



**Youth**Partnership

# COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH POLICY TURKEY



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**Youth**Partnership  
Council of Europe  
European Commission



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## Table of contents

1. Statistics on young people .....	5
2. Actors and Structures .....	5
3. Legislation .....	9
4. National Programmes on youth .....	10
5. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth .....	11
6. European Dimension of youth policy .....	11
7. Forthcoming events/conferences .....	12

## **Context of national youth policy**

In Turkey, there is no particular law comprising the issues involving youth, even if young people have reached a large proportion in the total population. However, rights and freedoms of youth have been included in the general acts of various institutions. Several institutions offer services for youth in areas such as education, health, accommodation, employment, working life, social security, cultural life, leisure time activities and protection from bad habits. Moreover, youth services are offered by the following state institutions within the scope of their own regulations: Ministries of National Education, Labour and Social Security, Health, Culture and Tourism, Interior, Foreign Affairs and Justice and General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection, General Directorate of Family and Social Researches, National Agency, Secretariat General for EU Affairs, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity, Turkish Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and General Directorate of Youth and Sports (GSGM). When the Turkish legislation related to youth is analysed, it appears that young people are considered as a human resource that needs to be trained in a way ensuring the integrity of the state and as a group in society that needs to be protected against bad habits. City Council Regulations, developed by the Ministry of Interior, based on the Municipality Law dated 2005, establish the legal basis for youth assemblies and guarantee the youth activities. Considering the provision that determines that the views raised at the city council are taken to the agenda and evaluated in the first meeting of the municipality assembly, this regulation seems to be a notable development for the youth.

The Ninth Development Programme (2007-2013) and the Medium Term Programme (2009-2011), developed by the Prime Ministry State Planning Organisation with the participation of all institutions and organisations, state that:

- equal opportunities will be ensured for the disadvantaged also including the young people facing difficulties in the labour market and programmes helping young people to gain experience in the labour market will be developed,
- measures will be taken to ensure better communication between the young people and their families and the society, to improve their confidence and to increase their feeling of belonging to the society they live in and their participation in decision making processes.
- GSGM has been assigned with the preparation of its first strategic plan encompassing 2010-2014 period, in accordance with the Regulations on Principles and Procedures Concerning Strategic Planning in Public Administrations dated 2006, and due studies are still continuing.

In the Programme 2007-2013, accepted by the Cabinet in accordance with the Ninth Development Plan and Medium Term Programme ([www.dpt.gov.tr](http://www.dpt.gov.tr)), the following measures concerning GSGM have been determined to be taken and responsible institutions and co-institutions were identified:

- GSGM is included in the institutions to cooperate with when it comes to take measures such as extending active labour force programmes for disadvantaged young people, carrying out activities for children directed to crime, wide-spreading the models of houses for children in need of protection, increasing the number of centres for child protection, care and rehabilitation and centres for care and social rehabilitation.
- GSGM has been assigned with the responsibility of taking measures in order to ensure the training of youth, especially focused on being confident and healthy individuals integrated in the society and on active participation in social life.
- GSGM has been asked to complete a study regarding the preparation of a “a National Youth Strategy by analyzing country examples especially EU countries. Establishment of youth councils will be promoted and participation of youth into decision making processes will be ensured. Youth will be oriented to art and sports in order to keep them away from violence and harmful habits”.

A research concerning the purposes of usage of internet by young people. The research is aimed at identifying measures to minimize the damages of factors which are threatening young people and children in internet.”

In line with this programme, GSGM Youth Services Department offers facilities and opportunities to young people for their leisure time: namely social, cultural and educational activities. Youth Services Department carries out programmes for young people, youth leaders and youth workers through its six sections: Youth Centres, Youth Camps, International Relations, Social and Cultural Activities, Youth Clubs and Research and Guidance.

