

STANDARD OF LIVING IN TURKEY



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Is Turkey satisfied with the standard of living?

“Life standard satisfaction” is a data measured regularly by foremost institutions of the globe conducting polls. As MetroPOLL, we are going to be measuring and assessing the “life standard satisfaction” data for Turkey on a regular basis, just as international polling companies like Gallup and Pew do for the U.S. and other countries around the world.

According to our research conducted in February, those who may reply affirmatively to the question, “Are you satisfied with your life standard” constitute the mere 21.7 percent of the population. Those who satisfied are predominantly (41 percent) the voters of Justice and Development Party (AK Parti). They are followed by 23.6 percent of the voters of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP); as a reminder, MHP is in an electoral coalition with AK Parti, and hence, they are also de facto in the governing block.

Those who are last satisfied with their life standards are voters of the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP): in total, 77.6 percent of the voters of HDP are dissatisfied with their living standards. Republican People’s Party voters rank as second in life standard dissatisfaction with 69 percent. Third comes İYİ Parti with 53.5 percent dissatisfaction level. Alternatively, those who are dissatisfied with their life standards minorities among AK Parti and MHP voters; respectively with 19 and 21 percent.

There are also those who neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; and they represent the majority among MHP voters. “Neither nor”s among the second biggest group among AK Parti voters, and they are measured around 36 percent.

“Gender” does not seem to be a determining factor in life standard satisfaction in case of Turkey. Men are 2.5 points more “dissatisfied” than women: whereas 43.4 percent of the male population are dissatisfied with their living standards, for women this figure is 41 percent. As might be observed, there is not a huge gap between genders in terms being dissatisfied with living standards. The females who are satisfied with their lives rank around 19 percent and the males, 24.4 percent. We may speculate that expressing dissatisfaction with living standards among women is lower due cultural bias. In other words, men may have higher freedom of expression in voicing dissatisfaction.

As far as age groups are concerned, it is observed that the 55 years plus group is the most “dissatisfied”. Among the 18-34 age group of millennials, dissatisfaction level is around 39 percent, but among those 55 and older, this ratio is 45.4 percent. All in all, we are seeing that the “satisfied” number around 21-22 percent among all age groups. The younger segment of the population may be more optimistic due to their youthful zest and express lesser aggrievances.

Education level is not a determining factor life satisfaction level either: graduates of middle schools and lower, and those holding a university degree and above are equally “dissatisfied”. Nevertheless, we may affirm that the graduates of lycée and equivalent schools are the most dissatisfied (44 percent).

Not so surprisingly, as the income level increases, dissatisfaction with life standard also decreases. 57 percent of those earning monthly 1000 TL and less (around 160 dollars) are dissatisfied with their life standards. On the other hand, this figure falls down to 28.4 percent among those earning monthly 4000 TL (640 dollars) and more.

“Rainy days ahead” perceptions

We may not be so content with our life standards today; how about the perceptions of tomorrow? Turkey’s public does not seem to be very optimistic about the future of their living standards. Around 60 percent of the population think that their life standards are deprecating. Those who think that their life standards have improved are only 18 percent of the public.

Those who can say that their life standards have improved are predominantly AK Parti voters (40.2 percent). They are followed up by the MHP voters (10.6 percent). However, those thinking that their life standards have depreciated constitute the overwhelming majority. For example, 91.7 percent of the HDP voters; namely almost all of the voter base of this party have negative views about their life standard’s fluctuation. Likewise, 79.3 percent of the CHP and 75.7 percent of the İYİ Parti voters share this view. Moreover, although MHP is positioned in the ruling bloc, those expressing negative sentiments regarding the change in their life standards make up the majority of this party’s voters (64 percent).

Gender and age do not seem to be variables that have a significant effect over the perceptions on the future living standards. For example, women thinking that their living standards are getting worse are almost on par with

men: 58 percent of women and 60 percent of men share the opinion “my living standards are getting worse”. On the other hand, ratio of women who are able to say “my living standards are getting better” are 5 points less than men; featuring at 15.6 percent.

