

Report prepared by:

Helga Rittersberger-Tılıç
Kezban Çelik

With the contributions of:

Tuğba Adalı
Alanur Çavlin
Selen Örs-Reyhanoğlu
A. Sinan Türkyılmaz
Gökhan Yıldırımkaaya

Translation

Akya Akarsu

Proofreading

Cheryl Jacklin-Piraino

© Population Association

Population Association - Nüfusbilim Derneği
Aziziye Mahallesi, Hava Sokak 25/1 Çankaya – Ankara
www.nd.org.tr

All rights reserved. Citation is allowed only with reference details. Requests for permission to reproduce all or part of this publication should be addressed to the Population Association.

The financial support for printing of this book has been provided by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

ISBN: 978-605-85586-5-6

First Print: March, 2016

Graphic Design by:
Asya Fatma Bağcı

Printed by:
Elma Teknik Basım Matbaacılık Ltd. Şti.
İvedik OSB Matbaacılar Sitesi Yenimahalle/ANKARA
Tel: 0312 229 92 65 • www.elmateknikbasim.com

CONTENTS

CONTENTS



02 ——— 04 ——— 05

INTRODUCTION THE CONCEPT OF YOUTH YOUTH IN TURKEY

07 ——— 09 ——— 12 ——— 13

YOUTH IN STATISTICS,
ACCORDING TO
2013 TURKSTAT DATA

EDUCATION

YOUTH
UNEMPLOYMENT
AND EMPLOYMENT

REASONS FOR YOUTH
UNEMPLOYMENT
AND POVERTY

DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE

15 ——— 16 ——— 18

MIGRATION AND YOUTH MARRIAGE AND YOUNG
POPULATION

ADOLESCENT
FERTILITY/SEXUAL
AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

22 ——— 25

PARTICIPATION
AND ORGANIZATION
(POLITICAL, SOCIAL PARTICIPATION)

PUBLIC EXPENDITURES
ON YOUNG PEOPLE

LIMITED PUBLIC,
STRONG FAMILY

26 ——— 27 ——— 30

YOUNG PEOPLE'S
VIEWS ON THEIR FUTURE

CONCLUSION
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

REFERENCES



Introduction

The global population of people between the ages of 10 to 24 is 1.8 billion. Worldwide, the number of young people has never been higher than today. Currently, one out of every four persons in the world falls into the 10-24 category. Even though this ratio will slightly decrease in the next 25 years in many regions, it is estimated that by 2035, youth will make up 20 percent of the population in all of regions except Europe, and will reach to over 30 percent in Africa.

A universal consensus on the definitions of young person and youth has not yet been reached. The most prominent reason behind this lack of official definition is the abstract nature of youth. The effects of the transition period from childhood to youth and adulthood are not just physical. There are many psychological, social, economic and cultural effects to consider. It should be noted that all periods of life have their own distinctive features. However, despite the aforementioned difficulties and constraints, there are also some accepted definitions regarding the age group which includes youth. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines the 10-19 age group as adolescents, and the 20-24 age group as youth, while the people in the 10-24 age group are defined as young persons. According to international organizations such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and United Nations (UN), youth corresponds to the 15-24 age group. UNESCO emphasizes that young persons are a changing and heterogeneous group and the concept of youth encompasses vast differences according to regions and countries. On the other hand, in some reports from the European Union, young people were defined collectively as persons between the ages of 15 to 29 (Commission of European Communities, 2011).

Even though there is no settled decision on the exact definition or the meaning of youth in academic social studies, there is an endeavor to create more dynamic definitions that consider biological and socio-economic aspects, either separately or together. Youth is regarded as one of the many stages of life, but one can claim that the definition of youth has more complex, sociologic dimensions than other groups, and the fact that there is no particular consensus among the definitions of youth in sociology also stems from this complication. According to a “biological” approach, youth can be defined as a homogeneous “semi-class” within the scope of certain cultures and interests. As an example, young persons who have common historical and cultural experiences in countries that undergo rapid transformation might develop strong attachments different from the previous generations and might become autonomous actors (Kentel, 2005). Rather than underlying socioeconomic factors, the chronological age group itself can also become a prominent factor. But the analytical approaches addressing this issue from a socio-economic point of view regard youth as a mere “word” and evaluate this concept within the scope of social class differences. Yet, it is possible to dynamically observe the biological and socio-economic approaches and to define them more comprehensively. Therefore, it would be more meaningful to assume that each successive generation displays different characteristics than the previous one, and that these different characteristics emerge in conjunction with socio-economic categories. Here, we can point to the so-called adolescence crisis as a defining characteristic; a person who enters the adolescent period experiences a frustration that hovers between self-acceptance and being open to all social dynamics. This frustration should be noted as one of the most distinctive characteristics of youth (Kentel, 2005).

Despite limitations and constraints, it is possible to say that the issues of youth, and young people in general, are being addressed by actively establishing a connection with the future. The group of young people aged 10-24 covers an important portion of the population and this group should be strengthened by making investments for today and for the future. Therefore, it is necessary that healthy habits and occupations be

supported, that young people be well-advised in terms of risky behaviors, given equal and easy access to education and increased employment opportunities, and that efforts for enabling their access to health services and for the social security coverage of all workers be made. The investments made in today's youth are the best investments for the improvement of the lives of the future generations. These investments should not only focus on the future, however. It is important to understand today's issues and take the social realities of the present time into consideration.

One of the main reasons to act according to current issues is related to demographic realities and development dynamics. According to population projections, in parallel with the falling fertility rates of the current young population, those persons who are currently young will be faced with fewer younger people who can support them as they age. As a result of demographic changes, the current young population will have an increased life expectancy and, at the same time, they will be forced to support an increasing proportion of elderly population.

Around the world, the majority of young persons are living in low income countries that have completed this demographic transition late, or have not yet completed the demographic transition. In these countries, education and health systems are insufficient, sexual and reproductive rights and health are either poor or hard to reach, good job opportunities are low and migration is high. Additionally, compared to the previous generations, the current young population has higher expectations in terms of self-determination, freedom and opportunities.

The achievements of the Millennium Development Goals affect various population dynamics such as growth, fertility and mortality levels, education and health indicators, mitigation of poverty, age structure and urban-rural distribution. Dynamic interactions between these elements also occur. One of the significant results of the demographic transition period occurring in many low and middle income countries is the increasing proportion of reproductive-age population, especially the growth in the numbers of persons between the ages of 15 and 24. Thus, the dilemma of whether youth should be seen as an "opportunity" or a "problem/obstacle" presents itself. The dynamics of development, which have multiple complicating factors, should not be tackled with a one-dimensional evaluation. Transforming a young population into an opportunity involves an increase in productivity and requires investments in the fields of education, nutrition and health. When this population momentum is combined with decreasing fertility rates, this creates a unique opportunity for stimulating economic development by increasing the labor force and decreasing the dependency burden on society.

All of the predictions regarding the future of young populations mention that in the upcoming years, the young population will increase until it reaches a plateau. Countries that meet the needs of their youth during this period will have the chance to be in a more favorable position in the second half of the century with their more educated and healthier population, more productive labor force, a growing economy and decreasing fertility levels. On the other hand, countries that do not address the needs of youth will be faced with the risks of increasing fertility rates and large young but dependent population over the time. The demands of this increasing young population for education and health services will also continue to rise and difficulties in these areas might create an under-skilled or weakened labor force. Countries that find themselves in this situation will not be protected from slow economies and poor growth ratios. Gender inequality might also render these conditions more difficult for young women and adolescent girls (UNFPA, 2014).

In countries that do establish policies centered on youth and with the participation of young people, the supports and services are often inadequate. Therefore, in these countries young people become a larger social problem. In turn, casting young people as a problem group reinforces the tendency for the public to blame young people for diverse troubles and disputes. In Turkey, which is currently undergoing a demographic transition, the proportion of young population is high; in fact Turkey has the youngest population in Europe. This document centers upon the young people living in Turkey with the aim of understanding their current status and making projections and recommendations for the future.



**Turkey has the
youngest
population in
Europe.**

AN OVERVIEW
of
**TURKEY'S YOUNG
POPULATION**

THE CONCEPT OF YOUTH

Social stratification by age is a phenomenon that can be observed in all societies. Here, it is possible to make an arm's length evaluation of the two disparate approaches that endeavor to define the concept of youth as "social constructionist", or its opposite; "non-social constructionist/essentialist". The first approach claims that the category of youth is constructed with social and historical dynamics (Fornas and Bolin, 1995). This perspective objects to essentialist definitions. It states that the characteristics attributed to youth are formed culturally and politically, and that due to this, the nature of these groups is inconsistent. By accepting that the concept of youth is formed culturally and politically, the dynamic aspect of youth, which varies with sex, class, ethnic features and cultural inclinations, is emphasized. (As a further note here, a striking and ironic situation develops when a young population is used as a show of force in foreign policies, especially during conflict periods.)

Contrastingly, non-social constructionist approaches consider youth to be a natural stage of development and they see youth as a transitional age category; a development period that is experienced during the path to adulthood. This concept results in the perception of young people as a homogenous category. According to this approach, a young person is not a child and not yet an adult; they are persons undergoing a transition period (Jones & Wallace, 1992). These periods can be summarized as transitions from "school to work", "family house to own house", "dependent category to independent category", "apprentice citizens to citizens" (Marshall 1950; Hall and Williamson 1999) and "family member to individuality". Here, the position of the young person in the means of production is not clear (Kongar, 1983).

These young people do not have families of their own. They are not required to have a paid job. They are not full citizens and although some can vote, they cannot yet be elected. With this transition period approach, young persons are not regarded as the subjects of development policies, and this is a key obstacle for social planning.

Recently, a new analytical approach has been being developed that falls between the aforementioned schools of thought and that evaluates the experiences of young people in conjunction with various political-economic and cultural aspects. (Brooks, 2007). This new approach does not restrict youth to psychology, biology or structural functions (Lüküslü, 2009). It maintains that youth are a socially constructed group and that there are certain factors that separate young people from other groups and each other. Furthermore, how young people congregate around certain common experiences is also being observed.

For many years, youth has been examined by focusing on education and employment, and this may still be the primary attitude. This approach distanced policy makers from young people and thus, their needs started to be identified and defined by adults (Chisholm, 2006). However, in parallel with the introduction and extension of the concept of a consumption society, studies that focus on young people have been increasing over the last 30 years. Youth has begun to be analyzed as a separate category in the academic sphere. These studies also brought to light the characteristics of youth that are not linked with education and employment (Blackman, 2005). There has also been an increase in the number of studies that center on consumption patterns and how daily life differs within distinctive cultures for those in the youth category.

We will start by explaining that the age-specific category of youth is allied with urbanization, industrialization and nationalization. In societies where production is based on agriculture, the demarcation of the age categories we know today was different and the number of categories was much smaller. Aries's study on the history of childhood (1960) demonstrates that there were two main age-specific categories in agricultural societies, in which the main income source is land, and that these categories were comprised simply of children and adults. In agricultural societies, the notion of childhood as we understand it today did not exist. Children were seen as

“miniature adults” and their adulthood started after only a brief childhood. Furthermore, the adulthood period shorter was than it is today. Due to the shorter average life span, there was no need for an interim period between childhood and adulthood and the transition to the productive category was considered coeval with the termination of childhood.

A radical transformation occurred with industrialization and urbanization, and the overall social model changed when age limits were placed upon participation in the new production process: in the end, this meant a childhood prolonged by compulsory education. The new industrial production mode required a more skilled and educated labor force, and that had an impact on the creation of “youth” as a transition category for adulthood. Thus, in the modern world, which acknowledged the condition of being an adult as that of an individual and independent person, youth emerged as a new age-specific category. Therefore, stating that the “industrialization”, “urbanization” and “nation-state” phenomena formed the category of youth as a social construct would not be an exaggeration (France, 2007).

