

«Այ Փի Էս Սի»

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Poll: A Snapshot on Pre-Electoral Armenia

SOCIOLOGICAL OPINION POLL

Methodological Report

Approved

Seal



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Introduction

The opinion poll is designed according to the internationally recognized standards and best practices through the intense communication and agreement upon the methodology, questionnaire, sample calculation process and quality control mechanisms with **TNS opinion** (www.tnsglobal.com) a leading pollster on politics and elections. The trainings for interviewers and fieldwork implementation were monitored by **TNS opinion**. Experts from **TNS opinion** visited IPSC during 22-25 February, 2012 to discuss the design, methodology and challenges of the poll and to monitor the institutional capacities of IPSC for project implementation (personnel, logistics, organizational culture, etc.). The partner was also in charge of questionnaire translation approval and for the quality control of the fieldwork. **TNS opinion** representatives conducted parallel visits and call backs to monitor the quality of interviewers' work in the field.

TNS opinion is supposed to submit a separate quality control report over the fieldwork implementation and data monitoring.

1. Sample Description

Taking into consideration the coverage and the main purpose of the poll the sample was designed 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 IPSC and *TNS opinion*.

The sample was designed according to the following steps:

- Step 1.** Sample size calculation
- Step 2.** Distribution of sample size among RA Marzes and Yerevan
- Step 3.** Selection of the cities, villages and the streets in Yerevan
- Step 4.** Design of random walking method principals.

STEP 1. Sample size calculation:

At the given parameters of **N=2,521,167**, $\gamma=95\%$ confidence and $\Delta=\pm 2.43$ marginal error, the sample size for the Republic of Armenia (RA) **n=1,600**, plus 1.5% for possible invalid questionnaires and missing values the final sample size for RA is **n=1,624**.

The distribution of sample size among Yerevan and Marzes is represented below.

Location	18+ population (de facto)	%	n-sample size
Yerevan	887,737	35.2%	572
Marzes	1,633,430	64.8%	1,052
Total	2,521,167	100.0%	1,624

Table 1. Distribution of sample in RA among Yerevan and marzes

STEP 2. Distribution of sample size among regions and Yerevan

The opinion poll was conducted in all 10 Marzes of RA and in all the communities of Yerevan. Firstly, the sample was proportionally distributed in all RA Marzes and Yerevan communities. After making corrections, based on decision of minimal sample size for each community and Marz, the sample was finally designed.

The sample distribution in Yerevan communities is shown below in the Table 2. It should be noted that Norq Marash and Nubarashen communities due to their small population size were included in the opinion poll accordingly to Kentron and Erebuni communities.

Community	18+ population (de facto)	%	Sample size – n, (after corrections)	Number of questionnaires received
Ajapnyak	85,435	9.6	55	55
Avan	40,750	4.6	34	34
Arabkir	109,870	12.4	68	68
Davitashen	31,568	3.6	30	30
Erebuni + Nubarashen	100,988	11.4	64	64
Kentron + Norq Marash	118,156	13.3	70	70
Malatia - Sebastia	113,092	12.7	69	69
Nor Norq	113,136	12.7	68	68
Shengavit	111,877	12.6	69	69
Qanaqer- Zeytun	62,865	7.1	45	47
Total	887,737	100.0	572	574

Table 2. Sample distribution in Yerevan communities

The sample is distributed among all 10 Marzes of RA and the final regional sample is presented in the Table 3.

