

Does Türkiye Need a New Political Culture? Comparative Analysis of Political Culture of the United Kingdom and Türkiye

¿Turquía necesita una nueva cultura
política? Análisis comparativo de la cultura
política del Reino Unido y Turquía

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Abstract

This article uses a comparative method to examine the political perspectives of the United Kingdom (UK) and Türkiye, focusing on their cultural structures. The study hypothesizes that Türkiye has a political culture shaped by social polarization caused by a lack of tolerance. It also aims to compare the political cultures of the UK, which is seen as a democratic-stable and harmonious society, and Türkiye, which is characterized by conflict rather than compromise, addressing the question of possible transfers for Türkiye in this field. In order to test the hypothesis, around 30 reputable national and international current reports/research that provide significant data in the areas selected as cases in this paper were analyzed. The findings suggest that deficiencies such as

freedom and fundamental rights in Turkish political culture affect lifestyles and tolerance towards diversity. It can be said that this situation damages social integrity.

Keywords: Comparative politics, political culture, tolerance, the United Kingdom, Türkiye.

Resumen

Este artículo se basa en un método comparativo para examinar las estructuras culturales del Reino Unido (RU) y Türkiye desde una perspectiva política. El estudio parte de la hipótesis de que Türkiye tiene una cultura política moldeada por la polarización social causada por la falta de tolerancia. Busca comparar las culturas políticas del Reino Unido, que se considera una sociedad democrática-estable y armoniosa, y Türkiye, que se caracteriza por el conflicto y no por el compromiso. Además, pretende abordar la pregunta por el tipo de transferencias que pueden hacerse a Türkiye en este ámbito. Para comprobar la hipótesis, se analizaron unos 30 informes/investigaciones actuales nacionales e internacionales de prestigio que aportaron datos significativos en las áreas seleccionadas como casos en este documento. Los resultados concluyeron que deficiencias como la libertad y los derechos fundamentales en la cultura política turca perjudican los estilos de vida y la tolerancia hacia la diversidad. Puede decirse que esta situación afecta la integridad social.

Palabras clave: Política comparada, cultura política, tolerancia, Reino Unido, Türkiye.

Introduction

Are the problems of societies universal? Can the knowledge and experience of developed societies in solving their problems be applied to other societies? (Sezer, 2019, p.10). Modernization approaches¹ to answer these questions as 'technology and knowledge transfer from developed countries to developing ones' is necessary to solve to the problems of underdeveloped societies (Ersoy, 1992, p. 18).

1 One of the most influential approaches to the idea of ranking the level of development of human societies according to certain criteria is the concept of modernization. As an explanatory basis for understanding and comparing social development, modernization theory attempts to elaborate a conceptual interpretation of the socio-economic and socio-political development processes that contemporary societies undergo, in accordance with both their general and specific characteristics (Kyianytsia, 2021, p. 42).

Understanding the similarities and differences between various types of society can help us answer the questions we presented at the beginning (Sezer, 2017, p. 20). Türkiye's recent history of economic and political crises calls into question the country's prevailing political culture (Tekeli, 2002, p. 77). Because the North of Europe is regarded as having the freest and most tolerant societies² by most of us, the UK, which is one of these countries –since it is seen as suitable for comparison with Türkiye in various aspects and in many ways known as one of the freest and most tolerant nations in the world– can serve as an example for this questioning.

The selection of the United Kingdom as the reference sample is based on a variety of factors. Both countries share a similar population size and boast rich historical legacies. The comparison between these two nations is particularly compelling, considering the complexities of UK politics with the Brexit process and the challenges posed by the global pandemic, as well as Türkiye's political landscape, which has seen the rise of a right-wing populist government amidst ongoing political divisions. The United Kingdom, being among the world's leaders in terms of prosperity, democracy, and individual liberties, stands as an ideal reference for such a comparison.

Türkiye's legitimate political sphere, which is frequently interrupted by coups and the interventions of various tutelage centers, where political and economic crises occupy daily life abundantly, news flows frequently fill the agenda, and social polarization cannot be minimized, is in structural pain in parallel with the problems in political culture. Military coups/interventions, economic crises, political tensions, social movements and actions, terrorism, and many similar circumstances in legitimate politics and the daily life of society during the Republican period have led to problems of prosperity, stability, and security. It has caused human, labor, and material losses to turn into obstacles, blocking the way to development, and into a dynamic that lowers morale and motivation. However, many of these problems in the UK have occurred relatively less than

2 The Northern European countries are often regarded as having some of the freest and most tolerant societies in the world. This perception is based on various factors, including their strong commitment to democracy, human rights, and social welfare, as well as their relatively high levels of gender equality, low levels of corruption, and robust legal and political systems. These countries often score well in global rankings related to democracy, political rights, and civil liberties, and they are frequently cited as examples of societies with high levels of tolerance and social inclusion. They tend to have progressive social policies, strong support for individual rights, and inclusive social safety nets. These attributes contribute to the perception of these nations as some of the freest and most tolerant in the world.

in Türkiye, so British society has been able to channel its energy and resources to development and progress more effectively.

This article recognizes the existence of a significant gap in the literature and aims to provide a comparative analysis of Turkish political culture using ideal examples. One of the co-benefits of this analysis is that it has the potential to guide decision-makers to understand the challenges faced by Turkish society and to develop solutions. It is important to note that addressing the complex issues within Türkiye's political culture requires a multifaceted approach that takes into account historical, social, economic, and cultural factors. By studying the experiences of democratic and developed countries, such as the UK, policymakers can gain valuable insights and potentially identify effective solutions for promoting social cohesion in Türkiye.

This study will examine the obstacles to democratic politics, cultural factors that undermine political stability, domestic (social and political) polarization, the public's capacity to focus on development and production rather than political issues, and the unifying power of culture to question whether Türkiye needs a new social contract.

The research question of this study is as follows: Can we minimize our problems by taking similar dynamics in the UK as an example data/case, considering the ontological and structural differences of Turkish political culture with an unbiased and realistic presupposition? Can we establish a less controversial and more stable political system?

