

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

# POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN NORTH CYPRUS

A Survey Study

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Based on a survey, this report explores citizens' attitudes towards different political and social issues in the northern part of Cyprus.



Particularly, it focuses on the differences and similarities between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants who came to the island after 1974.



The survey results show that while the two groups' attitudes diverge on major political and social issues, similarities can be observed too.



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# INTRODUCTION

This report aims to explore different aspects of politics and society in the northern part of Cyprus based on a survey. Most studies on Cyprus has focused on the Cyprus conflict and the division between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides, the two main ethnic communities in the country. Different from the previous ones, this study focuses on the division within one of these communities.

Following the de facto political and geographic division of the island as a result of the war in 1974, Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities started to live side by side after sharing the same geography for four centuries – a mostly peaceful co-existence marred by ethnic-violence between 1958 and 1974. Yet the ensuing ethnic-homogeneity did not lead to the emergence of a stable, harmonious society in the north. On the contrary, two important political cracks occurred in the society before long. First, there was a political crack within the society regarding the solution model of the Cyprus Problem, which is something that is not so common in other de facto states where reunification with the parent state is completely ruled out. From the beginning, while one side, the right, favoured the continuation of the division, the left favoured reunification of the island in a bi-zonal, bicomunal federation. Furthermore, as part of the right's strategy to consolidate the post-1974 division by Turkifying the northern part of the island, Turkish immigrants were settled in the areas left behind by Greek Cypriots. The flow of Turkish immigrants, which had started in an organized fashion in the 1970s, has continued in a more unplanned manner to this day. Most of them were also granted TRNC<sup>1</sup> citizenship.

This decision not only infuriated the Greek Cypriot side and complicated the solution of the Cyprus problem, but also has led to a subtle tension between the two groups, leading to the emergence of a *divided society* in the northern part of the island. This study focuses on the uneasy relationship between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants. This study investigates the political and cultural

factors underlying the uneasy relationship between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants. Although research on this relationship is not new, the method used in this report is a novel contribution to the studies in this field. So far, most studies have used interviews. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first survey study, which compares the attitudes of the two groups towards identity, politics, religion, the Cyprus problem and relations with Turkey.

The report starts with Chapter One, which outlines the broader context in which Turkish immigration to the northern part of Cyprus took place, based on the existing literature.

The discussion of the survey results starts in Chapter Two, which focuses on the perceptions of identity and sense of belonging. Results point out a serious division between the two groups and in a way justifies both the main idea of the report, that in the post-1974 period a *divided society* has emerged in the northern part of the island, and our decision to divide the sample into two groups. While native Turkish Cypriots tend to emphasize their 'Cypriotness', 'Turkishness' is the overriding element of identity among immigrants. Moreover, strikingly, a majority in both groups described the relationship between the two groups as 'bad' or 'very bad' while only one in twenty said it was 'good' or 'very good'.

Chapter Three focuses on the religious values. Our findings show that, in line with expectations, immigrants are significantly more religious than Turkish Cypriots. A bigger proportion of immigrants said that they belonged to a religion; a considerably bigger group among immigrants identified themselves as religious, and reported that they attended mosque. When asked whether they supported building more mosques and divinity schools, two controversial issues occupying public opinion lately, again, we can clearly observe that immigrants' support is remarkably higher than Turkish Cypriots' support.

Chapter Four focuses on the two groups' attitudes towards democracy, life satisfaction and interpersonal trust. This is where the two groups come closest to each other. Both groups reported strong commitment to democratic values and dislike towards military rule. In a similar vein, both groups leaned towards identifying the TRNC's government structure as democratic or very democratic, while around

<sup>1</sup> The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is only recognised by the Republic of Turkey. As the government of the Republic of Cyprus remains internationally recognised as the government of the whole of the island, the entire island is now considered to be a member of the European Union. However, the *acquis communautaire* is suspended in northern Cyprus pending a political settlement to the Cyprus problem (see Protocol no. 10 of the Accession Treaty).

one in four in a big majority in both groups said it was not democratic. Life satisfaction and interpersonal trust scores were also very similar. An overwhelming majority in both groups tend to distrust 'other people'.

Chapter Five presents a comparison of the political cultures of its two target groups. The results show that members of both groups are proud of being a citizen of the TRNC, despite a majority in both groups claiming they did not feel proud of its political system. A majority in both groups shows interest in domestic and Turkish politics by following daily political news. Both groups trust the Turkish government more than they trust the TRNC government, yet among the immigrant group, the level of trust for the Turkish government is significantly higher. When it comes to who they see as their leader, the immigrant group's allegiance seems to be split between the Turkish president and the TRNC president, while the native group has a more clear position in favour of the TRNC leader. Finally, ideologically, Turkish Cypriots tend to lean towards left, while immigrants tend to favour the right.

Chapter Six deals with the opinions of the two groups on the nature of the relationship between the TRNC and Turkey, another divisive issue in Turkish Cypriot political life. Here, once again, the differences between the two groups become palpable. While native Turkish Cypriots, in general,

favour a relationship on a more equal footing and show a tendency of dissatisfaction with Ankara's meddling in domestic politics of the TRNC, a majority of immigrants seem not to be bothered by the asymmetrical 'motherland-babyland' relationship or Turkey's policies towards the TRNC.

Chapter Seven focuses on the two groups' attitudes towards the solution of the Cyprus problem. As they disagreed over other major issues, the two groups expressed diverging views over possible settlement models. While the most favoured option among native Turkish Cypriots was a federation (even slightly more popular than the two-state solution model), annexation by Turkey was the most opposed. In sharp contrast, annexation was the most popular option among Turkish immigrants while federation was the most opposed.

The last chapter discusses the variation of attitudes among four immigrant sub-groups, which were formed based on the period of arrival of the first family member who had immigrated to Cyprus. Cross tabulation analysis shows that although the period of arrival played an important role in immigrants' perception of identity and homeland and made the immigrants from earlier periods more likely to identify with Cyprus, the relationship was less clear when it came to other questions such as the favoured solution model for the Cyprus problem or religiosity.

# METHODOLOGY AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

Based on a survey, this report presents a comparative analysis of attitudes of native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrant citizens of TRNC towards certain political and social issues. In order to make such a comparative analysis possible, we designed our own survey, which is available in the Annex.

In preparing the survey questions, we made use of the academic literature on the relations between these two groups to identify important issues, and we also made use of acclaimed questionnaires such as the World Values Survey (WVS).

The questionnaire was administered by Lipa Consultancy using a face-to-face survey method, with a sample of 1,665 TRNC citizens. The sample is divided into two separate

groups: natives (n=972) who have at least one parent born in Cyprus before 1974; and, immigrants (n=693) who were born in Turkey and/or both parents were from Turkey. The selection of the sample was designed to be representative of districts, gender, education level, etc. The confidence level of the survey is 95% and the margin of error of the results is 5%.

The fieldwork was conducted between January 20 and February 3, 2018 and financed by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Cyprus Office.

Figure D1

**Gender**

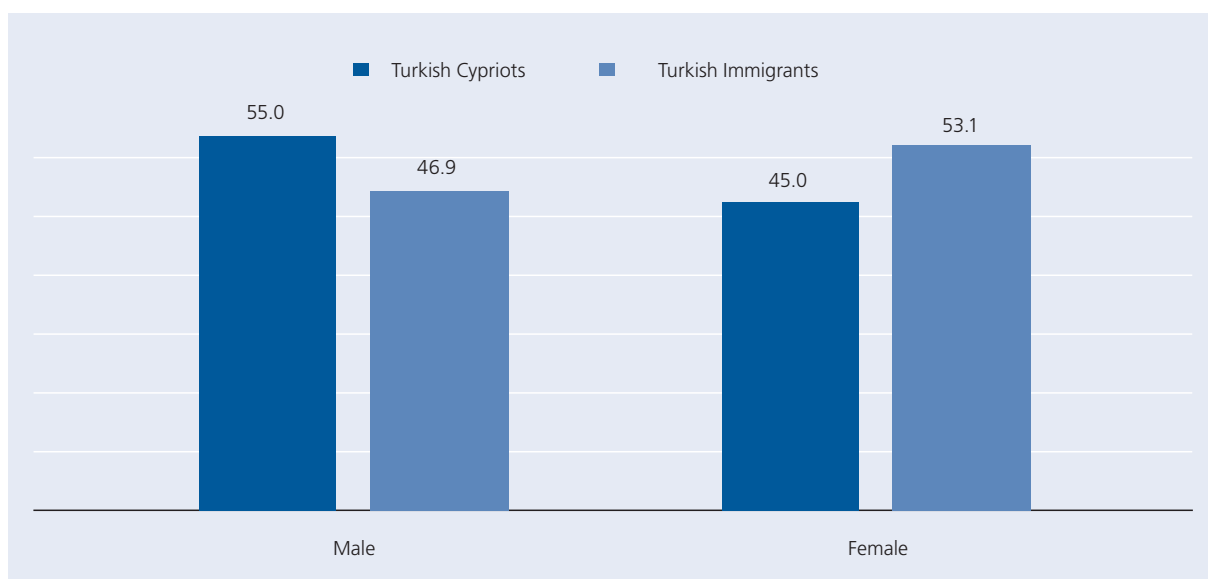




Figure D2

**Age**

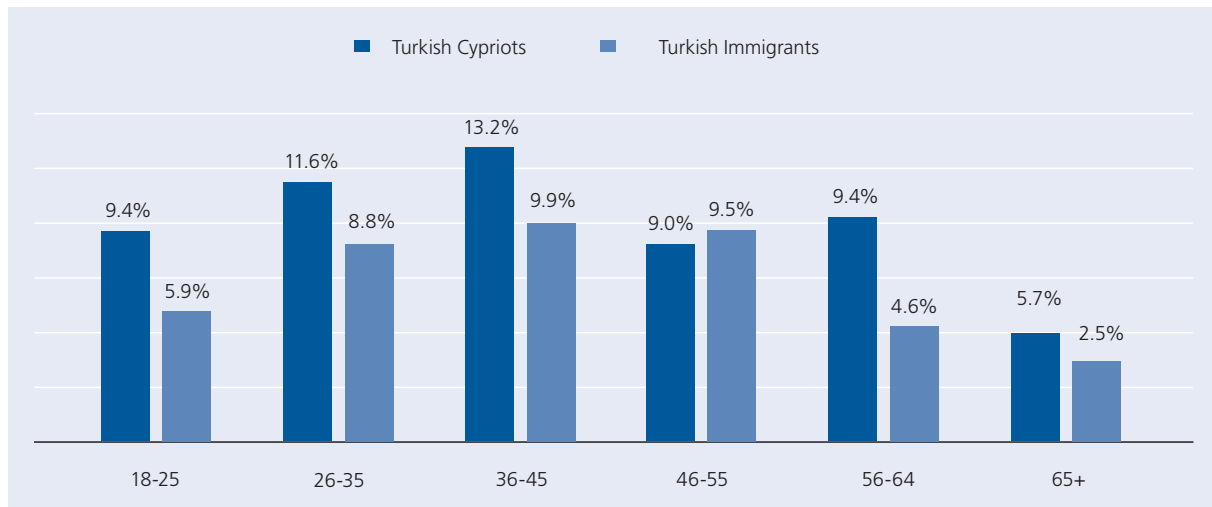


Figure D3

**Education**

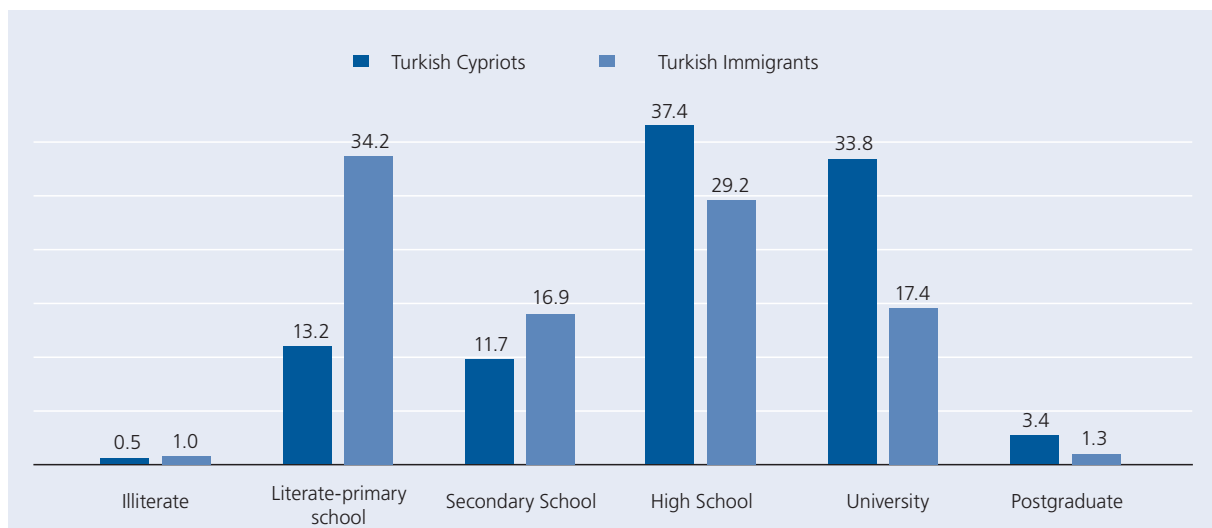
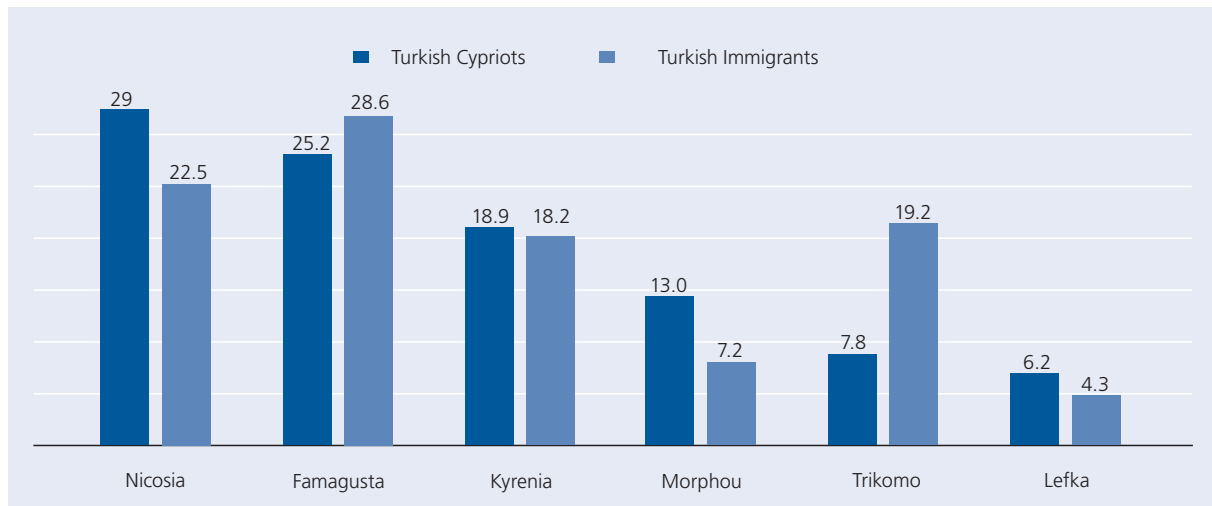


Figure D4

**District**



# 1

## A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: DIVISION OF THE ISLAND AND THE SETTLEMENT OF IMMIGRANTS

After the Ottoman takeover of the island and the subsequent settling of Anatolian Muslims in 1571, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots had lived in harmony for centuries in Cyprus (Asmussen 2015, p. 33). Following the arrival of the two rival 'nationalisms' from Greece and Turkey – which Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots considered as their 'motherlands', the culture of coexistence gradually left its place to inter-ethnic conflict (Kızılyürek 2003, pp.11-12; Bryant 2004).

To counter the then Greek Cypriot political ideal of *enosis*, union with Greece, which Turkish Cypriots perceived as an existential threat, Turkish Cypriots initially supported the continuation of British colonial rule. But by the mid-1950s, Turkish Cypriots and Turkey adopted *taksim*, the partitioning of the island between Turkey and Greece, as their official national strategy. These two naturally conflicting political ideals triggered the intercommunal conflict in the late 1950s.

In parallel with the decolonization process across the world, and in line with concerns about the security of NATO's southern flank in the Cold War context, the three NATO allies, Great Britain, Greece and Turkey agreed on the future of the island by signing the 1959 London and Zurich Agreements. Following the agreements, the Republic of Cyprus, which was based on intercommunal power-sharing, was established in 1960. Although the Republic's Constitution had explicitly forbidden *enosis* and *taksim*, the political elites on both sides continued to insist on their national dreams, which brought an end to the 1960 partnership. After a short-lived common state experience, the intercommunal conflict resumed in December 1963, following President Makarios' 'Thirteen Constitutional Amendment' proposals, which undermined Turkish Cypriot's political equality, which the Turkish Cypriot side subsequently rejected.

As a result, according to the Greek Cypriot perspective, the Turkish Cypriot community boycotted the Republic and established their own parallel administration, while the Turkish Cypriot counter-perspective argues that Turkish Cypriots were ejected from the administration by force and deprived of their constitutional rights in the Republic of Cyprus. After 1964, due to security concerns and in line with plans conceived earlier, Turkish Cypriots withdrew into enclaves and the division in the island became palpable.

The conflict was eased at the end of 1967, and the representatives of the two communities started the negotiation process in 1968, but a solution agreement proved elusive. On 15 July 1974, a Greek-orchestrated coup d'état against President Makarios gave Turkey the necessary pretext to start a military intervention on the island. Ankara referred to its responsibilities to guarantee the territorial integrity, independence and constitutional order of the Republic of Cyprus, derived from the London and Zurich Agreements and started a military operation to the island on 20 July and took certain areas of the northern part of the island under its control. As the negotiations following an initial ceasefire failed, Turkey resumed its military operation in August, reaching today's demarcation line. Consequently, the island of Cyprus has become both geographically and politically divided.

### IMMIGRATION OF TURKISH NATIONALS TO NORTH CYPRUS

Following the war in 1974, the intercommunal violence came to an end. But at the same time, this led to displacement on a massive scale. According to Gürel and Özersay (2006, p.351) '142.000 Greek Cypriots (close to 30% of the entire Greek Cypriot community at that time) were displaced from the northern to the southern part of the island; and, according to official Turkish Cypriot sources, 45.000 Turkish Cypriots (close to 40% of the entire Turkish Cypriot community at that time)' moved in the opposite direction. This de facto population exchange brought about ethnically homogeneous structures on both sides of the island. Afterwards, the Turkish Cypriot leadership declared the first separate Turkish Cypriot entity, the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (KTFD, *Kıbrıs Türk Federe Devleti*), in the northern third of the island, symbolizing the de facto division, with the support of Turkey.

To consolidate the division, a Turkification process followed (Kızılyürek 2003). As an important element of this, in 1975, a state-organized migration flow was initiated from Turkey to the northern part of Cyprus. In terms of their time and way of arrival, Turkish immigrants' settlement on the island can be categorized in three waves (Kurtuluş and Purkis 2014). The first wave of migrants settled in the northern part of Cyprus between 1975 and 1979, as a top-secret

'Protocol for Agricultural Labour Force' was signed between the KTFD and Turkey (Vural, Ekenoğlu and Sonan 2015). 'Mehmet Ali Birand notes that reportedly their number already reached to 30.000 in June 1976' (cited in Sonan 2014, p. 82). Although some of them returned to Turkey after a while, according to Hatay (2007, p. 47), 'around 15.000 were successfully settled' by the late 1970s; Morvaridi estimated (1993, p. 220) 'the number of Turkish immigrants [*Türkiyeli*]' in early 1990s to be between 25.000 and 35.000 people. Those who had come in the first wave had settled on the island with an exceptional status and benefited from various privileges including citizenship, allocation of land and properties in the north left by Greek Cypriots (Morvaridi 1993; see also Akçalı 2007, p.71). Those who came in the second and third wave in the 1980s, the 1990s and later did so largely on their own initiative without directly benefiting from these incentives (Hatay 2005, p. 13). There is a broad consensus that the first wave was particularly an organized, 'politically motivated migration' (Vural, Ekenoğlu and Sonan 2015) or an act of 'demographic engineering' (Jensehaugen 2017, p. 362; see also Hatay 2005; Navaro-Yashin 2006; Loizides 2015). As Jensehaugen put it (2017, p. 363), soon '[t]he increasing presence of settlers from mainland Turkey augmented the sense, outside the north, that Turkey was colonizing northern Cyprus'.

This policy has created a backlash and turned into 'a sensitive and controversial issue both at intra-communal and inter-communal level of politics in Cyprus since 1974. While this has led to a fear of assimilation among a large portion of Turkish Cypriots, it provoked the Greek Cypriots, who see these immigrants as settlers, to accuse Turkey of following a policy of colonization' (Vural, Ekeneoglu and Sonan 2015, p. 84).

