# Representation and Responsiveness in a Weakly Institutionalized Party System: The Case of Turkey

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A Dissertation Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Political Science
University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Political Science)

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By
Alper T. Bulut
December, 2014

**REPRESENTATION AND RESPONSIVENESS IN A WEAKLY INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY SYSTEM: THE CASE OF TURKEY**

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# ABSTRACT

How does weak party institutionalization and clientelistic linkage mechanisms affect policy responsiveness? Research on representation and responsiveness usually find a positive relationship between public priorities and subsequent policy making activities. However, most research on this topic assumes the context of strongly institutionalized party systems and presupposes that programmatic voter-party relations are prevalent. In weakly institutionalized party systems, on the other hand, clientelistic linkage mechanisms are the norm.

Previous studies have suggested that clientelistic linkage mechanisms decrease policy responsiveness since non-policy, selective benefits are substituted for the collective, policy-based benefits. To investigate the dynamics of representation in a weakly institutionalized party system, this dissertation departs from the current literature, and focusses on Turkey; a country with a weakly institutionalized party system and clientelistic parties.

This dissertation uses a novel dataset created by collecting and content coding over 13000 parliamentary documents (laws, parliamentary bills and oral questions) and over 10000 manifesto sentences as well as the most important problem question of public opinion surveys for a period of 11 years. My dissertation will show that parties largely relying on clientelistic linkage mechanisms are indeed responsive to the priorities of the median voter. The results also indicate that the policymaking agenda is jointly structured

by public priorities and party preferences. In this regard, I also offer a new approach to measure party priorities which is theoretically more relevant.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Chapter 1: Introduction**

How well does the relationship between public opinion and policy activities work in weakly institutionalized party systems where parties often compete by offering clientelistic selective goods instead of public goods? Can clientelistic parties be responsive to the general public opinion and to their party platforms by developing and adopting programmatic policy proposals?

Parties and party systems are considered programmatic if they compete for votes by offering alternative policy proposals that they promise to enact once they assume office (Schlesinger 1984; Kitschelt 2000). These policy proposals purport to benefit everyone in the society regardless of any person's particular vote choice. In programmatic competition, politicians cannot determine the individuals and groups who voted for them, and therefore cannot offer targeted benefits to their current or prospective supporters. Voters, on the other hand, are free riders: they enjoy the benefits (but also suffer from the costs) regardless of their support for the governing parties (Kitschelt et al. 2010, 16).

However, Kitschelt (2000, 849) points out that political parties may offer substitute 'products' to voters; namely, clientelistic linkages or personalistic linkages. Clientelistic linkages rely on distributing selective benefits to individual voters or groups of voters who support the party. Personalistic linkages, on the other hand, usually involve the exposition of the appealing personal characteristics and charisma of a party's leaders.

The above research questions are important since a strong linkage between the public and the policymakers is considered crucial for a healthy democracy. The current literature suggests that enhancing the ability of the citizens to select parties and candidates that best match their priorities helps to improve democratic accountability (Stein et al. 2006). When voters are able to identify parties based on their policies on specific issues, "programmatic linkage" mechanisms emerge (Kitschelt et al. 2010).

This dissertation offers answers to these research questions by studying Turkey, which is a good example of a country where there is clientelism and weak party institutionalization. The answers from such a study are not only relevant for the literature on representation and responsiveness but also for the democratization literature that investigates how and why democracies endure, and whether specific features of parties and party systems are beneficial or detrimental in terms of the survival of democracy. As Kitschelt et al. (2010) argue: "If democratic consolidation is defined as a significant decrease in the probability of reversal to an authoritarian system, then the degree of representation may also contribute to this aspect of a young democracy".

Focusing on a weakly institutionalized party system with clientelistic parties, this dissertation shows that parties in these systems can be responsive to the general public opinion. I also show that even the parties that are considered highly clientelistic can develop programmatic policy proposals and act upon them once they are in government. I argue that, although high level of clientelism and weak party institutionalization may seem inimical to a sustainable democracy, parties can achieve a significant level of responsiveness by establishing track-records in the parliament through re-election.

*Representation and Responsiveness*

During their tenure, governments always face a large number of problems and issues compete for space in the political agenda (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Jones and Baumgartner 2005). These issues are very diverse and usually range from the economy, health, and education, to law and order, defense and foreign affairs. Since time is a scarce resource, governments have to prioritize these issues and come up with policies to deal with them. In other words, with this multitude of problems, governments need to make choices about their priorities.

Prioritization of the issues is a complex process. Governments have to respond to their electoral mandates, the demands of the political parties, interests groups, public opinion and the media (Jennings et al. 2011). While working through this process, governments have to choose carefully from the menu of issues since ignoring those areas that are salient and important to the public will most likely result in punishment during elections. Therefore, parties are expected to take cues from the voters by prioritizing those issues that the public deems as important and requiring action. Similarly, parties have to keep up with their electoral mandates and carry out their promises.

A strong linkage between public opinion and policymaking activities (opinion-policy linkage) as well as between party programs and subsequent policymaking efforts (program-policy linkage) is considered crucial for a healthy democracy. A voluminous literature has examined these two linkage mechanisms and has usually found a significant relationship. However, almost all of these studies have been conducted in developed Western countries with strongly institutionalized party systems with programmatic

parties. The literature on party institutionalization and programmatic parties suggest that parties in these systems target the median voter and compete with each other based on programmatic policy proposals by offering public goods. In weakly institutionalized party systems, on the other hand, clientelistic parties are the norm.

The literature on weak party institutionalization and clientelism suggests that the target constituency in these systems differs from the strongly institutionalized party systems as parties tend to focus on local constituencies and club goods instead of appealing to the general public via public goods. The clientelistic linkage mechanism employed by parties insulates the policymakers from the policy priorities of their constituents since non-policy, selective benefits are substituted for the collective, policy-based benefits (Epstein 2009). This expectation implies that parties in these systems are not responsive to the voters because the linkage mechanism hampers these relationships. Although the literature suggests that weak party institutionalization and clientelistic parties lead to unresponsive policymakers, no rigorous empirical test have been conducted in these systems.

In this chapter, I first map the current research on opinion-policy and program to policy linkage and review the literature on these two fields and address their weaknesses. I also place the contributions of this dissertation within the context of the previous research and explain the relationship between party system institutionalization, clientelism and parties' and policymakers' responsiveness.

*Responsive Policymakers: Opinion-Policy and Program to Policy Nexus*

One of the central functions of the political parties is to establish the connection between policy-makers and citizens (Dalton et al. 2005). Recent decades have witnessed an increase in the scholarly literature pointing to the eroding power of the political parties (Dalton and Wattenberg 2002). In order to preserve their central role in representative democracy, parties have to be responsive to the priorities of the voters. This requires parties to adjust their policy positions according to the shifts in the public opinion. This dynamic representation (Stimson et al. 1995) has become crucial for parties' survival. Newly formed parties can replace existing parties if the latter are not responsive to the shifting policy preferences of the electorate (Kitschelt 1988).

The variants of "mandate theory" date back to the postwar studies on liberal democracy, which has now come to be known as "the responsible party model" (APSA 1950). An important feature of democracy is the responsiveness of the government to the preferences of the public (Dahl 1971, 1). According to this view of representation, elected officials are expected to be responsive to the opinions of their constituents.

In a democracy, politicians and political parties maximize their chances of winning elections by formulating their election programs with policy initiatives. In a Westminster system, the party receiving the most votes forms the government, and in order to secure its re-election, it enacts the policies which brought it success. In other words, from the perspective of mandate theory, elections are the main mechanisms through which citizens' preferences are translated into policy activities, and parties should deliver the policy commitments they have made during elections when they come to power.

The literature presents competing views on the nature of party competition. The Downsian view of electoral competition contends that parties compete by shifting their ideological positions according to the ideological positions of the voters since voters will choose the party closest to their ideal point on a single issue dimension (Downs 1957). Yet another strand of the literature argues that parties do not shift positions on issues. Instead, they compete by selectively emphasizing or deemphasizing certain issue dimensions (Budge and Farlie 1983).

Assuming that issue saliency is a key component of party competition, "an important aspect of democratic responsiveness concerns how politicians prioritize different issues and how this corresponds with the issue preferences of the public" (Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008, 310). Issue salience is crucial for democratic responsiveness since individuals who are concerned about a certain issue are more likely to consider the elected officials' actions on those issues when they go to the ballot box (Arnold 1990; Jones 1994). This inevitably leads parties to be more responsive on highly salient issues.

Numerous studies have examined the connection between public opinion and policy actions and have found a general congruence. Monroe (1979), for example, examined the relationship between the majority opinion about a proposed policy change and the legislative outcomes and found that, in 63% of the cases, policy moved in the public's preferred direction. Perhaps, one of the most influential studies investigating the opinion-policy nexus was done by Page and Shapiro (1983). In their study, the authors focused on the period between 1935 and 1979 and found that in approximately two thirds

of the cases where policy changes occurred it was in the direction desired by the mass opinion.

In their influential study, Erikson, Mackuen and Stimson (2002; see also Stimson et al. 1995) examined the relationship between "public mood" (measured by aggregating available public opinion across a wide range of policies into a single global indicator) and "policy activity" (measured by using various activities such as House and Senate roll calls, Supreme Court rulings and presidential liberalism calculated by taking the mean ADA score of policy support group in the Congress for the president). Their findings provided perhaps the strongest empirical support for dynamic representation. The authors found that as the public mood moved towards a more liberal position, policy activity and lawmaking moved in the same direction (304-321). In addition, the estimated impact of public opinion was so large that they concluded that "there exists about one to one translation of preferences to policy" (316).

Previous research has found a significant variation in terms of parties' responsiveness. For instance, parties that are more focused on policy are less responsive to the demands of the whole electorate and more responsive to that of their supporters. In this regard, the niche parties are not responsive to public opinion, whereas mainstream parties do respond to changes in public opinion (Adams et al. 2006). Ezrow et al. (2011), on the other hand, found that mainstream parties respond to the changes in the mean voter position, whereas niche parties respond to the changes in the mean position of the party supporters.

This line of research on policy responsiveness has largely focused on preference congruence and examined how the changes in voter preferences affect party positions

(Adams et al. 2004; 2006; 2009). The findings of this literature suggest that, in general, when the electorate moves in a certain direction on the left-right scale, parties movein the same direction. Although this research has significantly contributed to our understanding of the voter-policymaker linkage, it has certain limitations. First, it has not addressed how the parties respond to the issue priorities of the public. Second, as will be explained below, due to the symbolic nature of the left-right semantics the change in left-right stances of both the parties and the voters do not fully reflect a change in issue stances in weakly institutionalized party systems.

More recent studies in the literature, on the other hand, adopt a broader approach in focusing on policy priorities, and examining how well those priorities are reflected in policymaking activities (Wlezien 1995; Jones and Baumgartner 2005). To explore the correspondence between public opinion and the political agenda, Jones et al. (2009) examine whether the issues prioritized by policymakers in different policy venues (speeches, hearings, bills, laws, budgets, etc.) match those issues prioritized by the general public in the US. From a similar perspective, Soroka and Wlezien (2005; 2010) extend these studies to UK and Canada and find that the public responds 'thermostatically' to budgetary decisions and that the government follows public preferences on spending. Hobolt and Klemmensen (2005; 2008) also analyze opinion policy linkage in UK and Denmark. Using executive speeches and budgetary data to measure "rhetorical and effective responsiveness", the authors find that policymakers are responsive to public preferences.

This large body of research is quite rich and satisfying for it suggests that there is strong representation. Yet, almost all of this research has focused on the United States

and a few other Western countries with strongly institutionalized party systems. We do not know whether these findings apply to the developing countries with weakly institutionalized party systems. To understand how weak party institutionalization and clientelism affects the responsiveness of policymakers, we need to focus on the dynamic relationship between these phenomena.

*Party System Institutionalization, Clientelism and Democratic Representation*

Party competition lies at the heart of democratic politics and political parties are considered indispensable for democracy. A sound connection between parties and voters is also crucial for a well-functioning democracy. In this regard, the institutionalization of party systems and parties is considered necessary for creating and maintaining this connection.

Mainwaring (1999, 22-39) and Mainwaring and Scully (1995) conceptualize four dimensions of party system institutionalization. First, compared to the less institutionalized party systems, institutionalized party systems exhibit more stable party competition. Second, in strongly institutionalized party systems, parties have strong roots in the society, and voters both feel strongly attached to the party and usually vote for the same party over different elections. This strong association between the voters and the party help to stabilize the party system.

According to Mainwaring and Torcal (2005), the parties' roots in the society and electoral volatility are intertwined since strong party roots lead to electoral stability. As voters cast their vote for the same party, there are fewer vote changes, and therefore

significant changes in the party composition are highly unlikely. When voters have weak roots, on the other hand, electoral change is unavoidable. The third factor is the attributing of legitimacy to the political parties. In strongly institutionalized party systems, political actors accord legitimacy to parties and view them as indispensable components of democratic politics.

Lastly, the institutionalization of the party system prevents ambitious leaders from subordinating the party organization to their interests, and parties gain independent status and value of their own (Huntington 1968, 12-24). If the party is the personal instrument of the leader or a small group of elites then the institutionalization of the party system will be incomplete (Janda 1980). Mainwaring defines party systems that are characterized by a low degree of institutionalization as fluid or weakly institutionalized party systems.

Mainwaring and Torcal (2005, 1) underline the lack of attention to the different characteristics of these two systems and point out the need for an alternative approach:

> *Most theoretical works on voters, parties, and party systems implicitly assume the context of the advanced industrial democracies, especially of the United States and Western Europe.. . .the literature on the advanced industrial democracies cannot account for important characteristics of party systems in democracies and semi-democracies in less-developed countries. Voters, parties, and party systems in less-developed countries are qualitatively different from those of the advanced industrial democracies. These differences demand a reconsideration of theoretical assumptions and lead to the necessity of rethinking theoretical problems. More work must be undertaken to rethink theories about party systems based on the distinctive*

*experiences of democracies and semi-democracies in less-developed*
*countries.*

In their study, Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) argue that party systems of new democracies and semi-democracies are significantly less institutionalized than those of the advanced industrial democracies. Until Mainwaring and his colleagues' research (Mainwaring and Torcal 2005; Mainwaring 1999; 1998; Mainwaring and Scully 1995), party system institutionalization has been neglected as a critical dimension for understanding party politics. This lack of scholarly attention was probably due to the uniform level of institutionalization in advanced Western countries.

This lack of attention to the less developed party systems might also stem from the fact that there had been a limited number of new democracies and semi-democracies until the 1980s (Mainwaring and Torcal 2005; Mainwaring 1999). Party competition in these countries was either non-existent or tightly constrained. With the third wave of democratization, party competition became an important aspect of democratic life in these countries. Therefore the authors urge scholars to pay attention to the dynamics of these newly established party systems and develop theoretical tools to analyze them.

The most appropriate way to develop these tools is to understand the rich literature on the developed industrial countries and to critically challenge and modify it in order to understand the parties and party systems of the democracies of the less-developed countries (Mainwaring 1999). Scholars also argue that weak party institutionalization has several significant effects on representation and electoral accountability (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). First, it is prone to creating anti-party politicians such as Hugo Chavez. Also weak party institutionalization has a negative

effect on electoral accountability as party labels do not have value voters cannot easily identify the responsible party officials.

Based on the four dimensions of party system institutionalization mentioned above, Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) underline three specific differences between institutionalized and weakly institutionalized party systems. The first difference is the high electoral volatility and low levels of electoral stability compared to the advanced industrial democracies.

Second, much of the scholarly work on party politics relies on the context of the institutionalized party systems, which have strong roots in the society and assumes that programmatic or ideological linkages form the basis of stable linkages between voters and parties. However, these assumptions do not hold for party systems in the developing democracies since ideological and programmatic linkages in these systems are quite weak. In this respect, weaker programmatic and ideological linkages between parties and voters lead to weaker party roots in the society.

The third difference between the strongly institutionalized and weakly institutionalized party systems is the prevalence of personalistic linkages between voters and politicians in the latter. In weakly institutionalized party systems, more voters base their voting decision on the personal appeals of the candidates, making ideology or programmatic appeals less important.

To sum up, thanks to the renewed scholarly attention, party system institutionalization and clientelism have been studied on a variety of aspects, such as their effect on partisanship (Dalton and Weldon 2007) and campaign finance (Booth and

Robbins 2010). Other studies have focused on regions such as Africa (Kuenzi, and Lambright 2001; Lindberg 2007), Latin America (Dietz and Myers 2007), East Europe (Bertoa 2014) and Asia (Croissant and Volkel 2010) and tried to determine the level of institutionalization. However, the relationship between clientelism, party system institutionalization and representation has been understudied.

It is widely accepted in the literature that programmatic citizen-politician linkage mechanisms and electoral competition based on programmatic policy proposals deliver better results for representation and are more acceptable to electoral constituencies than the clientelistic and charismatic linkage mechanisms (Kitschelt et al. 2010, 29). Similarly, scholars have argued that the combination of at least a moderately stable party system with programmatic alternatives creates the basis for a durable democracy with mass support (Huntington 1968; Linz and Stepan 1996). Clientelistic and personalistic linkage mechanisms, on the other hand, are usually considered to be detrimental to democratic representation.

Although the literature suggests a weak representational linkage in clientelistic and weakly institutionalized party systems, few studies have empirically tested this assumption. Luna and Zechmeister (2005) are among the few scholars who have actually empirically examined the relationship between party system institutionalization and representation. In their study, the authors argued that greater institutionalization of a party system enables representation, and that therefore, in these systems, individuals are more likely to link with parties on the basis of issues. In this respect, a high level of party system institutionalization leads to higher levels of representation. Similarly, when electoral competition is centered on individual candidates' qualities and personality,

politicians may rely less on their political parties' programmatic stances for electoral support. Therefore, politicians lack the incentive to create coherent and well-structured party platforms on which to compete. (Luna and Zechmeister 2005, 394).

The authors' findings lend some support to their argument. However, as they point out, their study is limited since their measure of representation is limited to a measure of issue congruence between party supporters and party legislators at a single point in time and does not consider policy output (Luna and Zechmeister 2005, 99). In addition, the wordings of the elite and mass survey questions were quite different which led the authors to make arbitrary choices and select variables that represent similar policy considerations. Lastly, their measures focus on the preferences instead of the priorities of the public and the policymakers.

An important strand of the literature relies on spatial models of voting, and tries to determine the policy congruence between voters and policymakers based on their stances on several issues summed under a single left-right dimension (Adams et al. 2004; 2006; 2009). As mentioned earlier, this research strategy might not be able to provide reliable results since the left-right semantics in weakly institutionalized party systems do not offer a reliable measure for policy preferences.

### *The Spatial Approach and its Usefulness in Weakly Institutionalized Party Settings*

Spatial models of voting behavior are one of the most significant and powerful approaches in terms of explaining voter-party relations. It is widely accepted that, ideological labels are an important component of programmatic party competition. They

provide shortcuts for the voters and help them to make informed choices when they go to the ballot box. Most studies that focus on the relationship between public opinion and policy responsiveness use the spatial approach, which relies on left-right placements of voters and parties. However, applying the same strategy to the weakly institutionalized party settings with clientelistic parties poses some serious problems and is very likely to create biased results.

The literature on voting behavior has been heavily relying on the assumption that voters and parties are programmatically connected. Research on proximity and directional voting, studies on left-right semantics (Fuchs and Klingeman 1990), social cleavage (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) and party realignments in the developed Western countries (Inglehart 1990) rely on this assumption.

Directional spatial models differ from proximity spatial models. According to the directional proximity approach, voters choose candidates or parties on the basis of positional congruence. However, citizens cast their vote not according to their proximity on the left-right scale, but rather according to the parties' ideological orientation on a few issues about which voters care the most (Rabinowitz and MacDonald 1989).

Other major strands of the literature on parties implicitly assume programmatic or ideological voting. Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) famous social cleavage theory, for example, assumes that voters identify their interests in accordance with their social class, religion, ethnicity or nationality, as well as urban/rural residence.

All of these theories overlook the non-programmatic and non-ideological motivations that voters might have (Kitschelt 2000). First, voters might make their

voting decision on the basis of clientelistic goods instead of programmatic goods. In this case, voters may choose a politician that is ideologically further away from his position, yet offers a clientelistic good which can significantly advance his material interest. Second, these theories also overlook the fact that voting might be personalistic instead of programmatic.  Again in this case, voters may cast their votes not on the basis of ideological or programmatic preferences but rather because of sympathy for the personal traits of the candidates. This type of voting behavior inevitably weakens the bonds between the voter and the party.

According to Kitschelt et al. (2010), ideological labels may have at least two components: symbolic and substantive. The symbolic component references political groups without being associated with the policy stances of those groups. Since the political groups associated with the symbolic component are usually political parties, this component is also labeled as partisan (Kitschelt et al. 2010, 61-62).

As opposed to the symbolic or partisan component, the substantive ideological label reflects the cleavages in the society. In this context, a left-right divide also enables scholars' ability to predict a person's stance on a variety of issues. For example, one can make a prediction about an individual's policy stance on social policy simply by looking at his left-right placement.  However, the usefulness of the left-right semantics depends on the interconnectedness between parties' or politicians' policy stances on key issues, and their willingness or ability to place their party on the left-right dimension. (Kitschelt et al. 2010, 62). When this linkage is strong, the programmatic content of the left-right semantic will be more useful. If a symbolic component dominates, then the utility of left

right labels for guiding programmatic vote choice in that country is diminished; the use of left-right would signal only a party name.

In party settings that are programmatically structured, the substantive component is dominant. In the Turkish context, the connection between left-right semantics and party policy positions is often weak and sometimes reversed (Aydogan and Slapin, forthcoming), which makes it harder to establish a programmatic connection between parties and voters.

### *Turkey as a Case of Weak Party Institutionalization and Clientelism*

Based on the above definitions and arguments, Turkey presents an excellent example of weak party institutionalization and clientelism. According to the Democratic Accountability and Citizen-Politician Linkages dataset created by Kitschelt (2013), the governing Justice and Development Party is ranked as the most clientelistic party among 506 parties from around the world. Furthermore, 5 out of the 7 Turkish parties in the dataset were above the mean clientelism score.

Turkey is also a relevant example in terms of the personalistic linkage mechanisms. Since the founding of the AKP, Tayyip Erdogan has been its leader and he has also served as Turkey's prime minister. President Erdogan is renowned for his charismatic leadership style. During his tenure, AKP campaigns have largely relied on Erdogan's personality traits, such as being a man of his word, honest, and fearless. His personal charisma has been one of the main reasons for the AKP's success (Sambur 2009).

This quantitative evidence along with the qualitative literature presents the clientelistic nature of Turkish politics. We can therefore see that Turkey is a perfect case study to investigate the representation and responsiveness in a weakly institutionalized party setting. The following chapter will present additional data and explain in detail the choice of this country.

By examining the impact of weak party institutionalization and clientelism on representation and responsiveness, this dissertation represents a significant departure from the current literature and makes several contributions. First, it introduces a novel dataset using a wide range of activities. Unlike most studies, which employ roll call data to analyze the responsiveness of the legislators or legislative parties, my study employs a variety of legislative data including laws, parliamentary bills and oral questions.

This rich dataset enables us to analyze the preferences and motivations of the parties and offers a better way to measure strategic party choice. While roll call data can be useful to uncover parties' positions for particular dimensions such as left-right or government-opposition, it is less effective at measuring party priorities on each issue. In addition, the utility of the roll-call analysis outside the US, and especially in the European democracies, is highly questionable (Hug 2009; Carruba et al. 2006). This dataset has the potential to fill a huge gap by providing researchers institutional data on a transitioning democracy. In addition, it uses a common coding scheme applied in 18 countries, ensuring the comparability of the findings with the relevant literature. Also, this measurement strategy and data are more likely to create reliable results than the measures that rely on left-right policy stances.

Second, it goes beyond a limited type of governmental activity. So far, most of the studies on opinion-policy responsiveness have used budgetary data and executive speeches (Wlezien 2003; Hobolt and Klemmensen 2005). Although useful, this approach is limited.  Policymaking consists of a series of stages, spanning from agenda setting to enactment. Constraining the policy activities to only budgetary data limits our understanding of policy responsiveness. It also ignores the role of the opposition parties in the policy making process.

Discounting the role of opposition activities inside the legislature prevents scholars from seeing the full picture regarding party competition. Although in parliamentary democracies most opposition activities seem to be inconsequential in terms of producing legislation, they provide a unique forum in which the government is forced to respond directly to the issues and framing of those issues as predominantly raised by opposition parties (Green-Pedersen 2010). In this context, as Hall (1996, 29) argues, "the view that position taking and other forms of symbolic action are irrelevant politically simply because they are inconsequential legislatively, is difficult to justify unless one's sole concern is the prediction of outcomes, not the practice of representation".

Third, in terms of the empirical analyses, it offers an alternative method to measure party preferences that is theoretically more relevant. Instead of using all mentions in the manifestos, we focus on those sentences which propose a clear, tangible policy proposal and code these sentences according to their specific policy area. This way, we are able to measure the true priorities of the parties.

Fourth, this dissertation broadens our understanding of opinion-policy responsiveness by moving beyond developed Western countries. So far, almost all studies that investigate the opinion-policy linkage focus on developed Western countries with highly institutionalized party systems and dominantly programmatic parties. However, as the literature on programmatic and clientelistic parties suggest (Epstein 2009; Kitschelt 2011; Kitschelt and Singer 2011), parties in weakly institutionalized party systems tend to use clientelistic linkages to gain office. In other words, unlike programmatic parties, who appeal to the general public with programmatic proposals and by offering "public goods," clientelistic parties focus on narrow sets of constituencies and rely on selective incentives and club goods. In this respect, this dissertation rigorously tests the claim that the clientelistic linkage mechanism employed by parties insulates the policymakers from the policy priorities of their constituents since non-policy, selective benefits are substituted for the collective, policy-based benefits (Epstein 2009).

Lastly, my dissertation fills an important gap by bridging the two literatures that examine how well representation works. Bringing together the research on opinion-policy and program-policy linkage, this dissertation offers a broader approach to the issue of representation. Previous studies have treated these two mechanisms as different, when in reality the parties' political agendas are jointly determined by these two forces (Vliegenhart et al. 2013; Froio et al. 2013).

To sum up, in order to estimate the effect of weak party institutionalization and clientelism on the dynamics of representation, this dissertation will focus on the following questions:

I.      Are parties in weakly institutionalized party systems responsive to the priorities of the general public?

II.     Are parties responsive to their electoral mandate when they are in the parliament?

III.    Is there any variance between parties in terms of their level of responsiveness to the public opinion and their party platform?