The aims and objectives of this research can be listed as follows: I. Understanding the relationship between culture, politics, and tolerance. II. Questioning the feasibility of creating a culture that minimizes social and political division by modeling Britain's relatively stable system.

Research methods

To better understand political systems, we must make comparisons (Yayla, 2014, p. 80), because comparison is valuable for analyzing a subject from multiple perspectives. By emphasizing the similarities and differences between cases and examples, the benchmarking method contributes to distinguishing what is important and meaningful and what is not (Heywood, 2014, p. 49; Skocpol, 2004, p. 89).

This study will be carried out through two basic methods, one macro and the other micro, as well as two basic data collection techniques, which are intertwined and complementary to each other: "comparative policy analysis" at the macro level and JS Mill's "method of congruence and difference" at the micro level. In addition, Przeworski and Teune's approach to "most similar systems design (MSSD)" and "most different systems design (MDSD)" will also be utilized. To summarize, in this study, a comparative analysis will be made, and the standards for how to do the comparative analysis (and the limits/scope of the comparison) will be established with the help of the 'methods of agreement and difference' and 'MSSD-MDSD theories'³. In order to test the hypothesis, around 30 reputable national and international current reports/research that provide significant data in the areas selected as cases in this paper are analyzed. It aims to provide a more objective and analytical framework for the quantitative information presented by many different quality data stacks. Thus, the political culture of the UK and Türkiye will be compared through the key concept of tolerance.

Of course, as with many analysis methods, comparative politics also has some handicaps. Just as it lacks clearly defined or precise concepts and a language that expresses these concepts without ambiguity, dealing with too many variables can also prove difficult. This issue can be overcome by following these steps: by providing a clear definition of the phenomena to be compared; by using correctly the key concepts and terminology to be analyzed; and by focusing on comparable cases and reasonably limiting them to key variables, as well as a methodological simplification⁴. We must understand the limitations of the comparative method but also recognize and exploit its possibilities (Roberts, 1972, pp. 50-51; Lijphart, 1971). In this context, by integrating Mill and Przeworski's methods into the comparative politics method, formulating a holistic methodology over a more concretized problem has the potential to overcome the mentioned handicap.

How should Mill's "methods of agreement and difference" integrate into comparative analysis? Those who try to explain a particular example begin by finding valid connections to its causes. There are two main ways to go in this direction. Firstly, besides the example that is tried to be explained, many examples

3 Peter Mair (1998, p. 310) explains how a political analysis should be made while enumerating the three basic elements of comparative politics (A New Handbook of Political Science: Comparative Politics an Overview). In creating the method for this article, I was inspired by the writings of Mair.

4 Because human intelligence and the scientific method can hardly cope with a large number of variables, stacks of concepts, and mountains of data (Lijphart, 1971, p. 690).

are tried to be determined as common to the set of causal factors. Many detected instances may appear to be causally related to each other, although different in other respects. Mill calls the "method of agreement" the analysis, which is carried out by bringing together and comparing different examples in which the phenomenon occurs, revealing the point of agreement between them. According to the agreement method, when questioning the cause of the phenomenon under investigation, if a single factor is found in all cases, this factor is the cause or effect of the phenomenon. The second way is to compare the instances in which the phenomenon occurs with dissimilar instances. Mill calls that the "difference method." If a situation in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs and a situation in which it does not occur is common in all circumstances, except for a situation that occurs only in the first, the result is as follows: The only situation in which the two specimens differ is a necessary part of the result, cause or cause of the phenomenon. In sum the method of agreement attempts to compare political systems that share a set of common features (identifying features that are the same between different countries to account for a particular outcome) to ignore some differences and highlight others. The difference method, on the other hand, tries to identify the main features (countries that do not share any common features other than the political outcome to be announced and one or two explanatory factors that appear to be important for this outcome) that are different among similar countries and explain the observed political outcome. The method that seems most appropriate for that study is to combine these two comparison logics. The aforementioned consolidation is done by using many positive examples at the same time as well as the appropriate negative examples as they are opposite to them (Skocpol, 2004, p. 86; Landman, 2008, p. 70 as cited in Collier, 1993, p. 112; Mill, 2008).

In addition to the methods mentioned above, this study adopts the basic argument that "the development of developing countries can be achieved by making transfers from developed countries to them," which is the fundamental hypothesis of modernization-dependency approaches. During the study, the methodology outlined above will be reviewed again, and the dialectic of literature-data-methodology will be embodied.

The use of comparison is a common and effective method for gaining a deeper understanding of any phenomenon that we encounter regularly in our daily lives (Singh, 2021, p. 8). Similarly, comparative politics provides a systematic, dependable, and valuable approach for comprehending and gaining insights into the workings of politics. Comparative politics encompasses both a method of study based on comparison and a subject of study that examines political phenomena across different countries. As a subject of study, comparative politics

aids in understanding and explaining political phenomena within a state, a society, a country, or a political system (Lim, 2010, pp. 2-3).

By doing comparative politics, we can carry out a systematic, comparative study of political systems around the world. In a way, we can explain the differences and similarities between countries and discover patterns, processes, and regularities between political systems (Wiarda, 2000, p. 7). By comparing political phenomena, we can understand how to deal with various problems and question our systems and values (Singh, 2021, pp. 10-22).

Over time, comparative political studies have undergone changes in their subject matter, scope, perspective, and objectives. Initially, they were mainly concerned with categorizing governments and regimes. Later, the focus shifted to analyzing formal legal frameworks of institutions in Western countries. After World War II, attention turned to examining the various political actions and procedures within a single overarching framework. In the late 1980s, the emphasis on the comparative study of politics within a broad "system" framework began to weaken, and more attention was given to regional studies that concentrated on state and society. These changes demonstrate the dynamic nature of comparative politics as a field of study that adapts to new developments and perspectives over time (Singh, 2021, p. 23).

