

THE JUNE 7 ELECTIONS IN ARMENIA: POLITICAL CONTINUITY AND REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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Analysis No : 2026 / 19

25.06.2026

This is the English translation of a Turkish language article that was originally published by AVİM on 8 June 2026

The parliamentary elections held on 7 June 2026 in Armenia resulted in Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his Civil Contract Party retaining power and gaining renewed public confidence. According to the preliminary results, voter turnout reached 58.97%, while the Civil Contract Party secured 49.81% of the vote, obtaining a parliamentary majority sufficient to form a government on its own. On the opposition side, the Strong Armenia Alliance, led by Samvel Karapetyan, placed second with 23.29% of the vote. The Armenia Alliance, headed by former President Robert Kocharyan, won 9.99% of the vote and secured right for representation in the parliament.[1]

Unlike previous elections, these elections were not merely a political contest aimed at determining the future of the government. They also marked the beginning of a process that is likely to have a direct impact on the balance of power in the South Caucasus, the Azerbaijan-Armenia peace process, the normalization of relations between Türkiye and Armenia, and the policies of regional actors. Therefore, the June 7 elections also serve as a critical message regarding the foreign policy orientation that Armenia will pursue in the coming years.

Although the victory of the Civil Contract Party may, on the surface, be regarded as a political success, it in fact reflects a deeper shift in societal preferences. Despite the political and social shock experienced by Armenian public opinion following Azerbaijans establishment of control over Karabakh, a significant portion of the voters appear to have concluded that the countrys future lies not in collective traumas or new conflicts, but in economic development and regional integration.

It is striking that, despite basing much of its campaign on the loss of Karabakh, relations with Türkiye, and the governments security policies, the opposition received only limited support from the electorate. This suggests that a more realistic approach may be beginning to take precedence over nationalist reflexes within Armenian society. The Karabakh issue, which for many years served as one of the principal determinants of Armenian politics, is increasingly being supplanted by concerns such as economic reform, migration, investment, and security policy. This development also points to a significant transformation in Armenias national identity. For the first time in the post-independence period, the country is moving toward a political vision that does not define its foreign policy solely through historically rooted ideological aspirations.

The Peace Process with Azerbaijan

One of the most significant outcomes of the elections will be their impact on the ongoing peace negotiations with Azerbaijan. The Civil Contract Partys emergence as the leading party and its parliamentary majority have provided Prime Minister Pashinyan with substantial political legitimacy to continue the negotiation process. However, the majority obtained does not appear to be sufficient on its own to implement the constitutional amendments that Azerbaijan has put forward as a prerequisite for signing a peace agreement. Therefore, while the election results provide support to the Pashinyan government in continuing the peace process, they do not fully eliminate the principal legal and political obstacles standing in the way of a final agreement.

In this respect, it is likely that a broader political consensus will be necessary for Armenia to undertake the required constitutional amendments. In addition, diaspora groups, as well as nationalist and radical opposition circles, are expected to continue their criticism of the government, particularly with regard to the Karabakh issue and the normalization process with Azerbaijan. Consequently, although the election results provide a favorable basis for the continuation of the peace process, the domestic political obstacles to reaching a final agreement remain in place.

One of the Pashinyan governments main priorities during the new term will be the improvement of economic prosperity. A significant portion of the electorate expects higher living standards, expanded employment opportunities, and greater economic stability. Accordingly, encouraging foreign investment, accelerating infrastructure projects, developing the technology sector, and attracting diaspora capital are expected to rank among the governments policy priorities. Meanwhile, if progress is achieved in the normalization processes with Azerbaijan and Türkiye, Armenias integration into regional transport and trade networks is expected to accelerate, which could, in turn, contribute positively to the countrys economic growth.