To address these questions, I collected an original dataset which contains over 13000 parliamentary documents (laws, parliamentary bills and oral questions) and over 10000 manifesto sentences as well as the most important problem question of public opinion surveys for a period of 11 years. In order to obtain measures of public preferences, party preferences and party issue focus in the legislature, these documents have been hand-coded according to the common coding scheme of the Comparative Agendas Project. These measures enable us to analyze how well representation works in a weakly institutionalized party system. Our results will show that the policymakers in these systems can be responsive to the general public opinion and their electoral mandate, but there is variation between parties. Also the results show that the measurement of party preferences matters in terms of revealing the true degree of responsiveness.

The organization of this dissertation is as follows: Chapter two presents Turkey as a case for studying representation and responsiveness in a weakly institutionalized party setting. This chapter explains the emergence and evolution of the Turkish party system, and underlines the causal reasons for its weak party institutionalization and clientelism. This chapter also pays specific attention to the ruling AKP, tracing its roots to the emergence of political Islam in Turkey. The causes and consequences of this process and

its effects on representation are also discussed. This chapter aims to make the reader familiar with the Turkish politics from the onset of Turkish democracy until today. The chapter also underlines the clientelistic nature of Turkish party politics and provides qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding clientelistic linkage mechanisms.

Chapter two also discusses the data collected in order to familiarize the reader with parliamentary procedures in Turkey. I also discuss, in more detail, the selection of the documents to be coded (laws, bills and oral questions), the training of the coders, and procedures followed during the process. This chapter also presents information about the Comparative Agendas Project as well as the Turkish Policy Agendas Project under which the data was collected.

Chapters three, four and five are the empirical chapters of the dissertation. Chapter three focuses on the relationship between public opinion and policy activities. This chapter analyses how well the priorities of the public is reflected in various policy-making channels and whether there is variance in terms of representation across different channels.

Chapter four repeats the same analyses at the party level. Previous studies have shown that parties may differ in terms of their level of responsiveness to public opinion. Especially niche parties tend to be less responsive to general public opinion. Based on these findings, this chapter examines the opinion-policy linkage at the party level and tries to uncover the variance among different parties (Ezrow 2010).

Chapter five further develops the empirical analyses by analyzing how parties respond to their electoral mandate as well as to the general public opinion. This chapter

convincingly shows that parties not only pay attention to the priorities of the public, but also focus on their electoral pledges. This chapter also offers an alternative approach to analyzing the relationship between party mandates and legislative activities. Chapter six concludes by summarizing the main findings, suggesting new venues for further research, underlining the weaknesses and strengths of the current literature.

**Chapter 2: Introducing the Case and the Data**

This chapter introduces Turkey as an example of weak party institutionalization and clientelistic linkage mechanisms. It starts with the history and evolution of Turkish parties and explains the factors that created the weakly institutionalized party system. This chapter also elaborates on the clientelistic appeals of the Turkish parties, reviews the relevant literature, and discusses the dynamics that led to the establishment of clientelistic linkage mechanisms between voters and parties. The chapter pays specific attention to the ruling AKP and traces its roots to the pro-Islamic party tradition which started in 1960s. I also present evidence from a recent dataset that ranks AKP as the most clientelistic party among 506 parties in 80 electoral democracies.

The second part of this chapter presents the data that are collected and coded for this dissertation. In this respect, I discuss the data collection and coding process as well as the common coding system of the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP).

*The Emergence and Evolution of Turkish Parties*

The history of modern Turkish politics dates back to the 19th century when the *Tanzimat Reform* was accepted in 1839. This series of reforms was inspired by European ideas and intended to transform the empire from the old system based on theocratic principles to that of a modern state. The adoption of the *Tanzimat* and the civic equality it

promised paved the way for the formation of the New Ottoman Society in 1865 which later became the famous Society for Union and Progress (Ittihat ve Terakki) in 1889. The prominent members of the Society were called "Young Turks" which was also used to define the political movement that aimed to replace the absolute monarchy of the Ottoman Empire with a constitutional monarchy.

Following the adoption of the 1876 constitution, which was the first constitution written in accordance with the European model, the country experienced short periods of partisan competition between 1908-1912 and 1918-1919. These brief episodes of electoral and party activity were interrupted by the absolute rule of Sultan Abdulhamit II (1876-1908) and military dictatorship of the Committee of Union and Progress (1913-1918).

Party politics during the last years of the Ottoman Empire were deeply affected by the religious and the ethnic divides in the society. During the Young Turk period, parties were clustered around three ideologies which reflected the divisions in the society: Turkism, Ottomanism and Islamism (Rustow 1996). Turkism was largely supported by the Young Turks and was based on Pan-Turkic ideas, whereas the supporters of Islamism argued that the Empire could only survive through the union of Muslim nations. Ottomanism, on the other hand, relied on the idea of equal citizenship regardless of ethnic and religious background.

After the defeat in the First World War, the Empire lost almost all of its non-Muslim territories. This inevitably led to the disappearance of the Ottomanism ideology. Further, the invasion of the Arabian Peninsula by the British and French forces left the

empire with Anatolia whose population was dominantly Muslim and Turkish. In this respect, the result of the First World War deeply affected the ideological base of the party competition as Turkism came out as the strongest ideology (Rustow 1996).

After the end of the war, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who was one of the few victorious generals in the Ottoman army, started the War of Independence. Almost three years of national resistance resulted in a Turkish victory which strengthened the position and reputation of Ataturk. After the war, Ataturk formed the People's Party which was renamed the Republican People's Party (CHP) after the abolition of the sultanate. The Six Arrows in the party flag represented the six ideological tenets of the party: republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, revolutionism, and etatism. These six tenets were written into the party program in 1935 and into the Constitution in 1937 and in a sense, became the official ideology of the Turkish Republic.

After Ataturk's death, his close friend Ismet Inonu assumed the leadership of the CHP. The single party rule was continued by Inonu until the end of the Second World War. After the war, transition to democracy was inevitable as Turkey wanted to be a member of the NATO and strengthen its ties with the Western world against the manifest threat of aggression from Soviet Russia. However, the established bureaucracy and CHP elites did not welcome the idea of free electoral competition (Rustow 1996). An early election was called in 1946 with the aim to catch the newly founded Democratic Party of Adnan Menderes unprepared. In addition to the timing of the election, the irregularities in its conduct guaranteed the defeat of the DP.

As opposed to the 1946 elections, 1950 elections were fair and resulted in the resounding victory of the DP. The victory of the DP in the 1950 election and Inonu's decision to respect the results of the election marks the beginning of a new era of multi-party competition in Turkey. The period following the transition to democracy had also introduced several factors that eventually led to the weak party institutionalization. Sayari (2008) defines three non-electoral sources of weak party institutionalization in Turkey: military interventions, party closures by the constitutional court and frequent party switching.

*Military Interventions and Party System Change*

Military interventions can be considered as one of the most significant sources of party system instability in Turkey. Since the transition to democracy in the late 1940s, Turkey has experienced three military coups (1960, 1971 and 1980) and two indirect interventions. Although electoral politics and party competition have survived these military interventions, the party system became more unstable. The Turkish military did not have the ambition to directly rule the country through a military dictatorship, therefore, the military interregnums in Turkish politics have been relatively short. After the 1960 coup, the military remained in power for seventeen months. It took almost two years to return to the civilian life after the 1971 coup, and the longest period was three years after the 1980 coup. Although the military officials returned to their posts after each coup, they also made sure to secure reserved domains through which they were able to influence the government. Military generals often sought to use their influence in the

name of defending the country's territorial integrity as well as its constitutional order (Sayari 2008).

Turkey experienced its first military coup in 1960. The coup was the result of a highly polarized political system, the oppression of the opposition through government force, the discontent of the military with the DP administration, and military's close ties with the opposing CHP. The escalation of the political conflict between DP and CHP accompanied by student protest demonstrations in Ankara and Istanbul against the government led to a bloodless military coup. The 1960 coup was conducted by junior officers, and the majority of the military committee was formed by colonels and majors.

The 1960 coup had several significant effects on the Turkish party system. The most important impact was the dissolution of the DP, which governed the country for 10 years, and the banning of its leaders from political activities. DP could be considered the driving force of the early democratization efforts, and it not only had popular support, but also led the process of rapid party organization.

The banning of the nation's largest party that had an average of 52 percent electoral support caused a significant damage to the party system. The period right after the military coup witnessed the trial of the entire parliamentary group of DP, execution of its leader Adnan Menderes along with two other cabinet ministers, and banning many of its members from political activities. This military strategy was designed to engineer the party system from above, and it had disruptive consequences leading to considerable instability in the early 1960s (Sayari 2008).

The DP's sudden disappearance from the political arena created a big gap in Turkish politics, especially in the center right. As a result, several new parties claiming to be the inheritor of the DP were founded. The strongest of these parties, the Justice Party (AP), came out as the victor in this competition and secured the loyalties of the former DP. Apart from wiping one of the two major parties from the political arena, the military junta also changed the electoral system and the constitutional rules regarding party competition. Until the coup, the electoral system was based on a plurality system with multi-member electoral districts. The new constitution, which was drafted by a constituent assembly formed by the military junta, altered the electoral law from plurality to proportional representation based on the largest average d'Hondt formula. This change expectedly benefited the small parties and increased their chance of getting seats in the parliament. In the switch from plurality to the PR system created factional split inside the major parties. As a result of the increased fragmentation in the party system, in the 1961, elections four parties with a vote share of 10 percent or more entered the parliament. The new structure of the parliament marked the end of an era where single party governments were dominant and started a period of coalitions.

The 1960 coup also widened the spectrum of the ideologies in the political arena. Thanks to the expansion of the civil liberties by the newly drafted 1961 constitution, radical left and right parties were able to compete in the elections. In the 1965 elections, the newly formed extreme left Marxist Turkish Labor Party (TIP) entered the parliament. After four years, the radical right gained parliamentary representation through the Nationalist Action Party (MHP). The late 1960s also witnessed the founding of the pro-

Islamist National Order Party (MNP) along with the Unity Party (BP) which aimed to represent the rights of the Alawi citizens.

The 1960 military intervention did not fully eradicate the party system and the party base of the DP as the newly formed JP inherited the party organization and the electoral support of the DP. However, the coup seriously hampered the institutionalization of the party system and paved the way for future military interventions. To sum up, the 1960 military coup had been a major source of party system change. It lead to the transition from a two party system to a multi-party electoral competition and expanded the ideological spectrum in the political arena.

The second military coup in modern Turkish history took place in 1971 in the form of a military memorandum. This time the main reason for the military coup was the growing radical left activism in the military and the factional conflict caused by it. To avoid a possible coup by the factions inside the military who became increasingly discontent with the government policies, the army issued a memorandum and asked the then Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel to resign and dissolve the government immediately. Unlike the 1960 coup, the Parliament was not closed. Instead, the military closely oversaw the political process through a civilian government formed by military backed technocrats. The two major parties, CHP and AP, continued to function and maintained their organizational structure, whereas two radical parties, the Marxist TIP and pro-Islamist MNP, were banned. The constitutional amendments of 1971 and 1973 led to the reversal of some progress that was achieved thanks to the 1961 constitution.

The third military coup took place in 1980 and led to the longest military rule since the beginning of multi-party politics. The years preceding the 1980 coup witnessed major political and economic crises, political violence and terrorism, and growing numbers of civilian deaths caused by social turmoil. The political and social situation was worsened due to the economic and financial crisis. These events paved the way for the military intervention and enabled the Junta leaders to make a case about the necessity of the intervention. According to the Junta members, the political parties were the main reason for the turmoil and crisis in the country, and therefore, they had to be banned and dissolved.

With all parties banned from politics, Turkey entered a new era of politics where military aimed to design the party system from above (Sayari 2008). This project involved the creation of a two party system with centrist parties, one of which was going to be led by a retired general. To make sure that no other parties entered the system, the military administration did not allow the newly formed parties with ties to parties of the pre 1980 era to compete in the 1983 parliamentary elections. However, the military permitted a third party with no link to the previously banned parties, the Motherland Party (ANAP) to enter the elections, thinking that it would not get a significant amount of the vote.

The election result revealed the miscalculation of the junta leaders, as ANAP secured the majority of the seats in the parliament. The two parties supported by the military failed to gather popular support and vanished from the political arena in the

following years. In addition to this failure, the leaders of the pre-1980 parties won their political rights through a referendum in 1987 and resumed their political life.

Although the military failed to design the political system, its policies had significant impact on the party system. The military coup led to the emergence of a new party (ANAP) that dominated the political arena by ruling the country through a single party government from 1983 to 1991. Whether ANAP could have attained a large number of popular votes if the 1980 military coup had not happened remains a puzzle (Sayari 2008). Obviously, the coup led to the transformation of the party system from polarized to moderate pluralism and paved the way for single party governments ending the era of coalitions. Moreover, splits in the center right and left emerged. The center right, which was dominated by AP until 1980, ended up with two rival parties: ANAP and the newly formed True Path Party (DYP). The center left, which was dominated by CHP, ended up with two parties: the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) and the Democratic Left Party (DSP). These splits in center left and right politics were a product of the military's political design project rather than the social cleavages in the society (Sayari 2008).

To sum up, the instability caused by the military interventions and the military's attempts to ban most of the political parties led to high levels of volatility, reduced levels of party identification among the electorate and the undermining of the organizational strength of the major political parties which resulted in a weakly institutionalized party system (Sayari 2007). Moreover, the military regime adopted a new electoral law after the 1980 coup, introducing a 10 percent electoral threshold in an attempt to reduce the fragmentation of the party system and curb anti-system parties. Even this new law could

not prevent the high level of fragmentation, as five to six parties, of relatively equal strength, made it to the parliament in the 1991, 1995, and 1999 elections.

*The Impact of Party Closures*

The second major non-electoral source of party system instability in Turkey was the banning of the political parties by the Constitutional Court. Turkey's Constitutional Court is the principal institution that has the authority to oversee the activities of the political parties. Since its establishment in 1962, the court has closed 25 political parties. Six of these took place between 1962 and 1980; 19 parties were closed in the period from 1983 to 2014. The 1990s in particular witnessed an increase in the number of parties that were banned.

This highly restrictive tendency of the Constitutional Court during the 1990s was not surprising as this was a period of heightened pro-Kurdish and pro-Islamist activism. The banning of the pro-Kurdish parties did not have a major impact in terms of parliamentary representation since they managed to enter the parliament only after the 2007 elections. The closing of the pro-Islamist parties, on the other hand, did have significant impact on the political process and led to radical changes. For example, the vote share of the FP decreased to 15.4 percent (compared to RP's 21.4 percent). According to Sayari (2008) this decrease stemmed from the "wasted vote syndrome" which is caused by the unwillingness of the electorate to vote for a party that faces the prospect of being banned again.

*Party Switching*

Party switching by elected representatives is the third important non-electoral source that led to weak party institutionalization. The level of party switching has varied greatly since the beginning of multi-party competition. From 1946 to 1980, the average rate of party switching was 10 percent. During this period, the volatility reached its peak in the 1960s as the 22, 21, and 23 percent of the representatives elected in the 1961, 1965, and 1969 elections respectively abandoned their parties. The number of representatives who switched their party affiliation was 92 (out of 400) in the parliament following the 1969 election (Sayari 2007).

The level of party switching increased even more in the 1980s and 1990s. During the period between 1983 and 2002, the rate of party switching was 32 percent. The number of party switchers reached its peak in the 1995-1999 parliament when 260 out of 550 (47 percent) legislators changed their parties (Sayari 2008). Table 2.1 shows the electoral volatility in Turkey between 1987 and 2002, whereas Table 2.2 shows the governments formed after the 1980 military coup, which illustrates the instability in the 1990s and relative stability in the post 2002 AKP era.

**Table 2.1 Electoral Volatility in Turkey 1987–2002 (in percentages)**

| Period | Total Volatility | Intra-bloc Volatility | Inter-bloc volatility | Inter-bloc volatility as percentage of total volatility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1987-91 | 18.1 | 16.2 | 1.9 | 10 |
| 1991-95 | 15.3 | 8.2 | 7.1 | 46 |
| 1995-99 | 19.3 | 11.8 | 7.5 | 39 |
| 1999-2002 | 50.2 | 34.7 | 15.5 | 30 |
| Mean | 25.7 | 17.7 | 8.0 | 31.2 |

**Source: Sayari (2007:200)**

**Table 2.2: Governments in Turkey, 1983-2012**

| Period | Type of Government | Governing Party/Parties | Prime Minister |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dec1983–Dec1987 | Single party/majority | ANAP | Ozal |
| Dec 1987–Sep 1989 | Single party/majority | ANAP | Ozal |
| Sept 1989–June 1991 | Single party/majority | ANAP | Akbulut |
| June 1991–Dec 1991 | Single party/majority | ANAP | Yilmaz |
| Dec 1991–June 1993 | Coalition/majority | DYP, SHP | Demirel |
| June 1993–Oct 1995 | Coalition/majority | DYP, SHP | Ciller |
| Oct 1995 | Single party/minority | DYP | Ciller |
| Oct 1995–March 1996 | Coalition/majority | DYP, CHP | Ciller |
| March 1996–June 1996 | Coalition/majority | ANAP, DYP | Yilmaz |
| June 1996–June 1997 | Coalition/majority | RP, DYP | Erbakan |
| June 1997–Jan 1999 | Coalition/majority | ANAP, DSP, DTP | Yilmaz |
| Jan 1999–May 1999 | Single party/minority | DSP | Ecevit |
| May 1999–Nov 2002 | Coalition/majority | DSP, ANAP, MHP | Ecevit |
| Nov 2002–Aug 2007 | Single party/majority | AKP | Gul, Erdogan* |
| Aug 2007-June 2011 | Single party/majority | AKP | Erdogan |
| June 2011- Aug 2014 | Single party/majority | AKP | Erdogan |
| Aug 2014- | Single party/majority | AKP | Davutoglu |

*Gul served as the Prime-Minister for a brief period (3 months).

**Source: Turkish Grand National Assembly website**

*The Rise of Pro-Islamic Parties and Emergence of the AKP*

The AKP's roots can be traced back to the National Order Party (MNP) which was formed by Necmettin Erbakan in 1970. MNP is considered the first party with clear Islamic credentials. Only after one year of its establishment, the party was banned by the Constitutional Court following the 1971 military intervention. However, the National Salvation Party (MSP) was formed by the same leadership in 1973. MSP remained a mid-sized niche party in the 1970s with its vote share never exceeding 12 percent. Despite its moderate size, MSP managed to be a crucial player in coalition politics between 1973 and 1980 by taking advantage of the parliamentary arithmetic and inherent hostilities between rival parties.

Erbakan served as the deputy prime minister in the Ecevit (center-left) and Demirel (center-right) governments. Following the military coup in 1980, the party was closed down again and returned to the political arena under the name of the Welfare Party (RP). The Welfare Party managed to get 7.2 percent of the votes in the 1987 national election. Allying with the far right Nationalist Action Party, the party increased its vote share to 16.9 percent in 1991. The 1990s was a period of rapid rising for the party. The two biggest cities of Turkey, Istanbul and Ankara, elected RP mayors, and the party won over 19 percent of the national vote. December 1995 elections marked the peak for the Welfare party as the party increased its vote share to 21.4 percent and secured 158 seats, becoming the largest party in the Turkish Parliament.

The nature of the RP's success had been largely debated. Although the party had successfully combined religious and non-religious appeals, its Islamist background and

unclear rhetoric about the restoration of a new government system based on sharia law led rival parties, as well as the media, to focus on this dimension of the party.

To be more specific, RP's 1995 campaign platform called the then current political system a "fraud" and a "dark-room regime" and declared its intention to establish a genuinely pluralistic democracy. Despite the party's mention of a pluralistic democracy, scholars argued that the version of democracy it envisaged was more majoritarian than pluralistic (Ozbudun 2006). Also the party leaders' loyalty to democratic politics was questioned as Erbakan and other party leaders often stated that democracy was not the aim, but only a means to achieve the ultimate goal of establishing the "order of happiness"—a reference to the time of Prophet Mohammed. In terms of economic policies, RP offered a third way as an alternative to socialism and capitalism: just order (adil duzen).

In foreign policy, RP's Islamist ideology was clearly identified. The party advocated closer ties with other Islamic countries, an Islamic common market, and Islamic versions of the prominent international organizations such as NATO and UNESCO (Ozbudun 2006). The Party's rhetoric in terms of foreign policy was heavily anti-Western and anti-Zionist. Also, RP leadership opposed Turkish membership in the European Union, describing it as a Christian Club.

After the victory in the 1995 elections, RP formed a coalition with the center right True Path Party (DYP), and Erbakan became the prime minister. Soon after the formation of the coalition, tensions emerged between the military and the bureaucratic elites and the government. Later in the process, universities and prominent civil society organizations

joined the alliance against the RP-DYP Coalition, claiming that RP's true aim was to abolish secularism and to establish a religious state.

Problems became more visible after the infamous National Security Council meeting on February 1997, where the military generals harshly criticized the government and demanded dramatic measures to curb the effect of religion in the public sphere. Some of the demands included: banning of the religious cults, closing down the middle school part of the Imam-Hatip schools which offer religious in addition to modern education, transferring the administration of the Qur'anic courses to the Ministry of National Education, and maintaining strict control over the dress code in government buildings, and public and private schools, as well as universities.

The following months did not show a decrease in tension between the military and the government. On June 1997, Prime Minister Erbakan resigned from his duty to give his place to his coalition partner Tansu Ciller hoping that this change would decrease the tension between the government and the military. However, in the process, 37 legislators resigned from DYP, and several of them formed a new party. With the resignations, the RP-DYP coalition lost its majority in the Parliament, and a new government was formed without these two parties. In the later years, the Secretary General of the National Security Council Tuncer Kilinc stated that the resignation of the DYP legislators prevented a military coup (Baki 2009).

After losing its place in the government, RP was eventually banned by the Constitutional Court on the grounds of violating the secularist principals of the Turkish Constitution. Interestingly, the European Court of Human Rights also upheld the Court's

decision. Following the ban, the Virtue Party (FP) replaced RP. Since Erbakan was also barred from politics for a period of five years, Recai Kutan, who was a close associate of Erbakan, became the party leader. FP's political life was also rather short as the Constitutional Court closed it down in 2001 for similar charges. The closing down of the Virtue Party also started the process that eventually led to the founding of the AKP. Unlike the previous bans in the history of the Islamist Party, the FP split into two factions: "innovationists" (yenilikciler) and "traditionalists" (gelenekciler).

The innovationists founded the AKP under the leadership or Recep Tayyip Erdogan in August 2001. The traditionalists, on the other hand, founded a new party called the "Felicity Party" (SP) led by the former leader of the banned FP. After almost 15 months since its founding, the AKP managed to get the 34.3 percent of the votes and two-thirds of the parliamentary seats, whereas the SP could only get 2.5 percent. Although the party's number of seats was inflated due to the country's imbalanced election system and the high electoral threshold (10%), the 2002 election result was considered a huge success for AKP. The subsequent government formed by AKP was the first single party government since 1991.

To sum up, the pro-Islamic parties have been quite successful in terms of increasing their vote share despite the frequent interventions to the party system[1]. Clearly, the AKP represents a significant departure from the pro-Islamic party tradition both in terms of its vote share and its policies, and the post 2002 period of Turkish party politics deserves closer attention.

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[1] See the Appendix for the vote shares of the pro-Islamic parties over time.

*The Post 2002 Era: Rising Clientelism and Dominance of AKP*

The 2002 parliamentary elections marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Turkish party politics. The AKP has benefitted greatly from the diminishing popularity of its rivals in the 2002 parliamentary elections. The founders of the AKP were convinced that the pro-Islamist policies, and strategies were doomed to lead to the banning of the parties. Therefore they tried to differentiate the AKP from the SP by moderating its ideological stance and party program. An illuminating example is the pro-European Union approach adopted by the party. While the Islamist parties led by Erbakan had been strongly opposed to the EU and considered it as a Christian Club, AKP emphasized strong support for EU membership and placed it at the center of its party program.

There were several reasons for AKP's ideological moderation and its electoral success. First of all, the previous experience showed that the strategies followed by Erbakan created tensions with the state elites, and adopting the same strategy would probably result in another ban. The joining of the several high profile center-right politicians from DYP and ANAP into the party also helped to attract many voters from the center right electorate. The popularity of AKP leader Tayyip Erdogan and his strong connection with the common people, especially the urban poor, also contributed to the AKP's success.

AKP also inherited the strong grassroots organization of the pro-Islamic party tradition and had large numbers of dedicated party activists. Financially it had the support of a growing number of conservative businessmen. The electoral victory of the AKP

coupled with the high election threshold, made it the dominant party in the Turkish party system. The consecutive electoral victories of the party not only strengthened its place in the Turkish party system, but also increased its influence in governmental institutions. This inevitably enabled good access to political patronage which is regarded as an important power to win elections in Turkey (Gumuscu 2012; Sayari 2007).

*Effective Use of Clientelism in Turkish Politics*

Studies on contemporary Turkish politics often make references to the clientelistic nature of elections in Turkey. The clientelistic behavior in Turkey shows itself in different shapes and forms. In the Eastern part of Turkey, for example, the tribal lords have traditionally been very powerful and commanded a large amount of the electorate, and therefore received government benefits in return for votes. In other parts, political parties have offered clientelistic goods to voters in exchange for electoral support. The Turkish media frequently reports news regarding the clientelistic politics. For example, during the 2008 election campaign, the media often reported on the distribution of household goods such as refrigerators and dishwashers by the local government officials to the residents of Tunceli, a poor province where AKP had failed to gain electoral success.

Although the AKP has been very successful in term of using clientelistic linkage mechanisms, clientelism is hardly a new phenomenon in Turkish politics. Historically, clientelism has been a part of society dating back even to the Ottoman era. With the emergence of the CUP, members of the prominent families entered the Ottoman

parliament. The CUP formed its party organization by relying on these influential members and systematically using patronage (Rustow 1996). After the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic, the CHP adopted a similar strategy and recruited the members of the leading local families as members of the parliament and leaders of the local party organization. Using these ties, the CHP was able to control the rural population via the local patrons who maintained clientelistic ties with their peasant clienteles (Sayari 2011). Although CHP used clientelistic ties, the lack of competitive elections prevented it from distributing clientelistic goods to large numbers of people.