It is essential to consider the following three questions before conducting a comparative analysis in political science. First, what exactly are we comparing? This question concerns the selection of cases, variables, and concepts for comparison. Second, how do we compare these cases? This question addresses the methods, techniques, and tools used to analyze and compare the selected cases. Finally, why do we compare? This question explores the goals and objectives of the comparative study and what insights and knowledge can be gained from the analysis (Singh, 2021, p. 8).

This study will focus on analyzing political culture and tolerance comparatively through selected case in two countries. The case, variables, and concepts up for comparison, as well as the techniques and resources employed to study and compare them, must all be carefully chosen. The ultimate goal is to gain insights into the similarities and differences in political culture and tolerance in the two countries studied and identify the factors that contribute to these differences.

The different types of comparison allow a researcher to treat a wide range of similarities or differences as if they were control variables. In doing so, the

researcher can safely eliminate several potentially essential factors and instead concentrate on the variables that he or she considers most important (Lim, 2010, p. 19). In this context, the "case to be compared" was determined as "levels of tolerance towards lifestyles and differences/diversity."

The literature summary and the method of the study are explained in the first two chapters. In the third chapter, where the case study is carried out, brief information is given about the general situation of the compared countries, and the main characteristics of their political cultures are summarized with the help of the literature. Then, a comparison is made on sample topics selected as cases: 'level of tolerance towards lifestyles-differences.'

Literature Review: Political Culture and Tolerance

Recently, there has been a discernible trend toward the term "political culture" assuming the role of an overarching and all-encompassing concept (Dittmer, 1977, p. 552). In contemporary discourse, it has become increasingly challenging to identify any facet of culture that does not exhibit political connotations (Barber, 2001, p. 50). Notably, political scientists, particularly those specializing in comparative politics, have embraced the term "political culture" more frequently as a tool for their social analyses (Kim, 1964, p. 313). Throughout the past half-century, the concept of political culture has seen extensive usage as a means to facilitate comparisons among diverse national political systems (Lehman, 1972, p. 361).

Culture is a multi-layered notion. Political culture is a sub-fraction of general culture, which includes it. Political culture has several facets. It encompasses both the symbols that "typify" political activity and the symbols that "justify" and "integrate" that behavior (Lehman, 1972, p. 369). Political scientists conceptualize political culture regarding values, norms, beliefs, and symbols (Kim, 1964, p. 334). According to Almond, one of the most essential processes shaping political systems is political culture. Political culture cannot be boiled down to a specific political party, political system, or ruling ideologies. It transcends national boundaries, differs from ideology, is more enigmatic and implicit, and is an independent and distinctive component of culture (Almond, 1956, pp. 396-397).

Each society instills a distinct set of norms and principles within its members. Individuals hold ideals regarding the proper functioning of the political system,

the government's responsibilities to them, and what they can anticipate from it. The values, symbols, and beliefs connected to a nation's political system constitute its political culture, which varies widely across societies. Political culture can be defined as the political psychology of a society (Roskin et al., 1994, p. 122).

There is a deep connection between political culture and tolerance. Most conflict in our diverse global society comes from political intolerance (Moore & Walker, 2011, p. 49). On the contrary, a tolerant society is more likely to engender mutual trust and cooperation and tends towards peace. In a tolerant society, the likelihood of cruelty, hypocrisy, duplicity, dogmatism, hatred, and fanaticism tends to decrease. In short, the principle of tolerance contributes to the common good and a more humane society and is justified on pragmatic, consequential, and utilitarian grounds (Araújo et al., 2008, p. 2).

In its broadest terms, *tolerance* is defined as acceptance (in some sense) of things that are not customarily approved (Thacker, 2015, p. 67). What is distinctive about tolerance is the juxtaposition of dislike or disapproval of an item with the determination not to act against it in some specific way (King, 1989, p. 733). Tolerance, which has connotations of enduring, tolerating, or suffering, generally refers to the conditional acceptance of or non-interference with beliefs, actions, or practices that one considers to be wrong but still 'tolerable,' such that they should not be prohibited or constrained (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Engelen and Nys (2008, p. 45) list the three conditions necessary to speak of tolerance: The individual (1) finds a particular practice or action objectionable or even unacceptable (disapproval), (2) has the means to stop this practice (power) but (3) decides not to do anything about it (self-restraint).

According to the 'Declaration of Principles of Tolerance' signed by member states on November 16, 1995, the 50th anniversary of UNESCO, tolerance is about "respecting, accepting and appreciating the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and our ways of being human. Tolerance is not concession, condescension, or indulgence. *Tolerance* is an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy, and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups, and states."

One of the critical issues here is in which situations tolerance should be practiced and by whom, i.e., the limits of tolerance. How far does freedom of

expression extend, and where should its limits be drawn? Can one reasonably be said to have grounds for objecting to someone else's beliefs or religious practices? When can one reasonably be said to have reason to object to other people's controversial lifestyles? (Hansson, 2007, p. 301).

Walzer states that cultural, religious, and lifestyle differences should be tolerated. The defense of tolerance does not have to be a defense of difference. To argue that different groups and individuals should be allowed to live in peace side by side is not to argue that every actual or imagined difference should be tolerated. Radical attacks on individual freedom and the rights of association or military and political (not intellectual) interventions against the survival of a particular group are inconsistent with the minimum conditions for coexistence. Nor is it intolerance of difference to prohibit a party that is undemocratic in its program from participating in democratic elections (Walzer, 1998, pp. 10-24). Santos, who makes a similar restriction, argues that behavior that endangers the public interest, especially freedom, cannot be tolerated. Intolerance that jeopardizes freedom cannot be tolerated. In law, freedom does not exist as an abstract concept. However, it has the fundamental task of establishing a connection between concrete freedom, which makes coexistence possible, and reality, and in this context, the supremacy of concrete freedom is emphasized (Santos, 2007, pp. 184-188). We see a similar perspective in an empirical study: people are remarkably tolerant towards non-extremists; these are disliked. Non-extreme groups are tolerated far more than the extreme (Petersen et al., 2011, pp. 595-596).

