

THE EFFECTS OF COMMON VALUES ON EUROPEAN PEACE

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This project carried out by European Ministry of Turkey and Center of European Union Education and Youth Programs (National Agency <http://www.ua.gov.tr>) under Erasmus + Strategic Partnership for Adult Education Program and expenditures donated by European Commission. However, National Agency and European Commission cannot be hold responsible of the opinions.

CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS

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Stay away from the leaders who pronounce and favor war. No doubt, racism is like a two-sided blade. It, not only encourages the insane, but also narrows his/her mind. How do I know!? Because, I did this. And, I am Caesar!

Emperor Caesar

Racism is man's gravest threat to man - the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.

Abraham J. Heschel

The biggest problem throughout the history of man is the fact that racism is anything but an anomaly.

Erik Hansen

You are the ones who will turn this life into a happy adventure. So, let's use this power for the sake of humanity and democracy, and unite against the nationalism disease. Let's create a new World where there is no discrimination of nation and religion.

Charlie Chaplin

The one who invites to racism is not one of us. The one who fights for racism is not one of us. The one who dies seeking racial superiority is not one of us.

Prophet Mohammed

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INTRODUCTION

The core of racism is “scorning the others.” It is about how we see/interpret our environment, ourselves and others. Violence and some other extreme attitudes are some stages of racism. These may differ from one country to another. For instance, there might be racism against blacks in Europe and racism against whites in Africa.

Despite all the efforts and interventions, racism and xenophobia, and related violence could not be prevented in Europe and other countries.

Therefore, the common values of the religions are high priority. The references of the religions of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are, the verses of holy books of Koran, Bible, Torah, and Psalm, respectively.

In this modern era, humanity greatly needs the common values of these major religions more than before. This project focuses on the major role of common values in preventing racism and violence that are the disgrace of human honor in today’s World. What the common values of the divine religions are, what kind of roles these values may have on shaping the culture of living together, what kind of new values they may generate in order to prevent wicked attitudes such as racism, xenophobia, and violence, and what kind of solutions may help, are of concern of this project.

The aim of the project (CoReVAX) is to identify the common merits/values of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in order to prevent racial segregation, xenophobia and related violence; and introduce the contributions of these values to universal culture, cultural pluralism and EU harmonization process.

The project centers on two aims:

General Purpose: In order to prevent racism, xenophobia, and violence; the common values of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are going to be determined and introduce the contributions of these values to common peace, universal culture, and EU harmonization process.

Special Purpose: In order to prevent racism and violence; publishing brochures, building a website, conducting biblio-therapy sessions, organizing symposiums, conducting conferences, making inservice training, preparing books, arranging excursions.

DEFINITION OF RACISM AND COMMON VALUES

Coexist – Reconcile – Wax (CoReWax)

Sociologists define racism as the “doctrine which reduces social characteristics of people to biological or racial characteristics and claims that a specific race is superior to other races.” (*Turkish Language Society, 2005*)

Alternatively, racism can also be defined as the doctrine which claims that there is a hierarchy among the innate intellectual and cultural development capabilities as well as inequality in value among human groups in terms of feelings, personality and disposition.” (*Büyük Larousse, Racism*)

Racism can be traced back to psychological, economic, demographical and culture elements and even religious influences. (*AnaBritannica, Racism*)

Racism is also defined as “the movement which argues that social groups differentiate based on the hereditary physical characteristics and these characteristics should govern the status and relationship among these groups.” (*Turkish Religious Affairs Foundation, Encyclopedia of Islam, Racism*)

Our goal is to contribute to the studies that are about struggling with racism and xenophobia, by making suggestions and revealing (common) values.



Racism, in simplest definition, is the blindness of conscience, and the lack of empathy and tolerance.

“Racism makes me feel alone.”

“THE ONLY IMPORTANT COLOR IS THE COLOR OF THE SOUL”

Value means abstract measure for the importance of something, the compensation for something, worth, and high and beneficial quality. (Turkish Language Society, Turkish Dictionary. Racism. 2005)

Value is something is considered good, nice, and right in a society’s or an individual’s view or something that is advocated. (Grand Larousse. Racism, 1986)

Value is the fundamental criterion which we use to judge things and see what is right or wrong. The rightness and validity of a value come from the fact that it relies on knowledge and evidence and it has internal consistency and it aims for improvement and it is a source of a beneficial action. Thanks to this extensive background, values acquire universality. (Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN. Hz. Peygamber ve İnsan Yetiştirme Düzeni (Prophet and System for Educating People), DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2015, p. 13.)



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CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS

TURKEY

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TOYEV



2015

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who champions racism is not one of us. Anyone who fights for any racist cause is not one of us. Anyone who dies for any racist cause is not one of us (Muslims).” Prophet Muhammad

Racism and xenophobia as well as the struggle against racism and xenophobia are one of the recurring themes in human history. Such hate crimes against human beings are disgraceful. The struggle against these inhuman acts that make profound impact on individuals and society is of pivotal importance.

Racism is in essence “denigrating those who are not like us.” It is about how we perceive ourselves, our community and others. Our prejudices are what triggers racism. It is translation of prejudices into hate speech. The ensuing violence and other extreme attitudes constitute another phase of racism. Racism may take diverse forms in each country. Thus, there may be racist attitudes against the black people in Europe and against the white people in Africa.

Racism is an inhuman and unethical approach for all intents and purposes as it purports that a person or social group or society is superior to other people, groups or societies solely because his/her race. Racism is one of the key factors which divided societies, destroyed states and sowed seeds of hatred and hostility among people throughout history.

Racism has undergone various changes depending on social, political and economic transformations over time to rear its ugly head in various forms in our time. The underlying causes for this transformation can be listed as sociocultural discrimination, economic, political and legal gaps or problems. As these factors which directly or indirectly lead to racism are amplified to the level of otherizing other people or undermining their dignity or physical bodies, the problem become all the more intricate. In this context, improvements to economic conditions, alignment of political discourse with legal reforms, and implementation of nondiscriminatory policies in all areas are particularly important for the struggle against racism.

Racism, xenophobia and violence have become key problems globally and started to threaten the future of humanity. This suggests that the fight against these problems have certain flaws, which in turn brings to the agenda the search for new solutions. The need to look for a large-scale solution for racist attitudes and violence is obvious. To this end, common values should be utilized to create, expand and internalize an environment of trust on a global scale. Measures should be taken with the awareness that racism is a social epidemic that must be curbed wherever on earth it is seen.

In this context, the Council of Europe has redefined “hate speech” to include racism and xenophobia as well. Accordingly, the Council of Europe defined hate speech as follows:

Hate Speech: all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin. (*Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe R (97) 20*)

Policies developed using social, political and legal instruments of the European Union help to make the is extremely overwhelmed with racism and violence. These problems are no longer local or partial, but have come to threaten the entire humanity.

The need to look for a large-scale solution for racist attitudes and violence is obvious. To this end, common values should be utilized to create, expand and internalize an environment of trust on a global scale.

Measures should be taken with the awareness that racism is a social epidemic that must be curbed wherever on earth it is seen.

The values which endow people with true human qualities and which also support the very fabric of societies can be classified into two groups:

- a) High divine values,
- b) Values generated by human beings.

High divine values are general, valid and universal. In comparison, only some of human-generated values are universal. Social life has its unique dynamism as it continuously changes, develops and is renewed. Universal values tend to be more permanent in this process. However, it is hard for people to maintain universal values in all areas. Society influences people who are social beings and shape them based on dominant value judgments.

There are numerous factors that contribute to values. Religions have a special place among these values. For this reason, we opted to focus on the values common to Islam, Christianity and Judaism as the most widespread religions around the globe. Our primary purpose is to extract social and cultural values common to the Qur'an, the Torah and the Bible and utilize from these values in the process of the EU harmonization process, thereby facilitating the union between people from different countries and help them learn how to share by remaining within the confines of universal values.

It is clear that man has to invest great efforts in sustainable and lasting peace. Our project aims to rely on efforts for overcoming racism, xenophobia and violence and attaining true peace. Common religious values can make the greatest contribution to the culture of coexistence and universal values. A sound and valid method may be to identify how certain values of certain religions like jihad (holy war) or martyrdom can be used to promote violence through manipulation and to use religious texts to curb racism and violence. This is because every religion is here to add meaning to human life. It is not easy to maintain the processes in social, political and cultural fields and attain peace without making peace in the field of religion.