The demand in the new production model for a more educated labor force, and the changing category of youth (who are regarded as the protectors and inheritors of the developing nation states) are both ideas that have developed during a period of formation, creation and conveyance of existing and/or ideal values. While youth symbolizes the future labor force and the future society during the formation of nation states, it is, on the other hand, seen as an important actor that builds new societies. Therefore youth plays a dual role (Lüküslü, 2009: 20). Within this context, young people were embedded in the historical social field as a group without settled norms and values, and as a group that is preparing to become adults and are acknowledged as the members/actors of a transition period.

Although Turkey has seen an increase in the number of studies on youth in the last 30 years, one cannot claim there is comprehensive literature or extensive data sources that adequately represent young people in the country (Demir, 2012). According to Neyzi, it is possible to mention three periods: i) the period in which young people were seen as a group to whom the newly established nation will be entrusted, and to whom its values will be passed on (between 1923 and 1950), ii) the period in which youth were seen as rebels, people who were against the system and who disturbed the peace (between 1950 and 1980) and iii) the period in which young people were associated with concepts related to depolitization, disintegration, and an inclination toward bad habits and aimlessness (between 1980 and 2000). Along with the periodization and typology studies, studies designed to represent Turkey’s young population have been increasing. However they are still inadequate (such as KONDA, 2011; Konrad Adenauer Vakfı, 1999; SETAV, 2012; Strateji-Mori, 2000; Şen vd., 2005; TESEV, 2005; TNS-Piar 2009; UNDP, 2008; Nüfusbilim Derneği and UNFPA, 2007; Yaşama Dair Vakıf, 2007, Bilgi Üniversitesi Gençlik Çalışmaları Merkezi).

With the 2000s, the problems of young people had begun to be addressed in terms of their perceptions of identity, their relationships with their families and friends, and their education and their transition to adulthood. (Eryüksel, 1987; Gizir and Aydın, 2009; Taylor and Oskay, 1995; Terzi, 2008; Yıldırım, 1997). Again in this period, the studies conducted with a cultural-psychological perspective started to explore the varying experiences of young people during adolescence (Demir, 2007; Özdemir, 2009; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996). Especially as of the mid-1990s, the number of sociologic studies focusing on “Islamic identities”, “ethnic identities” and “gender identities” have increased (Demir, 2012; Çelik and Lüküslü, 2012; Alemdaroğlu, 2010).

YOUTH IN TURKEY

In Turkey, which has the youngest population in Europe, the regulations regarding youth are very superficial and dispersed. Article 58 of the constitution is one of the documents that summarize the current perspective on youth. This article adopts a passive understanding of youth rather than a positive, participatory and active approach.

Article 58 of the constitution adopts a passive understanding of youth rather than a positive, participatory and active approach.

Furthermore, it places priority on protecting young people, rather than supporting them (Değirmencioğlu and Acar 2006). Other important policy documents in which the regulations on youth can be monitored are the five-year development plans. These documents are being prepared every five years to determine the management of economic, social and cultural fields. By analyzing these plans, it is seen that the concept of youth has been addressed differently over the years; the importance of youth for the country was emphasized, however, it is seen that there were no concrete strategies offered for existing problems (Acar, 2008). In these development plans, subjects such as making use of leisure-time and the participation of young people in sports activities are emphasized. Other key subjects related to young people were not reflected comprehensively in one report and instead these subjects were addressed in sector reports like those on education and health. Furthermore, issues of sexual identity, sexual orientation, sex work, sex education, reproductive health and adolescent pregnancy have just started to be studied and these issues still do not get the attention they deserve at the institutional level. Even though the importance of these issues for young people is evident, coverage of them in these reports is also limited. In one example, a study which focuses on sex workers' levels of information on sexually transmitted infections and their patterns of risky behaviors was conducted in seven provinces of Turkey with the coordination of UNFPA Reproductive Health Division. It is one of the new and valuable studies conducted on the aforementioned issues (UNFPA, 2015). Elsewhere, The 2013 Turkey Demographic and Health Survey yields striking findings on adolescent women's contraceptive use, fertility and their access to reproductive health

In the development plans, subjects such as making use of leisure-time and the participation of young people in sportive activities are emphasized more prevalently.

services. Similarly, the paper of Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu and Ergöçmen (2012) on child marriages can also be given as an example of a recent study. The aforementioned critical issues are also appear to be excluded from the government policies. These policies generally focus on education, the labor force and the demographic structure of the youth. In terms of government policies over the last five years, the first striking point is related to the protection of young people from harmful drugs. Almost all government programs have touched upon the issue of substance abuse. In these programs the idea that youth is the future of the society is emphasized frequently; however the actions that should be taken to actualize this idea are not mentioned. Similar to the development plans, the prominent points in the government programs are limited to establishing proper infrastructure to enable young people to make use of their leisure-time and establishing equality of opportunity in education (Acar, 2008).

Until recently, the General Directorate of Youth and Sports (GDYS) was the only institution that provided services for youth. This institution was restructured and replaced with the General Directorate of Sports. According to the statutes of the institution prior to the restructuring, GDYS was obliged to organize in-school and out-of-school sport, social and cultural activities. As a natural consequence of the government's views on young people, the regulations of the GDYS were focused on sports and leisure-time activities. In Turkey, the National Youth and Sports Policy Document published in 2012 is the sole youth policy established for youth (Official Gazette, 2013). Society's perception of youth, youth's participation in civil society, building civic consciousness, as well as self and social improvement, which are among the main objectives accentuated in this document, are all the signs of an innovative approach at the state level. At this point, changes linked with the European Union (EU) membership have a significant effect on the regulations in relation to youth. It is evident that within the scope of social change which accelerated with the goal of full membership in the EU, there are important changes in the issues related to young people. One of the prominent changes is lowering the voting age to 18, which came with an amendment adopted in 1995. On October 2006, the age for parliamentary eligibility was also lowered from 35 to 25, although one must still be over the age of 18 to become a member of a political party.

The most important step taken during the accession process into the EU is the establishment of the National Agency. Even though the National Agency does not structure youth policies, it is an important means for the empowerment of institutions, organizations and NGOs working in the field of youth. Turkey, which gained the right to use the relevant social funds of the EU with the initiation of the accession period, has seen an increasing number of young people and youth organizations starting to receive funds (for example, through the Erasmus exchange program).

The period of youth had been prolonged sociologically, not biologically. This situation increases the relative social importance of this near-adult group and also the need for comprehensive policies. Therefore, the aforementioned initiatives are positive yet limited. Demographers state that young people reach certain turning points in their lives - completing their formal education, finding a job and starting a family etc., later today, due to economic (unemployment etc.) and socio-cultural factors. Also, since societies no longer have the same “guarantees” (job guarantee, comprehensive social security systems) they had before, the social roles acquired during their lifetimes are getting more and more complicated. At the same time, the phases completed in their lives are progressively less linear; education, independence, marriage, parenthood, and careers do not necessarily happen in the same order as in previous generations. Lastly, traditional lifestyles are declining and different personal preferences are becoming prominent in society. The way that individuals organize their life plans have reached a point where they can no longer be standardized in a traditional, linear fashion (Acar, 2008).

Under these circumstances, it is difficult to argue that sufficient attention and support is being given to young people. Even though efforts have been made to adopt a youth policy in recent years, there is still no comprehensive policy in terms of establishing conditions for the active participation of youth in the general social structure, for providing them with equal opportunities for their self-improvement, or for ensuring that young people make use all of their civil rights.

YOUTH IN STATISTICS

It is important to examine youth by considering the existence of both the macro and micro factors that affect youth, and by analyzing young people both as subjects and objects.

DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE

The first of the macro factors relates to the demographic structure. Turkey is a country that is undergoing a demographic transition period. In other words, the country shifted from having high fertility and high mortality rates to a new status quo in which the fertility rate has stabilized at replacement level and mortality rates have decreased.

The “demographic window of opportunity”, which is a one-time opportunity and a very important stage, is still open for Turkey.

It is clear that the “demographic window of opportunity”, which is a one-time opportunity and a very important stage, is still open for Turkey. The demographic window of opportunity refers to a temporary demographic period that arises when the population growth rate is decreasing and the working age population is increasing. This phenomenon occurs when the proportion of young population aged 15-24 exceeds 15 percent; an opportunity that enables socio-economic progress when seized effectively (UNDP, 2008). In the early 2000s, Turkey entered this window of opportunity, which lasts approximately 20-25 years for every country. By establishing feasible national and regional policies aimed at young people, the country can benefit from this window of opportunity; one that is

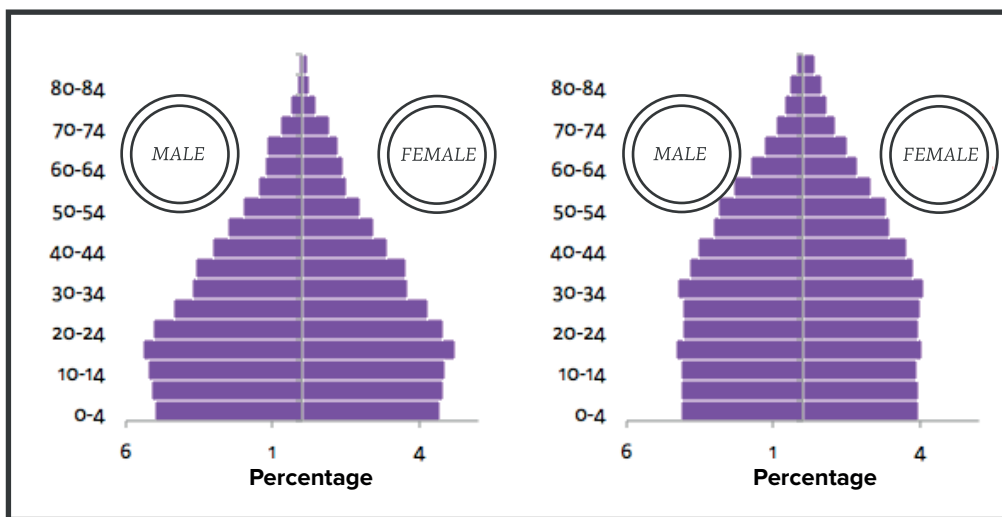
estimated to continue until 2025. Even though a comprehensive youth policy that centers on youth has been the focus of all political discourse, this policy had never been established in Turkey since the foundation of the republic.

The population is divided into three categories - “child” (ages 0-14), “adult” (ages 15-64) and “elderly” (ages 65 and above) - according to economically active and inactive ages. Regulations are planned based on these categorizations. The first category is “child”. The persons in this category are seen as individuals who do not yet have the capability to adapt to the changing society in which they live, who have not completed their physical maturity and who are dependent on other people. The “adult” category is defined as people who are liable to look after themselves and other dependent groups such as children and elderly. The elderly category is defined as people who are active in certain production fields that do not require extensive energy, since these people are losing their physical power, or they are seen as people who are old and fully dependent. It should be noted that young people are not included in this categorization scheme and that there is no clearly defined grouping for youth.

Children and young people constitute 41 percent of Turkey’s population. The proportion of young population of EU-28 countries in total population is 12 percent.

Turkey has a young population compared to European countries. Children and young people constitute 41.1 percent of Turkey’s population. The proportion of young population of EU-28 countries in total population is 11.5 percent. When compared with EU member countries, Turkey has the highest young population with 16.5 percent, while Spain and Italy have the lowest with 9.9 percent. When the 2000 and 2014 age pyramids are examined for monitoring the change in Turkey’s age structure over the years, it is seen that there is a 4 point decline in the proportion of 15-24 age group in total population. Nevertheless, the young population will continue to increase slightly in number and proportion, despite the decrease in the growth rates.