It is quite apparent that, the settlement of Turkish immigrants in the northern part of Cyprus marked the beginning of an uneasy relationship. Among other things, mingling with Turks from Anatolia was meant to strengthen the Turkish identity of native Turkish Cypriots. Yet, as Pollis put it, '[f]or many Turkish Cypriots their reaction has been increasing differentiation from the Turks rather than a strengthening of identity bonds ... This influx, mostly Anatolian peasants, has dramatized for the Turkish Cypriots their distinctiveness from mainland Turks' (Pollis 1996, p. 83; Kızılyürek 2003 and Akçalı 2007, p.72). Though in official discourse everyone was Turk and the Turkish Cypriot leader Denктаş often portrayed himself 'as "a Turk coincidentally born on Cyprus (*hasbelkader Kıbrıs'ta doğmuş bir Türk*)"' emphasizing and highlighting his Turkishness and rendering his Cypriotness epiphenomenal or accidental' (Navaro-Yashin 2012, p. 52), this was not enough to change the (negative) feelings and perceptions formed by both groups [towards each other] as a result of their everyday interactions: 'Language, dress, values and attitudes, even religion are divergent resulting in rising tensions' (Pollis 1996, p. 83; Akçalı 2007, p.72 and Akçalı 2011, p.1734).

Moreover, the tension was not limited to cultural differences but was rather complemented by economic and political friction as well. On the one hand, Turkish Cypriots thought the immigrants received 'preferential treatment' in allocation of property, and on the other they felt that granting immigrants voting rights was disempowering native Turkish Cypriots: 'This conjunction of cultural, political and economic tensions between the Turks and Turkish Cypriots has resulted in mounting tensions' (*ibid.* p. 84). As Navaro-Yashin (2012, p. 54) points out, referring to her fieldwork in north Cyprus, 'Turkish-Cypriots on the left of the political spectrum who were critical of Turkey's ongoing military and political presence in Cyprus were not the only ones, during my research, to express discomfort with the presence of settlers from Turkey. Turkish-Cypriots of all political convictions expressed similar sentiments'.

Since the beginning, Turkish immigrants also have had their misgivings about the process, and organized into political parties to air their concerns and protect their interests. Discrimination has been one of the most frequently mentioned complaints. Erhan Arıklı, the leader of the most recent political party (and the member of parliament representing Famagusta) established by Turkish immigrants (Rebirth Party [*Yeniden Doğu Partisi*], YDP), had put it in a newspaper column a few years before he established the YDP (Arıklı 2015), 'the migration from Turkey to Cyprus should have been organized very carefully. The island's needs and the Turkish Cypriots' sociological and cultural structure should have been taken into consideration. At the same time, measures to ease the integration of those who were made to migrate, with the island of Cyprus and the Turks of Cyprus, should have been swiftly taken. Unfortunately, nothing serious has been done on this issue, and the cultural integration of those who came to the island after 1571 and those who came after 1974, has not been achieved despite lapse of so many years'.

Against this backdrop, in the rest of the study, we report the survey results with the aim to contribute to the existing literature by (a) addressing some of the issues outlined above and (b) revealing similarities and differences between these two groups in their attitudes towards various political and social issues.

## 2

## IDENTITY PERCEPTION, SENSE OF BELONGING AND INTER-GROUP RELATIONS

Almost all studies touching upon the relationship between Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants in the northern part of Cyprus, which refer to identity, acknowledge that there are divergences in identity perceptions of these two groups.

The self-identification of Turkish Cypriots has always shown a fluctuating character depending on the circumstances they have faced over time (Vural, Sonan and Michael 2018). Turkish Cypriots had a Muslim identity and were part of the *'millet-i hakime'*, a ruling class position, during Ottoman rule (Vural and Rüstemli 2006, p.131). There was neither Turkishness nor Cypriotness then. According to Kızılyürek (2003), Turkish Cypriots, who had lost their privileged position to the rapidly modernizing Greek Cypriot community during British colonial rule, had taken shelter under Turkish nationalism as a reaction to Greek nationalism and its *enosis* ideal which came to dominate the Greek Cypriot community (Kızılyürek 2003).

However, things have changed in the post-1974 period. With massive Turkish immigration following 1974, Turkish Cypriots have become acquainted with their kinsmen from Anatolia at a large scale for the first time (Kızılyürek 2003; Ramm 2006). As a result, there has been a shift towards 'Cypriotism' in the identity perception of Turkish Cypriots (Pollis 1996; Kızılyürek 2003, Ramm, 2006). The Turkish Cypriot community began to see their ethnic kinsmen as 'the other' and since then tended to differentiate themselves from the 'Turks' or '*Türkiyeliler*' (people of Turkey) (Navaro-Yashin 2006, p. 52).

As a result, as Pollis put it 'the gradually evolving but never solidified construction of a Turkish identity among the Turkish Cypriots seems to be undergoing a further transformation into a Turkish Cypriot or a Cypriot identity' (Pollis 1996, pp. 83-84; see also Kızılyürek 2003). A caveat should be added here. On the one hand, those on 'the left' tend to identify themselves as 'Cypriots' by stressing a civic-territorial identity, while those on 'the right' tend to emphasize their 'Turkishness' by identifying themselves as 'Turkish Cypriots'. What unites them yet is their reference to Cyprus.

The questions asked in this chapter seek to measure this identity cleavage in a quantitative way. In the first section of this chapter, the perceptions of identity of Turkish immi-

grants and native Turkish Cypriots are taken up. Then, the chapter deals with inter-group relations.

We started by asking a direct question: '*How do you primarily identify yourself?*'. The answers very clearly revealed the deep intergroup identity division. While 55,6 percent of native Turkish Cypriot respondents identified themselves as 'Turkish Cypriot', 33,7 percent said that they saw themselves as only 'Cypriot'. The important point here is that almost all respondents in the native group (89,3 percent) emphasized their 'Cypriotness'.

A majority of Turkish immigrants, on the other hand, identified themselves primarily as 'Turkish' (53 percent). Only 27 percent part have chosen to identify themselves as 'Turkish Cypriot' in order to emphasize 'Cypriotness' in addition to their 'Turkishness'.

While Turkish Cypriots put an emphasis on 'Cypriotness', the emphasis of Turkish immigrants was on 'Turkishness'. Indeed, only 5,8 percent of Turkish Cypriots defined themselves as 'Turkish' only, whereas the proportion of Turkish immigrants identifying themselves as only 'Cypriots' was even less: 4,5 percent. This shows that for Turkish Cypriots 'Turkishness' by itself does not have an important position independent from 'Cypriotness'.

The survey results clearly indicate that Turkish Cypriots have an attachment to the island/land/geography and Cypriotness. On the other hand, there is a strong sense of belonging to ethnic identity or 'Turkishness' among Turkish immigrants.

Only a minority within both groups preferred to identify themselves with their religious identity. Whilst 13,3 percent of Turkish migrants said they felt 'Muslim', this proportion was even lower for native Turkish Cypriots (3,5 percent).

In the societies which are ethnically heterogeneous or accommodate a large number of citizens with migrant background, the place embraced as the 'homeland' is a complementary indicator of identity perception.

Figure 1  
How do you primarily identify yourself? (%)<sup>2</sup>

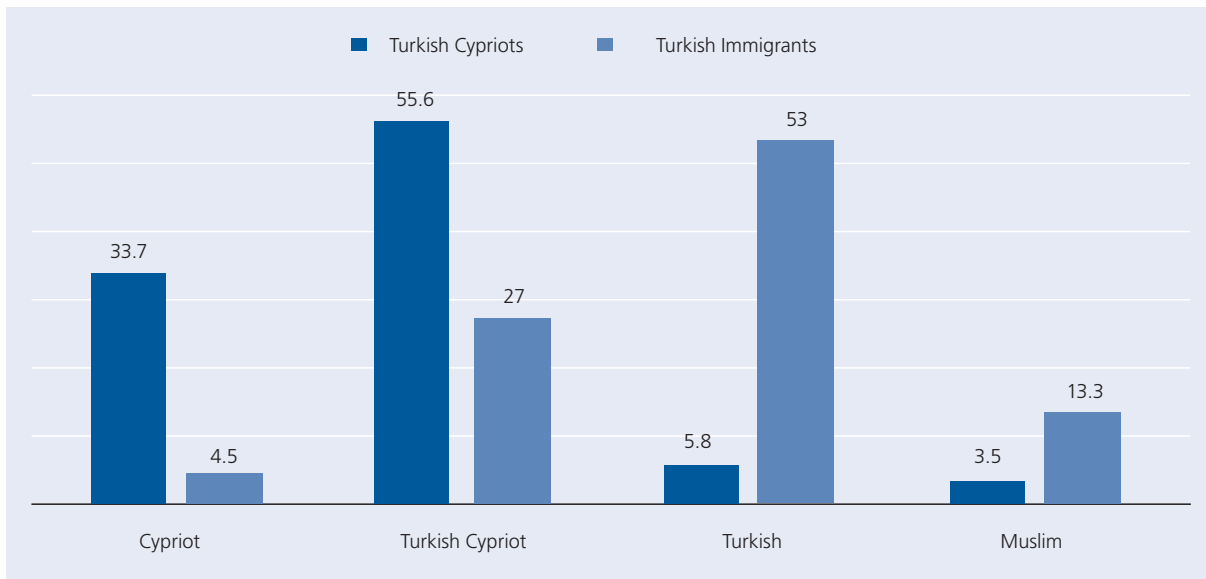
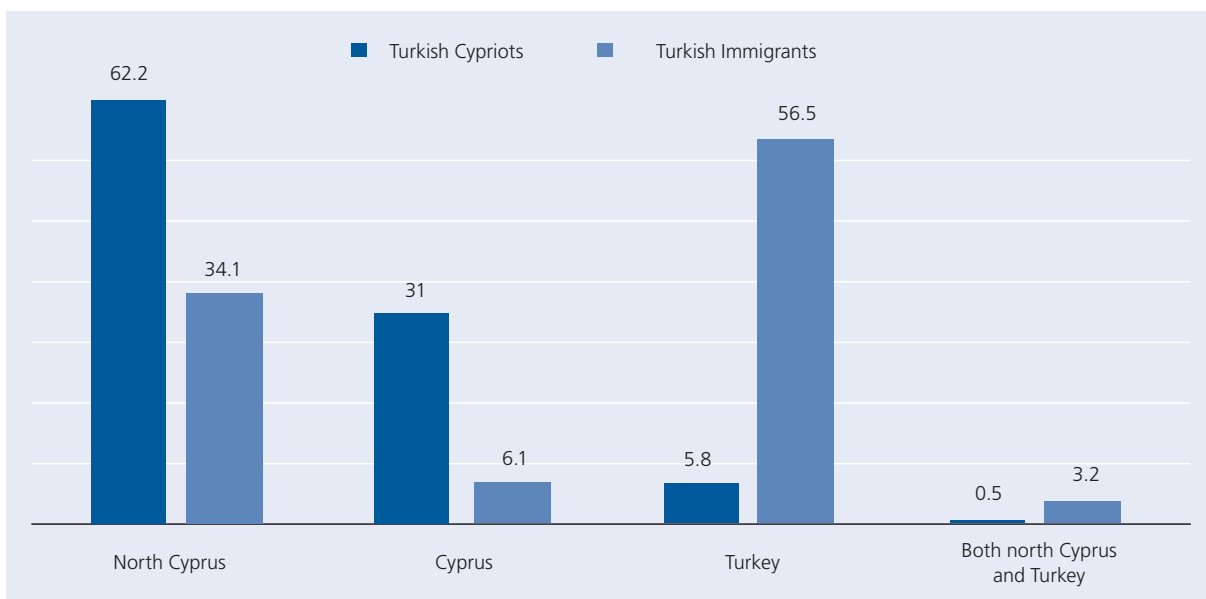


Figure 2:  
Where do you regard as your patria/homeland (vatan)? (%)<sup>3</sup>



When we looked at the answers given to the question ‘Where do you regard as your patria (vatan)?’, we observed that the divergences in the identity perception were having a direct impact on the spatial sense of belonging of the groups. There is a similarity between the answers given here and the answers given to the previous question. The results clearly show that the native and immigrant groups embrace different places as their homeland.

A big majority of native Turkish Cypriots (62,2 percent) singled out ‘north Cyprus’ as their homeland, while another

31 percent went beyond the northern part and identified the whole island of Cyprus as their homeland. The percentage of Turkish Cypriots viewing Turkey as their homeland was only 5,8 percent. The striking point here is again almost all native Turkish Cypriots expressed their attachment to the island (93,2 percent).

Having said that, another point that needs to be highlighted is the distinction native Turkish Cypriots made between the island as a whole and its northern part. An overwhelming majority, almost two-thirds, of Turkish Cypriots identified only the northern part of Cyprus as their homeland instead of the whole island. This position can be seen as a sign that the principle of ‘bi-zonality’ has been strongly internalized by Turkish Cypriots.

<sup>2</sup> This question was adapted from Kolstø 2016.

<sup>3</sup> This question was adapted from Kolstø 2016.

There is a disparate picture on the Turkish immigrants' side. A clear majority, 59,7 percent, of Turkish immigrants felt attached to Turkey. Around one-third of the immigrants (34,1 percent), on the other hand, showed that they had a sense of belonging to north Cyprus by choosing it as their homeland. It is quite understandable that almost none of the Turkish immigrants (93,9 percent) said that they saw the whole island as their homeland due to the simple reason that they came to the island after 1974 following the geographical division, and since then they never had contact with the southern part. It should be added to this context that, although it is possible for native

Turkish Cypriots to cross to the southern part of the island since the opening of the checkpoints in April 2003, Turkish immigrants are not allowed (by Greek Cypriot authorities) to cross; the only exceptions are those married to Turkish Cypriots and the children who were born out of these mixed marriages.

When we asked the two groups whether they felt attachment to the TRNC, the political entity, an overwhelming majority in both groups said yes.

Figure 3  
**'I feel attachment to the TRNC'<sup>4</sup>**

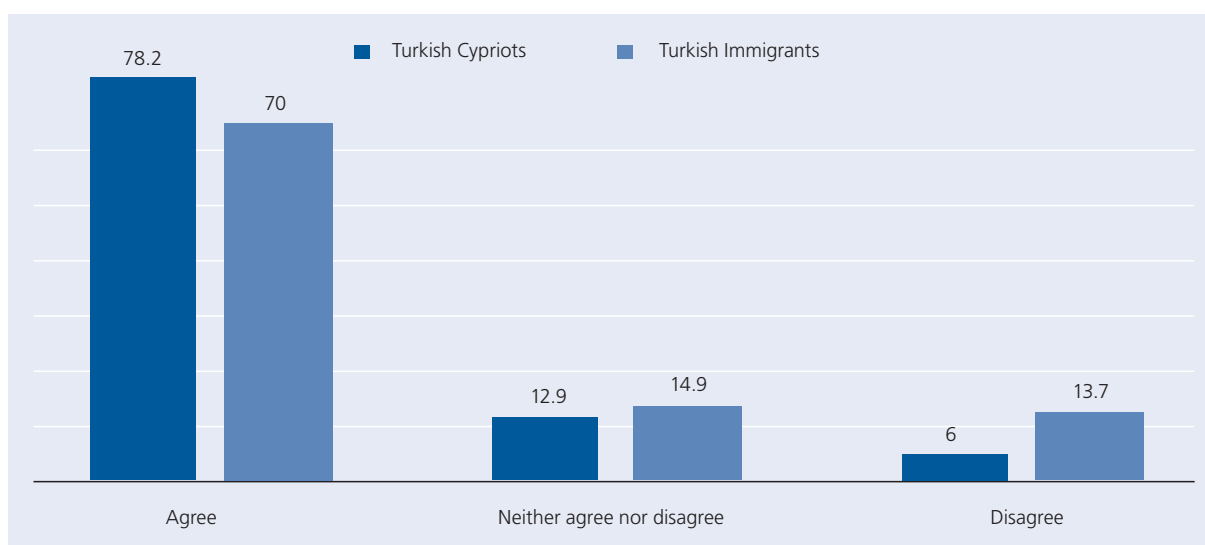
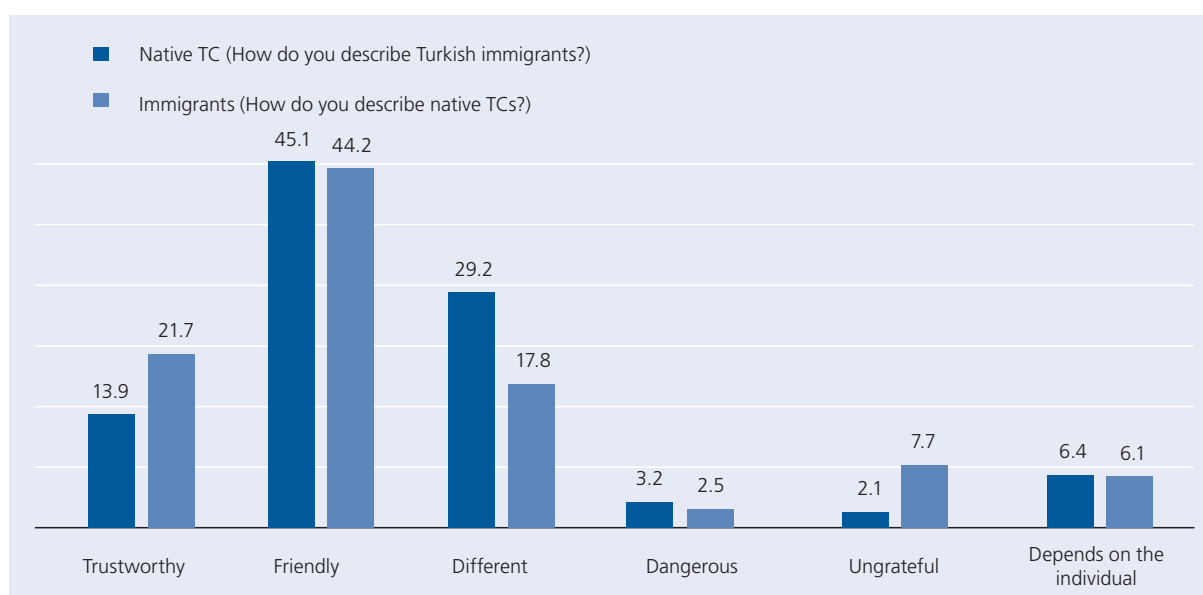


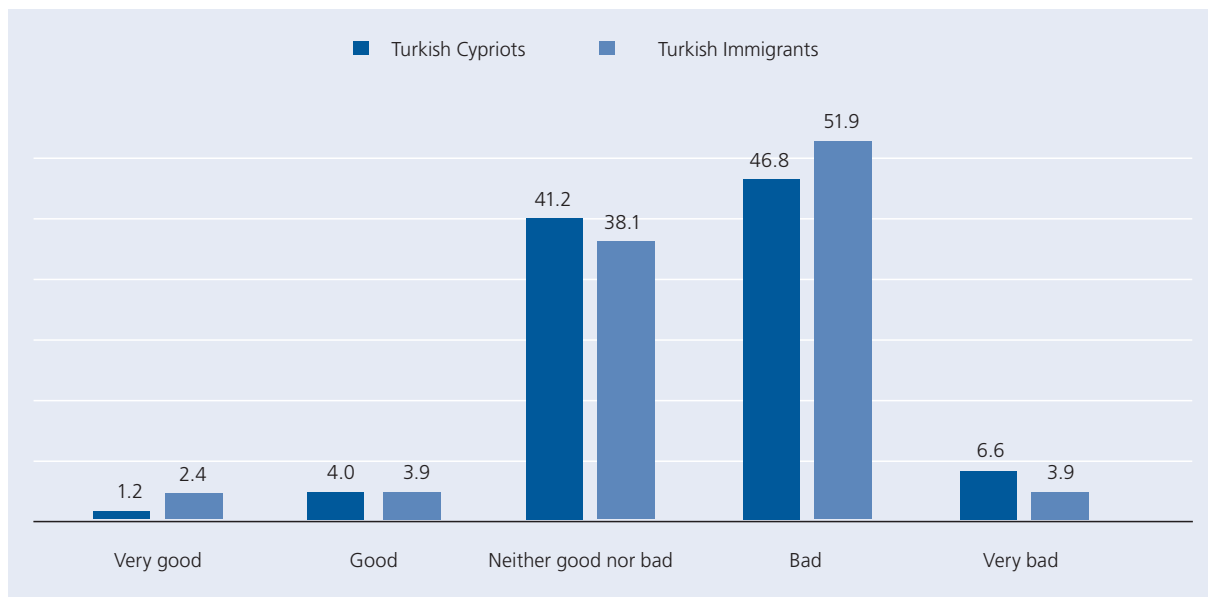
Figure 4  
**How do you describe Turkish immigrants/ native Turkish Cypriots?**



<sup>4</sup> This question was adapted from Kolstø 2016.

Figure 5

**How do you describe the relationship between the native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants?**



In this chapter, we also asked both groups how they described the other group. Results showed that both groups to a large extent ascribed each other positive characteristics like 'trustworthy' and 'friendly'. It is worth adding that almost three in ten native Turkish Cypriots described the immigrants as 'different'; a little under 18 percent of immigrants said the same thing of natives.

Having said that, when we asked them to evaluate the relationship between the two groups, only around five percent in each group said that the relationship was good or very good, while a majority in both groups said it was bad or very bad.

The survey results presented in this chapter show that native Turkish Cypriots tend to identify themselves more with Cyprus and Cypriotness rather than with their ethnic origin, while the majority of immigrants see Turkey and Turkishness as important elements of their identity. At the same time a strong majority in both groups have a strong attachment to the TRNC as a political entity. Remarkably, although both groups describe each other in positive terms, the majority of both of them described the relationship between the two groups as bad.

