are numbered 1 through 3 (colored black, dark grey, and light gray, respectively). The provinces which changed clusters between elections are placed in the region in which they appeared most. A tie occurred only in the case of Kars. The province appeared once in region 1, twice in region 2 and twice in region 3. It was placed in region 2, based on the weighted average. In 2011, 59.02 percent of all registered voters resided in cluster 1, 32.19 percent in cluster 2, and 8.79 percent in cluster 3.

The regions include the following provinces:

Cluster 1 (29 provinces): Adana, Amasya, Ankara, Antalya, Artvin, Aydın, Balıkesir, Bilecik, Burdur, Çanakkale, Denizli, Edirne, Eskişehir, Hatay, Mersin, İstanbul, İzmir, Kırklareli, Kırşehir, Kocaeli, Manisa, Muğla, Sinop, Tekirdağ, Uşak, Zonguldak, Bartın, Ardahan and Yalova.

Cluster 2 (38 provinces): Adıyaman, Afyon, Bolu, Bursa, Çankırı, Çorum, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Gaziantep, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Isparta, Kars, Kastamonu, Kayseri, Konya, Kütahya, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Nevşehir, Niğde, Ordu, Rize, Sakarya, Samsun, Sivas, Tokat, Trabzon, Yozgat, Aksaray, Bayburt, Karaman, Kırıkkale, Karabük, Kilis, Osmaniye and Düzce.

Cluster 3 (14 provinces): Ağrı, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Hakkari, Mardin, Muş, Siirt,
Tunceli, Şanlıurfa, Van, Batman, Şırnak and Iğdır.

Source:
Akarca and Başlevent (2011).

Table 2
The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of clusters:
Means of various indicators in 2000

Indicator	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Turkey
Proportion of urban population (%)	72.0	57.7	55.3	64.9
Population density (persons per square km)	138.0	65.1	57.2	88.0
Proportion of non-agricultural Employment (%)	66.2	39.6	32.7	52.7
Female share in non-agricultural employment (%)	19.3	12.0	6.8	15.2
Per Capita GDP (thousand TL)	2.3	1.3	0.7	1.8
Net migration rate (per thousand)	22.8	-17.9	-41.6	0.7
Proportion of population born in another province (%)	41.0	15.0	8.8	27.8
Average years of schooling	5.9	5.1	3.6	5.3
Median age (years)	27.1	24.6	17.3	25.1

Notes: In the computation of mean years of schooling for each province, 15, 11, 8, and 5 years of schooling are attributed, respectively, to university, high school, middle school, and primary school graduates in the province. Two years-worth of schooling is attributed to those who are literate but not a graduate of any school. Children under age six are omitted in computing the mean. The cluster means given are the averages of provincial means weighted with the 2000 population figures with the exception of population density which is weighted with the surface area of the province. The net migration rate is for the 1995-2000 period.
Source: Akarca and Başlevent (2011).

Table 3
Turkish political parties and their nationwide vote shares (%)

| POLITICAL PARTIES	2007	2011
Justice & Development Party (AKP)	46.58	49.83
Felicity Party and People's Voice Party (SP+HAS)	2.34	2.04
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	14.27	13.01
Republican People's Party and Democratic Left Party (CHP+DSP)	20.88	26.23
Democrat Party (DP)	5.42	0.65
Young Party (GP)	3.04	
Democratic Society Party (DTP) Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	3.84	5.67
Other Parties	2.23	1.67
Independents	1.40	0.90

Notes:

The percentages reported are votes cast for the respective parties, in proportion to valid votes cast in the years indicated. In paranthesis are the Turkish acronyms of political parties. The parties which are successors or predecessors of each other are put in the same cell to facilitate comparisons. The Democrat Party (DP) was named True Path Party (DYP) prior to the 2007 election. The Democratic Society Party (DTP), and its sucessor party, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), did not enter, respectively, the 2007 and the 2011 elections officially. Instead their candidates ran as independents to circumvent the nationwide 10 percent threshold the political parties are required to exceed to be represented in the parliament. The 2007 and 2011 figures shown for these parties are the aggregate vote shares of the independent candidates supported by them. The Democratic Left Party (DSP) entered the 2007 election in partnership and under the banner of the Republican People's Party (CHP). This party's vote share was 1.22 percent in 2002 and 0.25 percent in 2011. The People's Voice Party split from the Felicity Party in 2010. The party's vote share in the 2011 election was 0.77 percent. Blank spots in the table indicate that the party in question did not enter the election.