Population pyramids, 2000 – 2014



Source: 2000 General Census and 2014 Address Based Population Registration System

According to the 2014 data of the Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS), the proportion of “0-14” age group, which is defined as child population, in total population is 24.6 percent.

THE PROPORTIONS OF YOUNG POPULATION IN TOTAL POPULATION

YEAR	Total population	Young population (15-24)	Proportion of young population in total population (percentage)
1940	17.820.950	2.568.914	14,4
1950	20.947.188	4.350.499	20,8
1960	27.754.820	4.607.042	16,6
1970	35.605.176	6.545.971	18,4
1980	44.736.957	9.016.986	20,2
1990	56.473.035	11.311.973	20,0
2000	67.803.927	13.899.621	20,5
2010*	73.722.988	12.545.094	17,0
2014 *	77.695.904	12.782.381	16,5
2023 **	84.247.088	12.726.667	15,1
2050 **	93.475.575	10.961.194	11,7
2075 **	89.172.088	9.023.521	10,1

Source: TURKSTAT, General Censuses; (*) TURKSTAT, Address Based Population Registration System; (**) TURKSTAT, Population Projections, 2013

Turkey, which has the youngest population in Europe, can benefit from the “demographic window of opportunity” through comprehensive policies aimed at young people. When these policies are not established, the demographic structure becomes an obstacle and the large numbers are used to justify the inadequacies. Large numbers adversely affect education, labor market, access to health services, social participation, social inclusion tools and social opportunities and thus, the policies create an inequality from “center to periphery”, from “West to East” and from “men to women”.

EDUCATION

The studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between being a developed country and the educational level of that country’s population. The educational level is higher in developed countries and increasing education levels indicate increasing national income. For countries with high educational levels, it is seen that high value-added production is also advanced. The productivity of an educated labor force is also high and this, in turn, creates new sectors that require high quality labor. The European Union draws attention to this issue and contends that the total population with higher education should be increased in order to create a more competitive labor force.

Educational information for the 14-24 age group, which is by definition the closest age group to the 15-24 age group, can be obtained for 2013 from the TURKSTAT statistics. This distribution is presented in the table below. With this data, it is seen that 83.7 percent of young people have graduated from primary school and high school, or equivalent schools.

TURSKTAT 2013 EDUCATION STATISTICS

Educational status	Number of persons	Percentage
Illiterate	97.233	0,7
Literate but did not graduate from a school	1.195.687	8,7
Primary school graduate ¹	7.604.876	55,3
High school or equivalent school graduate	3.910.853	28,4
College or faculty graduate	933.650	6,8
Master's Degree	14.262	0,1
PhD	179	0,0
Toplam	13.927.672	100,0

According to the 2013 data, with 36 percent, the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training is twice the average of OECD countries.

Schooling rates which start decreasing statistically at the high school level increase the proportion of young people in the “not in employment, education or training” (NEET) category. In many European countries, NEETs are defined as young people aged between 15 and 25 who are not in employment, education or training (Eurofound, 2012: 20). The education and employment policies do not cover NEETs since they have completed the basic education age and do not take part in the labor market. In studies which were conducted within the scope of the definitions of ILO and OECD, Turkey comes to the forefront as a country with the highest proportion of NEETs (ILO, 2014; OECD, 2013). According to the 2013 data of OECD, while the proportion of NEETs is 35.89 in Turkey, the average of OECD countries is 18.21. The proportion of female NEETs (38 percent) in the current population (ages 15-24) is 22.5 points higher than the proportion of males (Kılıç, 2014:126).

It is seen that the number of male university students is higher than that of female students.

When the number of university students is observed, it is apparent that the number of male students is higher than that of female students. In 2013/2014 academic year, 583,909 female students enrolled in universities per 664,284 male students. In the same academic year, 165,170 male students enrolled in and continued Open University, whereas this number was 101,704 for females (TURKSTAT, 2015).

Turkish young people usually prefer the fields of engineering, medicine, natural and social sciences. The number of students who prefer the fields of art and sports are relatively low, due to the creative nature of these fields which require special talents and especially due to concerns about future employment.

Education should be considered as another important macro factor due to its direct relationship with employment, and its influence on young people in terms of finding their place in the society. While some young people do not participate in any stage of education, some participate in different stages of compulsory education and some of them either withdraw, or are forced to withdraw, from education at the end of the compulsory period. Even though the resources of families play an important role in withdrawal/forced withdrawal from education, the quality of

education provided in schools is also decisive. A young person might not like school, might find it boring and might detach his/herself from school. When the education provided in schools and the educators are not creative, when they focus on rote learning and are overly disciplinary, young people tend not to like learning (UNDP, 2008). Recent international evaluations demonstrate that Turkey has fallen behind many similar countries in terms of students' learning success. According to the "Program for International Student Assessment" (PISA, 2013), which is the world's most comprehensive education survey realized with the participation of 400,000 students, Turkey is in the 44th place among 65 countries in terms of secondary school quality. The education system is not sufficiently supportive to raise socially, politically or economically active individuals. This situation applies to every level (primary-secondary-high school-university) and type (vocational-technical and normal education) of education.

According to PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), as of 2013, Turkey is in the 44th place among 65 countries in terms of secondary school quality.

It is apparent that a "school-labor-market" relationship which will steer the education system has not yet been established. Turkey needs to develop long and short term workforce plans (UNDP, 2008). Otherwise, the supply-demand balance cannot be achieved and this situation leads to increasing unemployment among educated youth. Higher education does not, on its own, prevent unemployment and long-term unemployment experiences after graduation prevent young people from finding qualified jobs. Young people (ages 15-29) who can find jobs easily are listed as follows, ranked from 'easily' to more difficult; university or higher education graduates, primary school graduates and high school graduates. The reason why primary school graduates can find jobs easier than high school graduates is their willingness to work for lower wages and their tendencies to accept informal and indeterminate work agreements (Ercan, 2011:7). A recent study conducted through qualitative methods highlights "white collar" unemployment among university graduates. This is a noteworthy study since it demonstrates that university diplomas are not enough to find a job, or even for regular employment, and that educated young people might join the precaria group (people who work in temporary, unsecured conditions) (Bora, vd., 2011).

The reasons why primary school graduates can find jobs easier than high school graduates are their acceptance to work for lower wages and their tendencies to accept informal and indeterminate work agreements.

While having a good education does not guarantee success, not having enough education usually means failure. Lesser education shortens life and causes experiences such as working, marriage and parenthood to be experienced at earlier ages, while prolonged education delays these typical experiences of adulthood (Çelik, 2008). Duration of education depends mostly on the economic, social, cultural capital level of individuals, and upon the number of dependents in their families, rather than time spent in education being their own decisions. The relationship between the conditions and options for youth continues to be a strong cycle that is hard to break, as it is one passed down from one generation to the next (World Bank, 2012).

Short-term education quickens life and causes experiences such as working, marriage and parenthood to be experienced at early ages.

In educational institutions, the grading system is far more decisive than real abilities, skills and eagerness. This determination process is usually undertaken with the decisions and priorities of families in mind. A liberal family and school system which will unveil the creativity and dynamism of young people cannot be included in this process. Schools usually do not have supportive programs which will direct young people according to their abilities, qualities, inclinations and the fields in which they want to be trained. In general, families decide on the subjects young people should choose for their higher education. During the selection process, families lean towards professions that have higher occupational opportunities, prestige, recognition and income, rather than professions that are most suited to the abilities and skills of the young person.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

In the face of increasing youth unemployment, the “Europe 2020 Strategy” emphasizes the importance of education, especially vocational education, and the need for the prioritization of youth in social policies (European Commission, 2010). The report of ILO published in 2010 highlights the unemployment of young people aged 15-24, noting that it has increased more than adult unemployment. This trend also applies for Turkey, where youth unemployment is conspicuously high.

Labor force status of the 15-24 age group

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Labor force (per thousand)	4 789	3 166	1 622
Employment (per thousand)	3 930	2 639	1 291
Unemployed (per thousand)	858	527	331
Population who does not participate in labor force (per thousand)	6 936	2 700	4 236
Proportion of labor force participation (%)	41	54	28
Proportion of employment (%)	34	45	22
Proportion of unemployment (%)	18	17	20

Source: TURKSTAT, 2014 Labor Force Statistics, annual data

In 2014, the labor force participation was 54 percent among men, whereas it was 28 percent among women.

According to the 2014 TURSKTAT Labor Force Statistics, the nationwide unemployment of the 15-64 age group was 10.1 percent. Youth unemployment, which is comprised of the 15-24 age group, was 18 percent in 2014. Youth unemployment was 17 percent among men and 20 percent among women. In 2014, labor force participation was 54 percent among men, whereas it was 28 percent among women. According to 2013 statistics, while youth employment was 29.3 percent among people with higher education, this proportion was 20.2 percent for high school and equivalent school graduates. And while the unemployment rate was 23.4 percent for young men with high education, this proportion increases to 34.4 percent for young women.

Nationwide, in 2013 the proportion of employment in the service sector was 50 percent, employment in industry was 26.4 percent, and the proportion of employment in agricultural sector was 23.6 percent. Regarding the employment of young people by sectors, 47.8 percent of young people were working in service sector, 31.5 percent in industry and 20.7 percent of young people were working in agricultural sectors. According to the figures of 2013, young men were predominantly working in non-agricultural sectors, whereas young women were working in agricultural sectors (a 14 percent difference).

The labor force statistics demonstrated that women aged 15-24 are less likely to participate in education than men in the same age group. Further, they are much less likely to participate in the labor force than men, and the likelihood of women not participating in both education and labor force is much higher. While the majority of men who are not working described themselves as unemployed or as people who can work, 28 percent of all young women stated that they did domestic work – probably as young housewives or “house girls”- and thus they did not participate in the labor force. It is observed that since the participation of young women in the labor force remains at lower levels, the number of women not in education or employment increases at the age of 24 compared to all women, and the number of young men not in education or employment decreases at the age of 24, compared to all men. Furthermore, the number of women excluded from labor force due to “personal reasons” is higher than the number of women who are in the same situation. One of the reasons for this can be the situation in which women take care of other family members. It is known that the proportions of young men and women who continue their education, participate in labor force, or who are not in employment or education, display significant differences according to geographic regions, urban-rural differences and different social groups.



Educational level directly affects labor force participation ratios and gender discrimination in employment and occupations⁺ This situation also affects the behaviors of young women such as marriage and childbirth, and further implies the transition from youth to adulthood is a period that will have long-lasting effects (World Bank, 2012). In Turkey, labor force participation of women is limited, reflecting a deep-rooted problem and one of the most important differences between other industrialized countries and Turkey. It is widely accepted that traditional values play an important role in the unwillingness of Turkish women to participate in labor force and take part in employment.

REASONS FOR YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

Even though unemployment among young people displays geographical differences in the world, it generally follows an increasing trend. Studies have demonstrated that unemployment is 2 to 4 times more prevalent among young people than adults. Explanations for this circumstance include; young people seeking jobs for the first time and lacking the experience needed to be successful candidates; lack of experience regarding overall workforce situations; being easily discharged from a job during economic crisis periods as a result of “last in first out” mentality; the decreased need for manpower as a result of technological developments; and the high expectations of young people. The most frequently mentioned reasons are low educational levels of young persons and/or the situation where the training of young people does not meet the skills required by the labor market. Furthermore, working young people are usually in part-time, temporary, short-term or seasonal jobs.

