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The Changing Face of Turkish Politics: Turkey's July 2007 Parliamentary Elections

Dr. Banu Eligür

On July 22, 2007, Turkey held early parliamentary elections, as a result of which the ruling Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*—AKP) retained its majority. Because the AKP has roots in political Islam, most analyses of the election results so far have concentrated on the Islamist vs. secular debate—and, related to this, the question whether the AKP's performance in government might make it a suitable model of governance for the Muslim world. Although the issue of secularism (along with increased PKK terrorism) dominated the political parties' 2007 election campaigns, this Brief argues that the AKP's tremendous success in the 2007 parliamentary elections cannot be explained by focusing exclusively on the Islamist vs. secular debate. The success of the AKP must also be attributed to the socioeconomic concerns of the Turkish public, particularly the poor segments of the population—and the AKP's strong organizational party networks, which have enabled the party to satisfy poor voters' socioeconomic demands. This Brief will demonstrate how the results of these parliamentary elections (shown in Table 1, below) have changed the face of Turkish politics in an unprecedented way.

The AKP secured its victory despite the party's mixed performance during its four-and-a-half-year rule. The party's record was especially poor in dealing with the PKK (the Kurdistan Workers' Party, also known as *Kongra-Gel*), and the threat and reality of terrorism; with the high unemployment rate and the increased crime rate; and with Turkey's mounting foreign debt. The party's efforts to redefine secularism in Turkey were also controversial. But the AKP was clearly successful in responding to the socioeconomic needs and demands of the poor. The social success of the AKP undermined the appeal of the Center-Right parties, such as the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*—DYP), and thereby broadened the electoral base of the AKP beyond simple Islamism.

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The opinions and findings expressed in this essay are those of the author exclusively, and do not reflect the official positions or policies of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies or Brandeis University.

Table I. Results of the July 2007 Turkish Parliamentary Elections

Party	Percentage of Vote	Seats in Parliament
<i>Justice and Development Party (AKP)</i>	46.6	341
<i>Republican People's Party (CHP)</i>	20.8	98
<i>Nationalist Action Party (MHP)</i>	14.3	70
<i>Democratic Society Party (DTP)^a</i>	2.11	20
<i>Democratic Left Party (DSP)^b</i>	---	13
Independents ^c	0.24	5
<i>Great Unity Party (BBP)</i>	0.11	1
<i>Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP)</i>	0.15	1
Other	15.69	---
Total	100.00	549 ^d

Source: [The Higher Election Board](#).

- a. This figure shows the vote share of the 20 elected DTP parliamentarians only.
- b. The CHP and the DSP formed an election coalition; there is no data available showing the DSP's vote share in the 2007 elections.
- c. These figures do not include the vote share of the CHP parliamentarian who resigned from his party and has become an independent parliamentarian.
- d. One seat is vacant on account of one MHP parliamentarian's death in a traffic accident following the 2007 elections.

The Prelude to the July 2007 Parliamentary Elections

The July parliamentary elections were originally scheduled for November 2007. But the crisis in Parliament surrounding the election of Turkey's next president, which was originally scheduled for May, resulted in early elections. According to the Turkish constitution, Parliament needs a quorum of 367, or two-thirds of its members, to hold a presidential election. Once Parliament votes, a candidate must receive the votes of two-thirds of all members (that is, 367) in order to win election in either of the first two rounds of voting. But only a simple majority vote of 267 is needed if there is a third round. In April 2007, the AKP, in control of a 363-seat majority in the parliament, proposed to elect a "religious" president¹—one who would represent Islamic values—without first securing the agreement of opposition parties whose support would be needed to obtain the four additional votes required. The nomination on April 24 of Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül as the AKP's candidate for the presidency by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (who was also chairman of the AKP) led to mass demonstrations by the secular segment of the population, protesting Gül's candidacy.

