Changing Values in Turkey: Religiosity and Tolerance in Comparative Perspective

Birol A. Yeşilada; Peter Noordijk

* Mark Hatfield School of Government, Portland State University, Portland, OR, USA

Online publication date: 10 May 2010

To cite this Article Yeşilada, Birol A. and Noordijk, Peter(2010) 'Changing Values in Turkey: Religiosity and Tolerance in Comparative Perspective', Turkish Studies, 11: 1, 9 — 27

To link to this Article DOI: 10.1080/14683841003746999

URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14683841003746999

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
Changing Values in Turkey: Religiosity and Tolerance in Comparative Perspective

BIROL A. YEŞİLADA & PETER NOORDIJK
Mark Hatfield School of Government, Portland State University, Portland, OR, USA

ABSTRACT  Using data from the World Values Surveys, this study examines changing values in Turkey and shows that rising religiosity and intolerance can be traced back to 1995 and have become more visible during the AKP’s rule. Moreover, Turks are found to be the most religious of all the societies compared in the study. Findings suggest that Turkish voters are likely to continue being attracted to political parties like the AKP in the future, which would have important implications for Turkey’s relations with its traditional friends in the West.

Introduction
Since the beginning of the 1990s, significant socioeconomic and political developments have taken place in Turkey. One of these developments is the emergence of Islamist-oriented political parties as a credible choice for voters despite repeated attempts by the military and its laicist partners to keep the Islamists out of power. The rise of the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP) and its closure by the Constitutional Court, followed by the similar fate of the Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) exemplify this conflict. With the split of the FP into two alternative political parties, the conservative Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi, SP) and the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), Turkish electoral politics entered a new chapter. The AKP managed to attract many supporters from the traditional center-right as well as the conservative elements of the traditional right of the political spectrum and swept into power in the 2002 national elections. The party has managed to fend off challenges from the Turkish military and continued to repeat its electoral victories, albeit with sizeable decline in its voter support base, in 2007 and in 2009. How is it possible that Turkish voters gave such overwhelming support to an Islamist-based political party? What changes in the social values of the public made it possible for the AKP to maintain its grip on political power? Could it be that the policies of AKP since 2002 have served as a catalyst to move the Turkish public toward conservative social values that might have even greater implications for...
Turkey’s domestic development and foreign relations in the future? These questions are not easy to answer. This study attempts to provide some insight into these developments by examining rising conservatism, measured in the form of religiosity, and its impact on tolerance and democratic values based on data obtained from the World Values Survey (WVS). The analysis attempts to present this in the context of comparison with other countries that are members of the European Union, as Turkey represents the most challenging case of candidacy in EU history.

Conservatism, Religiosity, and Tolerance as Changing Social Values

Several significant surveys have shown that religiosity is a sound measure of conservatism in Turkey. Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu in their 2009 study and Toprak et al. in 2008, provide an in-depth overview of the causes and consequences of conservatism. The latter study found that growing societal cleavages in Turkey are reflected by women wearing the headscarf in order to pressure secularists to conform to religious Islamic practice, for example. Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu carried out complex statistical analysis and found that conservatism in Turkey is a product of a different set of complex and multidimensional factors that can be explained by psychology and social psychology. They found that while men are more authoritarian, intolerant, and old-fashioned (dimension-1 of conservatism), women tend to be more state interventionist, religiously liberal, and supportive of the status quo (dimension-2). They also found that partisan preferences had a limited significance on conservatism, but the left-right ideological scale appeared to be significant, showing that as people moved to the ideological right they became more authoritarian, old-fashioned, and religious—though not any more state interventionist—than others. Moreover, their findings demonstrate that happier people seem to be more conservative and religious. Probably the most significant finding of this part of their study is captured in the following statement:

Among the different measures of conservatism, the first dimension [...] captures authoritarianism, old fashioned and intolerant tendencies. These tendencies seem to increase as anomie, political inefficacy, lack of self-esteem, intolerance, and interpersonal trust and happiness increase. As Turkish society plunges into a mind-set defined by these indicators, it is likely that the resulting political regime will be faced with demands and pressures to maintain an oppressive authoritarian regime that looks to the past rather than the future.

