

Turkey's Local Election Results: An Explainer

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Abbreviations

AK Party: Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)

CHP: Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)

HDP: Peoples' Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi)

İYİ Party: Good Party (İyi Parti)

MHP: Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)

YSK: Supreme Election Council (Yüksek Seçim Kurulu)

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Introduction

On March 31, Turkey held local elections throughout the country. With a recorded turnout of 84.7%, over 48 million of 57 million eligible voters exercised their democratic rights. Depending on where they live, people voted for mayors, municipal council members, provincial assembly members, neighbourhood representatives (mukhtar) and the council of elders.

Political alliances – first used in the June 2018 General Election – made these local elections different from previous ones. The People's Alliance, comprised of the AK Party (Justice and Development Party) and MHP (Nationalist Movement Party), agreed to cooperate in all of 30 metropolitan municipalities in addition to 21 provincial municipalities. The CHP (Republican People's Party) and IYI Party (Good Party) led the Nation's Alliance, cooperating in 23 metropolitan munic-

ipalities and 27 provincial municipalities. In Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, Turkey's three largest cities, the AK Party's and CHP's mayoral candidates competed directly, with respective support from their MHP and IYI Party allies.

Latest results show that throughout the country the AK Party and MHP's People's Alliance won 51.64% of the vote, while the CHP and IYI Party's Nation's Alliance won 37.57% of the vote and HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) won 4.24% of the vote. Although political parties have filed their objections and recounting processes are now underway in several cities – including Istanbul – according to Anadolu Agency, provisional results show that AK Party won 15 metropolitan municipalities, the CHP won 11, the HDP won 3 and the MHP won 1. In the cities, the AK Party secured 24 mayoral seats, the CHP and MHP 10, the HDP 5 and the TKP (The Communist Party of Turkey) secured 1.

OVERVIEW OF THE MARCH 31 ELECTION RESULTS

Percentage of
Opened Ballot
Boxes

100%

Turnout

84.67%



AK PARTY



MHP

People's Alliance

51.64%



CHP



IYI PARTY

Nation's Alliance

37.57%



HDP



OTHERS

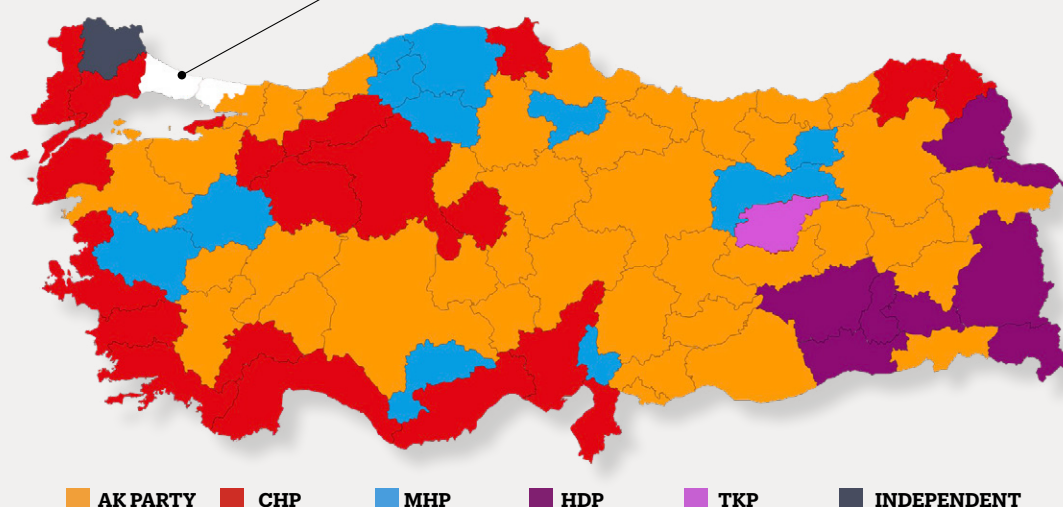
4.24%

6.55%

Source: Anadolu Agency

MARCH 31 2019 LOCAL ELECTIONS RESULTS

The result in Istanbul has been the most contested one. According to provisional results before the objection process, Ekrem İmamoğlu had secured 4,159,650 votes versus Binali Yıldırım's 4,131,761, putting İmamoğlu ahead of Yıldırım by 27,889 votes.