Religions have made great contributions to the formation of universal values. These values have been effective in combating racism and xenophobia and forms of violence associated with them. However, it hasn't been possible to prevent racism and xenophobia and forms of violence associated with them so far. Accordingly, new values are needed.

Given this, our project intends to identify the common values in the Qur'an, the Torah and the Bible, which are the holy books for divine religions in the first instance. The planned activities will reveal that common values like peace, tolerance, truthfulness, forgiveness, respect for rights of other people, right to mental and physical health, and security of property will contribute greatly to peaceful coexistence of mankind. It is important to place the main emphasis on mankind and champion the idea that religions are here for the sake of human beings.

In this context, this project is an attempt to solve the problem. Our goal is to make contributions to the existing efforts to combat racism and xenophobia not by solely voicing criticisms, but also by coming up with proposals. There may be several alternatives for combating racism and xenophobia and forms of violence associated with them. With this project, we present one of those alternatives and seek to contribute to universal values and sustainable European common values.

1. REGULATIONS CONCERNING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN THE TURKISH LAW

The Constitution and laws contain a number of provisions designed to combat racism and xenophobia. These provisions are given below. All citizens are equal before the law regardless of any discrimination. This equality is guaranteed under the Constitution. Let us review these articles:

1. CONSTITUTION

X. Equality before the Law

“Article 10. All individuals are equal without any discrimination before the law, irrespective of language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such considerations.

(Additional paragraph: 07/05/2004–5170/Art. 1) Men and women have equal rights. The State shall have the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice. **(Added sentence: 07/05/2004–5982/Art. 1)** Measures taken for this purpose shall not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality.

The Constitution also has other provisions prohibiting various forms of discrimination.

2. LAWS

The Turkish Penal Code (TCK), which entered into force in 2005, has introduced various provisions regarding discrimination. Before anything, the TCK prohibits discrimination in the enforcement of the law.

a) TURKISH PENAL CODE (Law No: 5237, Date of Enactment: 26/09/2004) Equitable principle “Article 3/(2) Neither discrimination can be made between the persons in respect of races, language, religion, sects, nationality, color, sex, political tendencies etc. nor a person can be subject to special and different treatment before the laws and courts.”

“Restriction of freedom of belief, conception, conviction

Article 115 - (1) Any person who forces another person by using violence or treat to disclose or change his religious, political, philosophical beliefs, conceptions and convictions, or prevents disclosure and publication of the same, is punished with imprisonment from one year to three years.

Discriminatory Behavior

Article 122 – (Amended: 02/03/2014-6529/Art. 15)

(1) Any person who makes discrimination between individuals because of their racial, lingual, religious, sexual, political, philosophical belief or opinion, or for being supporters of different sects and therefore;

- a) Prevents sale, transfer of movable or immovable property, or performance of a service, or benefiting from a service, or bounds employment or unemployment of a person to above listed reasons,
- b) Refuses to deliver nutriment or to render a public service,
- c) Prevents a person’s recruitment for a job,
- d) Prevents a person to perform an ordinary economic activity, is sentenced to imprisonment from six months to one year or imposed punitive fine.

Article 153 – Purpose, or converts this property to his own or others’ use beyond the object seeking transfer of possession, or denies this transfer event, is punished to imprisonment from six months to two years and imposed fine upon complaint.

To curb hostility and hatred in society, the TCK also includes an article which can be perceived as concerning hate speech.

Provoking people to be rancorous and hostile

Article 216 - (1) Any person who openly provokes a group of people belonging to different social class, religion, race, sect, or coming from another origin, to be rancorous or hostile against another group, is punished with imprisonment from one year to three years in case of such act causes risk from the aspect of public safety.

(2) Any person who openly humiliates another person just because he belongs to different social class, religion, race, sect, or comes from another origin, is punished with imprisonment from six months to one year.

(3) Any person who openly disrespects the religious belief of group is punished with imprisonment from six months to one year if such act causes potential risk for public peace.

b) LAW ON PUBLIC SERVANTS

(Law Number: 657, Promulgated in the Official Gazette dated 23/07/1965 and numbered 12056)

Article 7 of the Law on Public Servants No. 657 prohibits discrimination against the beneficiaries of public services. The text of the article in question is given below:

Impartiality and loyalty to the State

Article 7 – (Amended: 12/05/1982 - 2670/Art. 2) The public servants shall not become members of a political party; they shall not act to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party, person or group; they shall not discriminate people based on linguistic, racial, gender, political, philosophical, religious or sectarian differences in performing their duties.

There are sanctions for the public servants who violate this article.

Article 125 - (Amended: 12/05/1982 - 2670/Art. 31) The non-judicial punishments and acts and cases which entail non-judicial punishments are as follows:

D - Penalty of suspension of advancement: The acts and cases punishable with penalty of suspension of advancement are as follows:

1) Discriminate people based on their language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect and act to the advantage or disadvantage of people in the fulfillment of their duties,

c) LAW ON POLITICAL PARTIES

Law Number: 2820 Official Gazette: Date: 24/04/1983 Number: 18027

To combat discrimination in the context of political rights and freedoms, the Law on Political Parties has elaborated on the principle of “equality before the law,” enshrined in Article 10 of the Constitution.

Terms of membership:

Article 12 – The terms and conditions for membership to a political party for the individuals who Turkey - Spain – Bulgaria – Germany – Czech Republic

are not barred from membership by laws shall be set forth in the party bylaws. The bylaws shall not contain provisions which discriminate among their applicants for membership in respect of language, race, sex, religion, sect, lineage, society, class or profession.

Prohibitions concerning the protection of the democratic system of the State:

Article 78 – Political parties:

Shall not nurture the following purposes and they shall not perform activities to this end and they shall not promote or encourage others to work to fulfill these goals:

a) To endanger the Turkish State and Republic, destroy fundamental rights and freedoms, discriminate based linguistic, racial, color, religious or sectarian differences or otherwise establish a state order based these concepts and ideas;

b) shall not rely on a specific region, race, person, family, group, religious community, religion, sect or religious order or use their names.

Prohibition of regionalism and racism:

Article 82 - Political parties shall not promote regionalism or racism or conduct activities to this end in the country which is an indivisible whole.

Protection of principle of equality:

Article 83 - The political parties shall not have goals or perform activities in breach of the principle that all individuals are equal without any discrimination before the law, irrespective of language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such considerations.

d) LABOR LAW

(Law Number: 4857 Date: 10/06/2003)

Legal arrangements have been made to eliminate discrimination also in business life.

The principle of equal treatment

Article 5 - (Added: 06/02/2014 - 6518/Art. 57)

No discrimination based on language, race, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sex or similar reasons is permissible in the employment relationship.

e) BASIC LAW ON NATIONAL EDUCATION

(Promulgated in the Official Gazette dated 24/06/1973 and numbered 14574)

I - Generality and equality:

Article 4 - Educational institutions are open to everyone regardless of linguistic, racial, gender or religious differences. No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class in education.

f) LAW ON ESTABLISHMENT AND BROADCASTING SERVICES OF RADIO STATIONS AND TV CHANNELS

(Law Number: 6112, Promulgated in the Official Gazette dated 03/03/2011 and No: 27863)

Principles for broadcasting services

ARTICLE 8 - (1) Media service providers shall provide their broadcasting services with a sense of responsibility toward the public and inline with the principles set forth in this article.

Broadcasting services:

e) shall not contain broadcasts which discriminate against people based on their differences in race, color, language, religion, nationality, gender, disability, political or philosophical views, sect or with similar considerations or which promote such discrimination.

General principles

ARTICLE 9

b) Not to contain or promote discrimination based on gender, race, color or ethnic origin, nationality, religion, philosophical view or political ideology, disability, age or with similar considerations,

g) TURKISH CIVIL CODE

(Law Number: 4721, Promulgated in the Official Gazette dated 08/12/2001 and numbered 24607)

The Turkish Civil Code regulates social relations in a comprehensive manner and its Article 68 regarding associations seeks to eliminate forms of discrimination in the context of activities of association.

a. Equal rights

Article 68 - It is a basic principle to grant equal rights to the members of an association. The association may neither make discrimination among their members in respect of language, race, color, sex, religion, sect, lineage, society and class nor may adopt any behavior deteriorating the balance between the members.

h) LAW ON SOCIAL SERVICES AND CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY

(Law Number: 2828) Article 4 - The general principles concerning social services are as follows:

d) Class, racial, linguistic, religious, sectarian or regional differences shall not guide the provision of social services, and in case the demand is higher than the supply for services, the priorities shall be set by order of application or identification.