Coordination with various countries and international youth organisations is ensured, especially with the Council of Europe (CoE) Directorate of Youth and Sport. International activities are organised in cooperation with the CoE to contribute to the development of youth policy in the country. Various programmes are realised in areas such as participation, social services, migration, gender, intercultural learning, volunteering and active citizenship. Moreover, exchange programmes between youth centres and non-governmental organisations are encouraged and coordinated through the Cooperation Protocol on Youth Policies, signed with Germany in 1994. Several projects for strengthening the youth centres

are developed in cooperation with United Nations and World Bank. Finally, reciprocal youth exchange programmes are implemented and joint projects are held with various countries. (summerized from the “Report of Youth Policy in Turkey” (2009) prepared by GSGM.)

## 1. Statistics on young people

Population in Turkey is 71.517.100 (data of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008) and half of the population is younger than 28,5. Young population constitutes almost 30% of the population of the country (Turkish Statistical Institute- [www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr)). Although the age for youth is defined differently in some research and documents in Turkey, the data on youth provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute refer to people between the ages 15-29.

15-19	Total	6 157 033
	Boys	3 159 723
	Girls	2 997 310
20-24	Total	6 240 573
	Boys	3 181 804
	Girls	3 058 769
25-29	Total	6 512 838
	Boys	3 295 102
	Girls	3 217 736
<b>Total</b>		<b>18.910.444</b>

## 2. Actors and Structures

### Ministry in charge of youth

- State Ministry responsible for youth
- Murat Basesgioglu (State Minister)
- Duration of mandate (since September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007)

### **Youth Department in the Ministry**

- **Fields of Activities of the Department of Youth Services**

#### **1. Youth Centres**

The Department of Youth Services is serving mainly young people of 12 – 24 years old through its sub-structures, namely “Youth Centres” that are under the control of Provincial Directorate for Youth and Sports. At present there are 113 Youth Centres throughout Turkey. These centres strengthen cooperation and solidarity among young people, give

them the opportunity to gain skills in various fields and to socialize by providing social and cultural activities and courses.

## **2. Youth Camps**

During summer holidays, youth camps are organised for young people of 13 – 24 years old. The aims of these camps are to ensure that young people have a good time, rest, become friends and develop a sense of cooperation.

## **3. Cultural Activities**

Throughout the year various cultural and social activities are realised. Youth Week celebrations are organised between 15 – 21 May every year. During the week the General Directorate and the Provincial Directorates of Youth and Sports organise various activities such as conferences, panels and symposiums about youth issues, youth feasts, theatre shows, folk dances, concerts, sports tournaments, exhibitions of works produced by young people.

## **4. Youth Clubs**

According to the Article 57 of the Association Law No: 2908, “the right to be registered as youth club has been given to the associations founded with the aim of realizing activities in the youth field”. As from August 2003 there are 155 youth clubs registered to the Directorate General.

## **5. Guidance and Counselling**

There are guidance and counselling bureaus in youth centres. Training courses for young people on various subjects, such as drugs, first aids etc... are organized throughout Turkey by the Department of Youth Services, in cooperation with the relevant institutions.

## **6. International Relations**

The Department of Youth Services is responsible for all international issues relating youth, except EU Youth Programme. Although the Directorate General for Youth and Sports has protocols with several countries and realises various activities in the sport field, it has a protocol in the youth field only with Germany. General Directorate aims at promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the youth field also with other countries.

### **Main tasks of the Department of Youth Services**

1. Taking necessary measures in relation to the opening, commissioning and operating of youth centres, hostels, camps and facilities; coordinating with the relevant department for the construction, maintenance and repair of such facilities;
2. Registering and supervising youth associations/clubs;
3. Providing in-service training for the officials and honorary authorities who will serve for youth activities;

4. Acting as the official institution in national and international youth activities on behalf of the General Directorate;
5. Ensuring that the youth spends its leisure time for social and cultural activities, providing service for this regard, organizing courses to improve the youth level of knowledge and their skills in fields of necessity;
6. Coordinating and cooperating with the relevant institutions in order to take the necessary measures to protect the youth from bad habits;
7. Conducting the activities and proceedings related to the Youth Week;
8. Carrying out the works and proceedings related to the provisions of protocols between Turkey and other countries;
9. Participating in meetings, courses, seminars and similar activities held abroad, disseminating throughout the country the new information and developments in this regard;
10. Performing, assessing, publishing and documenting researches related to the problems of youth;
11. Opening and having others open Consultancy and Guidance Offices for the Youth,
12. Carrying out the works and proceedings related to the participation of Turkish youth living abroad in the youth activities held in the country;
13. Coordinating activities of Youth Tourism;
14. Providing services for the good use of the leisure time by the youth,