Source: Anadolu Agency

Provisional results have been announced by the YSK (Supreme Election Council) in the next day of the election, but the election process has not been finalized yet. Political parties have filed objections in constituencies where they detected irregularities in ballot box results. Moreover, in some of the constituencies, the margin between the leading candidates was very low. In these constituencies political parties also made applications for the re-evaluation of all votes or at least the invalid votes.

Turkey's most important city and economic powerhouse, Istanbul, home to 20% of the Turkish population had a very intense election process. The provisional results showed that CHP candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu is leading the race over AK Party candidate Binali Yıldırım by a narrow gap. The AK Party has appealed objection to the provisional result in Istanbul on the basis of high number of invalid votes and detected irregularities. The CHP has also filed objections for alleged irregularities in some of the ballot boxes in Istanbul. The mechanisms and scope of the objection process have been clearly defined by the law.

District Election Boards throughout Istanbul as well as the Provincial Election Board have accepted the AK Party's appeal and has decided to re-evaluate all of the invalid votes in 39 districts of Istanbul. At the time of writing, the re-evaluation process is ongoing and the vote margin between the candidates is approximately 18 thousand in favour of Ekrem İmamoğlu.

This info pack aims to provide the necessary information regarding the objection process in Turkey's election system. Firstly, the structure of Turkey's Supreme Election Board will be examined in detail. Secondly, the objection process will be examined step by step. Thirdly, the electoral process in Istanbul and objections to the results in the city will be given in detail, including the statements of the political parties. Lastly, examples from other cities will be given to better explain the objection process of the election system.



(Muhammed Furkan Güneş- AA)

The Electoral Process in Turkey

YSK is the top authority responsible for the conduct of all electoral processes in a transparent, equal, fair, and reliable manner. The YSK oversees the entire process from its onset to the end. Provincial and District Election Boards also carry out duties assigned by the YSK and supervise the election process within their respective jurisdictions. Ballot box committees also play a critical role in supervising and documenting the electoral process during and after the elections. Political parties assign one original and one reserve member to these committees thereby strengthening transparency.

The electoral process - including before, during and after the election period - is carried out through an integrated election management system, called SECSIS. This system enables voters and political parties to monitor the whole process throughout the country. It also ensures that political parties simultaneously obtain results of the ballot boxes once they are entered into the system after counting. This system secures the conduct of elections in a transparent manner.

What is the YSK and What Does it Do?

The YSK is an independent and impartial institution in performing its duties and exercising its powers. It is legally enshrined that no authority can give orders and instructions to the YSK. The YSK is responsible for carrying

out all procedures related to the management of the election from its commencement until its end, with a particular focus on ensuring its integrity. The YSK also examines and finalizes all possible corruptions, complaints and objections related to the election process both during and after the election.

The YSK consists of seven principal and four alternate members, six of which are elected from among the members of the Court of Cassation and the remaining five members are from among the Council of State through secret ballot and absolute majority voting. The members of the YSK serve for a six year term and can be re-elected once their terms are expired.