## 3

## RELIGION IN NORTH CYPRUS

In the previous chapter, the divisions over self-identification and perceptions of *patria* among Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants were presented. This chapter's objective is to investigate the attitudes of natives and immigrants towards religion and religious values.

Religion and the value attached to it is an important component of social value systems, and it is a source of friction in north Cyprus. 'Turkish Cypriots differentiate themselves from people from Turkey particularly on the grounds of lifestyle' (Navaro-Yashin 2006, pp. 95-96), cultural traits, and religiosity (Özekmekçi 2012, p. 113). We know from the existing literature (see for instance, Morvaridi 1993; Navaro-Yashin 2006; Özekmekçi 2012; and Kurtuluş and Purkis 2014) that the majority of migrants were from the rural and eastern regions of Turkey where people have strong religious convictions. On the other hand, as Morvaridi (1993, p. 266) put it in the early 1990s, among native Turkish Cypriots 'the impact of Islam on everyday life is minimal and religious belief and practice remain personal. Even though imams have been brought from Turkey to North Cyprus to help encourage religious practice, Turkish Cypriots are secular, and only attend mosque on special occasions, such as weddings and deaths'. Based on the 2006 WVS results, Yeşilada confirmed that this still held in the 2000s: 'Turkish Cypriots represent some of the most secular Muslims in the world' (2009, p.49). It is important to

note that lately the fear of Islamization has been a strong concern among native Turkish Cypriots (Smith 2018; see Dayioğlu and Köprülü 2019), and many believe that this is likely to occur through immigrants. According to Weise (2018), 'When Turkish Cypriots worry about Islamization, few of them fear that their own families will become more religious. Rather, most are concerned that Turkish settlers and their descendants will skew more conservative — and vote accordingly'.

Against this backdrop, this chapter aims to provide up-to-date data on the religiosity of the people living in northern part of Cyprus, both natives and immigrants, and their opinions on related matters.

In this section of the questionnaire, we took our questions either directly from the WVS or adapted them. 'Do you belong to any religion?' was our first question.

The majority of both groups have stated that they had faith in one religion. However, the size of this majority showed clear variation. While an overwhelming majority of Turkish migrants (91 percent) stated that they believed in a religion, the ratio of native Turkish Cypriot believers was lower (70 percent) than the migrants. Almost one-third of Turkish Cypriots have stated that they did not belong to any religion (30 percent) whereas this went down to less than one in ten among migrants.

Figure 6  
Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination?<sup>5</sup>

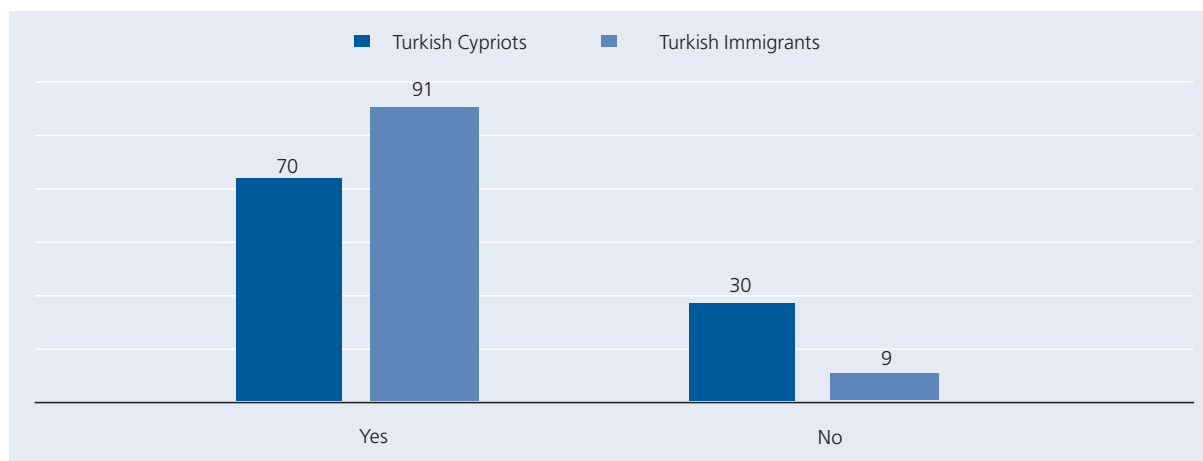
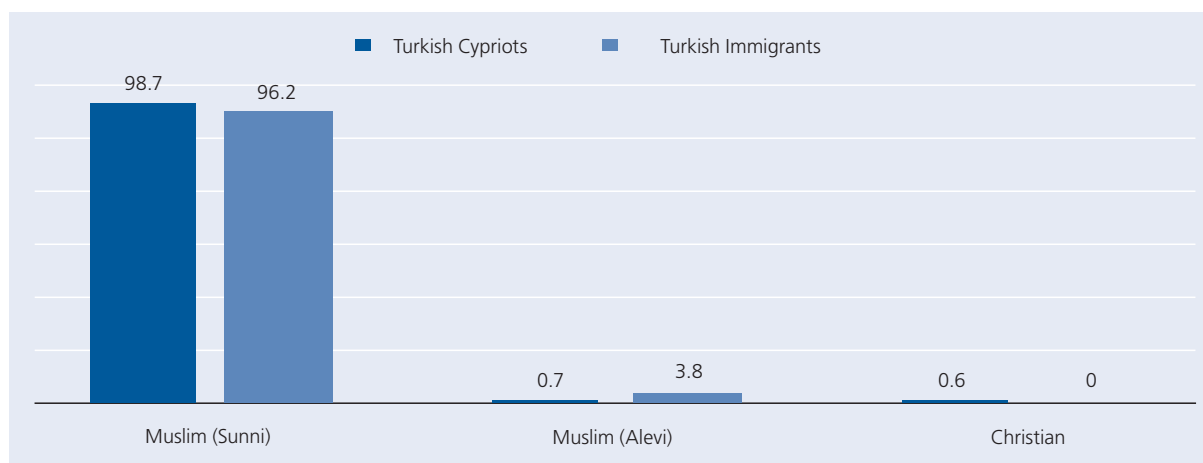




Figure 7

**If yes, which religion do you belong to?**



As a follow up question, we asked: *'If yes, which religion do you belong to?'* As expected, almost all in both groups who indicated believing in a religion belonged to Sunni Islam. There was also an Alevi minority (3,8 percent) within the Turkish immigrant group. The proportion of Alevis among native Turkish Cypriots was less than one percent.

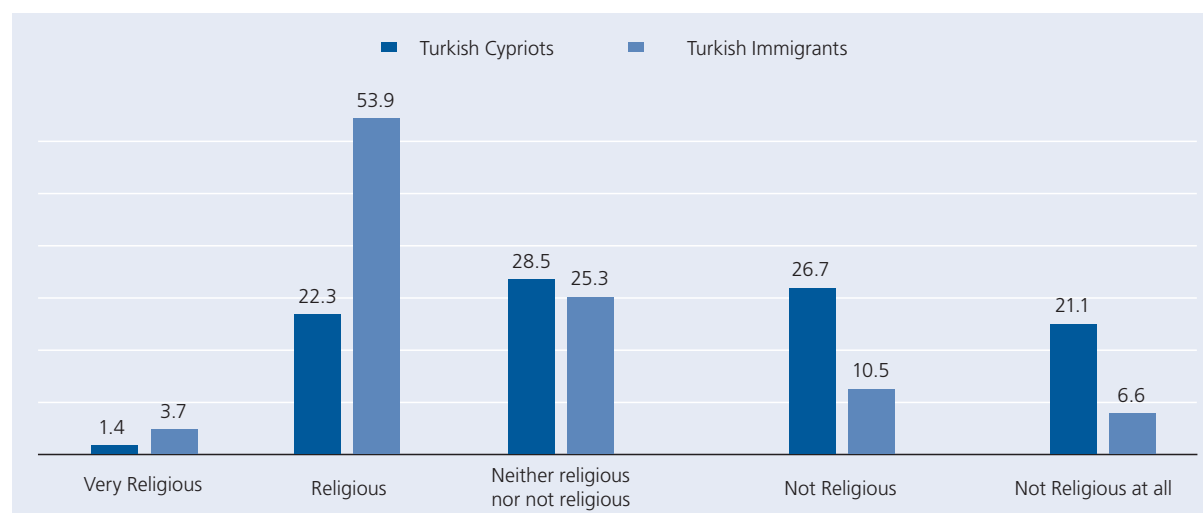
With the next question, we tried to measure how religious the participants saw themselves.

percentage of Muslim Turkish immigrants who were 'not religious' was rather low (17,1 percent).

It is important to note that the number of people who identified themselves as religious among immigrants (57,6) was considerably lower than the figure in Turkey, which was 83,5 percent according to the WVS 2011 results.

Figure 8

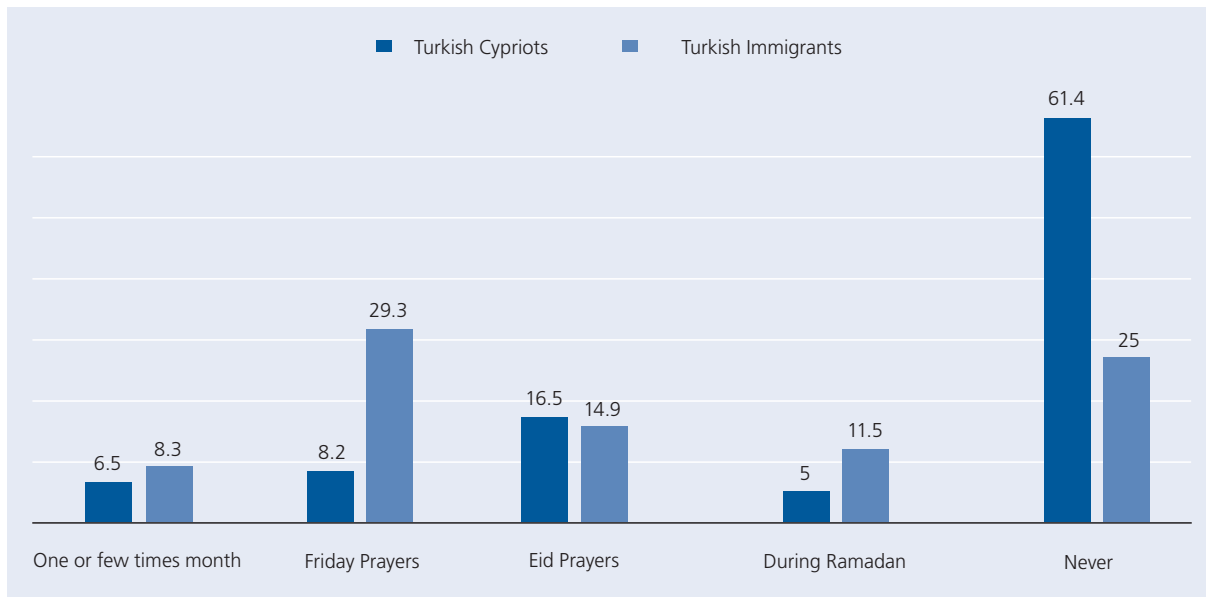
**Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are a religious person?**



To measure this, we directed the following question: *'Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are a religious person?'* to the participants, again used in the WVS. Here, a serious difference between the answers of native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants can be observed. As more than half of Turkish migrants (57,6 percent) accepted themselves as a 'religious' individual, this ratio went below one in four among native Turkish Cypriots (23,7 percent). Turkish Cypriots who stated they belong to a religion also pointed out that they were 'not religious' (47,8 percent). By contrast, the per-

centage of Muslim Turkish immigrants who were 'not religious' was rather low (17,1 percent). It is important to note that the number of people who identified themselves as religious among immigrants (57,6) was considerably lower than the figure in Turkey, which was 83,5 percent according to the WVS 2011 results.

Figure 9  
**Apart from funerals, about how often do you attend religious services these days?**



This differentiation extends to ‘Friday Prayers’ and the ‘Ramadan’ month as well. Whilst 11,5 percent of Turkish immigrants have reported attending mosque during the month of Ramadan, this ratio stood at around 5 percent for Turkish Cypriots. Again, it can be observed that attending ‘Friday Prayers’ is practiced by close to three in ten Turkish immigrants (29,3 percent), while only a minor fraction of native Turkish Cypriots (8,1 percent) have such a habit. The native Turkish Cypriots’ mosque attendance (16,5 percent) surpasses Turkish immigrants’ (14,9 percent) attendance only at the time of ‘Bayram (Eid) Prayers’.

In recent years, many mosques and a religious school have been built in north Cyprus with Turkish funding. This has created a heated public debate (see, for instance, Ahval 2018). As a recent *Politico* article put it, many Turkish Cypriots ‘are concerned that Ankara will gradually erode their way of life by building mosques and encouraging religious education’. (Weise 2018). Particularly, teachers’ unions strongly reacted to what they saw as Islamisation of the northern part of Cyprus (Weise 2018). To quote a unionist, ‘[t]he worry is that these things are a step towards changing the culture, identity and secular lifestyle of Turkish Cypriots’ (cited in Weise 2018).

In the last section of this set of questions, we asked two specific questions to inquire about the views of the respondents on a current issue occupying Turkish Cypriot public opinion.

In order to find out the thoughts of Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants on these issues, we asked them whether or not they supported opening more (a) mosques and (b) divinity schools. It turns out that there was a sharp division

Figure 10  
**Do you support construction of more mosques in the TRNC?**

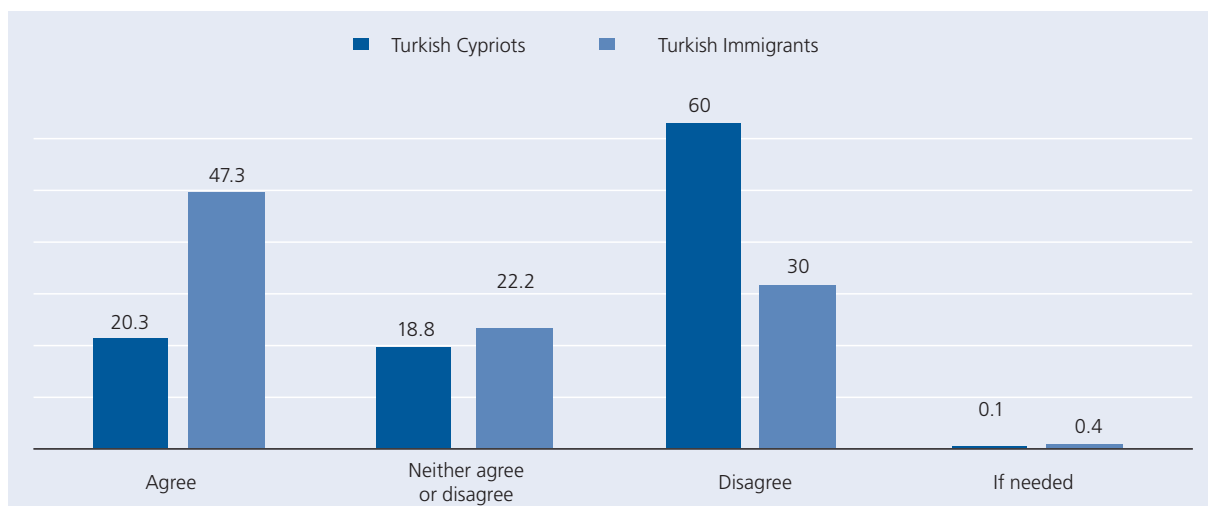
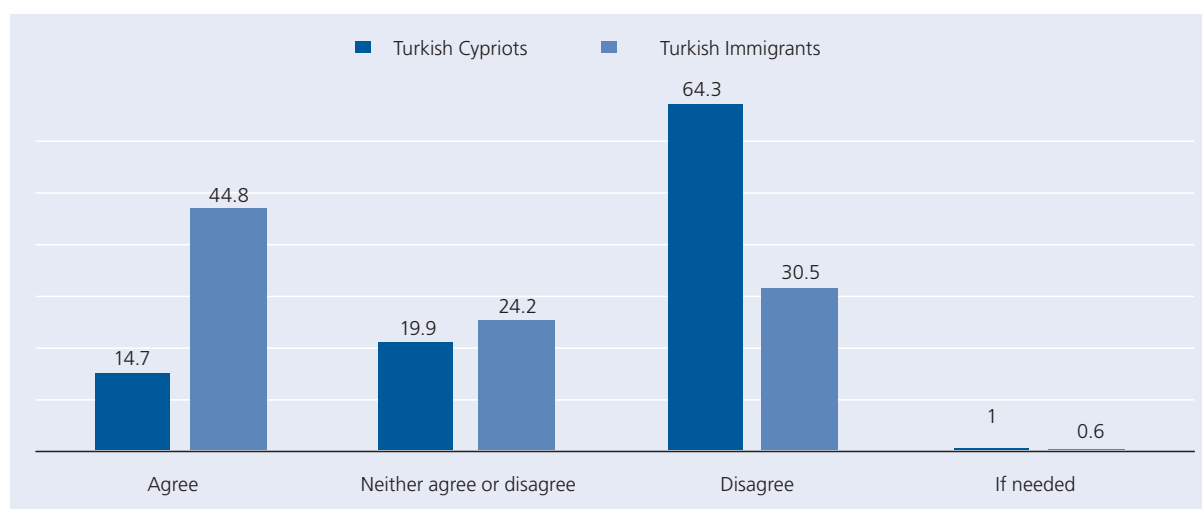


Figure 11

**Do you support construction of more divinity schools in the TRNC?**

among native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants over these issues too. Almost half of Turkish migrants (47,3 percent) expressed their support for the idea of building more mosques; this was supported by only one-fifth of native Turkish Cypriots (20,3 percent). While a strong majority (60 percent) of Turkish Cypriots objected to the idea of building more mosques, the proportion of those who did not support it amongst the Turkish immigrants was 30 percent.

When asked 'Do you support construction of more divinity schools in the TRNC?' while nearly half of Turkish migrants (44,8 percent) said that they were in favour of the idea of setting up more divinity schools, only a minority (14,7 per-

cent) of the native Turkish Cypriot group gave support. In parallel to opinions regarding building more mosques, almost two-thirds of Turkish Cypriots (64,3 percent) expressed their opposition to the setting up of more divinity schools.

Our findings show that attitudes towards religion and related matters still seriously divide the two groups. The members of the immigrant group tend to be more religious and more receptive to policies which aim to increase the influence of religion in society.

# 4

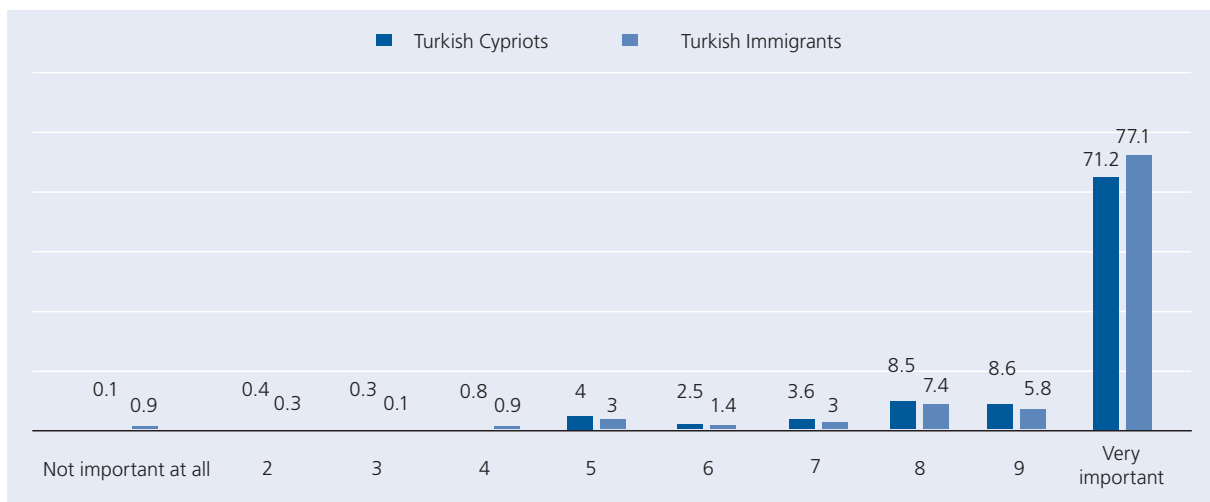
## DEMOCRATIC CULTURE IN NORTH CYPRUS

Democracy, which can be simply defined as the freedom of people to rule over their own lives, cannot exist without freedom of thought and expression, the right to elect and be elected, political representation, equal opportunity, tolerance to differences, pluralism, rule of law, freedom of belief, gender equality etc. (Welzel 2013, pp. 307-332). According to Robert Dahl (1998, pp. 156-158), presence of democracy depends on a society’s internalization of culture of democracy. Dahl (1998) stressed the need for citizens and political elite to support democratic values and processes to have a stable democracy. Democratic culture stems from internalization of democratic values, tolerance, trust in the political

the two groups could be observed. When it comes to the attitudes of the two groups towards democracy and democratic values however, a strong similarity stood out: Living in a country ruled by democracy is important or very important for an overwhelming majority of both Turkish Cypriots (91,9 percent) and Turkish migrants (93,3 percent).