ı) LAW ON THE EXECUTION OF PENALTIES AND SECURITY MEASURES

(Law Number: 5275)

Basic principles in execution

ARTICLE 2. (1) Penalties and security measures shall be executed without discrimination in respect of race, language, religion, sect, nationality, color, sex, birth, philosophical view, national or social origin or political or other view or without special and different treatment based on economic power or social status.

2. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS COMBATING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN TURKEY

In Turkey, there are basically two forms of the civil society organizations (CSOs). These are:

- a) Associations, and
- b) Foundations.

Establishment purposes of associations and foundations are specified in their bylaws. There is no association or foundation which is specifically established for the purpose of combating racism and/or xenophobia, but there are CSOs which seek to promote the struggle against racism and/or xenophobia among other goals.

Some of these CSOs are given below:

The Human Rights Association (İHD) was established in 1986 in Ankara.

The Social Change Association was established in 2009 in Istanbul.

The Open Society Foundation was founded in 2008 in Istanbul.

The Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM) was established in 2004 in Istanbul. The TASAM make contributions with articles on racism and xenophobia.

The Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism Initiative (DurDe) as well as the Social Change Association affiliated with it have been working to unite relevant CSOs under the umbrella structure, the Platform against Hate Crimes. In addition, the International Hrant Dink Foundation, the Human Rights Agenda Association (İHGD), the KAOS GL Association, the Pink Life LGBTT Solidarity Association,

Black Pink Triangle İzmir LGBTT Association, Lambda Istanbul, Istanbul Bilgi University's Human Rights Law Implementation and Development Center, and the Human Rights Joint Platform (İHOP) conduct activities and initiatives in this context. (Pınar Öğünç / Radikal Newspaper.), www.aktüelpsikoloji.com.20.3.2010



Two visual examples from the activities conducted by the Platform against Hate Crimes.

The following demonstrations covered by the press can be given as examples for their activities. Using the slogan, “Do Not Touch My Brother,” the platform protested the efforts to create racist and intolerant reactions in the society against Syrian refugees.



The associations and foundations that are part of this platform conducted protests with the title “Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism Platform” and exhibited a clear attitude against racism.



Visuals from the Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism Initiative (DurDe). (İHA, iha.com.tr. October 16, 2014)

Racism denies different colors. But colors exist despite this denial.

Different colors lend color to life. But racist are miles a way from enjoying rot of color.

3. PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS COMBATING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

A) INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The first organizations that rejected racial discrimination in the recognition of social and political rights were established in the United Kingdom and the United States in the 19th century, and the principles they championed made their forays into legislations after the work conducted at the national and international levels and also into the texts of the conventions drafted by the United Nations, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and other international organizations, particularly in the wake of the Second World War. (AnaBritannica, Combating racism)

The international and regional organizations continued to be influential during and after the Cold War by changing their purposes and principles. Of these organizations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), Council of Europe, and the European Union are particularly important. NATO is a military organization and therefore, it won't be taken into consideration in the fight against racism. The UN has many members and, as such, gives the impression of being a very influential organization, but it fails to provide a systematic fight against racism with its organs that are capable of imposing sanctions on its members like the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). (TASAM, the report dated 21/06/2011)

With the new identity it acquired after 1991 and the Copenhagen criteria it adopted, the EU has emerged as the top organization that champions human rights. It is an interstate organization which has made human rights advocacy its primary principle and which markets respect for democracy and human rights a prerequisite for membership or partnership negotiations.

The Council of Europe has an organ that seeks to combat racism. It is the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). This unit was developed as an idea at the Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government in Vienna in 1993 and it was finalized at the second summit meeting held in Strasbourg in 1997. It works on three areas: state review, the work on general issues and cooperation with the civil society. The ECRI also conducts joint work with the UN and organizes joint international conferences on racism; for instance, such a conference was held in 1997.

The ECRI prepares a report about the member state and sends it to the state in questions. It conducts a secret meeting with officials from that state. The content of the report is revised based on this meeting and the report is adopted. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe sends the report to the government of the member state. The reports are prepared upon complaints filed by the civil society organizations and the public in the member state, and these complaints are verified and information on the case-law is obtained during the secret talks with the government. People from each member state are included independently among those who prepare the report. (TASAM, the report dated 21/06/2011)

B) ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY

The Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) sets up commissions on different areas. One of these commissions is the Human Rights Investigation Commission. This commission occasionally draws up reports on racist or xenophobic practices against Turkish expats in Europe.

The commission's 2012 Interim Monitoring Report notes the following:

Having heard that the bombed attack that claimed the lives of 77 people on July 22, 2011 in Norway had been motivated with anti-Islamic sentiments, the Commission opened a "monitoring file" to work on Islamophobia, xenophobic and racist attitudes, practices and legislative changes in Western countries.

The Turkish Grand National Assembly's Human Rights Investigation Commission published a Monitoring Report also in 2014. This report, too, has certain striking information. (You can find it at the section. "Statistics" for 2014 data)

4. MEDIA REPORTS ABOUT RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN TURKEY

The remarks Religious Affairs Directorate President Ali Bardakoğlu made concerning racism and xenophobia are of great importance as he is the head of a public and religious organization. In his statement, Bardakoğlu noted that all institutions and organization must work collectively to prevent the recent individual attacks against practitioners of various religions in Turkey and around the world from becoming widespread.

Pointing out that the Religious Affairs Directorate nefariously condemns the recent attacks that undermined the atmosphere of peace and the experience of coexistence such as the killing of Santa Maria Catholic Church's Priest Andrea Santoro, journalist Hrant Dink, and three people at a publishing house in Malatya, Bardakoğlu indicated that such incidents sabotage internal peace in Turkey as well as the country's international prestige and mutual relations.

"The fact that the cleric was murdered inside a temple and the murdered journalist was a practitioner of another religion and the last attack targeted a publishing house that printed and distributed the holy books of another religion has exacerbated the seriousness of the events," Bardakoğlu said, adding that Islam equates killing one man with killing the entire mankind. Bardakoğlu explained that the attacks against innocent people constitute the most clear form of betrayal to religions and the common values mankind is trying to develop, regardless of their motivation. "The murdering of innocent people cannot be justified with religious, national, philosophical or humanitarian excuses," he said.

"The relationship between Muslims and the practitioners of other religions is guided by freedom of faith, enshrined in Islam, tolerance, wise purpose behind creation, commitments regarding the legal framework that apply, universal human rights, and fundamental rights and freedoms," Bardakoğlu stated. He further reminded that Turkey has inherited the Islamic and historical tradition of peaceful coexistence with diverse religions and faiths for centuries. "In its history dating back to thousands of years ago, our nation has always acted with the awareness that ensuring peaceful coexistence of diverse cultural and religious experiences and traditions of humankind is a human responsibility and provided a suitable environment for peaceful coexistence in an exemplary manner and protected the historical and cultural heritage of other religions and seen this as advisable by vast tolerance of Islam," he said.

Noting that individual cases of breach of fundamental rights and freedoms of people may be seen although this is strongly forbidden by Islam, Bardakoğlu added: "Indeed, such incidents which have occurred recently to sadden the entire society and which ignore the fact that religious, ethnic and cultural diversity is nothing but manifestation of divine love, compassion and wisdom can be attributable to the perceptions of religions and their practitioners about each other. Therefore, it would be flawed to attribute such individual and local incidents directly to a specific religion, nation or culture, as is frequently done in the international media... The Religious Affairs Directorate believe that all institutions and organizations must work collectively to prevent such incidents world from becoming widespread."

03/05/2007 Ali Bardakoğlu (Yeni Şafak)

In a speech he delivered on February 6, 2015, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made the following remark about racism: "Racism may be disguised in many forms, but it is the concept that caused the highest casualties. It is unseemly for our religion to discriminate people for their religion, color or faith.

(radikal.com.tr)

Pınar Ögünç, from Radikal newspaper, interviewed Professor Yasemin İnceoğlu, who works on hate speech, on March 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This interview, published on Radikal newspaper, is as follows:

It is obvious that the emotions which can hardly be described as friendly are behind many crimes, but hate crime is something else. We are talking about damage done to another person regardless of whether it involves physical violence or not. The justification is nothing but the ethnicity, religion or gender of the victim. Sometimes, age, social status or disability may emerge as the main motives. It is not racism alone or discrimination alone; there is a crime at hand and its motivation is obviously hate. To kill a person just because s/he is Armenian or Christian... To attack a person just because s/he is a transvestite... To damage someone's property because his/her skin color.