After the beginning of multi-party elections in the late 1940s, clientelism had become a widely used electoral strategy and played a very significant role in Turkish politics. Two major parties CHP and DP largely relied on local patrons to mobilize the electorate and used their clientelistic relations to form the local party organizations (Sayari 2011). As parties strengthened their local and national organization, the distribution of benefits to the voters started to take place through these organizations instead of the traditional patron-client relations. In this respect, the distribution of state resources through party organizations for electoral support became an important tool for political parties (Ozbudun 1981). During the single party government of the DP, clientelism and patronage became an established component of Turkish politics.

The DP government was very successful in terms of using clientelism for electoral success. During its tenure, the party used its access to state resources to reward those who voted for it with electricity, new roads, water, and other public works. The DP administration also used these means to punish the opposition dominated areas by

withholding them. Other parties, which came to power after the DP, followed its example to varying degrees. Since the beginning of the multi-party competition, Turkish parties have used state resources for distributing to those who support them and depriving those communities that support rival parties. Employment in the public sector has traditionally been one of the most important sources of clientelism in Turkey. The use of the public sector employment has varied greatly from high-ranked positions in crucial state agencies to employment as workers in government-run industries.

An illuminating example regarding the extent of clientelism in Turkish politics is presented in the example of the Social Democratic Party which was the government partner between 1991 and 1993. During this time period, the party leader (and Deputy Prime Minister) Erdal Inonu received 110,889 personal petitions from the Turkish public. 33,795 of which (or 30.5 percent) asked for a job while another 7,740 (6.9 percent) requested monetary help (Schuler 1999).

Apart from public sector employment, Turkish parties have also used socioeconomic assistance, such as providing coal, food, or household appliances to the urban poor. Governing parties have also used lucrative government contracts as a means to gain the financial support of the business sector which was also used in distributing clientelistic goods.

To sum up, the nature and form of clientelism has changed significantly over time in Turkey. In early stages of the multi-party competition, clientelism was largely confined to the rural population. However, the rapid urbanization has created a class of urban poor combined with the strengthened party organizations at the local and national level paved

the way for large scale clientelistic politics. In order to gain the votes of this large social class, parties had to offer goods that will mitigate their socioeconomic problems. In this respect, the pro-Islamist parties have been more successful compared to their rivals. According to Sayari (2011, 13) the success of these parties largely relies on the fact that they were able to replace vertical ties of clientelism with frequent face-to-face interaction between party workers and their neighbors. This strong base of party workers, coupled with state resources, created a new network of clientelism which played a major role in AKP's success.

Although the fiscal crisis of 2001 and the strict IMF programs that put restrictions on government expenditures had reduced the resources for clientelism for the first years of the AKP government, the rapid economic growth and successful economic policies in the following years provided AKP the necessary means for clientelistic policies. The level of AKP's clientelistic politics is also evident from the number of green card holders. The Green Card program covers healthcare expenditures of those earning less than one-third of the minimum wage. The card is given after a thorough investigation and is renewed every year. In 1992, when the program was initiated, it covered only inpatient healthcare expenditures. In 2004, outpatient expenditures and in 2005, drug expenses were also included in the coverage (Erus and Aktakke 2011).

According to the answer provided to a parliamentary question that was directed to the Minister of Health, the number of green card holders increased from 10 million (in 2000) to 14.5 million (in 2007). However, the increase in the number of cardholders is not as striking as the increase in the expenses. The total amount spent for the program increased 18 times between 2000 and 2007.

It should be noted that the successful clientelistic policies of the AKP cannot be regarded as the sole reason for its electoral success. The weakness and fragmented nature of the opposition parties have also benefited the AKP. Center left CHP has been the main opposition party in the parliament since 2002. However, AKP's dominance in terms of seat shares marginalized the CHP in the parliament, and the party had little influence over the political outcomes. In addition to its weakness in numbers, CHP has also suffered from intra-party factionalism which further reduced the effectiveness of the party. Unable to affect the policymaking through parliament, the CHP relied on its historical ties with the military and civilian bureaucracy.

An acute example of CHP support for military influence is the infamous military manifesto which was uploaded to the official website of the Turkish Armed Forces in April 2007. In the manifesto, the army revealed its discontent with the direction towards which the country was heading and implied that it would not hesitate to intervene if it felt that the secular state was in danger. In the following days, CHP officials supported the memorandum instead of condemning it stating that they would also "sign the document".[2] AKP, on the other hand, condemned the memorandum and called for early elections which resulted in another victory for the party.

The qualitative literature on Turkish politics clearly presents the clientelistic nature of Turkish parties. However, additional information is needed in order to be able to assess the level of clientelism from a comparative perspective. In addition to the qualitative literature, there is also convincing quantitative evidence that strongly confirms the high level of clientelism.

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[2] For more details see: http://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/ilicak/2012/04/18/27-nisan-ve-chp

The Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project (DALP) offers a unique opportunity to compare the clientelistic linkage mechanisms in a large number of countries. The project was initiated and carried out by a group of investigators in the Political Science Department at Duke University. The research involves data collection in more than 80 electoral democracies. The expert surveys for data collection were done in 2008 and 2009.

The research instrument employed in the project is an expert survey that covers the extent to which democratic accountability proceeds through exchanges based on broad collective goods and large club goods, and on goods targeted to individuals and small groups in detail (Kitschelt 2011). The experts are consisted of scholars mostly from political science departments who are experts about their country's parties, campaigns, and elections since they teach or research these subjects in their professional life.

The clientelism score of individual parties is calculated by summing up the answers to five questions each of which measure a different aspect of clientelistic linkage mechanisms. [3] According to the DALP dataset, the governing AKP is the most clientelistic party in the dataset. The level of clientelism is striking considering that the dataset has over 500 parties. This quantitative evidence largely confirms the qualitative literature that underlines the clientelistic nature of Turkish party politics.

To sum up, the qualitative literature on Turkish politics as well as comparative quantitative evidence convincingly presents the weak party institutionalization and clientelism inherent in Turkish party politics. The second part of this chapter focuses on

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[3] See the Appendix for the five survey questions used to measure clientelistic linkage mechanisms.

the data that will be used to analyze the representational link between policymakers and the public in this highly clientelistic and weakly institutionalized party system.

### *The Data*

The data for this dissertation is collected and coded according to the common coding system of the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP). The original Policy Agendas Project was initiated by Bryan Jones and Frank Baumgartner in 1993. The project aims to provide better measurement of key concepts in the study of public policy. The difficulty to trace changes in policy activity within particular policymaking areas across longer periods of time had led the CAP scholars to create datasets which would provide consistent and reliable measures of policymaking activity within policy categories. The CAP framework enables researchers to rigorously assess the extent to which activities had changed from one time period to another.

CAP extends the original Policy Agendas Project topic system, developed for the United States, to other nations. The project classifies events (such as bills, parliamentary questions, executive speeches, media stories) for topic, makes it possible to study the frequency of such events, and enables detailed examination of particular events. The coding system consists of 21 major topics and over 200 subtopics. Table 2.3 presents the major topics of the CAP coding system. Extensive and detailed coding enables reliability in comparing issue attention, across different decision-making venues and between

nations.[4] While coding each item, the coders strictly followed the general guidelines of the CAP coding system.[5]

**Table 2.3: Main Topics of the Comparative Agendas Project**

1. Macroeconomics
2. Civil rights
3. Health
4. Agriculture
5. Labor
6. Education
7. Environment
8. Energy
9. Immigration
10. Transportation
12. Internal affairs and justice
13. Social policy
14. Housing
15. Commerce and industrial policy
16. Defense
17. Science and technology
18. Foreign trade
19. International affairs
20. Government and public administration
21. Public lands and water management
23. Culture

*Note: There are no topics coded under 11 and 22 according to the CAP coding system*

To measure public priorities, we relied on the "most important problem question" of the public opinion surveys. Party manifestos were used to measure parties' issues priorities before they enter the parliament.

In accordance with the coding scheme of the CAP project, we collected and content coded the laws, parliamentary bills and oral questions for the period between

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[4] For more information see: http://www.comparativeagendas.info/
[5] See the Appendix for the important guidelines that are originally determined by the American Policy Agendas Project (PAP Codebook 2014: 3-4) and directly taken from the project's website.

2002 and 2013. Table 2.4 shows the number of observations for each policymaking channel. Together these datasets include more than 13.000 records. The data were gathered from the Turkish Grand National Assembly's (TGNA) website as well as from various staff members of the parliament.[6] To code parliamentary questions and laws, we have used their title. The titles of the oral questions and laws are usually long and detailed which enable easy coding. In those situations where the title was not enough to understand the content of the question, we have referred to the actual document which is available in the Parliament's website. For the parliamentary bills, we have used the short summaries of the parliamentary bills.

**Table 2.4: Policy Making Channels**

| Policy Making Channel | |
|---|---|
| Laws | ~1,700 |
| Parliamentary bills | ~3,500 |
| Oral questions | ~8,300 |

Each law, bill, question, and manifesto sentence is coded according to the relevant issue area giving a measure of aggregate issue attention of various actors. For example, if a bill is related to the issue of crime, the coders code it to the category 12 as well as to the relevant sub-category such as 1203. If it is related to government operations, it is coded

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[6] Some documents were provided as pdf documents. To transform these to excel files, we have used a custom made text parsing program. For text parsing, text was extracted to 'txt' files from 'pdf' files by using acrobat reader (http://get.adobe.com/reader/). To analyze the data, text was reformatted and standardized to excel format. For this purpose, a simple interface was designed by using C# programming language in Visual Studio (2010) (http://www.visualstudio.com/). This tool read the files and created the columns to analyze the data in excel.

to category 20 etc. To illustrate, Table 2.5 presents sample bill summaries along with the

main topic and sub topic assigned to them.

**Table 2.5 Sample Bill Coding**

| Party | The Short Summary of the Bill | Subtopic | Main Topic |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------|------------|
| AKP | The bill proposes school supplies and medical drugs to be exempt from the value-added tax. | 107 | 1 |
| BDP | The bill proposes the establishment of a commission on gender equality. | 202 | 2 |
| BDP | The bill proposes a change in the Turkish code of law in order to ensure the punishment of those who force the medical personnel into unlawful acts. | 324 | 3 |
| CHP | The bill proposes to postpone the credit debts of the farmers and farmer unions | 402 | 4 |
| CHP | The bill proposes the retirement age to be decreased to 50 for mine workers | 503 | 5 |
| MHP | The bill proposes to establish a new government university named "Adana Technical University". | 601 | 6 |
| CHP | In order to establish an educational system in OECD standards, this bill proposes the kindergarten to be compulsory for kids aged between 60 to 72 months. | 602 | 6 |
| CHP | This bill proposes that the environmental criminal court to have jurisdiction over all disputes that have to do with the environment. | 700 | 7 |
| CHP | The bill proposes to provide stimulus packages for industries using alternative energy resources such as solar, wind geothermal and biomass energy. | 802 | 8 |
| BDP | The bill proposes to provide free healthcare for immigrants and asylum seekers. | 900 | 9 |
| DSP | The bills proposes the public transportation to be free for students. | 1001 | 10 |
| CHP | The bill proposes changes in the criminal law in order to prevent the violence against women. | 1208 | 12 |
| AKP | The bill proposes harsher sentences for sexual harassment. | 1210 | 12 |
| CHP | This bill proposes providing monthly salary and free healthcare to families with handicapped members. | 1304 | 13 |

**Table 2.5 Continued**

| Party | The Short Summary of the Bill | Subtopic | Main Topic |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------|------------|
| MHP | The bill proposes the recording of every phase in the construction of a building and provides a "building identity card" to ensure close inspection. | 1400 | 14 |
| MHP | The bill proposes new regulations for the foundation, business and inspection of retail companies. | 1521 | 15 |
| CHP | The bill prohibits banks to charge customers annual credit card fees or account fees. | 1504 | 15 |
| CHP | The bill proposes to provide a monthly "honor salary" to the veterans regardless of their social security status. | 1608 | 16 |
| CHP | The bill proposes a change in the electronic signature law in order to enable legal personalities to use electronic signature. | 1700 | 17 |
| AKP | The bill prohibits the usage of foreign currency in domestic trade. | 1808 | 18 |
| BDP | This bill proposes the attorneys with 18 or more years of experience to be given green passport. ** | 1929 | 19 |
| AKP | The bill proposes to give 5 days of leave of absence to government employees who lost their spouses, parents or siblings. | 2004 | 20 |
| AKP | The bill proposes allocating a certain share of the general budget to the city council and municipality | 2001 | 20 |
| MHP | The bill proposes the district of Kozan to become a province. | 2001 | 20 |
| CHP | The bill proposes to change the name of the "Sincanli" district (Afyon province) as "Sinanpasa". | 2001 | 20 |
| CHP | The bill proposes to lower the 10% national election threshold to %5. | 2012 | 20 |
| AKP | The bill proposes the Seyhan Lake area to be given a National Park status in order to protect the natural environment surrounding the lake. | 2101 | 21 |
| CHP | The bill proposes the "Madimak Hotel" to be redesigned and transformed into a museum and renamed as "Martyrs of Democracy Museum". | 2300 | 23 |

We have also content coded the election manifestos of the governing party (AKP) and the main opposition party (CHP) according to the same framework. We have also identified and coded the election pledges in each manifesto which led to the coding of more than 10000 manifesto sentences.[7] To code the manifestos, we have used the natural sentence rather than the quasi sentence (QS). The decision to use natural sentences instead of the widely used QS approach is based on the findings of Daubler et al. (2012).

Using QSs instead of natural sentences certainly offers a tradeoff. The main aim of the QS approach is to capture all relevant political information contained in the sentence and to identify multiple policy propositions. However, the identification of the QSs by human coders is highly unreliable. In this respect, if there is no meaningful difference in terms of the measured political content, natural sentences should be preferred to avoid the possible unreliability of human unitization (Daubler et al. 2012). By comparing the validity of expert-coded text analyses based on exogenous versus endogenous text units from a reanalysis of CMP manifestos, Daubler et al. (2012, 947) find the following:

> *Using natural sentences rather than quasi-sentences as units of analysis does not affect the validity of the classification of these units following deterministic unitization. Indeed, we demonstrated that endogenous unitization so rarely results in multiple and differently coded QSs within one natural sentence unit that even random allocation of codes to the larger natural sentence units resulted in essentially the same aggregate results – suggesting that the reliability of coding has little potential to be adversely affected by the switch to natural sentence units. The*

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[7] A detailed explanation of the coding of manifesto sentences and pledges is provided in Chapter 5.

*implication of these results for applying categorical coding schemes to political text is clear and simple. Natural sentences can be substituted for QSs to achieve a major gain in the reliability of text unitization without loss of validity. This implies that future text coding projects should dispense with endogenous text unitization by human experts as part of the coding process, and move to fully automated unitization based on natural sentence delimiters defined exogenously as part of the research design. Since our estimates suggest that substantive findings are unlikely to be affected by doing this, but reliability is likely to increase, the shift to natural sentence unitization could usefully be extended to the ongoing CMP and PA projects. Our analysis here implies that a substantial gain in reliability, efficiency and replicability can be achieved without sacrificing important substantive information in the texts under investigation.*

Following Daubler et al. (2012), I use natural sentences as the unit of analysis to avoid possible pitfalls of human text unitization. The four datasets have been coded by the same four coders. The coders went through about a month of intensive training in the coding system where examples and problems where discussed. Several rounds of reliability tests were then conducted where the four coders coded the same documents. The training was stopped when the level of inter-coder reliability had reached 85% at the sub-topic level. Coders were also continuously supervised through the coding process allowing them to ask questions about coding of specific activities. Finally, a special variable allowed coders to indicate cases where they were in doubt about the coding, and these cases were then checked and sometimes recoded by the supervisors. When a decision could not be made by the supervisors, we have requested help from the American Policy Agendas coding team.

As mentioned above, the data covers the period between 2002 and 2013. The decision for the time period was made due to a couple of reasons. First and foremost, there is no public opinion data available before 2002. This prevents us from conducting an analysis before 2002. Second, data availability is problematic for the period before 2000 since the online archiving of government documents is a relatively new phenomenon in Turkey. Third, the last ten years have seen less electoral volatility and more stability in terms of party competition as the same party is ruling the country for ten years, and the same parties entered the parliament in the last two elections. As pictured earlier, in the pre-2002 era, early elections and coalition breakdowns were almost an inherent feature of Turkish politics.

As mentioned earlier, the data uses three policymaking channels: laws, parliamentary bills, and oral questions to measure the issue focus of different actors. This research strategy enables us to adopt a broader approach in terms of representation and responsiveness and allows us to see the variation across different policymaking channels as well as different actors.

*Laws*

Laws are straightforward measures of the government agenda. They have direct influence on policy and therefore are considered reliable measures. Lawmaking is not only a tool for enacting substantive policy outputs, but also an opportunity for agenda setting and for signaling the priorities of policy makers (Bevan and Jennings 2013). The unification of executive and legislative powers in the Turkish political system, combined

with high levels of party discipline, suggests that there should be a close link between executive and legislative agendas and the other outputs of government. In other words, unlike coalition governments, single party government with a large parliamentary majority enabled AKP to pass almost any laws the cabinet wanted to pass. Free from the problems of complex coalition bargaining and without having to make compromises to coalition partners, the laws passed during AKP's tenure of government should reflect the government's preferred policies.

The data regarding laws has been collected from the TGNA website and from staff members when necessary. The coders used the long titles of the laws to code them into the relevant categories.

*Parliamentary Questions*

Legislation is an important function of the parliaments, however, in most countries, the legislative process and the laws are primarily dominated by governments (Ström et. al 2003). Therefore, legislative activities of opposition parties do not tell us much about their issue prioritizations.

There are several reasons that make parliamentary questions an ideal tool to measure the issue focus of parties. First of all, it should be noted that time is a scarce resource for the MPs. This scarcity should lead the MPs to be more careful in their legislative activities. MPs should be selective in which topics to bring about the parliamentary agenda. Along the countless number of issue topics, the MPs should make a strategic decision to opt out some issues and to pick others. In this regard, *continuous*

*issue prioritization under circumstances of scarcity turns the issues parties decide to address in parliament into a powerful instrument to reveal the mechanisms of parliamentary action* (Vliegenthart and Walgrave 2011).

Using parliamentary questions has several advantages in terms of the issue competition and selective emphasis approach. First, opposition parties are freer to ask the questions they see as being advantageous to them. Unlike roll call votes, parliamentary questions enable us to measure the true issue priorities of the opposition parties. There are very few structural limits to these questions (such as the word limits for oral questions), and opposition parties are free to ask the questions that will benefit them and potentially harm the government. Oral question can also be used for a variety of reasons. They are also widely used by the individual legislators as a means to represent their local interests and to exercise constituency service (Martin 2011).

Oral parliamentary questions provide an effective tool for government oversight by the TGNA. This right is based on the 98th article of the Turkish Constitution.  In Turkish politics, oral questions are widely used especially by the opposition parties. Both the oral, and the written questions are referred to the prime minister or the relevant minister by the speaker of the Turkish TGNA. Oral questions must not exceed 100 words and cannot have any attachments. According to the Rules of Procedure (RP) article 16, questions are put on the agenda five days after the referral date to the relevant ministry. A minimum of one hour at the beginning of each session of at least two working days of every week is reserved as a special time for oral questions. The prime minister or the relevant minister can answer the question within five minutes. The questioner may request additional information from her seat, and the spokesperson can use an additional

five minutes to answer the additional question(s). The spokesperson has the right to answer multiple questions jointly, provided that they are related.

*Bill Initiation Data*

Bill initiation data is also a valuable way to determine the attention of the opposition parties. In most parliamentary democracies, opposition parties do not have the power to influence the law-making process. Yet, MPs from opposition parties continue to propose bills or amendments to the bills proposed by the government. Although this seems like a futile effort, in reality, bill initiation is a convenient way of influencing the parliamentary agenda.

Although most opposition bills do not even make it to the floor, they provide valuable information to the constituents. In other words, opposition parties use bill initiation as a means to go on the record that they actually "care" about the issue, and they are striving to bring that issue to the parliamentary agenda. This way, opposition parties not only increase the saliency of the issue, but also build a record and send the constituents a "message." Brauninger and Debus (2009, 805) also underline the fact that bills are not only drafted for the sake of being enacted, but they are also intended to signal to voters that viable alternatives to the government's policy agenda exist. Similarly, intra-party factions or backbenchers within the governing parties may use bills to raise their profile and gain support from their constituents to enhance their chances of re-election (Brauninger and Debus 2009).

Every member of the TGNA has the right to propose legislation. The bill draft must have the signature of the initiator. The grounds for the proposal must also be included in the draft along with the text. The bills that have been rejected by the floor cannot be proposed one year after the rejection date.

### *Measuring Public Preferences*

To measure the preferences of the public, we use the most important problem survey question. The MIP question has been widely used in the literature to measure public preferences or public's attention as well as the broader public salience of issues (see McDonald et. al 2004; Jones and Baumgartner 2004; 2005; Pennings 2005). Survey organizations have been asking about the most important problem facing the nation for many years. Gallup first asked the question in the United States in 1935 and in the UK in 1947. The advantage of this survey question is that it has been asked in several polls and election surveys across the world and repeated over time. Thus, it can be used for cross-national and cross-temporal analyses. Moreover, it captures the public's prioritized concerns with different policy areas on the "popular agenda" (Pennings 2005, 34).

Despite its wide usage, the MIP measure is still debated in the literature and scholars argue that it is not the perfect measure for the public's preference for specific policies (see Wlezien 2005). Jennings and Wlezien (2011), for example, underline the difference between the most important problem and the most important issue questions. According to the authors, an important issue refers to something that people care about such as health, economy or education. Conceptually, a problem is different as it captures

the importance of an issue and the degree to which it is a problem. In this respect, something can be a problem but of little importance, and something can be important but not a problem. Both of these components are needed for something to be an important problem (Jennings and Wlezien 2011, 47). Although conceptually these questions seem to be different, the analysis of these measures shows that they are strikingly similar and capture the same things.

Despite all of its limitations, the most important problem question remains the best and oldest available indicator of the public's prioritization of the focus of government attention and activities on particular topics (Jennings and John 2009). It is confident to say that the MIP question at least provides a measure of what is in public's mind although we are not sure how well it corresponds to their preferences.

The policy priorities of citizens are estimated on the basis of the survey question, "What do you think is the most important problem facing our country today?" Respondents are asked to mention which policy problem they see as the most important and salient. The data for the MIP comes from the Eurobarometer surveys. Unfortunately, this survey question had not been asked regularly in Turkish public opinion surveys. Eurobarometer's poll question about the most important problem is the most continuous time series measure of public opinion in Turkey as the question has been asked since 2002. Before 2002, Eurobarometer did not administer this question in Turkey on a regular basis, and therefore, the data is not available.

To translate Eurobarometer polls into issue attention percentages, we followed three steps following Jones et al. (2009). First, we coded each answer according to the CAP main topics. Second, for each poll, we calculated the percentages of every issue

category. Finally, we aggregated the data annually by taking average values in those years where multiple polls were conducted. Table 2.6 shows the question wording and options for the most important problem question.

**Table 2.6: Eurobarometer Most Important Issue Question and Options**

| *What do you think are the two most important issues facing our country today?* |
| --- |
| 1. Crime |
| 2. Public Transportation |
| 3. Economic Situation |
| 4. Rising Prices/Inflation |
| 5. Taxation |
| 6. Unemployment |
| 7. Terrorism |
| 8. Foreign Affairs |
| 9. Housing |
| 10. Immigration |
| 11. Healthcare System |
| 12. The Educational System |
| 13. Pensions |
| 14. Protecting the Environment |
| 15. Energy Related Issues |
| 16. Government Debt |
| 17. Climate Change |
| 18. EU's influence in the World |
| 19. Other |
| 20. None |

*Summary*

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Turkish party system is weakly institutionalized and highly clientelistic. The frequent military interventions, banning of the political parties by the constitutional court, and high levels of party switching are identified as three major sources of weak party institutionalization (Sayari 2008). Another

inherent feature of Turkish party politics is the high level of clientelism. The roots of clientelistic voter-politician relations can be traced back to 1950s when multiparty competition started. Over the last decade, clientelism in Turkish politics has reached higher levels. Thanks to the consecutive national and local election victories, the AKP consolidated its power and increased its influence on the governing institutions. This consolidation of power combined with the abundance of financial resources let the AKP to increase the level of clientelism to greater levels.

AKP's clientelistic tendencies are also evident from a comparative perspective. According to the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project dataset, the AKP is the most clientelistic party among 506 parties, and Turkey ranks as the fifth most clientelistic party system in the dataset. This finding not only supports the qualitative literature on Turkish politics, but also shows that Turkey offers a great case for the study of representation and responsiveness in a clientelistic environment.

The data collected for this dissertation offers a unique opportunity to study the effect of clientelism and weak party institutionalization on representation. To ensure a broader approach to the study of representation, we have coded a large amount of items from several policymaking channels ranging from oral questions, parliamentary bills to laws. The following chapter will use this data and show how well representation works in a weakly institutionalized party system.

**APPENDIX 2.1: CAP Coding Guidelines**

*Coding Guidelines of the CAP*

1. Observations are coded according to the single predominant, substantive policy area rather than the targets of particular policies or the policy instrument utilized.

> a) For example, if a case discusses mental health programs for returning veterans it would be coded according to the predominant substantive policy area (mental illness, code 333) rather than the target of the programs (veterans affairs, code 1609). If a case discusses changes to the home mortgage tax deduction, it is coded according to the substantive policy area (consumer mortgages, code 1504) rather than the policy instrument (the tax code, code 107).

2. Observations that discuss appropriations for particular departments and agencies are coded according to their substantive policy area. Those that discuss appropriations for multiple departments and agencies that span multiple major topic codes are coded as general government operations (code 2000).

> a) For example, cases that discuss appropriations for the Department of Energy are coded as energy (code 800) and those that discuss appropriations for the FAA are coded as air transportation (code 1003). Cases that discuss appropriations across multiple major topic areas, such as appropriations for the Ministry of foreign affairs (code 1900), the Ministry of Defense (code 1600), and the Ministry of Energy (code 800), are coded as general government operations (code 2000).

3. The general (00) topic includes cases where more than one distinct subtopic was discussed within a single major topic area.

a) For example, if a case discusses both water pollution (code 701) and air pollution (code 705), it is coded as a general environmental issue (code 700). Thus, the general category within each major topic area includes some cases that are truly general as well as some cases that are the combination of as few as two subtopics. Each major topic includes another category (NN99) for issues that do not fit into any of the categories and for which there were too few cases to justify the creation of a new category.