In this question we asked the respondents to give their opinions about different political systems, and 86,3 percent of native Turkish Cypriots identified ‘having a democratic political system’ as a good or very good thing. Ironically, 31,2 percent of the respondents also stated that they considered ‘hav-

Figure 12  
How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?



system, politicians and government institutions, interpersonal trust and life satisfaction, etc.

As development of democratic culture will make the democratic structure of a country stronger and more functional, measurement of the democratic culture of a society is important. In this chapter, we aim to present a comparison of attitudes of Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants towards some of the democratic values identified by Welzel and Dahl, and democracy in the TRNC.

So far, in every category a remarkable difference between

ing a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections’ as a good or very good thing.

At the same time, they expressed a clear stance against a political system based on religious rules and leaders (81,7 percent), and military rule (78,4 percent). Technocratic government was also identified as a good or very good political system by a minority (27,7 percent).

Similar to native Turkish Cypriots, 88,8 percent of Turkish migrants said that democracy was a good or very good political system. Again, similar to native Turkish Cypriots,

Figure 13

I am going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as way of governing this country? (Native Turkish Cypriots)

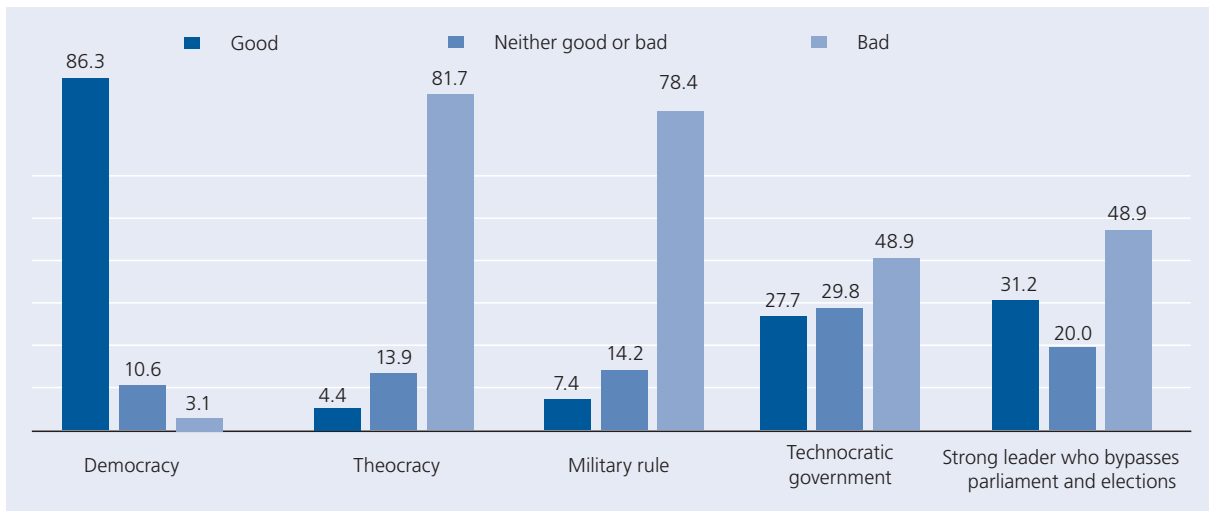


Figure 14

I am going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as way of governing this country? (Turkish Immigrants)

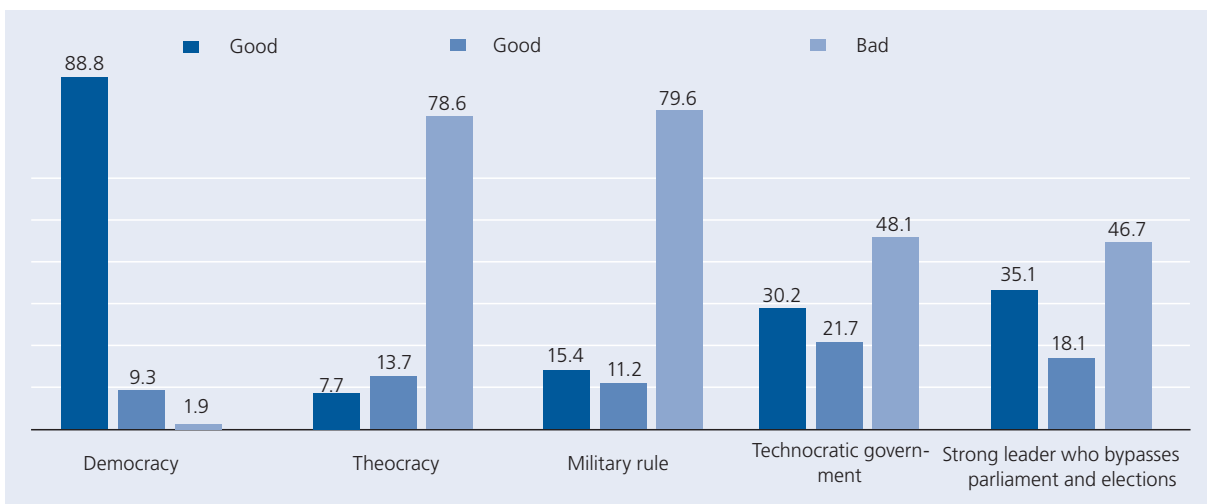


Figure 15

How democratically is the TRNC being governed?

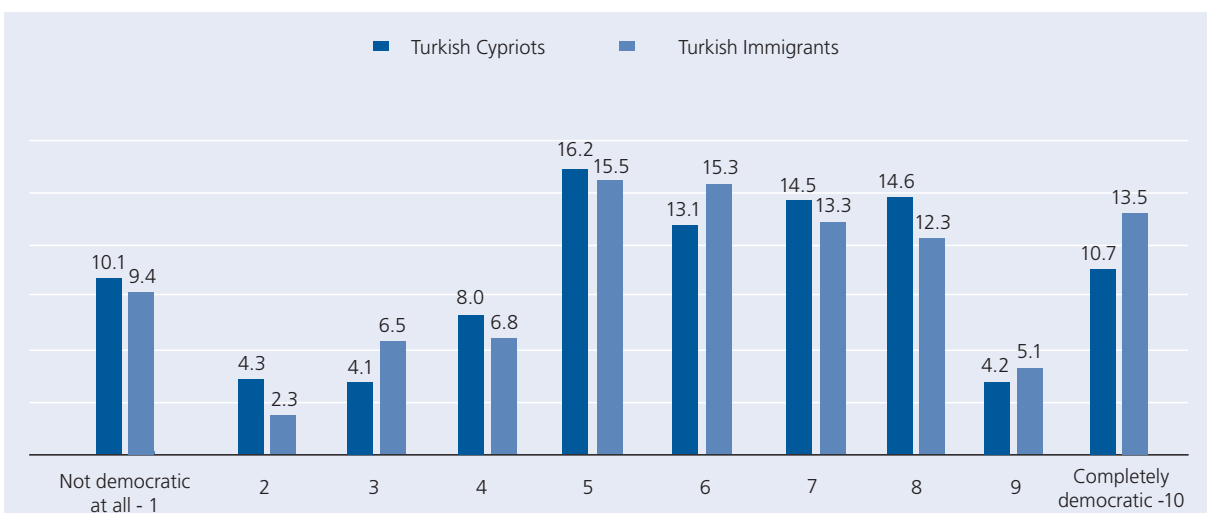
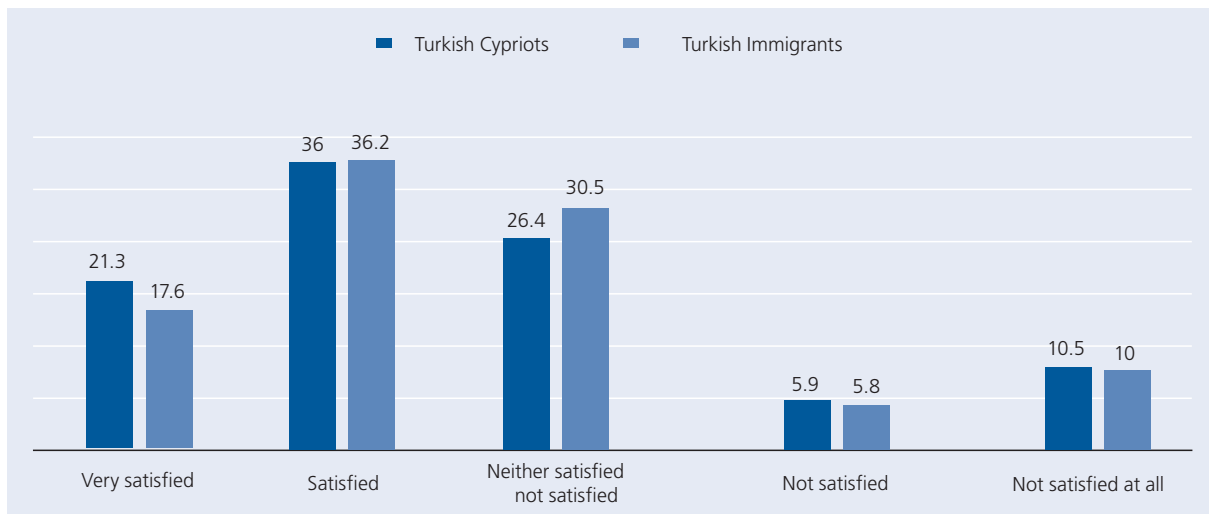


Figure 16  
How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?



they contradicted this strong opinion by also expressing a positive view of ‘having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections’ (35,1 percent).

Despite having a relatively more positive attitude towards religious values compared to native Turkish Cypriots, Turkish immigrants did not favour a theocratic rule too; only 7,7 percent of the respondents described this as a good or very good system.

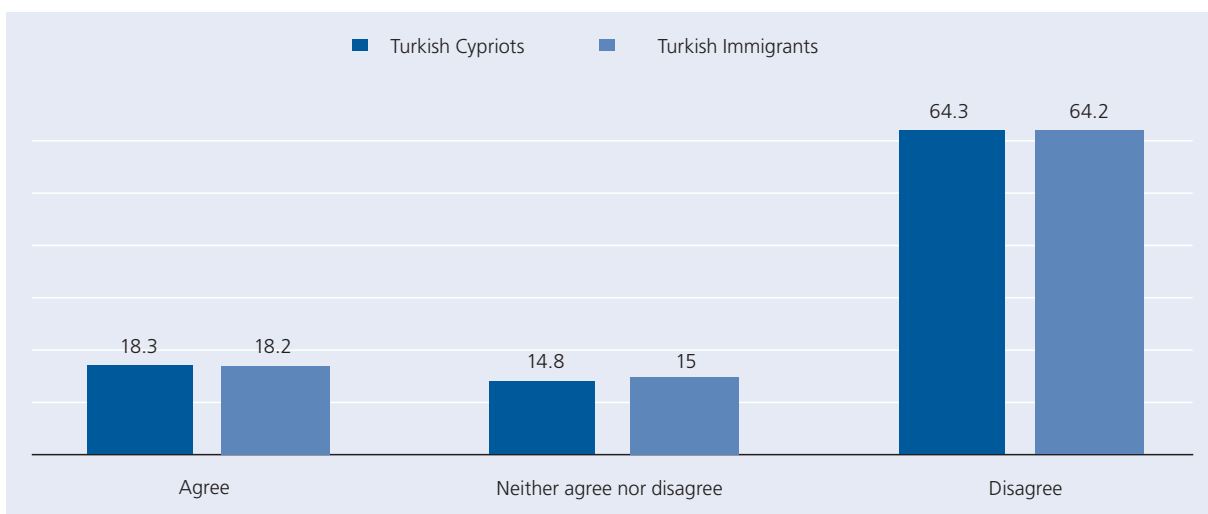
When asked the question ‘How democratically is the TRNC being governed?’<sup>5</sup> both groups gave similar opinions. Majority of both native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants evaluated TRNC as democratic, while around one in fourth in both groups rated the level of democracy as bad or very bad.

According to the findings of the research conducted by Inglehart and Welzel (2003), there is a positive correlation between life satisfaction and the level of interpersonal trust on the one hand, and the level of democracy on the other.

We asked the respondents from both groups ‘How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?’<sup>6</sup> The life satisfaction levels of both groups turned out to be parallel. The majority of both groups reported being satisfied with life, with only around 15 percent saying they were not satisfied.

In the next question, we investigated the views of the respondents on gender equality.<sup>7</sup> Both groups gave almost identical answers to this question. Almost two-thirds of both groups took a position favouring gender equality. It is important to note that as in the question about religiosity, Turkish immigrants’ answers to this question were also

Figure 17  
‘Men make better political leaders than women do’



5 The question is from WVS.

6 The question is from WVS.

7 The question is from WVS.

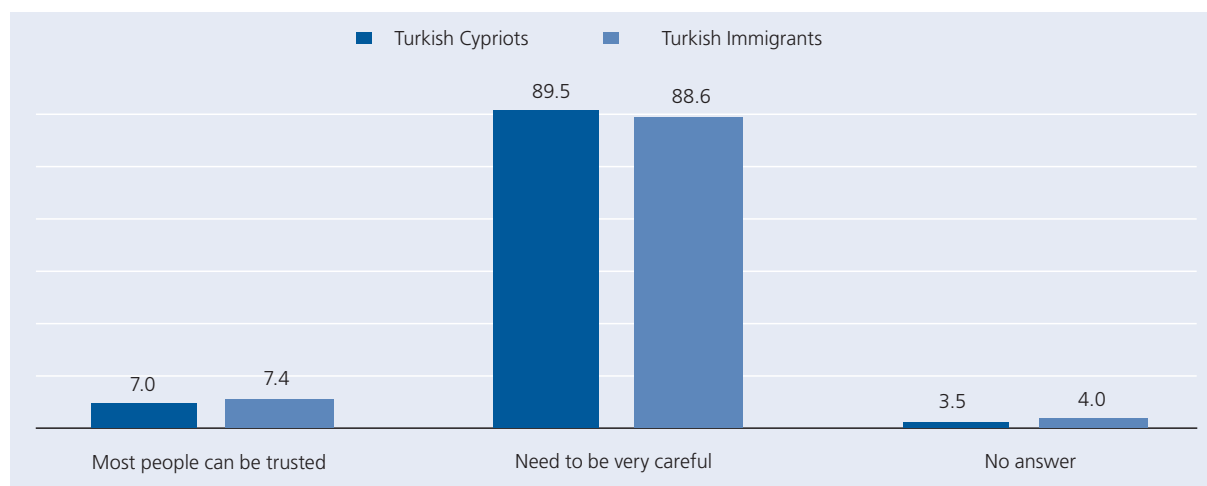
considerably different from the answers given to the same question in Turkey. According to the WVS 2011 results, 28,5 percent of the respondents in Turkey disagreed with the statement while 68 percent agreed with it.

A standard question, measuring social capital or interpersonal trust in a society, which is asked by WVS is the following: 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?'. Both groups were equally distrustful of other people. In other words, with around nine in ten people answering with 'need to be very careful', the level of interpersonal trust was abysmally low in both groups. Though these figures look very low, they demonstrate similarity to the interpersonal trust level in the Republic of Cyprus (90,9 percent) as it was measured by WVS in 2011. The social capital level in Turkey, on the other hand, was

relatively higher (82,9 percent) according to WVS 2011.

Results in this chapter show that overall both groups value living in a democratic system, though 30 to 35 percent support that having 'a strong leader' indicated that the real support was lower than it appeared at first sight. Furthermore, the majority in both groups gave the level of democracy in TRNC a passing grade and reported being satisfied with life: a good sign for a democratic culture. The level of interpersonal trust, on the other hand, was alarmingly low.

Figure 18  
**Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?**



## 5

## POLITICAL CULTURE IN NORTH CYPRUS

This chapter presents a comparison of the political cultures of the two groups. In their seminal study, the Civic Culture, pioneers of political culture research, Almond and Verba (1963) defined culture as ‘psychological orientation towards social objects’ while they described the ‘political culture of a nation’ as ‘the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation ... the political culture of society means the political system as internalized in the cognitions, feelings and evaluations of its population’ (Almond and Verba, 1963, p.13).

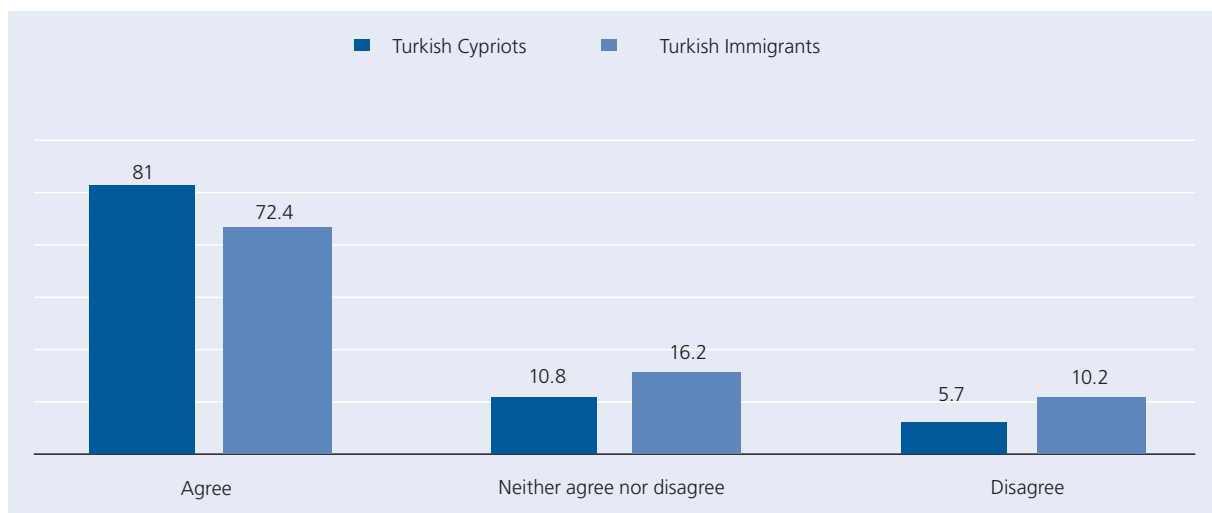
The political culture of Turkish Cypriot society has not been widely studied (a notable exception is CMIRS 2012). Moreover, though literature covering the intergroup relations between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants have shown that there were cultural differences between the two groups, the political culture differences among the

twice, one for TRNC and then another one for Turkey, to see whether there is variation between the two groups.

The finding that there was a difference between the sense of belonging of native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants was touched upon in Chapter 2. However, despite the fact that the majority of Turkish migrants identified Turkey as their homeland, 72,4 percent of them at the same time said that they felt proud of being a citizen of the TRNC. In a similar vein, 81 percent of Turkish Cypriots prided themselves on being a citizen of the TRNC.

Our findings demonstrate that, even though both groups said that they took pride in being a citizen of the TRNC, they were not proud of its political system.<sup>8</sup> A majority of both groups said (53,7 percent of Turkish Cypriots and 52,6 percent of Turkish migrants) that they were not proud of the political system of the TRNC.

Figure 19  
I feel proud of being a citizen of the TRNC



mentioned groups have not been touched upon yet. In line with the definition provided by Almond and Verba (1963), in this chapter we covered opinions towards the political system of TRNC. The questions covered in this chapter aim to measure subjective civic competence, interest in politics, sense of national pride, and confidence in national political institutions. Some questions were asked

Furthermore, more than two-thirds of both groups believed that things were going in the wrong direction.<sup>9</sup> Only 16,7 percent among native Turkish Cypriots and 10,4 per-

<sup>8</sup> These questions are adapted from Almond and Verba (1963).

<sup>9</sup> The question is from Eurobarometer.