Professor Arus Yumul, a lecturer at the Sociology Depart at Istanbul Bilgi University, working on racism, gave the following interview on racism:

“To say, ‘There is no racism in Turkey and there has never been any act of racism in Turkey,’ and try to prove this by producing examples about the blacks in the US is, at best, an illusion, if not a deliberate attempt for self-deception. Traditionally, racism is defined as claiming that a race is superior to another based on biological differences between races. This restricted and biological definition of racism is the first definition. However, today, racism is seen as targeting not only a race, but also ethnic, religious, national or other groups. In the Western racism, the idea of biological superiority has largely been replaced with discrepancy and lack of harmony among traditions, culture and lifestyles.

We define immigration-related problems in certain countries as ‘racism’ but we give the same responses under similar circumstances. Just have a look the messages posted about Syrian immigrants on the social media. ‘We feed them although we can hardly feed ourselves. They take our jobs away from us,’ we say. “When will they go away?” we ask instead of trying to acknowledge the humanitarian tragedy of Syrian refugees. This is nothing but atrophy of conscience or lack of empathy.”

(milliyet.com.tr)

Professor Hayrettin Karaman says: “A Muslim is a Muslim in the first place, regardless of his/her nationality or membership to a specific nation or ethnic group. ‘We have put you into groups so that you can know or define each other,’ the Qur’an notes.

From a scientific and religious perspective, people do not come from a single race, ethnic or cultural origin. We believe that although they descend from the same parents, social, cultural and ethnic groups have been formed for various reasons. The Qur’an refers to these groups as ‘qawm, shu’ub or qabail’ and this indicates that mankind does not rely on one race.

29/10/2013, <http://www.hayrettinkaraman.net/>

5. STATISTICS/SURVEYS AND FINDINGS RELATED TO RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN TURKEY

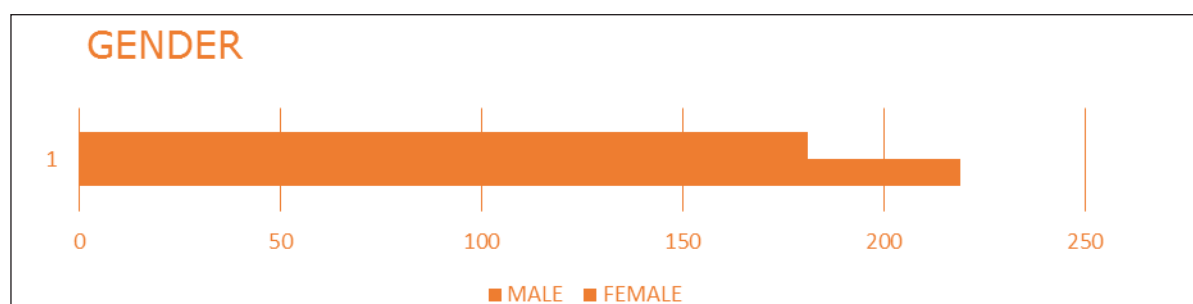
We will examine the statistics and surveys conducted on racism and xenophobia in Turkey in four sections and present the conducted surveys below.

a) Surveys Conducted by the TÖYEV in Turkey about the Current Situation of Racism and Xenophobia in Turkey

The surveys prepared by the TÖYEV under the framework of the project titled “The Effects of Common Values on European Peace” were conducted both in Turkey and the partner countries: Spain, Germany, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic. In Turkey, the surveys were conducted with the participation of 401 people, aged above 18, from various occupational groups (university students in general), in Ankara, Kırıkkale, Eskişehir, Erzurum, Denizli, Gaziantep and Istanbul provinces.

The participants were questioned about the definition, current situation, and causes and effects of racism, as well as their suggestions for solving the problem of racism. In addition, the ideas of the participants were solicited about what the actions that trigger racism most are in an attempt to find out to what extent these factors are influential upon leading to racism. Below you will find the graphics on this study.

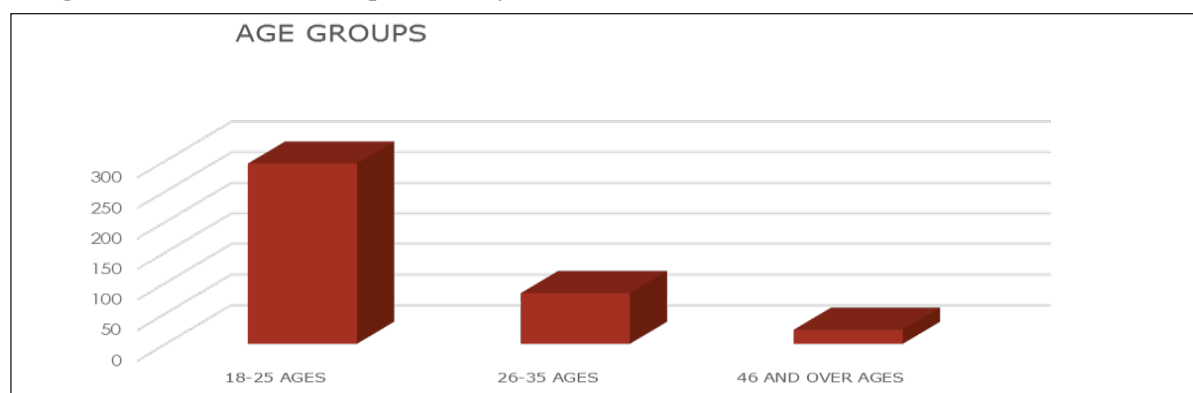
Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by GENDER