Sources:
Tuncer (2007 and 2011)

Table 4
Vote shares of political parties in various clusters (%)

Political Parties	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3	
	2007	2011	2007	2011	2007	2011
Justice & Development Party (AKP)	39.98	44.58	57.53	61.47	48.29	42.09
Felicity Party and People's Voice Party (SP+HAS)	2.10	1.80	2.98	2.68	1.29	1.14
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	15.49	13.54	14.49	14.63	3.49	2.72
Republican People's Party and Democratic Left Party (CHP + DSP)	27.29	34.11	13.40	17.31	4.54	4.21
Democrat Party (DP)	5.61	0.67	5.23	0.70	4.77	0.33

Young Party (GP)	4.10		1.77		0.44	
Democratic Society Party (DTP) Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	2.29	3.12	0.86	1.27	29.93	41.58
Other Parties	1.94	1.66	2.11	1.72	1.57	1.63
Independents	1.20	0.52	1.63	0.22	5.68	6.30

Notes:
The percentages reported are votes cast for the respective parties, in proportion to valid votes cast in the years indicated. Provinces in each cluster are listed in notes to Figure 3.

Sources:
The same as Table 3 for vote shares, and Figure 3 for the composition of clusters.

Figure 4
Vote shares of main political parties in 2011

A. AKP
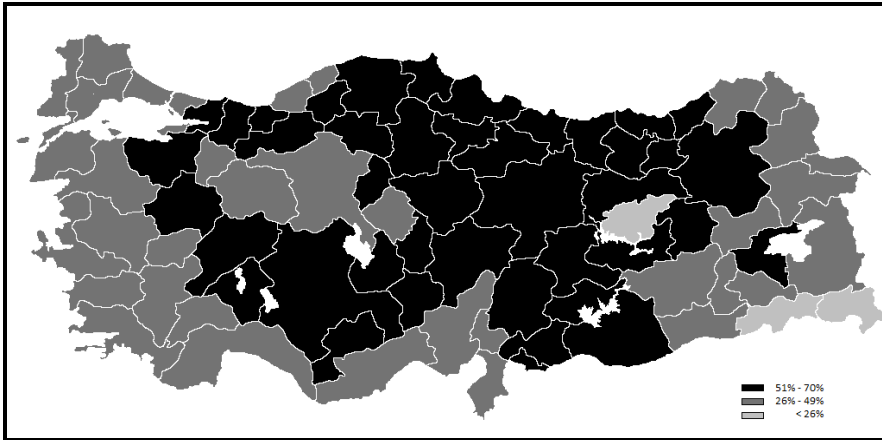
B. CHP + DSP
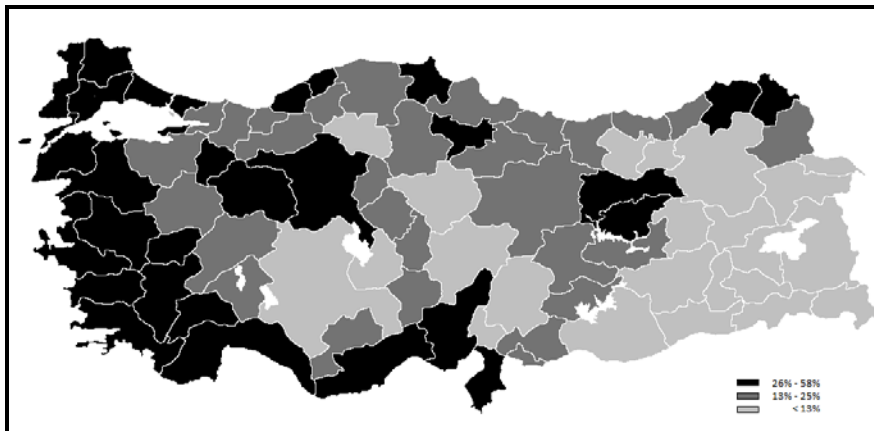
C. MHP
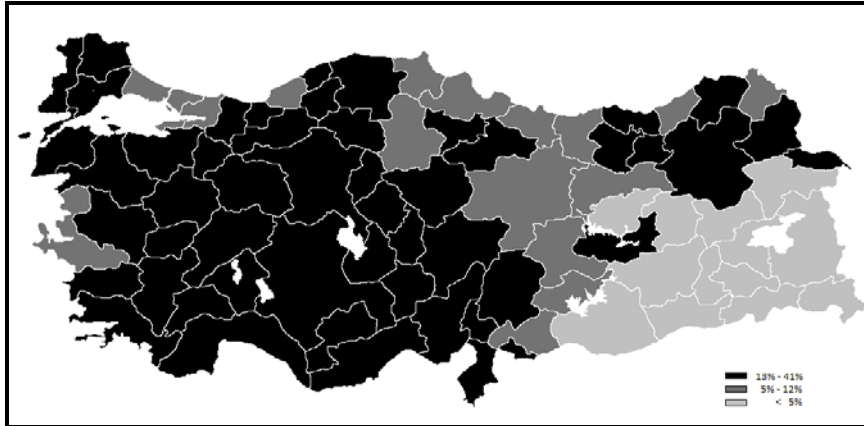
D. BDP

Notes:
The percentages reported are votes cast for the respective parties, in proportion to valid votes cast in 2011. Provinces in which a party's vote share exceeded its nationwide vote share are colored black, in the cases of the AKP, CHP+DSP, and MHP. In the case of the BDP, provinces colored black and dark grey are the ones where the party's provincial vote share exceeded its nationwide vote share.