⁺ Another point that affects/designates the state of being young is observed to be correlated with gender. In general, the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about youth is the word “man”(Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Cohen, 1955, 1972; Corrigan, 1979; Hall & Jefferson, 1976; Hebdige, 1979; Robbins & Cohen, 1978; Willis, 1977; Whyte, 1955; Young, 1971). TStudies conducted in developed countries, where the schooling rates of males and females are high, present findings on labor force participation and occupational distribution by sex. Some of these studies state that gender discrimination starts during education and, consequently, young women are more prevalently working in lower-status jobs and occupations (Gundert and Mayer, 2012). In developing countries, where the schooling rates of females are lower than that of males, this situation leads to gender inequalities during the transformation period from youth to adulthood.

Some of the reasons for youth unemployment are as follows; young people seeking jobs for the first time; lack of experience regarding work life; being discharged from a job easily during economic crisis periods as a result of “last in first out” mentality; the decreased need for manpower as a result of technological developments and high expectations of young people.

When looking at unemployment rates in Turkey, it is seen that, in 2013, 29.6 percent of young men were working in temporary jobs and their jobs had ended that year, whereas 29.6 percent of young women were seeking jobs for the first time and 22.5 percent of them had left their jobs.

According to the findings of the “Income and Living Conditions Survey” conducted by TURKSTAT in 2012, based on the poverty line, which was determined as 60 percent of the equivalent households’ median incomes, 25.6 percent of young men aged 15-24 and 27.8 percent of young women lived below the poverty line. There has been no significant difference in poverty rates among young men in the last three years. The poverty rate among people working in agricultural sector decreased, whereas this rate increased among unemployed people. The poverty rate among young women does not differ for women who are not in the labor force. In observing the findings of the last three years, it is clear that poverty rates have declined for people working in agricultural sector and increased with fluctuations in non-agricultural sectors. Regarding various income types, 98.6 percent of the incomes of the adult population are social transfer incomes, whereas the most common income type for youth is a daily wage.

Among the macro issues affecting young people are the characteristics of the work place and the basic make up of the labor force. The participation of young people in the labor force is associated with economic growth, a decline in poverty and the transition of young people to economically-independent individuals. Studies have examined the different experiences of people who graduated from different types of schools and how they transitioned to employment. Both general high schools and vocational high schools were compared within this context (Müller, 2005; Iannelli and Raffe 2007) and it was concluded that an undereducated and/or under-skilled labor force increases poverty, social insecurity and thus, social exclusion. The report of the ILO published in 2010 found that unemployment of young people aged between 15 and 24 has increased to more than the adult unemployment rate, and that young people experience a longer struggle in order to improve their status in the labor market (ILO, 2010). The ILO report also stated that youth unemployment rate did not decrease after the peak of the economic crisis and, in fact, in the category of “Developed Countries and European Union” it reached its highest level since the 1991 initiation of youth unemployment measurements. Studies conducted in the field of the sociology of work also point to the unsecured condition of youth in ever- globalizing labor markets. The concept of the ‘precariat’ was formed – a portmanteau of the terms ‘unsecure’ and ‘proletariat’. Some studies which used this neologism suggested that precariat (defined as a class of people existing under precarious social conditions) was a new category and that young people played an important part among the factors that formed the precariat (Standing, 2011).

Having a paid job is an important step toward being independent and self-reliant. When the labor market is affected by technology-intensive production, privatization, or by withdrawal of the public sector from employment initiatives, these issues can be exacerbated by inexperience in the labor force and young people are left at risk for chronic unemployment. Even though unemployment insurance, which is one of the passive policies used to ease the burden of unemployment, was implemented by İŞKUR in 2001, young people are generally not covered by this insurance. In order to benefit from unemployment insurance, regulations state that one must have worked as an insured laborer before the unemployment period. Since young people usually constitute a group that is entering the labor market for the first time, they are often excluded from collecting unemployment insurance benefits. On the other hand, having a paid job does not always guarantee economic independence for young people (ILO, 2010). More than half of the working young people are “working poor”, which increases the dependency of young people on their families.

More than half of the working young people are “working poor”.

In Turkey, the studies on women's participation in labor force demonstrate that there is a directly proportional relationship between educational level and employment. Women's participation in labor force is below 30 percent. While this proportion is 18.8 percent among women who received an eight-year education, it is 29.4 percent among high school graduates and 70.6 percent among people with higher education (Gökşen vd., 2011). When the studies which show that the participation of young women living in urban areas in the labor force has been increasing (World Bank, 2009) are taken together with the data which shows that the schooling rate of females at the secondary level has increased (in the 2010-2011 academic year, 66 percent of the females in the secondary education age), the rate of women in the work force was still found to be relatively lower than that of males (72 percent in the 2010-2011 academic year), and the importance of gender in education becomes apparent. Gender socialization in educational institutions and in the family can cause young girls to "return to their homes" after their education, rather than moving on and participating in the labor force (Çelik and Lüküslü, 2012).

Gender socialization in educational institutions and in the family can cause young girls to "return to their homes" after their education rather than moving on and participating in the labor force.

When it comes to issue of youth employment, young people living in urban areas are the focus and only the urban labor market is taken into consideration. Attention is not being paid to young people living in rural areas and their employment conditions. Since there are no efforts regarding possible job opportunities for rural areas and no activities for developing skills aimed at agricultural sectors, young people living in rural areas remain silent and invisible.

MIGRATION AND YOUTH

Migration is generally left out of the discussions on youth. It is mostly regarded as a phenomenon occurring as a result of economic, political, cultural and environmental circumstances. However, with regards to youth, the employment, migration data yields specific patterns that should also be considered. The first notable pattern is that youth employment is higher in urban areas than rural areas. The main motivation of rural-to-urban migration stems from this situation. As a result of internal migration, which has been continual since the 1950s, 75 percent of Turkey's population is living in urban areas. It should be noted that migration changes according to agricultural policies and agricultural mechanization, and migration is also considered inherently selective. The poorest people and people with low educational attainments are not the first groups who join migratory movements. Having information about different opportunities for living in urban areas and possessing some capital are significant factors that have an impact on the first participatory group of migration movements.

The main motivation of rural-to-urban migration is the fact that youth employment is higher in urban areas than rural areas.

The most important motivation that pushes people to migrate is the hope of a better life, and the hope of having a better life by finding a job in cities is questionable among young people with low educational attainments. When they do migrate, they find only temporary, low wage, unsecured jobs, predominantly in informal work sectors, due to their low educational and technical skills. At this point, sex comes to the forefront as another factor that should be emphasized.

For 50 years, Turkey has been a sending country for migrants. Nevertheless, the country also receives significant amount of immigrants from neighboring nations. The majority of irregular migrants, who usually stay in the country

Especially young women might prefer to migrate through marriage to urban areas where they can be more autonomous.

temporarily, are young and female. Young women coming predominantly from Moldova, Azerbaijan and Georgia are primarily working in domestic jobs, or in the textile sector. Regardless of the type of migration, such as regular, irregular, internal or external, the importance of the relationship between migration and age, as well as sex should be noted. Age affects development patterns and the importance of young families' migration decisions should be highlighted. Young people coming to and going from Turkey are economically active and want to participate in the labor market. Employment, better education, social and cultural opportunities and the wish for accessing infrastructure conditions are the main motivations for migration and it can be said that, in general, these motivations affect young people the most. Young women, in particular, prefer urban areas where they can be more autonomous regarding their motivations for migration and decisions of marriage (Ercan and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2012, Youth, Employment, and Migration, WP, IOM).

It is known that the main motivations of migration such as employment, better education, social and cultural opportunities and the wish for accessing infrastructure conditions affect young people the most.

According to the findings of ABPRS and of the 2000 General Census, in all of the statistical regions and among all of the age groups between 0 and 24, migration numbers increase as the population totals of these age groups increase. However, there is a reverse trend for the proportion of migration collected for the age of 25 and above. According to the findings of ABPRS, among 2,122,454 migrants in the regional migration statistics sorted by age group (1,055,519 males and 1,066,935 females), the most crowded age groups were the 20-24 (422,914 in total; 192,764 males and 230,150 females) and 25-29 (302,182 in total; 152,919 males and 149,263 females) groups. Among the migration numbers obtained from 10 of the statistical regions, the highest number was in the 20-24 age group.

Internal, external migration, immigration and so-called 'brain drain' should be examined comprehensively. Furthermore, young people's patterns of participation in every form of migration, and the impacts of these patterns on those same young people, should be addressed in detail. Notably, in March 2001, after the initiation of the conflict of Syria, an increasing number of Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) citizens has been migrating to Turkey with temporary protection status. According to the data of the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), there are 259,078 Syrians living in the camps (AFAD, 2015). Although the exact number is not known, it is estimated that, together with the refugees living outside the camps, there are nearly 2 million Syrian refugees in the country and the fact that a significant proportion of these refugees are young people continues to be an important issue. Not having a complete understanding of the reasons for their migration, not examining migration patterns by sex and the effects of migration on young people, as well as not including them in political processes, are all issues that affect young people. Since the characteristics of young migrants and their reasons for migration are not considered, appropriate policies related to young migrants cannot be established. Furthermore, the life conditions of people who do not/cannot migrate cannot be evaluated. Therefore, young people who continue to live in towns or small cities become an invisible category and the young people who do migrate must try to live in the absence of policies aimed at them.

MARRIAGE AND YOUNG POPULATION

In Turkey, marriage is a widespread and a significant portion of marriages happen during childhood or adolescence, in spite of the fact that underage marriage is against international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Beijing Women's Conference.

As of 2013, in Turkey, 5 percent of young men and 22 percent of 22 young women are married. In average, men enter marriage 3 years late than women.

The median age at first marriage and the share of the married population within the total population are common indicators used to examine the age at first marriage. The marriage statistics of MERNİS yield pertinent information on civil marriages. According to that data, regarding the change in the proportion of first marriages by sex over the years, it is seen that the proportion of married young men and women is decreasing. In 2005, while 40.1 percent of young men (ages 15-24) were married, in 2013 this proportion declined to 32.6 percent. While this proportion was 71.4 percent among women in 2005, it declined to 63.5 percent in 2013. The proportion of young women marrying for the first time was nearly twice that of men. When the young population is observed according to the legal marital status, it is seen that in 2013, 13.7 percent of young people (ages 15-24) were ever-married. Among ever-married young people, 5.4 percent of them were young men and 22.4 percent of them were young women. Over the 20-year period between the TDHS-1993 and TDHS-2013, the age at first marriage increased by 2 years. And according to the 2013 marriage and divorce statistics of TURKSTAT, the average age at first marriage was 26.8 for young men, whereas it was 23.6 for young women. On average, men enter marriage 3 years later than women.

Percentage distribution of women aged 15-49 by age and marital status, Turkey 2013

Age	Never-married	Currently married	Divorced	Separated	Widowed	Number of women
15-19	92,8	7,1	0,0	0,1	0,0	1.572
20-24	52,6	46,3	0,9	0,2	0,1	1.337
25-29	19,1	78,1	1,9	0,7	0,2	1.492
30-34	7,1	89,1	2,4	0,8	0,6	1.565
35-39	4,5	89,3	3,5	1,6	1,1	1.513
40-44	2,1	91,0	3,4	1,6	1,9	1.238
45-49	3,0	86,3	4,5	0,6	5,7	1.029
Toplam	27,5	68,3	2,3	0,8	1,1	9.746

TNSA, 2013, ss: 106.

The findings of TDHS-2013 show there is a positive relationship between educational level and the median age at first marriage. The median age at first marriage of women with high school and above education is 24.6 , which reflects a 4 year difference from the median age at first marriage of women with only secondary school education (20.8). The difference in median age at first marriage of women with no education/incomplete primary education (18.9) is nearly 6 years. The median age at first marriage also increases with household wealth level: women with high wealth levels marry about 3.6 years later than women with low wealth levels.

The median age at first marriage of women with high school and above education is 25 and the median age at first marriage of women with no education/incomplete primary education is 19.