Female : 219

Male : 181

Figure 2. Distribution of respondents by AGE GROUPS

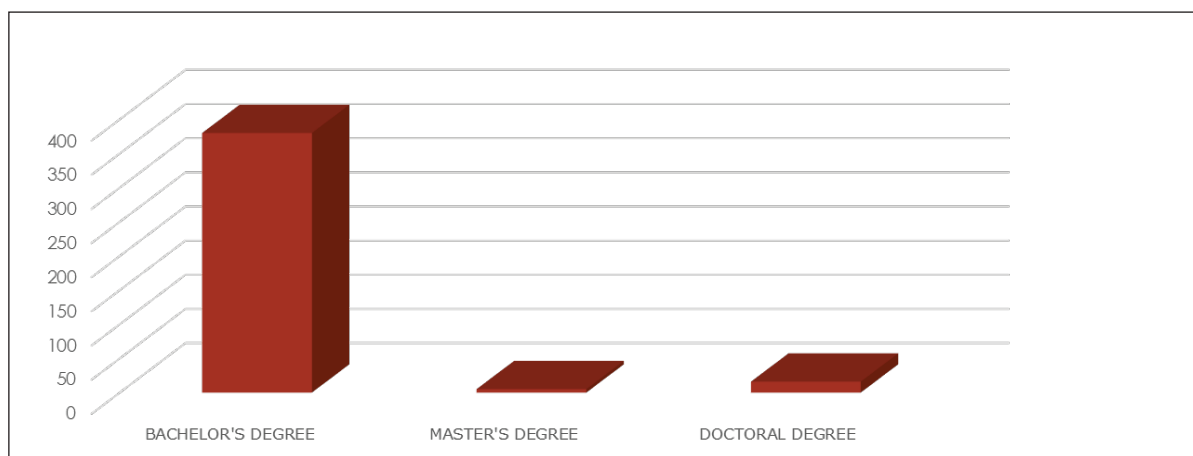


18-25 ages: 297

26-35 ages: 81

46 and over ages: 23

Figure 3. Distribution of respondents by EDUCATION LEVEL

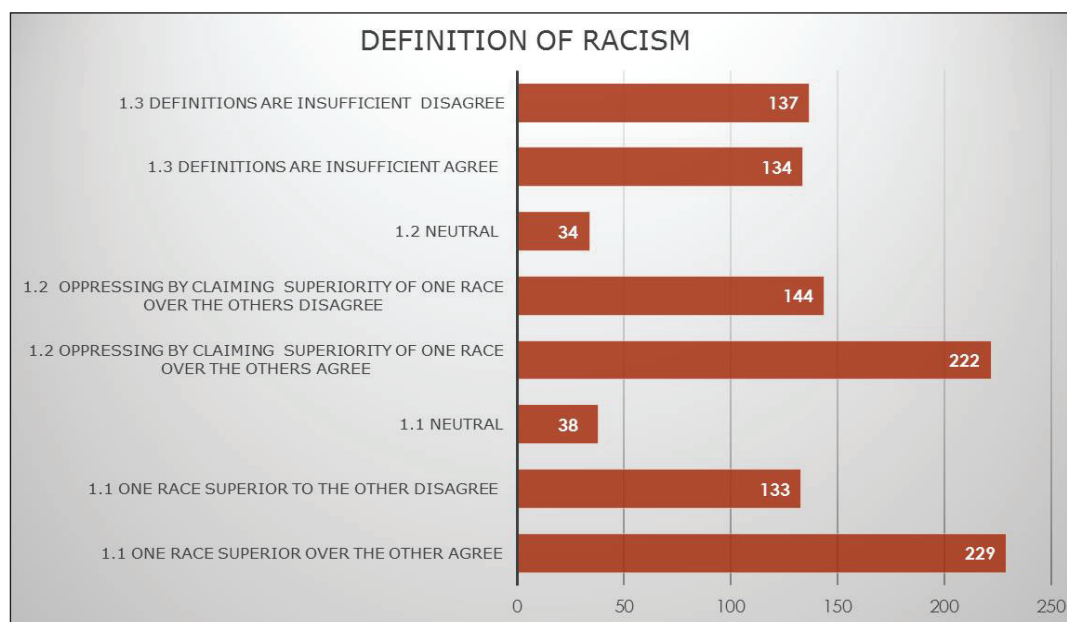


Bachelor's Degree: 387

Master's Degree: 3

Doctoral Degree: 11

Figure 4. Distribution of respondents according to their agreement with the DEFINITION OF RACISM



As seen in the Figure above, the number of respondents who agree with the definition of racism that “by definition racism is the superiority of a race over another race” is 230, whereas the number of respondents who disagree with this definition is 133.

On the other hand, the number of respondents who agree with the definition of racism that “by definition racism is the oppression by claiming superiority of one race over the other” is 223, whereas the number of respondents who disagree with this definition is 144. Clearly, the answers are very close to each other in both definitions.

Figure 5. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the CURRENT SITUATION OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

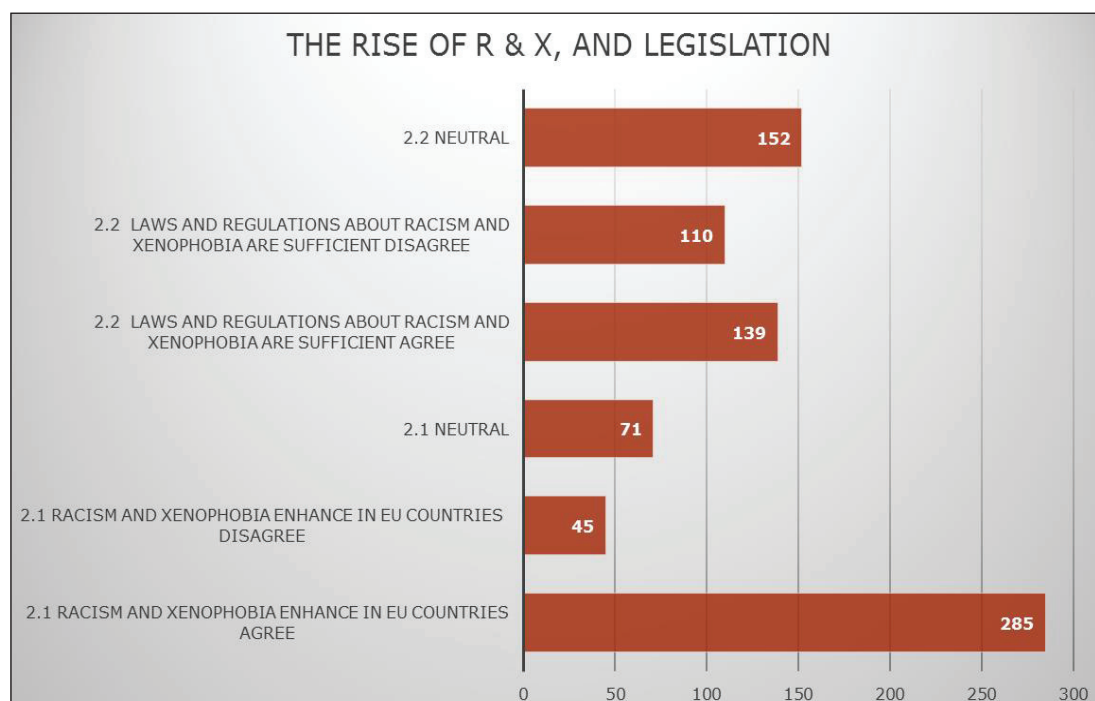


Figure 6. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the CURRENT SITUATION OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

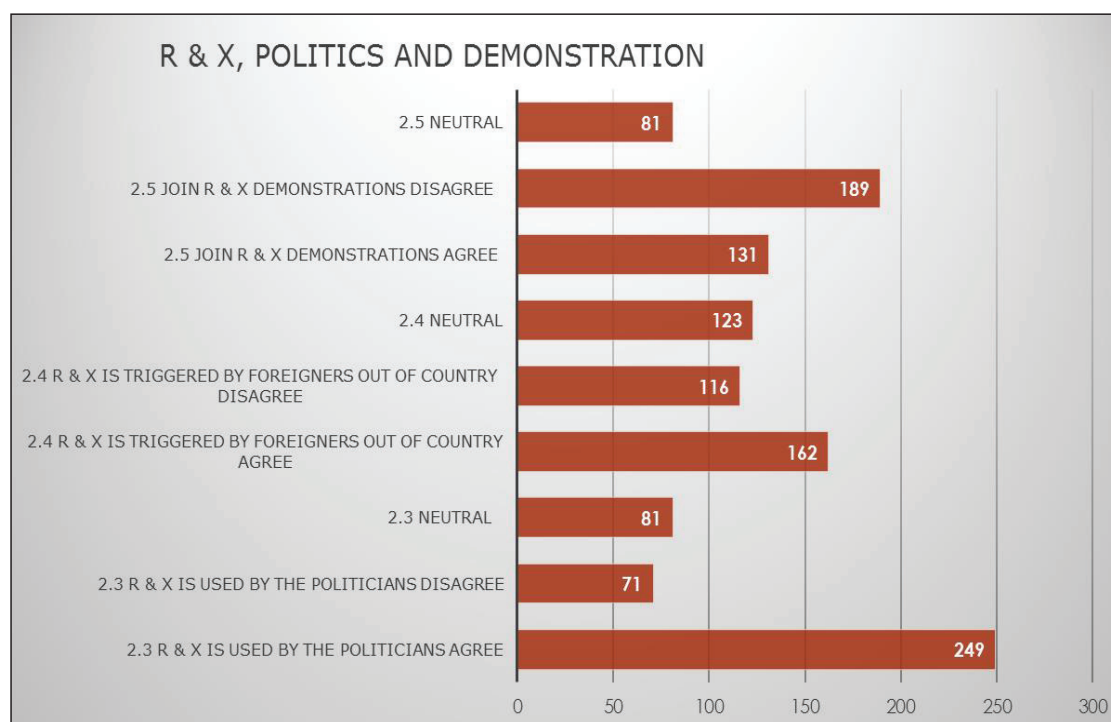


Figure 7. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the REASONS OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