### **Number of people who work in this ministry in the youth department**

#### **Director responsible for Youth in the Ministry**

Mr. Mehmet Atalay (General Director)

#### **Contact person in the youth department competent for European youth policy**

Mr. Adnan Gul (Director of Youth Services Department)

#### **Other national public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies**

- Other Ministries
  1. Ministry of National Education
  2. State Ministry - General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection
  3. Prime Ministry State Planning Organization
    - General Directorate for Social Sectors and Coordination
    - National Agency of Turkey
  4. Ministry of Health
  5. Ministry of Labor and Social Security
  6. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  7. Ministry of Justice

## 8. Ministry of Interior Affairs

- Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime
- Turkish Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction

### - Offices

Higher Education Council

## **2.1 Regional and/or local**

- The Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Regional Development Administration
- Municipalities
- Provincial Directorates for Youth and Sports
- Provincial Directorates of National Educational

### **Parliament commission in charge of youth issues**

- Name : The Commission of National, Education, Culture Youth and Sport
- Name of president / chair : Mehmet Sağlam (Deputy of Kahramanmaraş)
- Role and competence: Negotiates the notices of motion and he is responsible for the voting and the legalisation of these notices.

#### **2.1.1 Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

The Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Regional Development Administration is a multi sector and integrated regional development effort in the context of sustainable development. Its basic objectives include the improvement of living standards and income levels of people so as to eliminate regional development disparities and to contribute to such national goals as social stability and economic growth by enhancing productivity and employment opportunities in the rural sector. It runs programmes to ensure the social development of the disadvantaged groups such as women, working children and youth.

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#### **2.1.2 Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

General Directorate for Youth and Sports, Ministry of National Education and General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection have local directorates all over the country.

## **2.2 Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)**

Association for Social Workers

## **2.3 Non-public actors/structures & youth services with competencies in the youth field**

### **2.3.1 Youth councils**

There is no national youth council in Turkey. For further information, please see the section on national youth councils and on youth parliament in the questionnaire about participation.

### **2.3.2 Youth NGOs**

- 1.The Association of Support for Contemporary Life ([www.cydd.org.tr](http://www.cydd.org.tr))
- 2.Educational Volunteers ([www.tegv.org](http://www.tegv.org))
- 3.Community Volunteers Foundation ([www.tog.org.tr](http://www.tog.org.tr))
- 4.Umut Foundation ([www.umut.org.tr](http://www.umut.org.tr))
- 5.Turkish Education Trust ([www.tev.org.tr](http://www.tev.org.tr))
6. Youth Services Center ([www.gsm.org](http://www.gsm.org))
7. Turkish Red Crescent Society ([www.kizilay.org.tr](http://www.kizilay.org.tr))
8. Youth Development Association ([www.gencgelisim.org.tr](http://www.gencgelisim.org.tr))

## **2.4 Other structures**

- Youth Post ([www.genclikpostasi.org](http://www.genclikpostasi.org))
- Youth for Habitat Turkey ([www.youthforhab.org.tr](http://www.youthforhab.org.tr))
- gencnet ([www.gencnet.org](http://www.gencnet.org))
- Youth Express Network ([www.gencgelisim.org.tr](http://www.gencgelisim.org.tr))
- Youth for Understanding ([www.gencgelisim.org.tr](http://www.gencgelisim.org.tr))

## **3. Legislation**

### **Articles of the constitution concerning youth explicitly**

ARTICLE 58. Protection of the Youth. The state shall take measures to ensure the training and development of the youth into whom keeping our state, independence, and our Republic are entrusted, in the light of contemporary science, in line with the principles and reforms of Atatürk, and in opposition to ideas aiming at the destruction of the indivisible integrity of the state with its territory and nation. The state shall take necessary measures to protect the youth from addiction to alcohol, drug addiction, crime, gambling, and similar vices, and ignorance.