Marriage, which can be seen as one of the defining indicators of adulthood, should be examined together with sexuality. Social norms and values in Turkey currently see extramarital sex as “not very pleasant”. Sex is considered a taboo subject, an issue that should not be mentioned, and it is difficult to engage in extramarital sex. All of this renders the examination of youth and marriage even more important. While this cultural assumption of keeping sex within marriage excludes a large group of young people with sexual orientation and sexual identity issues, it also paves the way to early marriages and to the early transition to adulthood. Shorter education duration also decreases the age at first marriage. Early marriages become almost an obligation for young people who do not continue with their education, especially for young women who cannot participate in labor force for a variety of reasons. On the other hand, male-female friendship, or becoming lovers and dating are not easy for young people who have only received education for a short duration. While these conditions lead young persons to early marriage, either as a result of their own decisions or the decisions of their families, the youth period, which is a “learning process”, is transformed into another status with the sociological termination of this period through marriages (Çelik and Esin, 2012).

In recent years, however, the age at first marriage has shown an increasing trend in relation with a prolonged duration spent in education, as well as in parallel with uncertainties in the labor market and increased youth unemployment. The accompanying decreasing trend of the proportions of marriages among young people has attracted the attention of the highest authorities. This situation was considered a broader social problem and advice was given to young people: the decrease in the proportions of marriages among young people was explained to be caused by “selectivity”, and the negative outcomes of being too picky were defined as “leaving the rose garden empty handed” which refers to being too selective to be able to find a partner. The increasing age at first marriages among young people is being presented as a personal preference, while the causes of this increase are being omitted. However, when demographic, economic and educational issues are considered together, it can be predicted that the age at first marriage will further increase in the coming years and policies should be established in line with this trend. In this regard, it is evident that it is necessary to develop an approach more suitable to changing societal norms, rather than encourage marriage without acknowledgement of new social climates.

Regarding the increasing age at first marriage, it is necessary to develop an approach suitable to societal norms rather than encouraging marriage.

ADOLESCENT FERTILITY/SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

One of the important effects of marriage on overall life cycle is child bearing. Early marriages are directly correlated with adolescent fertility. In the Millennium Development Plans, the objective related to the improvement of maternal health mentions that young mothers are more prone to health risks. In observing the age-specific fertility rates in Turkey over the years, it is seen that the fertility rates among young women are declining, but in contrast, they are increasing, with some fluctuations, among adult women. This situation is related to the decreasing proportion of married women in young age groups, and to the postponement of fertility to older ages among married women. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around the world, nearly 16 million girls aged between 15 and 19 give birth every year. While the age-specific fertility rate of young women was 76.9 per thousand in 2009, it declined to 65.8 per thousand in 2013.

Recent studies have shown that age at first marriage is increasing all around the world, including Turkey[‡]. It is

[‡] According to the results of the Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys, the age at first marriage is increasing in Turkey. From TDHS-2003 to TDHS-2013 the median age at first marriage of the 25-29 age group increased from 21 to 22. Furthermore, the proportion of ever-married women in the 15-19 age group decreased from 11.9 to 7.2. While the proportion of women marrying at the age of 15 was 5 percent in the oldest age group, this proportion was 1 percent among women in the 20-14 age group.

possible to conclude that an increasing average life expectancy, increasing time spent in education and increasing unemployment due to the changes in the labor market are elements that have impacted on this trend. There is now a longer period of sexual maturity before marriage. If adolescents can have access to the information and consultation services that they might need, this period can be managed well. However, numerous studies have shown that there are many obstacles for young people wishing to use these services. Factors such as the social perception of sexuality, gender, socio-economic level, education and place of residence create certain obstacles at different levels.

The increasing age at first marriage results in a long period of maturity before marriage. If adolescents can have access to information, services and consultation services that they might need, only then this period can be managed well.

In the action plan of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, the concept of reproductive health was emphasized. This action plan prioritized the use of health services by disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, every year on July 11, the UNFPA designates a theme that focuses on the important issues of the population, during World Population Day. The theme of 2013 was "Adolescent Pregnancy". In order to ensure comparability between countries, adolescent pregnancy is generally defined as pregnancies between the ages of 15 to 19. The adolescent fertility rate is the number of births per 1,000 women aged 15-19.

According to UN population projections calculated with a medium fertility rate assumption, for the 2012-2015 period, the three countries with the lowest adolescent fertility rate are Slovenia (0.6 per thousand), North Korea (0.6 per thousand) and Switzerland (1.9 per thousand). Based on these projections, in the ranking of adolescent fertility rates from lowest to highest, Turkey is in the 113th place among 199 countries.

The issue of adolescent fertility involves risks related to health issues and social life.

Adolescent fertility is an important issue for both health and social reasons. Adolescent mothers are more likely to be subject to adverse pregnancy outcomes or maternal mortality. Children of very young mothers are faced with high risks of disease and mortality. Mortality rates for infants of mothers aged below 20 is 50 percent higher than those born to mothers in the 20-29 age group. Furthermore, early childbearing hinders the education of adolescents and their access to employment opportunities. At this point, it should be noted that, in Turkey, the legal age of marriage is 18. According to the TDHS-2013 findings, nearly 5 percent of adolescent females had begun childbearing.

Further, some 3 percent of adolescent women had had live births and 1 percent was pregnant with their first child at the time of the survey. Adolescent fertility continues to decrease every year. Since TDHS-2008, there has been a decrease in the proportion of adolescent women who had begun childbearing in their adolescent period. This proportion decreased from 6 percent to 5 percent.

TNSA-2008'den bu yana çocuk sahibi olmaya başlayan ergenlerin oranında sadece yüzde 1'lik bir düşüş olmuştur. Ergenlik döneminde çocuk doğurmaya başlayanların yüzdesinin, 18 yaşından sonra keskin bir şekilde arttığı görülmektedir. Çocuk doğurma davranışı 17 yaşından önce nadirdir, ancak 19 yaşındaki kadınların yüzde 16'sı anne olmuş veya ilk çocuğuna gebe. Kırsal alanlardaki ergenlerde çocuk sahibi olma, kenttekilere göre daha sık görülen bir davranıştır (sırası ile yüzde 6 ve yüzde 4).

There has been an only 1 percent decline in the proportion of adolescent childbearing since TDHS-2008. The proportion of women who have begun childbearing during the adolescent period increases sharply after the age of

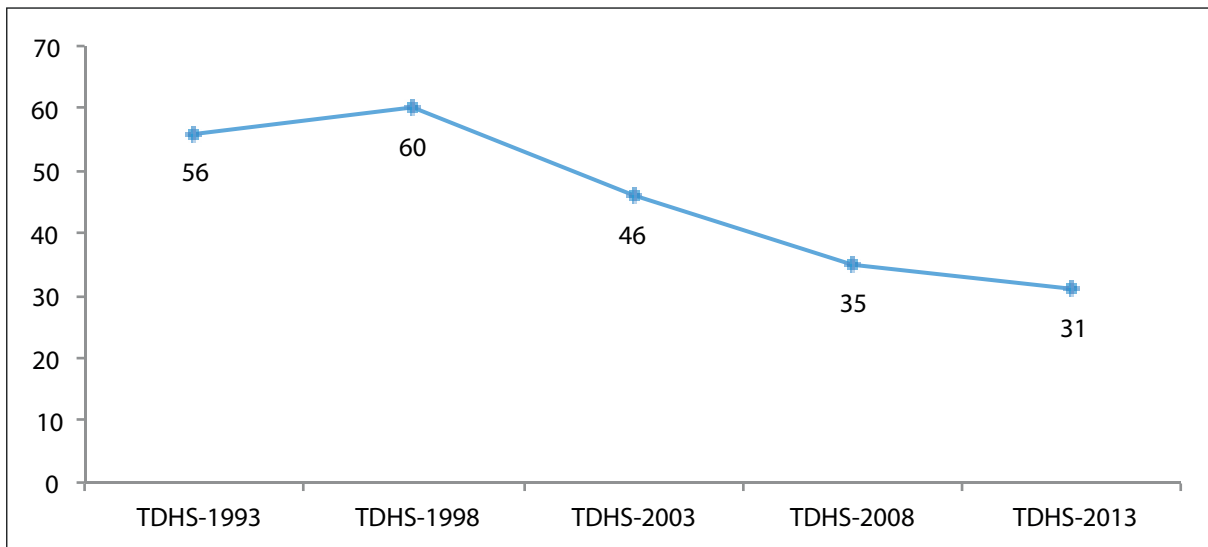
There is an inverse relationship between educational level and early childbearing.

18. Childbearing before the age of 17 is rare, however, 16 percent of women aged 19 are either mothers or pregnant with their first child. Childbearing is more prevalent among women living in rural areas than those living in urban areas (6 percent and 4 percent, respectively).

The percentages of women who have begun childbearing during adulthood differ by regions. While this proportion is 3 percent in Western regions, it is 6 percent or higher in the Southern, Central and Eastern regions. Study results have demonstrated that there is an inverse relationship between educational level and early childbearing. While 17 percent of girls with no education or with incomplete primary education have begun childbearing during the adolescent period, this proportion was 8 percent among girls with at least primary school education. By observing early marriages by wealth level, it is seen that 6-8 percent of adolescents living in households with medium, low and the lowest wealth levels and less than 3 percent of adolescents living in the wealthiest households have begun childbearing.

incomplete primary education have begun childbearing during the adolescent period, this proportion was 8 percent among girls with at least primary school education. By observing early marriages by wealth level, it is seen that 6-8 percent of adolescents living in households with medium, low and the lowest wealth levels and less than 3 percent of adolescents living in the wealthiest households have begun childbearing.

Adolescent Fertility Rate, 1993-2013



Source: Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys

Due to the extent of its age range, there is a general opinion that the adolescent group is the healthiest and most dynamic group in society. However, there are many factors that affect the health status of this group, such as socio-economic level, sex, influence of family and peers and environmental factors.

The adolescent period is identified as a transition from being a child to being an adult. However, this period can also be described as a period during which an individual experiences rapid physical, psychological and sociological changes. As a result of these changes, the individual is more prone to be affected quickly by these many factors and may react in many different ways. Furthermore, since sexual activity and sexual drive increase during the adolescent period, this age group should also be regarded as the age group with the highest potential risk of sexually transmitted infections.

It is observed that there are many obstacles when it comes to young people’s needs for sexual/reproductive health services. To begin with, families, schools and public services do not encourage young people to use these services. “Youth-friendly Health Centers”, as defined in the “Guide for Youth Counseling and Health Services Centers” published by the Ministry of Health in 2007, is an example of the efforts being made to provide public services. In the aforementioned document, the features of these centers were identified in detail. In addition to detailing health services, it was constructed to disseminate information on the rights of the service recipients, on

contraceptive methods, and on the use of condoms to avoid STIs/HIV through visual aids such as posters. According to the Public Health Institution of Turkey, these Youth Counseling and Health Service Centers became operational in 2003 and as of 2011 there are 41 centers.

In general, the family environments do not allow young people to think or ask questions about sexual health/reproductive health.

In general, family environments do not allow young people to contemplate or ask questions about sexual health/reproductive health. Especially in families with low socio-economic levels and thus, low educational levels, the issues related to sexuality and reproductive health, most particularly sexuality, are regarded as inappropriate. Keeping in mind that adults are still discussing these issues secretly, thinking about or asking questions about these subjects during adolescence is still considered “immoral” and a “sin”. As a result, young people who have entered their adolescent periods learn to suppress their curiosities and questions. The education system provides limited information and young people cannot get satisfactory answers to their questions or curiosities. In general, the institutions that provide services in this field only act upon applications made to them by the public and their means of increasing the demand for these services are limited. Under these circumstances, the levels of information disseminated to young people on these issues remain very limited. Due to the lack of resources, wrong and incomplete information are shared among friends and this becomes another obstacle in the path of acquiring reliable information. Along with young people’s limited access to information, their access to related services is also restricted. It is evident that there are problems caused by young people’s lack of access to condoms and other contraceptive methods. Also, unmarried young people, or married young people below the age of 18, cannot protect their privacy while using health services. This is another source of the problems (Çelik, Esin, 2012).