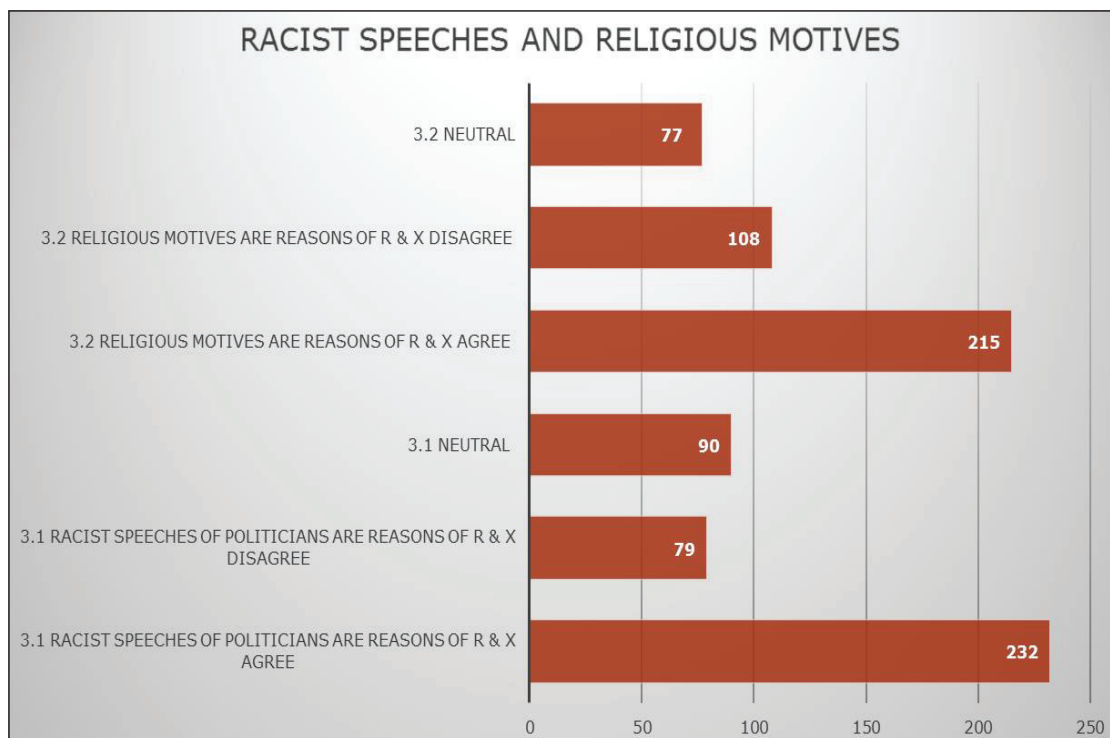


Figure 8. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the REASONS OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

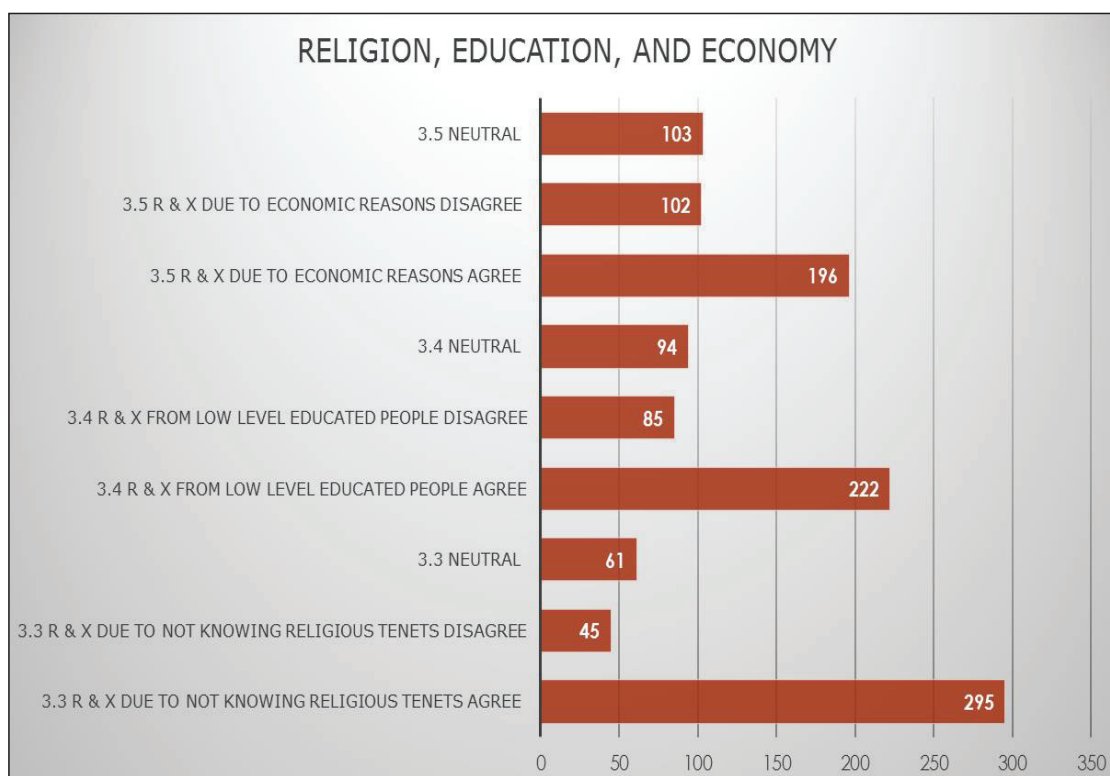


Figure 9. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the EFFECTS OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

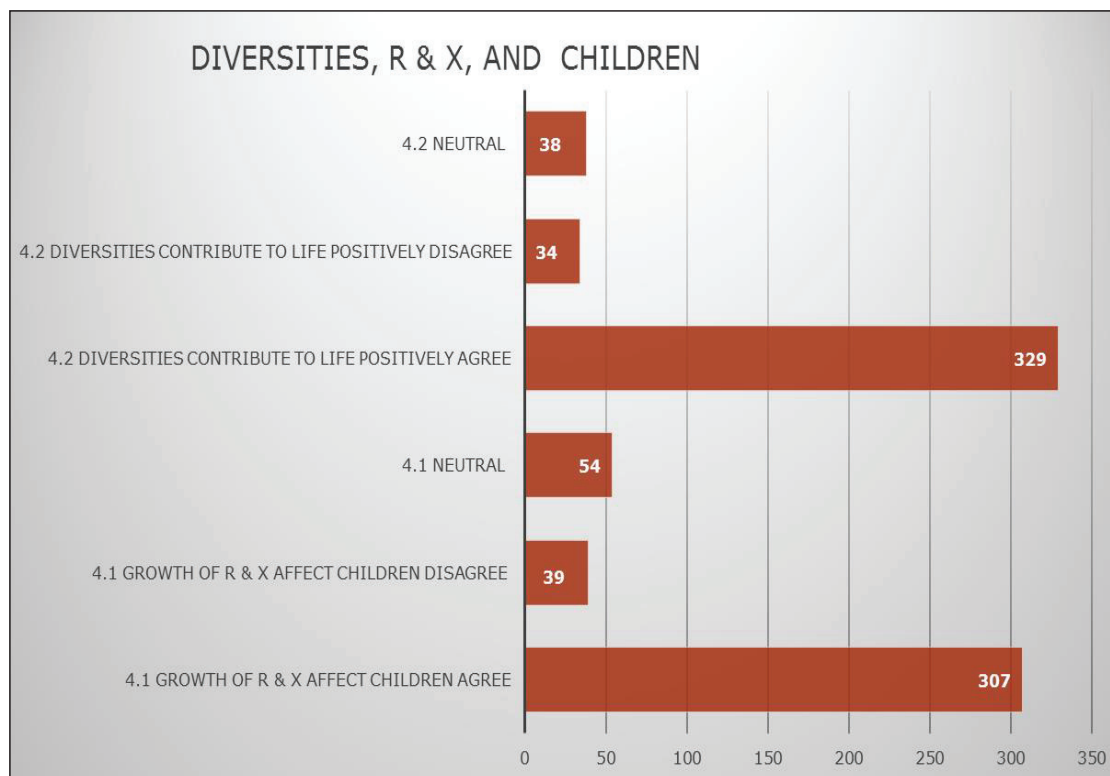


Figure 10. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the EFFECTS OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