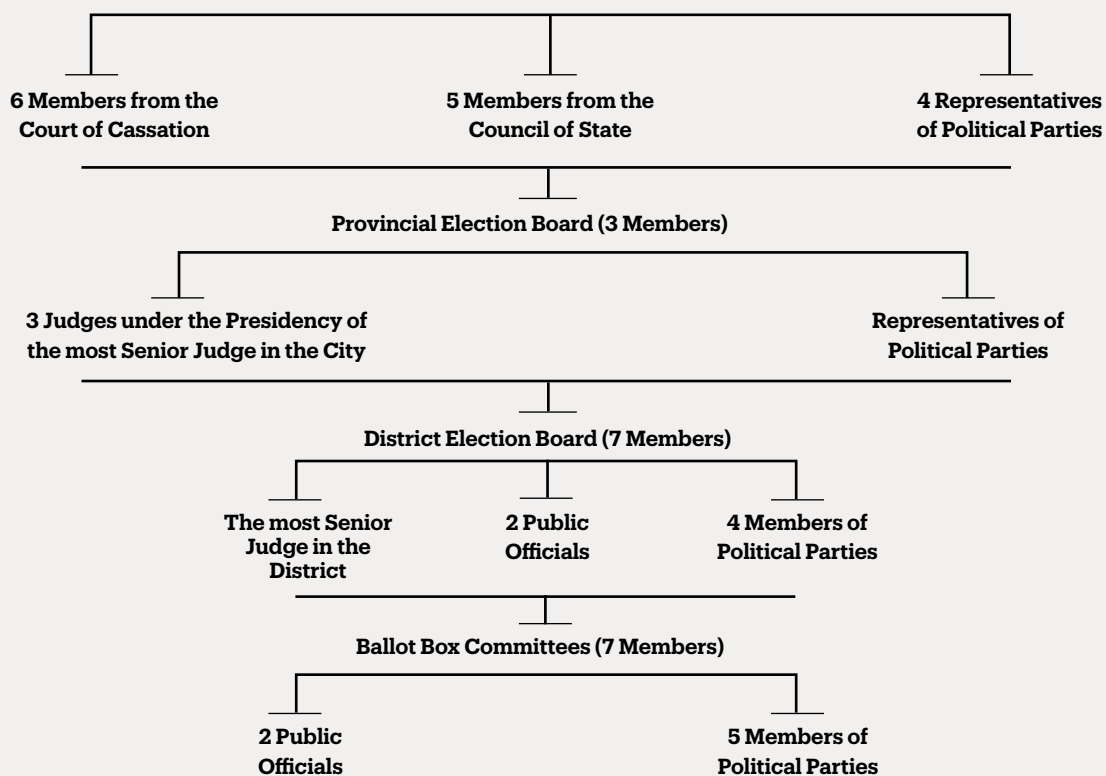
Additionally, the four political parties that received the highest votes in the most recent parliamentary elections can place one principal and one alternate representatives in the YSK. These representatives of the political parties can participate in all the works and discussions of the YSK, but they do not have a right to vote.

The YSK makes decisions by absolute majority. In case of equality of votes, the decision of the President of the YSK determines the results. The principle decisions of the YSK are published in the Official Gazette within fifteen days; other decisions related to election are published on its own official website.

STRUCTURE OF THE SUPREME ELECTION COUNCIL



Supreme Election Council (11 Members)



Source: Anadolu Agency



(Evren Atalay- AA)

Responsibilities and Duties of the YSK

■ The YSK determines the principles and procedures for the creation, updating, management and supervision of the voter registration process.

■ The YSK is responsible for the formation of Provincial and District Election Councils.

■ The YSK swiftly finalizes the objections to operations and decisions of Provincial Election Councils before the day of the election.

■ The YSK immediately reviews and resolves the objections against the decisions about the electoral procedures made by the Provincial Election Councils on the voting day.

■ The YSK examines and finalizes the objections against the official reports issued by the Provincial Election Councils.

Responsibilities and Duties of the Provincial Election Boards

■ The Provincial Election Board is composed of one president, who is the most senior judge in the city and two members who are the next most senior judges. The Board serves for a two year term.

■ Political parties are also represented in the Provincial Election Boards and state their opinions, however, they cannot participate in the decision making process.

■ The Provincial Election Boards take all necessary measures to ensure that the election is conducted properly within their respective electoral districts.

■ The Boards immediately examine and resolve the objections against the formation, procedures and decisions of the District Election Boards.

■ The Provincial Election Boards also organize the official reports for the provincial electoral district after combining the official reports of the District Election Boards.

Responsibilities and Duties of the District Election Boards

■ The District Election Boards consist of a president and six members, which serve for two year terms.

■ The most senior judge in the district is the president of the Boards. Two council members are selected from among the public officials. The remaining four members are selected from the political parties.

■ The District Election Boards are responsible for taking all necessary measures to ensure that the elections are conducted properly in the district.

■ The Board is in charge of forming ballot box committees and resolving the objections against the decisions and operations of these committees.

■ The Boards are also responsible for the compiling of the official reports coming from the ballot box committees and convey them to the Provincial Election Boards.

Responsibilities and Duties of the Ballot Box Committees

■ The Ballot Box Committees consist of one president, six principal and six alternate members. The president and one member of the committees are selected from among the public officials.

■ The five political parties that received the highest votes in the district in the most recent parliamentary elections assign the remaining five members.

■ The Ballot Box Committees are established on the date announced by the YSK and they continue to work until they submit the counting reports the District Election Councils.

■ Political parties and independent candidates can each assign one observer in order to monitor the electoral process.

■ The Committees are responsible for the conduct of the electoral process during election day and carry out instructions related to the elections issued by the YSK.