The first round of voting took place in Parliament on April 27, but failed owing to the absence of a quorum; opposition parliamentarians had refused to attend. That same evening, the Turkish Armed Forces issued a strong statement on its Web site, noting that the military had been "the staunch defender of secularism. When necessary, it will display its attitudes and actions very clearly. No one should doubt that."² The next day, unlike its predecessor the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*—RP) in 1997, the AKP, in the person of spokesman Cemil Çiçek, responded to the implied threat. "[A] military warning against [the AKP]," he declared, "is democratically unacceptable. According to our Constitution, the military chief of staff is responsible to the prime minister."³

On May 1, the Constitutional Court annulled the first round of the presidential election following a petition submitted by the CHP, the largest opposition party,

to the effect that the quorum rule in Parliament had been violated. The AKP, having seen that it would be unable to secure the votes required in Parliament, cognizant of the fact that the Constitution required new elections in the event Parliament could not elect a president in four consecutive rounds, and facing pressure from secular state institutions, political parties, and civil society associations, called for early elections. On May 3, 458 members of the 550-member Parliament voted to hold early elections on July 22.

Despite expectations of low turnout in a summertime election, the participation rate in the 2007 parliamentary elections was quite high: 84.2 percent.⁴ The issue of secularism in Turkey and the matter of increased PKK terrorism, along with concerns about economic stability, played important roles in propelling Turks to vote.

The Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi—AKP)

The AKP succeeded in steadily increasing its vote share while serving as the governing party from 2002 to 2007. This continues a longer-term trend of increasing electoral support for Islamist political parties in Turkish politics, as indicated in the electoral data presented in the Appendix. The AKP received 34.3 percent of the votes in the 2002 parliamentary elections, 41.6 percent in the 2004 municipal elections, and 46.6 percent in the 2007 parliamentary elections. Between the 2002 and 2007 parliamentary elections, the AKP increased its electoral base from nearly 10 million votes to some 16 million.

Despite this success, it should be noted that the AKP's four-and-a-half-year performance was, as noted, decidedly mixed. To begin with, PKK terrorism has dramatically increased since the 2003 Iraqi war—and despite the military's demands, the AKP government refused to take strong measures to combat this threat. Second, unlike previous Center-Right and Center-Left parties, the AKP pursued controversial policies aimed at redefining secularism as represented by the secular-state establishment, including the presidency, the Constitutional Court, the Council of State, the higher education board, and the military. For example, the AKP persistently attempted to, and sometimes successfully changed laws and regulations concerning the status of Islam in both education and public spaces to favor the Islamist movement.⁵ These efforts intensified the debate over Islamism vs. secularism in Turkish politics.

Furthermore, persistent problems in the Turkish economy continued under AKP rule. Despite positive macroeconomic indicators, such as high GDP growth rates and the reduction of inflation to single digits during the AKP's tenure, the extent to which macroeconomic changes have trickled down to the

microeconomics of the country is questionable.⁶ Turkey's rapid growth rate was driven mainly by a massive inflow of foreign finance capital attracted by significantly high interest rates.⁷ The relative abundance of foreign exchange led to overvaluation of the Turkish lira, which in turn led to an import boom in both consumption and investment.⁸ This resulted in a dramatic increase in the country's external debt, from \$130.1 billion in 2002 to \$206.5 billion by the end of 2006—the latter figure equal to half the total external debt that Turkey had accumulated over the previous 83 years.⁹ Domestic debt, which was \$91.7 billion in 2002, increased to \$173.1 billion in 2006.¹⁰ Turkey's increased dependence on the flow of foreign capital made the Turkish economy more vulnerable to fluctuations in global markets. Thus, macroeconomic growth did not automatically translate into socioeconomic development.¹¹

The Turkish economy is also characterized by a persistent unemployment problem (over 10 percent). Unemployment among urban youth is even higher, around 26 percent.¹² According to the OECD, long-term unemployment¹³ in Turkey (39.6 percent) is higher than the total for the OECD (32.8 percent).¹⁴ Turkey also has the lowest gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (\$7,698), the lowest net national income per capita (\$7,196), and the lowest health spending per capita (\$586) among OECD members.¹⁵ Despite some improvements, 20.5 percent of the population of Turkey lives under the poverty line (down from 26.9 percent in 2002),¹⁶ and the distribution of wealth remains unequal (20 percent of the population of Turkey enjoys 44.4 percent of the country's income).¹⁷ According to the Turkish Statistics Institute, only 30.1 percent of the population is satisfied with its household income.¹⁸

In addition to these persisting economic problems, the crime rate in Turkey significantly increased under AKP rule.¹⁹ Given this record, the AKP's success in increasing its vote share in the 2007 elections was particularly surprising to some sectors of the Turkish public. The secular segment of the population, represented by the CHP,²⁰ and the nationalists, represented by the MHP, were especially shocked by the results.