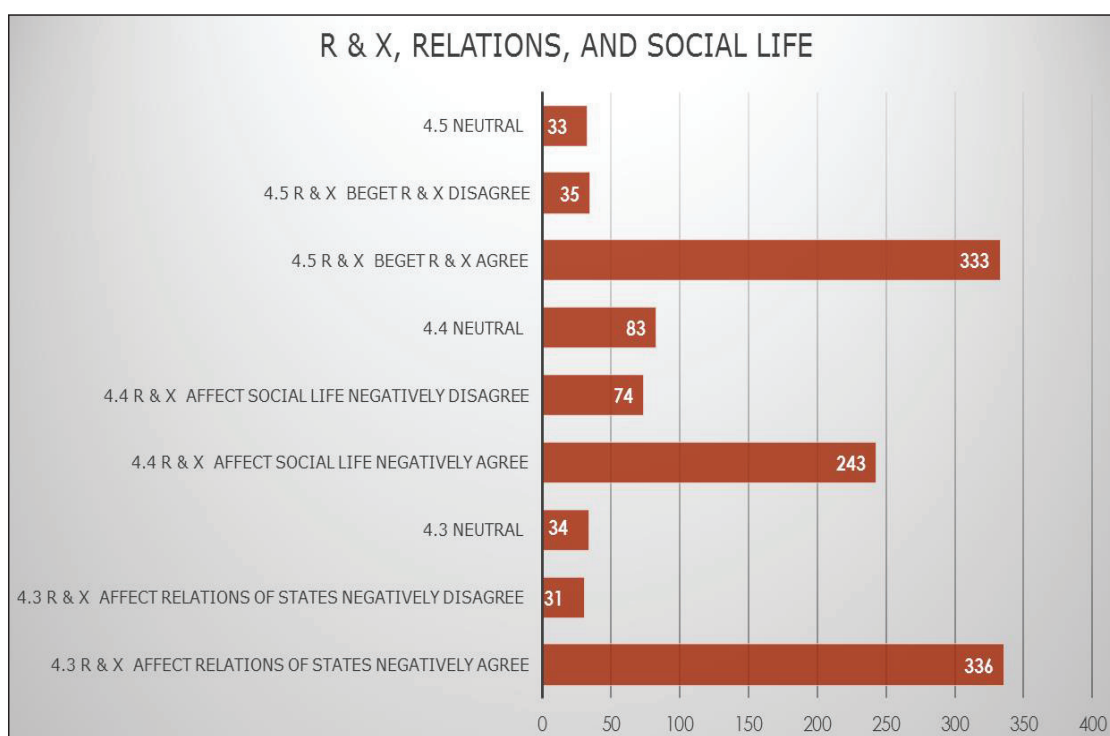


Figure 11. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS FOR THE REDUCTION OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

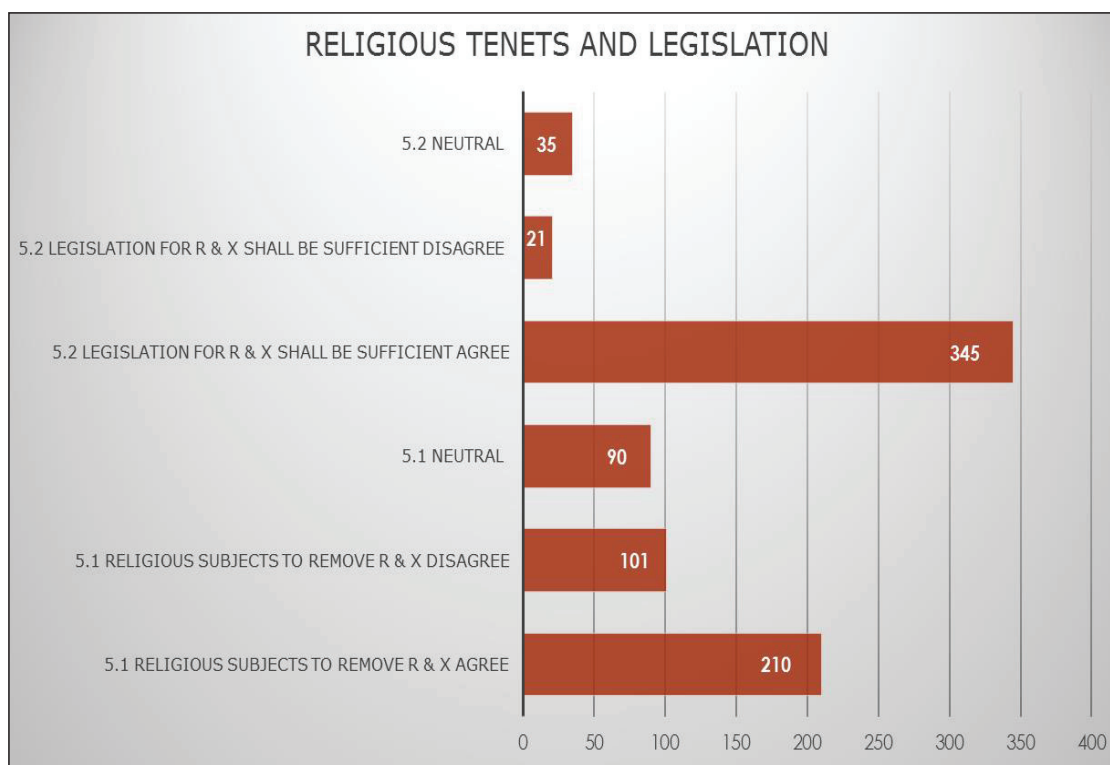


Figure 12. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS FOR THE REDUCTION OF RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

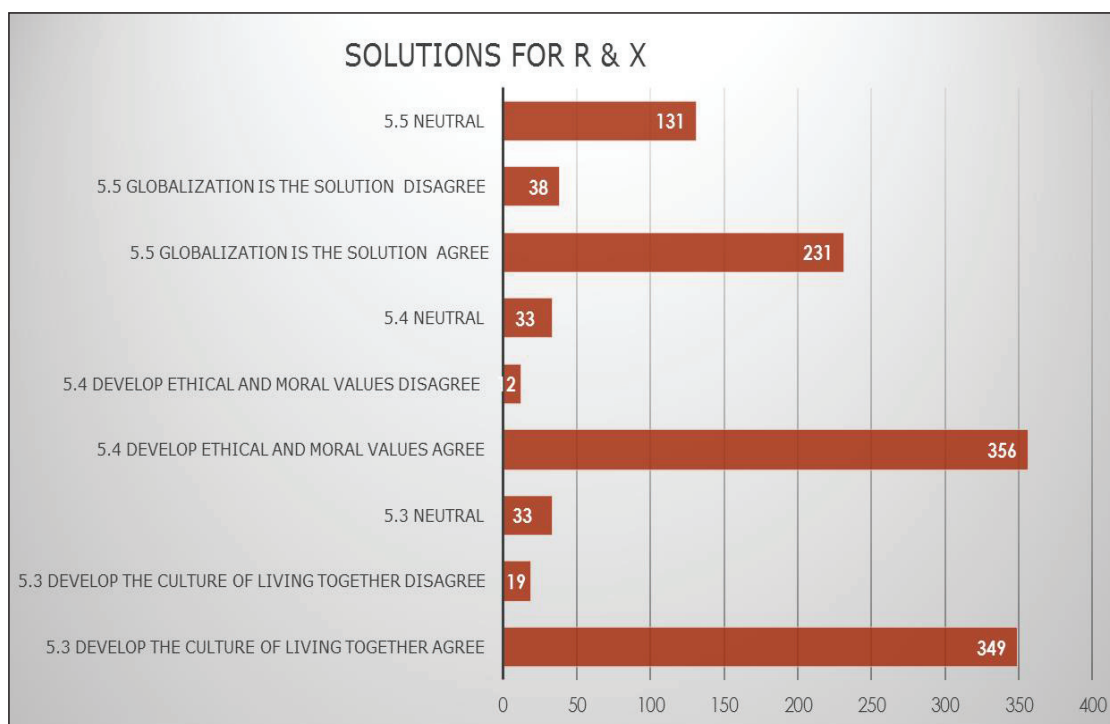
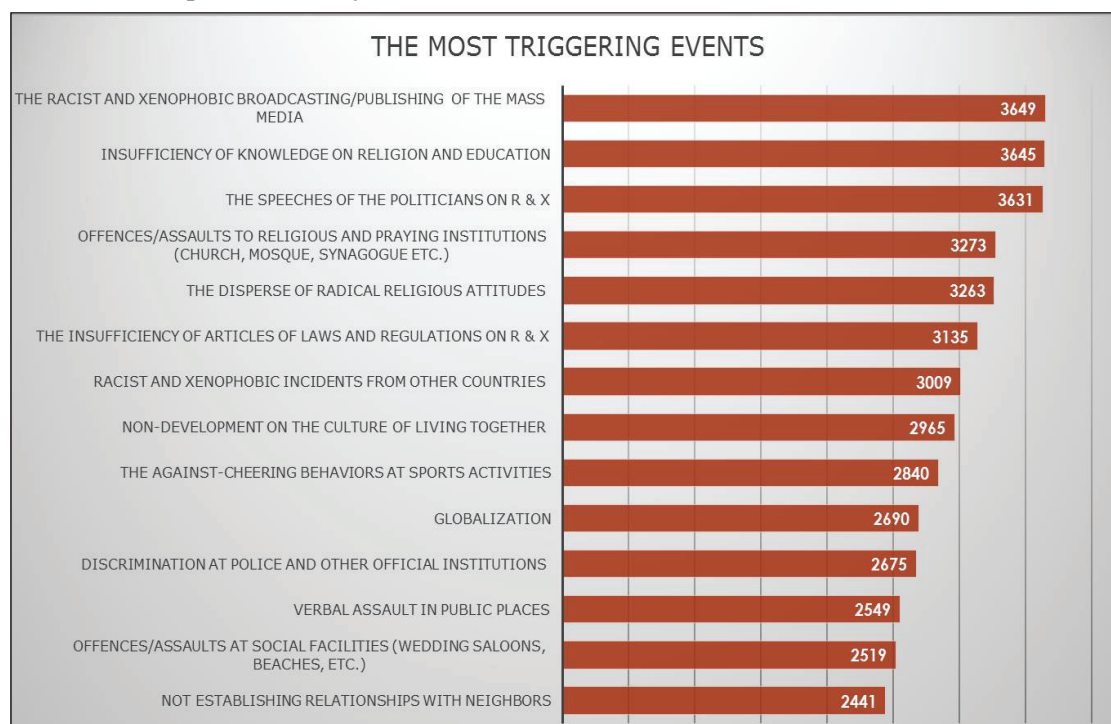