Some conceptions provide different perspectives on the idea of toleration and how it relates to authority, power dynamics, and mutual recognition among citizens (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy):

- I. **Permission Conception:** Toleration is seen as a relationship between an authority or majority and a dissenting minority. It involves the authority allowing the minority to live according to their beliefs as long as they accept the authority's dominant position.
- II. **Coexistence Conception:** This conception views toleration as a means to avoid conflict and achieve social peace. It involves groups of roughly equal power agreeing to peacefully coexist and compromise for the sake of their own interests.
- III. **Respect Conception:** In this conception, toleration involves mutual respect between citizens who differ in their ethical beliefs and cultural practices. They recognize each other as moral-political equals and agree on common norms for social life.

IV. **Esteem Conception:** This conception goes beyond respect and emphasizes even fuller mutual recognition between citizens. It involves respecting members of other cultural or religious groups as moral and political equals.

In the meantime, we must address the concept of political tolerance. According to Gibson, who analyzes the reflection of tolerance in the political field, political toleration describes toleration secured through the apparatus of the state. He describes political toleration in this sense as 'public' toleration since it is toleration secured by and through a society's public authority and public arrangements. From the perspective of democratic political systems, political freedom includes institutional guarantees of the right to engage in oppositionist political activity by speaking, assembling, organizing, proselytizing, and competing for political power (Gibson, 1992, pp. 338-341).

The results of Katnik's empirical investigation provide crucial details about the degree of tolerance. This study shows a negative relationship between religiosity and political tolerance. Analyses specify that individuals without religious beliefs are generally the most tolerant group. It also points out that social classes with more control over the means of production and other people's labor are more tolerant than groups engaged in physical labor. Therefore, it is concluded that social classes are a factor influencing the level of tolerance. The research also shows that advanced capitalist countries have higher levels of political tolerance. In less developed countries, economic and political problems suggest a degree of hostility towards those who threaten the system due to the fragile nature of democracy. Economic and political instability creates an environment in which civil liberties are not widely supported by those seeking to overthrow the system (Katnik, 2002, p. 34).

According to Jones, rather than locating political toleration in governments or majorities, we should locate it in arrangements. Society's public arrangements must include a commitment to tolerance and guarantee tolerance for members of society; if we are to make good the claim that some political regimes can adequately be described as tolerant, that claim has to rely upon more than the supposition that they are staffed and supported by tolerant people. For instance, a tolerant political order will permit Muslims to live as Muslims and will not permit Muslims to hinder Christians from practicing their religion. It will also not permit either to repress atheists or atheists from suppressing course. A tolerant political system will also ensure people's freedom, although there must be restrictions (Jones, 2007, pp. 386-387).

This study recognizes that political tolerance is vital for promoting coexistence and social cohesion. It also argues that political tolerance should encompass respect, acceptance, and affirmation of different lifestyles. However, the study recognizes the limits of tolerance and underlines that it must be consistent with democratic values, individual freedoms, and legal frameworks. It avoids equating extremism, violent tendencies, and undemocratic attitudes with tolerance.

Case Study: Türkiye and the United Kingdom

This section will provide a comparative analysis of the political cultures of both countries. After providing an informative overview of the nations' overall circumstances, it will concentrate on this particular parameters: levels of political, social, and cultural tolerance, tolerance for lifestyles, and differences/diversity.

I. An overview of both countries

The United Kingdom

The UK is a nation that merits examination due to its rich history, democracy, affluence, and political culture. It is a constitutional monarchy that has developed through a long process of evolution and is shaped by a wealth of traditional practices and theoretical experiences (Özdemir & Kanat, 2020, p. 2339).

The UK regimes and governments have existed in stability for centuries (Gürbüz, 1980, p. 47). The nation is regarded as the birthplace of democracy. Many influential democracy texts, such as the Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights, have emerged in the UK. It carries historical breaking points such as the Industrial Revolution, the liberal economic model, and imperialism. Civil society and the parliament are strong. Human rights have developed. Social and individual welfare, purchasing power, and quality of life are high. Polarization and turmoil in society are almost nonexistent until the last few years.

It is noteworthy that the UK has made significant contributions to art, culture, and science. Many renowned philosophers, scientists, inventors, economists, writers, poets, and activists have emerged from the UK and have left their mark on the world. Francis Bacon, Herbert Spencer, and John Locke are

famous philosophers from the UK, while John Dalton, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, and Stephen Hawking are notable scientists. The UK is also known for inventors like Michael Faraday and Alexander Graham Bell and economists like Adam Smith, John Maynard Keynes, and David Ricardo. The country has produced literary figures such as Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, and Thomas More. Activists like John Lennon have also significantly shaped the UK's contributions to human history.

Despite losing its imperialist characteristics post-World War II, the UK maintained a strong position in the changing and globalizing international environment (Özdemir & Kanat, 2020, p. 2338). The Commonwealth of Nations was established with the disintegration of the British Empire, one of the twentieth century's hegemon countries, and governors appointed by the British Crown govern today's +16 Commonwealth member countries. Furthermore, the country has 14 overseas territories spread across the globe. To summarize, the UK remains a significant global power.

The UK, the world's 21st most populous country, has a population of 67 million people (UK Office for National Statistics). It ranks 80th in the world in terms of land area, with 243 thousand kilometers. It is a member of prestigious international organizations such as the United Nations Security Council, NATO, the Group of Seven (G7), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Universities in the UK are ranked among the best in the World (Times Higher Education Magazine). London is the capital of not only England but also global financial capitalism.

Türkiye

The Republic of Türkiye is an exciting country to study because of its strategic location, historical heritage, and cultural-political-social structure.

It is the successor state of the Ottoman Empire, a powerful state that influenced world history for nearly five centuries. It has approximately 70 years of democratic experience, a relevant regional clout, and a medium-sized economy and industry. Welfare, quality of life, and fundamental rights are all relatively low.