■ The committees immediately start counting of the votes in open and interrupted way. Observers can monitor the counting process.



(Şahin Oktay - AA)

The SECSIS System

■ Turkey's electronic election infrastructure has been developed with the aim of enabling voters to monitor the information-registered systems, such as identity, addresses and polling stations.

■ The system has been used in eliminating duplicate electoral records, announcing election results in very short periods of time, allowing political parties to simultaneously monitor ballot results delivered by District Election Boards, informing the public about decisions and regulations of the YSK, shortening the work processes and increasing the efficiency and productivity with its interactive services – thereby acting as a tool to enhance the transparency of elections.

■ Once ballot box results data have been entered into the SECSIS system, temporary results are transmitted simultaneously via web services over a safe and closed line to the YSK and the headquarters of political parties.

■ The minutes of the counting process signed by ballot box committees are screened by District Election Boards and entered into the system, which are also simultaneously shared by headquarters of political parties.

■ To maintain transparency, the temporary results presented by District Election Boards are published on www.ysk.gov.tr so that the public can also view the results based on electoral region. As of date of finalization, the summary of election results are published on the Official Gazette.³

³ Official newspaper of the state where official announcements regarding the law changes, amendments and other such issues are shared with the public.



Source: (Salih Zeki Fazhoğlu - AA)

How are the Votes Counted and Results Announced?

Polls open at 7.00 and close at 16.00 in cities located on eastern part of the country while in the remainder of the country, polls open at 8.00 and close at 17.00. The Voting process is supervised and documented by the ballot box committee. The system is valid for every single ballot box in the country. In the March 31 elections, for instance, 194.678 ballot boxes had been established across the country.

When the polls are closed the counting process begins for each ballot box. The ballot box committee is the first

responsible body for counting the votes. The president of the committee supervises the counting and documenting. When the counting finishes, every single vote, whether it is valid or invalid, is documented in a sheet called "sayım-döküm çetveli" and signed by the members of the committee. According to this sheet, the box result protocol is prepared where the number of votes of each party or candidate is written down in the designated spaces of the protocol. This protocol is signed by the members of the ballot box committee and an original copy of this is given to the

each representative of the political parties and independent candidates. The president and members of the committee take the ballot papers, sheet and the box result protocol to the District Election Board, escorted by the police.

In the District Election Board, the numbers in the box result protocols of different ballot box committees are transferred to a document called combined official report by the YSK officials in front the members of the ballot box committees and observers. The numbers in this combined official report is then put into the electronic system of the YSK, called the SECSIS system. Political parties are given access to the results in the SECSIS system throughout the process.

The District Election Board prepares their final counts and documents after they combine all the final box protocols and send them to the Provincial Election Board. Afterwards, the Provincial Election Board, based on the information from the District Election Board, prepares their final election results report and shares it with the YSK.

Finally, if there is no remaining objection to the announced results, the YSK announces the winner of the election and the winner starts his/her duty as the mayor.

What is the Objection Process?