Similarly, there are no perceptual gaps over distribution according to age groups. 58-59 percent of the public affirm that “their standard of living is getting worse” across all age groups. On the other hand, the 18-34 age group is the segment with the lowest rate of stating “My life standard is getting better” (16.4 percent).

High school graduates are the group who has experienced worsening of their standard of living most intensely: about 65 percent of them expresses negative opinions on the direction of their level life standards.

As may be expected, life standard satisfaction is directly proportional with income levels. Groups that earn less than 3000 TL (approximately 480 dollars) per month feel the deterioration of living standards more intensely; with an average level of 60 percent. On the other hand, the rate of those who think that the living standard has deteriorated (with 49.2 percent) is the lowest among earning monthly 4000 TL and above (around 640 dollars and above).

Let us point out that general average of those who think that their standard of living has deteriorated in Turkey are now higher than the levels that Gallup * measured in the U.S. during the 2007-2009 economic crisis, nicknamed the “Great Recession”. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) referred to this period, when the average of the global gross national product lost 5 percent, as the “biggest depression after the Great Depression” of the 1930s. According to Gallup's “Standard of Living Index” data, during the great economic crisis taking place in the U.S. in 2008, those affirming that “their standard of living has worsened” was around 41 percent: As we noted above, in figure in contemporary Turkey is around 60 percent. ** .

Prof. Dr. Özer Sencar

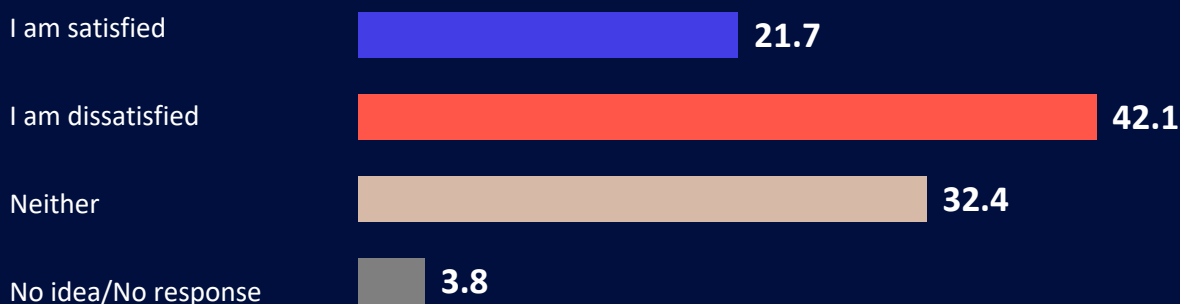
* Gallup Daily: U.S. Standard of Living” <https://news.gallup.com/poll/110140/gallup-daily-us-standard-living.aspx>

** Jim Norman, “Americans' Ratings of Standard of Living Best in Decade”, 12 September 2017, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/218981/americans-ratings-standard-living-best-decade.aspx>

Life Standard Satisfaction

According to MetroPOLL's "February Standard of Living Survey", 42% of the population are not satisfied with their living standards. While 22% said they were satisfied, the rest did not express an opinion on this matter. Life standard satisfaction was measured at the base of the AK Party with 41%.

When you think in general, are you satisfied with your standard of living?