4. While it is uncommon that observations not related to appropriations equally span two major topic areas, these observations are assigned the numerically lower major or subtopic code.

a) For example, a case that discussed both drinking water safety (code 701) and hydroelectricity (code 802) with equal weight is coded according to the numerically lower code (code 701). This is a rarely used, arbitrary guideline employed for cases that do not clearly have a distinguishable, predominate substantive issue focus.

APPENDIX 2.2: Tables

**Table II-1 Percentage of Votes of Islamist Parties in Parliamentary and General Local Elections (1973–2014)**

| Year | Party | Votes (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1973 | (parliamentary): National Salvation Party (MSP) | 11.8 |
| 1977 | (parliamentary): MSP | 8.6 |
| 1984 | (local): Welfare Party (RP) | 4.4 |
| 1987 | (parliamentary): RP | 7.2 |
| 1989 | (local): RP | 9.8 |
| 1991 | (parliamentary): RP (in coalition with the MHP and IDP)* | 16.9 |
| 1994 | (local): RP | 19.1 |
| 1995 | (parliamentary): RP | 21.4 |
| 1999 | (parliamentary): Virtue Party (FP) | 15.4 |
| 2002 | (parliamentary) AKP | 34.3 |
| 2004 | (local) AKP | 41.67 |
| 2007 | (parliamentary) AKP | 46.58 |
| 2009 | (local) AKP | 38.39 |
| 2011 | (parliamentary) AKP | 49.83 |
| 2014 | (local) AKP | 43.39 |

*MHP stands for the Nationalist Action Party and IDP for the Reformist Democracy Party.

**Source: Turkstat**

**Table II-2: Summary of the DALP Clientelism Questions**

| Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| 1. Consider whether candidates and parties give or promise to give citizens consumer goods (e.g., food or liquor, clothes, cookware, appliances, medicines, building materials etc.) as inducement to obtain their votes.<br><br>How much effort do candidates and parties expend to attract voters by providing consumer goods? | [1] A negligible effort or none at all<br>[2] A minor effort<br>[3] A moderate effort<br>[4] A major effort<br>*99+ Don't know |
| 2. Consider whether candidates and parties give or promise to give citizens preferential access to material advantages in public social policy schemes (e.g., preferential access to subsidized prescription drugs, public scholarships, public housing, better police protection etc.) as inducement to obtain their votes.<br><br>How much effort do candidates and parties expend to attract voters by providing preferential public benefits? | [1] A negligible effort or none at all<br>[2] A minor effort<br>[3] A moderate effort<br>[4] A major effort<br>*99+ Don't know |
| 3. Consider whether candidates or parties give or promise to give citizens preferential access to employment in the public sector or in the publicly regulated private sector (e.g., post office, janitorial services, maintenance work, jobs at various skill levels in state owned enterprises or in large private enterprises with government contracts and subsidies, etc.) as inducement to obtain their vote.<br><br>How much effort do candidates or parties expend to attract voters by providing preferential access to employment opportunities? | [1] A negligible effort or none at all<br>[2] A minor effort<br>[3] A moderate effort<br>[4] A major effort<br>*99+ Don't know |
| 4. Consider whether candidates or parties give or promise to give citizens and businesses preferential access to government contracts or procurement opportunities (e.g., public works/construction projects, military procurement projects without competitive bidding to companies whose employees support the awarding party) as inducement to gain their and their employees' votes.<br><br>How much effort do candidates or parties expend to attract voters by offering them preferential access to government contracts or procurement opportunities? | [1] A negligible effort or none at all<br>[2] A minor effort<br>[3] A moderate effort<br>[4] A major effort<br>*99+ Don't know |

**Table II-2 Continued**

| | |
|---|---|
| 5. Consider whether candidates or parties influence or promise to influence the application of regulatory rules issued by government agencies (e.g., more lenient tax assessments and audits, more favorable interpretation of import and export regulation, less strict interpretation of fire and escape facilities in buildings, etc.) in order to favor individual citizens or specific businesses as inducement to gain their and their employees' vote. How much effort do candidates or parties expend to attract voters and the businesses for which they work by influencing regulatory proceedings in their favor? | [1] A negligible effort or none at all<br>[2] A minor effort<br>[3] A moderate effort<br>[4] A major effort<br>*99+ Don't know |

**Source: DALP Codebook**

## Chapter 3: The Effect of Public Opinion on Policymaking

In the previous chapters I described how weak party institutionalization and clientelism might impact the relationship between public opinion and policymaking activities. The literature suggests that since in these systems parties tend to rely on clientelistic linkage mechanisms and offer club goods by targeting small sets of constituencies, parties are less concerned with the general public opinion.

Chapter Two introduced Turkey as a case of weak party institutionalization with highly clientelistic parties and discussed the data. In this chapter, I will focus on the following questions:

1. Are the priorities of the public transmitted to the policy agenda?

2. Does the level of responsiveness vary according to the policy channel in question?

3. Does the level of responsiveness increase during election times?

In order to answer these questions, three analyses will be conducted. The first analysis will focus on the laws that passed in the Turkish parliament between 2002 and 2013. The second analysis will focus on parliamentary bills for the same period and the last analysis will examine oral questions. This research strategy not only allows us to study representation from a broader angle, but also enables us to see the effect of institutions on policy responsiveness.

For the purpose of these analyses, I have created a unique dataset that consists of all the laws that were passed during these 11 years, and all parliamentary bills and oral questions submitted to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) as well as the most important problem question of the Eurobarometer survey. During this period the AKP ruled the country with single party majority governments. Therefore, the choice of time period ensures that all the changes in the dependent variable are due to the public opinion and not a change in the government. Before explaining the statistical model and the variables, I will first show the general trends in the public and political agenda and uncover the similarities or differences between the two agendas.

*The Public and the Policymaking Agenda*

A common finding in the literature regarding public priorities is the dominance of a few issues on the public agenda (Green 2007; Chaques-Bonafont and Palau 2011). This is especially the case for the developing countries since the public priorities have not transitioned from materialist values such as economic and physical security to a new set of post-materialist values emphasizing more autonomy and self-expression (Inglehart 2008). In this respect, few issues seem to capture the attention of the Turkish public. Figure 1 shows the percentages of the five most important problems in the public agenda. The economy is by far the most important problem according to the public. It is followed by terrorism, crime, education, and health. Together these five issues form 90.76% of the public agenda for the decade under question. As a whole, economic issues capture 56.54 percent of the public agenda, defense/terrorism 22.51 percent, crime 5.10, education 3.98,

and health 2.62. These percentages are hardly surprising in the context of a developing country. In transitional countries, issues such as environment, immigration or individual rights usually form a small percentage of the public agenda as these issues are usually of secondary importance.

**Figure 3.1: Most Salient Issues on the Public Agenda (2002-2013)**
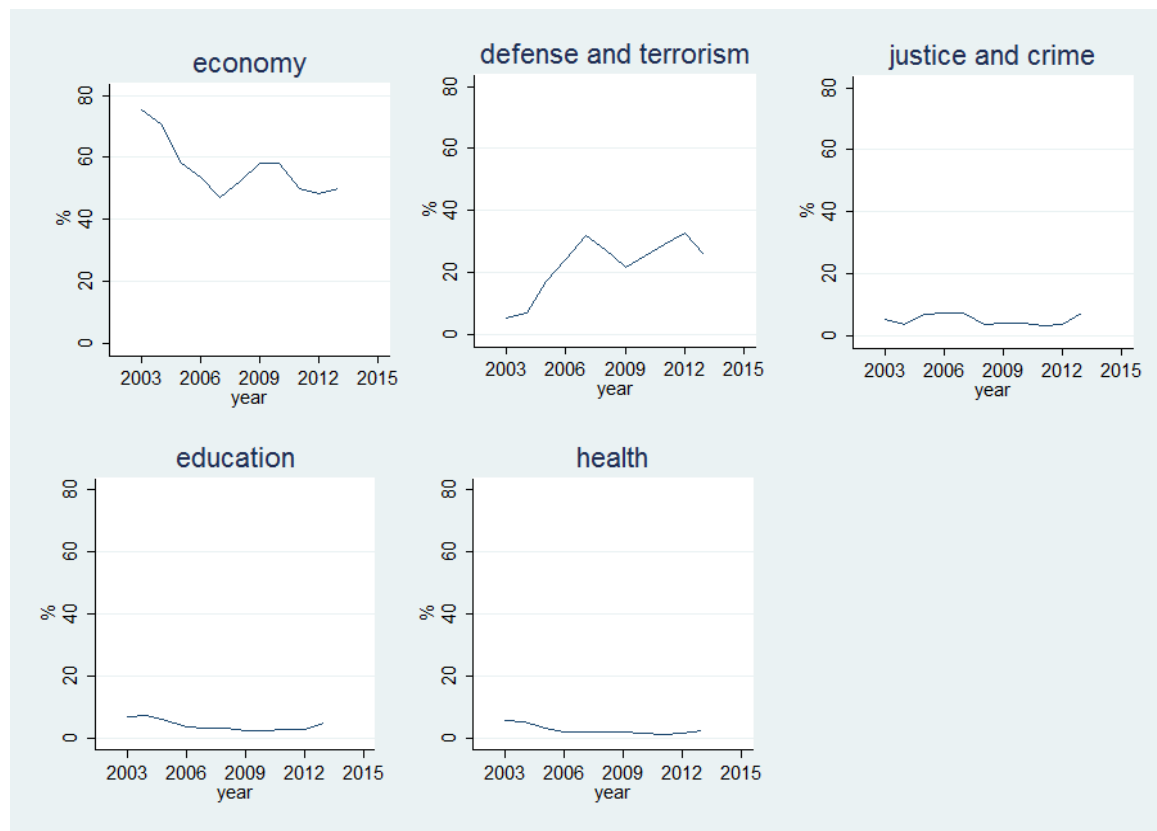


During the period under study, the Turkish economy did well compared to the pre-2002 period during which the country experienced deep economic crises. Although there had been an improvement in terms of the inflation rate, unemployment remained as a major problem for the Turkish economy. The second most important problem on the

public agenda is defense. Turkey's long struggle with PKK[8] terror has always been an important concern for the public as the problem not only threatened the security of the country, but also had a major impact on the economy. The trend in the public opinion largely follows the escalation or decline in the terrorist activities. It increases from 2007 to 2008 and 2011 to 2013 when the PKK escalated violence, and it decreases between 2009 and 2011 during peace negotiations.

*The Government Agenda: Laws*

Figure 3.2 shows the average percentage of attention given to each topic for laws. Foreign affairs makes up 18% of the laws passed during the period under study. This is due to the fact that the Turkish Constitution requires every agreement (whether international or bilateral) to be confirmed by the Parliament. If we exclude foreign affairs, economy seems to receive the most attention in terms of laws, followed by justice and crime, defense and transportation. These topics are quite compatible with the salient issues on the public agenda. Four of the topics on which the Turkish government legislated the most are also among the five most important problems according to the public opinion.

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[8] PKK is a terrorist organization whose ideology is based on Kurdish nationalism and separatism.

**Figure 3.2: The Distribution of Laws in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
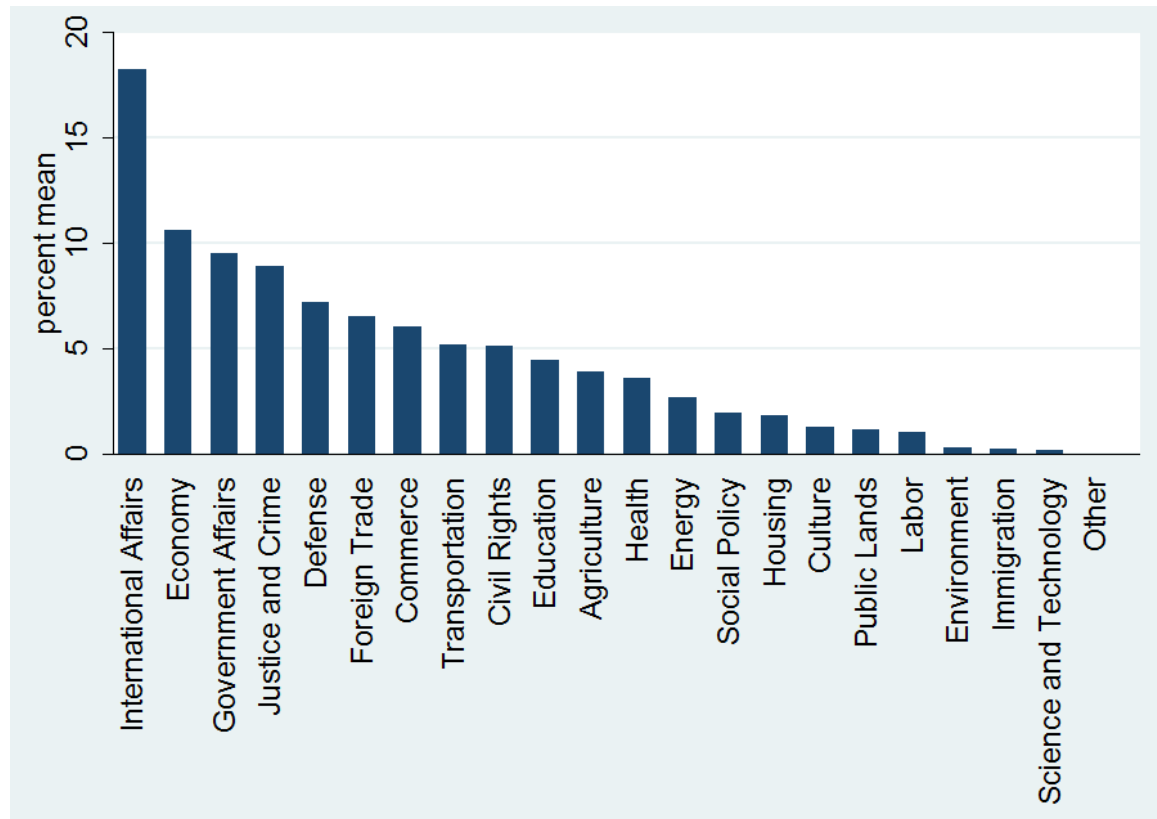


*Parliamentary Bills*

      As mentioned earlier, the AKP has ruled the country since 2002 with single party majority governments. This enabled the government to dominate the legislative agenda and pass any legislation they desired. Therefore, analyzing only laws does not tell us much about the priorities of the opposition and their responsiveness to the public priorities. In order to examine the opinion-policy responsiveness from a broader angle we also analyze the parliamentary bills. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the bills drafted in the TGNA by topic.

**Figure 3.3: The Distribution of Parliamentary Bills in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
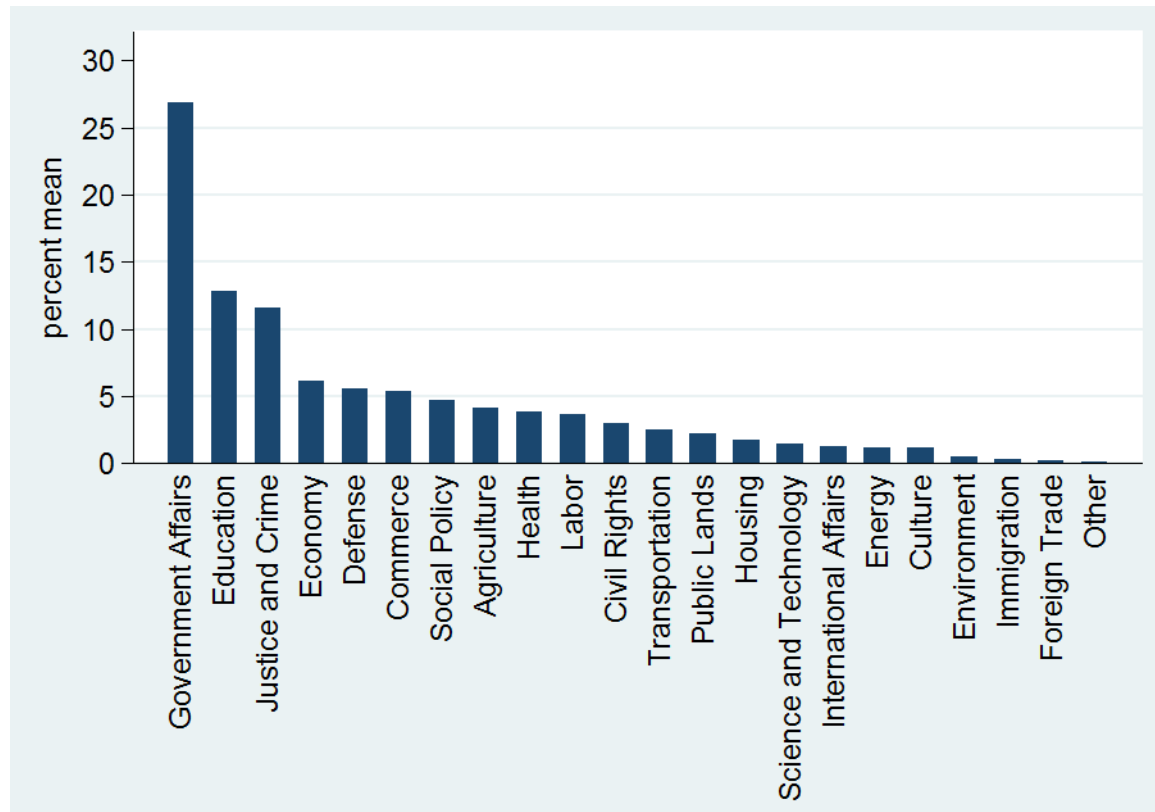


Government affairs is the most salient issue in the legislator's agenda. This finding is not surprising as topic covers a variety of constituency related issues.[9] After government affairs, education is the most popular topic followed by justice and crime, economy, and defense. Again, the distribution of topics seem to be compatible with the public priorities as four of the most popular topics in terms of bill initiation are those that are prioritized by the public.

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[9] See Table 2.5 for examples

*Oral Questions*

Lastly, Figure 4 shows the distribution of attention for oral questions. Again government affairs is the most salient issue for the Turkish legislators followed by transportation, agriculture, economy, and health. Two of these issues, economy and health, are also among the five most salient issues for the public. This trend implies that as we move from laws to parliamentary bills and questions, the congruence between priorities tend to decrease.

**Figure 3.4: The Distribution of Oral Questions in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
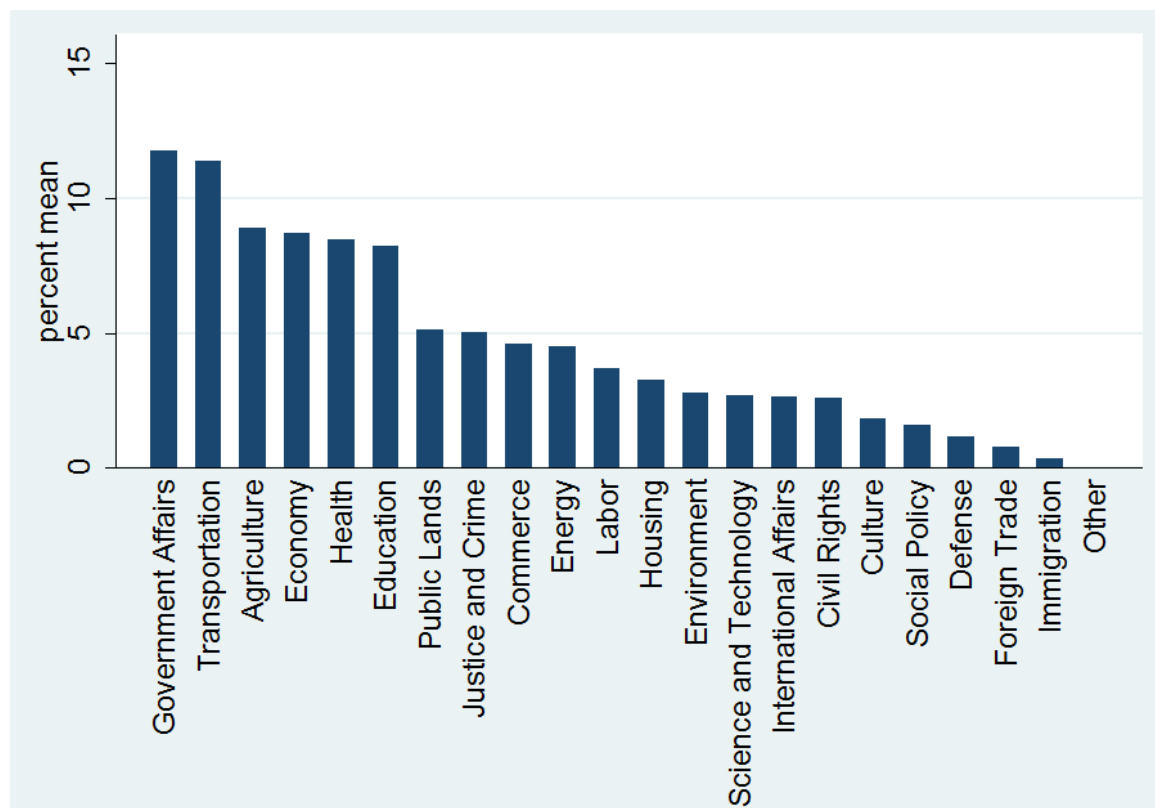


The above figures visualize the overall distribution of attention across different policymaking channels. In order to see how and to what direction these trends move over

time, I also plotted the trends in different policymaking channels against the trends in public opinion. Although comparing the average percentages of attention in each policy area is useful, we need a better indicator that will show how similar the distribution of the policymaker's attention is to the distribution of public's attention. To this end, I have calculated the mean absolute deviation (MAD) of the five most salient issues on the public agenda for all policymaking channels. The results are presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Mean Absolute Difference of the Policymaking Activities and Public Opinion**

|                       | Laws  | Bills | Oral Questions |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Economy               | 47.50 | 52.04 | 49.90          |
| Defense and Terrorism | 13.87 | 15.49 | 19.93          |
| Justice and Crime     | 4.74  | 6.63  | 1.82           |
| Education             | 3.42  | 8.58  | 5.63           |
| Health                | 2.70  | 2.78  | 5.59           |

Generally, there seems to be a better congruence between laws and public opinion. For example, the MAD for laws under the economy category is 47.50, whereas it is 52.04 and 49.90 for bills and oral questions respectively. Similarly for defense and terrorism the MAD is smallest in the domain of laws (13.87) and largest in the domain of oral question (19.93).

Figure 3.5 plots public opinion versus laws for the five most important problems in order to compare the general trend in terms of public versus legislative priorities. The straight line represents the MAD between laws and public opinion for the five topics. Although there seems to be a gap between the public priorities and laws for the topic of

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economy, there is a directional correspondence. However, the MAD is quite high. The percentage of laws under this topic gets closer to the MAD around 2008 and 2009. This is most likely due to the effect of the 2008 financial crisis. The lawmaking agenda seems to be particularly responsive in the domain of defense and terrorism. As mentioned earlier, PKK violence escalated in 2007 and the issue of terrorism became highly salient in the public agenda. The government seems to respond to the public priority by legislating more on this topic in the following year.

**Figure 3.5: Public Priorities versus Laws (2002-2013)**
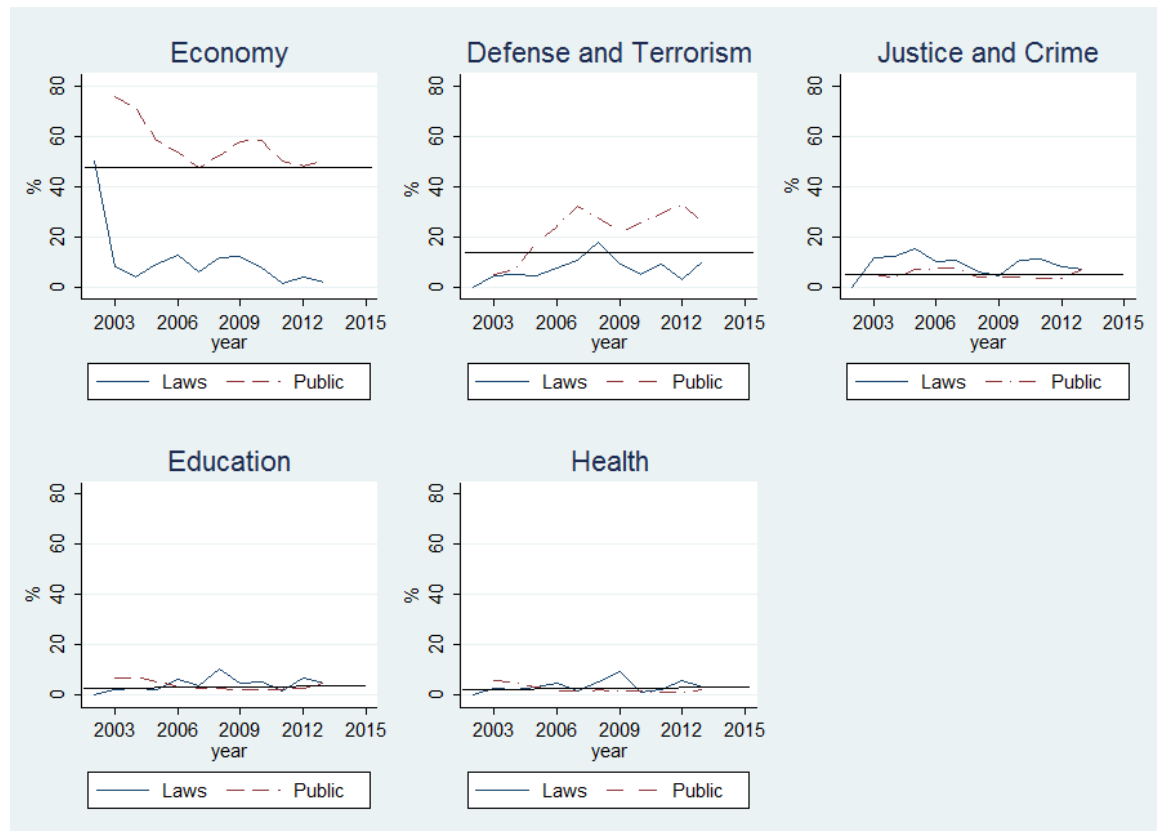
Figure 3.6 plots public opinion versus parliamentary bills. For all categories the MAD is higher compared to the laws. The MAD is the highest for the category of economy. For defense and terrorism and justice and crime topics, there seems to be a better congruence.