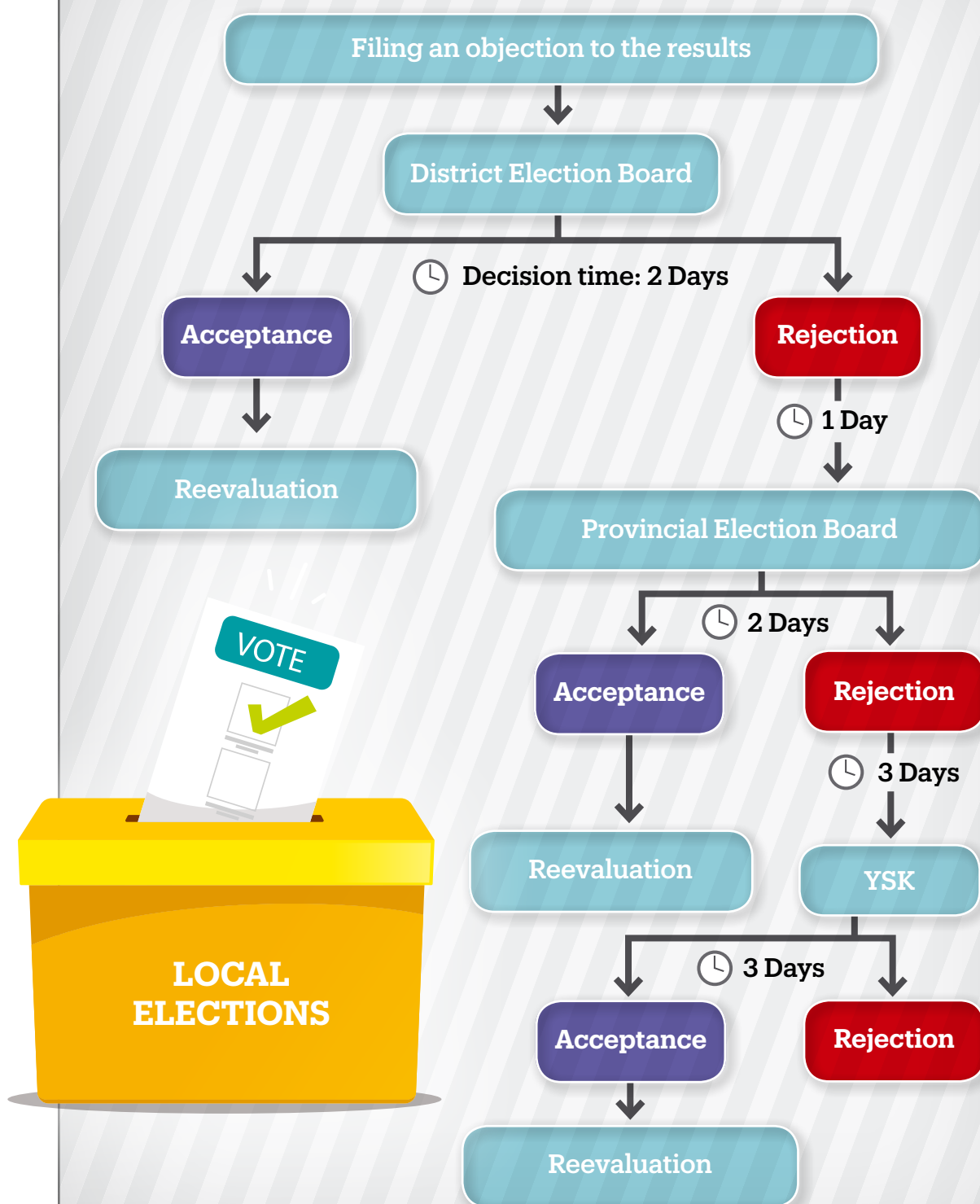
Objections to the election results are regulated by the Law 298. According to this law, people who are eligible to vote, political parties or their relevant bodies, observers and candidates have right to object to the decisions of the ballot box committee, District Election Board and Provincial Election Board. Objections to the decisions

of a ballot box committee is put to the District Election Board, while objections to the decisions of the District Election Board are the responsibility of the Provincial Election Board. The YSK is the final authority for dispute settlement in the objection process, and its verdict cannot be objected any further.



Chair of Supreme Election Council Sadi Güven is announcing the latest developments regarding the election process. (Emin Sansar- AA)

HOW DOES THE OBJECTION PROCESS PLAY OUT?



Source: Law 298 regarding the Electoral Process

Things to Know about the Objection Process

■ In order to evaluate the objections, a justification and evidence should be put forward by the complainant. If the complainant fails to show relevant evidence, the objection will be rejected by the relevant board of the YSK.

■ Objections are required to be submitted in written form and should be presented to the President of the relevant Election Board.

■ The relevant body of the the YSK takes its decision by simple majority vote. If the votes are equal, the vote of the President of the YSK becomes the deciding factor.

■ If an objection is accepted by the relevant authority, the verdict includes what will be done afterwards whether it is to recount the votes or correction of a mistake in any of the official reports.

■ If an objection is rejected by a board of the YSK, a further objection to this rejection can be made to the higher authority. However, the final step of objection is the YSK and its decision are final and cannot be objected.

How Can a Vote be Invalid?

Ballots are considered to be invalid in the following situations.

■ If they are not in the shape or colour of the designated ballots for the particular election.

■ If the YSK watermark on the back of the ballots does not exist.

■ If there is no stamp of choice for any party or candidate.

■ If there is more than one stamp of choice for two or more different party or candidate.

■ If the stamp of choice is put for a party or candidate but it reaches to the designated part of another party or a candidate.

■ If the ballot does not belong to the designated electoral district.