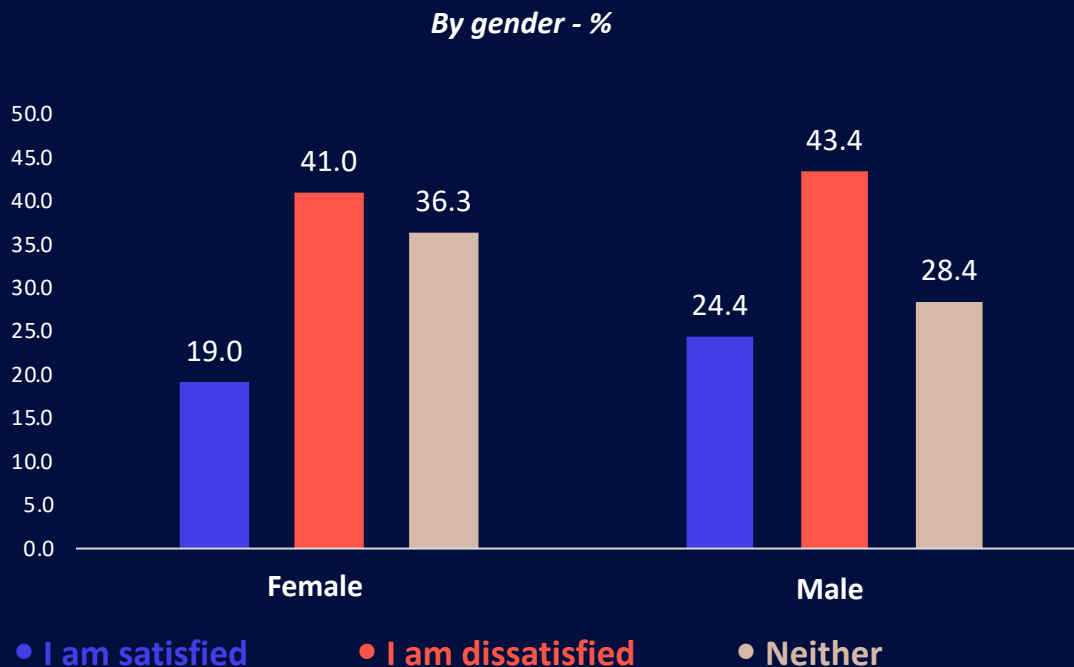


By vote cast in June 24, 2018 parliamentary election - %

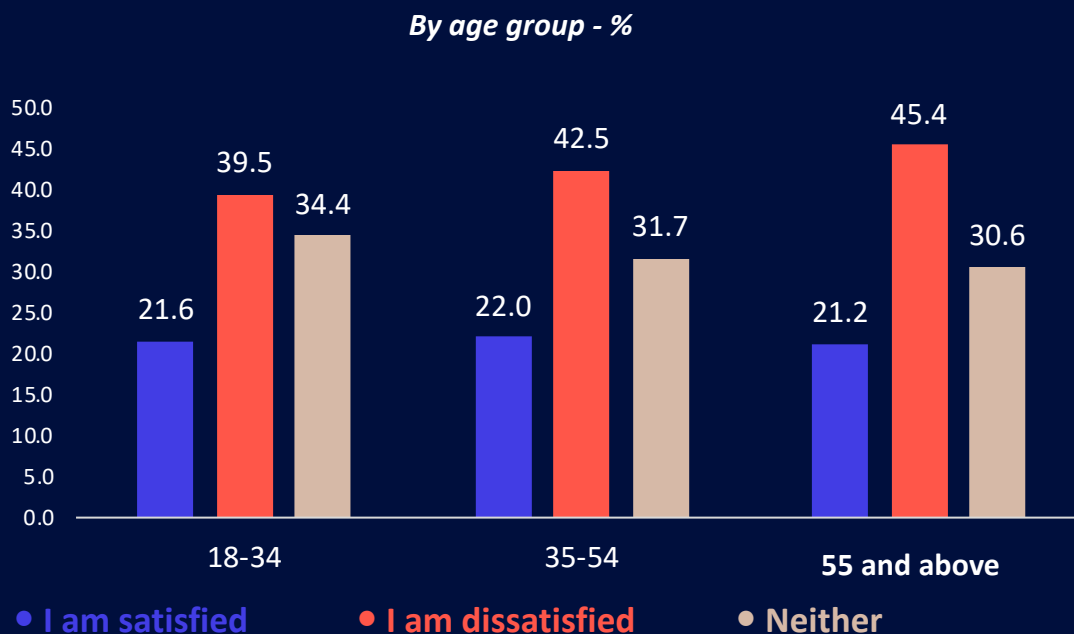
	I am satisfied	I am dissatisfied	Neither	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	41.1	18.9	36.2	3.7	100
CHP	4.3	68.9	23.2	3.7	100
MHP	23.6	21.1	52.8	2.5	100
HDP	3.5	77.6	13.5	5.3	100
İYİ Party	10.4	53.5	36.1		100
SP	26.3	47.4	15.8	10.5	100
Other party		100.0			100
AVERAGE	21.7	42.1	32.4	3.8	100

When you think in general, are you satisfied with your standard of living?