Marzes	18+ population (de jure)	%	Sample size, (after corrections)	Urban % (de jure)	Rural % (de jure)	Urban sample size (after corrections)	Rural sample size (after corrections)	Urban/number of questionnaires received	Rural/number of questionnaires received
Aragatsotn	106,244	6.5%	83	24.2%	75.8%	20	63	20	63
Ararat	213,415	13.1%	123	29.5%	70.5%	36	87	36	87
Armavir	216,591	13.3%	126	36.4%	63.6%	46	80	46	80
Gegharquniq	180,065	11.0%	111	34.3%	65.7%	38	73	38	73
Lori	219,469	13.4%	126	59.3%	40.7%	75	51	75	51
Kotayq	218,325	13.4%	127	56.7%	43.3%	72	55	72	55
Shirak	214,109	13.1%	124	61.1%	38.9%	76	48	76	48
Syuniq	119,077	7.3%	89	69.5%	30.5%	62	27	62	27
Vayoc Dzor	42,912	2.6%	60	35.4%	64.7%	21	39	21	39
Tavush	103,223	6.3%	83	39.9%	60.1%	33	50	33	50
Total	1,633,430	100.0%	1,052			479	573	479	573

Table 3. Sample distribution in RA Marzes

STEP 3. Selection of the villages and the streets

On the next step of sampling rural and urban sample was calculated based on the population size. Number of villages and cities from each Marz was selected according to the sample size of that Marz. Afterwards, the villages and cities in a separate Marz were selected by random choice technique from the combined list of all Marz villages and cities. The minimal sample for each rural community was set to not less than 8 household members and for each urban community was set to not less than 16

household members. Totally 21 cities and 56 villages were selected from Marzes and 58 streets were selected in Yerevan.

STEP 4. Design of random walking method principals

While using random walking method the following principles were kept:

1. Selection of the building/house in the street and the apartment (in case of the buildings)

The step of selecting the building/house was based on the following method:

- In urban communities the interviewer counted the number of buildings/houses in the given street and then divided this number into the number of interviews that should be conducted in that street. The received figure was the step of selecting the building/house.
- The step of the apartment in the building is a standard step, i.e. each 5th apartment in Yerevan and each 3rd in Marz cities. If there is a multi-storey building (more than 10 storey block or more than 3 entrances) – 2 interviews per building were allowed.
- In rural communities the random walking step was each 3rd right wing house.

2. Selection of the respondent in the family

Respondents were selected from all household members aged 18+ whose birthday is the closest to the day that interview takes place. Up to 2 call-back visits per address were performed (3 in the Marzes and maximum possible in Yerevan) when:

- the respondent asked to come later, as it was not appropriate time for him/her;
- the respondent was not at home;
- no one was available at the moment and neighbours say they will be late.

No call-back visits in the situations when:

- the respondent was not available (is abroad, is in the army, etc.) during the fieldwork days;
- the respondent refused to participate in the interview;
- no one is available and the neighbours said the apartment/house was not inhabited;
- the respondent was sick and is not able to participate in the opinion poll during the fieldwork days;
- there were language barriers.

2. Fieldwork description

2.1 Fieldwork duration

The fieldwork was implemented on the following days:

Yerevan - 29.02.2012 – 05.03.2012

Marzes - 29.02.2012 – 05.03.2012

2.2 Days of fieldwork

On each day the following Marzes were visited:

I day – Yerevan, Shirak, Armavir, Kotayq, Aragatsotn

II day – Yerevan, Gegharquniq, Kotayq, Ararat, Tavush, Aragatsotn

III day – Yerevan, Lori, Tavush, Kotayq, Ararat, Gegharquniq

IV day – Yerevan, Lori, Aragatsotn, Ararat, Armavir

V day – Yerevan, Armavir, Vayots Dzor, Syuniq

VI day – Yerevan, Syuniq.

The number of interviewers working in the field is the following:

Yerevan – 21 interviewers,

Marzes – 30 interviewers.

Each interviewer conducted around 8-13 interviews per day.

2.3 The process of fieldwork organization

Each day in Yerevan the fieldwork started from 9.45-11.00am and finished at 20.00-21.00pm, and in regions from 8.00-9.30am and lasted until 21.00-22.00pm (return to Yerevan 23.00pm-01.00am). The filled in questionnaires of each day were accepted and checked every next morning before sending interviewers to the field in order to avoid errors and flaws in the filled questionnaires. Along with this, the interviewers report problems that have occurred during the fieldwork regarding the sample, the interviews, etc. Each day interviewers were provided with the necessary number of the questionnaires and other materials (routes list, fieldwork guide, sample and questionnaire guides, cards, badges, lighters and etc.).