Figure 13. Distribution of respondents by their agreement with the questions related to the ACTIONS THAT TRIGGER RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA MOST

The survey participants were also provided with 14 different actions and asked to rank order these from 1 to 14, starting from the one which triggers racism and xenophobia the least.

As a result, the participants stated that the group which triggers racism and xenophobia is the press and “the racist publications by the media”.



b) The Statistics of the Actions Carried out against the Turks in EUROPEAN countries Published in the Reports of the Turkish Parliament on Racism and Xenophobia.

YEAR	TYPE OF ACTION	NUMBER OF ACTION	CASUALTIES
2011	Burning and destroying actions	1	77

The actions from among those carried out against only the Turks:

YEAR	TYPE OF ACTION	NUMBER OF ACTION	CASUALTIES
2012	Assault	38	
	Arson	15	2
	Threatening letters	19	
	Burning, destroying and so on of the Holy (Mosques etc.)	36	
2013	Assault	24	
	Arson	15	
	Threatening letters	7	
	Burning, destroying and so on of the Holy (Mosques etc.)	24	
	TOTAL	70	79

6. DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

As a result of these studies carried out on racism and xenophobia the following could be underlined as important points.

1. It is remarkable that there is not a common definition of the concept of racism. Nevertheless, the option that “racism is the oppression by claiming superiority of one race over the other” and “these descriptions mean something to me” options were stated more often than others.
2. It was evident that racism has been rising steadily in EU countries.
3. It was emphasized that racism is used by politicians. On the other hand, there was a tendency not to participate in the racism actions.
4. The results stating that “use of religious motifs caused reasons that lead to racism” were realized at such a high rate that it could not be underestimated.
5. Another significant finding was that “not having adequate knowledge about the religious tenets” was also one of the reasons which led to racism.
6. It could also be seen that the perception that “racism correlates with low education level and economic causes” is becoming more and more widespread.
7. It has been observed that racism affects social life and international relations.
8. It has been pointed out that there is an urgent need for the reorganization of the laws on racism.
9. The development of the culture of living together is one of the important steps to be taken towards the prevention of racism.
10. In the context of the actions that triggers racism, it is striking that the attacks on religious symbols and values are the most prominent.
11. Racist discourse used by politicians and the fact that such discourse takes place in the media was one of the most remarkable among those actions which were seen as triggering racism.
12. It was evident that attacks on religious values in European Union countries have already taken place at high rates.
13. Unfortunately, the news reports and images in media reports about racism were perceived as a trigger among those with racist ideas and those who have a tendency towards racism. As it can be seen in the survey results, media ranks first among those which trigger racism the most.

As stated by Prof. Dr. Ali Çarkoğlu and Prof. Dr. Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, being a Muslim is one of the factors that are considered important in determining individual identity in Turkey together with speaking Turkish and being a Turkish citizen, where two thirds of the associations (68%) emphasize that being Muslim is very important for them.

On the other hand, Sinan Özbek, Kocaeli University Philosophy Department Chairman makes a different comment about the concept of racism stating that “it is impossible to determine that biological indicative in Turkey is the significant factor in itself.”

When the value judgments in Turkey are considered, the verses of the Holy Qur’an prohibiting racism and the words of Prophet Muhammad related to racism are of paramount importance for the Muslims. Some of these include the following:

“The believers are only brothers. Thus make peace amongst your brothers. Fear Allah! So that you might be provided for clemency.” (Sura al-Hujurat, 49: 10).

“O human beings! Surely We created you from the male and the female. We made you in nations, and tribes. So that you know each other. Surely the nobler amongst you in the sight of Allah is who is more pious of you. Surely Allah is Knower-Observant.” (Sura al-Hujurat, 49: 13).

“They Say: “If we return to Madina, indeed the mighty-ones will drive out the meaner-ones.” The Might belongs to Allah and to His Messenger, and to the believers. But the hypocrites do not know.” (Sura al-Munafiqun, 63:8)

Prophet Muhammad said:

“Anyone who champions racism is not one of us. Anyone who fights for any racist cause is not one of us. Anyone who dies for any racist cause is not one of us (Muslims).” (Muslim, Imara: 53)

In his Farewell Sermon, Prophet Muhammad said:

“O humankind! Your Lord is the only one and your father is the only one. You are all children of Adam, and Adam was created from earth. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a white – except by piety and good action. Those whom Allah value most are the one who fear Allah most.” (The Farewell Pilgrimage, Religious Affairs Directorate.)

“O Prophet of Allah! What is racism?” Wathila ibn al Aska’ asked Prophet. “Racism is that you aid your tribe (nation) in tyranny,” he replied. (Wathila ibn al Aska’ Hadith No: 4800).

As it is clearly understood, racism is helping and being on the side of a nation in tyranny. In other words, a person’s love for his nation it is not called racism.

Prof. Dr. Ali Çarkoğlu of the Academy of Sciences of Koç University and Prof. Dr. Ersin Kalaycıoğlu of the Academy of Sciences of Sabancı University pointed out the following in their report prepared for their surveys titled “Nationalism in Turkey and in the World”:

“These surveys aim at examining the sense of belonging and identity, as well as orientation towards the country and the properties of the country. As a result, it was found out that among the factors which contributed to determining individual identities in Turkey included being a Muslim, in addition to the factors of Turkish language and being a Turkish citizen. Up to two thirds of the respondents (68%) emphasized that it is very important for them to become a Muslim.” (Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, Nationalism in Turkey and in the World)

In conclusion, it is embarrassing when people are exposed to racism and xenophobia as a hate crime. The struggle against these inhuman acts that make profound impact on individuals and society is of pivotal importance. It is a humanitarian duty to combat racism and xenophobia. Trying to extinguish the fire of hate crimes with the bonds of love and common values is an important way to combat this hate fire.

Following Yunus Emre, who said, “We love the creatures, due to the Creator,” and saw all nations as one community and Rumi, who said: “Come, come again, whoever, whatever you may be, come / Heathen, fire-worshipper, sinful of idolatry, come / Come, even if you have broken your vows a hundred times / Ours is not the portal of despair or misery, come,” Abu al-Hasan Harakani, one of the spiritual architects of Kars, said:

“Whoever comes to the door, give them bread and never question their faith. Because anyone who is worthy to carry a spirit before Allah the Almighty is worthy enough to eat the bread at Abu al-Hasan’s table.” (Harakani, p. 19)

Surely racism denies different colors and different nationalities. But it should be noted that different colors and nationalities exist in reality even if they are denied. We believe different colors add color to life but people with racist views are far from taking pleasure from this celebration of colors. To make them enjoy this celebration of colors, we need to fight more against racism and will need to find new ways in this fight.

In short, racism cannot be defended on any basis and consists of just a corrupt philosophy, which means to destroy human dignity, and damage and destruct human honor, divide and fragment societies from each other. So, racism cannot be accepted by civilized nations. Accepting people as humans is a necessity of humanity.

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