However, the strong organizational networks of the AKP enabled it to respond to the demands of the Turkish poor, who were focused on their own social and economic problems. The AKP's ideologically motivated Islamist supporters were by themselves insufficient in number to carry the party to victory. It was the support the party received from poorly educated low-income voters, residing in shantytowns and in rural areas, that provided it with the requisite plurality.²¹

Nearly 65 percent of the Turkish population resides in urban areas.²² Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir accounted for one-

third of registered voters in the 2007 elections.²³ In these cities, the AKP received most of its votes from districts that received migration, particularly since the mid-1980s, from rural Turkey. For example, in Istanbul the AKP received more than 50 percent of the vote in seven such districts. Similarly, the party drew most of its support in Ankara and Izmir from such districts. The AKP also secured significant vote support in a number of provinces in the rural areas of eastern, southeastern, and central Anatolia, the Mediterranean region, and the Black Sea region.²⁴ According to a poll conducted by the Istanbul-based A&G research firm in July 2007, 75.8 percent of respondents who intended to vote for the AKP said they were doing so because the party provided good constituent services during its governance. Only 51.4 percent responded that they would be voting for the AKP because it was the party ideologically closest to their views.²⁵ These results provide further evidence of the expansion of the AKP's appeal beyond the Islamist movement.

Between 2003 and June 2007, the AKP government and its municipalities regularly distributed economic benefits (food, clothing, and financial assistance; health services; scholarships and free schoolbooks) amounting to over 3.3 billion YTL (new Turkish liras).²⁶ Over six million families regularly received food packages amounting to 322 million YTL, along with 4.4 million tons of coal.²⁷ The AKP also reformed the health care system and constructed 270,000 units of community housing for low- and middle-income people in 81 provinces. The party improved the conditions of public-sector workers by increasing their wages and by granting them full-time positions; it also increased scholarships to needy students by 200 percent. On the eve of the elections, the party postponed the rural sector's debt repayment to the state and increased the rates of state subsidies for certain agricultural products.²⁸ The AKP thus provided some tangible economic incentives for some rural voters.

The appeal of the AKP may also have been broadened, inadvertently, by the series of talks delivered during the election campaign by Necmettin Erbakan, honorary chair of the traditional Islamists' Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*—SP). He condemned the AKP as no longer an Islamist party.²⁹ This may have convinced some secular, conservative, and disaffected voters that the AKP, despite its roots in political Islam, had by this time become a Center-Right party. Despite Erbakan's effort to deny the AKP an Islamist mantle, however, many Islamic brotherhoods and congregations declared that they would vote for the AKP.³⁰ In the end, as was the case in the 2002 elections, a majority of the Islamist segment of the electorate voted for the AKP. Erbakan's Felicity Party received only 2.3 percent of the votes.³¹ The AKP secured the support of Islamists,

the urban poor, and more traditional rural populations in the 2007 election, thus achieving a significant increase in its vote totals.

The Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—CHP)

During its election campaign, the Center-Left CHP party accused the AKP of posing “an Islamist threat.” It also accused AKP ministers and parliamentarians, including Prime Minister Erdoğan, of corruption. But the CHP's elitist understanding of secularism—according to which Turkish society should entirely adopt a Western, liberal lifestyle, leaving only a minimal role for Islam—was at odds with the conservative-Muslim value structure embraced by an important segment of Turkish society. The failure of the CHP to offer a convincing socioeconomic program further contributed to the party's electoral failure. It did not receive any significant support from poor voters.