Source:
Tuncer (2011).

Table 5
Breakdown of votes cast in 2011 according to the party voted for in 2007 (%)

Party voted for in 2007	Turkey	Cluster1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
Justice & Development Party (AKP)	38.02	32.10	49.63	35.21
Felicity Party (SP)	1.91	1.68	2.57	0.94
Nationalist Action Party (MHP)	11.65	12.44	12.49	2.54
Republican People's Party and Democratic Left Party (CHP+DSP)	17.04	21.91	11.56	3.31
Democrat Party (DP)	4.42	4.50	4.51	3.47
Young Party (GP)	2.48	3.29	1.53	0.32
Democratic Society Party (DTP)	3.13	1.86	0.74	21.82
Other Parties	1.60	1.55	1.82	1.15
Independents	1.37	0.96	1.40	4.14
New voters	18.38	19.70	13.74	27.10

Notes: The information given in the notes to Tables 3 and 4 apply here as well. However the percentages reported here are votes cast for the respective parties in 2007, in proportion to valid votes cast in 2011.

Sources: The same as Table 3 for vote shares, and as Figure 3 for the composition of clusters.

Table 6
Estimated vote equations: Cluster 1

Independent Variables	Equations		
	AKP11	CHP11 + DSP11	MHP11
Constant	-6.04 (1.00)	-5.13 (1.50)	4.37 (1.33)
AKP07	1.17*** (11.87)		
CHP07+DSP07		1.02*** (12.62)	
MHP07	0.10 (0.92)	0.26*** (2.60)	0.73** (5.86)
DP07	0.44** (2.38)	0.50*** (2.81)	-0.06 (0.26)
GP07	0.32 (1.26)	1.02*** (5.06)	-0.12 (0.52)
NV	0.41*** (4.45)	0.39*** (4.93)	0.07 (0.75)

Notes: For the definitions of variables, see Section 3. For the provinces included in region 1, see the notes to Figure 3. The equations are estimated as a system of Seemingly Unrelated Regressions, using the Zellner (1962) procedure. The numbers in parantheses are the t-

values in absolute value. The single, double and triple asterisk superscripts indicate significance at ten, five and one percent levels respectively, in one tail tests.

Source: Author's computations.

Table 7
Estimated vote equations: Cluster 2

Independent Variables	Equations		
	AKP11	CHP11 + DSP11	MHP11
Constant	-2.36 (0.85)	-2.97*** (2.41)	-1.29 (0.78)
AKP07	1.07*** (24.06)		
CHP07+DSP07		1.27*** (20.10)	
MHP07			1.01*** (15.94)
DP07	0.47*** (4.)	0.34*** (3.20)	0.37*** (2.62)
GP07	0.38** (2.22)	0.51*** (2.74)	0.21 (0.82)
NV	0.57*** (11.73)	0.21*** (4.54)	0.11* (1.64)
RIZE	12.28*** (7.19)	8.35*** (4.29)	1.50 (0.56)
SIVAS	5.45*** (3.19)	-2.98 (1.55)	0.84 (0.31)

System Weighted R-square = 0.91

Notes: For the definitions of variables, see Section 3. For the provinces included in region 2, see the notes to Figure 3. The equations are estimated as a system of Seemingly Unrelated Regressions, using the Zellner (1962) procedure. The numbers in parantheses are the t-values in absolute value. The single, double and triple asterisk superscripts indicate significance at ten, five and one percent levels respectively, in one tail tests.

Source: Author's computations.

Table 8
Estimated vote equations: Cluster 3

Independent Variables	Equations	
	AKP11	BDP11
Constant	7.43 (1.23)	-7.38 (0.94)
AKP07	0.98*** (10.08)	
DTP07		1.03*** (3.17)
NV	-0.12 (0.58)	1.15*** (3.36)
ŞANLIURFA	21.51*** (4.05)	-22.08** (2.11)
HAKKARİ	-12.25** (2.54)	20.08** (2.52)
System Weighted R-square = 0.92		

Notes: For the definitions of variables, see Section 3. For the provinces included in region 3, see the notes to Figure 3. The equations are estimated as a system of Seemingly Unrelated Regressions, using the Zellner (1962) procedure. The numbers in parantheses are the t-values in absolute value. The single, double and triple asterisk superscripts indicate significance at ten, five and one percent levels respectively, in one tail tests.

Source: Author's computations.