Given Turkey’s desire to join the European Union (EU), it is important to compare these findings with trends observed in other EU countries. For the EU, increase in tolerance is indeed a declared goal—one that has taken a front-row seat on the EU’s agenda following troubling riots and clashes across several member states in the 2000s. The specific relationship between religion and intolerance has been widely proposed in studies of right-wing authoritarianism, in popular discourse, and because religion is one of the main markers of ethnic identity for many cultures. A
number of studies have explored potential relationships in religiosity and values of tolerance in Europe, observing and testing a variety of explanatory hypotheses.

One relevant study on tolerance in Europe tested the effect of religiosity on anti-Semitism to see if anti-Semitism in the Netherlands was a product of the exclusionary doctrine of Christianity. The authors found that there was a positive, albeit somewhat weak relationship, between Christian religiosity and religious anti-Semitism. However, the authors found that Catholic religiosity had a link to secular anti-Semitism, while members of Protestant sects did not differ from average Netherlanders. The authors found a much more powerful secular predictor of effect on anti-Semitism; they found that a variable on perspective, “narrow perspective,” accounted for 52 percent of the relationship between Christian beliefs and religious anti-Semitism, while religious beliefs accounted for less than 15 percent. They also found that secular anti-Semitism was also largely a product of a narrow perspective, with 70 percent of the variance in secular anti-Semitism accounted for by the perspective variable versus 13 percent associated with Christian religion. The implication of their analysis is that the relationship between Christian religiosity and anti-Semitism was driven by narrow perspective. While the authors documented a positive and significant relationship between Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism, they established that the relationship was more of narrow perspective mediated slightly by values of a Christian religiosity. Their analysis notes the relationship among fundamentalist religiosity, authoritarian personalities, and a narrow worldview that contributes to antipathy for groups outside the mainstream.

Another study conducted on the Netherlands hypothesized that religiosity should have a nonlinear negative effect on intolerance. The authors theorized that those who “live” their faith will reject ethnic bias, while only those who claim an affiliation without being a core believer or adhering to a particularistic faith will show positive correlations with intolerance. The authors conducted a multilevel regression analysis of types of religious beliefs and behaviors as well as of Protestant and Catholic sects of Christianity. Their conclusions were that Christians tended to show more support for prejudice than non-religious people or persons of other faiths. They also found that ethnic intolerance was positively associated with religious attendance. However, they found a strong indication that the kind of religiosity practiced mattered. They found negative relationships between intolerance, both doctrinal beliefs, and importance of religion in respondents’ lives, but also found a positive relationship between intolerance and religious particularism. The results seem to support a common-sense notion that those who practice a religion that values tolerance will be more tolerant but those who adhere to an exclusionary interpretation of their faith will tend to be less tolerant. The study shows the importance of using a multidimensional factor for religiosity, as the type of religiosity and the manner in which it is practiced changes the sign of the association with intolerance. The authors do caution that the non-Christian religious individuals in their study of European countries are members of outlying groups and therefore unlikely to express
intolerance towards the minority group to which they belong, a problem that persists in this study too. Minority religious respondents seemed to not answer the religious denomination questions on the survey. Finally, and significantly to this study, the authors found that the religious heterogeneity of the countries in the study had a strong positive effect on prejudice, as did economic conditions. Questions about ethnic bias may be more salient to those with out-groups toward whom misanthropic feelings can be directed.