It is difficult for young people to access contraceptive methods. For unmarried young people or young people below the age of 18, it is difficult to use health services while protecting their privacy.

As an example of these deficiencies and restrictions, in Turkey, 90 percent of young people do not understand basic information such as a woman’s fertile period - when she is most likely to get pregnant. Along with a need for accurate family planning information, some, 92 percent of young people stated that the information on reproductive health and services should be provided for unmarried young people. Due to these major deficiencies in the access to information and services, sexual health, reproductive health and reproductive rights are hindered[§]. Young people in particular have lesser access to contraceptives, HIV tests, consultancy and care services. Civil society is emphasizing the problems of young LGBT people related to their access to reproductive and sexual health services and is bringing this situation to the attention of the media. In Turkey, only 1 out of every 10 young people has correct information on HIV and AIDS (Population Association and United Nations Population Fund, 2007).

In Turkey only one out of every 10 young people has correct information on HIV and AIDS.

Tobacco, drug or substance abuse, psychosocial problems and obesity are also among the important problems, along with the issues of adolescent marriages, fertility and young people’s access to information and services on reproductive health. But the statistics related to these issues are very limited. Nevertheless, according to the TDHS-2013, 1 out of every 5 women in the 15-19 age group is either overweight or obese (body mass index >25).

[§] For example, in 2014 the section related to human reproduction was taken out of the 6th grade science textbooks.

PARTICIPATION AND ORGANIZATION (POLITICAL, SOCIAL PARTICIPATION)

Regarding the participation of youth in social and political life, as well as their participation in the decision-making processes that concern their lives, there are two correlated platforms. The first one is an information and communication technologies (ICT) and internet platform, with its interactive and non-centered structure. The second one is a governance mechanism that stimulates the ideal of direct and participatory democracy and enables active participation in non-governmental organizations and citizen's initiatives. Within this context, it is seen that in an increasing number of countries, youth and information society strategies interact with each other through governance platforms. Technology, which is becoming more and more ubiquitous in young people's lives, and in particular socio-technical networks, are causing young people to be more involved with and attached to the present. Young people can roam over networks, and through these networks they can raise their voices and take action. As a result of this situation, the necessity of associating national and supranational information and social policies with relevant youth policies become apparent (Uçkan, 2011).

The results of four studies (1.Türk Gençliği: Suskun Kitle Büyüteç Altında [Turkish Youth 1998: The Silent Majority Highlighted], 2. Türk Gençliği ve Katılım [Youth and Participation], 3. Türk Üniversite Gençliği Araştırması: Üniversite Gençliğinin Sosyokültürel Profili [Turkish University Youth Research: Sociocultural Profile of the University Youth, 4. UNDP Ulusal İnsani Gelişme Raporu, Türkiye'de Gençlik [UNDP National Human Development Report, Youth in Turkey]) conducted after 1980 have demonstrated that young people in Turkey are not interested in politics and their political participation is low. The results obtained from these four studies have shown that the participation of young people in any political, social, cultural associations and groups is below 5 percent. This proportion is also similar for university students. The most widespread form of political participation is "voting" and voting is seen as both a "right" and a "responsibility".

As of 2012, there are 785 youth organizations, 340 student associations in Turkey and the proportion of youth organizations and associations in total is 1.2 percent.

According to the 2012 data of the Department of Associations, there are 785 youth organizations, 340 student associations in Turkey and, out of all groups in the country, the proportion of organizations and associations that are focused on youth in total is 1.2 percent. Among these specific youth associations, the proportion of associations that provide special services aimed at young people is 7.4 percent. According to the TACSO (2011) study conducted with 90 NGOs, 17 percent of NGOs believed that the relationships with the central government were problematic and 15 percent of them believed that the relationship with local authorities were problematic. Among youth organizations the most prominent problems such as financial problems, autonomy, lack of volunteer support and legal problems are primarily related to the local and central governments. Even though it seems like youth participation is increasing, it is reasonable to assume that this is a career-oriented increase seen predominantly in middle and upper-middle classes.

Rapid technological developments play an important role in young people's lives. Computer use among young people is 70.6 percent and their internet use is 68.7 percent. While the proportion of internet use is 80.1 percent among males, it is 57.5 among females. The proportion of internet use among young people in the same age group is 70.6 percent. This proportion is 82 percent among young males, whereas it is 59.5 percent among young females.

When examining the reasons for not travelling domestically, the distribution of young people shows that not being able to travel due to financial impossibility is in first place. It is followed by lack of time due to work or education and lack of time due to familial reasons.

The most widespread leisure-time activities of young people are watching television, listening to music (including radios) and hanging out, talking with friends in cafes, malls or over the internet. Young people spare very little time for reading, cultural activities, exhibitions and other activities or physical activities (TACSO, 2011).

Watching television (generally TV series, sports programs and other shows) is the most widespread leisure-time activity of young people.

According to the results of the “Profile of Turkey’s Youth” survey, which focused on 15-29 age group and which was conducted by the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2012, watching television (generally TV series, sports programs and other shows) is the most widespread leisure-time activity of young people, standing at 56.8 percent, and it is followed by reading books, magazines and newspapers (40.8 percent), use of social media (37.2 percent), sport (26.9 percent), going to the theater, movies and concerts (15.6 percent) and hanging out with friends in cafes/pastry shops (13.4 percent). According to the Turkey Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Research survey which focused on the 15-24 age group and which was conducted by the Population Association and UNFPA in 2007, some 75 percent of young people reported going to malls as their most preferred leisure-time activity. Going to a movie (20 percent), concerts (around 24 percent) and all the activities that will develop physical and mental abilities, such as playing an instrument, are among the least common activities. Teenagers and their families find big shopping malls safe and comfortable and they see them as places where they can come together without spending too much money.

Young people need many external stimulants in order to make better use of their time, to take up a hobby, develop cultural awareness and a sense of art, as well as to unveil their creativity. On the other hand, this period is also very important in terms of the development of young people’s relations with their peers. Young people should be active in their social lives. However, financial resources are needed for taking the dolmuş (shared taxis), sitting in a cafe with friends, going to the movies, keeping up with fashion and for acquiring a place and status in society. The consumer habits of young persons who do not have incomes of their own rely on their families’ support (UNDP, 2008).

Social participation is important, however. It offers many opportunities for the preparation of young people for life, for having an opinion on other people and for becoming an individual. Yet, the young people who need these opportunities the most seem to make the least use of them. This situation plays an important role in the reproduction of inequalities and, more importantly, it causes young people who have lesser means and cannot present or develop their individual identities to become more and more attached to other real or “imaginary” identities. Young people who are more affected by inequalities spend a shorter time in education and are more likely to have irregular jobs. Under these conditions, young people develop more attachments to their various cultural identities— Kurdish, Turkish, fan of Fenerbahçe, Alevist – and are more prone to ostracize the ones who do not have the same identity as them (UNDP, 2008).

Decreasing education and social participation levels can also cause young people to shun those who are different from them. When the place of residence is small and there are limited places to go, participation in social life can be difficult. Being a women and having a lesser educational background can be sufficient reasons for exclusion.

In terms of social participation, the importance of volunteering is being acknowledged more and more at the international, national and local level. The social advantages offered by volunteering and the gains of individuals who participate in these activities are all being voiced more prevalently both by individuals and institutions, and it is accepted that these activities create an opportunity for young individuals to learn about themselves and their

According to the 2012 report of TEGV, although the proportion of young people's participation in volunteering activities is higher than the average of the country, the proportion is still only 8 percent.

society. Studies have demonstrated that individuals who participate in volunteering activities have better communication and empathy skills compared to others, and that these individuals are more optimistic about the future.

According to the 2012 report of the Studies on Volunteering conducted by the Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV), although the proportion of youth participating in volunteering activities is higher than the average of the country, the proportion is still only 7.7 percent. Furthermore, again according to the same report, the proportion of men's participation in volunteering activities is higher than women's participation. Young volunteers spare 4 hours of their time per week for these volunteering activities. The majority of the individuals who do not volunteer reported not having enough time or financial resources for participating in volunteering activities. Almost half of the individuals who do not volunteer stated that they could not find an institution to allow them to participate in volunteering activities, 40 percent of them stated that they did not trust the institutions and 13 percent reported having had a bad experience. Among these people, 30 percent of them believed that volunteering activities did not provide meaningful results.

It is also observed that volunteering has significant positive impacts on volunteers. According to the study results, compared to the level of Turkey, the sense of anomie (defined as a social strain between the individual and the community that can lead to rule-breaking behavior and dysfunctional social consequences) is observed to a lesser extent among young volunteers. They have higher empathy compared to their peers, their "generalized trust" levels, which refers to the situation of being able to trust a stranger, are three times higher than other young people and they feel happier (TOG, Üniversitelerde Sosyal Sorumluluk ve Sosyal Girişimcilik Pilot Projesi Raporu, 2013).

Politics, which is not an economically independent category, approaches young people from a family perspective, rather than seeing them as citizens, and it excludes young people from most active participation opportunities. It is apparent that young people's experiences of being citizens are limited to "voting". Those young people who are more active in politics are the ones encouraged and supported by their families.

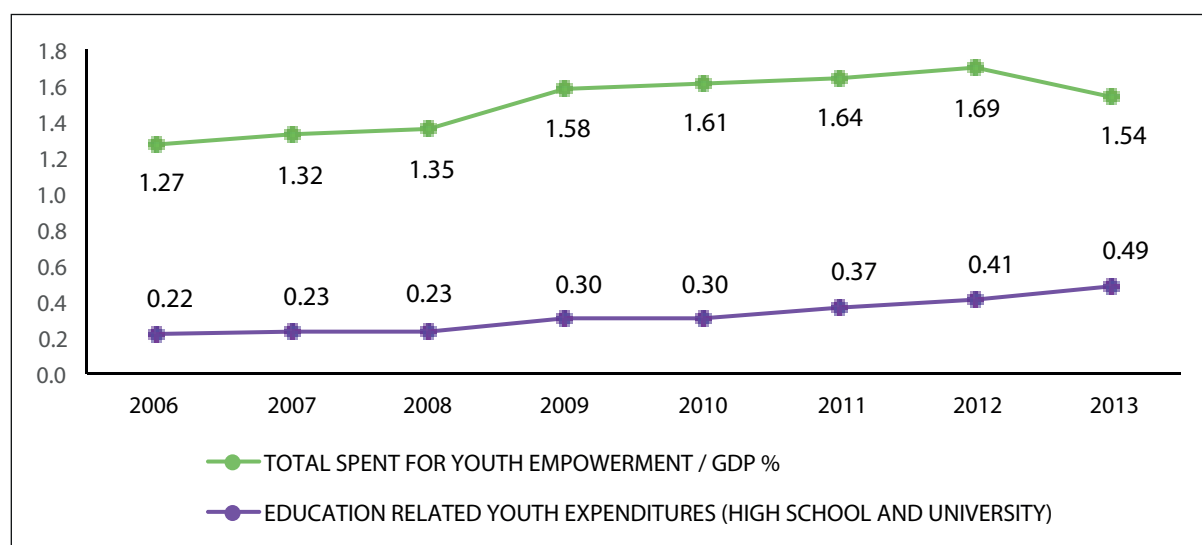
Young people are faced with expectations from many sides. Families, close relatives, schools, teachers and other adults all have their own opinions. However, young people's opinions are rarely asked for or heard. The phenomena of feeling young and actually being young are generally conflated. However, it is possible that people mix these two phenomena to cement their own positions of power. There is an assumption, or even an acceptance, that young people "are unreliable", "can make mistakes at any moment", "are frenetic" and "have not yet internalized the norms and values". As a result of young people's lack of experience, other people impose their own experiences on young people. What is ironic is that all of these attempts are justified under the guise of promoting young people's well-being. Whether or not they will have an education, the type of the school, their professions, the city where they will go to school, even their partners and whether they will leave the family home or not, are all decided for young people by others. In fields such as political rights and their scope, other adults step into the decision-making process when families cannot make good decisions. The question of how low the voting age should be is discussed by adults on behalf of young people. Furthermore, young people are being ignored due to their lack of work experience and they are forced into a situation that can be defined as chronic inexperience.