We can say that the dissatisfaction rate is higher in men, albeit with a slight difference. While 43% of men state that they are not satisfied with the standard of living, this rate is 41% for women.

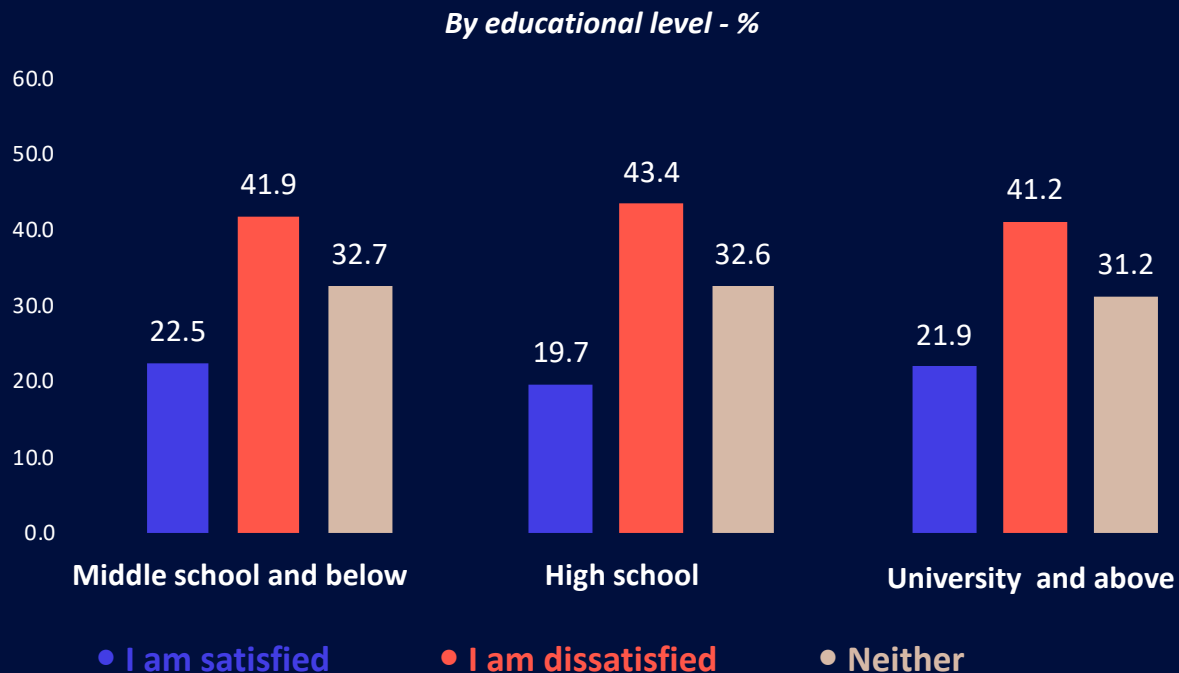


It is observed that voter groups across all age groups are not satisfied with their standards of living, but negative response rate was measured highest in the age group of 55 and over (45.4%).