These findings of the multilevel study by Scheepers et al. partially refute and partially support earlier studies on religiosity and bias in Europe. A 1990 study of racism and religiosity in Holland found that there was some association with prejudice among casual church members and those who attended frequently, but that the trend reversed among individuals who participated in church functions and associations. They also found that the positive association between nationalism and religious participation almost completely suppressed the relationship between faith and bias. A 1999 follow-up study that extended the investigation to cross-state comparisons concluded that nationalism had a much more powerful effect on bias, and that the relationship between religion and bias may be spurious to that of nationalism and prejudice. Finally, Maurice Gesthuizen, Tom van der Meer, and Peer Scheepers completed a test of Putnam’s thesis that ethnic diversity and social capital appear to have an inverse relationship, with tentative findings that the presence of a social safety net in wealthy European countries ameliorates much of the “economic threat” argument for the existence of links between income and intolerance.

Patterns of Intolerance

Studies for the European Monitoring Centre on Xenophobia and Racism by Coenders, Lubbers, and Scheepers were able to make a detailed examination of ethnic exclusionism. They found a variety of concepts that were embedded in notions of intolerance and ethnic exclusionism. The study focused on attitudes towards migration, but the hypothesis suggested in their analysis is interesting to a broader discussion of tolerance. The summary report discussed the impact of national GDP and competition over resources may have on the level of ethnic exclusionism. Subsequent analysis of the European Social Survey 2002-2003 found the country-level characteristics GDP and unemployment rates had a significant relationship to resistance to ethnic diversity. However, their hypothesis regarding competition for resources was reversed at the national level. Higher national unemployment was associated with lower resistance to diversity rather than higher. Perhaps the salience of the issue was lower as workers did not tend to flock to other low-employment countries.

In order to investigate the change in values as a function of religiosity, this study uses survey data over the several waves of the WVS and constructs a series of indicators using responses from the surveys as observed indicators. The changes in post-materialist values, tolerance, and religiosity are examined individually then as part of regression models to try and isolate the partial correlations between religion
Changing Values in Turkey

and intolerance while controlling for individual demographics and changes between waves 1 and 5 of the WVS.

WVS Data and Cross-National Comparison of Religiosity in Turkey

The World Values Surveys (1990-2005) and its predecessor, the European Values Survey (1981), provide a comprehensive measurement of all major areas of human life, from religion to politics to economic and social life. This survey originated from the work of Ronald Inglehart at the University of Michigan and is conducted every five years by leading social scientists around the world and is the most comprehensive study of its kind. The project director for Turkey is Yılmaz Esmer of Başçekşehir University in Istanbul. The basic premise of the WVS is that socio-economic development results in profound changes in the basic human values that shape politics. With respect to this study’s focus on religiosity and social values change, Inglehart-Welzel’s values map is important. This map reflects the fact that a large number of basic values are closely correlated; they can be depicted in just two major dimensions of cross-cultural variation. These include the traditional/secular-rational and survival/self-expression values. Together, these two dimensions explain more than 70 percent of cross-national variance.

The traditional/secular-rational values dimension reflects the contrast among societies over religion. More traditional societies place greater emphasis on religion while more secular-rational ones do not. Inglehart and Welzel also found that a wide range of values are associated with this dimension. For example, societies near the traditional pole emphasize the importance of parent-child ties and deference to authority, along with absolute standards and traditional family values, and reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. They tend to have high levels of national pride coupled with a nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values have the opposite preferences in all of these areas.

The second key dimension of cross-cultural variation is linked with the transition from industrial society to post-industrial societies, which bring a polarization between survival and self-expression values. Their basic argument maintains that unprecedented accumulation of wealth in advanced societies over the course of the past generation resulted in a greater portion of the population taking survival for granted. These people shifted their priorities from an overwhelming emphasis on economic and physical security toward an increasing emphasis on subjective well-being, self-expression, and quality of life. Inglehart and Baker found that people’s values shifted from traditional toward secular-rational in almost all industrial societies. Furthermore, reflecting that modernization is not a linear phenomenon, they found that there is a shift from survival values to self-expression values when these societies move from industrial to post-industrial economies.