2.4 Number of received questionnaires

After completion of the fieldwork the number of the questionnaires received from the field composed **1,626**.

2.5 Rejections

In total 4,444 cases were applied. The successful interview rate composes 36.6%. The rate of rejections is presented in the table below. The table includes the reasons of not selecting the household and not interviewing the selected adults.

Reasons for not interviewing in the household	Cases	%
Conducted interviews	1,626	36.6%
Not conducted interviews	2,818	63.4%
Total	4,444	100.0%
Reasons for not conducting interviews in the household	Cases	%
Address not found	221	5.0%
Empty address	656	14.8%
Language difficulty	27	0.6%
Reconstruction	17	0.4%
No reply	105	2.4%
The family is in a leave	25	0.6%
No call-back visit, which was necessary	155	3.5%
Non citizen of RA	11	0.3%
No need of call-back visit (limitation up to 3 call-back visits)	178	4.0%
Refusal without opening the door	91	2.1%
There are two families living at the same building	1	0.0%
There are family members at home but they did not react	39	0.9%
No adult lives at home	1	0.0%
They will return late, they will not come home that day	43	1.0%
The door of the building was locked	13	0.3%
A person owns several houses	1	0.0%
Invalid interview because of wrong sample	4	0.1%
The respondent was acquainted with the interviewer	2	0.1%
No information (missing value)	58	1.3%
Eligible adult selected	1,170	26.3%
of which:		
• Selected adult refused to answer to questions	703	60.1%
• Interview interrupted	39	3.3%
• Health problems	94	8.0%
• Selected adult does not live in the household at the moment	73	6.2%
• Selected adult is out of home	38	3.3%
• Family matters	18	1.5%
• The family will not come home that day	165	14.1%
• Other family members' refusal	9	0.8%
• No call-back visit, which was necessary	21	1.8%
• No need of call-back visit (limitation up to 3 call-back visits)	5	0.4%
• Not a citizen of RA	5	0.4%

Table 4. Reasons for not conducting Interviews in the household

2.6 The problems during the fieldwork

The following table represents the main problems which were encountered during the fieldwork and the solution given to them by IPSC:

№	Problem	Solution
1.	It was difficult to keep random walking steps in the villages, as the houses did not have numbers.	Interviewers were instructed to follow the right-wing step principle and enter each 3 rd house in the line.
2.	The apartment numbers were mixed in some multi-storey buildings in Yerevan and other towns, so it was impossible to follow the numbering (for example: apartment №28 was the next after apartment №2).	In these cases interviewers entered each 5 th for Yerevan and 3 rd for Marzes apartment without keeping the numbers.
3.	The interviewers have missed some information (time, refusal reasons etc.) when filling in the contact lists.	On the second day of the fieldwork last minute trainings were organized with each group to clarify all the issues regarding the contact list completion.
4.	Several interviewers did not get the random walking step principle and instead of entering each 5 th apartment they entered each 6 th .	Last minute instructions were conducted for those interviewers to explain random walking principle.
5.	Some interviewers did not conduct call-back visits, especially when the call-back visits were arranged for late hours.	N/A
6.	The weather was cold and the roads were frozen which made additional difficulties for drivers.	N/A
7.	Originally selected village Madina was substituted by a nearby village Vaghashen in the same Marz because of bad weather conditions and snowstorm, which made it impossible to drive to that village.	N/A

Table 5. Problems identified during the fieldworks and the proposed solutions

3. Quality Control and Monitoring

The quality check-up of interviewers and the work conducted in the framework of the opinion poll has been implemented in the following stages:

3.1 Interviewers' control by the field coordinators (quality control coordinators)

3.2 Primary check-up of the received questionnaires quality

- Technical monitoring of the questionnaires
- Content and logical monitoring of the questionnaires

3.3 Call check-ups

3.4 Return visits.

3.1 Interviewers' Control by the Field Coordinators

Each interviewer has been controlled by the field coordinators during the opinion poll. The coordinators have been present at the interviews and have taken notes over the conducted work (both about the sample preservation and the way of interview conduction) guided by initially instructed standards. The controlled questionnaires have been signed by the coordinator with blue pen.