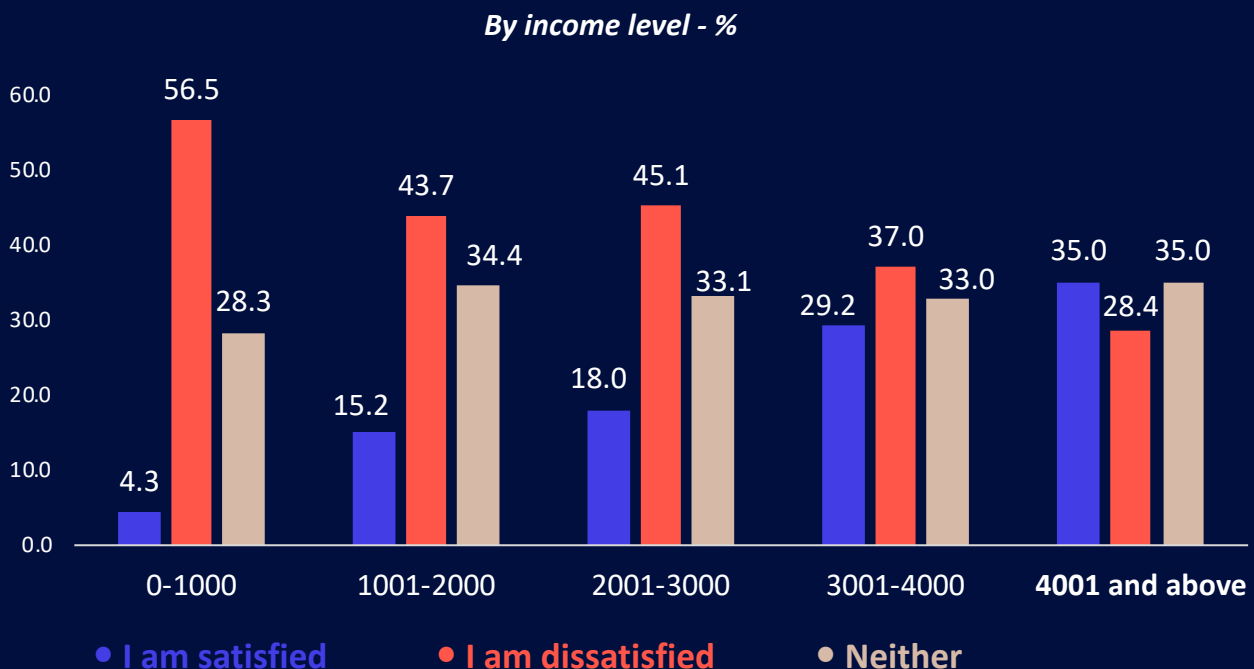


When you think in general, are you satisfied with your standard of living?

“Are you satisfied with your standard of living?”: The answer to the question "I am not satisfied" constitute the majority among 43% of high school graduates.



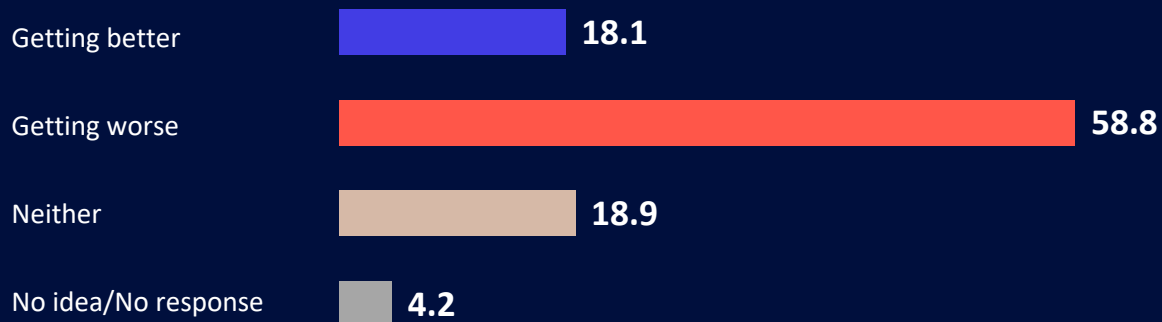
When the relationship between income status and standard of living is examined, 57% of those with income below 1000 lira state that they are not satisfied with their standards of life. The standard of living satisfaction was measured at 35% in the highest income bracket (4001 TL and above).