Inglehart’s research shows that a key component of this transformation is the polarization between materialist and post-materialist values. That is, a cultural shift is occurring among generations who have grown up in an environment where survival is taken for granted. In these cases, self-expression values place higher
priority on such issues as environmental protection, diversity, and tolerance (including towards gays and foreigners), teaching such values to children, increased interpersonal trust, and increased demand by people for participation in economic and political decision-making.

Given the significance of these findings, the analysis of Turkish society begins by expanding the Inglehart-Welzel map from the last two waves to all waves of WVS. The resulting map (Figure 1) displays a vivid picture of trends along the survival/self-expression and traditional/secular-rational values for Turkey and some EU member states.

The values map shows a general trend in the selected EU countries moving from survival to self-expression and traditional to secular-rational values since 1981. Spain, which joined the EU in 1986, clearly shows movement in these directions over a 25–year period. The Dutch and French are even further down the self-expression

![Figure 1. Values Map. Source: European Values Survey (1981) and World Values Survey (Waves 1990-2005).]
Changing Values in Turkey

and secular-rational values line. The British and Italian data show progress along self-expression values while holding fairly steady in the mid-range of traditional/secular-rational values. The Czechs, who represent one of the newest members of the EU, display strong secular-rational values with a mix of survival/self-expression values. The two countries that display strong traditional values and strong survival values are Poland and Turkey. In both countries secular values are not found even though Poland was ruled under a communist system for four decades and Turkey has had a laicist political system since 1923. Furthermore, in both cases values associated with economic and physical survival dominate. Results from Turkey confirm Kalacuoğlu’s findings on voter realignment in Turkey since 1994 that indicate that the entire electorate shifted to the right of the ideological spectrum. This observation is further confirmed by data obtained from the WVS across five waves, shown in Figure 2.

Religious Practices and Attitudes in Turkey

Religiosity is measured through different questions in the WVS. Figure 3 shows results for Turkey over five WVS waves. An analysis of variance indicates that there are significant ($p<.05$) changes in means over the waves for each of the values;
except for “confidence in mosque,” there is no clear pattern in institutional (confidence or attendance) or personal religious indicators. The 1990 wave indicates lower aggregate religiosity in Turkey; the 1995 wave indicates a return to more religiosity, with an anomalous increase in mosque attendance by women. Finally, there is a mixture of changes in the latest two waves indicating a decreased intensity of religious adherence.

In light of the mixed nature of the religiosity indicators and the unique interactions of religion, gender, and politics in Turkey, religiosity factors were derived from the indicators illustrated above. Figure 4 illustrates the shifts in mean values of religiosity over the various waves of the WVS. Results illustrate a profound shift

**Figure 3.** Indicators of Religiosity in Turkey (Mean Values).

**Figure 4.** Religiosity by Wave (1 = least and –1 = most).
Changing Values in Turkey

Towards more intense religiosity in 1995 (measured by importance of God) and a drift back towards less religiosity by 2007 showing similar association with the attendance and gender measure.

Religiosity Factors for Turkey

Often, studies have used attendance at religious services as an instrumental variable for religiosity. As recognized in more recent studies, this practice is generally flawed. It is particularly flawed for societies such as Turkey’s, which have a complicated mix of religious beliefs and practices as well as traditional Islam’s restriction against women’s participation in public religious life. In light of the complex nature of religiosity in Turkey, a factor analysis was conducted to reduce a variety of features of religiosity into a manageable number of variables. Using principal axis factoring (which is more robust to challenges of normality than maximum-likelihood) and a promax rotation (which allows for correlated factors), an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the questions provided in the WVS that touch on religious practices and importance. Figure 5 provides results of the factor analysis.

As these results demonstrate, the derivation of two factors for religiosity is particularly important for Turkey, as the difference in beliefs and practice is apparent. Turkish religiosity, as that of many Muslim cultures, is bifurcated around issues of gender and practice. The unique variances labeled on the lines connecting the latent variables with observed responses show factor loadings. This shows the direction and size of unique correlations to the underlying concept. The double-headed arrow linking both factors illustrates the 0.24 correlation between the factors.

