

Turkey

Youth Policy in Turkey

The strong aspect of the youth policy in Turkey has always been the policies aimed at strengthening the youth. In this scope, policy measures and targets for strengthening the youth are designed to include all dimensions, situations and future projections of the young person's life. This comprehensive point of view for strengthening the youth manifested itself in the determination of the policy fields of the [National Youth and Sports Policy Document \(Ulusal Gençlik ve Spor Politikası Belgesi\)](#). These policy fields are: Education and Lifelong Learning, Ethics and Humanitarian Values, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Disadvantaged Youth and Social Inclusion, Health and Environment, Democratic Participation and Citizenship Consciousness, Culture and Art, Science and Technology, Youth in the International Arena, Using Leisure Time, Informing the Youth and Volunteering and Mobility.

Turkey has a young and dynamic population. %48,3 of the Turkish population is under the age 30 and %24,4 is between the ages 15-29. The definition of youth expressed in the National Youth and Sports Policy Document that is the legal document determining the framework concerning the youth policy in Turkey covers the youth between the ages 14-29. Although historically, the youth work in Turkey had been adhered to steps aimed to strengthen the youth, by the contribution of civil society's increasing effectiveness since 1990s, youth participation has become an important component of the youth work.

The principal public authority carrying out, supporting and coordinating the activities aimed at strengthening the youth is the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the document in which policy measures and activities aimed at strengthening the youth with its responsible and concerned partners are set is the National Youth and Sports Policy Document. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the one responsible for implementation and monitoring of the document in question.

The compulsory education in Turkey lasts 12 years and the formal education service in Turkey is offered under the administration of the single public authority, namely the Ministry of National Education. General Directorate of Lifelong Learning within the body of the Ministry of National Education sets forth the general framework of the non-formal education in Turkey and assumes the principal duty in designing and assessing multiple education models. Furthermore, the Ministry of Youth and Sports has an important position in offering non-formal education opportunities for the youth through Youth Centres, project grants and implementation of educational-cultural projects.

Providing the youth with a regular and peaceful family life is one of the fields of the youth policy of considerable importance. The Ministry of Family and Social Policies provide consultancy service for the youth in this regard. Furthermore, the Ministry of Youth and Sports organises seminars and make publications meant for underpinning the mutual bond between the family structure and healthy youth.

The existing employment structure of Turkey supplies an adequate environment for the young entrepreneurs and for the youngsters who are to take place in the working life for the first time. ??KUR (Turkish Employment Agency) assumes the duties of creating new job opportunities for the youth for employment and entrepreneurship, improving and documenting the skills of the youth, offering consultancy to the youth for business life. KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization), however, is the most important entrepreneurship organisation with its grant support offered to the young entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship education organised for the youth.

“Social Inclusion” which is a transversal public policy issue, rests on the works and activities carried out in partnership of multiple public authorities and civil society organisations in Turkey. Youth work carried out by all public authorities is coordinated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in line with the policy measures and activities set out in the National Youth and Sports Policy Document. Youth Centres affiliated with the Ministry of Youth and Sports constitutes a hub on the national level for the implementation of multi-directional and multi-player activities targetting the social inclusion of the youngsters with fewer opportunities, in addition to targeting the disadvantaged youth and the youth under the risk of being socially excluded, the activities might target the young groups who are under provisional protection for taking refuge in Turkey.

The matter of youth health is worked out within the framework of national youth policy around the measures to combat against the habits affecting health of the youth adversely, rendering dietary habits healthy, and the aims to get the youth acquire physical activity habits. Along with campaigns carried out by the Ministry of Youth and Sports emphasising the combat against addiction and obesity and health-sports relationship, there are formal education programs carried out by the Ministry of National Education to get the students acquire the habit of physical activity. Steps aimed at facilitating the access of the youth in the general health services are provided through partnerships by the Ministry of Health with its other public authorities.

Projects and project support programs carried out by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and culture and art projects carried out by the Ministry of Youth and Sports have important role in generalising cultural and artistic hobbies and activities among the youth that would enhance their exploratory and creative skills and raising awareness of the youth on culture and art.

Youth Information is one of the important headlines of the National Youth and Sports Policy Document and this policy field has been developed to increase the awareness in the youth on the opportunities offered by the youth policy. In this context, Youth Centres, strong organisation in the local base within the body of the Ministry of Youth and Sports offer informing the youth on many aspects of the youth work and opportunity for sound guidance to the youth.

Even though volunteering works do not have a legal framework in Turkey, the increasing effect of civil society works in Turkey on shaping the youth policies brought the youth volunteering in the centre of the youth work. In this scope, the Ministry of Youth and Sports carries out joint works with various non-governmental organisations in order to include the youth in the youth volunteer initiatives and to encourage youth volunteering. The cooperation the Ministry of Youth and Sports forms with international NGOs and other countries have significant role in terms of

increasing participation and representation qualifications of the youth in the international arena and ensuring access of the youth to the means through which they could contribute to solution of global issues.

As well as in determination of policy measures and aims for strengthening the youth, the youth participation in Turkey has become an important component of the youth work all by itself. The youth participation in Turkey forms the centre of the youth work as a result of both the youth section in political parties being an effective part for the political life and increasing participation of the youth and youth non-governmental organisations in the decision-making mechanisms. Youth participation has become a strong actor in determination and implementation of youth policies through its powerful effectiveness and organisation within local governance scale, education system, university and civil society.

Ratio of young people in the total population on 1st January

Ratio of men and women in the youth population

Statistic references

References:

Ratio (%) of young people in the total population (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Absolute number of young people on 1 January for the age group 15-29 (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_010 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Ratio (%) of men and women in the youth population (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Young immigrants from non-EU countries (2016): Eurostat, yth_demo_070 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].