Figure 20

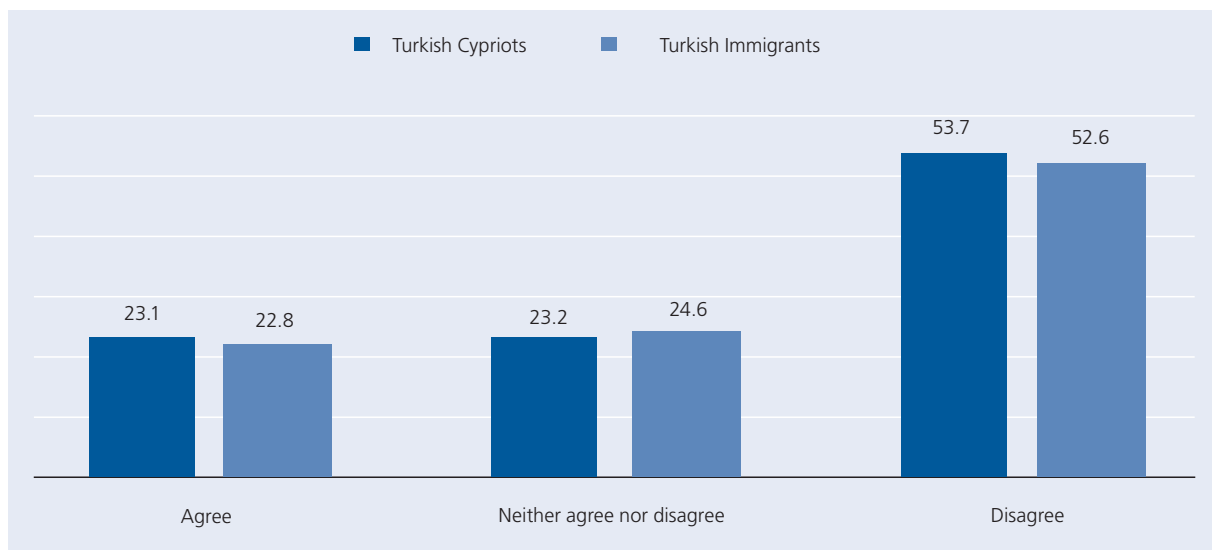
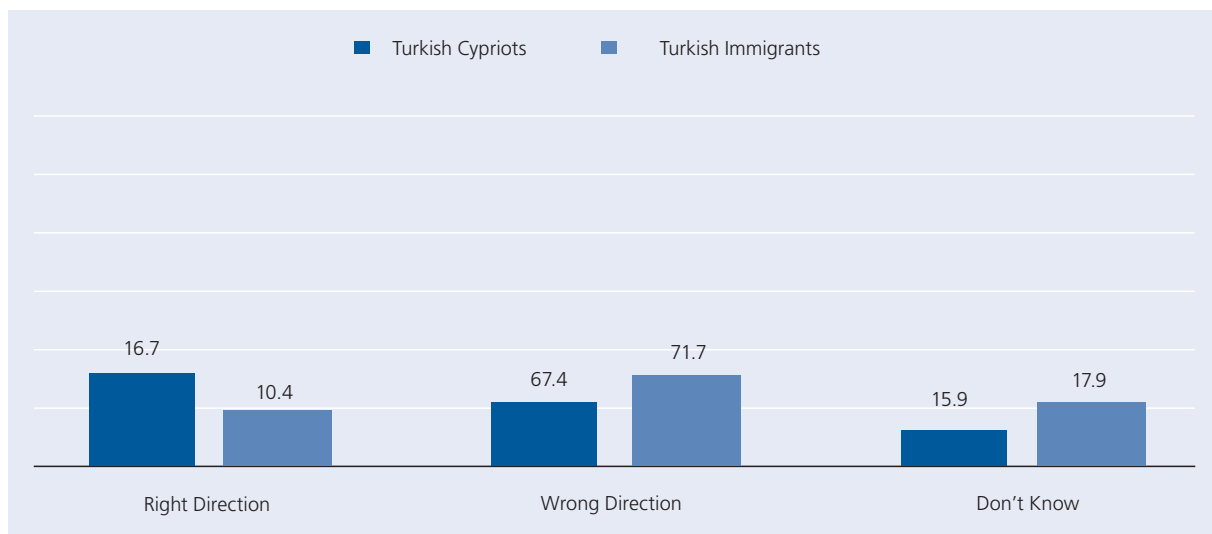
**I am proud of the political system of the TRNC**

Figure 21

**Are things in society moving in the right or wrong direction?**

cent among immigrants said that they thought things were going in the right direction.

A politically active citizenry is important for the health of democracy and it is an important element of political culture. To capture how active the participants from the two groups were, we asked them to what extent they agreed with the statements (i) 'I'm active in TRNC politics' and (ii) 'I follow daily news about politics in the TRNC'.

With around 24 percent and 22 percent agreeing with the statement 'I'm active in TRNC politics', native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants reported similar levels of political activism.<sup>10</sup>

There is a similarity among the two groups in their answers to the second political participation question, where they were asked whether or not they followed politics of the TRNC: 53,3 percent of Turkish immigrants and 57,9 percent of Turkish Cypriots reported that they followed political news.<sup>11</sup>

Considering the strong ties between the TRNC and Turkey, we asked both groups whether or not they were interested in and follow politics in Turkey too. Parallel to their interest level towards politics in TRNC, 58,9 percent of Turkish Cypriots said that they were also interested in following politics in Turkey. However, the situation turned out to be different for Turkish immigrants. Turkish immigrants reported to

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (2018).

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (2018).

Figure 22  
I am active in TRNC politics

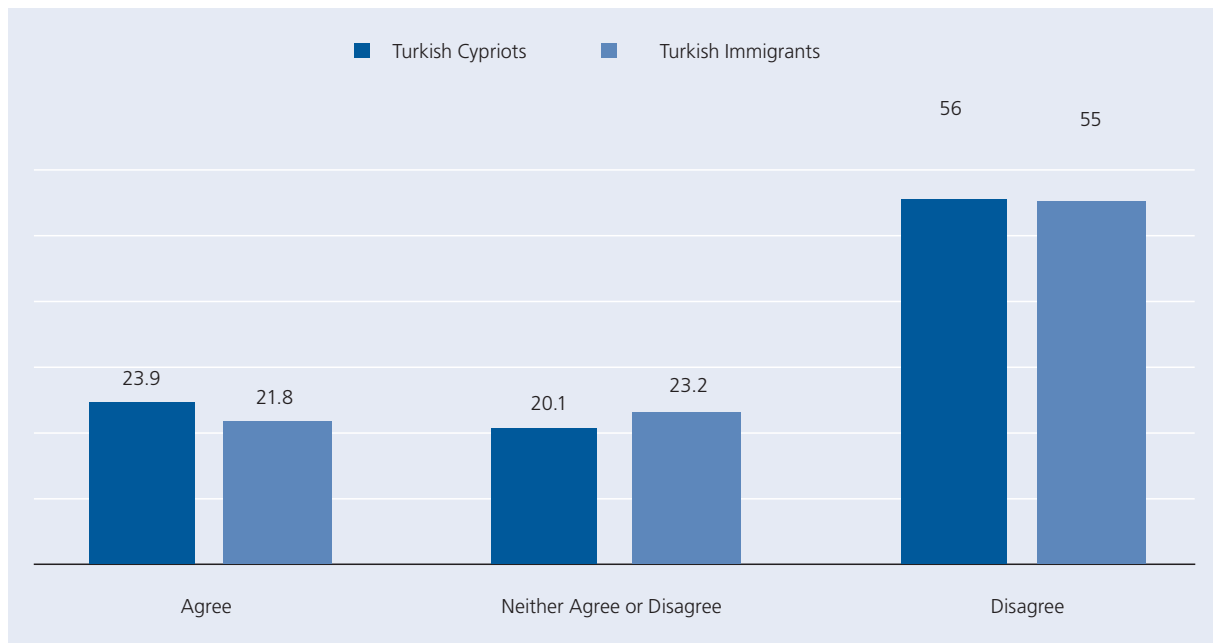
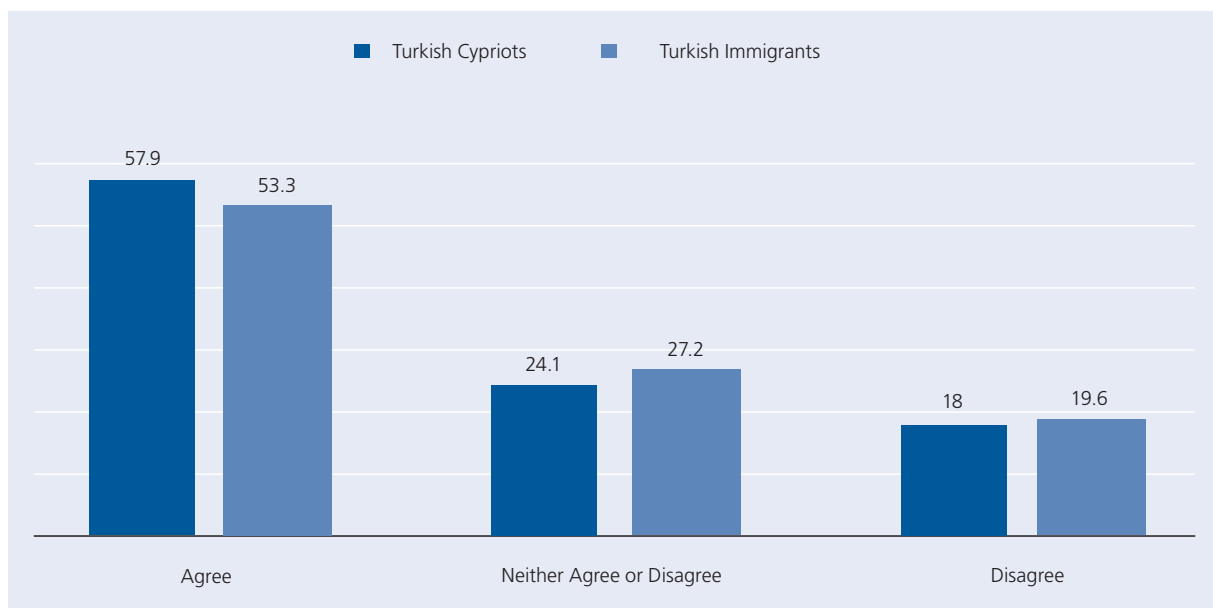


Figure 23  
I follow daily news about politics in the TRNC



have a considerably greater interest in Turkish politics (77,1 percent) than they had for Turkish Cypriot politics. Complementing the findings in similar questions, this shows that Turkish immigrants still have a strong transnational attachment towards Turkey.

When we asked the participants to express their level of trust in the TRNC government, we found out that the overall level of trust was not so high. It can be said that while native Turkish Cypriots were slightly inclined to trust, the immigrants were inclined to distrust.

When the same question was asked of the Turkish government, findings indicate that native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants, once again, have divergent thoughts. While a big majority of Turkish migrants (71 percent) declared their trust in the Turkish government, among Turkish Cypriots the level of trust was significantly lower (43,8 percent). Approaching from a different angle, our findings show that both groups trusted the government of Turkey more than the government of the TRNC.

However, the difference is much stronger among Turkish immigrants. While only 30,8 percent of Turkish migrants

Figure 24

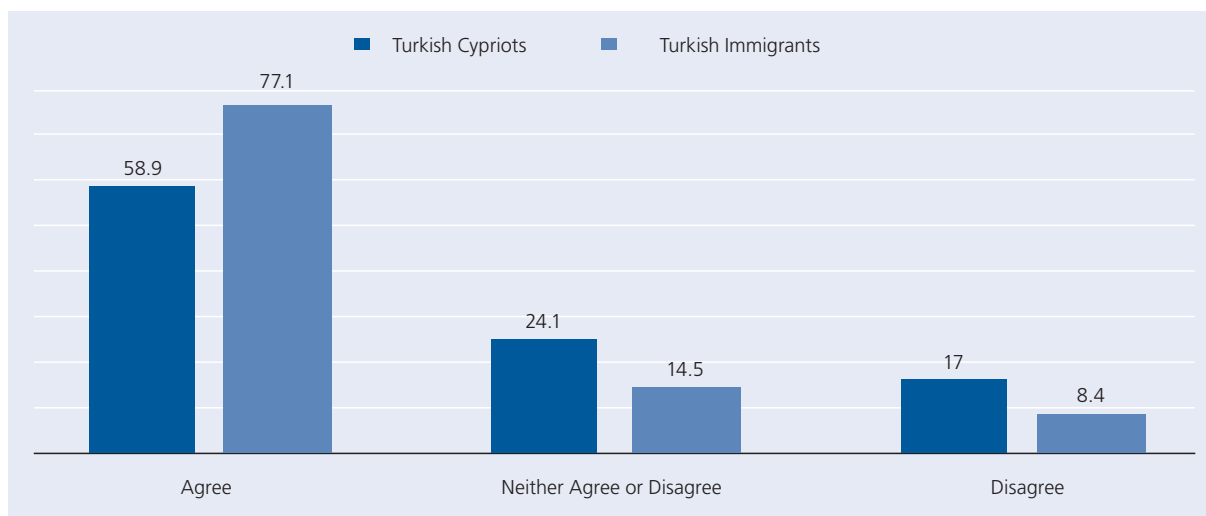
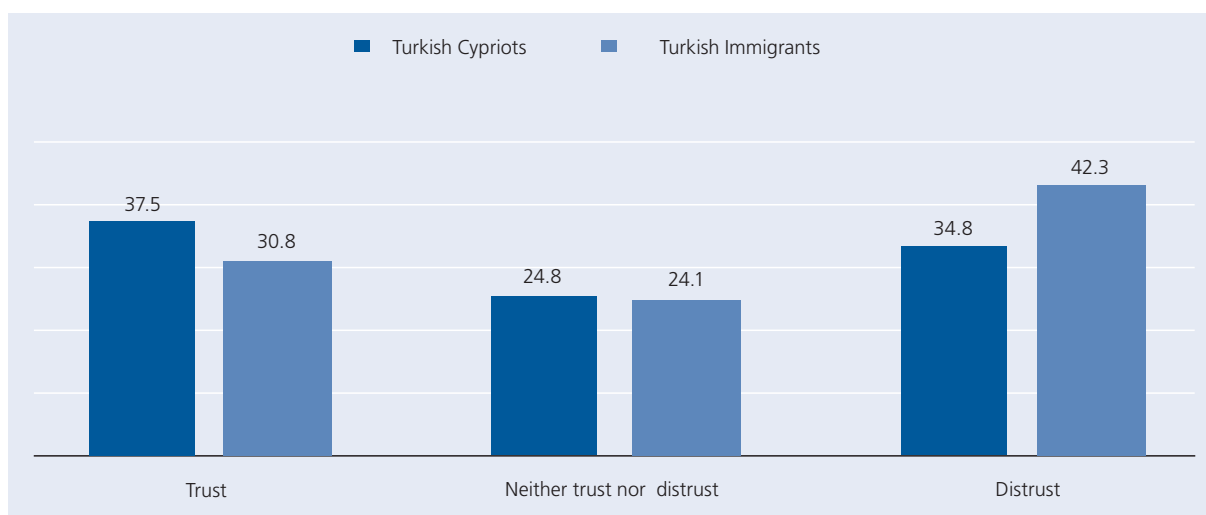
**I follow daily news about politics in Turkey**

Figure 25

**Trust in the government of the TRNC**

said that they trusted the TRNC government, 71 percent of them expressed their trust in the Turkish one. With 37,5 percent, the level of trust in the TRNC government among the native group was relatively higher; 43.8 percent of them expressed their trust in the Turkish government.

In the answers given to the question *'Which one do you see as your leader?'*, we can observe that the majority of the native group had allegiance to the TRNC president. The plurality of Turkish immigrants (39,2 percent), on the other hand, opted to say both, while one-third said 'only Turkish President'. The findings show that almost half of immigrants had difficulty seeing the TRNC President as their leader.

Finally, in this chapter, we asked the respondents to identify their position on the ideological spectrum. Remarkably, a significant segment of both groups, around 40 percent, either did not answer this question or said that they did not know. Based on the answers, it is possible to say that while

the immigrants leaned towards the right, natives leaned towards the left of the political spectrum.

According to the answers given to the questions asked in this chapter, it is possible to say that members of both groups are proud of being citizens of the TRNC. This is despite the fact that a majority of both groups did not feel proud of the political system. A majority in both groups show interest in domestic politics by following daily political news. A bigger proportion of the immigrant group also follows Turkish politics. Both groups trust the Turkish government more than they trust the TRNC government, yet among the immigrant group, the level of trust for the Turkish government is significantly higher. When it comes to who they see as their leader, the immigrant group's allegiance seem to be split between the Turkish president and the TRNC president, while the native group has a more clear position in favour of the TRNC leader. Finally, ideologically, Turkish Cypriots tend to lean towards the left, while the immigrants tend to favour the right.

Figure 26  
Trust in the government of Turkey

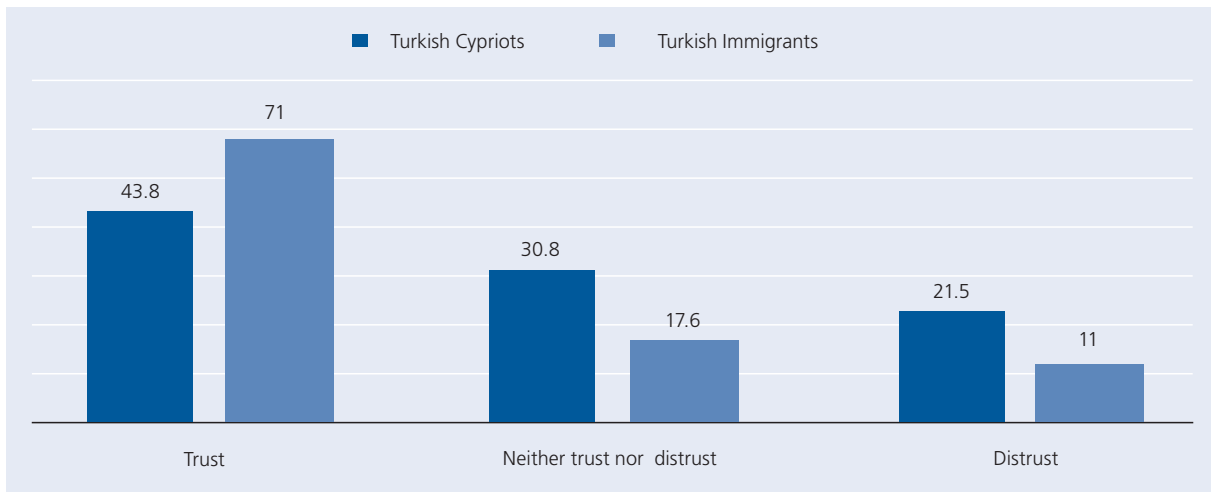


Figure 27  
Which one do you see as your leader?

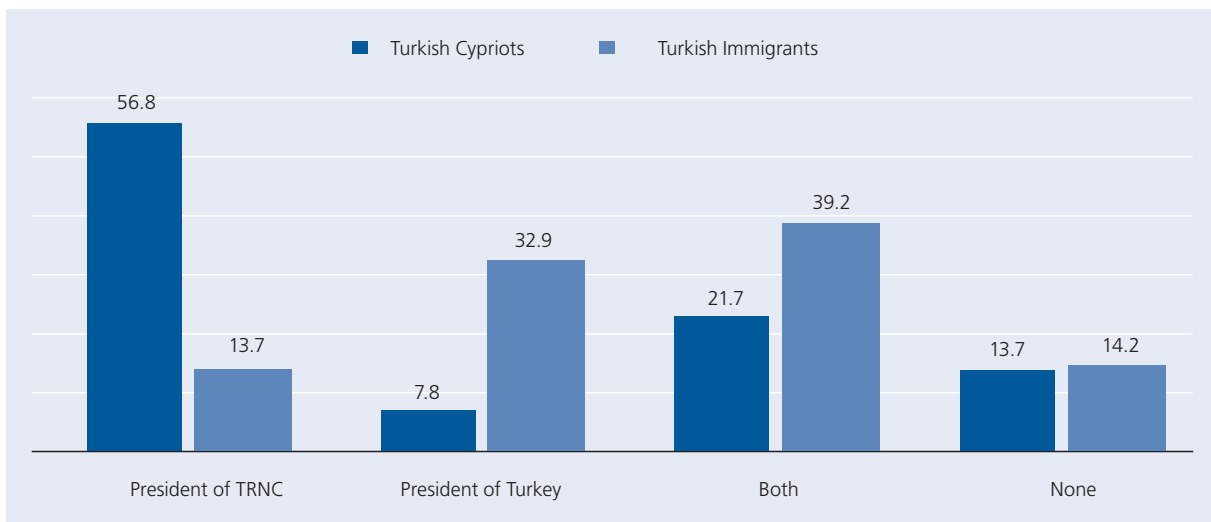
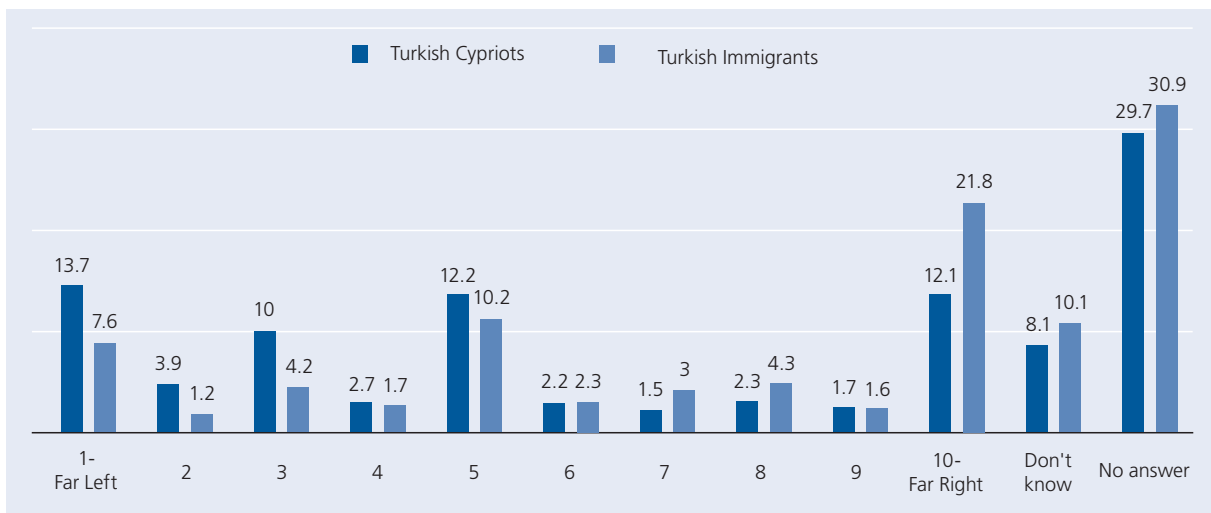


Figure 28  
In political matters, people talk of 'the left' and 'the right'.  
How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?