Figure 5. Pattern Loadings of Religiosity Factors.
In order to allow ease of interpretation and to adjust for skewed results reflecting the high average level of religious belief in Turkey, the variables for questions asking respondents about the importance of God and the importance of religion in their lives were transformed by taking the natural log of the scores and aligning the scales to reflect low scores with intense religiousness. To account for the dramatic effect of gender on attendance, two separate observed variables for attendance were used: one for male attendance and another for female; in all waves except 1995 female attendance is inversely related to other indicators of religious activity and belief.

The factor analysis function in SPSS (Statistics Package for Social Sciences) derives new compound variables from the pattern loadings shown in Figure 5 above. Table 1 provides regression coefficients for religiosity. The latent factors are labeled as Import of God (importance of God) and Attend-Gender (attendance and gender) religiosity.

As one can see from both the pattern loadings in Figure 5 and the factor regression coefficients in Table 1, both factors are centered at 0 with a scale from -2 being perfectly religious to +2 being an indicator of a non-religious person. The second factor, attendance and gender, allows for the inclusion of traditional women who are both religious and do not attend mosque more frequently than on religious holidays. The male scores for the attendance and gender factor are very closely correlated with the importance of God indicator; the female scores are less closely aligned with those scores as female attendance is less closely aligned with religiosity than it is with men.

To provide further insight into the changing relationship between the factors and other indicators of religiosity the correlations of the two factors with the other religion questions over the past four waves of the WVS are given in Figures 6 and 7.

Results in Figure 6 show the diminishing relationship between the gender and attendance-based religiosity and other indicators of religious belief. By the 2005 wave, the confidence in churches factor (religious leadership, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) had all but faded in any relationship with the factor derived from institutional attendance controlled for gender. In contrast, the table below shows the persistent relationship between the importance of God factor and the various indicators from which it is composed. All the correlations are significant (*p*<.05) across all the waves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Factor Regression Coefficients for Religiosity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor Regression Coefficients (Bartlett Regression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important child qualities: religious faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence: Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ln (relig imp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ln (god_imp_)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attend_by male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attend_by female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures 6 and 7 show the changes in the relationship between religion indicators and the attendance-driven factor, while the relationship between the importance of God factor and its constituents are consistent in its correlations but varied in its magnitude.

Next, the relationship between religiosity and traditional-secular and survival/self-expression values was examined, given how Turkey stood apart from other EU countries on these scales, shown in Figure 1 above. Figures 8 and 9 provide the results of these correlations.

Figures 6 and 7 show the changes in the relationship between religion indicators and the attendance-driven factor, while the relationship between the importance of God factor and its constituents are consistent in its correlations but varied in its magnitude.

Next, the relationship between religiosity and traditional-secular and survival/self-expression values was examined, given how Turkey stood apart from other EU countries on these scales, shown in Figure 1 above. Figures 8 and 9 provide the results of these correlations.

**Values**

Religious beliefs and practices are part of the observed variables used by Welzel and Inglehart to estimate their factors for traditional-secular values. What is interesting in Figure 8 is the diminished relationship between attendance-based religiosity and
the traditional-secular measure. The correlations are positive because both the Inglehart-Welzel measure of traditional-secular and this study’s measure of religiosity scale the measures in the following way: Religious/Traditional — Nonreligious/Secular. The positive correlation means that people who are more religious are more likely to also be traditional.

Results in Figure 9 indicate a very weak relationship between this study’s measures of religiosity and the Welzel-Inglehart measure of survival/self-expression values. The correlations are only significant in the 2000 wave. Interestingly, the relationship between religiosity and survival/self-expression flips in the 2000 wave, for which there is data confirming earlier observations in Figure 1. Speculatively, the flip may be because of the survival/self-expression scores for secular men in particular.

![Figure 8. Religiosity by Traditional-Secular.](image)

![Figure 9. Religiosity by Survival-/Self-Expression.](image)
who were affected by the financial crisis of 2000–2001 and also represent most of the nonreligious individuals in the attendance-based measure.

