



To Whom it May Concerns

With surprise we read an article published by Nouvelles d'Arménie (NdA) Magazine in their April edition (No 195) and republished and commented by a small number of Armenian online media. The articles are entirely based on the scandalous claim that EuFoA or anyone else have bribed or tricked TNS opinion during the conduct of the four opinion polls which we carried out in Armenia during the election cycles 2012-2013, in order to present politically biased data and take part in a plot to mislead the Armenian public.

In response TNS opinion would like to clarify that such a speculation is totally unfounded and contradicts the transparency and the massive supervision which we applied for these polls. TNS opinion heavily involved its regional partner from Georgia, including their Armenian diaspora staff, and also personally supervised every stage of the poll on the ground. The design of the random sample, fieldwork monitoring, survey implementation and quality control were developed under the direction of TNS opinion and merit our full confidence. Quality control measures were a particular focus, including multiple call-backs and parallel visits, as well as extensive database consistency checks. For more details about this, please confer the background information below.

The data presented to the Armenian public in each of these four polls was entirely correct. We ensured with sophisticated methodologies that neither interviewers nor anyone else involved could falsify the results. These results were also cross-checked between the four polls. This revealed consistencies which would be mathematically impossible if parts of the sample or the data had been falsified. We also ensured that the methodology and analysis takes into account factors specific for Eastern European societies. In doing so, we drew on our extensive experience working for several large international institutions (see details below). Certainly we were not and could not have been tricked into producing false results and we would also not risk our reputation as world leader in opinion research for any bribe about these four comparatively small polls. We welcome and understand that Armenian media generally question polling data presented to them and invite anyone who is genuinely interested in the quality of the polls to examine the data or procedures with us in detail. The Armenian public may also draw confidence into the TNS polls from the fact that we, unlike any other pollster, are making this offer.

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TNS opinion



Background

TNS (www.tnsglobal.com) is the world leader in opinion research and custom/ad hoc research, has wholly owned subsidiaries or majority shareholding in companies in over 70 countries, with more than 150 offices across five continents. We provide market measurement, analysis and insight in over 110 countries. The expertise of *TNS opinion* in the field of political and social research and opinion polling is founded on more than 35 years of experience, expressed notably through their work on the Standard and Flash Eurobarometer, the two largest general public opinion polling contracts in the world, which they conduct on behalf of the European Commission and the European Parliament. *TNS Opinion* has undertaken numerous public opinion surveys in Europe, Africa and other regions of the world for various prestigious clients, covering different target groups, ranging from general public to elite surveys and business leaders and using different methodologies, such as face-to-face, telephone or online interviewing.

Methodology for all the surveys

- A multi-stage, random (probability) sampling design was used. In the first stage, primary sampling units (PSU) were selected from each of the administrative regional units. This was agreed as best methodology between TNS opinion and IPSC.
- Interviews were conducted in all 10 regions (marzes) of Armenia and in all Yerevan communities. The sample was distributed proportionally to reflect the population distribution in Armenia,
- Interviewers selected households using the random walking method to ensure that there is no selection bias. To ensure a random selection, the person interviewed in each household was the adult whose birthday was closest to the day of the interview.
- If a respondent was not immediately available, 1 to 2 call-back visits were done to conduct the interview later. If a call-back visit was not successful or if a respondent could not take part for other reasons, the interviewer approached the next randomly selected household according to the random walking method.
- The sampling procedure was monitored by using a detailed contact sheet for each interviewer. The data base was analysed by TNS opinion and IPSC independently to ensure that interviews had been selected randomly.
- The data was weighted according to age and gender and is accurate to a maximum margin of error of $\pm 2.4\%$ for the overall sample.

Quality control

- One fifth of the interviews conducted were accompanied by IPSC quality control coordinators to ensure high quality and compliance with the standards agreed. A fourth of the entered paper questionnaires were double-checked in the database to ensure accuracy of processed data.
- One third of the sample was called back by IPSC to confirm demographic details and that the interview took place in the conditions recorded. Additionally, around one fifth of interviews were randomly selected by TNS opinion and called back to confirm key demographic information and two opinion questions. This consistency check-back resulted in the required compliance level with the originally collected data.
- Extensive checks were conducted on the data file by TNS opinion to see if there were any logically inconsistent or inaccurate interviews, data points or invalid information. This was assessed positively and no case exclusions were made.