**Figure 3.6: Public Priorities versus Parliamentary Bills (2002-2013)**
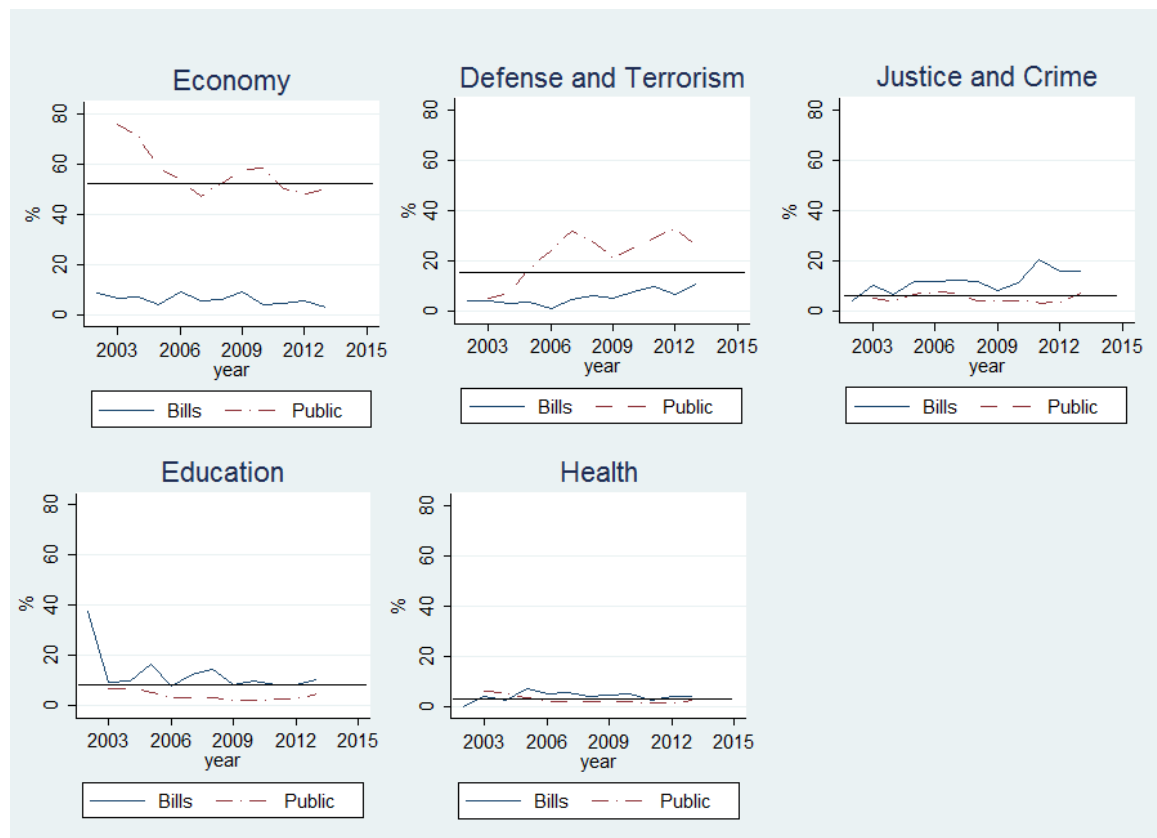


Lastly, Figure 3.7 plots oral questions against public priorities. Compared to laws and bills, there is a weaker correspondence. Similar to laws and bills, the MAD is highest for the topic of economy. The directional correspondence is also weaker compared to the other policy-making channels.

**Figure 3.7: Public Priorities versus Oral Questions (2002-2013)**
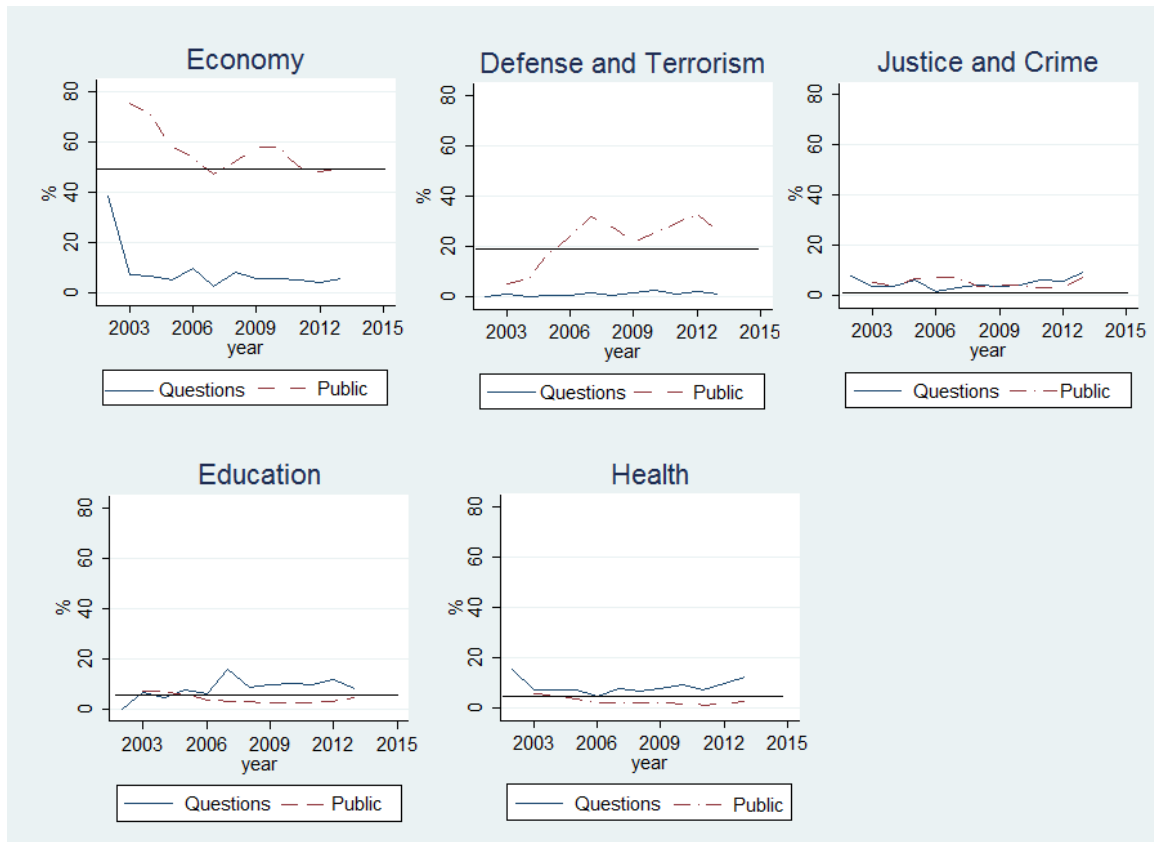


To sum up, the visual presentation of the data provides some hints in terms of how well representation works for different policy-making channels. In general, the congruence between public opinion and policy-making activities seem to worsen as we move from laws to oral questions. However, one needs more analysis to properly assess the relationship between public opinion and policy-making.

*The Statistical Model*

To test the effect of public opinion on policy activities, we use time series autoregressive distributed lag (ADL) models that account for the autoregressive nature of

the laws, bills, and questions of the Turkish Parliament.[10] This modelling strategy is preferred to a separate analysis of each issue area because our data do not have enough observations for issue specific time series analysis. The unit of analysis in our model is the policy topic parliamentary year, where each year is the time value and each major topic is treated as an individual panel. This resulted in a total N of 231 (11 years * 21 major topics) observations. The models used to test the relationship between public opinion and various policymaking channels take the following form:

$$\textbf{LAWS}_{\textbf{it}} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{ PUBLIC}_{it-1} + \beta_2 \text{LAWS }_{it-1} + \beta_3 \text{ MISERY} + \beta_4 \text{ ELECTION YEAR} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

$$\textbf{BILLS}_{\textbf{it}} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{PUBLIC }_{it-1} + \beta_2 \text{BILLS }_{it-1 +} \beta_3 \text{ MISERY} + \beta_4 \text{ ELECTION YEAR} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

$$\textbf{QUESTIONS}_{\textbf{it}} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{PUBLIC}_{it-1} + \beta_2 \text{QUESTIONS }_{it-1} + \beta_3 \text{ MISERY} + \beta_4 \text{ ELECTION YEAR} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

*Dependent Variable*

To measure the effect of public opinion on various policy channels, we use three dependent variables. In the first model, the dependent variable is the laws passed by the Turkish Parliament. For example, the percentage of laws on education in year 2004 in the data set is one observation, as is the percentage of laws on education in 2005, and so is the percentage of laws on healthcare in the 2005, and so forth.

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[10] In order to get reliable results from an ADL model we need to make sure that the data are stationary. I have conducted a Levin-Lin-Chu unit root test which confirmed that the data are stationary.

In the second model, the dependent variable is the bills by policy year. The proportion of bills on the topic of defense and terrorism in 2003 is one observation, as is the proportion of bills on the topic of economy in 2004. The last model uses the oral questions as the dependent variable using the same method.

*Independent Variables*

The main explanatory variable in the model is lagged public opinion. The public opinion variable is measured by the most important problem question of the Eurobarometer surveys. To create the variable, I first coded each answer according to the CAP main topics, and for each poll, I calculated the percentages of every issue category. Finally, I aggregated the data annually by taking average values in those years where multiple polls were conducted. A statistically positive coefficient for the lagged public opinion variable means that previous attention to an issue by the public increases the attention to the issue in the legislature in the form of laws, parliamentary bills, and oral questions on the same topic.

I also included a lagged version of the dependent variable in each of the models since there is a strong reason to believe that laws, bills, and questions follow an auto regressive process. In other words, one of the best possible predictors for the number of laws/bills/questions on the issue of education in a given year is the number of laws/bills/questions on education in the previous year. Since during the period under study AKP was always in government and the composition of the parties in the parliament was somewhat stable, we expect this autoregressive progress to be quite

strong.

*Control Variables*

      Elections might have an impact on the level of policy responsiveness. The parliamentary session before the election is an important period when political actors seek ways to maximize their votes and re-gain office. Hence, political parties are more likely to give special attention to those issues that are highly salient to the public right before the elections in order to increase their chances of re-election (Jones 1994; Maravall 1999; Klingemann et al. 2006). Similarly,  policymakers will tend to give special attention to public priorities during the parliamentary session right after elections since the effect of the campaign will be more prevalent, and both the public and the political parties will be more attentive to the political agenda (Sulkin 2009).  To sum up, the level of correspondence between the policymakers and the public might increase during election periods. To control for the effect of the elections on policy responsiveness, we include a dummy variable which takes the value of one for election years and zero otherwise

      Contextual information about the country is also included using the misery index. The index was created by economist Arthur Okun. It is an economic indicator which is calculated by adding the unemployment rate to the inflation rate assuming that the combination a higher rate of unemployment and a worsening of inflation creates economic and social costs for a country. This variable is included in the model since the

ability of the governments to follow the priorities of the public might be hampered by deteriorating economic conditions (Duch and Stevenson 2010).

Table 3.1 shows the results of our first model where the dependent variable is the laws. The coefficient of the lagged public opinion variable is quite small and insignificant for Model I indicating that public priorities have no effect on law making. Results are similar for the parliamentary bills and the oral questions. The only variable that is consistently significant across all three models is the lagged values of the dependent variables. This shows that the legislative agenda is relatively stable, and issues that were on the legislative agenda in the previous year are more likely to make it to the next year's agenda.

The election year coefficient is positive across all three models, but it is statistically insignificant. This finding contradicts with the findings of the previous literature that argue that policymakers become more responsive during election times (Chaques-Bonafont and Palau 2011). The misery variable is also statistically insignificant. This finding is hardly surprising as during the period under study, the inflation and unemployment rates were relatively stable.

**Table 3.2: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Opinion-Policy Responsiveness 2002-2013**

|  | Model I Laws | Model II Bills | Model III Questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Public$_{t-1}$ | 0.00 | 0.01 | -0.03 |
|  | (0.04) | (0.01) | (0.03) |
| Laws$_{t-1}$ | 0.45*** | - | - |
|  | (0.12) |  |  |
| Bills$_{t-1}$ | - | 0.78*** | - |
|  |  | (0.05) |  |
| Questions$_{t-1}$ | - | - | 0.52*** |
|  |  |  | (0.12) |
| Election Year | 0.00 | 0.00 | -0.00 |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Misery | -0.00 | -0.00 | 0.00 |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Constant | 2.48*** | 0.97*** | 2.26*** |
|  | (0.48) | (0.24) | (0.50) |
| R-squared | 0.31 | 0.78 | 0.35 |
| N | 242 | 242 | 242 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

In general, these results seem to confirm the expectation in the literature regarding weak party institutionalization and clientelism as the policymakers seem to be unresponsive to the priorities of the public. However, a closer look to the data reveals the fact that this result largely stems from the way the economy category was coded in the most important problem dataset. As presented in Figure 3.1, on average more that 50 percent of the public thinks that economy is the most important problem facing the country. This category is created by combining three separate categories: economy, prices/inflation, and unemployment. Therefore, it makes up more than half of the MIP answers. Although economy seems to be the biggest concern of the public, there are limited legislative activities that can be done about it. In Turkey, the Central Bank is independent, and it determines the inflation policy. Similarly, there is a limit to what

governments can legislate about unemployment. Previous research also refers to the governments' limited ability to manage the economy (see for example Alesina and Rosenthal 1994; Duch and Stevenson 2010; Greene et al. 2014).

In order to see the relationship between opinion and policy without the economy category, we drop it from the analysis. We also drop the misery index variable since its inclusion is not intuitive without the economy category. Table 3.2 repeats the same analyses by excluding the economy category. The results largely confirm our expectations. The coefficient for the lagged public opinion in the first model becomes significant and larger. Figure 3.8 shows this effect graphically by calculating the marginal effects.[11]

Lagged public opinion variable becomes larger for the second model where the dependent variable is the bills, but it is still insignificant. For the oral questions, the coefficient remains negative and insignificant. The election year variable also remains insignificant across all three models.

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[11] As Cameron & Trivedi note (2005: 333), "A marginal effect or partial effect, most often measures the effect on the conditional mean of y of a change in one of the regressors, say $X_k$. In the linear regression model, the ME equals the relevant slope coefficient, greatly simplifying analysis".

**Table 3.3: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Opinion-Policy Responsiveness (economy category excluded), 2002-2013**

| | Model I Laws | Model II Bills | Model III Questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Public$_{t-1}$ | 0.13** | 0.06 | -0.04 |
| | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.03) |
| Laws$_{t-1}$ | 0.53*** | - | - |
| | (0.13) | | |
| Bills$_{t-1}$ | - | 0.78*** | - |
| | | (0.05) | |
| Questions$_{t-1}$ | - | - | 0.63*** |
| | | | (0.12) |
| Election Year | 0.15 | 0.06 | 0.09 |
| | (0.27) | (0.01) | (0.22) |
| Constant | 1.94*** | 0.88*** | 1.82*** |
| | (0.48) | (0.23) | (0.54) |
| | | | |
| R-squared | 0.36 | 0.78 | 0.42 |
| N | 231 | 231 | 231 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

**Figure 3.8: The Marginal Effect of Public Opinion on Laws**
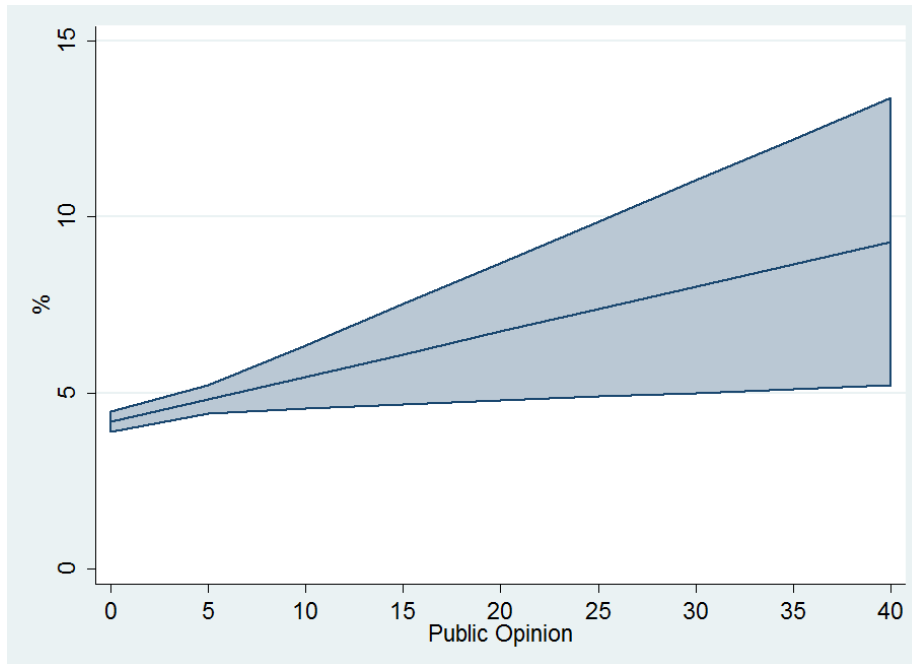


*Note: Shaded areas are 95% confidence intervals*

*The Role of Institutions*

Institutions play a crucial role in the political process. To explain the mechanism between institutional structure and political responsiveness, Jones and Baumgartner (2005) and Jones et al. (2009) developed the concept of "institutional friction". This concept refers to formal institutional structures that introduce decision and transaction costs associated with a particular policy venue and the number of individuals and collective actors whose agreement is required for decision-making. According to this framework, as a proposal moves from the agenda setting stage to the decision making stage, institutional friction will increase, and policy responsiveness will decrease since the capacity of the policy makers to respond to public's demands will be lower (Jones et.al 2009).

Based on this framework, oral questions should have been the most responsive policymaking channel as transaction costs for asking a question is the lowest. Similarly, laws should have been the least responsive policymaking channel. According to the results of the analyses, laws are the most responsive policymaking channel, and oral questions are the least. In terms of the relationship between opinion responsiveness and policymaking channel, our results do not corroborate the findings of the previous literature (Jones et al. 2009; Chaques-Bonafont and Palau 2011). These findings might stem from the fact oral questions and bill initiation are widely used for constituency service, confirming the findings of the previous literature (Martin 2011).

*Summary*

In this chapter, I have focused on the relationship between public opinion and policymaking activities across different policymaking channels. The results show that the Turkish government is responsive to the priorities of the public, and it takes into account the public opinion while legislating. This finding is quite intuitive as since 2002, Turkey has been ruled by a single party with a strong parliamentary majority. Without having to deal with complex coalition bargaining and accommodating rival political parties' policy demands, the AKP government had a distinct advantage in its ability to follow public priorities. This finding is important since law-making is probably the most important policymaking channel.

For parliamentary bills and oral questions, public opinion seems to have no significant impact. This finding is not totally surprising considering that oral questions and parliamentary bills are also widely used for the purposes of constituency service. In this respect, parties seem to be using different policymaking channels for different purposes as laws are more responsive to public priorities, and bills and oral questions seem to be more frequently used for clientelistic purposes.

These first results indicate that highly clientelistic parties in weakly institutionalized party systems can indeed be responsive to the priorities of the general public. Since law-making is dominated by the governing AKP, these results imply that AKP is more responsive to the public priorities compared to the other parties in the parliament. This finding is compatible with the current literature which argues that parties vary in their level of responsiveness. Klüver and Spoon (forthcoming), for example, show

that larger parties are more responsive to the issues prioritized by the public. However, their findings also suggest that governing parties are less responsive to voter priorities which reflect the constraints governing parties have to face.

In order to be able to see the variation between parties, more analyses are required. The next chapter is dedicated to this task. In the following chapter, I will disaggregate the parliamentary bills at the party level and conduct the same analyses. By focusing on the party level responsiveness, the chapter will enable us to see the variations among parties both in terms of responsiveness to the public opinion and their issue priorities.

**Chapter 4: Responsiveness of the Parties to the Priorities of the Public**

In the previous chapter, I investigated the relationship between public opinion and policymaking and examined the correspondence between public and legislative priorities in several policymaking channels. In this chapter, I turn my attention to the correspondence at the party level to see the variation in terms of responsiveness to public priorities. In this respect, I specifically focus on the following questions:

1. Is there variation at the party level in terms of responsiveness to the public priorities?

2. Are some parties more focused on certain issues than the others?

The extant literature on opinion and policy responsiveness (e.g. Adams et al. 2006; Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010; Ezrow et al. 2011) argues that larger parties, mainstream parties, and governing parties will be more responsive to the median voter. In this context, there might be differences in responsiveness between the four parties that represent a significant variation in terms of their size and ideology. In order to analyze the opinion policy linkage at the party level, I focus on the parliamentary bills of each party that managed to secure seats in the parliament for the period under study.

The second chapter provided detailed information about the governing AKP and the main opposition CHP. However, after 2007, two other parties had managed to enter the parliament: the Turkish right wing nationalist MHP and the Kurdish left wing

nationalist BDP. Hence, I will first briefly explain the foundation and the ideology of these two parties.

*Far Right and Far Left in Turkey*

The MHP was formed when the former junta member and nationalist politician Alparslan Türkeş gained the control of the conservative rural Republican Villagers Nation Party (CKMP). In 1969, the party was renamed as the Nationalist Movement Party.

After the 1980 coup, the party was banned along with all other political parties and many of its members were imprisoned. In 1985, the party was reformed as the Conservative Party and later the Nationalist Task Party. Finally, in 1992, it returned to its original name. In the 1999 elections, MHP entered the parliament as the second largest party and became a coalition member. However, in 2002, it failed to pass the 10 percent electoral threshold and could not enter the parliament. In 2007, the party secured around 14 percent of the votes and gained 71 seats. Finally, in the 2011 elections, the party received 13 percent of the votes and won 53 seats, retaining its status as the third largest group in the Parliament. In general, MHP is known for its focus on nationalism and tough stance on the fight against terrorism and crime.

BDP, on the other hand, has a leftist ideology and is more concerned with the rights of the Kurdish citizens. It also has close ties with the terrorist group PKK. The party's roots go back to 1990 when the first Kurdish party HEP was founded. As

mentioned in Chapter 2, the Kurdish political parties have been frequently banned by the Constitutional Court and reformed after each ban under a new name. From HEP to the current BDP, seven Kurdish nationalist parties were banned by the Court due to the close ties with the PKK. In order to clear the 10 percent electoral threshold, the party adopted a different strategy which is based on supporting independent candidates. Thanks to its strong network among the Kurdish public, the party managed to secure 20 seats after the 2007 elections and even increased its support in 2011 by gaining 36 seats in the parliament.

According to the expert survey analysis conducted by Benoit and Laver (2006), BDP and MHP are located at the opposite ends of the ideological left-right spectrum.[12]All together these four parties present a suitable sample to test the variation in terms of responsiveness. However, before embarking the statistical analysis, I will first focus on the distribution of bill topics for each party and try to visualize the patterns in terms of attention allocation.

Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of the AKP bills. Government affairs is by far the most salient issue on the AKP members' agenda followed by education, justice and crime, commerce, and economy. The party agenda seems to be somewhat parallel to the public agenda as three of the five most important problems are also prioritized in the party members' bills.

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[12] On a 20 point scale, BDP has a score of 5.2, whereas MHP has a score of 18.4.

**Figure 4.1: The Distribution of AKP Bills in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
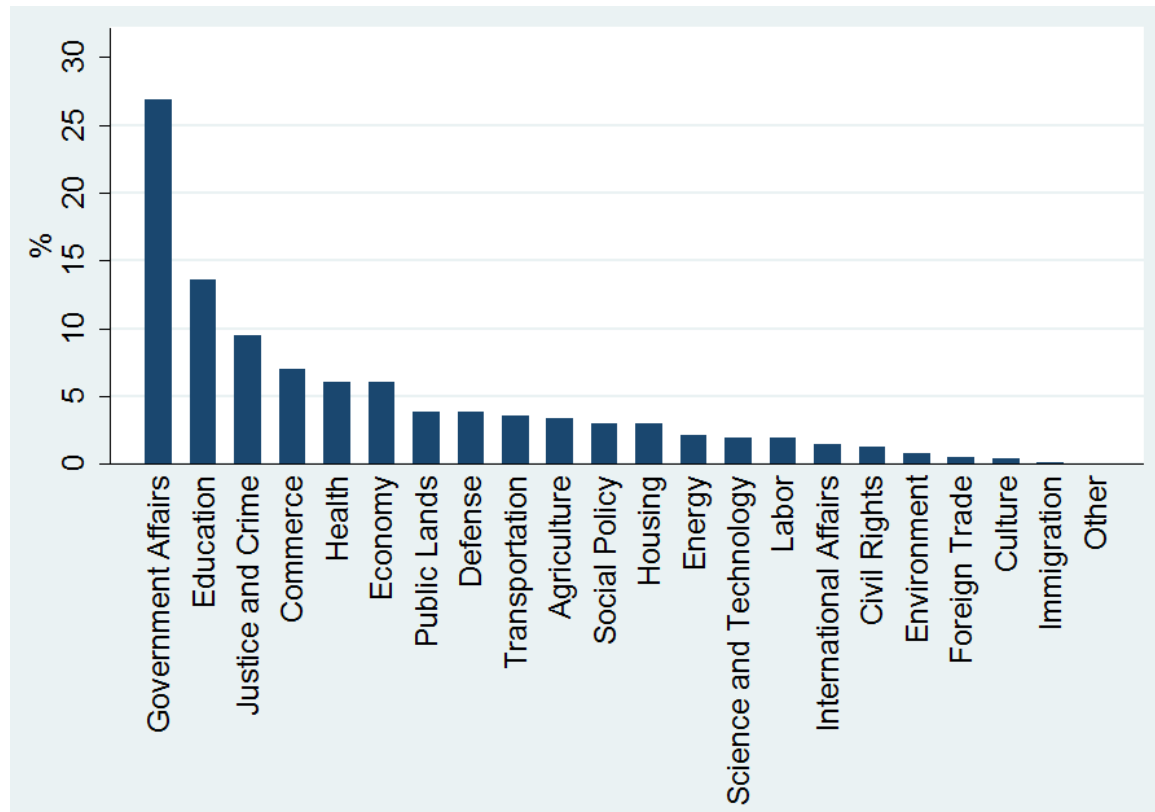


The pattern is also observed in the CHP bills (Figure 4.2). Government affairs is the most salient topic followed by justice and crime, education, economy, and defense. In other words, four of the five most salient issues in the public agenda made it to the CHP's legislative agenda. An interesting point is the high proportion of bills drafted under the justice and crime topic. Roughly 16 percent of the CHP bills were related to justice and crime. The strong focus on justice and crime by a center left party is unusual in the Western context. However, since the party was always in the opposition, it is plausible to expect CHP members to draft bills addressing the problems related to justice and crime issues and force the government to act on the issue.