ARTICLE 59. Development of Sports. The state shall take measures to develop the physical and mental health of Turkish citizens of all ages, and encourage the spread of sports among the masses. The state shall protect successful athletes.

### **National legislation on youth**

See the constitution articles already mentioned above (Article 58 (protection of the youth) and Article 59 (development of sports))

### **Regional and local legislation on youth**

Article 6.b in the Municipalities Law (Law 5393)

Articles 14 and 85.e in the City Administrative Law (Law 5302)

City Council Regulations are related with the regional or local legislations on youth.

## **4. National Programmes on youth**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Institution</b>	<b>Joint Institutions</b>	<b>Period</b>
Priority 6.1 Re-regulation of legislation in the youth field.	The Directorate of Youth and Sports	Prime Ministry And State Planning Organization	End of September
Priority 6.2 Increasing the participation of young people in decision-making processes.	The Directorate of Youth and Sports	Ministry of National Education, General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection, Local Governances and Youth NGOs.	End of JUne

### **Action plans i.e. official strategies**

Although there are various action plans throughout the country in terms of education and career planning of young people, two national campaigns are basic:

- "100% Support for Education" by the Ministry of Education
- "Go Girls" by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with UNICEF which aims to increase the schooling of girls.

### **Programmes and actions for specific target groups**

The national campaign "Go Girls" by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with UNICEF which aims to increase the schooling of girls.

## **5. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth**

National level : 5.114.000 Turkish Liras

Regional level : N/A

## **6. European Dimension of youth policy**

### **6.1 Council of Europe programmes or activities implemented in an important way for youth purposes**

- Seminar for Cooperation in the youth field: Training Seminar for Experienced Youth Work Practitioners on Youth Participation, 16-22 June, 2008.
- 50/50 Training Course: 50/50 on the Cooperation and Partnership Between Governments and NGOs, Strasbourg, 30 November- 4 December 2008.
- Training Seminar on Gender Equality, Antalya 4-7, December 2008
- Developing International Youth Cooperation Through Intercultural Language Training (Turkish/English Language Course)

### **6.2 European Union programmes**

YOUTH Programme and Eurodesk are implemented by National Agency of Turkey ([www.ua.gov.tr](http://www.ua.gov.tr))

The projects are being held throughout the country and particularly supported in the cities where there is considerable lack of opportunities. There are youth agencies and/or associations from the disadvantaged regions of Turkey whose projects have been accepted and this brings not only a support to youth but also a community development.

In 2008, of the 1355 applications for YiA projects received by the National Agency, 431 were accepted. Almost 100 activities were held (voluntary activities, provincial information meetings, project pre-implementation meeting, action training courses, external expert training, information meetings for governmental officers, evaluation meetings, conferences, training courses on youth-related subjects at national and international level).

Moreover, in the same year, 255 young people from Turkey took part to the EVS and 108 young people came to Turkey to carry on their EVS

In November 5<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> 2008, Turkey hosted the Balkan Youth Intercultural Dialogue Conference in Istanbul.

News items on European Youth Portal are translated into Turkish.

Enquiry answering on EuroDesk ([www.europe.eu/youth](http://www.europe.eu/youth))

Eurodesk organised a conference on Youth Information Systems and also Italian representatives participated to this conference.

### **Other EU programmes implemented in an important way for youth purposes**

Euromed, Lingua, LLP, EuroDesk, EuroGuidance

## **7 Forthcoming events/conferences**

### **7.1 Current developments/plans with regard to national legislation/guidelines**

GSGM has been assigned with the preparation of its first strategic plan encompassing 2010-2014 period, in accordance with the Regulations on Principles and Procedures concerning Strategic Planning in Public Administrations dated 2006 and the related efforts are still continuing.

### **7.2 Current developments/plans with regard to European youth policy priorities**

The attempt of unificating the plans, programmes and implementations of youth institutions at a national level is continuing. Among the responsibilities of the Youth Services Department of the General Directorate of Youth and Sports, the following are basic:

1. conducting, evaluating and publishing research related to youth
2. opening, evaluating and controlling youth centers, camps, hostels, etc
3. promoting leisure and cultural activities for young people
4. Prevent and protect young people from drugs, alcohol and smoke.
5. Establishing national and international relations.