■ If the ballot is ripped off which disrupts the integrity of the ballot.

■ If any sort of special sign, any name, signature, stamp or fingerprint impression is put down on the ballot instead of the designated stamp of choice.

■ If any of the party or candidate space on the ballot paper is scribbled or signed intentionally.

■ If there is any writing, drawing, number or any other sort of letter on the ballot paper.

There are also other situation which makes a vote invalid in elections where there are more than one ballot paper for different positions (Local elections, for instance, are in this category as there are 4 or 2 different ballot papers depending on the type of the voting district).

■ If there is any extraneous brochure, paper, writings, special sign or any other extraneous object in the envelope in which people put their ballot papers, all of the ballot papers is invalid.

■ If there is more than one of the ballot paper for the same election type, only these two ballot papers are invalid and the remaining ballot papers are valid (i.e. if there is two ballot paper for the metropolitan mayor election, one for the district mayor election, one for the municipality council and one for mukhtar election, only those two ballot papers for the municipal mayor elections are invalid and remaining votes are valid).

■ If there is a ballot paper in the envelope which belongs to another election, all of the votes in the envelope are invalid.

However;

■ If one of the ballot papers for one of the election type is invalid, this does not make the other voting papers in the envelope invalid.

■ If there is a missing ballot paper in the envelope, this does not make the other ballot papers invalid.

Election Results in Istanbul

Istanbul is the most important city for the political parties in the local elections. The city is home to 16 million people, nearly 20% of Turkey's total population. Moreover, the city is the economic and sociocultural capital of the country. The AK Party and its predecessors have been governing Istanbul since the current President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected mayor in 1994. The AK Party's candidate for Istanbul Mayor is former Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament Binali Yıldırım, while the CHP has chosen a local figure, Istanbul's Beylikdüzü district's mayor, Ekrem İmamoğlu.

Nearly one fifth of voters in Turkey are registered in Istanbul and 83% of its nearly 10.5 million eligible voters cast their vote for mayor on the election day. The counting process began immediately after the polls closed at 17:00. The results showed that three different political parties won mayoral posts in Istanbul's 39 districts. According to the initial results, the AK Party won 24 of districts, the CHP won 14 and MHP won 1.

From the time the tabulation of the votes for Istanbul metropolitan mayor began, the margin of difference between the two main candidates was very low. Both Binali Yıldırım and Ekrem İmamoğlu were holding approximately 48.7% of the vote throughout the evening.

During the course of the evening both parties maintained their respective claims to victory in Istanbul. The next day, in early hours of the morning, the YSK announced that in Istanbul the tabulation process of 31,102 of 31,186 ballot boxes had ended, and, according to provisional results Ekrem İmamoğlu had secured 4,159,650 votes versus Binali Yıldırım's 4,131,761, putting İmamoğlu ahead of Yıldırım by 27,889 votes. In a later announcement, Chair of YSK, Sadi Güven, stated that the election process had ended and the objection process had begun.

Party Objections to Election Results in Istanbul

At a press conference on Monday April 1, AK Party candidate Binali Yıldırım acknowledged that "According to the provisional YSK numbers, İmamoğlu is approximately 25,000 votes ahead." However, he added that he believes that "CHP's lead is due to over 300 thousand invalid votes¹ and that his party would appeal to the results in all of the 39 districts of Istanbul. Because the invalid votes have a potential to change the outcome of the election."

Ekrem İmamoğlu stated that "There are some faults and deficiencies in this elections, as there are in any other election. CHP has also objected to some errors. However, according to our data, we have won the election and the number of these errors are not enough to change the re-

sult. Therefore, the mandate should be given to us as soon as possible to prevent a delay to service to the people of Istanbul." He added that "I believe that the YSK is an assurance for the process and it should be faithful to the procedures, past case law and practices. We follow the process very carefully."

The İYİ Party's Secretary General stated that "we have no objection for those who call for justice but AK Party has no valid argument to claim the mayorship. Istanbul's Mayorship should be given to Nation's Alliance's candidate." On the other hand, MHP's Leader, Devlet Bahçeli, said that "appealing the results of the elections is a legal right" adding that "the results should be carefully examined."

¹ Please see page 15 of the report for how can a vote be invalid.