**Figure 4.2: The Distribution of CHP Bills in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
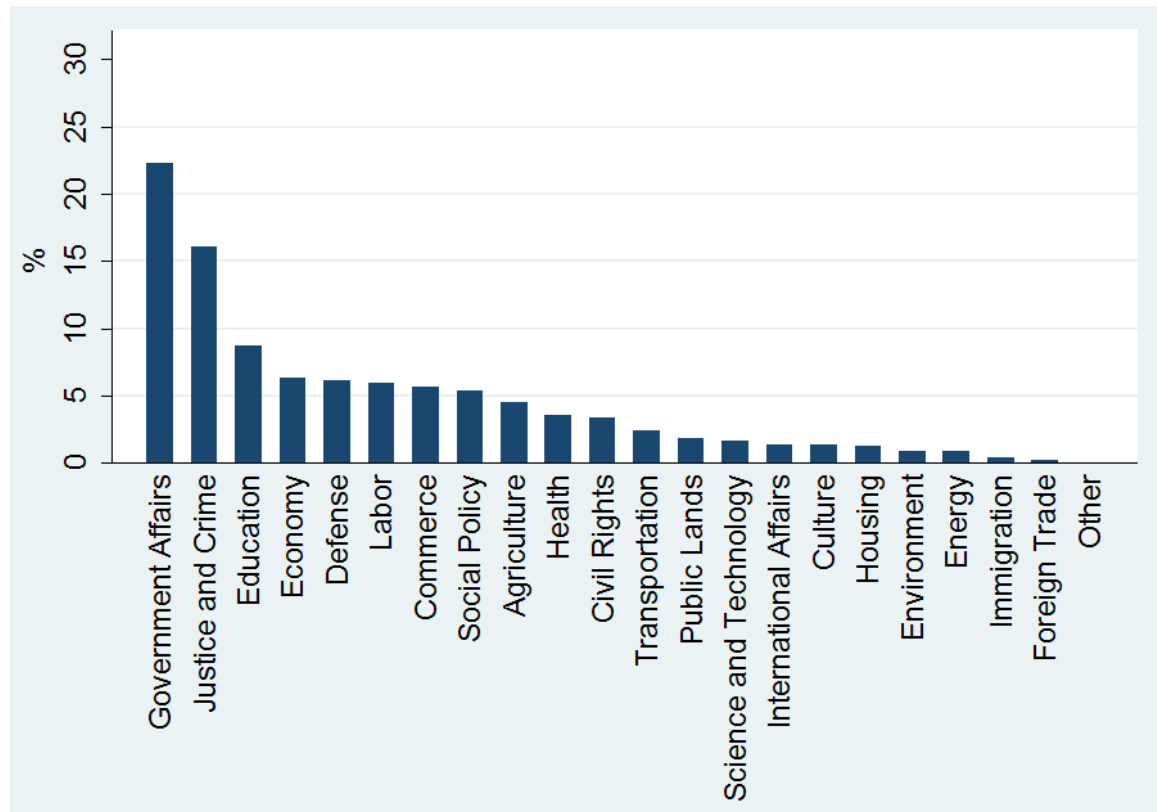


The above results do not present a stark difference between center right AKP and center left CHP. Now, I turn my attention to the other parties in order to see whether the distribution of attention differs for left wing BDP and right wing MHP. Figure 4.3 and 4.4 present the topic distribution for MHP and BDP bills respectively.

**Figure 4.3: The Distribution of MHP Bills in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
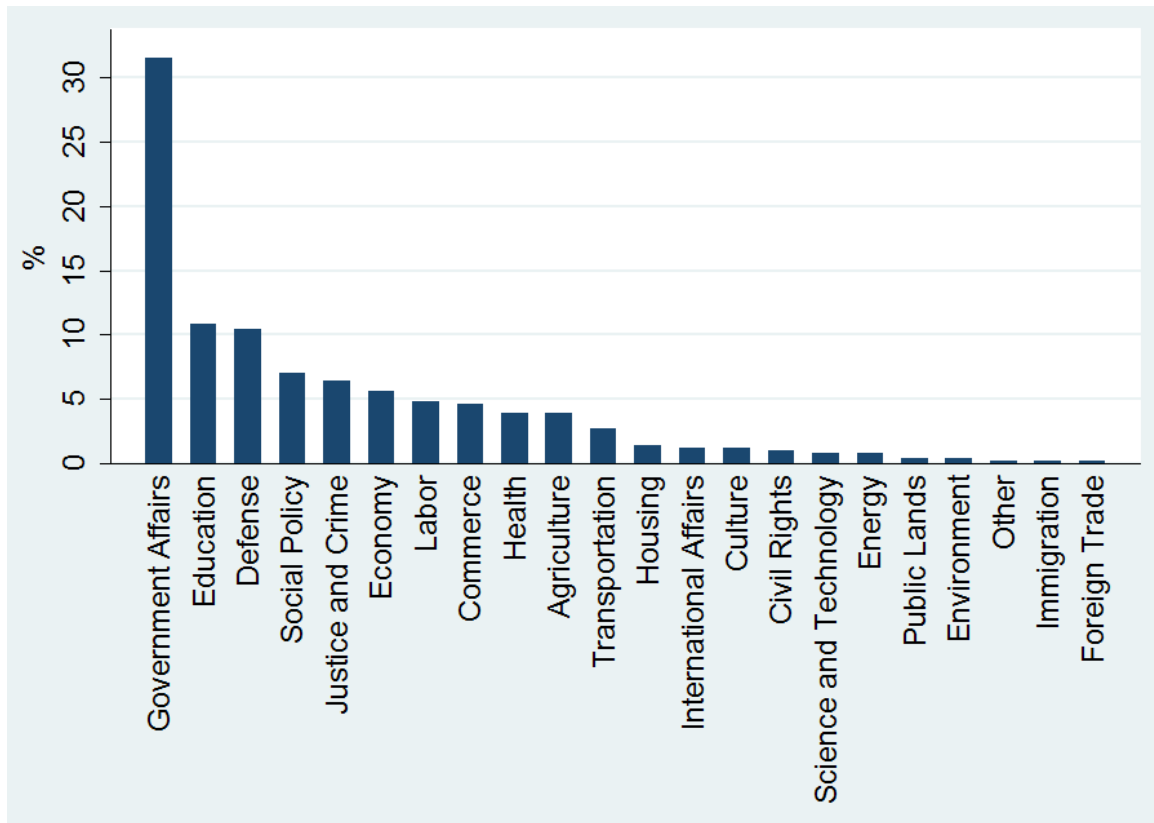


Government affairs makes up almost one third of the total MHP bills followed by education, defense, social policy, and justice and crime. Surprisingly, the right wing MHP drafted more bills under the topic of social policy than the center left CHP. This finding lends some support to Aydogan and Slapin (forthcoming) who argue that left-right politics in Turkey is reversed.

**Figure 4.4: The Distribution of BDP Bills in Each Issue Area (2002-2013)**
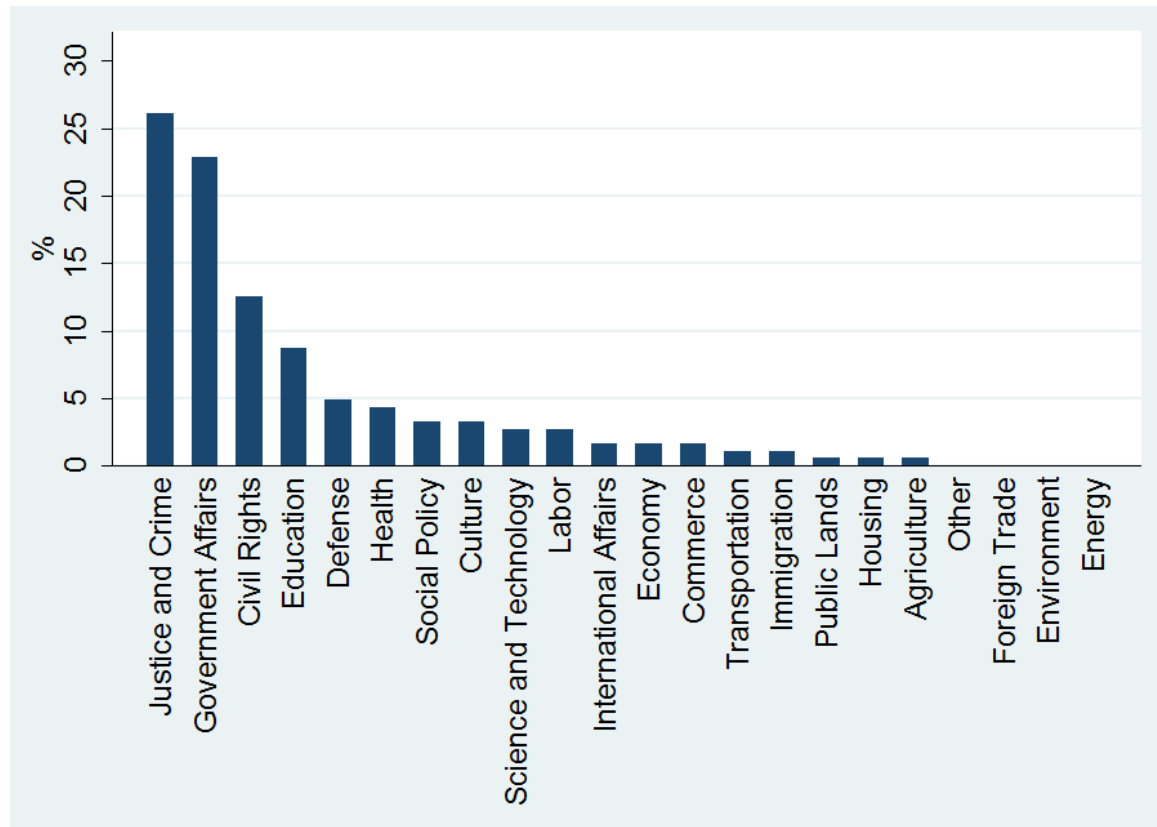


The distribution of the topics for the BDP bills largely confirms its status as a niche party. Justice and crime is the most salient issue in the party agenda, followed by government affairs, civil rights, education, and defense. The reason for the large amount of bills in the field of justice and crime is the party's close ties with the PKK. Due to these relations, many party members were accused of supporting the PKK and organizing its urban resistance forces.

In addition, Turkish prisons have a large number of terrorists captured by the military and police forces. In this regard, legislators of the party drafted many bills proposing better prison conditions and changes to the criminal code. There is also strong

focus on the topic of civil rights due to the issues related to the rights of the Kurdish citizens such as education in mother tongue, freedom of assembly.

In sum, these results imply that the governing AKP and main opposition CHP and to some degree the right wing MHP show similar trends in terms of the distribution of attention. BDP, on the other hand, seems to be quite focussed on its own narrow constituency and ignore the issues that are salient to the mass public. So far, I have focussed on the distribution of the bill topics by party. Below, I turn my focus to the congruence between the public and party priorities. As in the previous chapter, I first present the mean absolute difference of each party's policy activities for the five most salient issues on the public agenda. Table 4.1 presents the results.

**Table 4.1: Mean Absolute Difference of the Party Bills and Public Opinion**

|  | AKP Bills | CHP Bills | MHP Bills | BDP Bills |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economy | 51.50 | 50.90 | 43.75 | 51.30 |
| Defense and Terrorism | 16.01 | 16.27 | 16.55 | 23.85 |
| Justice and Crime | 5.60 | 8.98 | 3.45 | 28.46 |
| Education | 9.38 | 7.04 | 11.65 | 10.80 |
| Health | 5.41 | 3.12 | 2.30 | 3.25 |

Several patterns are striking. First, for the topic of economy, the MAD is smaller for MHP bills (43.75)  compared to other parties. Second, the Kurdish nationalist BDP prioritizes justice and crime over other issues. The MAD for the party bills on this topic is 23.85 which means that there is a gap between public and party priorities in this domain.

In order to see the general congruence between party bills and public opinion over time, I plot the two against each other. Figure 4.5 shows the correspondence between public opinion and AKP bills for the five most important problems over time. As in the previous graphs, the straight line shows the MAD between public opinion and party bills.

For economy, justice and defense, and terrorism AKP bills seem to be responding to the changes in the public opinion. For example, as the issue of economy becomes more salient around 2009 (probably due to the 2008 financial crisis), AKP members respond by drafting more bills under this topic. The percentage of party bills under the topic of economy comes closer to the MAD around 2009. Similarly, there seems to be a directional correspondence between public opinion and AKP bills for defense and terrorism and the percentage of party bills under this topic gets closer to the MAD after 2009. For other issues, public opinion seems to be quite stable over time and the proportion of party bills are somewhat close to the public opinion.

**Figure 4.5: Public Priorities versus AKP Bills (2002-2013)**
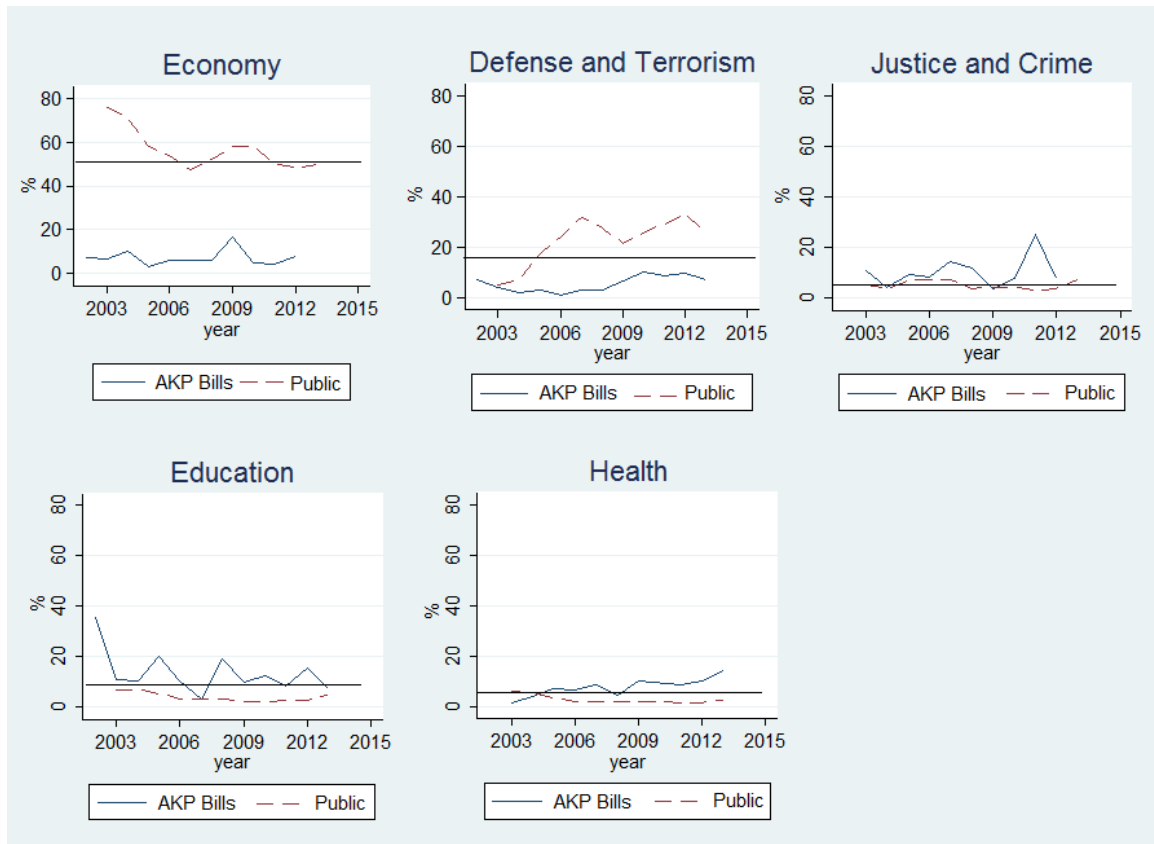


Figure 4.6 plots public priorities versus CHP bills. Similar patterns are observed: For the topic of economy, the party seems to respond to the public opinion better around 2009. For, defense and terrorism the pattern is similar as well. There is a better congruence between the party bills and public priorities after 2009.

**Figure 4.6: Public Priorities versus CHP Bills (2002-2013)**
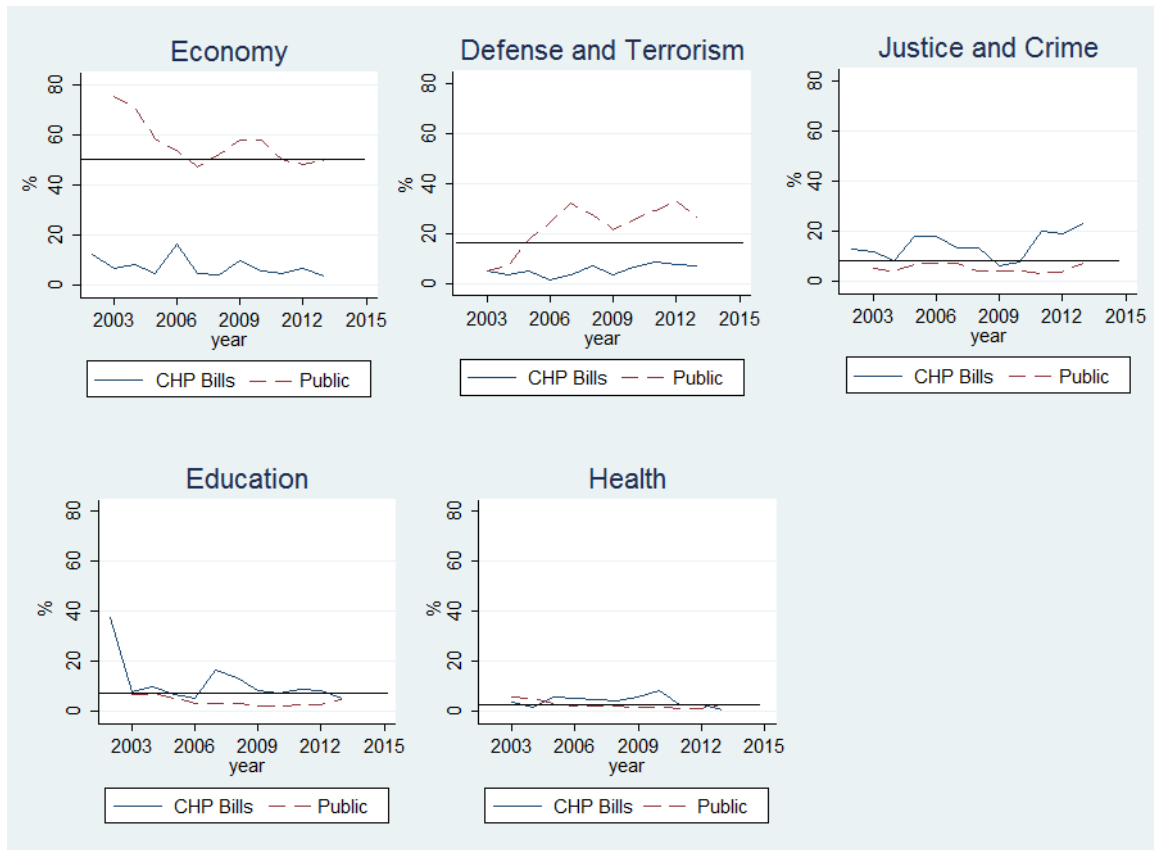


Figure 4.7 shows the correspondence between public opinion and MHP bills. Party bills start around 2007 since MHP entered the parliament after the 2007 elections. There is an evident correspondence between public priorities and MHP bills for the topic of defense and terrorism. This is hardly a surprising finding considering the nationalist stance of MHP.

**Figure 4.7: Public Priorities versus MHP Bills (2002-2013)**
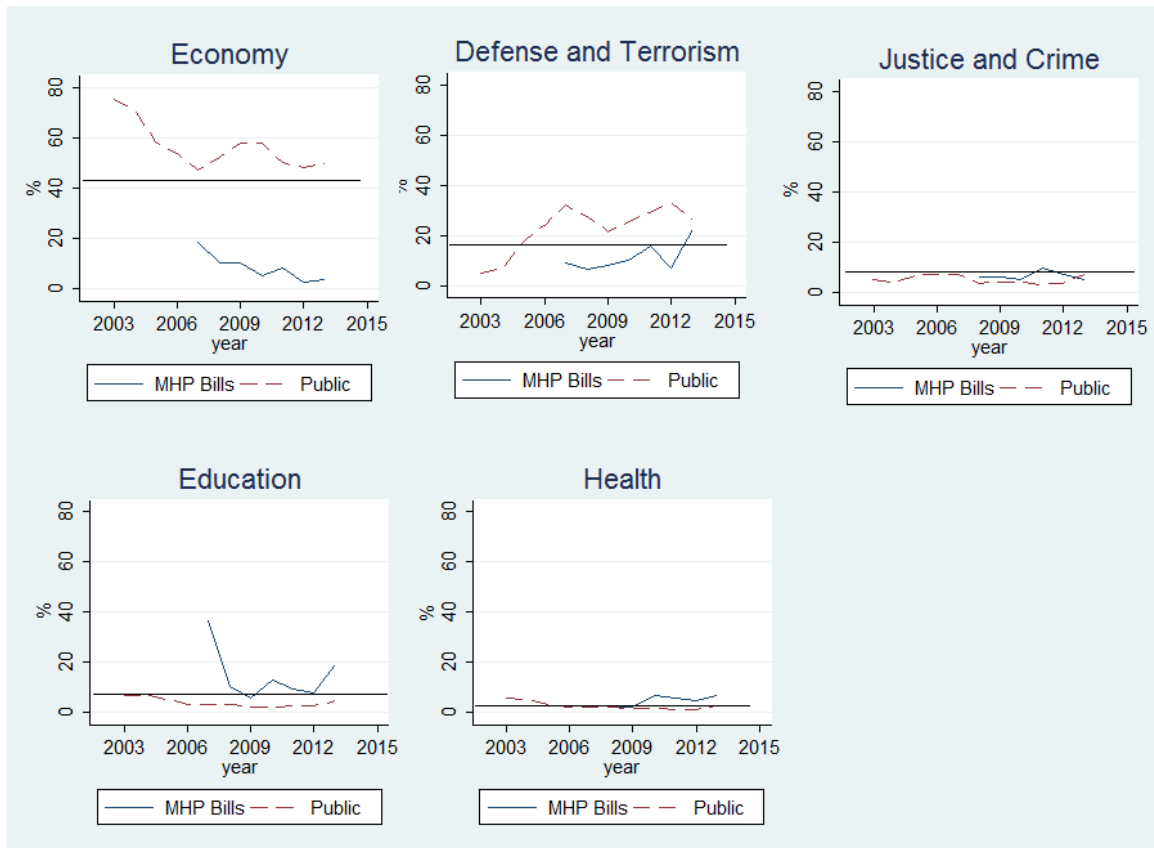


Lastly, Figure 4.8 presents the results for the BDP. Similar to MHP, the BDP entered the parliament after the 2007 elections. The party seems to unresponsive to the general public opinion as party members drafted few bills under the topic of economy. There is a better congruence on the issue of defense and terrorism as the party bills under this topic seems to follow the same direction with the public tendency. For the issue of justice and crime, the party is quite far away from the public opinion.

**Figure 4.8: Public Priorities versus BDP Bills (2002-2013)**
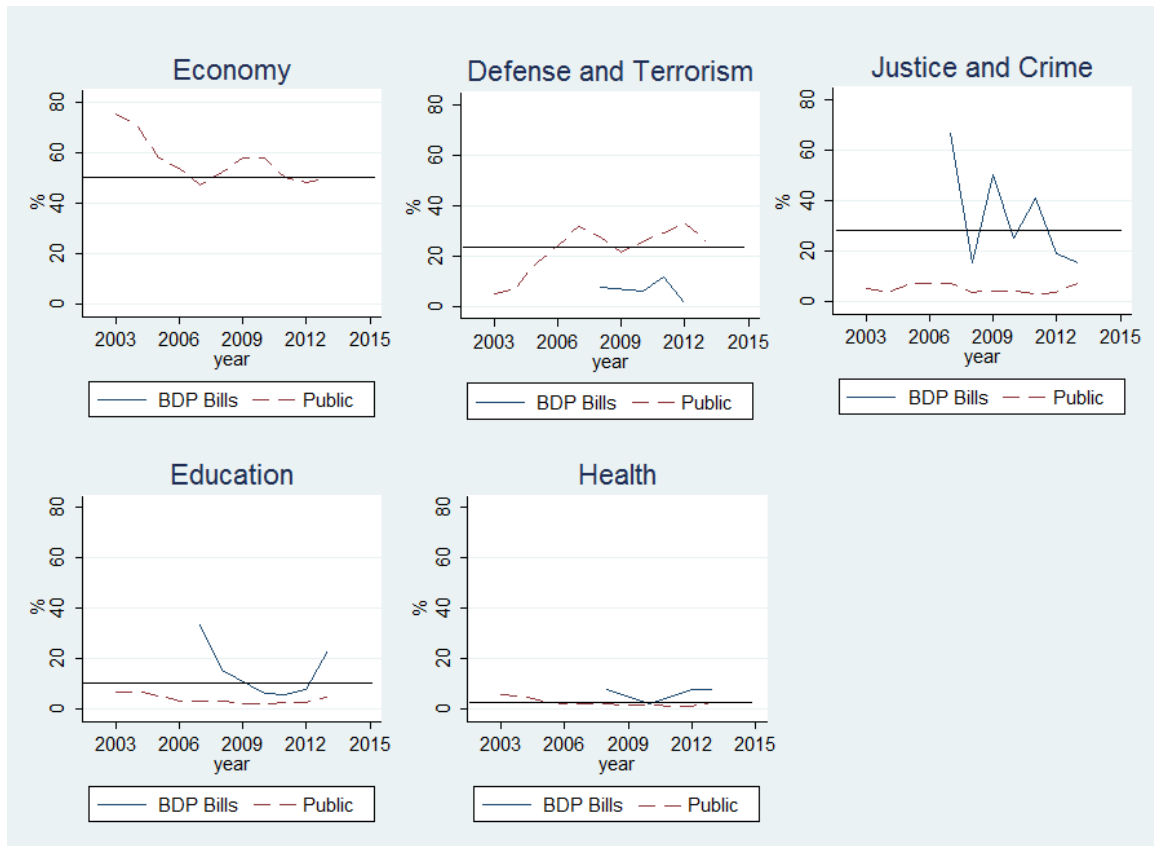


Overall, the visual evidence provides some hints about the extent of policy responsiveness for each party. However, a detailed analysis is needed to reveal the differences at the party level. In this respect, I use a time series ADL model where the dependent variable is the bills drafted by each party in the Turkish Parliament, specifically party bills by policy topic, year, and the independent variables are lagged public opinion and lagged party bills.

