



EUROPEAN  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE EDUCATION  
OF ADULTS

# **Country Report on Adult Education in TURKEY**

Helsinki, 2011



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## Introduction

This Report covers the situation of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Turkey. It is divided into two sections. The section *Policy and Politics* gives an overview of the key policy currently in force, and also outlines the main legislation or political situation in the country. *Structure and Providers* gives a more detailed look at the organizational structures, and also outlines the main adult education providers, mainly looking at non-formal and informal learning.

We want to thank our members for their contributions to this reflection on the adult education situation in Turkey as far as possible as of 2010/2011. Inevitably there will be new things emerging within the ever changing situation of adult education, but we believe the majority of the information provided will be relevant and useful for the foreseeable future. However, to keep the resource accurate and up to date we are open to suggestions to improve the texts. If you feel there is something you can add about your country please contact us via email at [eaea-info\[at\]jeaea.org](mailto:eaea-info@jeaea.org).



## Overview

In Turkey, adult education services are provided mainly by the **Ministry of National Education**, other related Ministries such as the **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women and Family, Ministry of Industry and Trade** and formal and semi-formal institutions, local administrations, universities, civil societies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Besides being responsible for the provision of adult education programs, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) also coordinates the cooperation between institutions at national and local level and inspects the running of their programs. The Ministry of Education provides adult education services through the **General Directorate of Apprenticeship and Non-formal Education** which is the main governmental unit for adult education. [1]

Recently Turkey has seen a rise in educational programmes in this field due to the **European Union harmonisation programme**, under the '**Lifelong Education Concept**'. This aims to improve the underlying system of providing adult education, as well as work towards a more efficient technical and economic infrastructure. The direction of these programmes is focussed primarily on good citizenship and personal development, although there is also great emphasis on employability and skills development for industry. [2]

## Politics and Law

The system of Adult Education in Turkey is largely under the control of the Ministry of National Education, even non governmental organisation (NGOs) who wish to organise life long learning programmes are **required to obtain permission from the ministry** rather than local administration. This can often mean that such programmes are avoided in favour of **short term or individual seminars which do not fall under this jurisdiction**. [3]

By the **Primary Education Law and Education Law number 222 in 1961**, each citizen who has passed the age of primary education or who was not able to continue his/her education for any reason was given the right to get education in the remedial classrooms in order to increase the general knowledge and to get better job and further education opportunities. [4]

The education system in Turkey is governed mainly by the **National Education Basic Act** which came into effect in June 1973. According to this Act, the Turkish national education system is composed of two basic components: **formal education** (*örgün eğitim*) and **non-formal education** (*yaygın eğitim*) (Article 18). Non-formal education is defined as the training and education of those who did not enrol in formal-education for whatever reason, or continuous education of



those who had taken some level of formal education. The Act requires formal and non-formal education activities to be organised in close collaboration and coordination, utilising each other's available resources as much as possible. In the legal foundation of the Turkish education system, adult education and other continuing education activities lie in the scope of non-formal education.

## Future trends/key concerns/directions

The candidacy process of Turkey to the EU required harmonisation of Turkey's legislation with the EU's in some fields, including education. In order to achieve that, Turkey's **Programme for Alignment with the Acquis Communautaire (2007-2013)** was developed between parties in 2007. The chapter called Education and Culture in this program requires the preparation of a 'Strategy Document for Lifelong Learning' by the year 2007. By 2013, the programme expects legislation about lifelong learning in Turkey to comply with the Lisbon Strategy of the EU. [5]

Another hot issue concerning the future of adult education in Turkey is the need for **professionalism in public education centres**. Several recommendations have been suggested in order to increase the quality of the public education centres including: pre and in-service training for both administrative and teaching staff to increase skills, working to improve the image of education centres to attract a wider part of society and making legal adjustments to enable centres to effectively promote their services. [6]

In addition, there is **MEGEP's Policy Paper and Strategy Document for Lifelong Learning (LLL) in Turkey**. MEGEP (or English SVET - Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey) is an EU funded project within MoNE that aims to improve vocational training and education system of Turkey. As an expected project output, the project developed the first Lifelong Learning Policy Paper in 2006. The policy paper recommends change in seven key areas:

1. System, Infrastructure and Funding of Lifelong Learning
2. The Collection and Use of Data for Monitoring and Decision-Making
3. Decentralisation and Devolution, Civil Society and Collaboration
4. Information, Advice and Guidance to Learners, and a Culture of Learning
5. The Development of Staff Capacity
6. International Co-operation
7. Quality Assurance and Accreditation [7]