## 6

## RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

Turkish government's role in Turkish Cypriot politics is another widely contested issue. In the discourse of Turkish nationalism, Turkey is the motherland and the TRNC is the baby-land. This framing has increasingly come under criticism from the Turkish Cypriot public, in general, and the Turkish Cypriot left, in particular. Therefore, with a set of questions touching upon this matter, we tried to have an insight into the attitudes towards the relationship between Turkey and the TRNC by comparing the two groups' opinions on the issue.

In the first question, we asked the respondents what kind of relationship they preferred between the TRNC and Turkey. The most common answer among native Turkish Cyp-

riots was a sisterly relationship [*iki kardeş ülke*]; 39,5 percent of the respondents chose this option, while almost 31 percent expressed that they would prefer a motherland-babyland relationship. Almost one in four, on the other hand, wanted to go even beyond a relationship between 'two sister states' and opted for a relationship between two separate states.

Among Turkish immigrants, the most popular answer was the mother-baby relationship. A majority of respondents in this group chose this answer, while more than one in three opted for 'two sister states'; less than one in ten said that they preferred a relationship between two separate states.

Figure 29

**How do you think the relationship between Turkey and the TRNC should be?**

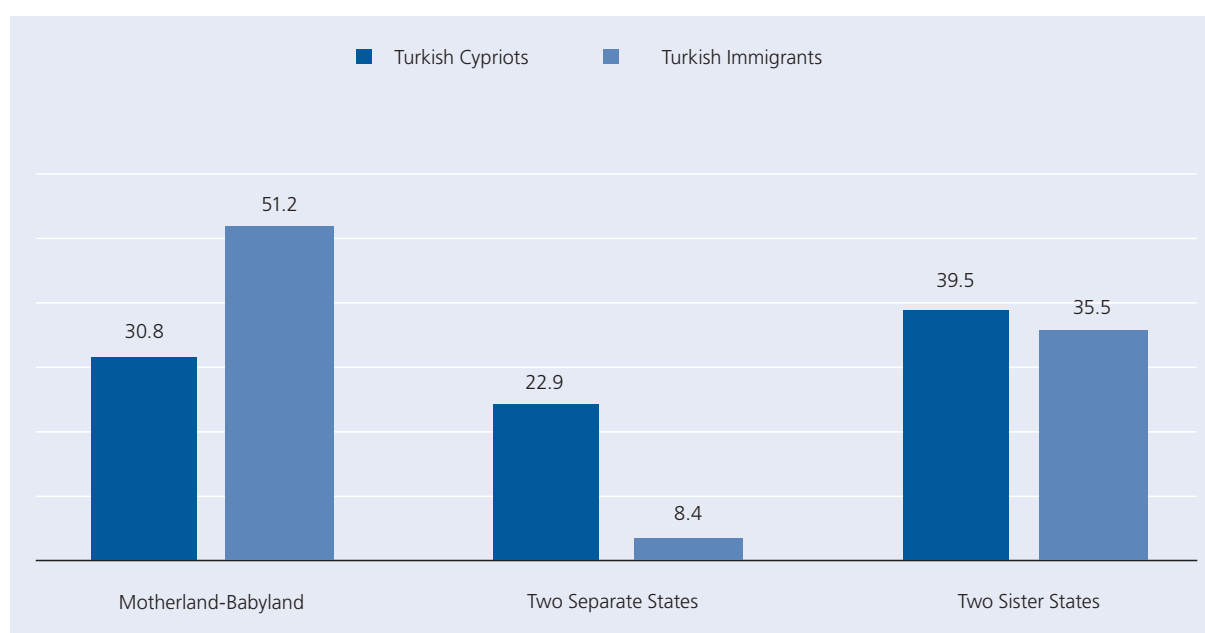
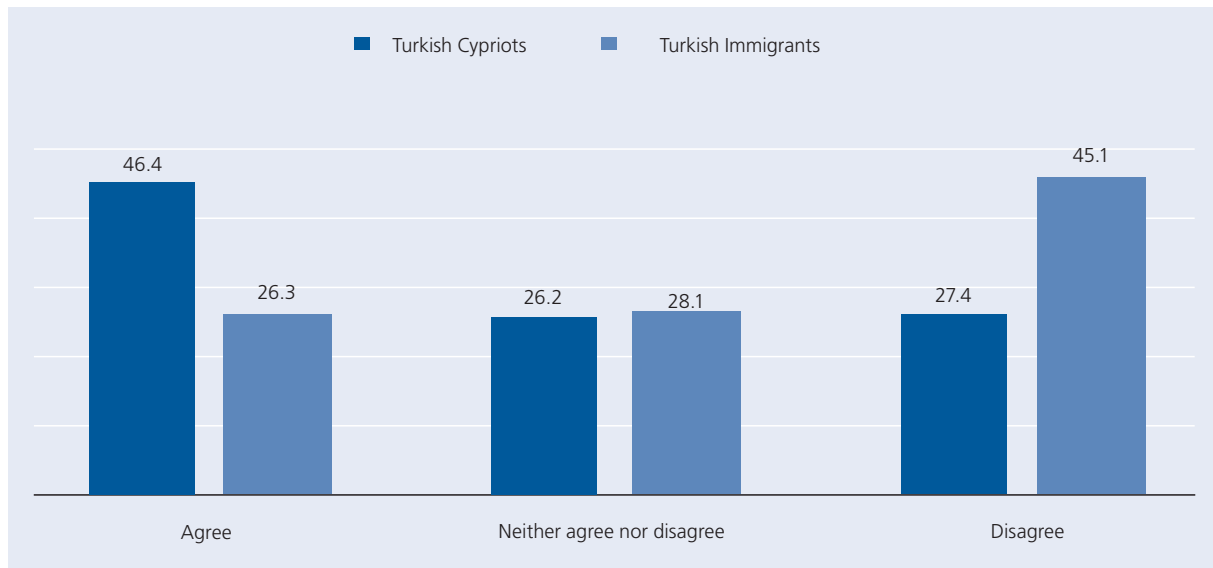


Figure 30  
**I think Turkey meddles too much in the domestic affairs of the TRNC**



In the second question in this chapter, we asked participants to say to what extent they agreed with the following statement: *'I think Turkey is meddling too much in the domestic affairs of the TRNC'*. While almost half of migrants disagreed with this statement, almost the same proportion of natives agreed with it, once again indicating a remarkable disagreement between the two groups.

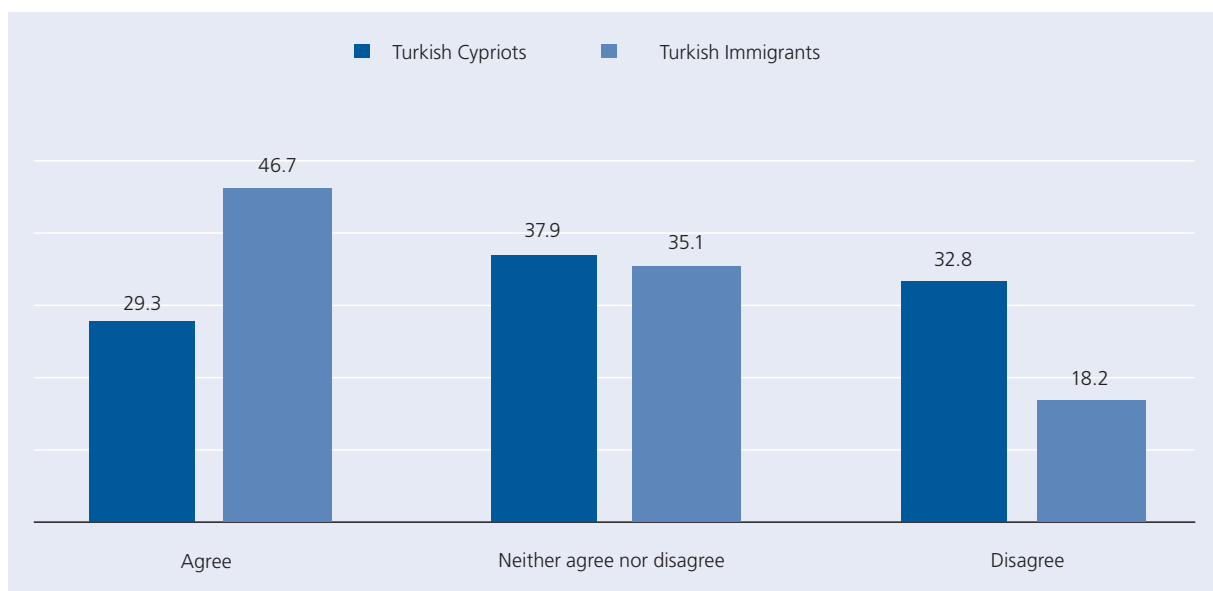
In the third question in this chapter, we asked the participants to say to what extent they agreed with the statement: *'I'm satisfied with the policies of Turkey towards the TRNC'*. Among native Turkish Cypriots, remarkably, the most common answer was 'neither agree nor disagree'. Obviously, this group has mixed feelings about the Turkish government's approach towards the northern part of Cy-

prus. Almost one-third of native Turkish Cypriot respondents said they were not satisfied with Ankara's political stance vis-à-vis the TRNC, while around 30 percent expressed their satisfaction.

By contrast, almost half of migrants said they were satisfied with Turkey's policies, while more than one in three in this group also showed ambiguity by saying 'neither agree nor disagree'. Only around one in five expressed their dissatisfaction.

Overall, it can be said that native Turkish Cypriots lean towards a restructuring of the relations with Turkey while Turkish immigrants tend to be less bothered with the existing situation.

Figure 31  
**I am satisfied with Turkey's policies towards the TRNC**



# 7 ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND GREEK CYPRIOTS

The Cyprus conflict plays a major role in Turkish Cypriot politics. Particularly, the Turkish Cypriot opposition has seen granting more and more citizenships to immigrants from Turkey as an attempt to distort the political will of Turkish Cypriots not only in domestic politics but also in the Cyprus negotiation process, which is seen by many as the most crucial issue.

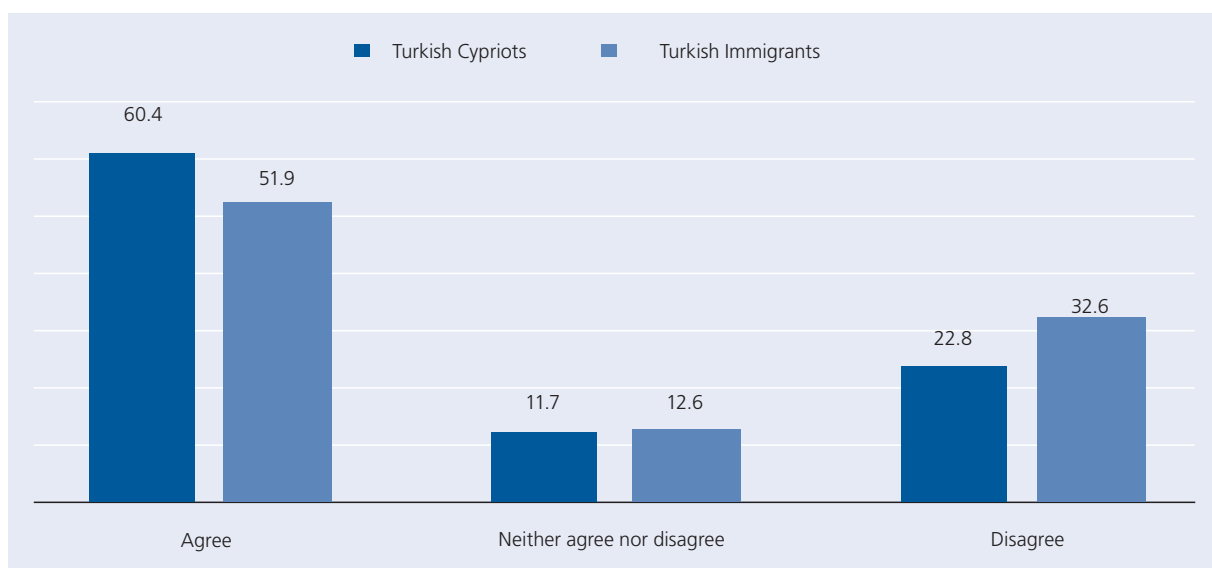
In this chapter, we first explore the attitudes of native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants towards the current state of division and alternative models for the solution of the Cyprus problem. Then, we look into the attitudes of the two groups towards having a Greek Cypriot neighbour after the solution of the Cyprus problem to have an idea about their attitudes towards the other community on the island.

In the first question in this chapter, we asked the respondents whether or not they agreed with the statement: *'The division of the island of Cyprus bothers me'*.

We presented five possible scenarios to the participants and asked them to what extent they supported these solution models: (i) continuation of the status quo, (ii) annexation by Turkey, (iii) a two-state solution, (iv) a unitary-state under the Republic of Cyprus, (v) a bi-zonal, bicomunal federation based on political equality.<sup>12</sup> As in most other questions, answers given by the two groups were considerably different from each other.

The first scenario presented to the participants was the 'continuation of the status quo', which can be understood as the continuation of a 'divided Cyprus'. Nearly half of the native Turkish Cypriots (46,3 percent) stated that they were strongly against the continuation of the status quo and division, while one in five said that they were fully in favour of this. On the other hand, while one-third of Turkish migrants perceived the 'continuation of the status quo' as a very favourable scenario, another third of the group thought exactly the opposite.

Figure 32  
The current division of the island bothers me



A majority of both groups expressed their disapproval of the ongoing division on the island. Having said that, their opinions diverged from each other when it came to their views about ending the division.

<sup>12</sup> The questions and answer categories are adapted from Cyprus 2015.

Figure 33  
Continuation of the status-quo

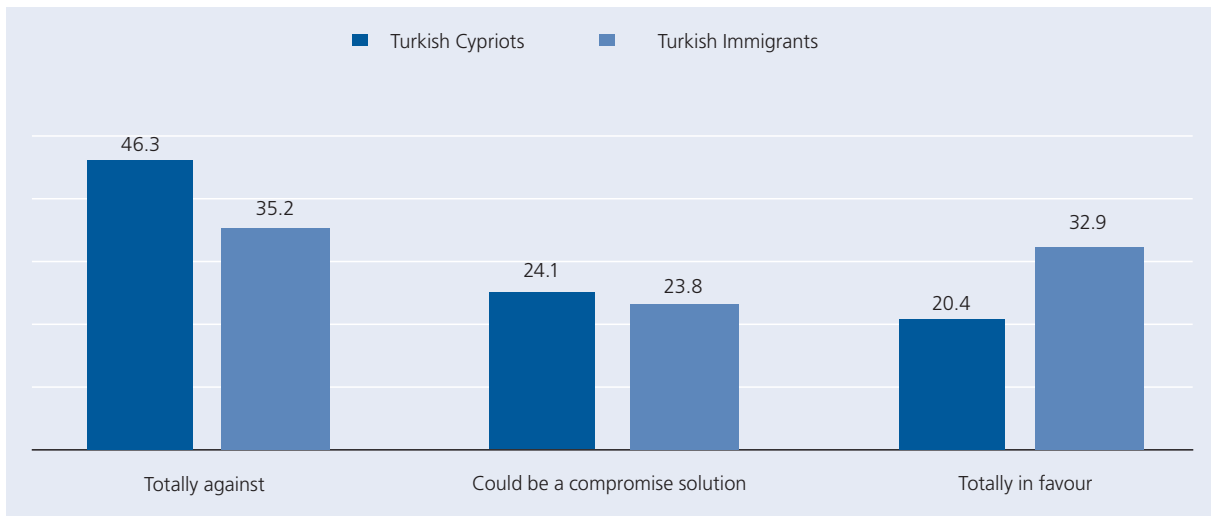
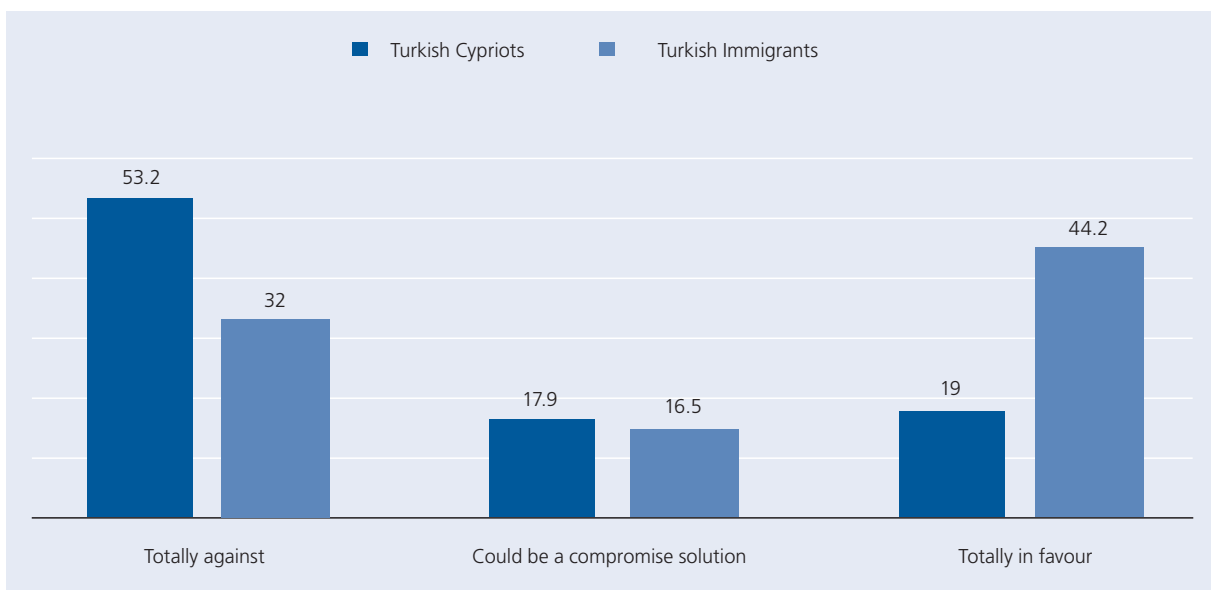


Figure 34  
Annexation by Turkey



The second possible scenario, which is the annexation of the TRNC by Turkey, is the most controversial of the five models. This is a scenario, which is strongly rejected by a majority of native Turkish Cypriots (53,2). One in five of this group, however, responded that they would strongly support this model. For 44,2 percent of Turkish migrants, on the other hand, 'annexation by Turkey' was a satisfactory option that could be strongly supported. However, among Turkish immigrants too, there was a sizeable group, almost one in three, who strongly opposed this option.

Generally, a two-state solution where the TRNC would gain international recognition is considered as the ideal solution particularly by the right in north Cyprus. Therefore, it was not surprising to see that 40 percent of native Turkish Cypriots supported this model. It was interesting to see, however, that almost 39 percent of Turkish immigrants totally rejected this option.

What was even more surprising was to see that a reunification under the Republic of Cyprus in a unitary model was seen as a favourable option by a (wafer-thin) majority of native Turkish Cypriots either as a 'satisfactory option' or as a 'compromise solution with mutual concessions'. Normally, this is considered an anathema by all politicians across the political spectrum.

The last solution model presented to the respondents was the 'bi-zonal-bicommunal federation based on political equality,' which is the model that has been negotiated for a long time by the leaderships of the two communities under the auspices of the United Nations. At the same time, this was the model which was approved by 65 percent of Turkish Cypriots in the so-called Annan Plan referendum, which took place in 2004.