This choice of analysis led to four models; one for each party. The models used to test the relationship between public opinion and party bills take the following form:

**PARTY BILLS $_{it}$** $= \alpha_0 + \beta_1 PUBLIC_{it-1} + \beta_2 PARTY\ BILLS_{it-1} + \mathcal{E}_{it}$

The results are presented in Table 4.1. Similar to the aggregate level model for the bills, the public opinion variable is insignificant across all models. Even the sign of the coefficient is negative. The only variable that is significant across all models is the lagged party bill variable. The coefficient for the variable is highly significant and positive which means that the distribution of the topics is quite consistent across years. For example, Model II shows that 71 percent of the CHP bills drafted in year t were on the same topic with those bills drafted in year t-1.

**Table 4.2: Time Series Cross Sectional Model of Party Agendas**

|  | Model I AKP Bills | Model II CHP Bills | Model III MHP Bills | Model IV BDP Bills |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Public$_{t-1}$ | -0.00 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.19 |
|  | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.04) | (0.18) |
| Party Bills$_{t-1}$ | 0.59*** | 0.71*** | 0.54*** | 0.30 |
|  | (0.09) | (0.08) | (0.21) | (0.191) |
| Constant | 2.99*** | 1.81*** | 3.99** | 10.32*** |
|  | (0.72) | (0.62) | (1.82) | (3.00) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| R-squared | 0.51 | 0.58 | 0.34 | 0.16 |
| N | 126 | 155 | 60 | 32 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As in the previous chapter, I have also repeated the same analysis after dropping the economy category. The results (Table 4.2) have not shown any substantive change. The coefficient for the public opinion variable becomes positive for MHP and CHP, but it

fails to reach statistical significance. For AKP and BDP, the coefficient remains negative and insignificant.

**Table 4.3: Time Series Cross Sectional Model of Party Agendas (economy excluded)**

|  | Model I AKP Bills | Model II CHP Bills | Model III MHP Bills | Model IV BDP Bills |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Public$_{t-1}$ | -0.00 | 0.00 | 0.10 | -0.19 |
|  | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.13) | (0.18) |
| Party Bills$_{t-1}$ | 0.61*** | 0.73*** | 0.55*** | 0.30 |
|  | (0.09) | (0.078) | (0.21) | (0.19) |
| Constant | 2.87*** | 1.65*** | 3.68** | 10.32*** |
|  | (0.72) | (0.59) | (1.77) | (3.01) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| R-squared | 0.53 | 0.62 | 0.35 | 0.16 |
| N | 116 | 144 | 54 | 32 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The above results show that there is no significant variation between party bills in terms of responsiveness to the public priorities. However, parties might be more responsive to the priorities of "their voters" instead of the general public. As Ezrow (2010) contends, "niche parties," which usually specialize in few issues, are more likely to respond to their mean or median party supporter rather than to the median voter. This might especially be the case for the far right MHP and far left BDP. In this regard, a better test should include measures of the party supporters' priorities and analyze the congruence between the priorities of the "party supporters" and the party's policy activities. Unfortunately, the Eurobarometer surveys used in this study stopped asking the party identification and vote intention questions after 2005 which prevented me to conduct this type of analysis.

*Summary*

In this chapter, I have examined the opinion policy-linkage at the party level. Previous chapter has shown that policymakers are not responsive to the public priorities when they are drafting bills. In this section, I have disaggregated the parliamentary bill data and investigated the opinion-policy linkage at the party level. The results do not show any variation in terms of party responsiveness, and all four parties seem to be equally unresponsive to public opinion when they are drafting bills.

However, the distribution of topics for each party indicates the emergence of issue ownership at least for some parties. For example, only 1.6% of the BDP bills were devoted to the topic of economy, whereas 26% of the BDP bills were under the justice and crime topic. Similarly, the issue of civil rights seems to be more salient for the left-wing Kurdish BDP than any other party which actually confirms the niche party status of the BDP.

The results of this chapter do not offer any evidence to support the findings of the previous literature which argue that parties vary in their degree of responsiveness to the public opinion. However, as mentioned earlier, this dissertation argues that the political agenda is jointly structured by public priorities and party preferences. In order to be able to fully uncover the dynamics of representation and responsiveness, the long term preferences of the political parties should also be taken into account. The following chapter does that by including party preferences into the analysis and offers a new model that explains policy responsiveness as the joint function of public priorities and party mandate.

## Chapter 5: The Responsiveness of Parties to their Party Platforms and Public Priorities.

In the previous chapters, I have examined the congruence between public priorities and policymaking. Another strand of the literature on representation examines the congruence between the party platforms and subsequent policy activities which is called the program to policy nexus (Royed 1996; 1999; Thomson 2001; 2008). This dissertation argues that political parties are also bound by their long term policy commitments. In this respect, parties have to respond both to the public priorities and to their election platform.

Clearly, party platforms are also expected to respond to the priorities of the public. However, they must also maintain a balance between their long term commitments/ideology and the public mood. To illustrate, let's assume that there is a severe economic crisis in a European country, and the public identifies the generous social spending as the main cause of the crisis. The Social Democratic Party in the country is expected to adjust according to the public mood and propose some restrictions on social spending. However, the party cannot completely abandon its social democratic stance and support a smaller government since the core voter base might the discontent with such a change. Therefore, the party will eventually find a balance by both responding to the current public mood and still taking into account its party platform.

So far, studies of representation have usually focused on only one aspect of representation mentioned above. This dissertation has identified this weakness and

argued that the political agenda is jointly structured by public priorities and party preferences. In order to be able to measure the true extent of policy responsiveness, a broader approach that takes into account these two mechanisms is needed. In this chapter, I take on this task and use a research strategy that combines these two approaches.

The extant literature has argued that programmatic party systems create better representational ties and, in these systems, parties are more likely to compete based on distinct policy proposals (Mainwaring 1999; Mainwaring and Torcal 2005). On the other hand, scholars have also argued that the clientelistic linkage mechanisms employed by parties insulate the policymakers from the policy priorities of their constituents since non-policy, selective benefits are substituted for the collective, policy-based benefits (Epstein 2009). Hence, parties that employ clientelistic linkage mechanisms, as Turkish parties are said to do, are less responsive to the public preferences and party mandates (Kitschelt et al. 2010). In this respect, this chapter will also investigate whether clientelistic parties can develop and implement programmatic policy proposals. In sum, this chapter will focus on the following questions:

1. Can clientelistic parties develop and implement programmatic policy proposals?

2. Does the legislative agenda respond to the priorities of the public as well the party platforms?

2. Can the opposition party exert any influence on the policymaking agenda?

3. Do the governing and opposition parties show variation in terms of their responsiveness to their electoral mandate and public opinion?

*Measuring Party Preferences*

According to the mandate theory, parties are the most important connection between the voters and policy, and the distribution of issues in manifestos is a good indicator of subsequent government actions (Klingeman et al. 1994). To measure the party preferences, we have coded the election manifestos of the governing party (AKP) as well as the main opposition party (CHP) according to the CAP topic coding system over three electoral cycles. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this is the traditional method used by CAP scholars, as well as others, to measure party priorities. In this dissertation, I offer a novel method to measure party priorities which I believe is superior to the classic method.

So far, widely used datasets[13] as well as most studies in the literature have used the proportion of manifesto sentences (or quasi sentences) to measure party preferences. I contend that, although useful, this method cannot capture the true priorities of the political parties. Manifestoes are long and detailed documents and they serve to a variety of purposes. Other than communicating the position of the party to the voter, they also reflect the consensus of the party elites in terms of party policies. As the political agenda is quite large, parties have to respond to a wide range of issues in their manifestos. They have to cover the salient issues that are on the public agenda, answer the critics of their

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[13] For example: The Comparative Manifestos Project; The Comparative Agendas Project, The Euromanifestos Project.

opponents and make general statements about issues on the political agenda. Certain parts of the manifestos can even be considered as cheap talk.

However, there are also issues that are important to the parties. These issues are usually the ones where the party has an advantage and feels strong about (i.e. welfare for Social Democrat parties, immigration for right wing parties). For these issues, parties propose tangible policy proposals and make election pledges. By doing so, parties actually prioritize certain topics over others. I call these the "the core issues" as those are the issues to which parties attribute the most importance.

From this perspective, parties begin the prioritization process before entering the parliament. When parties enter the parliament, they give priority to the "core issues" in any way they can. For government parties, this can be in the form of law making. Opposition parties, on the other hand, prioritize these issues when they draft a bill or ask questions.

To illustrate the difference between manifesto mentions and pledges, Table 5.1 presents sample sentences from the AKP and CHP manifestos. As the table presents, manifestos contain several sentences which vary in their degree of tangible policy proposals. Sentences that are considered election pledges usually provide clear and quantifiable goals, whereas other sentences are vague and do not present a programmatic content. For example, sentence 3 is clearly a general statement that underlines the importance of animal rights. However, it does not propose a clear tangible goal that can somehow be measured. Similarly, sentence number 5 is another statement that points out

to a general goal: to distribute resources fairly. Yet, the statement is too vague and too general.

Another example is sentence 10 which is nothing more than a statement evaluating the state of the economy. A closer look to the manifesto sentences that are coded as pledges reveal the stark difference between pledges and other sentences. For example, sentence 8 promises to sustain the independence of the Turkish Central Bank. This is a pledge that can easily be identified, and the fulfilment of the pledge can be determined. Similarly, sentence 9 sets a quantifiable goal and promises to triple the government budget for research and development.

**Table 5.1: Sample Manifesto Sentences**

| No | Party | Sentence | Topic | Pledge |
|----|-------|----------|-------|--------|
| 1 | CHP | Contemporary Turkey can only be achieved through gender equality. | 2 | NO |
| 2 | CHP | Agriculture is not a burden on Turkey it is our strength. | 4 | NO |
| 3 | CHP | Respect to animal rights is a requirement of the contemporary society. | 4 | NO |
| 4 | CHP | We will elevate labor and protect the rights of the laborers. | 5 | NO |
| 5 | CHP | We will assure fair division of resources. | 1 | NO |
| 6 | CHP | There have been severe price raises in governmental services. | 1 | NO |
| 7 | CHP | We will reduce the inflation rate to single digits. | 1 | YES |
| 8 | CHP | We will sustain the independence of the Central Bank. | 1 | YES |
| 9 | CHP | In four years, we will triple the budget allocated to R&D. | 1 | YES |
| 10 | AKP | Turkey has been left behind many countries in terms of inflation, growth rate, and income equality | 1 | NO |
| 11 | AKP | The agricultural sector is in desperate situation. | 4 | NO |
| 12 | AKP | We will initiate the "General Healthcare System" and government will pay for those who cannot pay their insurance fees. | 1 | YES |
| 13 | AKP | The share of Turkish marine transportation will be increased from 30% to 50%, and projects will be supported in accordance with this goal. | 1 | YES |

As mentioned above, the degree of certainty and the quantifiable nature of the pledges actually point out to a reality: parties have clear policy proposals on these issues, and they are ready to act when they assume office. In this respect, these issues are more likely to be prioritized over others as parties have "game plans" for these issues. In

addition, by making pledges, parties also make those issues more salient in the media and public agenda. Studies that treat these two types of manifesto sentences as equal cannot capture the difference in terms of policy content. In this regard, using this method, I give weight to the sentences that has a strong policy content. In order to measure the real effect of election manifestos on subsequent policy activities, I focus on the pledges in the party manifestos. To identify pledges, I follow the techniques described in Royed (1996) and Thomson (2001). Royed (1996, 79) defines electoral pledge as follows:

> *" ...'real' pledges are defined as a commitment to carry out some action or produce some outcome, where an objective estimation can be made as to whether or not the action was indeed taken or the outcome produced. If a party seems to commit to some sort of change, and one could equally strongly argue that it was carried out, and that it was not, then the 'pledge' is considered too vague or value-laden to be considered a 'real' pledge. Instead, it is considered primarily a rhetorical statement.*
>
> *The process for isolating such real 'pledges' from other sentences was the following: first, every sentence in the platforms and manifestos which seemed to be making some sort of pledge was marked. Secondly, these initial choices were re-examined and coded according to the scheme below and final 'pledges' were thus chosen. A potential 'pledge' generally has two clauses: (1) a phrase indicating commitment/support: we will/we support/we oppose/we will work for, etc. (2) the action or policy for which commitment is indicated. The first clause can indicate either a 'firm' commitment (we will) or a 'soft' commitment ('we support', or 'softer' still, 'we must, we should').*

Based on this definition, vague sentences such as "we will help the needy" are not considered as a pledge, whereas "we will reduce the inflation rate to single digits" is considered a pledge[14]. Based on this definition, the coders first determined the election pledges and then coded those pledges to a single topic code. To compare the difference,

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[14] As an illustration, in 2002 election manifestos, a total of 402 pledges satisfied the above definition. The AKP made 262 pledges, whereas the CHP made 140 pledges.

we have also calculated the percentages for the whole manifestos by assigning each sentence to a single topic code.

*The Statistical Model*

To test the effect of public priorities and party mandate on policymaking, I use time series ADL models. The analysis is presented using all data including those years between elections with the government and opposition agendas' measures being repeated in each year. The unit of analysis in the models is the policy topic, year, where each year is the time value, and each major topic is treated as an individual panel.

To measure the effect of public opinion and electoral mandate on various policymaking channels, I use three dependent variables. In the first model, the dependent variable is the laws passed by the Turkish Parliament, specifically laws by policy topic, year; for the second model, bills by policy topic, year, and for the last model oral questions by policy topic, year. The models take the following form:

**LAWS** $_{it} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 PUBLIC_{it-1} + \beta_2 LAWS_{it-1} + \beta_3$ GOVERNING PARTY PLEDGES+ $\beta_4$OPPOSITION PARTY PLEDGES + $\varepsilon_{it}$

**BILLS** $_{it} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 PUBLIC_{it-1} + \beta_2 BILLS_{it-1} + \beta_3$ GOVERNING PARTY PLEDGES+ $\beta_4$OPPOSITION PARTY PLEDGES + $\varepsilon_{it}$

**QUESTIONS** $_{it}$ $= \alpha_0 + \beta_1 PUBLIC_{it-1} + \beta_2 QUESTIONS_{it-1} + \beta_3 GOVERNING\ PARTY$

$PLEDGES + \beta_4 OPPOSITION\ PARTY\ PLEDGES + \varepsilon_{it}$

Table 5.2 presents the results for all three policymaking channels. The initial results seem to support the expectation of a weak link between public opinion and policy activities as well as party mandates and subsequent policymaking. In all models, the coefficient for the lagged public opinion variable is negative and even significant for questions. These results imply that the legislative agenda of the Turkish Parliament does not respond to the public priorities. The coefficient for the government and opposition party manifestos are also insignificant except for the parliamentary questions.

**Table 5.2: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Policymaking Agendas, 2002-2013**

|  | Laws | Bills | Questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| $\text{Public}_{t-1}$ | -0.05 | -0.02 | -0.08*** |
|  | (0.03) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
| $\text{Laws}_{t-1}$ | 0.42*** | - | - |
|  | (0.13) |  |  |
| $\text{Bills}_{t-1}$ | - | 0.76*** | - |
|  |  | (0.06) |  |
| $\text{Questions}_{t-1}$ | - | - | 0.47*** |
|  |  |  | (0.12) |
| Gov Manifesto | 0.08 | 0.02 | -0.17** |
|  | (0.17) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| Opp Manifesto | 0.17 | 0.08 | 0.38*** |
|  | (0.15) | (0.08) | (0.10) |
| Constant | 1.71*** | 0.69** | 1.79*** |
|  | (0.36) | (0.27) | (0.33) |
|  |  |  |  |
| R-squared | 0.33 | 0.78 | 0.40 |
| N | 242 | 242 | 242 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

The opposition manifesto has a positive and significant effect on oral questions. This finding is quite intuitive since for the opposition parties, there are fewer institutional barriers regarding oral questions and compared to the parliamentary bills and laws, opposition parties are freer to determine the agenda and follow their party mandate.

In general, the results presented in Table 5.2 paint a discouraging picture for representation and responsiveness in Turkey as parties seem to respond neither to their election platforms, nor to the public priorities. However, as mentioned earlier, this dissertation offers an alternative strategy to measure party priorities by coding the manifesto pledges in each party manifesto instead of coding every sentence. In this respect, I run the same models with party pledges and compare the results in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Policymaking Agendas (including election pledges), 2002-2013**

| | Laws | | Bills | | Questions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
| $Public_{t-1}$ | -0.05 | -0.01 | -0.02 | -0.02 | -0.08*** | -0.08*** |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.02) | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
| $Laws_{t-1}$ | 0.42*** | 0.44*** | - | - | - | - |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | | | | |
| $Bills_{t-1}$ | - | - | 0.76*** | 0.73*** | - | - |
| | | | (0.06) | (0.06) | | |
| $Questions_{t-1}$ | - | - | - | - | 0.47*** | 0.40*** |
| | | | | | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Gov. Manifesto | 0.08 | - | 0.02 | - | -0.17** | - |
| | (0.17) | | (0.08) | | (0.01) | |
| Opp. Manifesto | 0.17 | - | 0.08 | - | 0.38*** | - |
| | (0.15) | | (0.08) | | (0.10) | |
| Gov. Pledge | - | 0.22** | - | 0.14 | - | 0.18* |
| | | (0.11) | | (0.09) | | (0.10) |
| Opp. Pledge | - | -0.09 | - | 0.03 | - | 0.15* |
| | | (0.08) | | (0.08) | | (0.08) |
| Constant | 1.71*** | 2.05*** | 0.69** | 0.54** | 1.79*** | 1.56*** |
| | (0.37) | (0.44) | (0.27) | (0.26) | (0.33) | (0.38) |
| | | | | | | |
| R-squared | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.78 | 0.79 | 0.40 | 0.41 |
| N | 242 | 242 | 242 | 242 | 242 | 242 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results confirm my expectation regarding the party mandate. For the governing AKP, the coefficient for party pledges is significant for laws and oral questions. The coefficient for the CHP pledges, on the other hand, comes out significant only for the oral questions. For laws, the positive and significant coefficient of the government pledge variable means that the AKP was quite responsive to its electoral mandate while legislating. The positive and significant coefficient largely confirms my argument regarding party pledges and issue prioritization: Issues on which the party offers clear, identifiable policy commitments are prioritized when the government legislates.

In the same model, the opposition pledge variable is negative which implies that the governing AKP does not respond to the CHP's electoral pledges and the opposition cannot influence the agenda of the government. These results lend some support to the issue ownership theory which argues that parties compete based on selective emphasis of issues.

Similar to the models in Table 5.2, the opposition seems to be effective only in the domain of questions. However, the two models for oral questions present a striking difference. In the first model, which uses all manifesto mentions, the coefficient for the party manifesto variable is 0.38 (significant at $p<0.01$), whereas in the second model the coefficient of the pledge variable decreases to 0.15 while the level of statistical significance decreases from $p<0.01$ to $p<0.1$. This significant decrease implies that questions are a better tool for "rhetorical responsiveness" (Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008) instead of substantive responsiveness.

Although these results confirm that parties are responsive to their electoral mandate, they seem to be unresponsive to the public priorities. As in the previous chapters, in order to see the effect of public opinion on policymaking without the economy category, I run the same model by excluding this topic. Table 5.4 shows the results.

**Table 5.4: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Policymaking Agendas (economy category excluded), 2002-2013**

|  | Laws | Bills | Questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| $Public_{t-1}$ | 0.16*** | 0.10** | -0.02 |
|  | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.021) |
| $Laws_{t-1}$ | 0.49*** | - | - |
|  | (0.13) |  |  |
| $Bills_{t-1}$ | - | 0.69*** | - |
|  |  | (0.07) |  |
| $Questions_{t-1}$ | - | - | 0.50*** |
|  |  |  | (0.13) |
| Gov. Pledge | 0.27*** | 0.22** | 0.17 |
|  | (0.107) | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| Opp. Pledge | -0.02 | 0.10 | 0.19** |
|  | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.07) |
| Constant | 1.05** | -0.04 | 0.92** |
|  | (0.43) | (0.30) | (0.40) |
|  |  |  |  |
| R-squared | 0.39 | 0.80 | 0.47 |
| N | 231 | 231 | 231 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As expected, the coefficient for the lagged public opinion variable becomes positive and significant for laws and parliamentary bills. Similar to the Table 5.3, the government pledge variable is significant, and the coefficient becomes even larger. The coefficient for the opposition pledge variable, on the other hand, is still negative and insignificant. For the parliamentary bills, government pledge variable is statistically significant, whereas opposition seems to have no significant influence. For the oral questions, the lagged public opinion variable is negative and insignificant. This finding once again confirms that oral questions are largely used for constituency service and more related to local politics. Figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 present these effects graphically.

**Figure 5.1: The Marginal Effect of the Public Opinion on Laws and Parliamentary Bills**
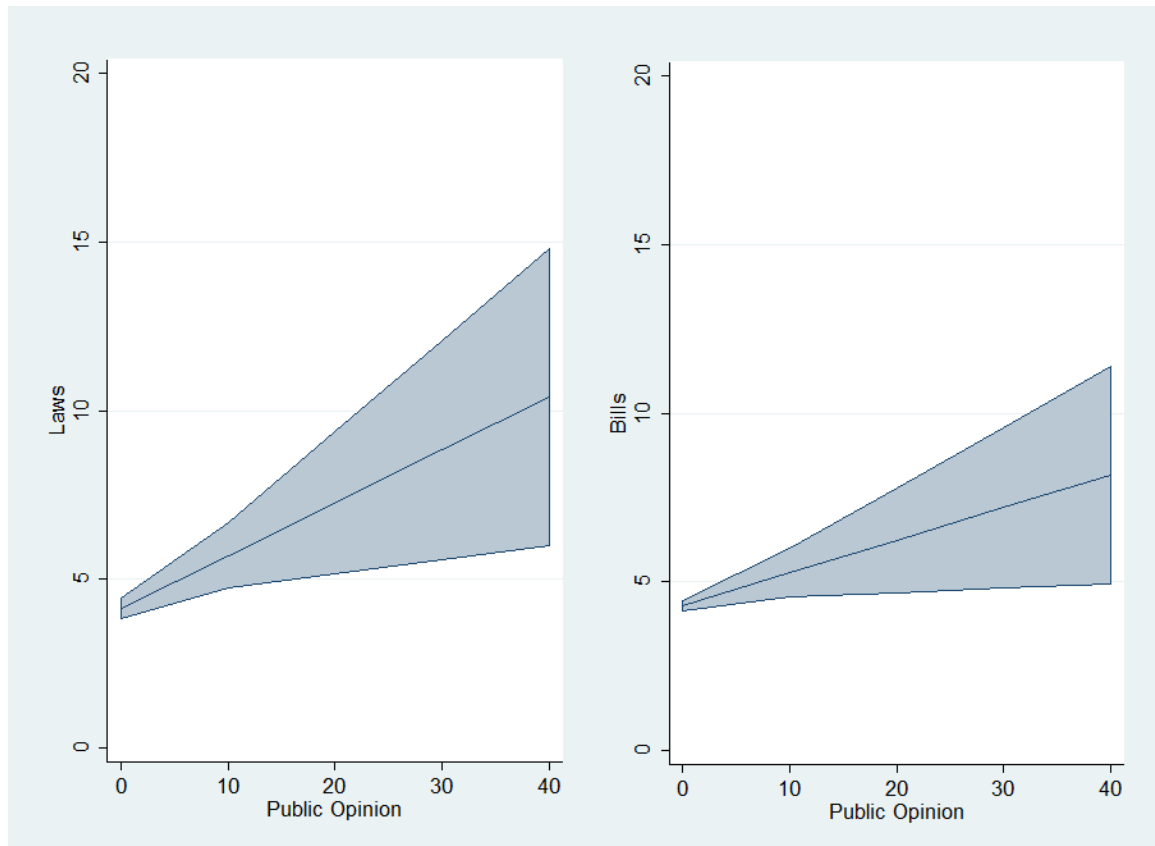


*Note: Shaded Areas are the 95% Confidence Intervals*

Figure 5.1 shows that as public opinion moves from 0 to 40, the percentage of laws increases from 4 to 11 for laws and from 4 to 8 for parliamentary bills.

**Figure 5.2: The Marginal Effect of the AKP Pledges on Laws versus Bills**
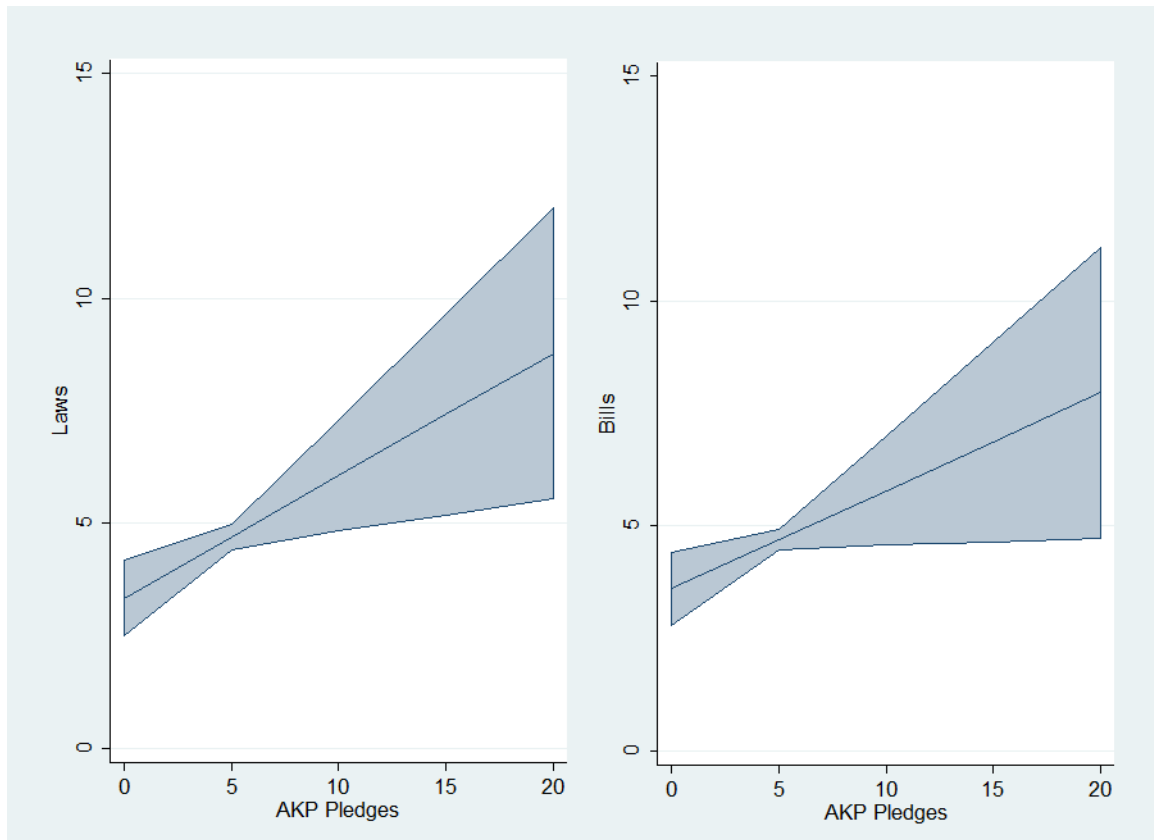


*Note: Shaded Areas are the 95% Confidence Intervals*

According to Figure 5.2, AKP Pledges seem to have a greater effect on laws than parliamentary bills. As the percentage of AKP pledges moves from 0 to 20, the percentage of laws roughly increases from 4 to 8, whereas bills move roughly from 4 to 7. Lastly, Figure 5.3 clearly illustrates the substantive difference between the AKP and CHP pledges. As CHP pledges change from 0 to 20, the percentage of laws decreases to 3 from 4.