All interviewers have been controlled during the fieldwork. The coordinators have been present in average at 7 interviews per day. As a result the rate of controlled interviews composed **17.7%**.

3.2 Primary Check-Up of Questionnaire Quality

a. Technical Monitoring of Questionnaire

All the questionnaires (**100%**) have been strictly checked by the person responsible for the questionnaire quality. The systematic omissions discovered have been filled in by the interviewers through phone calls, and non-systematic ones through phone calls by the control specialist. During the questionnaires check-up the following points have been specially noted:

- ✓ Comparability of interview duration and minutes marked on the questionnaire,
- ✓ Clear and right infill of demographic questions and their logical correspondence to the questionnaire in general,
- ✓ In-fill rate of the respondents' telephone number and address,
- ✓ Distribution of addresses according to sampling rules,
- ✓ Sameness of handwriting and pen ink per interviewer,
- ✓ In-fill of the interviewer's data (code, name, surname),
- ✓ In-fill of the technical data (location code, questionnaire number, etc.),
- ✓ Presence of interview minutes and contact information in not less than 85% of questionnaires of each interviewer.

b. Content and logical analyses of the questionnaires

All the questionnaires (**100%**) have been monitored by the Quality Control Department of IPSC with the focus on the following criteria:

- ✓ Keeping the passages within the questionnaire,
- ✓ Non-adequate and wrong answers,
- ✓ Logic of the responses to cross questions,
- ✓ General logic of the questionnaire,
- ✓ Inconsistency within the responses,
- ✓ Technical problems (omissions),
- ✓ Number of “Don’t know”s (D./K.) responses supposing passages,
- ✓ Detection of new, non-recurring information and repetition of information,
- ✓ Detection of systematic errors,
- ✓ Detection and counting of missing responses.

The person responsible has made corresponding notes over the problems and has passed the information to the Quality Control Manager.

As a result of the questionnaire primary check-up **2** questionnaires has been found invalid and were rejected from the fieldwork.

3.3 Phone call check-ups

In total **29.2%** of the questionnaires has been checked up through phone calls. The distribution according to the interviewers has been maintained. The following variables were controlled over the phone calls:

- ✓ Respondent’s age,
- ✓ Respondent’s gender,
- ✓ Respondent’s education,
- ✓ Topic of the opinion poll,
- ✓ Interviewer’s gender,
- ✓ Interview duration,
- ✓ 3 questions of and 1 out of the questionnaire.

1 questionnaire has been qualified as possibly fault and has been passed to the Quality Control Manager for further review.

3.4 Return Visits

As a result of return visits **4.9%** of interviews have been checked up. The distribution according to the interviewers has been maintained. The variables have been as follows:

- ✓ Respondent’s age,
- ✓ Respondent’s gender,
- ✓ Respondent’s education,
- ✓ Respondent’s address,
- ✓ Respondent selection method,

- ✓ Number of people who participated in the interview,
- ✓ Number of interviews conducted in a family,
- ✓ Topic of the opinion poll,
- ✓ Interviewer's gender,
- ✓ Interview duration,
- ✓ 3 questions of and 1 out of the questionnaire.

In total **2** questionnaires considered as possible faults have been check via return visit and labelled as final invalid because the respondent was not a citizen of RA.