Figure 35  
**Two-state solution**

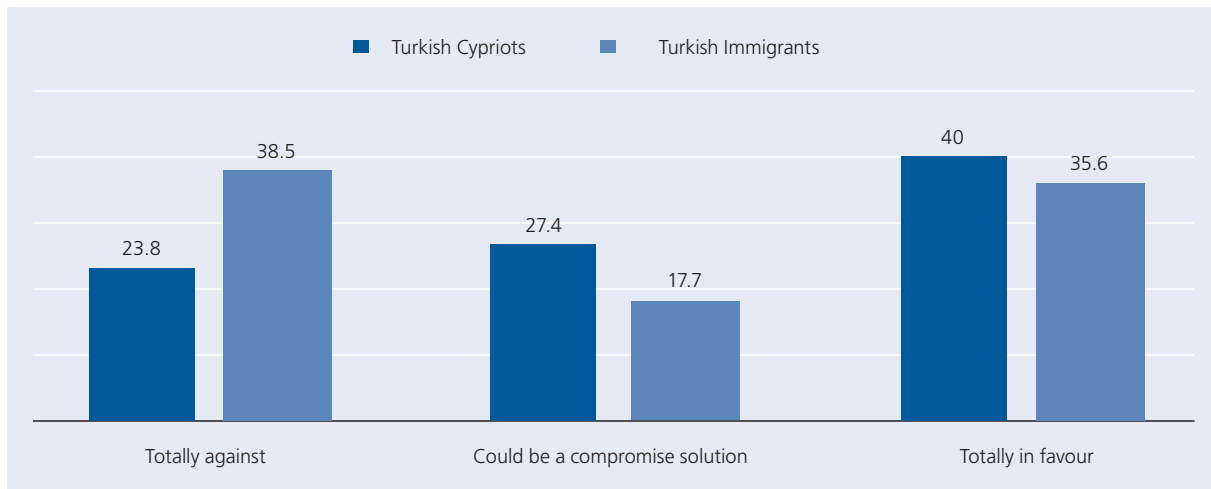


Figure 36  
**Reunification under the Republic of Cyprus – Unitary state**

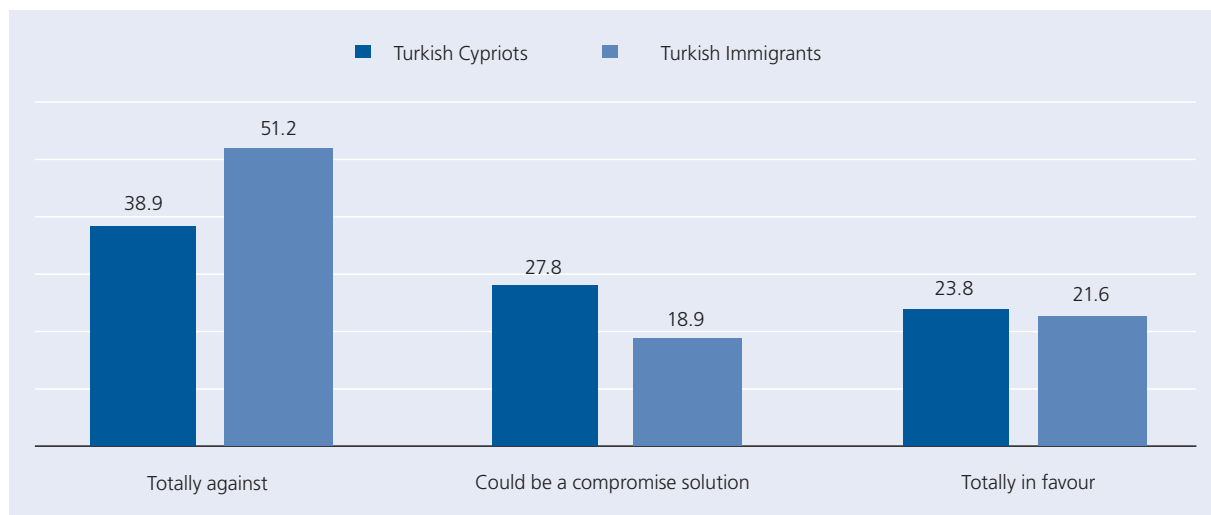
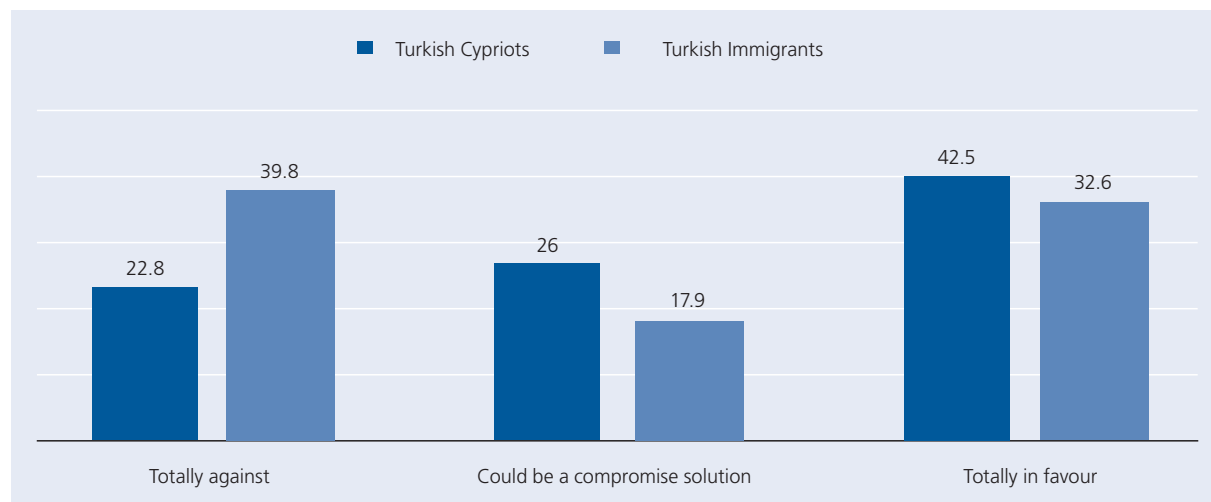


Figure 37  
**A bi-zonal, bicomunal federation based on political equality**



While 42,5 percent of native Turkish Cypriots said that they would fully support this model, another 26 percent said that this could be a compromise solution with some mutual concessions. Only 22,8 percent of the native Turkish Cypriot respondents were totally against a federal settlement. When we look at the answers of the immigrant group, we see that the proportion of Turkish immigrants, who were totally against this solution model reached 39,8 percent, while those who were strongly in favour of a federal model constituted around one third of the participants.

When we reformulated the question and asked the respondents what her/his vote would be if an agreement, which was also supported by three guarantor powers was reached and put to referendum, the native Turkish Cypriot groups' clear majority said that they would vote in favour while only around one fourth said that they would vote 'no'. Though a higher proportion of immigrants said that they would vote 'yes' than those who said they would vote

'no', the difference between the two groups was narrower, and the supporters of this model fell short of constituting a majority.

Finally, we asked the respondents whether they wanted to have a Greek Cypriot neighbour after the solution of the Cyprus problem. Almost half of native Turkish Cypriots (48,8 percent), expressed a positive opinion about having a Greek Cypriot neighbour, while a majority (58 percent) of Turkish immigrants opposed the idea of having a Greek Cypriot neighbour.

Overall, on Cyprus problem related questions, the immigrant group also tended to give more conservative answers than the native group. The native Turkish Cypriots were more bothered by the status quo, more supportive of a possible federal solution, and more receptive to the idea of having a Greek Cypriot neighbour in a prospective reunified island than the immigrant group.

Figure 38  
**How would you vote if a bi-zonal, bicomunal federal settlement based on political equality was agreed by Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders, approved by the three guarantor countries, and was put to referendum?**

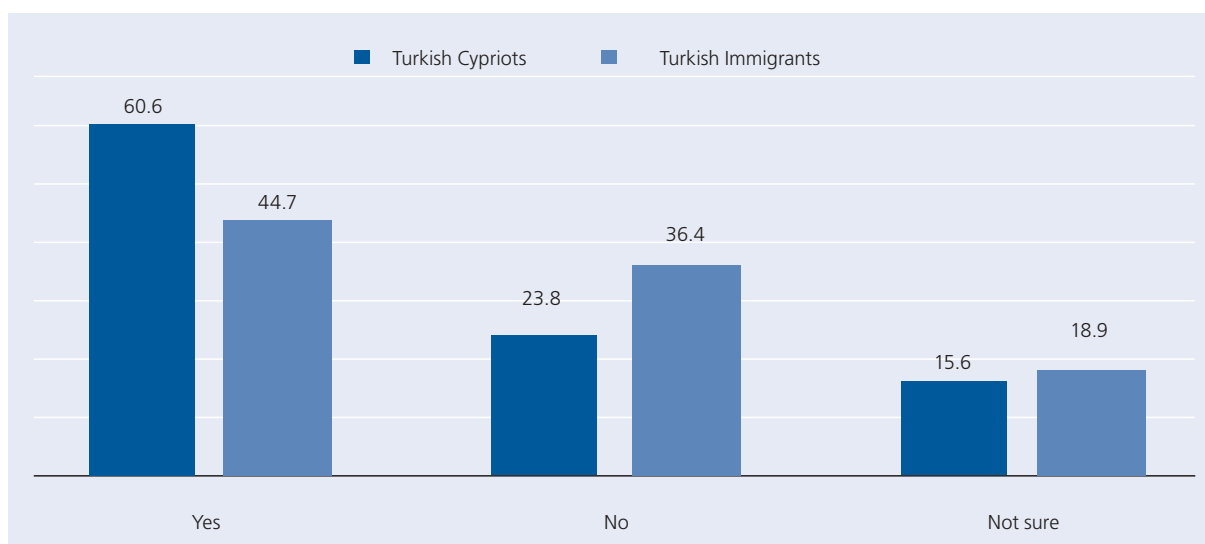
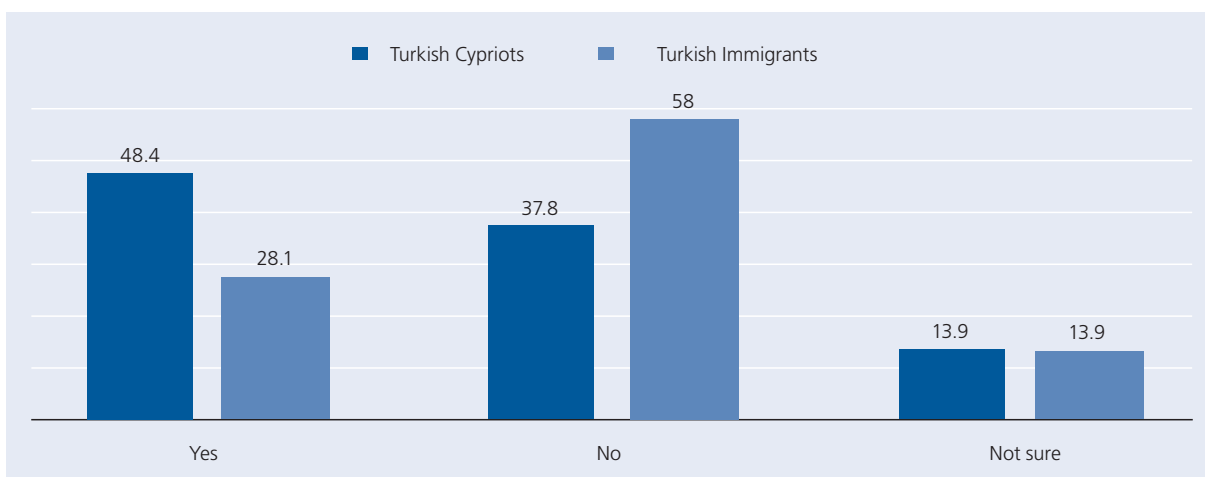


Figure 39  
**In case of the settlement of the Cyprus problem, would you like to have a Greek Cypriot neighbour?**



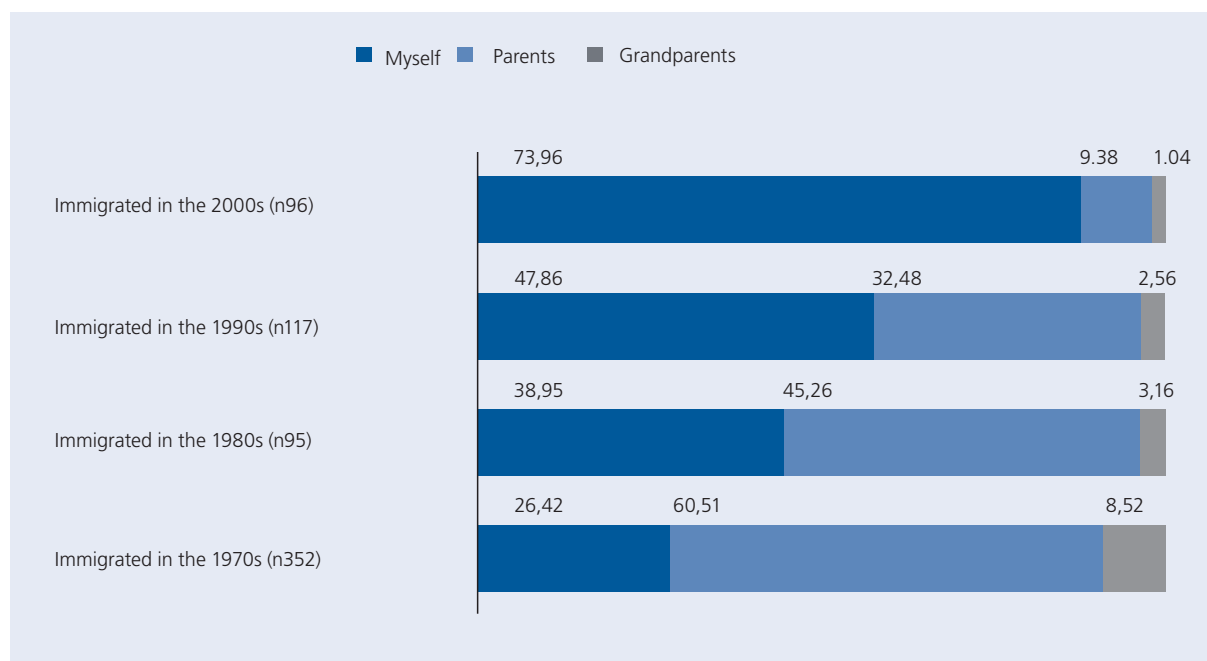
# 8

## VARIATION OF ATTITUDES AMONG IMMIGRANTS

In this last chapter, we elaborate on the differences within the immigrant group. As the flow of people from Turkey to the northern part of Cyprus has been going on since 1975, we wondered whether or not the period of arrival in the island played a role in the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents. We divided the group into four sub-groups based on the period when the first person of the family immigrated to the island.

totalled 351 (the figure includes those who came in the 1970s and their descendants). Around 40,5 percent of the respondents within this group identified themselves as 'Turkish Cypriot' or 'Cypriot'. As presented in Chapter Two, this number was 31,5 percent for the whole group. Even more strikingly, the number of respondents identifying themselves as 'Turkish Cypriot' or 'Cypriot' decreased to 16 percent among respondents who came to the island in the

Figure 40  
Who was the first person in your family to immigrate?



Then, we selected some of the questions and cross-tabulated to see the intra-group differences within the immigrant group. In some questions, we found clear patterns pointing out the relevance of the period of arrival; in others the relationship turned out to be more ambiguous.

Firstly, the findings indicate that there is a relationship between the period of immigration and developing an attachment to Cyprus.

The people surveyed who were part of the first wave of immigrants to settle on the island by the end of the 1970s

2000s. These findings demonstrate that the rate of self-identification as 'Cypriot' is relatively higher in the first wave immigrants and their descendants compared to those who came in the following periods. To put it differently, it could be said that the first wave immigrants are better integrated than immigrants from other waves (at least in terms of subjective identity).

When the perception of patria is analyzed with respect to the immigrants' period of arrival, a picture similar to the one about self-perception of identity emerges. Among those who had arrived earlier, the tendency to identify

Figure 41  
**Turkish immigrants' perception of identity according to period of immigration (%)<sup>1</sup>**

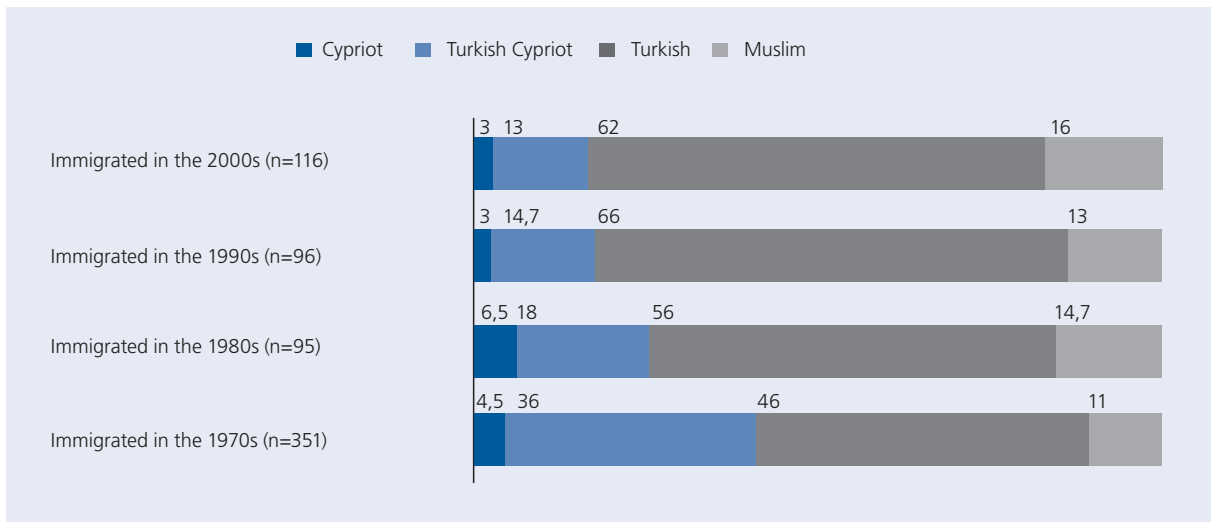


Figure 42  
**Turkish immigrants' perception of patria according to period of immigration**

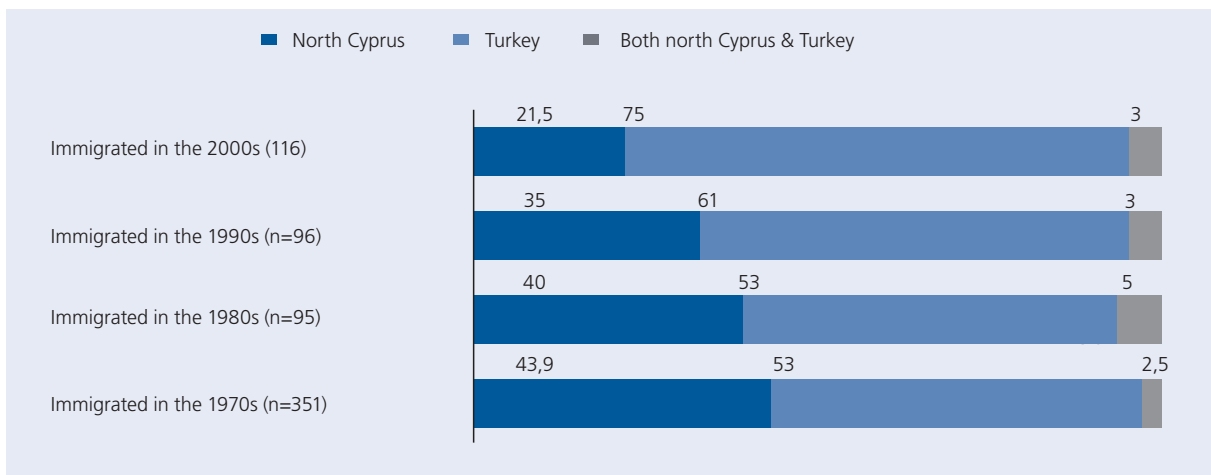
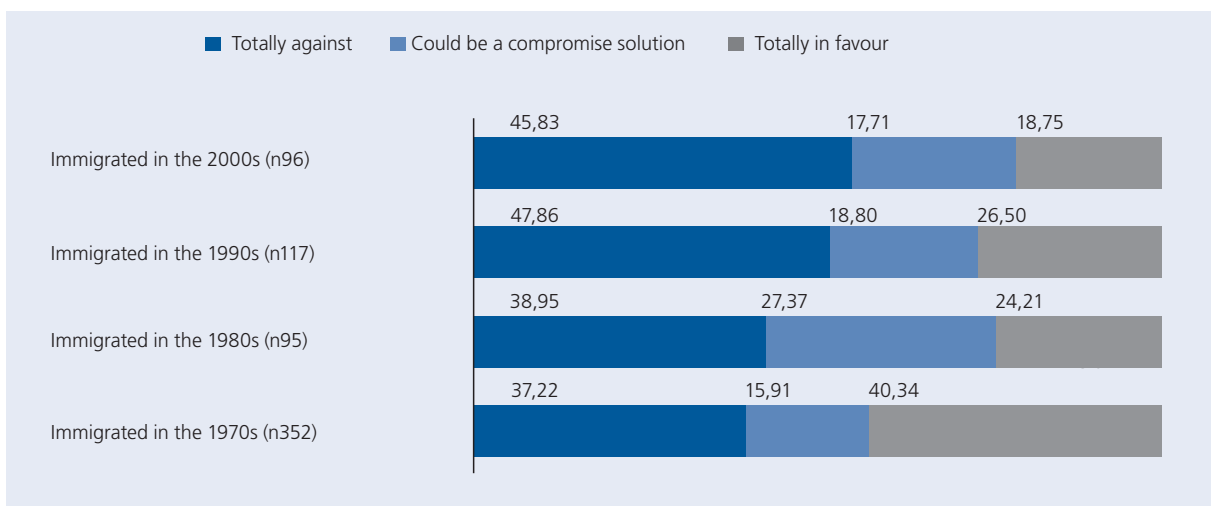


Figure 43  
**Support for a bi-zonal, bicommunal federation based on political equality among immigrants**



<sup>1</sup> This question was adopted from Kolsto 2016.

north Cyprus as their homeland tended to be higher. Almost half of the first wave immigrants said that they saw 'north Cyprus' or both 'north Cyprus' and Turkey as their homeland. Among those who had come in the 2000s, the number goes down to one in four.

When it came to the alternative scenarios about the solution of the Cyprus problem, it can be seen that the sub-group which was the most supportive of a federal settlement was the immigrants from the 1970s. A clear majority in this group (over 56 percent) either totally supported this model or saw it as a compromise solution. This number went down to 36,5 percent among those who came in the 2000s.

However, in a somewhat contradictory manner, those who came in the 1970s were also very supportive of the annexation option.

Overall, the relationship between the period of arrival and support for annexation was less clear. The same can be said of the opinions regarding relations with Turkey. The sub-group which was the most content with a mother-baby relationship had come in the 1970s (54,83 percent), while the least content were those who came in the 1980s (35,79 percent).

Those who came in the 1970s were also more religious than the other groups, while among those who came in the 2000s the proportion of 'not religious' and 'not religious at all' was the highest.