Nonetheless, the CHP received 20.8 percent of the votes, largely because of the election alliance it formed with the Center-Left Democrat Left Party, the DSP. In the July 2007 polls cited above, 64.6 percent of respondents who declared their support for the CHP said they were doing so because they were worried about the Republic and secularism, while 58.6 percent considered the party ideologically closest to their political views.³² Although Deniz Baykal, chair of the CHP, argued that his party had been successful in the elections, a group of dissidents within the CHP sharply disagreed, pointing to the decline in the number of the party's seats in Parliament, from 178 in 2002 to 99 in 2007 (now 98 as the result of the defection of one parliamentarian who became an independent), and suggested that Baykal should not only resign from his post, but also leave politics.³³ In the coming months, pressures within the CHP for leadership change are likely to increase.

The Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi—MHP)

The right-wing nationalist MHP received over 14 percent of the votes and reentered the parliament after a four-and-a-half-year absence. It should be noted that the party lost its traditional conservative/rural voter base in central and eastern Anatolia and the Black Sea region to the AKP. Yet, compared with the 2002 elections, when it received only 8.4 percent of the votes, the MHP increased its vote share to 14.3 percent in the 2007 elections.³⁴ The rise of PKK terrorism in Turkey and the EU's demands during AKP rule regarding Cyprus and the Armenian issue played important roles in the MHP's achieving this result. During the election campaign, the MHP clearly stated that, once it became the governing party, it would bring an end to PKK terrorism by taking necessary measures as suggested by

the military (e.g., a possible cross-border operation against PKK camps in northern Iraq); and it unequivocally came out against the idea of federation in Turkey. The party also promised that Turkey would not grant any concessions with respect to Cyprus and the Armenian issue in return for EU membership. The MHP's firm stance regarding PKK terrorism and the EU's demands attracted voters who were particularly concerned about the preservation of the Turkish state's unitary character. According to the July 2007 poll cited above, 59.6 percent of respondents who intended to vote for the MHP reported that they were doing so because it would solve the problem of PKK terrorism, while 56.6 percent asserted that the party was ideologically closest to their views.³⁵

The Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi—DTP)

The vote share of the pro-Kurdish DTP (in 2002, the Democratic People's Party/*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*—HADEP) decreased by more than half between 2002 and 2007; from 6.2 percent in the 2002 elections to 3.0 percent in 2007. The DTP fielded 61 candidates—mainly in the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey—of whom only 20 succeeded. In the July 2007 poll, 83.2 percent of respondents who intended to vote for the DTP stated that ideologically the party was closest to their political views.³⁶

The DTP's main competitor in the 2007 elections was the AKP. The success of the latter in the conservative regions of eastern and southeastern Turkey suggests that ethnic Kurdish nationalism, as advocated by the DTP, was less important in influencing voting than Islamic brotherhoods and congregations and local tribal families (*aşiretler*). The AKP's invocation of Islam as a basis for unity and stability in the country strongly attracted the electorate in the eastern and southeastern regions. The AKP, like its predecessor the RP (*Refah Partisi*), supports the idea of introducing a federal system in Turkey, which would make it easy to implement Islamist policies on a regional or provincial basis by eliminating centralized state control over the country. But the AKP's support for the idea of federalism also seems to have appealed to former DTP voters—Kurdish nationalists who seek to establish a Kurdish federation in eastern and southeastern Anatolia. The appeal of the AKP in the eastern and southeastern regions was also strengthened by its efforts to construct roads and bring electricity, aimed at developing these economically backward regions.³⁷

The Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti—DP)

The True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*—DYP), which had changed its name to the (Center-Right) Democrat Party or DP in May 2007, tried and failed to establish an election alliance with the Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*—ANAP) in

order to attract Center-Right votes. Both the ANAP, which was the ruling party for most of the 1980s, and the DYP, the main coalition party in the first half of the 1990s, needed this alliance in order to meet the 10 percent threshold required to enter Parliament. In the 2007 elections, however, the DP received only 5.4 percent of the votes, causing the party's chair, Mehmet Ağar, to resign from his post.³⁸ The 2007 elections thus marked the elimination of the Center-Right from Turkish politics, a development spurred by the appeal of the AKP to conservative and rural voters, the Center-Right's traditional support base.