Türkiye, the world's 17th most populous country, has a population of 84.6 million people (TUIK). With an area of 783 thousand kilometers, it ranks 37th

globally. Among the global and regional organizations, it is a member of are NATO, OECD, WTO, IMF, OSCE, G20, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Organization of Turkic States.

II. General view of political culture in both countries

Culture refers to the fundamental components of social life, an individual's acts and output, group activities, and the motivations behind these activities (Köktürk, 2016, pp. 375-378). This argues that the emotional or normative relationship between the state and its citizens is what is meant by political culture (Dittmer, 1977, p. 552). This section will focus on the degree of tolerance and respect for differences in political culture in both countries. In this analysis, our foremost objective is to examine the overarching tolerance trends, emphasizing established cultural norms rather than giving undue weight to the current or recent years. When analyzing tolerance, it is paramount to center our attention on broad trends and utilize widely accepted cultural norms as a reference point. This method enables us to comprehend better the historical evolution of tolerance and how it aligns with established societal norms. Such an approach also allows us to identify enduring patterns and shifts in tolerance, which can be particularly enlightening in comprehending the dynamics of a given society or culture. Furthermore, it helps mitigate the potential bias arising from an exclusive focus on recent events or isolated incidents.

The United Kingdom

The UK is frequently described as having solid cultural cohesion in academic and popular discourse. Most British people are thought to live similar lives and have broadly shared attitudes. The UK, according to this understanding, is a developed and harmonious welfare society. People use standard public services, earn a living in a variety of acceptable standard ways, spend their leisure time in various typical pursuits, and have primarily similar ideals for themselves and their families. From a slightly different angle, the country also has some significant cultural differences resulting from various economic, social, geographical, and ethnic factors. For example, it is undeniable that the country's central and northern regions and the south and east have significant demographic, cultural, and industrial differences (Forman & Baldwin, 1999, pp. 5-6). Individuals in the UK are also known to be multicultural (having multiple ethnoreligious identities) (Henderson & Jones, 2021, p. 37).

According to a report by the society Fear and Hope, which studies social value systems, with statistics for 2021, liberals and multiculturalists are at one end of the UK population, while those with covert and actively hostile views are at the other. In the middle, there is a more unstable group sensitive to economic conditions and an economically secure group concerned about cultural issues (Fear and Hope, 2022).

Following its exit from the European Union in 2020, the UK has entered a visible political crisis. This development lends credence to the argument that the characteristics once thought to distinguish British politics—such as stability, continuity, and moderation—have shifted, resulting in parliamentary gridlock and an almost unprecedented breakdown in party discipline (Henderson & Jones, 2021, p. 1). This new situation demonstrates that the political culture of the UK is changing and that more in-depth analysis is required.

Türkiye

Turkish political culture is challenging to define and comprehend, because the sources that can be used for this purpose—that is, Turkish historical narrative—are majorly ideological. For this reason, we should examine Turkish political culture through the lens of some fundamental dialectics, with assistance from an analytical perspective.

In the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire and the 100-year Republican period, Turkish society underwent a rapid and radical transformation. Even though Türkiye has not yet achieved an ideal democracy, the concept of democracy has been relatively ingrained (Karpas, 2010, p. 10). On the one hand, Türkiye has a multicultural historical heritage but also a cultural divide. This political-social cleavage, known as the traditionalist-contemporary (Türkdoğan, 2016) or conservative-secular conflict, has divided society for nearly two centuries due to it being trapped between Ottoman legacy-Westernization/modernization. This schism has widened in recent years, and social polarization has increased accordingly.

The political culture in Türkiye is characterized by a tendency towards conflict rather than conciliation. This has resulted in a lack of tolerance for dissenting opinions and lifestyles that do not conform to traditional values. The culture is shaped around an understanding of a strong and mighty state, which is often considered sacred. Additionally, there is a widespread admiration for charismatic leaders within Turkish society (Şahnagil, 2021, p. 536).

When asked how they would describe themselves in terms of their political views, 40.3% of respondents described themselves as religious/political Islamist/conservative, 15% as nationalist, and 16.6% as Kemalist, according to the "Türkiye Trends 2022" research, which analyzes the values of Turkish society. The answer to the question "How would you define yourself ethnically?" was 87.6% Turks, 9.2% Kurds, and 1.2% Arabs. According to another organization's (Sonar Research Company) research, "Türkiye-General Political Trends and Agenda Survey 2022," 24% Kemalist, 21% nationalist, 14% I do not have a political opinion, and 12% conservative answered the question "How do you position yourself politically?"

A variety of social and political factors shape Turkish political culture. Various communities and sects significantly influence political and social positions. Military coups have a long history of interfering in political affairs and controlling the bureaucracy. Economic crises, which occur approximately every ten years, significantly shape the country's politics. The demands for the rights of religious and ethnic minorities and the ongoing terrorist threat in the eastern regions of the country are other important issues affecting Turkish political culture.

III. Tolerance for lifestyles and differences/diversity

Political culture is influenced by society's material conditions, values, beliefs, understandings, and behavioral conditions (Turan, 1996, p. 37). Political culture shapes the tolerance for lifestyles and differences/diversity. Under this heading, reputable studies, reports, and opinions that provide essential data on the main focus of the study –tolerance of lifestyles and differences/diversity– are presented.

The United Kingdom

In the UK, there is a relatively high level of political tolerance, which includes tolerance for social and cultural differences. Despite being contentious and troublesome, respect for different lifestyles and differences/diversity is higher than the global average.

Ireland, Wales, and Scotland are all trouble areas in the UK. For many years, Northern Ireland has seen violent separatist uprisings. Wales and Scotland pursued their claims more peacefully. Each region has a significant assembly with great authority (Black, 2017, p. 202).