Life Satisfaction Expectancy

The results found by study shows that 59% say their standard of livings are getting worse day by day. On the other hand, 18% of voters think their standard of livings getting better. Also, there is a group of 19% that claims their standard of livings follows a straight line.

Do you think your standard of living is getting better or worse?

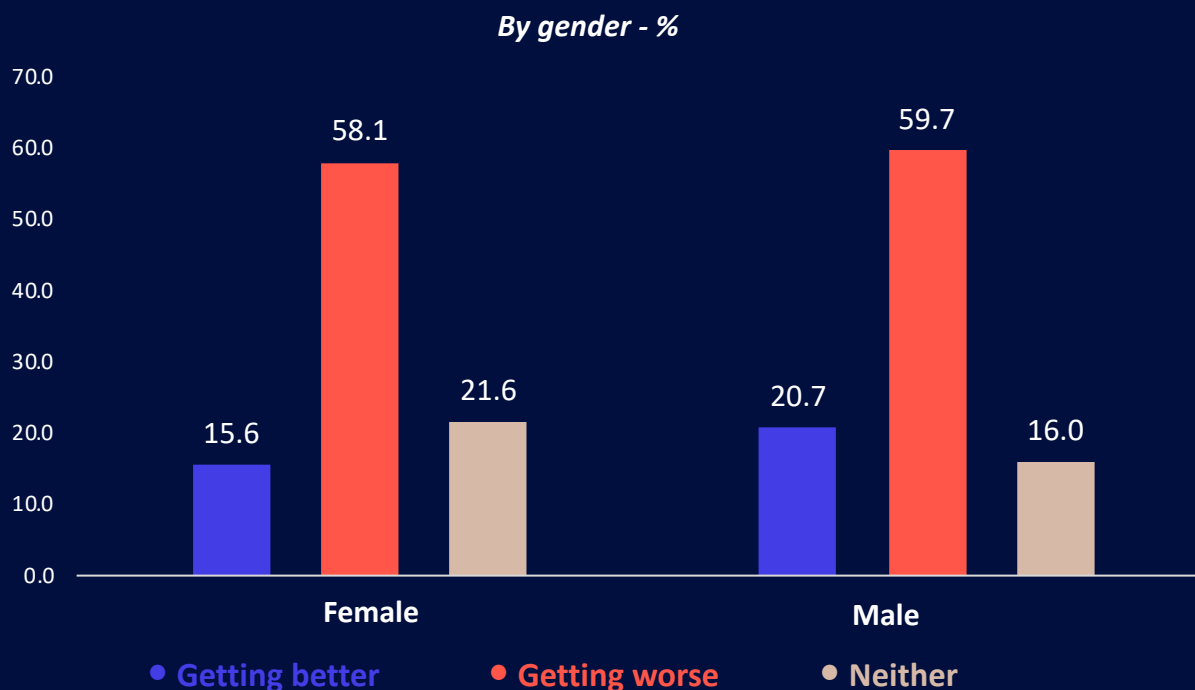


By vote cast in June 24, 2018 parliamentary election - %

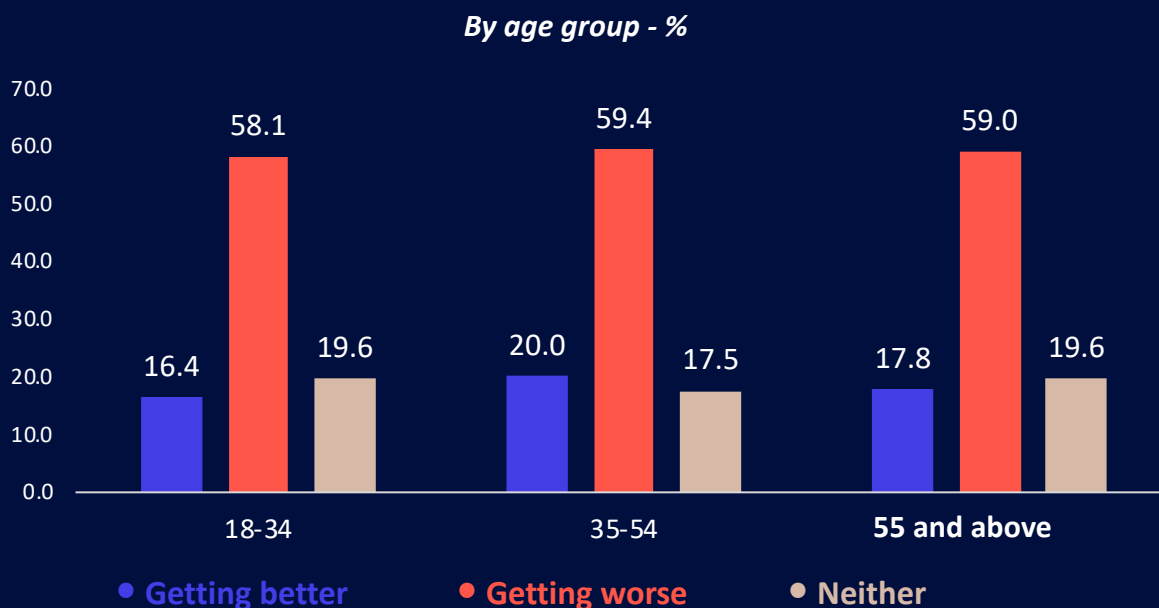
	Getting better	Getting worse	Neither	No idea/ No response	Total
AKP	40.2	32.4	23.2	4.2	100
CHP	4.3	79.3	12.2	4.3	100
MHP	10.6	64.0	25.5		100
HDP	1.2	91.7	6.5	0.6	100
İYİ Party	0.7	75.7	20.8	2.8	100
SP	15.0	50.0	35.0		100
Other party		100.0			100
AVERAGE	20.0	46.7	20.0	13.3	100

Do you think your standard of living is getting better or worse?

According to the research, when the distribution by gender is analyzed, it is seen that the life expectancy rate is higher among male voters (20.7%) than female voters (15.6%). In addition, it is concluded that a 58% among female voters and a 60% among male voters think that the standard of living is deteriorating.