Conclusion

The elimination of the traditional Center-Right as a factor in Turkish politics is of potentially historic significance for the future development of Turkey. It was the Center-Right that simultaneously supported conservative values, secularism, and the unitary character of the Turkish state. The Center-Right has now been displaced by the AKP, which combines traditional conservative and Islamist appeals with economic programs that appeal to the urban and rural poor.

Similarly, the Center-Left (as represented by the CHP), by focusing on the secularism vs. anti-secularism debate, alienated the conservative segment of Turkey's electorate and failed to address the socioeconomic demands of poor voters. The AKP was thus able to broaden its support among the previously Center-Left electorate as well.

Only the right-wing MHP increased its vote share as a result of dissatisfaction on the part of the nationalist, Center-Right, and some Center-Left segments of the electorate with the AKP. MHP voters responded to the inaction of the AKP in response to PKK terrorism and its perceived failure to protect Turkey's interests with respect to Cyprus and the Armenian issue in the face of pressure from the EU. During its four-and-a-half years of governance, the AKP abandoned the Turkish state's traditionally firm policies on all of these issues and instead pursued more conciliatory policies. Those segments of the electorate who were particularly concerned about the unitary character of the Turkish state and who were more uncompromising with respect to PKK terrorism, Cyprus, and the Armenian issue thus were attracted by the MHP's firm stance.

The mixed economic performance of the AKP could have alienated the laboring class and rural voters. But in the pre-election period, the party successfully addressed the concerns of this portion of the electorate by providing direct economic assistance. The AKP targeted poorer voters by providing them with continuous financial assistance, which in turn left this segment of the population dependent on the party's governance. One of the major challenges to the new

AKP government, therefore, will be to sustain these economic subsidies without aggravating macroeconomic problems, such as foreign and internal debt. The party will also have to deal with both the nationalist MHP and the Center-Left CHP as opposition parties. The MHP firmly opposes AKP policies regarding crime and the economy, as well as its policies with respect to PKK terrorism and the Cyprus and Armenian issues. Both the MHP and the CHP, despite differences in their ideological origins, support the secular and unitary character of the Turkish state. These are issues likely to increase the political salience of Turkish nationalism and questions of Turkish identity vis-à-vis political Islam, Kurdish nationalism, neighboring states, and the West. And as these issues grow in importance, so will the importance of the Turkish military for politics.

The military (legally the guardian of the secular and unitary character of the Turkish state) has traditionally played an active role in Turkish politics: There have been three direct military interventions (in 1960, 1971, and 1980) and one “soft” military coup (in 1997) in Turkish political history. As the AKP has roots in political Islam, some analysts regard the military as its main opposition. It remains to be seen, therefore, how the military will respond to the public’s increased support for the AKP. Nonetheless, while the likelihood of a challenge to the AKP from the military might have been diminished by the 2007 elections, the parliamentary opposition to the party’s rule seems to have increased.