According to Roskin (2007, p. 64), British people are often known as polite, pragmatic, respectful of authority, and generally averse to violence. The UK is also known for its high levels of mutual tolerance, respect for the law, social trust, and civil organization, which are relatively higher than many other countries. However, studies suggest that in recent years, social divisions, crime rates, and xenophobia have increased due to various factors, such as periodic economic crises resulting in unemployment and poverty, as well as a significant influx of immigrants (Özdemir & Kanat, 2020, pp. 2338-2339).

While it is generally true that the British political culture values civility and respect in political discourse, it would be inaccurate to suggest that offensive or deep ideological conflicts are entirely uncommon. While politicians may maintain a level of decorum in their public interactions, there have been sharp and divisive political debates in British politics, particularly on issues such as Brexit, immigration, and national security. Furthermore, political campaigns and elections can often be highly polarized and divisive, with each party seeking to highlight their differences with their opponents in order to gain support from voters (Gürbüz, 1980, p. 50; Roskin, 2007, p. 61).

The UK has a rich history of free expression. In recent decades, the decline in societal obedience and hierarchy, the decline in respect/trust in traditional institutions such as the church, kingdom, law, union, and political party, and the increase in educational opportunities have all exacerbated the tendency to express opposing viewpoints (Black, 2017, pp. 221-222). For example, an ordinary British citizen can easily say whatever he wants on any subject in London's famous "speaker's corner": Hyde Park (Roskin, 2007, p. 61). According to reports such as the "Global Expression Report" published by the International Human Rights Organization's Article 19 and "Freedom in the World" published by Freedom House, the UK scores highest in countries with complete freedom of expression.

For example, based on data from the 'Democracy Index 2022,' an annual publication by the global research organization 'Economist Intelligence Unit,' ranked the U.K. 18th. According to the 'Freedom House's Freedom Agenda 2022' report, which focuses on several vital thematic issues related to democracy, political rights, and civil liberties, the U.K. is recognized as one of the countries with the highest levels of freedom in terms of democracy, political rights, and civil liberties. According to 'The World's Best Countries For Quality of Life 2021' report prepared by 'Ceoworld Magazine,' which compares 165 countries on ten parameters such as economy, market, income justice, stability, political neutrality, education, and health, it ranks 11th. Also, it ranks in the top 10 among 85

countries in 'U.S. News Best Countries 2023 Rankings,' which evaluates global performance using various criteria.

The UK has a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural structure today (Özdemir & Kanat, 2020, p. 2340). The country has a rich cultural diversity, with many different languages and traditions represented. The ethnic composition of the population is white (87.17%), Asian or Asian British (6.92%), and black (3.01%). Scotland has 5.5 million people, Wales has 3.2 million people, and Northern Ireland has 2 million. Regarding religion, approximately 30 million Christians, 23 million people do not identify with any religion, and 3.4 million Muslims live in the UK. In addition to those figures, there are smaller populations of Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, Buddhists, and other religious groups in the UK (UK Population Data; UK Office for National Statistics).

With increased immigration, the country's sociological and demographic structure⁵ has changed dramatically over the last century. The UK's history of immigration and its impact on British society is complex and controversial. While immigration has brought diversity and contributed to the country's economic growth, it has also increased tensions and discrimination toward minority groups. The UK's experience with immigration has been complex, with both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, immigrants have contributed significantly to the country's economy and culture, helping to transform it into a multicultural state. However, the wave of immigration has also resulted in forming communities along racial and religious lines, with many immigrants facing discrimination in various aspects of British life. Additionally, the increasing number of opinions that the UK's Muslim minority hates the country has led to antipathy towards immigrants among some British natives, resulting in racist riots and other forms of prejudice. In response to these challenges, institutions and laws have been established to combat racism and integrate immigrant communities into British life. Nevertheless, the issue remains contentious, with ethnic minorities projected to make up a third of the population by 2050. Despite this, the prevailing view is that the British super-identity is one of the multiple identities, rather than excluding other identities and that the British lifestyle continues to exist as a tolerant, diverse culture (Roskin, 2007; Black, 2017; Burns, 2010).

5 The collapse of the British Empire was accompanied by the migration of people from the imperial countries to the UK, which disrupted the homogeneity of the country (Burns, 2010, p. 224).

Sharing the findings of some reports and research on tolerance and the views in the literature summarized thus far may provide more concrete insight on the current situation.

In the UK, hate crimes have increased since 2013. According to official statistics, hate crimes have increased from 42,255 to 155,841 in the last ten years. There were 109,843 racial hate crimes, 8,730 religious hate crimes, and 26,152 hate crimes based on sexual orientation (UK Population Data).

According to the 2021 British Social Attitudes Survey, tolerance of different cultures and lifestyles has increased recently. The survey found that 83% of people in the UK agreed that it was important for people from different backgrounds to come together and live in mixed communities, up from 76% in 2019. However, the survey also found that attitudes towards immigration remained mixed, with 43% believing that immigration harmed the UK, while 38% believed it had a positive impact (Wellings, 2022).

In 2020, the Runnymede Trust, a race equality think tank, published a report on race equality in the UK. The report found that people from ethnic minority backgrounds faced significant inequalities in education, employment, and health. The report also highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ethnic minority communities, with higher infection and mortality rates among these groups (Nazroo & Becares, 2021).

The 'Fear and Hope 2022' report highlights that the UK is commonly perceived as an open and tolerant society. The country has transformed into a place with greater social liberalism and openness as its population has become more diverse and educated throughout the 2010s. Specifically, the report notes that in 2011, less than half of the population (40%) considered immigration beneficial to the country, whereas by 2021, this proportion had increased to 56%. Additionally, the percentage of people who believed that different ethnic groups get along well in the UK has risen from 29% in 2011 to 41% in 2021. Similarly, the proportion of people who view diversity in backgrounds and cultures as a vital element of British culture has increased from 49% to 60% over the past decade, with attitudes shifting towards more openness and tolerance across social issues such as same-sex marriage and immigration.