(Arif Hüdaverdi Yaman- AA)

AK Party

AK Party officials argue that there were two different irregularities in the polls. Firstly, there were over 300 thousand invalid votes and that the party would appeal for them to be recounted. According to the AK Party's own findings, the majority of the wet-signed² results that were decided as invalid was above normal, and it was not clear why they were considered as invalid.

The second irregularity in the polls for the AK Party was that when the counted votes were recorded with the District Election Board, the votes of the AK Party were registered on behalf of different candidates. AK Party had found an "excessive" difference between votes cast at the ballot stations for their candidate and the data sent to electoral authorities.

Bayram Şenocak, the AK Party's Istanbul chairman, said on Tuesday that he has submitted objections to results in all 39 of the city's districts, seeking a recount to fix alleged irregularities and a reassessment of invalid votes. Şenocak noted that they identified differences between the results of the YSK and the sealed records of the ballot boxes. AK Party spokesperson Ömer Çelik also said at a press conference that their appeal process is a natural one designed to uncover irregularities in the election results. Çelik also added that the legal process continues. The process is extremely transparent. The YSK is the only decision-maker in the process. Once the process is completed and the YSK makes its decision regarding the process, we will all respect the result.

Upon the AK Party's appeal, several District Election Boards decided to recount the invalid votes in Istanbul. After the CHP's appeal to Provincial Election Board to stop the recount of invalid votes due to lack of justification and evidence, the Istanbul Provincial Election Board suspended the recounting of invalid votes.

The AK Party subsequently challenged the decision of the Istanbul Provincial Election Board, whereupon the YSK opted for the continuation of the recounting of invalid votes in districts where the recounting had already started. Upon the AK Party's objection that the amount of invalid votes might change the election result and therefore the invalid votes in all districts of Istanbul should be recounted, The YSK decided to recount all the invalid votes in all districts of Istanbul.

AK Party officials have stated that the process of recounting continues, and therefore İmamoğlu should not declare himself as the mayor until he receives his mandate from the YSK. Moreover, they claim that if the errors are reversed and invalid votes are recounted, the result of election will change. President Erdogan has also commented on the process of recounting saying that YSK is the boss of election and will give the ultimate decision. The objection right is the natural right of all political parties. Every party has a right to object to election results. We should all wait the decisions of the YSK.

² A wet signature is a physical mark on the ballot paper created by the voters



CHP

On the other hand, the CHP claims that the recounting of all of invalid votes is not legal due to lack of justification and evidence for this objection. The CHP agrees with The AK Party on that there some errors and deficiencies in the counting, however, these errors are not in great numbers and, thus, will not affect the results. Therefore, the CHP says that extension of the process is unnecessary and the mandate should be given to İmamoğlu as soon as possible.

CHP's Istanbul Provincial Chairman Canan Kaftancıoğlu stated that "In order to recount the invalid votes, there must be a reservation submitted by a member of the ballot box committee or observers during the counting process. The CHP argues that the AK Party did not submit reservations on all invalid votes. Therefore, there is no justification and legal basis to recount all invalid votes."

İmamoğlu said that "the AK Party's request to recount all invalid votes is based on a weak argument as it does not provide any justification or tangible evidence. Some of the invalid votes have been recounted already, but it appears that there has not been a major change in the numbers. As such, even if we recount all invalid votes, it will not change the overall results. Moreover, there are in-

valid votes in every elections. For instance, in 2014 local elections in Istanbul, there were 400 thousand invalid votes. If there is reservation on an invalid vote, we are not against a recount of that vote."

According to İmamoğlu, as of April 5, recounting of invalid votes in 17 districts of Istanbul have been finalised. As such, 119,652 of 318,222 invalid votes have been recounted. Recounting continues in other districts and the vote difference is 18,742 in favour of İmamoğlu.



Objections to the Results in Other Cities

Apart from Istanbul, there have been objections to the election results in many other cities and districts. Most of these objections are from constituencies where the number of votes separating the main candidates are very low. Taking into account previous elections, most of the objections do not affect the result of the election. However, the objections are part of the electoral process by law. Therefore election boards evaluate political parties' objections with concrete evidences.

Below are some examples from various cities.