## Structure overview

The public budget allocated for adult education and other non-formal education activities in Turkey is used and managed by the **Directorate of Apprenticeship and Non-Formal Education (DANE)**. In addition to the work of the Ministry of National Education and DANE, educational services for **SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises)** have been implemented and supported by **KOSGEB (Small and Medium Industry Development Organisation)** and by **TESK (Merchants and Crafts workers Chambers Association)**. According to law, TESK should allocate 5% of their gross income to a training budget for vocational training. TESK established a Vocational Training Fund to support such training activities. Both the training budget and the Vocational Training Fund are used for the vocational training needs of merchants and crafts workers, as well as the affiliated vocational organisations. [8]

## Key Providers/Main institutions/Sources for Adult Education

In very general terms, the following groups and organisations are responsible for providing adult education in Turkey: providers of state education (Universities, general and vocational training institutions, private education institutions, elementary and pre-schools), state institutions and organisations (ministries, institutions and legal high-committees, local authorities and the Turkish armed forces), the business world, (including trade unions and employers' organisations), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the media.

However, although approved by the Ministry of National Education, private education institutions often have difficulty in attracting students because of a relatively high tuition fee. These institutions therefore tend to focus on one or two month seminar programmes on capacity-building rather than long term vocational training. They mainly attract young adults (25-35) who are working university graduates. [9]

### 'Non-Formal' Learning

#### - Public Education Centres - PEC (Halk Egitim Merkezleri)

Organised in all cities and districts of Turkey **PECs are the main providers of non-vocational non-formal education**. PECs are able to provide free education services between 07:00 and 24:00, including weekends. There is a twelve person minimum participation limit in order to open a course although it is not strongly enforced. Courses for people with disabilities, homeless children, ex-convicts and drug addicts in treatment can be opened with any number of participants. The



target group for PEC's education activities are mainly those with some sort of lack of education, workers with no formal qualifications, immigrant workers, and rural workers who have emigrated to the cities. [10]

During this phase of harmonisation with the EU in Life Long Learning these programmes are being extended to focus more of **Personal Empowerment and Good Citizenship**. The general objectives of the Personal Development Program are to assist students (primarily women) in realising the goals they have set up for themselves in their personal and professional lives, to support social actions and initiatives for change and thus enhance individual skills. Such skills include leadership and management skills, risk management, achieving targets and adapting to change. The Good Citizenship Programme seeks to increase competency levels in individuals, especially increasing knowledge about social issues such as justice and accountability, but also in being creative. The scope of the program includes topics that have an impact on daily life such as rights and responsibilities, human rights, democracy, moral values, hygiene, social justice, history, traditions, transparency, access to information, local-national-international business markets, gender equality, technological development and environmental values. [11]

### Vocational Institutions and career-related training

Vocational Training Programs are educational sessions that focus on practicing a particular art, job or profession once initial technical skills have been taught. Because these programs develop specialization in technical areas, they are sometimes referred to as technical training. The emphasis on vocational training in Turkey is growing as industry develops and becomes more specialised. The need has been identified for more specialist skills training over longer periods, and more established connections are being made between VECs and businesses to create a stronger working relationship between the education and the work place. [12]

#### - Vocational Education Centres - VEC (Mesleki Egitim Merkezleri)

VECs are founded primarily in areas of Turkey with a significant industrial capacity. People who are at least fifteen years old and have completed eight-years of primary formal education are eligible for the VEC courses. Participants receive one-day theoretical and technical courses in VEC classrooms and then six days of in-service training. Through completing the VEC training programs, apprentices can obtain the following certified titles:

- **Skilled Worker:** Earned after 2-3 years of training and one examination.
- **Master:** Earned after completing 240 hours of course program.



- **Master Teacher:** Earned after completing 40 hours of work in the pedagogy course program.

In addition, the Ministry of National Education has also provided distance education services such as **Open Primary School, Open High School and Open Vocational and Technical High School and Open College.** [13]

## e-learning

The main provider of e-learning in Turkey is the **Anadolu University** which has a well established Open Education system. The university currently has over 1.000.000 students in a distance learning programme from Turkey, Northern Cyprus and Turkish communities with the EU. Learning takes place online via a videoconferencing system for teaching and also through self directed study guides and text books and television or radio programmes produced by the University Television Centre (some 300 annually). Courses and degrees available are generally focused on subjects such as business, economics and finance, although the variety is now expanding to include social sciences and subjects such as theology. [14]

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Written in cooperation with Ms A. Ozyol from our EAEA member in Turkey, HYDRA (<http://www.hydra.com.tr>)

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