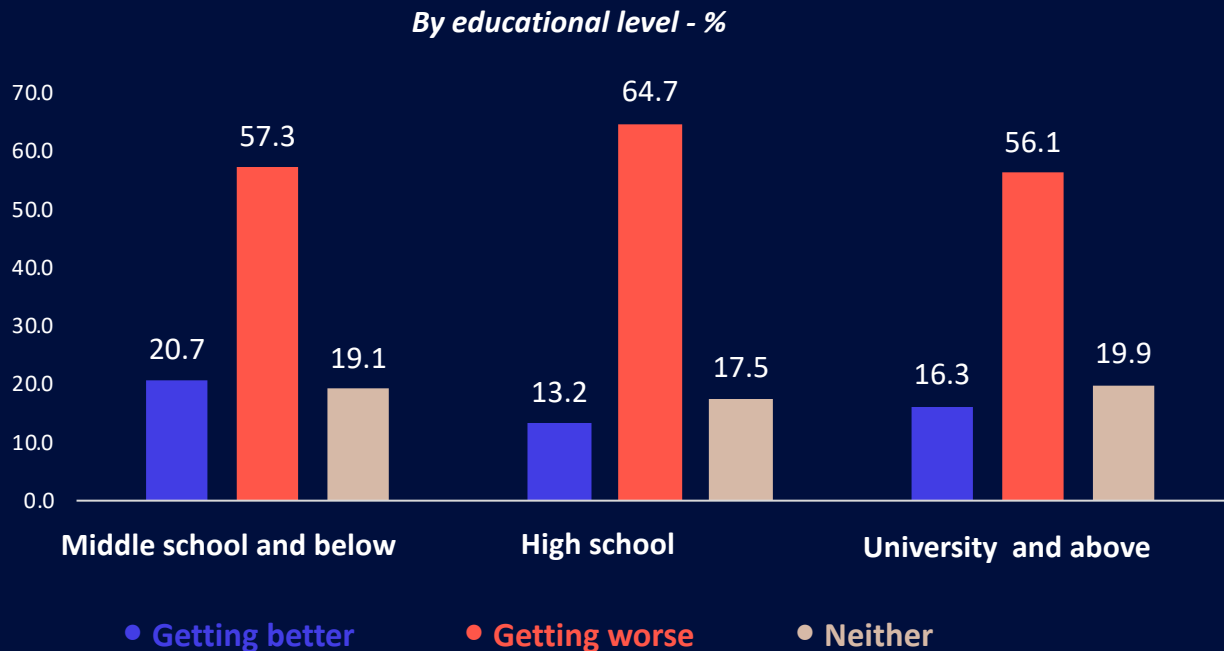


Perceptions on living standards' direction among voters in all age groups are negative: Merely, 16% of younger adults, 20% of the adults, and 18% of the elders aged 55 and above, share the view that their living standards are getting better.

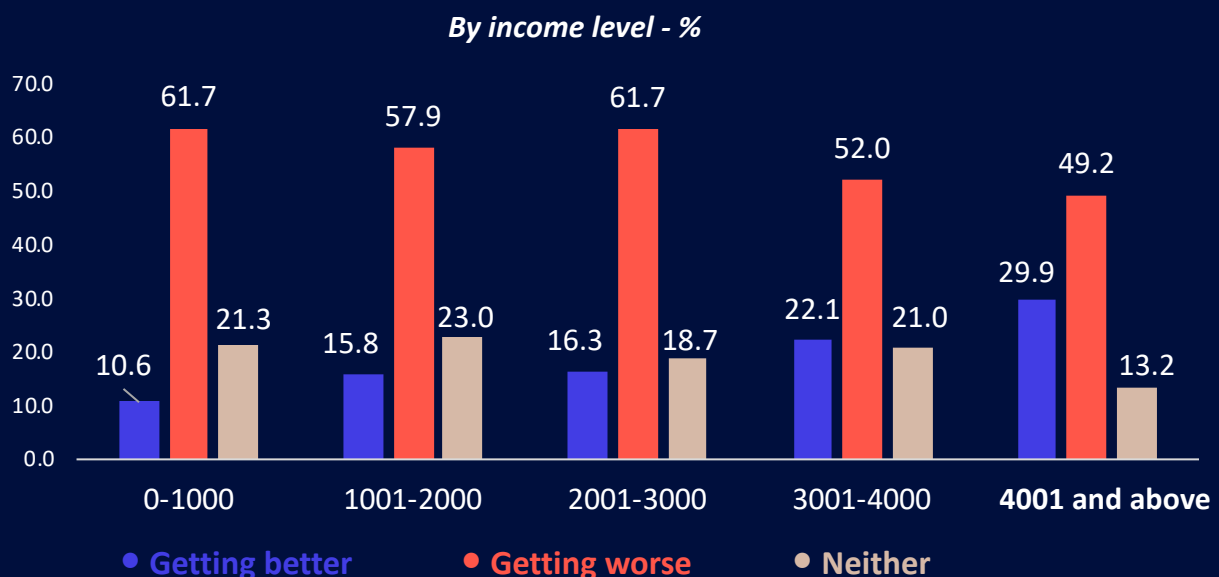


Do you think your standard of living is getting better or worse?

When relationship between education level and levels of oscillation in the standard of living is examined, it is measured that 16% of university graduates and above think that their living standard is getting better and 56% think it is getting worse. Perceptions of the 65% of high school graduates and 57% of secondary school graduates posit that their living standards have deteriorated.



According to the survey, 62% of people whose income is up to 1000 TL and those who are between 2001-3000 TL think their standards of living are getting worse. Those perceiving their living standard are getting better number around 30% of the people with the highest income bracket (4001 TL and above). However, 49% of this highest earning group think their living standards are also getting worse.



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