Social Tolerance and Religiosity in Turkey over Four Waves of the WVS

As with other relationships with religiosity discussed in this study, the relationship between religiosity and intolerance seems to have peaked in 1994. Using a scale derived from responses to a series of questions regarding the desirability of a neighbor from one of several categories, some gauge of social tolerance is obtained and tested against a respondent’s religiosity. The question asked of respondents is whether they would not want to have a member of certain groups as neighbors. The five groups indicated in Figure 10 were included. The survey dataset codes affirmative responses as 1 and negative responses as 2. The responses to the groups below were summed to get the intolerance (Intol) variable. Hence, lower values are associated with more intense intolerance and higher values with tolerance.

Results provide a look at both the means of the constituent groups for the intolerance variables and also the overall mean of intolerance for each wave. There has not been a clear pattern of greater tolerance in Turkey. Instead, there was a period of greater tolerance in 1990, followed by a retrenchment and a slow return to slightly higher levels of tolerance.

Interestingly, the movement in the tolerance means parallels that of the importance of God religiosity factor but not so much the practice-driven attendance-based religiosity measure. The results of a simple Pearson correlation test for each of the waves reinforces observations of Scheepers et al. on the importance of measuring different dimensions of religiosity. The correlations in Table 2 show a steady relationship between the importance of God religiosity factor and tolerance. The pattern of positive correlations means the more religious an individual, the less tolerant

Figure 10. Intolerance in Turkey.
(s)he seems to become. Attendance-gender driven religiosity, on the other hand, shows no correlation only in the 1990 wave, and associations hover around the threshold of statistical significance in the remaining waves.

Next, the relationships between intolerance and the two measures of religiosity were explored using a series of regression models, which control for several covariates of social tolerance and religiosity as well as the difference in main effects for each wave. The final model tests the null hypothesis that there has been no change in the relationship between religiosity and intolerance during the four waves included in this analysis. Grand-mean centered interaction terms were used to discover changes in the slope of religiosity terms over the waves. This is in keeping with standard practice to avoid problems of multicollinearity. The data are presented in Table 3 using standardized coefficients to enable easier comparisons of the relative magnitude of each independent variable’s coefficient.

In all three models, self-positioning on the political scale, educational attainment, and income all have statistically significant coefficients. They all move in the direction expected by the literature on social tolerance and post-materialist values. By model 3, one standard deviation shift rightward in political self-alignment is associated with a 0.107 standard deviation decline in social tolerance. Inversely, increased education and increased income are both associated with improvements in social tolerance. In model 3, controlling for differential slopes among the religiosity indicators in addition to the demographics, the standardized coefficient for education is 0.23. The standardized coefficients for the effects of income are much lower, 0.09, but significant at $p<0.05$.

What is interesting from the demographics variables is that in model 1, with the attendance gender-based indicator omitted, men (the reference case) tend to be less tolerant than women. A 0.043 shift in the intercept for women is observed in model 1, with smaller, non-significant shifts in the other two models when the gender-attendance religiosity is included and mediates the gender effect.

The importance of God indicator does have a strong and changing relationship with social tolerance. However, it is not a linear relationship, as the association intensifies significantly between waves 1 (1990) and 2 (1995), then by wave 4 (2005) seems to be returning to the same levels as wave 1. In model 1, the importance of God has a significant positive standardized coefficient of 0.19, indicating that in aggregate over the waves an increase in religiousness is associated with social intolerance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Religiosity and Tolerance Correlations by Wave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of God Religiosity (−2=very religious, 2=nonreligious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Attendance-Based Religiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**=*p&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The addition of slope differences (the interaction terms) for each of the waves allows for the examination of change in the relationship of the importance of God religiosity and tolerance over time. What the model 3 standardized coefficients indicate, similar to the correlations in the table above, is that the effect of this form of religiosity does indeed change between waves. The reference slope from wave 1 is 0.125. The wave 2 interaction term has a significant standardized coefficient of 0.079, indicating the slope is 0.079 greater in wave 2 than in wave 1. Likewise, the slope in the wave 3 interaction term is 0.053, indicating a 0.178 increase in tolerance for each standard deviation shift toward intensified religiosity in that wave. Finally, by the 2005-2007 wave, the difference term, 0.024, is no longer significantly different from that of wave 1.