Most of the British population is aware of the prevalence of racism and acknowledges the discrimination experienced by Black and Asian individuals in their daily lives. However, there is widespread opposition to challenging structural

racism, and the majority rejects the concept of privilege based on identity. In terms of gender equality, there is broad agreement among people. Views on major social issues have become less ideological, while specific issues have become more critical. Views on individual identity issues have become more pronounced, with new identity politics emerging as traditional political identities based on 'British values' are fading. Identity issues continue to divide British society, with their manifestations differing significantly from those of a decade ago. The far right's focus has shifted from overt white supremacy to anti-Muslim sentiment. While anti-Muslim prejudice has decreased recently, it still sets Muslims apart from other religious groups. A reactionary right threat is now emerging to counteract the fight against social inequalities that undermine social tolerance. New identity politics are emerging that draw new lines of division over overlapping and intersecting issues, which can give rise to hate-filled politics that appeal to new audiences. However, despite these changes, the study concludes that culture wars do not lead to extreme social polarization, and citizens' attitudes remain balanced (Fear & Hope, 2022).

Türkiye

It has been observed that in Türkiye, "political tolerance" and "tolerance for different lifestyles" are generally low. However, depending on the place and demographic, the tolerance level for social and cultural variations may change. Political affiliation, religious beliefs, and ethnic identity often significantly shape individuals' attitudes toward social and cultural diversity. Research suggests that while there is some acceptance of diversity in urban areas, rural regions tend to be less tolerant. It is also alleged that some minority groups, such as the LGBT+ community, face significant discrimination and intolerance in Türkiye.

In Türkiye, several political issues have yet to be resolved. For nearly 40 years, the security problems caused by (but gradually decreasing) terrorism in the country's eastern region, as well as the claims of the Alevis, who make up 4% of the population (Konda Research and Consultancy), have been a pending solution. Although there are occasional openings for ethnic or religious identity differences, the problem can be said to persist in concrete terms.

The extent of violence in Turkish society is a critical factor in evaluating its tolerance level. Official data supports the fact that violence is a pervasive issue in Türkiye. According to the Ministry of Justice's annual publication of "judicial statistics," there were 2 million criminal court cases, with approximately 3.5 million defendants and 8.7 million victims in one judicial year (2022). This data

suggests that 5.5 percent of the population— almost one out of every twenty-two people— were accused of a crime, while 9 percent were victims. However, the situation is even more concerning when considering unreported cases that may have gone unnoticed by official proceedings.

The level of censorship and self-censorship in Türkiye is a significant concern according to the Susma Platform (Speak Up Platform), a civil society organization that aims to combat restrictions on free expression. In their 2019 report titled "Censorship and Self-Censorship in Türkiye," they claim that fundamental rights violations have intensified, particularly in areas such as book recalls, event bans, preventing access to news, censoring news, halting publications, targeting, intimidation, denunciation, detention, investigation, prosecution, and imprisonment. These violations have reached alarming levels, posing a severe threat to fundamental rights (2019, p. 7). The platform's 2021 and 2022 reports suggest that censorship has become a systematic issue affecting various fields, including journalism, television, internet broadcasting, cinema, music, and theater. These reports assert that censorship and self-censorship are pervasive problems in Türkiye, affecting social life.

According to a 2020 study called "Report on Academic Freedoms in Türkiye During the State of Emergency," by a national association dedicated to protecting fundamental rights and freedoms, there has been a notable decline in academic freedom and activities in Türkiye. The report notes that no institutional mechanisms are in place to ensure academic activities are free from self-censorship, meaning that the academic environment is not free (Tastan & Örddek, 2020).

In 2018, the Association for Monitoring Equal Rights, a civil organization working on fundamental rights, conducted a survey called "The Discrimination Survey." The survey revealed that a significant portion of the Turkish population experiences discrimination in their daily lives, business, education, property acquisition, and interactions with security forces and judicial institutions due to gender, sexual preference, ideology, ethnicity, and race. The survey also found that the social value system is the most significant source of discrimination.

Türkiye's standing in terms of freedom of expression is in a state of crisis, according to the international human rights organization Article 19's "Global Expression Report." The report places Türkiye at the bottom of the list, ranking -141. We come across similar findings in the reports of various independent organizations on indicators such as democracy, freedom, and fundamental rights. For instance, according to 2022 data found on the Economist Intelligence

Democracy Index, Türkiye is ranked 103rd, at the bottom of the list. The 'Freedom House's Freedom Agenda 2022' report states that Türkiye is among the low-ranking (non-free countries & the category of the biggest decline of the last ten years) regarding democracy, political rights, and civil liberties; and "The World's Best Countries For Quality of Life 2021" report prepared by Ceoworld Magazine, which compares 165 countries on ten parameters such as economy, market, income justice, stability, political neutrality, education, and health, ranks Türkiye in the 61st position. It ranks 30th among 85 countries in U.S. News "Best Countries, 2022 Rankings," which evaluates global performance based on various criteria. Furthermore, the findings of the "The Pulse of Türkiye" survey carried out by the Metropol Research Company reveal a serious concern within the political culture. 70% of respondents believe that sects and communities are organized in public institutions and are attempting to influence public administration.

Other reports, such as the World Happiness Report 2022 and the UN Development Programme's Human Development Index, also rank the UK higher than Türkiye in terms of quality of life and overall development. According to the 2021/22 statistics of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which has been presenting independent, analytical, and empirically grounded development issues, trends, and policies since 1990, UK ranks 18th, Türkiye ranks 48th. According to the United Nations "World Happiness Report 2022," which uses global survey data to report on how people in more than 150 countries around the world rate their lives, the UK is the 17th, whereas Türkiye is the 112th happiest country. According to Hanke's "Annual Misery Index 2022," which publishes the misery levels of countries, the UK ranks (among the least miserable countries) in the 129th place, while Türkiye ranks 10th. The Global Slavery Index, a comprehensive report published by the Walk Free Foundation that assesses the prevalence of modern slavery and human trafficking in countries around the world, also ranks the UK relatively well among countries in terms of efforts to combat modern slavery, while Türkiye ranks 5th.