There is an assumption or even an acceptance that young people "are unreliable", "can make mistakes at any moment", "are frenetic" and "have not yet internalized the norms and values".

PUBLIC EXPENDITURES ON YOUNG PEOPLE

The 2014 Public Expenditures Monitoring Report was published by the Public Expenditures Monitoring Platform (KAHİP). The report outlined spending on social protection, security, justice, children, youth and the disabled in public expenditures. The findings have shown that while total security expenditures are increasing, expenditures on children and young people remain at lower levels. The studies related to the deficiencies for youth are very limited. There should be regular national studies on this issue, data should be collected and shared with the public and youth participation should be emphasized.

Expenditures for the empowerment of young people



Source: Public Expenditures Monitoring Report, 2014

The proportion of expenditures in GDP earmarked for the advancement of young people was 0.30 percent in 2010 and 0.49 percent in 2013. While the economy of Turkey, which is one of the fastest emerging economies of the world, is developing, the increase in the public expenditures for the empowerment of young people falls behind this development. In other words, young people are not given an adequate share of this growth. In order to transform the demographic process to a “window of opportunity”, Turkey should invest in young people and give them an equal share from the development. Otherwise, the large number of young people will become a problem and the responsibility will be laid on their shoulders. Young people need public support to be productive, effective and participatory, both now and in the future, and it is evident that in order to achieve all this there is a need for a comprehensive youth policy.

In order to transform the demographic process to a “window of opportunity”, Turkey should invest in young people and give them equal share from the development.

LIMITED PUBLIC, STRONG FAMILY

Turkish young people live with their families and they continue to do so, regardless of their occupational statuses. There is no doubt that the roles of families and households in social solidarity networks are very important.

However, the effects of these roles on young people should also be regarded as an important issue. The Mediterranean Model regime mentioned in the literature explains welfare regimes. It highlights the role of social solidarity networks and families as being much more important than the role of the state as the provider of welfare. In Turkey, a country which is associated with the Mediterranean Model, the situation is no different (Buğra and Keyder, 2006). The family is a resource that helps young people cope with the difficulties they encounter in the labor market (unemployment, unsecured, unstable jobs etc.). In developed countries, young adults are also returning home after the completion of their education, or when they are faced with long term unemployment. This interesting phenomenon emerged during the last global economic crisis. In a study conducted in six countries (Newman, 2012), it was found that these households bend like an “accordion” in response to economic cycles and that in countries where the welfare state is not established, young adults live more prevalently with their families. In the Mediterranean Model, in which the family is the most important means for welfare, young people are referred to as the “boomerang generation”, since young people live with their family for longer periods and/or they return to their homes after experiencing difficulties like unemployment, or divorce (Wyn and White, 1997). In this model, families are isolated while they are raising and protecting their family members. Even though close relatives and immediate social networks also take part in these processes, this involvement generally has an influence on the reproduction of traditional norms and values. Families who constantly try to protect young persons, either knowingly or not, impede young persons from developing their own identities and characteristics. Being economically dependent expands the scope of dependency. Economic dependency makes it difficult to develop an autonomous identity and it expands the control areas of families. Under these circumstances, young people cannot be the agents of change. Rather, they can only be passive actors in the propagation of established norms. This obstacle might cause a young person to become an extension of the family and to only identify as a “family member” (Çelik, 2008), rather than an independent individual.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S VIEWS ON THEIR FUTURE

In 2013, TURKSTAT conducted a survey on profiles of young people aged 15-24 and the development of this young population, as well as their physical and mental health, educational status, occupation status, income and poverty, personal life, social participation, happiness, life satisfaction and their future expectations in order to contribute to the establishment of youth policies in Turkey. According to the results of this study, while the proportion of people reported being optimistic about future was 77 percent, this proportion was 83.4 percent among young men and 84.4 percent among young women. In 2013, nationwide, the proportion of individuals who reported being happy was 59 percent, whereas this proportion was 65.1 percent for young people; 60.9 percent of young men, while some 69.2 percent of young women reported being happy.

Over the last 20-30 years during which an attempt was made to associate identity with consumption, these “new consumption habits” designated young people as the target group. Fashion, clothing, music and technology came together in an endeavor to identify youth as a “unique phase of life”. This identification has been carried out through homogenization and thus not belonging to these identified groups might lead to one feeling like an outcast. Even though young people do not identify as “consumerist”, they try to create certain images with the influence of their friends, people around them and, partially, advertisements. Consumption means money and for certain group of young people consumption is just not possible.

When young people (ages 18-24) were asked about the things that make them most happy, 50.3 percent of them stated that being healthy made them happy. When they were asked about the people who make them happy, 72.8 percent of them stated that it was their families who made them happy. As seen above, the lack of youth policies, high youth unemployment, and inadequate implementations related to young people and limited public expenditures on young people are all factors that render the family the most important “institution for well-being”. Young people, therefore, become more dependent upon their families.

In Turkey, one-fifth of the population is comprised of young people. Even though the proportion of young people in total population is estimated to decrease by 2050, the young population will continue to increase. However, the situation summarized throughout the report under different sub-titles demonstrates that young people do experience severe difficulties. The lack of detailed data that can be monitored from the perspective of a time series analysis is one of the most important obstacles. Current data does not enable the monitoring of urban-rural, male-female, east-west and other differences, nor does it include local variations. There is non-existent or limited data related to subjects such as disability, sexual orientation, access to sexual and reproductive health, leisure-time activities, cultural activities, or participation in political life and civil society - elements which identify young people as individuals rather than associating them with educational and occupational issues. Additionally, rather than regarding the 14-24 age group as a homogeneous group, it should be kept in mind that the individuals in this age group have different physiological, psychological and legal statuses. For example; people aged 18 and above are defined as legal adults and are subject to all liabilities and rights of being a citizen. This situation distinguishes this group from the people under the age of 18. While the policies and recommendations that will be established for these two main groups should consider one of the groups as individuals/citizens, they should also consider the other group as children and identify their varying rights based on these differences.

Data that identifies young people as individuals rather than associating them with educational and occupational issues is either non-existent or very limited.

Another difficulty in this situation is the fact that the national youth policies currently in place are not being implemented. In order to establish a national youth policy, determine priority areas, and in order to clarify the target groups as well as to make prioritizations, current data sets that enable the monitoring of time-dependent changes should be established. Thus, an inclusive, consistent youth policy should be developed. The first step toward reaching this target is collecting up-to-date, reliable data that enables monitoring and comparability. Accordingly, qualitative and quantitative studies should be conducted and data-based policies should be developed. Furthermore, it will be important to ensure the active participation of national and international youth organizations and communication networks in the process of establishing policies.

The fact that the word 'young' is predominantly associated with a "healthy/dynamic" group comprised of "men" and "students" leads to the tendency of ostracizing the ones who are disabled, women and non-students. Therefore, it is important to develop new approaches and modules that consider different "states of youth" inclined to heterogeneity, rather than homogeneity. Similarly, the fact that the word 'young' is generally associated with young people living in urban areas eclipses the visibility of young people living in small cities, towns and in rural areas, and these young people tend to be excluded from studies on education, labor market and gender equality.

It is necessary to develop new approaches and modules that consider different "states of youth" inclined to heterogeneity, rather than homogeneity.

Moreover, the relationship between the educational status and occupational status of young people, as well as their economic dependency on their families, emerge as

The proportions of leaving education and not being in education or employment are increasing.

important issues affecting young people. Given that the already limited numbers of youth studies are being conducted from an adult perspective and given the limited participation of youth in these processes, these factors could also lead to significant difficulties. One out of every five young persons is unemployed. Unemployment increases with increasing educational levels and this increase is more marked among women. The condition of becoming the “working poor” is prevalent among young people in low-waged, unsecured jobs. There are still difficulties related to the prevalence and quality of education, and the proportions of people leaving education and not participating in either education or employment are increasing. The socio-economic levels of families are determinative of young people’s life chances and this

strengthens the possibility of intergenerational transmission of poverty. In recent years, studies that examine the contribution of families to education demonstrated that, among the OECD countries, the contributions of the families were the highest in Turkey. This situation is also observed in the proportion of public expenditures on young people. As a result, these situations increase social inequalities. In other words, in cases where specific expenses are covered by families instead of the state, families with high wealth levels spend more money and families with low wealth levels spend less, or cannot spend any money at all, a problem that echoes social inequalities. Therefore, increasing quality of education and increasing proportion of public expenditures on youth will have an impact on the mitigation of social inequalities. Since there are no policies related to these two main issues, education becomes the most important social factor that reproduces social inequalities and this strengthens the possibility of intergenerational transmission of inequalities.

One out of every five young persons is unemployed.

Increasing quality of education and increasing proportion of public expenditures on youth will have an impact on the mitigation of social inequalities.

Long-term unemployment is most prevalent among university and vocational high school graduates (29 percent), followed by college and faculty graduates. The proportion of unemployment is the lowest among the illiterate group. The most important reason for this is the willingness of the unskilled labor force to work in any job and under any conditions. For the national, social and economic development of a country, higher education should be seen as a necessity rather than a “luxury”. However, in order for young people to make these desirable contributions, they need to receive recompense. Therefore, the generation’s question “did we study in vain?” will have detrimental effects on society. The first result will be related to the wasting of national educational resources. The second result will be the exclusion of young people from production during their most productive period, a dilemma that will weaken young people’s faith in the system and produce results that will be hard to recover from. Despite these problems and foreseeable complications, in Turkey, youth policies and strategies are not prepared to deal with the active participation of young people. It is important that the participation of young people in all processes be ensured.

Inequalities stemming from social inequities affect young women and lessen their life choices, ranging from education to employment. The difficulties faced by young women in the work force are closely related to the basic characteristics of the labor market. The efforts for increasing women’s participation in the workforce were ineffective due to the prevalence of small businesses and small businesses’ lack of effort in establishing a social climate that includes opportunities for the employment of young women. Effort must also be made to provide a method for dealing with problems of workplace harassment, difficult working hours, and the lack of child care services. According to the findings of reports on overall gender equality, Turkey is in 126th place among 131 countries on this issue. Yet, when all educational attainments are considered, the unemployment duration of young women is longer than men. Increased participation of young women in the labor force will strengthen the economy and the participation of women in the labor force will enable some women’s occupations to attain a

According to the reports on gender equality, Turkey is in the 126th place among 131 countries.

secure place in the market. This will decrease the economic dependency ratios, contribute to the development of new jobs and it will be an important step towards ensuring gender equality. As educational levels decrease, women cannot even identify themselves as “unemployed” as they are not in a position to actively seek work. This situation is the most important factor that creates gender inequalities.

The ages of women at first marriage are increasing for the following reasons; their increasing time spent in education, the many uncertainties in the labor market and accompanying high unemployment rates which postpone marriage, as well as increased average life expectancy. In parallel with the increasing age at first marriage, the needs of unmarried women related to sexual and reproductive health should also be regarded as an important issue.