Endnotes

1. See Turkish Parliament chair and AKP parliamentarian Bülent Arınç, “Dindar bir cumhurbaşkanı seçeceğiz” [We will elect a religious president], *Milliyet*, April 16, 2007.
2. “Military issues harsh warning over secularism,” *Turkish Daily News*, April 27, 2007.
3. “Government lashes out at the military,” *Turkish Daily News*, April 28, 2007.
4. The participation rate in the November 2002 parliamentary elections, for example, was 79 percent.
5. For a detailed examination of these efforts, see Banu Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey (1980–2002): An Application and Revision of the Political Process Model* (unpublished PhD dissertation) (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University, 2006).
6. Interview with Professor Can Erbil, Department of Economics, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, September 17, 2007.
7. Interest rates in Turkey are over 10 percent, while they range between 3 and 4 percent in global markets. See [Eriç Yeldan, “Patterns of Adjustment under the Age of Finance: The Case of Turkey as a Peripheral Agent of Neoliberal Globalization” \(University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute, Working Paper Series, no. 126, February 2007\)](#).
8. The gap in Turkey’s foreign trade balance increased from -\$15.4 billion in 2002 to -\$53.9 billion in 2006. Ankara Ticaret Odası, “Aylık Ekonomik Görünüm, Ağustos 2007” [Ankara Trade Chamber, Monthly Economic Profile, August 2007] (Ankara: ATO, 2007), 15.
9. The Turkish lira appreciated by 40 percent in real terms against the U.S. dollar and by 25 percent against the euro. As of September 2007, Turkey’s total external debt stock was \$213.5 billion. See Yeldan, “Patterns of Adjustment under the Age of Finance,” 4-7; Yeldan, “Turkey: Crisis and Beyond—A ‘New’ Government, with ‘Old’ Policies, and yet under ‘Altered’ Global Conditions” (Amherst College, September 2007, mimeographed). See also [Undersecretariat of Treasury](#).
10. As of September 2007, the domestic debt of Turkey was \$192.2 billion.
11. Yeldan, “Patterns of Adjustment under the Age of Finance,” 14-16; interview with Professor Erbil.
12. Yeldan, “Patterns of Adjustment under the Age of Finance,” 14. See also Turkish Statistics Institute (TÜİK), Household Labor Force Surveys.
13. Must be defined as persons unemployed for 12 months or more as a percentage of total unemployed.
14. *OECD Factbook 2007: Economic, Environmental, and Social Statistics* (OECD, 2007).
15. These figures were as of 2005. See *OECD Factbook 2007*.
16. The poverty line in Turkey was 26.9 percent in 2002. TÜİK, “2005 Yoksulluk Çalışması Sonuçları” [2005 Results of Poverty Study], *TÜİK Haber Bülteni* no. 208 (December 26, 2006). For the year 2005, the Turkish Statistics Institute announced that the poverty line for per household of four persons was 487 YTL (\$374.6).
17. TÜİK, “2005 Yoksulluk Çalışması Sonuçları;” TÜİK, “2005 Gelir Dağılımı Sonuçları” [2005 Distribution of Income Results], *TÜİK Haber Bülteni* no. 207 (December 25, 2006).
18. Two percent are very satisfied, 28.1 percent satisfied, 25.5 percent neither satisfied nor not satisfied, 31.6 percent not satisfied, and 12.8 percent not satisfied at all. See *ibid*.
19. For example, the Turkish Directorate of General Security reported that between the years 2005 and 2006, incidents of purse snatching (*kapkaç*) increased by 70 percent, particularly in big cities like Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. “Türkiye’nin asayiş raporu korkuttu” [Turkey’s crime report is frightening], *Milliyet*, July 2, 2007.
20. Meral Tamer, “CHP’ye oy veren seçmenin duyguları” [Feelings of the electorate who voted for the CHP], *Milliyet*, July 25, 2007.
21. “A&G’nin Başkamı Adil Gür: Muhtıra olmasa da AKP bu oyu alırdı” [Chair of the A&G Adil Gür: The AKP would receive this vote share even if the military did not issue a warning], *Milliyet*, July 24, 2007.
22. The eight most populated provinces in Turkey are, in descending order, Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Adana, Konya, Antalya, and Mersin. Those cities made up only 44 percent (nearly 19 million) of registered voters in the 2007 elections. The AKP, except in Izmir and Mersin, ranked first by receiving the following vote percentages in the 2007 general elections: Istanbul, 45.16 percent; Ankara, 47.51 percent; Izmir, 30.5 percent; Bursa, 51 percent; Adana, 36.88 percent; Konya, 65.3 percent; Antalya, 34.02 percent; and Mersin, 27.15 percent. In the 2007 general elections, the CHP ranked first in Izmir by receiving 35.45 percent of the votes, while the

MHP ranked first in Mersin by receiving 30.5 percent of the votes. [See the Higher Election Board Web site.](#)

23. The total number of registered voters in these three provinces was 12,872,739. [See the Higher Election Board Web site.](#)

24. Based on data available at the [Higher Election Board Web site.](#)

25. “Oylar kime, neden verildi” [To whom and why the votes were given], *Milliyet*, July 26, 2007.