3.5 Final Results of Quality Control and Check-Up

The following table summarizes the quality control results described above:

Quality Control	Accompanied visit		Phone Call		Return Visits		Total	
Number of Questionnaires	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
1,626	287	17.7%	475	29.2%	80	4.9%	842	51.8%
Evidence	Coordinators signature on the questionnaire by blue pen		Callers list of telephone numbers to be called		Coordinators signature on the questionnaire by red pen			

Table 6. The Results of the Quality Check-Up

Invalid Questionnaires	Questionnaire Monitoring		Phone Call		Return Visits		Total		Database
Number of Questionnaires	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity
1,626	2	0.1%	3	0.2%	2	0.1%	7	0.4%	1,619

Table 7. Invalid questionnaires

As a result of the quality control and monitoring the opinion poll has been qualified as **APPROVED**: **1,619** questionnaires entered into the SPSS database are considered valid.

4. Data Processing

Data processing has been implemented through the following steps:

1. Questionnaire design,
2. Training of the interviewers,
3. Pilot testing and preparation of the final field version of the questionnaire,
4. Preliminary and secondary control of the questionnaires and identification of problems occurring during fieldwork,
5. Professional editing and coding,
6. Preparation of SPSS database,
7. Data entry into the database,
8. Final checking and cleaning of the database.

4.1 Questionnaire design and pilot test preparation

The quantitative survey questionnaire has been developed and edited by the specialists of IPSC. The questionnaire has been intensively discussed and finalized together with the Client (**European Friends of Armenia**) and **TNS opinion**. For some questions consistency with the questionnaire of the poll of 2010 was kept, while many questions were adapted to local cultural context. The final version of the questionnaire was proof-read for English/Armenian consistency by specialists from **GORBI**.

The prepared questionnaire includes in total 33 questions (27 content and 6 demographic questions) according to the project tasks and objectives (is composed of 10 x A4 pages). The final version of the questionnaire in English is attached to this Methodological Report in Appendix 2. The final version of the questionnaire in Armenian is presented in Appendix 3.

The questionnaire design is followed by the trainings and instructions of interviewers.

After the fieldwork quality control meetings were conducted to discuss the issues regarding each section. The following issues related to the questions occurred during the interviews:

№	Problems	Solution
1.	Respondents had difficulties in answering to questions Q15 and Q16. They did not clearly understand the majoritarian voting system though the interviewers gave detailed information on that topic. Another issue related to these questions is that the respondents sometimes confused the previous parliamentary elections with the presidential elections of 2008.	The interviewers were instructed to give additional information on majoritarian voting system with a special emphasize on the parliamentary elections.
2.	Some respondents had difficulties in understanding the statements of Q22 because of the pronoun in the formulation (For instance, 1. I feel I have a good understanding of the political issues in our country.) This misunderstanding was not revealed during the pilot test.	The interviewers were instructed to re-read the statements and clarify that they refer to the respondent. In some cases substitution of the pronoun "I" with "You" was allowed.

3.	The interviewers indicated that the respondents could not understand the term “value system” in Q23 and asked many questions regarding topic. For this questions responses were received which did not seem to be accurate enough for analysis.	It was decided not to analyse and report the responses to this question.
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Table 8. Problems related to the questionnaire

4.2 – 4.3 Questionnaire instruction, testing and preparation of field version

Being present at the questionnaire instruction is a mandatory condition for all interviewers. The instruction is organized of the following sections:

- Presentation of survey tasks and objectives,
- Introduction to the questionnaire,
- Role play,
- General institutional training.

The instructions have taken place in three stages:

1. **First Stage** (February 24, 2012) – during this stage the interviewers were introduced with the questionnaire and the sample peculiarities. After the training, each interviewer conducted two pilot interviews based on which the Data Manager has been informed about the obvious errors, as well as about several issues which have been incomprehensible for the respondents. Based on the pilot interview results the questionnaire was revised, finalized and sent to be printed. Based on the final version of the questionnaire a Questionnaire Completion Guide to was developed by the Data Manager where all the technical and content information is introduced in regard to the filling of the questionnaire.
2. **Second Stage** (February 28, 2012) – the interviewers were introduced with the final and approved version of the questionnaire.
3. **Third Stage** (February 28, 2012) – to revise the questionnaire and to avoid technical and content errors during the interview a role play has been scheduled later that day, during which one of the interviewers has acted as a respondent, while the other one as an interviewer. The corresponding specialists of IPSC have noted the errors during the interview and informed the all the interviewers about that.