Figure 44  
Support for annexation by Turkey among immigrants

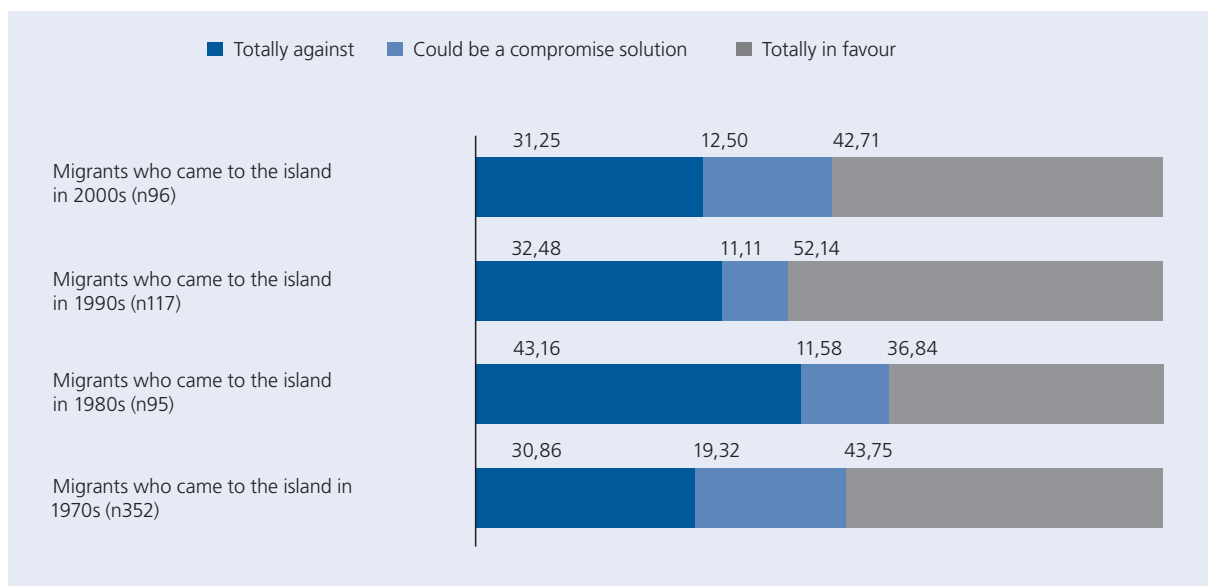


Figure 45  
How do you think the relationship between Turkey and the TRNC should be?

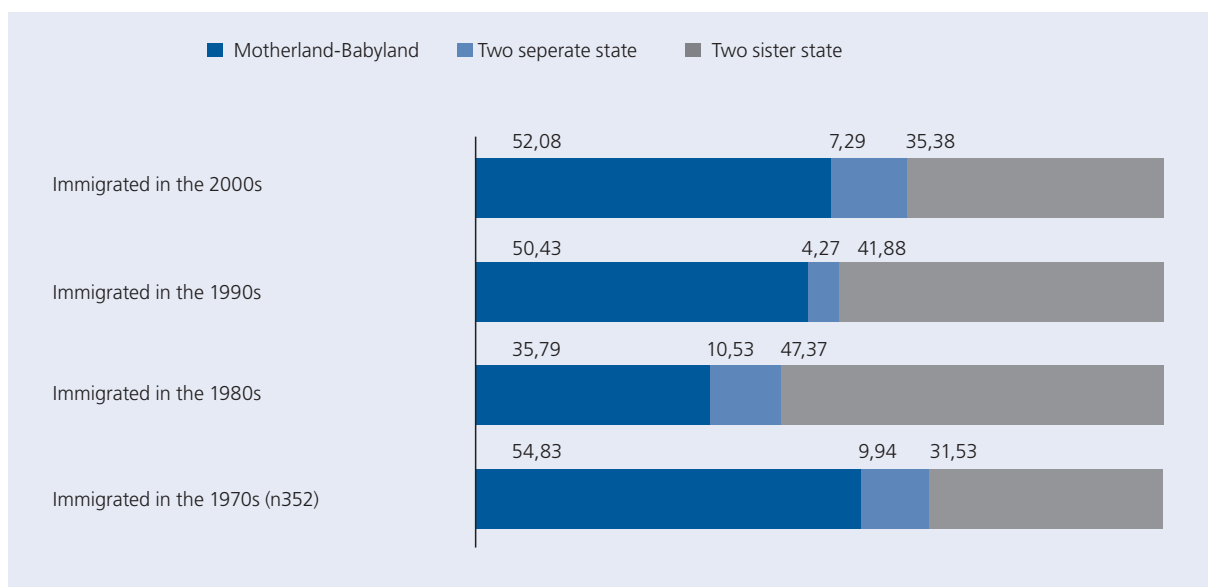
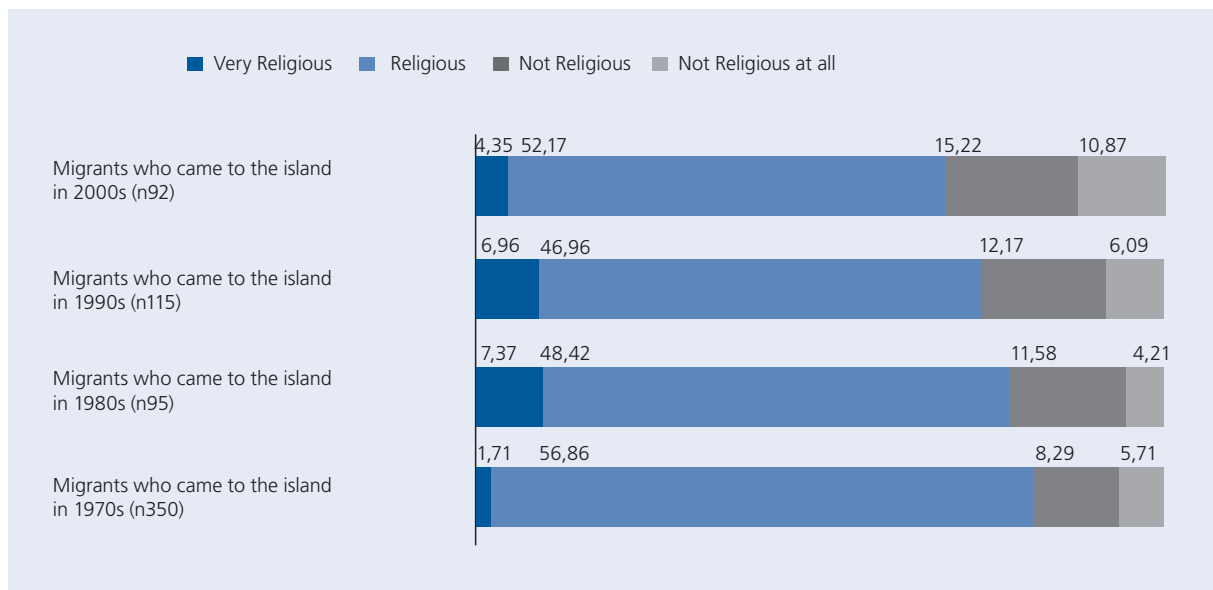


Figure 46  
**Religiosity among immigrants**



However, the strongest support for the construction of more mosques also came from the sub-group made up of those who came in the 2000s.

Finally, we investigated whether there was a relationship between the period of arrival and the attitude towards gender equality. Here too, it was not possible to see a clear relationship although it can be said that those who came in the 1970s and 1980s tended to be slightly more liberal than the other two groups.

When we analysed the variations among the attitudes of immigrants based on the period of arrival, we could not see a consistent pattern. Cross-tabulation analysis shows that, although the period of arrival played an important role in immigrants' perception of identity and homeland and made the immigrants from earlier periods more likely to identify with Cyprus, the relationship was less clear when it came to other questions taken up in this chapter.

Figure 47  
**Support for construction of more mosques among immigrants**

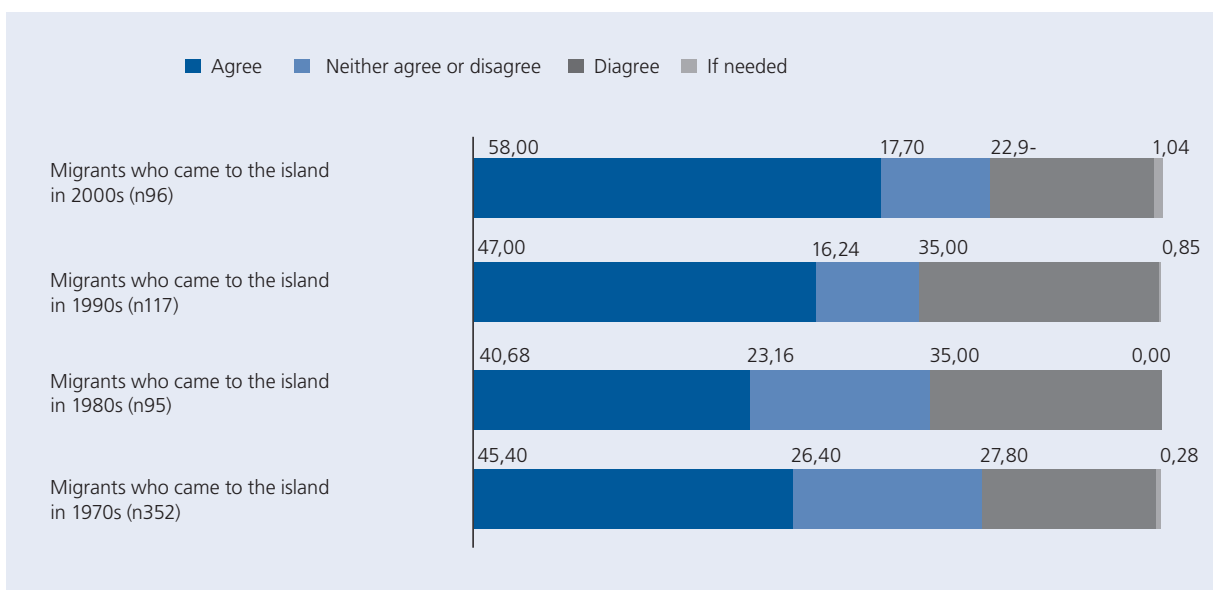
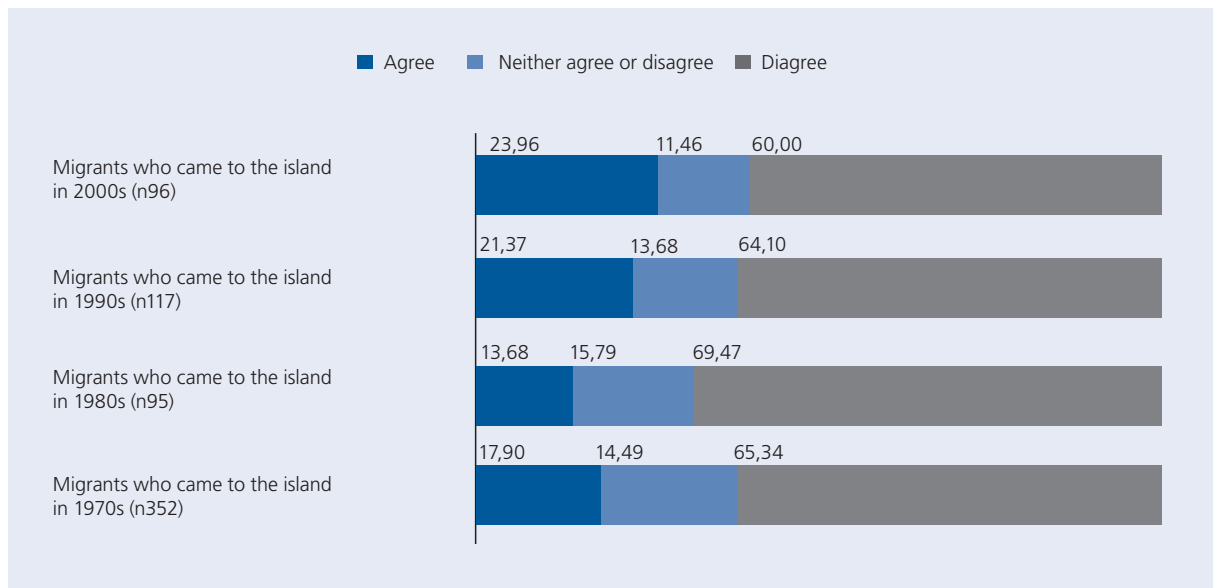


Figure 48  
**Men make better political leaders than women**



## Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to explore different features of politics and society in the northern part of Cyprus, based on survey results. It investigates the political and cultural factors underlying the uneasy relationship between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants and tries to explain their positions regarding various political and social issues. Although focusing on this relationship is not new, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first comparative study which uses a quantitative approach to compare the attitudes of the two groups towards politics, religion, the Cyprus problem and relations with Turkey.

In many respects, the findings show clear cleavages between the two groups and corroborate earlier studies which pointed out differences in values and attitudes of these two groups. To give a few examples: the immigrants are more religious and nationalistic; their attitudes towards the Turkish government are more positive; and, they have different preferences regarding the solution of the Cyprus problem. Particularly, this study, which divides the TRNC's population into two sub-groups, shows that native Turkish Cypriots are even more secular than WVS studies show, which does not divide the sample. Furthermore, it shows that Turkish immigrants in Cyprus are relatively less religious compared to people of Turkey and have a more liberal approach to gender equality.

At the same time, the study shows that both groups respond similarly when it comes to gender equality, life satisfaction, interpersonal trust and their views regarding the direction of the society.

By providing a snapshot of the attitudes of the TRNC citizens as a whole and its two sub-groups separately, this report aims to provide useful insights about the current situation of Turkish Cypriot society.



ANNEX  
SURVEY FORM

Good Morning/Afternoon. My name is ..... I'm from Lipa Consultancy. We are conducting an academic survey on daily life, political values, political culture and identity in northern Cyprus, and we would like to learn your ideas and opinions on this issue. In accordance with the ESOMAR rules, a research professional regulatory body, all information obtained during the interview will not be shared with the third parties for personal purposes and will be kept confidential. Thank you in advance for participating in the survey! INTERVIEWER WARNING: BEFORE STARTING THE SURVEY THE PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ASKED: Do you HOLD TRNC citizenship? (The person interviewed will definitely be TRNC CITIZEN and 18 years OR older!)

If Yes, proceed with the survey!	If No, end the survey!! All surveys conducted with non-citizens will be CANCELED.
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**T1. Participant's Citizenship(s): Which citizenships do you have other than TRNC citizenship?**

INTERVIEWER: There may be more than one answer.

Turkey	1	Republic of Cyprus (South Cyprus)	2	Other (Please specify):	
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**T2. Country of Birth (Country and City)**

						City of Birth (please specify):
	Cyprus (North)	Cyprus (Migrant from South)	Turkey	England/UK	Other	
*Participant	1	2	3	4	5	
Participant's Mother	1	2	3	4	5	
Participant's Father	1	2	3	4	5	
Participant's Spouse	1	2	3	4	5	

**T3. The year of immigration to TRNC (Please specify) ..... (IMPORTANT)****DEMOGRAPHY****D1-Participant - Gender**

Female	1	Male	2
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**D2- Participant - Age .....****D3- Highest completed educational institution.**

	Illiterate	Literate-primary school	Literate-primary school	High School	University	Postgraduate
Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6

**D4- Participant – District.**

Nicosia	Famagusta	Kyrenia	Morphou	Trigomo	Lefka
1	2	3	4	5	6

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

How do you primarily identify yourself? (Single answer)

Cypriot	Turkish Cypriot	Turkish	Muslim	European	Other (Please specify):
1	2	3	4	5	

Where do you regard as your patria (homeland) ? (Single answer)

North Cyprus	1	Cyprus	2	Turkey	3	Both Turkey and Cyprus	4	Other (Please specify):	
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To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
I feel attachment to the TRNC.	1	2	3	4	5

How do you describe Turkish immigrants? (asked to native Turkish Cypriots)  
How do you describe native Turkish Cypriots? (asked to Turkish immigrants)

Trustworthy	Friendly	Different	Dangerous	Ungrateful	Depends on the individual
1	2	3	4	5	6

How do you describe the relationship between the native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish migrants?

Very bad	Bad	Neither good nor bad	Good	Very good
1	2	3	4	5

Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination?

Yes	1	No	2
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If yes, which religion do you belong to?

Muslim (Sunni)	1	Muslim (Alevi)	2	Other (Please specify):	
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Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are a religious person?

Very religious	Religious	Neither religious nor not religious	Not religious	Not religious at all
1	2	3	4	5

Apart from funerals, about how often do you attend religious services these days?

Every day	Once or few times a week	Once or few times a month	Friday Prayers	Bayram (Eid) Prayers	During Ramadan	Never
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you support construction of more mosques in the TRNC?

Completely Support	Support	Neither Support Nor Against	Do Not Support	Do Not Support At All
1	2	3	4	5

Do you support construction of more divinity schools in the TRNC?

Completely Support	Support	Neither Support Nor Against	Do Not Support	Do Not Support At All
1	2	3	4	5

**How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?**

Not important at all -1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very important -10
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

**I am going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as way of governing this. country?**

	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad
Having a democratic political system	1	2	3	4	5
An administration where the religious leaders and rules prevail	1	2	3	4	5
Having the army rule	1	2	3	4	5
Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country (technocratic government)	1	2	3	4	5
Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections	1	2	3	4	5

**How democratically is this country (TRNC) being governed?**

Not democratic at all -1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely democratic -10
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**All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?**

Not satisfied at all -1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely satisfied -10
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**To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'Men make better politicians than women do'**

Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
1	2	3	4	5

**Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?**

Most people are trustworthy	1	Need to be very careful	2	IDK/NA	77
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**To what extent do you agree with the following statements? INTERVIEWER: One answer per line.**

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
18. I feel proud for being a citizen of the TRNC.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am proud for being a citizen of the TRNC.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am active in TRNC politics	1	2	3	4	5
21. I follow what is going on in TRNC politics by reading articles in newspapers and or magazines.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I follow what is going on in Turkish politics by reading articles in newspapers and or magazines.	1	2	3	4	5

**Are things in Turkish Cypriot society moving in the right or wrong direction?**

Right direction	1	Wrong direction	2	I don't know	3
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**Would you please indicate your trust in the following institutions separately?**

	Completely Trust	Trust	Neither Trust nor Distrust	Distrust	Completely Distrust	IDK/NA
24. Government of TRNC	1	2	3	4	5	
25. Government of the Republic of Turkey	1	2	3	4	5	77

**Which one do you see as your leader?**

TRNC President	1	Turkish President	2	Both	3	None	4
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**In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your position on this scale, generally speaking?**

Left - 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 -Right
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**How do you think the relationship between Turkey and the TRNC should be?**

On the basis of Motherland-Babyland	1	Two separate states	2	Two sister states	3	IDK/NA	77
-------------------------------------	---	---------------------	---	-------------------	---	--------	----

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements? INTERVIEWER: One answer per line.**

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
29. I think Turkey meddles too much in the domestic affairs of the TRNC.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I am satisfied with Turkey's policies towards the TRNC.	1	2	3	4	5

**'The division of the island of Cyprus bothers me.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?**

Completely Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Completely Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

**Can you tell us what you think about each of the possible solutions to the Cyprus problem below? INTERVIEWER: ONE ANSWER PER LINE.**

	Totally against	Could be a compromise solution	Totally in favour	IDK/NA
32. Continuation of the status-quo	1	2	3	77
33. Annexation by Turkey	1	2	3	77
34. Two-state solution	1	2	3	77
35. Reunification under the Republic of Cyprus - Unitary state	1	2	3	77
36. A bi-zonal, bicomunal federation based on political equality				

**How would you vote if a bi-zonal, bicomunal federal settlement based on political equality, was agreed by Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders, and approved by 3 guarantor countries, was put to referendum?**

Yes	No	Not Sure
1	2	3

**In case of the settlement of the Cyprus problem, would you like to have a Greek Cypriot neighbour?**

Yes	1	No	2	Not sure	3
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Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in our survey.

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# POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN NORTH CYPRUS

## A Survey Study

This report aims to explore different aspects of politics and society in the northern part of Cyprus based on a survey, which was conducted in 2018. Most studies on Cyprus focus on the Cyprus conflict and the division between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides, the two main ethnic communities on the island. This study is different from them as it focuses on the division within one of these communities; it seeks to investigate the political and cultural factors underlying the uneasy relationship between native Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants who came to the island after 1974 and gained citizenship. Although research on this relationship is not new,

the method used is. So far, most studies have used interviews. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first survey study, which compares the attitudes of the two groups towards, among others, identity, politics, religion, the Cyprus problem and relations with Turkey. In many respects, the findings show clear cleavages between the two groups and corroborate earlier studies, which pointed out differences in values and attitudes of these two groups. To give a few examples, the survey results show that the immigrants are more religious and nationalistic; their attitudes towards Turkish government are more positive; and, they have different preferences regarding the solution of the

Cyprus problem. Particularly, this study, which divides the population into two sub-groups, shows that native Turkish Cypriots are even more secular than the World Values Survey results show, which does not divide the sample. Furthermore, the study shows that Turkish immigrants in Cyprus are relatively less religious and have a more liberal approach to gender equality compared to people of Turkey. At the same time, the study shows that both groups show similar responses when it comes to gender equality, life satisfaction, interpersonal trust and their views regarding the direction of the society.