26. In August 2007, the dollar /YTL exchange rate was approximately 1:1.33.

27. “Yaz ortasında kömür yardımı” [Coal assistance in the mid-summer], *Milliyet*, July 3, 2007; “AKP’den yardım yağmuru!” [Assistance shower from the AKP], *Milliyet*, July 16, 2007; and “İşte AKP yardımlarının faturası” [Cost of AKP’s assistance], *Milliyet*, July 21, 2007.

28. “AKP’nin 10 altın vuruşu” [The AKP’s ten golden blows], *Milliyet*, July 24, 2007.

29. Devrim Sevimay’s interview with Necmettin Erbakan: “AKP seçilse de dağılır” [The AKP dissolves, even if it is elected], *Milliyet*, July 2, 2007; “Saadet’ten AKP’lilere: Beyaz imam hatipliler” [From the Felicity Party to the AKP parliamentarians: You are white *imam-hatips*], *Milliyet*, July 5, 2007.

30. Ömer Erbil, “Tarikatler, dini cemaatler ve 22 Temmuz 1-5” [The Islamic brotherhoods and congregations and July 22], *Milliyet*, July 10–14, 2007.

31. The SP received 782,204 votes. [See the Higher Election Board Web site.](#)

32. “Oylar kime, neden verildi” [To whom and why the votes were given], *Milliyet*, July 26, 2007.

33. “Sol ağır yenilgiyi tartışıyor” [Left discusses the heavy defeat], *Milliyet*, July 24, 2007; “Muhafiflerden sert çıkış” [Dissidents’ firm opposition], *Milliyet*, July 25, 2007.

34. “Oy depolarında hüsran” [Disappointment in ballot depots], *Milliyet*, July 23, 2007.

35. “Oylar kime, neden verildi” [To whom and why the votes were given].

36. Ibid.

37. Taha Akyol, “Sandıktan çıkan mesajlar” [Messages that came out of the ballot boxes], *Milliyet*, July 23, 2007; Güneri Civaoglu, “Baykal’ın bekleyiş nedeni” [Baykal’s reason for waiting], *Milliyet*, July 24, 2004.

38. The DP received 1,898,873 votes. [See the Higher Election Board Web site.](#)

* Weblinks are available in the PDF version found at www.brandeis.edu/centers/crown

Appendix General Election Results, 1983–2007

	1983	1987	1991	1995	1999	2002	2007
Party	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Center-Right							
ANAP	45.1	36.3	24.0	19.6	13.2	5.1	---
DYP/DP ^a	---	19.1	27.0	19.2	12.0	9.5	5.4
MDP	23.3	---	---	---	---	---	---
Center-Left							
CHP ^b	---	---	---	10.7	8.7	19.4	20.8
DSP	---	8.5	10.8	14.6	22.2	1.2	---
SHP	---	24.8	20.8	---	---	---	---
HP	30.5	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nationalist							
MÇP/MHP	---	2.9	---	8.2	18.0	8.4	14.3
Kurdish							
HADEP/DTP	---	---	---	4.2	4.7	6.2	3.0
Islamist							
RP ^c	---	7.2	16.9	21.4	---	---	---
FP	---	---	---	---	15.4	---	---
SP	---	---	---	---	---	2.5	2.3
AKP (moderate)	---	---	---	---	---	34.3	46.6

Source: D.I.E., *Statistical Yearbook of Turkey*, 2002 (Ankara: D.I.E., 2003) and the [Higher Election Board](#).

Note: This table does not include vote shares for independent candidates.

Also: In Turkey’s electoral system, an increase in vote share does not necessarily translate into an increase in the number of parliamentary seats. This is especially the case as the number of parties enters the parliament by meeting the 10 percent threshold.

a. In May 2007, the True Path Party (DYP) changed its name and became the Democrat Party (DP).

b. In the 2007 elections, the CHP and the DSP formed an election alliance.

c. The RP, the MÇP, and the Reformist Democrat Party (*Islahatçı Demokrat Parti*—IDP) formed an alliance in 1991 in order to meet the 10 percent threshold necessary to enter the parliament. The coalition was dissolved in the aftermath of the 1991 elections.



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