Since educational institutions are not qualified to overcome inadequacies and gaps regarding young people’s level of information on sexual and reproductive health, and since there is a large group of people who are not even participating in education, it is important that this issue be addressed multidimensionally. Furthermore, it is very important to include sexual and reproductive health, especially adolescent health, in the curricula of formal and non-formal education in an age-appropriate manner.

It is very important to include sexual and reproductive health, especially adolescent health, in the curricula of formal and non-formal education in an age-appropriate manner.

Despite the importance of sexual and reproductive health for youth, the information in this field has been collected from a medical perspective and there is a deficiency in terms of understanding its socio-demographic aspects. In other words, along with national and international level statistics, there is a need for in-depth and qualitative social studies regarding this field. Therefore, in youth studies and youth policies, special attention must be paid to sexual identity, sexual orientation, sex work, sex education and reproductive health.

In youth studies and youth policies, special attention must be paid to sexual identity, sexual orientation, sex work, sex education and reproductive health.

In Turkey, there are constraints on young people’s access to sexual and reproductive health services due to existing social norms, values and the perception of honor. Social taboos make it difficult for young women to access information and services related to contraceptive methods, induced abortion services and gynecological examinations. While young people’s access to these services is already problematic, issues of sexual orientation and issues surrounding being sex worker can cause even greater difficulties. These young people can also face discrimination in the fields of education, employment and shelter. It is important that Youth Friendly Health Centers be improved in a way to meet the health needs of these disadvantaged groups.

REFERENCES

- Acar, H. (2008). "Türkiye'nin Ulusal Gençlik Politikası Nasıl Yapılandırılmalıdır?" *Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi* 5.1:1-10.
- Abadan, N. (1961). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin serbest zaman faaliyetleri: Ankara Yükseköğrenim Gençliği Üzerine Bir Araştırma*. Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Yayınları, Ankara.
- Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı (AFAD) (2015). *Barınma Merkezlerinde Son Durum*. <https://www.afad.gov.tr/tr/IcerikDetay1.aspx?ID=16&IcerikID=848> Last accessed date:: 12 Mayıs 2015.
- Alemdaroğlu, A., (2010). *Knowing Your Place: Inequalities, Subjectivities and Youth in Turkey*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. University of Cambridge.
- Bianet, 2015. *İnfoğrafik Rapor: Kamu Harcamalarında "Güvenlik" Artıyor*. <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/159548-infografik-rapor-kamu-harcamalarinda-guvenlik-artiyor>. Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015
- Blackman, S., (2005). Youth Subcultural Theory: A Critical Engagement with the Concept, its Origins and Politics, from the Chicago School to Postmodernism. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8(1), 1-20.
- Bora, T., Bora, A., Erdoğan, N. ve İ. Üstün., (2011). *Boşuna mı Okuduk? Türkiye'de Beyaz Yakalı İşsizliği*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Brooks, R. (2007). Transitions from Education To Work in The Twenty First Century. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26(5), 491-493.
- Buğra, A. ve Keyder, Ç. (2006). "The Turkish Welfare Regime in Transformation". *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16, 211-228.
- Chisholm, L. (2006). European Youth Research: Development, Debates, Demands. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 11, 11-21.
- Cloward, R., & Ohlin, L. (1960). *Delinquency and opportunity: A theory of delinquent gangs*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Cohen, A. (1955). *Delinquent boys: The culture of the gang*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Corrigan, P. (1979). *Schooling the smash street kids*. London, UK: MacMillan.
- Çelik, K. (2008). "My State is my father: youth unemployment experiences under the weak state welfare". *Journal of Youth Studies* Vol. 11, No. 4, August 2008, pp.429-444.
- Çelik, K., Esin, A. (2012). "The non-use of services: adolescents and sexual health provision in Ankara, Turkey". *Journal of Children's Services*. Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 201-212
- Çelik, K. ve Lüküslü, D. (2012). Spotlighting a Silent Category of Young Females: The Life Experiences of 'House Girls' in Turkey. *Youth & Society*, 44 (1), 28-48.
- Demir, İ. (2012). The Development and Current State of Youth Research in Turkey: An Overview. *Young* 20, (1), 89-114.
- Ercan, Hakan; Rittersberger-Tılıç, Helga, 2012, Youth , Employment, and Migration, Working Paper, IOM, Ankara.
- Eryüksel, G., (1987). *Ergenlerin Kimlik Statülerinin İncelenmesine Yönelik Kesitsel Bir Çalışma*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara.

Eurofound (2012). NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission (2012). Towards a job-rich recovery. COM (2012) 173 final, Brussels.
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0173:FIN:EN:PDF>. Last accessed date: 31 Aralık 2014.

Değirmenciođlu, S. ve Acar, H. (2006). Institutional Analysis of Youth Participation, Inclusion and Empowerment in Turkey. Unpublished report presented to World Bank Turkey Branch.

Fornas, J. ve Bolin, G. (1995). Youth Culture in Late Modernity. Sage, Londra.

France, A. (2007). Understanding Youth in Late Modernity. Open University Press.

Gizir, C. A. ve Aydın, G. (2009). Protective Factors Contributing to the Academic Resilience of Students Living in Poverty in Turkey. Professional School Counseling, 13(1), 38–40.

Gökşen, F., D. Yüksek, A. Alnıaçık, ve Ü. Zenginobuz. (2011). Kız Meslek Liseleri Üzerine Kapsamlı Deđerlendirme Notu. Koç Üniversitesi Sosyal Politika Merkezi, İstanbul.

Gundert, S. ve K. U. Mayer. (2012). Gender Segregation in Training and Social Mobility of Women in West Germany. European Sociological Review, 28, 1, 59-81.

Hall, S., & Jefferson, T. (Eds.). (1976). Resistance through Rituals. London, UK: Hutchinson.

Hall, T., Coffey, A. and Williamson, H. (1999). "Self, Space and Place: Youth Identities and Citizenship". British Journal of Sociology of Education, 20, pp. 501-513.

Hebdige, D. (1979). Subculture: The meaning of style. London, UK: Methuen.

Iannelli, C. ve D. (2007). Raffe. Vocational Upper-Secondary Education and the Transition from School. European Sociological Review 23, 1, 49-63.

ILO (2010). Global Employment Trends for Youth.

ILO (2014). Global Employment Trends 2014. Geneva: ILO.

Jones, G., and Wallace, C. (1992). Youth, Family and Citizenship. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Kađıtçıbaşı, Ç. (1984). Sex roles, value of children and fertility in Turkey. Ç. Kađıtçıbaşı der, Sex roles, family and community in Turkey, ss.151-180. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Kentel, Ferhat. "Türkiye' de genç olmak: Konformizm ya da siyasetin yeniden inşası." Birikim Dergisi 196 (2005).

Kılıç, Y. (2014). Türkiye'de Ne Eğitimde Ne İstihdamda Ne de Yetiştirmede (NEİY) Yer Alan Gençler. Eğitim ve Bilim, Cilt 39, Sayı 175, ss: 121-135.

Kongar, E. (1983). Demokrasi ve Kültür. İstanbul: Hil Yayınları.

Lüküslü, D. (2009). Türkiye'de "Gençlik Miti":1980 Sonrası Türkiye Gençliđi. İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The problem of generations. Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge. London: Routledge&Kegan Poul.

Marshall, T. H. (1950). Citizenship and Social Class. Cambridge University Press.

Müller, S. (2005). Education and Youth Integration into European Labour Markets. International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 46,5-6, 461-485.

Newman, K. (2012). *The Accordion Family: Boomerang Kids, Anxious Parents, and the Private Toll of Global Competition*. Beacon Press, New York.

Neyzi, L. (2001). Object or Subject? The Paradox of Youth in Turkey. *International Middle East Studies* 33 (3), 411-432.

Nüfusbilim Derneği ve Birleşmiş Milletler Nüfus Fonu (2007). *2007 Türkiye Gençlerde Cinsel Sağlık ve Üreme Sağlığı Araştırması*. Ankara.

OECD (2013) *Education at a Glance 2013*. Son Erişim Tarihi: 3 Ocak 015, www.oecd.org/edu/eag.htm

Özdemir, Y. (2009). *Ergenlik Döneminde Benlik Kurgusunun Kültür ve Aile Bağlamında İncelenmesi*. Yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi, Ankara.

Resmî Gazete (2013). 27 Ocak 2013 Pazar, Sayı: 28541.

Robbins, D., & Cohen, P. (1978). *Knuckle sandwich*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Uçkan, Özgür. (2011). "Gençlik, Bilgi Toplumu, Yönetişim, Sansür ve Türkiye. Katılımın" e-hali"
<http://ekitap.alternatifbilisim.org/files/katilimin-e-hali.pdf>

Smyth, E. (2005). Gender Differentiation and Early Labour Market Integration across Europe. *European Societies*, 7, 3, 451-479.

Standing, G., (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Londra: Bloomsbury.

TASCO, 2011, www.tacso.org

Taylor, R. ve Oskay, G. (1995). Identity Formation in Turkish and American Late Adolescents. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 26(1), 8–22.

Terzi, Ş. (2008). The Relations Between Resilience and Internal Protective Factors in University Students. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, 35, 297–306.

TOG, (2013). *Üniversitelerde Sosyal Sorumluluk ve Sosyal Girişimcilik Pilot Projesi Raporu*.

TURKSTAT (2015) Dünya Nüfus Günü, 2014.

<http://www.TÜİK.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=15975> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015) Dünya Nüfus Günü, 2013

<http://www.TÜİK.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13663> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015) İstatistiklerle Gençlik, 2013

<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=16055> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015) Dünya Nüfus Günü, 2014.

<http://www.TÜİK.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=15975> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015) Dünya Nüfus Günü, 2013

<http://www.TÜİK.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13663> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015) İstatistiklerle Gençlik, 2013

<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=16055> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

TURKSTAT (2015). Cinsiyet ve eğitim seviyesine göre yükseköğretimde öğrenci sayıları, Yükseköğretim İstatistikleri 2013-2014. Last accessed date: 7 Mayıs 2015.

UNDP, (2008). *Türkiye'de Gençlik: insani Gelişme Raporu: Türkiye. Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı Türkiye*, Ankara.

UNFPA and NBD (2007) *Türkiye Gençlerde Cinsel Sağlık ve Üreme Sağlığı Araştırması*, UNFPA ve Nüfusbilim Derneği http://www.nd.org.tr/custom/odesismc/GA_rapor_TR.pdf

UNFPA and NBD (2013) Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Konusunda İlköğretim İkinci Kademe ve Lise Öğrencilerinin Tutumları. Ankara, Erzurum ve Aydın illerinde niteliksel bir araştırma, UNFPA ve Nüfusbilimler Derneği , Kasım 2013

UNFPA (2015). Ergenler ve Gençler. <http://www.unfpa.org.tr/v2/pages/ergenler-ve-gencler.php> Last accessed date: 11 Mayıs 2015

Wyn, J. Ve White, R. (1997). Rethinking Youth. London: Sage.

Whyte, W. F. (1955). Street corner society: The social structure of an Italian slum. London, UK: University of Chicago Press.

Willis, P. (1977). Learning to labour. Aldershot, UK: Saxon House.

World Bank (2009). Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey. Trends, Determinants and Policy Framework. Dünya Bankası, Ankara.

World Bank (2012). World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development. Dünya Bankası, Washington, DC.

Yıldırım, A. (1997). Gender Role Influences in Turkish Adolescents Self Identity. *Adolescence*, 32(125), 217–31.

Young, J. (1971). The drugtakers: The social meaning of drug use. London, UK: Paladin.

Yüksel Kaptanoğlu, İ., Ergöçmen, B. (2012). Çocuk Gelin Olmaya Giden Yol. *Sosyoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 15(2): 128-161.