

10. Youth Work

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In 2011 Ministry of Youth and Sport was founded with the vision of making youth work more efficient and powerful. From the very beginning it sets goals for itself focusing on youth empowerment and youth participation and it has built strong ties with all stakeholders in the field of youth so far. As the consequence of its cooperative and governance-based approach, in 2013 the Ministry produced “National Youth and Sports Policy Document” in a participatory manner.

Ministry’s general approach to youth work has two main pillars. First is the **“Youth participation”**. Within this pillar, it is intended to invest young people with more initiative and capability in decision-making processes. From the local administrative units to national political arena, they are encouraged to be involved and active in policy-making, decision-making processes. The Ministry thereby aims to increase young people’s civic engagement.

In line with the aim of increasing participation of youth and youth organisations in decision making mechanisms and enhancing their contribution in term of youth participation in Turkey, efforts are underway to found a Turkish National Youth Council.

The second pillar of Ministry’s youth policy approach is **“Empowerment of young people”**. This policy pillar covers all the supporting mechanisms and instruments needed by young people in their various aspects of life. In this framework, to ensure the well-being, personal and social development of youngsters, the Ministry have focused on several policy areas such as personal well-being, social inclusion, employment, volunteering, education and training.

These two pillars stand on the idea of close cooperation between public authorities and NGO’s. The mechanisms to establish these mutual bonds covers [Youth Projects Support Programme](#), volunteering activities, joint workshops and participatory meetings. Ministry’s grant programme aims to support youth NGO’s, diverse youth initiatives and student initiatives at high school and universities. Granted projects range from participation, volunteering, mobility, social inclusion projects to art and culture projects.

Ministry’s local hubs are youth centres, Ministry continually builds new youth centres for reaching out more young people at grass-root level. Number of youth centres has risen to 311 at the end of 2019.

Youth centres have multidimensional character, they combine the abovementioned two pillars. They offer services for youth empowerment with trainings in social sciences, innovation, personal development, religious sciences and many other areas; they also encourage youth participation at local level by creating new channels that young people can express their ideas freely and they serve as youth information hubs whereby they contribute to awareness-raising on youth rights. In youth centers, several trainings, workshops and deliberative meetings over local issues are also arranged in cooperation with local NGO’s.