The gender-attendance religiosity variable is more difficult to interpret in its relationship to social tolerance. For men, the gender-attendance variable is closely correlated to the importance of God indicator, while for women, the relationship between faith and attendance is more ambiguous. The data shows that women who are both very devout and traditional, and those who are casually observant, tend to only go to mosque on holidays. The survey conducted in December-January 1995-1996 provided a strong break from that pattern, with many more religious women reporting frequent mosque attendance. Further complicating analysis is the suppression effect that high correlation of the attendance-gender indicator has with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Tolerance by Religion- Standardized Model Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1, R²:2.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beta          Sig.          Beta          Sig.          Beta          Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept     4.96          0            5.00          0            5.04          0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex           0.043         .008          0.028         .411          0.023         .489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-positioning in political scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest educational level attained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale of incomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of God and religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-attendance-based religiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave 3 dummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave 4 dummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave 5 dummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave3_impgod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave4_impgod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave5_impgod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave3_attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave4_attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wave5_attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y=INTOL, N=3129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
importance of God indicator for men (0.9), while for women it has a much lower correlation.

While interpretation of these coefficients is difficult, insight can still be gleaned from the changes in standardized coefficients between the models. The attendance-gender variable, when used with the importance of God variable, measures the relationship between religious women and social tolerance. In model 2, the slope of gender-attendance religiosity is confounded by the changes in slope over the waves that are revealed in model 3. In model 3, the reference wave’s (1990) standardized slope of gender-attendance is a surprising −0.071, which indicates that social tolerance increased among women who were more religious but less frequently attended mosque services than their peers with average education and political and economic characteristics. That unique effect weakened over the next two waves, and the 2005-2007 wave indicates a significant (p=0.021) direct association between intolerance and attendance-gender, with a slope of 0.06. Whatever the unique circumstances that existed in the reference 1990 wave concerning privately religious women seems to have faded by 2005.

Conclusions

Analysis in this study clearly shows that the Turkish public has become more conservative (traditional on the Inglehart-Welzel factor of the traditional-secular/rational scale) during the period of 1995 to 2005. The findings indicate that this is not a phenomenon that started with election of the AKP in 2002. It is a trend that can be traced to 1995 and has intensified toward more conservatism since then. That is, while the Turkish public has not become more religious during the last six years, religiosity has become more apparent and visible during the AKP’s rule. This confirms findings of others, such as Esmer’s and Kalaycıoğlu and Çarkoğlu’s studies in 2009, respectively. At the same time, a slight but significant shift in survival-self expression values was observed: a regressive shift from 1990 to 2000 followed by a slight return toward more self-expression in 2005. However, Turkish performance on these scales is far below levels observed in EU countries with the exception of Poland. These findings support Kalaycıoğlu’s voter realignment hypothesis, which maintains that since 1994 the Turkish electorate as a bloc has moved to the right of the political spectrum. Such a trend makes it easier for parties like the AKP to capture these conservative-leaning voters.

With respect to the Inglehart-Welzel values map, it was found that self-positioning on the political scale, educational attainment, and income all have significant coefficients across the four waves. They all move in the direction expected by the literature on social tolerance and post-materialist values. It was also observed that religiosity is a complex matter for Turks and shows significant variation based on gender.