**Figure 5.3: The Marginal Effect of the AKP and CHP Pledges on Laws**
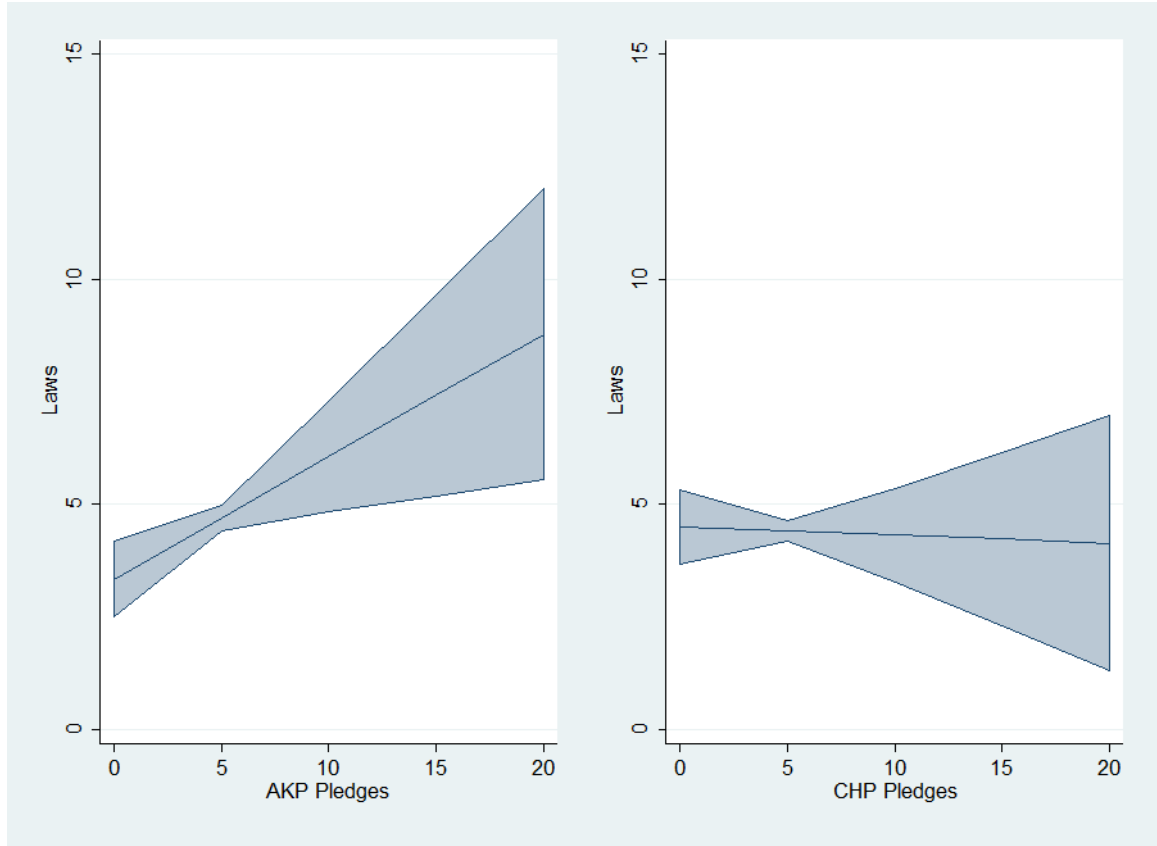


*Note: Shaded Areas are the 95% Confidence Intervals*

In sum, the results of the several analyses show that AKP used the distinct advantage of the governing party status and have been quite responsive the public priorities as well as its party mandate. So far, I have examined the legislative responsiveness at the aggregate level. Now, I will turn my attention to the party bills and analyze the responsiveness at the party level. To do that, I have separated the AKP and CHP bills and replicated the same model which I have used for the parliamentary bills. The party bills models take the following form:

**PARTY BILLS** $_{it}$ = $\alpha_0$ + $\beta_1$PUBLIC$_{it-1}$+ $\beta_2$PARTY BILLS$_{it-1}$ + $\beta_3$GOVERNING PARTY PLEDGES+ $\beta_4$OPPOSITION PARTY PLEDGES + $\varepsilon_{it}$

**Table 5.5: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Party Agendas, 2002-2013**

| | Manifesto Mentions | | Election Pledges | |
| | Model 1 (AKP Bills) | Model 2 (CHP Bills) | Model 3 (AKP Bills) | Model 4 (CHP Bills) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $Public_{t-1}$ | -0.08*** | -0.05* | -0.06* | -0.04 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.02) |
| $PartyBills_{t-1}$ | 0.51*** | 0.66*** | 0.51*** | 0.66*** |
| | (0.01) | (0.09) | (0.10) | (0.09) |
| Gov. Manifesto | 0.26 | 0.15 | - | - |
| | (0.16) | (0.18) | | |
| Opp. Manifesto | 0.13 | 0.08 | - | - |
| | (0.14) | (0.15) | | |
| Gov. Pledge | - | - | 0.39* | 0.20 |
| | | | (0.21) | (0.19) |
| Opp. Pledge | - | - | -0.05 | -0.01 |
| | | | (0.19) | (0.14) |
| Constant | 2.16*** | 1.27** | 2.05*** | 1.23** |
| | (0.53) | (0.63) | (0.56) | (0.61) |
| | | | | |
| R-squared | 0.54 | 0.59 | 0.55 | 0.60 |
| N | 126 | 155 | 126 | 155 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As in the previous models, I run the analysis with the manifesto mentions and with election pledges. The results are presented in Table 5.5. The manifesto variables are insignificant in both models. The lagged public opinion variable is insignificant in the first three models. As expected, the government pledge variable is significant for the AKP bills meaning that AKP members are responsive to their electoral mandate when they are drafting bills.

Finally, Table 5.6 presents the results with the economy category dropped. Similar to the previous models, the public opinion variable becomes significant for the AKP bills. The government pledge variable is quite large and significant. These results confirm the previous findings: the governing AKP is responsive to the public priorities

and its electoral mandate. For the CHP bills, the coefficient for the government pledge variable is a lot larger than the opposition variable (although both of them are insignificant) which implies that the governing AKP exerts greater influence even to the opposition agenda, whereas CHP members cannot influence the legislative agenda through parliamentary bills. I also present these effects graphically in Figure 5.4.

**Table 5.6: Time-series Cross-sectional Model of Party Agendas, (economy category dropped) 2002-2013.**

|  | Model 1 AKP Bills | Model 2 CHP Bills |
|---|---|---|
| $Public_{t-1}$ | 0.08** | 0.05 |
|  | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| $PartyBills_{t-1}$ | 0.46*** | 0.64*** |
|  | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| Gov. Pledge | 0.52** | 0.27 |
|  | (0.23) | (0.19) |
| Opp. Pledge | 0.10 | 0.06 |
|  | (0.20) | (0.15) |
| Constant | 0.65 | 0.45 |
|  | (0.68) | (0.56) |
|  |  |  |
| R-squared | 0.60 | 0.64 |
| N | 116 | 144 |

Panel corrected standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

**Figure 5.4: The Marginal Effects of Election Pledges on Party Bills**
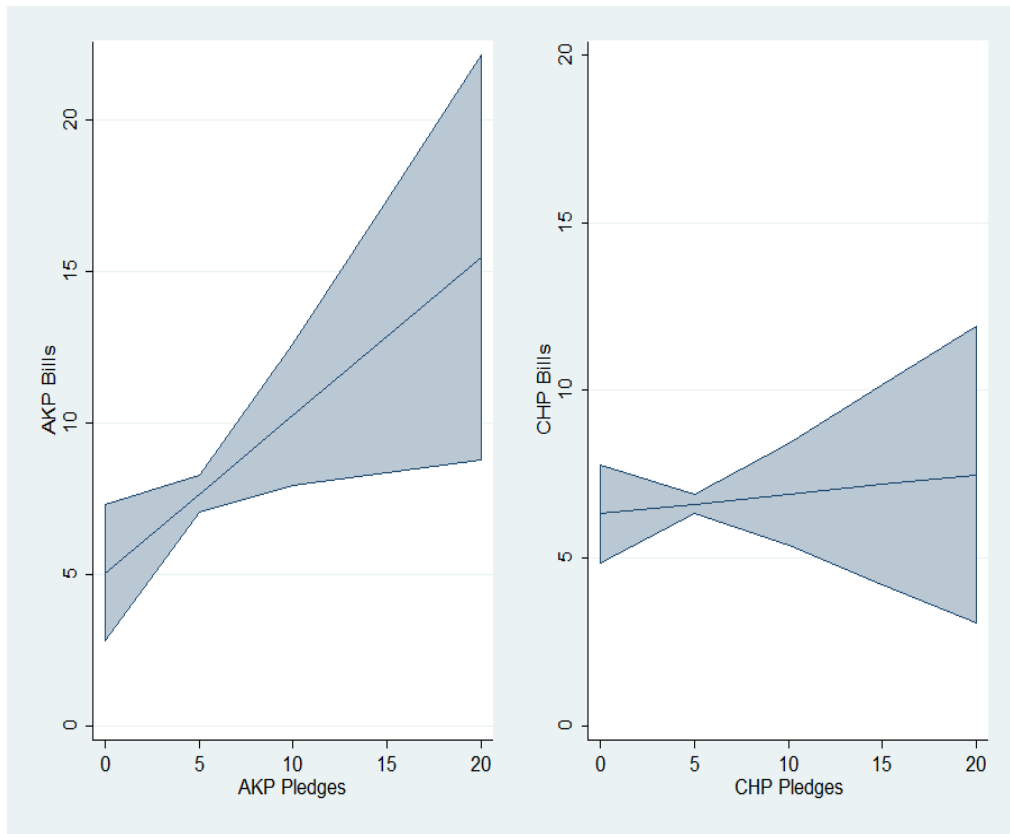


*Note: Shaded Areas are the 95% Confidence Intervals*

### *The Power of the Opposition?*

In general, these results challenge the findings of a growing literature which argue that the opposition can force the government to legislate in the direction that it favors (Green-Pedersen et al. 2012; Seeberg 2012; 2013a; 2013b). For example, Seeberg (2013a), argues that by successfully politicizing issues, the opposition parties can force the government to change the policies towards their preferred level since the governments want to prevent unwanted issue politicization. Seeberg's study is focused on Denmark where coalition governments are common. Hence, these results might stem from the

peculiarities of the coalition politics. For example, opposition parties might use the cleavages between the governing parties to attack the government (Tzelgov, 2014).

However, Seeberg (2013b) finds similar results for the UK. Focusing on the issues of crime, health, education, asylum/immigration, unemployment, tax, and the environment in the UK and Denmark, the author finds that the opposition successfully forces the governments to legislate in a way which moves policy closer to the opposition's stance (Seeberg 2013b). My results, on the other hand, present a different picture: The main opposition CHP cannot exert any influence on the legislative agenda, and the governing AKP seems to be dominating the legislative agenda

*Summary*

In this chapter, I have argued that the policymaking agenda is jointly structured by the public priorities and parties' long term policy commitments. Hence, in order to be able to analyze the true extend of policy responsiveness, a comprehensive approach that takes into account the party mandate is essential. The results of the several analysis strongly confirmed that Turkish parties are responsive to their electoral mandate as well as the public priorities.

The governing party is significantly more responsive to the public priorities as well as its electoral mandate. My findings also underline the advantage of the governing status. Single party majority government status gave the AKP the chance to be responsive to the party platform as well as the priorities of the public. The opposition, on the other

hand, could only influence the legislative agenda through oral questions. Unlike the previous literature which found that opposition parties can force the governing party to legislate in the direction of its favored policy stance, I have found no effect of opposition party on legislation.

This chapter has also offered an alternative measure of party priorities. Previous research has used manifesto sentences to measure party priorities. Studies of representation largely rely on this method to measure party preferences. This chapter argued that instead of coding each and every sentence, researchers should focus on the pledges in the manifestos. Using a strict definition of an election pledge, I was able to identify and code manifesto sentences that offer programmatic proposals and present measurable goals. In this respect, this research strategy enabled me to measure the substantive level of responsiveness.

Pledges may also be considered better indicators of party issue ownership. It is plausible to assume that parties will be more likely to make pledges on issues that they give the utmost importance, and they feel most advantageous about. For example, a social democrat party is more likely to make election pledges on social policy and human rights, whereas a center right party is more likely to focus on crime and defense. This does not mean that parties will completely ignore other issues. Parties also include in their manifestos the issues that they give less priority, yet they use vague sentences and general statements regarding those issues.

The findings of this chapter indicate that this distinction is crucial to identify the true party priorities. Using the conventional measure, I have found unresponsive parties.

However the replication of the analyses with the party pledge measure showed significant congruence between party priorities and subsequent policy actions.

### *Opposition Influence*

In general, the finding that there is substantive responsiveness in the Turkish case is important in terms of democratic consolidation. Without question, a strong congruence between the public priorities and subsequent policy activities contributes positively to the strength of the democracy in a polity.

Although the results presented in this Chapter and Chapter 3 showed that the governing AKP is quite responsive to the public priorities as well is its party platform, the opposition parties cannot exert any influence on the law-making agenda. The only policy channel through which the opposition can influence the legislative agenda is the oral questions. This finding is not surprising considering the strong parliamentary majority of the governing AKP.

However, in the context of a consolidating country, this pattern might have negative effects on democratic consolidation. Seeing that their party cannot influence the policymaking process, the voters of the opposing parties might feel estranged from democratic politics. As a result, this might lead to reduced levels of turn out. This is especially problematic for a consolidating country such as Turkey which is deeply divided along secular-religious and ethnic cleavages. In this respect, at least some degree of opposition influence on the law-making agenda might be beneficial in order to make sure that "democracy is still the only game in town" (Linz and Stephan 1996).

In sum, the statistical evidence provided in this chapter shows that the governing AKP which heavily relies on clientelistic linkage mechanisms to connect with the voters is strongly responsive to its party mandate and public's priorities. Together these findings show that the clientelistic linkage mechanisms do not isolate parties from the priorities of their constituencies, and clientelistic parties in weakly institutionalized party systems can develop programmatic policy proposals and act upon their electoral pledges when they are in office.

**Chapter 6: Conclusion**

Normatively speaking, "a key characteristic of democracy is the continued responsiveness of the government to the preferences of the people" (Dahl 1971, 1). According to this view of representation, elected officials are expected to be responsive to the priorities of their constituents. In this respect, a strong linkage between parties' promises and the actions of elected officials is also one of the observable features of a well-functioning democracy (Mansergh and Thomson 2007).

This study broadened our understanding of opinion to policy and program to policy linkage by moving beyond the context of the developed Western countries. So far, almost all studies that investigate the dynamics of these relationships have focused on Western countries with highly institutionalized party systems and dominantly programmatic parties. However, these party systems are inherently different from the party systems in the developing world.

Most studies in the literature assume the context of institutionalized party systems with strong party roots in the society and further presuppose that programmatic linkages form the basis of the stable linkages between voters and parties (Mainwaring and Torcal 2005). According to this framework, voters choose a party or candidate on the basis of their ideological and programmatic preferences. However, the party systems of most democracies and semi-democracies in less-developed countries are weakly

institutionalized, and in these countries, linkages between the voters and parties are usually less programmatic (Mainwaring and Torcal 2005).

As an alternative to the programmatic linkage mechanisms, parties in these countries use clientelistic or personalistic linkages. Clientelistic linkages rely on distributing selective benefits to individual voters or groups of voters who support the party. Personalistic linkages, on the other hand, usually involve the exposition of the appealing personal characteristics and charisma of a party's leaders (Kitschelt et al. 2010). Hence, unlike programmatic parties, who appeal the general public with programmatic proposals and by offering "public goods", parties in these systems, focus on narrow sets of constituencies and rely on selective incentives and club goods.

Previous research has suggested that clientelistic linkage mechanisms employed by parties insulate the policymakers from the policy priorities of their constituents since non-policy, selective benefits are substituted for the collective, policy-based benefits (Epstein 2009). Similarly, when electoral competition is centered on candidates' qualities and personality, politicians rely less on parties' programmatic stances for electoral support. As a result, this tendency prevents politicians to create well-structured party platforms on which to compete (Luna and Zechmeister 2005).

Considering that highly institutionalized party systems are not prevalent in most countries (Mainwaring 1999; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006), understanding how weak party institutionalization affects the dynamics of opinion to policy and program to policy linkage is paramount for the study of representation.

This dissertation has focused on Turkey, which offers an excellent case for studying the effect of clientelistic and personalistic linkage mechanisms on

representation. Turkey's governing AKP is ranked as the most clientelistic party in the world, according to the DALP dataset. In terms of personalistic linkage mechanisms, Turkey is also a very relevant case.

AKP leader Tayyip Erdogan has ruled the party from 2002 until his recent presidential election victory in August 2014. During his leadership Erdogan largely relied on his charisma and led the election campaigns by himself. Even after leaving his position as the party leader, Erdogan's charisma still contributes greatly to the party's success. For example, according to the results of a recent public opinion poll, 50% of the AKP supporters (roughly 25 percent of the electorate) told that they will vote for AKP due to their support for Erdogan.[15]

To test how well representation works in a weakly institutionalized party setting, I collected a novel dataset which contains over 13000 parliamentary documents (laws, parliamentary bills and oral questions) and over 10000 manifesto sentences as well as the most important problem question of public opinion surveys for a period of 11 years. In order to obtain comparable measures of public preferences, party preferences as well as party issue focus in the legislature, these documents have been hand-coded according to the common coding scheme of the Comparative Agendas Project.

The findings of the several analyses show that when parties are able to establish track records through re-election, they can be responsive to public preferences and their electoral mandates. The relative stability of the Turkish party system in the last decade paved the way for responsive parties even in an environment where clientelistic linkage

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[15] For the detailed results see: http://www.kamuajans.com/siyaset/haber/son-anketlere-gore-partilerin-oy-oranlari-464006.html

mechanisms are prevalent. The results of my dissertation suggest that clientelism is not an obstacle for a responsive government.

Chapter 3 of this dissertation has showed that the responsiveness of the legislature was highest for the domain of laws (compared to parliamentary bills and oral questions). Without having to deal with complex coalition bargaining and accommodating rival political parties' policy demands, the AKP government had a distinct advantage to follow public priorities.

In order to see the effect of public opinion on policymaking at the party level, Chapter 4 focused on party bills. However, the results of the chapter provided no evidence for party level variation. On the other hand, the topic distribution patterns suggested that right wing and left wing niche parties are beginning to form as these parties have started to own certain issues.

In chapter 5, I incorporated party preferences into the analysis by using election manifestos. This chapter has also offered an alternative strategy to measure party priorities. Unlike the previous studies that utilize all the sentences in the manifestos, I have focused on the election pledges and compared the results with the models using election manifestos. Using a strict definition of an election pledge offered two distinct advantages. First, using this method, I was able to identify the programmatic proposals and thereby measure the level of programmatism in each manifesto. Second, this method enabled me to identify the sentences which reflect the true priorities of the parties. The results of the analyses with party manifestos versus election pledges confirmed my expectations as parties are more responsive to the election pledges.

The findings of this chapter showed that parties not only follow the public priorities, but also pay attention to their election platform. These two variables, on the other hand, exert varying levels of influence for each policymaking channel. The governing AKP's election pledges are an important indicator of party lawmaking activity. In other words, the party pays attention to its election pledges when it passes a law or a party member drafts a bill.

For the opposition party CHP, the result are different. CHP's election pledges cannot exert any influence on the political agenda for laws and bills. The governing AKP does not pay attention to the CHP's election pledges and focusses on its own agenda while legislating. For oral questions, on the other hand, CHP's party pledges seem to have a significant effect. This finding is plausible considering that there are few structural barriers for submitting oral questions compared to drafting bills or passing a legislation.

In sum, this study opens new venues for further research by bridging two literatures: the literature on opinion and policy linkage and the literature on program to policy linkage and moving from strongly institutionalized western party systems to a weakly institutionalized party system with clientelistic parties. The results of this study show that at least for the case of Turkey, weak party institutionalization and clientelism do not jeopardize democratic representation. The governing AKP which heavily relies on clientelistic and personalistic linkage mechanisms, develops and implements programmatic policy proposals and prioritizes issues that are salient to the general public.

These findings imply that parties that widely rely on clientelistic linkage mechanisms also pay attention to the public priorities. Parties follow mixed strategies in

order to increase their votes. Normatively, this finding has important implications for democratic representation. Successfully combining clientelistic policies with programmatic party policies might create lead to higher policy responsiveness. If parties can maintain a balance between clientelistic policies which rely more on individual relations with the constituents and still develop and deliver programmatic party proposals, democratic representation might improve.

*Suggestions for Future Work and Implications for Consolidating Democracies*

This dissertation has focused on a weakly institutionalized party system with highly clientelistic parties. The fact that AKP is ranked as the most clientelistic party in the world offers a very tough test regarding the effect of clientelistic linkage mechanisms on representation and responsiveness. For future research, I would suggest to include additional countries to the analyses with varying degrees of clientelistic linkage mechanisms and party system institutionalization to ensure that my findings are not country specific. The level of decentralization in the country might also have an impact on responsiveness. Previous studies have shown that there is significant variation in issue attention between level of government and across regional government (Chaques-Bonafont and Palau 2011). In this regard, parties and politicians in federal systems might be more responsive to their own constituents and less to the general public.

Future analysis should also expand the time period under study. In this dissertation, I have focused on a time period when a single party formed the government with a strong parliamentary majority. However, the type of government might have an

impact on policy responsiveness as the ability of parties to deliver their policy commitments change. Coalition governments can change the level of responsiveness in various ways. First, more parties have access to government resources and therefore have a better chance to be responsive to their electoral mandate. Second, intra-coalition dynamics might force parties to be less responsive to the mean party supporter and more responsive to the mean voter. For example, in the case of a coalition between a center right and a right wing party, the right wing party might moderate its stance and focus less on the issue of immigration and more on economy.

The results of this dissertation imply that oral questions and to certain extend parliamentary bills are used for constituency service. Parliamentary questions are widely used in the literature to measure parties' issue focus. In order to make sure to measure the party issue focus instead of the legislators' own constituency related concerns, future studies should separate the questions that are drafted for constituency service. Refining the questions in this way will ensure that party priorities are measured and hence provide more reliable results.

Additionally, future studies should pay closer attention to the electoral politics. Legislators might show variation in responsiveness depending on the level of electoral contestation in their district. For example, legislators from party strongholds and safe districts might be less responsive to the priorities of their own constituents and more responsive to the general public opinion. Similarly, there might be country level differences depending on the electoral systems. For example, legislators in close list proportional representation (PR) systems might be more concerned with the general public opinion compared to legislators in open list PR or single transferable vote (STV).

Future studies should also integrate a saliency approach into the analysis. Previous studies have shown that the elected representatives ask more questions about issues the media have paid attention to (Vliegenthart and Walgrave 2011). In this respect, how media prioritizes issues and whether the salient issues in the media affect public opinion, or the legislative politics is crucial to understand the policy-making agenda.

My final suggestion is regarding the general approach used by CAP scholars. In this dissertation, I have used a measure of policy attention that focuses on the aggregate number of laws, bills, and questions. Although this research strategy does not pose a significant problem for parliamentary bills and oral questions, using it for the laws can be problematic. During their tenure, governments pass important amount of laws in several areas. However, not all laws are the same in terms of their level of significance. In reality, laws differ in their degree of importance. Some laws effect a significant majority of the population, whereas some laws are passed due to legal requirements. To illustrate, I will give two examples from Turkish politics related to education.

In 2012, the AKP government passed a law which made it compulsory for every student to finish high school. The law, usually known as Compulsory Education Act, affected millions of students and their families as the compulsory education increased from eight years to twelve years. Further, number of years for the elementary school was reduced to four years as the fifth grade was abolished and added to the middle school. To sum up, the law imposed dramatic changes to the educational life in the country, and it had substantive impact on students, their families, and educators. In Turkey, the establishment of new universities is also subject to legislative approval, meaning that a bill proposing the foundation of the new university must be passed. In this respect, the

law that approves the founding of a small private university has the same weight with the law that radically changes the education system in Turkey.

As the empirical chapters have shown, for the topic of economy, there is a significant gap between public opinion and law-making. However, these results might change once the legislative significance is taken into account. Governments might pass fewer laws than the public supposedly requires, but these laws might be substantive both in terms of their scope and impact.

To remedy this problem, scholars of CAP have used several methods. For example, Baumgartner and Jones's (2002; 2004) American Policy Agendas Project collects information on every public statute enacted since 1948 and identify the important enactments based on the number of column lines devoted to each enactment in the Congressional Quarterly Almanac. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2010) adopt a similar approach and use the length of debates (in columns) assuming that lengthy debates arise only on issues that many parties from both government and opposition deem important. These methods might provide a proxy for the significance of the legislation, and future studies should include similar weights in their analyses.

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