Ankara

Turkey's capital Ankara is the second most populated city with 5.5 million inhabitants. Due to its high population and centrality in Turkish political life, Ankara is one of the most regarded cities in local elections. The AK Party's candidate for the elections Mehmet Özhasseki secured 47.12% of the votes and The CHP candidate Mansur Yavaş secured 50.93% of the votes. The AK Party has contested the results claiming that they have detected irregularities during the election process. AK Party officials announced that they believed a recount would close the nearly 4% margin between the candidates. After the AK Party's appeal, some District Election Boards recounted the invalid votes. After the recount of invalid votes the AK Party's votes increased by 1807 and the CHP's raised by 668. The AK Party made a further appeal to the Ankara Provincial Election Board for a recount of all votes in the city. The Board has not made a decision at the time of writing of the info pack.



AK Party's Ankara Chair Hakan Han Özcan is announcing their objection to the election results in Ankara (Orhan Karlı- AA)

Kars

In the eastern city of Kars the election results showed a very close margin between MHP's candidate Çetin Nazik and HDP's candidate Ayhan Bilgen. According to the results, HDP candidate won 29.58% of the votes and the MHP candidate won 26.57% of the votes. The District Election Board made a recount of the invalid votes after the MHP's application. However HDP candidate won 16 more votes after the recount and the situation did not change in Kars.

Bartın

In Bartın, the election race was between the two members of the People's Alliance AK Party and MHP. According to the initial results MHP's candidate Cemal Akın won 14,024 votes and AK Party's candidate Yusuf Ziya Aldatmaz won 13,855. The AK Party candidate Aldatmaz applied for a recount of 1562 invalid votes hoping the 169 vote margin would be closed. However, the AK Party only raised its votes by 20 after the recount and the election results in Bartın did not change.

Balıkesir

Balıkesir is located in the Marmara region and the city is one of the most populous cities of Turkey. The race in Balıkesir was between the AK Party's candidate Yücel Yılmaz and İYİ Party's candidate İsmail Ok. Initial results showed that Yılmaz won the elections by winning 47.78% of the votes while his rival Ok secured 46.50% of the votes. The İYİ Party applied for a recount of invalid votes and re-evaluation of the count in some ballot boxes with the claim of some irregularities. The Election Board has rejected İYİ Party's appeal. İYİ Party officials announced that they will file their objection to the YSK.

Giresun

Giresun was another city where the vote margin between the leading candidates of the AK Party and the CHP was very close. The AK Party candidate Aytekin Şenliklioğlu won 30,306 votes and the CHP candidate Kerim Aksu won 30,026 votes in the city. The margin of 280 votes led the CHP file an objection to the District Election Board. The CHP announced that they have detected irregularities in 178 ballot boxes. The District Election Board announced its decision over CHP's objection, ruling that invalid votes in these ballot boxes will be recounted. However AK Party candidate won 16 more votes after the recount and the situation did not change in Giresun.

Conclusion

On March 31 2019, Turkey conducted one of the most closely contested local elections in its history. With a voter turnout rate of 84.7 %, the preliminary results revealed that People's Alliance, comprised of the AK Party and the MHP, secured 51.6% of the national popular vote while the Nation's Alliance, consisting of the CHP and İYİ Party, received 37.6 %. Additionally, the three biggest cities Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir have been won by candidates from the Nation's Alliance, according to the provisional results of the Supreme Election Council.

Although the counting of votes was completed on election night, the process is ongoing as parties file their respective objections to the provisional results. Istanbul comes first at this point where Nation's Alliance candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu is leading with a narrow margin over People's Alliance candidate Binali Yıldırım. Both the AK Party and the CHP submitted their appeals to the District Election Boards as of the first deadline on Tuesday afternoon. The AK Party filed objections in 39 districts of Istanbul and demanded a reassessment of the invalid

votes and the address of a various alleged irregularities. The CHP also filed its objections in certain ballot boxes for irregularities.

At the time of writing, the election boards have decided to re-evaluate the invalid votes in all 39 districts in Istanbul, some of them has already been completed. Objections of political parties to the results are not limited to Istanbul. There are also several other cases where political parties filed their objections in different provinces and districts.

The District Election Boards finalized their decision on the evening of Thursday, April 4th. Political parties have the right of appeal to the Provincial Election Boards on Friday if their appeals are rejected. Following this, the relevant boards should make a decision within two days. If the decisions in the Provincial Election Boards are not finalized, political parties can appeal to the YSK within three days. The final decision will be made by the YSK within three days and official results will then be announced.



Members of District Election Board are recounting contested votes. (Selim Bostancı - AA)