The findings show a strong but tapering association between the importance of God religiosity and tolerance. The pattern of positive correlations means the more
religious an individual is the less tolerant (s)he seems to become. The attendance-gender driven religiosity, on the other hand, shows a strong reversed correlation in the 1990 wave, and then associations taper to hovering around the threshold of statistical significance until the last wave, where religiosity is correlated with intolerance. Results from model 1 demonstrate that there is a significant difference in this relationship based on gender. Men tend to be less tolerant than women. Yet there is more to this than meets the eye. The gender-attendance religiosity is more difficult to interpret in its relationship to social tolerance. For men, the gender-attendance variable is closely correlated to the importance of God indicator, while for women the relationship between faith and attendance is more ambiguous. Women who are both very devout and traditional, and those who are casually observant, may only go to mosque during holidays. Further complicating analysis is the suppression effect high correlation of the attendance-gender indicator has with the importance of God indicator for men (0.9), while for women it has almost no correlation.

While there is a persistent correlation between the importance of God measure of religiosity and intolerance, the effects of religiosity on intolerance appears to be returning to the lower level of correlation observed in 1990. There was a weaker correlation between religiosity and intolerance in 2005 wave than in the previous two waves. The latest wave also showed the highest level of social tolerance, along with lower levels of importance of religiosity than in the previous two waves. Two reinforcing phenomena seem to be occurring here: (1) Turkish society is getting slightly more tolerant while becoming more religious, and (2) the relationship between belief in God religiosity and social tolerance is weakening.

The findings here suggest that Turkish society is far from values observed in many EU member states with respect to religiosity and Inglehart and Welzel’s values map. Such findings certainly raise questions concerning implications of increased conservatism and religiosity for Turkey’s future socioeconomic and political development as well as its foreign relations. Moreover, causal factors behind these results need further analysis (e.g., urbanization, political and economic crisis, external shocks like the war on terror). Much of these questions are beyond the scope of this paper. However, it can be concluded that given the trends observed in this study Turkish voters are likely to continue being attracted to political parties like the AKP for the foreseeable future. This trend fits the policy priorities of the current AKP government quite well. Success of the AKP, or any other similar party, in capturing and keeping this support would depend on the party’s ability to provide sufficient response to their aspirations.

Notes

1. For examples of these studies see Ali Çarkoğlu and Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, Türkiye’de Siyasetin Yeni Yüzü [The New Face of Politics in Turkey] (Istanbul: Open Society Institute, June 2006); Ali Çarkoğlu and Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, The Rising Tide of Conservatism in Turkey (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Binnaz Toprak, Türkiye’de Farklı Olmak: Din ve Muhafazakârlık Ekseninde Ötekileştirilenler[To Be Different in Turkey: Those Who have become “Others” on the Axis of
Religion and Conservatism] (Istanbul: Open Society Institute, 2008); Binnaz Toprak and Ali Çarkoğu, Değişen Türkiye’de Din Toplum ve Siyaset [Religion, Society, and Politics in a Changing Turkey] (Istanbul: TESEV, 2006); Yılmaz Esmer, World Values Survey: Turkey Wave No. 5 (Ann Arbor, MI: World Values Survey, 2007); Yılmaz Esmer, “Radikalizm ve Asırcılık,” [Radicalism and Extremism], Milliyet (Turkish daily), May 31, 2009; Binnaz Toprak et al., Türkiye’de Farklı Olmak [To be Different in Turkey] (Istanbul: The Open society Institute and Bosphorus University, 2008).


3. Ibid., p. 95.

4. Ibid., p. 96.


6. By “narrow perspective on social reality” the authors refer to close-visioned values, a difference between differentiated (open-minded) and undifferentiated (closed-minded) styles of thinking, and construct a compound measure to capture the difference. See Konig et al. (2000), “Explaining the Relationship Between Christian Religion and Anti-Semitism in the Netherlands,” pp. 375, 379.

7. Ibid., p. 383.


14. Data for World Values Survey are generally referred to in four waves (1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005). However, the initial study that took place during 1981 was called the European Values Survey. This study uses data from all five data bases and therefore refers to them as waves 1 through 5.


16. Ibid.