Türkiye-Armenia Relations

The election results may also have significant outcomes for Türkiye-Armenia relations. Although the normalization talks conducted between the two sides have made a certain degree of progress in recent years, the process has yet to reach a permanent political framework. The Civil Contract Partys parliamentary majority is going to provide the Yerevan administration with significant political support to continue its normalization policy. At the same time, the fact that a considerable portion of opposition parties represented in parliament remain skeptical of the normalization process with Türkiye and Azerbaijan suggests that the governments initiatives in this area will continue to be debated in domestic politics. Therefore, while the election results provide a favorable basis for the continuation of the normalization process, the progress of the process will continue to be influenced by political competition between the government and the opposition, as well as by differing views within public opinion. From Armenias perspective, the normalization of relations with Türkiye has strategic significance for reducing regional isolation and expanding economic opportunities.

A New Phase in Armenia-Russia Relations

One of the most notable international outcomes of the elections concerns Armenia-Russia relations. Traditionally regarded as being within Russias sphere of influence, Armenia has taken steps in recent years to strengthen its relations with the West, and as a result of these steps, Russia has imposed strong sanctions and issued warnings against Armenia. The re-election of the Civil Contract Party indicates that this process is likely to continue and suggests that Armenia will continue to pursue a gradual diversification of its foreign policy priorities. Nevertheless, this does not mean a complete rupture with Russia, as Armenia will remain dependent on Russia in the areas of energy, trade, and security for the foreseeable future. For this reason, Armenia is expected to continue pursuing a balanced and multi-vector foreign policy in the upcoming period.

Strengthening Integration with the West

The Pashinyan administration has taken significant steps in recent years to strengthen relations with Western institutions. The election victory demonstrates that these policies have gained a certain degree of legitimacy among Armenian society. Indeed, throughout the election campaign, the close engagement of Western actors with the Pashinyan administration, particularly the European Union and the United States, as well as their support for its reform agenda, was noteworthy. This suggests that Armenias political and economic cooperation with the West may deepen further in the upcoming period. Accordingly, it is considered that the election results may provide a favorable basis for expanding the EUs economic assistance programs, investment projects, and institutional cooperation mechanisms with Armenia.

In conclusion, the 7 June 2026 elections not only determined Armenias new government but also affirmed the countrys strategic direction for the coming period. The election

results demonstrate that a significant portion of the electorate supports stability, reform, and a realistic approach to foreign policy. Nevertheless, the parliamentary majority secured by the Civil Contract Party is not, by itself, sufficient to resolve the principal political and institutional challenges faced by Pashinyan administration. In particular, the issue of constitutional amendment, which Baku has put forward as a prerequisite for the signing of a peace agreement, maintains its significance in the peace process with Azerbaijan. The current political distribution in parliament indicates that the necessary political support for comprehensive constitutional reforms has not been fully formed yet. Therefore, although the elections have strengthened the political legitimacy of continuing the peace process, they have not eliminated all the obstacles to reaching a final agreement.

In the coming period, the peace negotiations with Azerbaijan, the normalization process with Türkiye, the redefinition of relations with Russia, and economic reforms are expected to remain among the Yerevan administrations principal policy priorities. Progress in these areas will directly influence Armenias regional position and economic future. Therefore, while the June 7 elections have reflected an important choice regarding Armenias political direction, they represent only the initial stage of the process aimed at addressing the countrys strategic challenges. The implications of this process are likely to extend beyond Armenias domestic political dynamics and have the potential to shape the prosperity and stability of the South Caucasus.

[1] Ermenistanda Tüm Sandıklar Açıldı: Parlamentoya Dört Siyasi Güç Giriyor, *ArmenPress*, 8 Haziran 2026, https://armenpress.am/tr/article/1252316.

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To cite this article: TECİMER, Tuğçe. 2026. "THE JUNE 7 ELECTIONS IN ARMENIA: POLITICAL CONTINUITY AND REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION." Center For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Analysis No.2026 / 19. June 25. Accessed November 23, 2026. https://www.avim.org.tr/en/Analiz/THE-JUNE-7-ELECTIONS-IN-ARMENIA-POLITICAL-CONTINUITY-AND-REGIONAL-TRANSFORMATION

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