4.4 Primary and secondary check-up of the questionnaires right after field stage

The main stages of data processing are presented below which follow the field stage:

1. **Primary check-Up of the questionnaires by the quality controllers:** the questionnaires from the field were checked by the corresponding specialists of IPSC. During the verification process specific attention has been paid to content errors, omissions, to wrong in-fill of the questionnaire and the deviation from the sample. At the beginning of each field day the interviewers have been informed about the errors to reduce the possibility of making the same errors during the following days.

2. **Secondary check-up of the questionnaire through phone calls.** On this stage the questionnaires have been checked through phone calls after which all the invalid questionnaires have been removed. Based on the provided information Quality Control Manager has selected the processed questionnaire to pass them for the next stage of the database completion.
3. **After the first two stages the questionnaires are being numbered:** only based on the numbering the questionnaires are entered into the database. Besides the questionnaires, the contact lists were also being numbered. After it the corresponding specialists have reviewed all the lists which include logical analyzes and coding to finalize and prepare for data entry.

4.5 Professional editing and coding

On this stage following the field the coders extracted responses to the semi-closed questions, which include also the “Other” option for some questions. The responses of the respondents were professionally treated based on which classified coding categories were created aimed at categorizing those questions. Furthermore, each questionnaire has been processed through the coding list and all the semi-closed questions have been coded. Each coder was responsible for a given section of the coding (for some open-end questions and for “Other”). After coding, all the coded questionnaires were entered into the database by the data entry operators.

4.6 SPSS database preparation

Based on the final version of the questionnaires an SPSS database was prepared which consists of 351 variables. During the database preparation peculiarities of each question were taken into account and necessary information about variables and their values was inserted. The open-ended questions codes were entered into the database as well.

4.7 Data entry

Data entry was performed by 4 data entry operators, using in total 5 computers (4 data entry computers plus 1 computer of a supervisor). The operators have been instructed on the data entry logic before the data entry process. The data entry operators were also provided with Data Entry Guide with detailed description of each variable to be entered. The whole process of data entry was monitored by Data Manager.

25% (each 4th questionnaire) of all entered questionnaires was checked by operators after the data entry process was completed. In case of every detected mistake the data entry operator had to check one additional questionnaire. As a result, 25% of the questionnaires have been verified in 100% accuracy. The main difficulties that have been encountered during the data entry referred to the questions with multiple responses: the operators had to input 1 (Yes) and 0 (No) instead of the codes they had in those questionnaires.

4.8 Database clean-up

The database quality check is followed by the database clean-up process which is composed of the two stages:

- I. Discovery and correction of errors found in the database. The database clean-up is implemented based on the frequencies analysis, which, as a rule, is implied for categories such as gender, age, residence, aimed at correcting possible inconsistencies.

- II. After the clean-up of the residence codes and codes of the interviewers, other independent variables are being cleaned according to each question, and the visible errors are being eliminated based on the data from the corresponding paper questionnaire.

After the final database was ready the special statistical operations were performed to maintain data consistency. The processing showed 17 (random 1%) inconsistent questionnaires (percentage of missing values more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of total, invalid data, etc.). These questionnaires were deleted from the final database, which thus includes **1,602 confirmed cases**.

The data was weighted according to region, age, gender to make it accurate to a maximum margin of error of $\pm 2.4\%$ for the overall sample.

After finishing all these stages the database was sent for the data analysis and final report preparation, which is submitted to the Client separately from this Methodological Report.