Results

According to the data we analyzed, we first reached the following main finding: According to various reports and rankings, the UK generally ranks higher than Türkiye in terms of democracy, human rights, quality of life, and other measures. There are several political and social reasons for this important conclusion.

The UK has a rich history of cultural exchange and diversity, which has shaped its traditions, customs, and arts. This cultural diversity has been influenced by the country's colonial past and immigration patterns, resulting in a mix of traditional and popular culture. In Türkiye, however, there has been a growing divide in recent years, with social polarization increasing. Several factors, including political differences, economic inequality, and social issues related to religion, gender, and ethnicity, have fueled this gap.

The UK and Türkiye have political cultures developed over time and shaped by their histories and experiences. Acknowledging that these political cultures are multifaceted and cannot be reduced to a few factors or characteristics is essential. However, while the UK has a long tradition of democratic institutions and individual freedom, Türkiye has had a complex relationship with religion, ethnicity, and military coups. It is also essential to recognize that both countries have citizens who are actively engaged in the democratic process and who have a strong sense of civic duty. Ultimately, a nuanced understanding of political cultures is necessary to grasp the complexity of each country's political landscape.

It is important to note that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right and is crucial for the functioning of a democratic society. It allows citizens to express their opinions and ideas freely, to hold their governments accountable, and to participate in decision-making processes. While the UK has a relatively high level of freedom of expression, it has its own challenges. There are concerns about negative attitudes towards certain types of expression, such as anti-immigrant and hate speech, which have increased in recent years. However, it can be said that the UK has been able to maintain its strong tradition of protecting freedom of expression. In Türkiye, there are more significant challenges to freedom of expression. As mentioned earlier in some reports and studies, there have been crackdowns on media outlets, arrests of journalists, and restrictions on social media posts. These restrictions have a chilling effect on freedom of expression and limit the ability of citizens to hold their government accountable.

Moreover, the concern about particular groups or communities attempting to influence public institutions underscores the significance of core principles in a democratic society, including transparency, accountability, and the need for a fair and impartial public administration. When there is a perception that these principles are compromised, it can lead to conflicts within the political culture. Maintaining and strengthening these principles is essential for fostering trust in government institutions and ensuring that public administration serves the interests of the entire society rather than specific groups or interests. Addressing

these issues, providing mechanisms for transparency and accountability, and upholding the rule of law are essential steps in resolving conflicts and maintaining a healthy and functional political culture.

Conclusions

The political cultures of the two countries chosen (Türkiye and the UK) as samples were compared using the comparative political method. An answer to the question "What are the problems of Turkish political culture?" was sought, using similar dynamics in Türkiye and the UK as an example/case considering the ontological and structural differences of Turkish political culture with an unbiased and realistic presupposition.

The literature review examined many scientific works and more than 30 respected national-international reports. In this study, problems such as obstacles to democratic politics, internal (social and political) polarization, and the unifying effect of culture were analyzed. This study aimed to compare the political cultures of the UK, which is seen as a democratic-stable and harmonious society, and Türkiye, which is characterized by conflict rather than compromise. Potential transfers in political culture that could be applied to Turkey were also investigated. Finally, the hypothesis of the study that "Turkey needs a new social contract" was tested. The results achieved in this framework are as follows:

As a parameter indicating political tolerance, the United Kingdom has adopted an approach to minimize social polarization through various forms of recognition of democratic rights for its troubled regions (Wales, Ireland, and Scotland). Another parameter is that the studies concluded that the country's citizens enjoy the freedom of expression and the privilege to freely adopt the lifestyles of their choice, that the print and broadcast media are not suppressed, and that society is not polarized (except in recent periods). The country is multicultural, and many different ethnic and cultural elements live together peacefully. Social violence is relatively low. However, the country also faces challenges such as xenophobia and racially or culturally motivated hate crimes due to increased immigration. All in all, the adversities have not led to sharp polarization. Acceptable tolerance levels of different cultures and lifestyles can be attributed to the state's traditional political culture, which prioritizes freedom of expression and inclusiveness.

Conversely, there seems to be lower respect for lifestyles and diversity in Türkiye. Various data points criticize the crackdown on opposition groups

and journalists, restrictions on social media, and exclusion policies towards communities such as LGBT+. While freedom of expression is highlighted as a serious problem, there are restrictions on academic studies, artistic activities, and other areas. Moreover, allegations of favoritism towards sects and communities as a factor disrupting social cohesion are also prominent. The problem of PKK terrorism remains an important issue. Social violence is both quantitatively and qualitatively high.

The comparison between the UK and Türkiye reflects levels of tolerance towards different lifestyles, with the UK adopting an approach that emphasizes freedom of expression and inclusiveness, while Türkiye is characterized by greater repression and restrictions. The political and social dynamics in both of these countries are important factors influencing levels of tolerance.

The results show significant problems with freedom and fundamental rights in Turkish political culture. This is due to a lack of political tolerance. These problems can profoundly affect social cohesion, the culture of living together, and citizens' sense of belonging to the state. When individuals and groups feel discriminated against or censored, this can lead to divisions and erode the social fabric of society. Addressing these issues is vital to building a more just, democratic, and inclusive society where everyone can feel valued and respected. Therefore, the question of whether the political system in Türkiye should be restructured in a democratic and inclusive perspective to prevent social polarization becomes paramount. Addressing these issues will be essential for improving Türkiye's overall political culture and a more democratic and stable society.

These issues, which have the potential to erode social cohesiveness and democracy, should be addressed by Turkey. Turkey can encourage freedom of expression and change its media laws. Can improve the safeguards for academics, human rights advocates, journalists, and dissidents.

In sum, the UK has a higher political tolerance and a more vibrant tradition of protecting freedom of expression than Türkiye. Türkiye can learn from the UK's example, model its level of political tolerance, and take steps to improve its political tolerance and protect different lifestyles.

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