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This project is funded by the European Union.

# Harnessing the Power of Youth:

An Analysis of Youth Not-in-Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in Turkey and Policies and Civil Society Models that Promote Active Youth Engagement



OCTOBER 2020





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.  
This project is funded by the European Union.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALMPs	Active Labour Market Policies
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECCPE	Early Childhood Care and Preschool Education
EMCO	European Commission Employment Committee
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EUROFOUND	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoFor	Youth Organisations Forum ( <i>Gençlik Örgütleri Forumu</i> )
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SILC	Survey on Income and Living Conditions
TOG	Community Volunteers Foundation
TURKSTAT / TUIK	Turkish Statistical Institute
TUS	Time Use Survey
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
YGA	Young Guru Academy
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research study was conducted within the scope of the “Enhancing Advocacy Capacities of Youth CSOs in Turkey: Guiding CSOs through Research” project jointly executed by Development Analytics and the Young Guru Academy (YGA). This project is financed within the scope of second phase of "Civil Society Support Programme" which is supported by EU and coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for EU Affairs. The report aims to contribute to the analytical and academic evidence base on the issue of youth, not in employment, education or training in Turkey, as well as to provide a stocktake of available models of youth empowerment from existing CSOs and to highlight these models to a policy audience. The report was written by a team comprised of Nazli Aktakke, Hazal Colak, Zeynep Baser, Sena Buyukavci and Cagla Tabak, with field coordination support from Sezin Aydın (YGA) and Gasya Çavuşyan (YGA) and oversight from Dr Meltem Aran. We would like to express our gratitude to Annagret Wart (Istanbul Policy Centre), Hasan Oğuzhan Aytaç (GoFor), Itır Akdoğan (TESEV), Kenan Dursun (Istanbul Bilgi University) and Nurhan Yentürk (Istanbul Bilgi University) who supported the study with their valuable comments from the outset, Dr. Volkan Yılmaz (Boğaziçi University) for peer review support, and the staff and volunteers of YGA (Young Guru Academy), TOG (Community Volunteers Foundation), Toy Youth Association and Girls Without Borders Project who supported the research with their experience, knowledge, comments and enthusiasm.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Turkey has a young and dynamic population currently going through the demographic transition, however, more than one-in-four young people (ages 15-29) are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET). Turkey has the highest ratio of NEETs among all OECD member states and also stands out in global data with regards to the gap between young men and women in terms of NEET rates. This report aims to highlight the issue of NEET in Turkey and provide more details on the profiles and determinants of NEET youth, especially focusing on gender dimensions, while analysing their time use, labour force attachment and civil society participation. The study uses three primary data sources to analyse these patterns: Survey on Income and Living Conditions (2017), The Household Labour Force Survey (2017) and Time Use Survey (2015), all collected by TURKSTAT. The second part of the report focuses on policies to address the problem of NEET youth both from the government side as well as civil society models that aim to engage, activate and empower young people.

Gender is an important determinant of being NEET in Turkey, as three-quarters of NEET youth in Turkey are women. Another important determinant of NEET status is the location in Turkey: the likelihood of becoming NEET among the youth is highest in south-eastern Turkey. Educational attainment is another important correlate of NEET status, while household wealth is less strongly correlated with being NEET. NEET men and women have some common profiles, but they are inherently different in terms of age and demographics. For both young men and women, several individual characteristics like low education or having bad health increase the likelihood of being NEET, though education makes a greater difference for women than it does for men in terms of being NEET. While young NEET men almost entirely (93%) live with their parents, only one-third of NEET women live with their parents and NEET women in Turkey are more likely to be married (66%).

- **Time-Use Patterns:** According to the Time Use Survey (2015), time use patterns of NEET men and women are entirely different. While NEET women's time use on household production (unpaid work) activities on average almost matches up to the employment activities of non-NEET women and non-NEET men, NEET men spend more of their time on leisure and sleep. Hence young women who have NEET status, are not necessarily idle – most of the time they are engaged in household chores or unpaid care work. A woman's educational attainment (more than household wealth or her husband's educational level) is a determinant of whether she spends most of her time on household chores.
-

- **Labour Market Attachment:** According to Labour Force Survey (LFS 2017), in Turkey, while a significant proportion of NEET youth has worked in the past, currently the majority (63.5%) of NEET youth are not looking for a job or do not desire to start one even if they found one.

This finding is mainly driven by women in the data: the majority of NEET youth women are not looking for a job or willing to start a job even if they found one while this is not the case for men. The reasons for not looking for a job differs between young NEET men and women: for women, the most cited reasons for not looking for work are being engaged with household chores and looking after children or incapacitated adults. The level of education of the NEET individual makes a difference in their labour market attachment, especially for women and if they have completed university education.

- **Civil Society Participation:** Civic participation of youth also remains critically low in Turkey. Similar to the findings in global literature, in Turkey as in other countries, a strong connection exists between low economic participation and low civil society participation. Civic participation among youth is lower in Turkey compared to European countries. While young people in Turkey have very low levels of civic engagement, NEET youth are even more disengaged. The largest difference between NEET youth and non-NEET youth is due to CSO membership. Volunteering (i.e. active participation) in the last month is already low among the youth in Turkey, and it is even lower for NEET youth. Among youth, civic engagement is higher among men, older youth, youth with higher education and youth living in wealthier households. Not being in employment, education or training is negatively associated with civic engagement controlling for other individual and household characteristics

## **Cost of NEET and Policies to Activate Youth**

Being NEET has serious costs for the individual and society. Being NEET has detrimental and long-lasting effects on future employability and future earnings of the individuals. High levels of NEET also have social costs. NEET youth are also often considered to be at risk of problematic psychosocial outcomes given that they are more likely to be coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. The cost of being a NEET is often estimated in public finance costs and resource costs. In this report, we make an estimation based on existing methodologies for estimating the cost of NEET youth simply by looking at the income in lost wages for NEET youth and find that the cost of NEET youth women ranges between 1.62 and 2.49 percent of the GDP while the cost of NEET youth men is less than half of these values and ranges between 0.67 and 0.74 percent of the GDP as of 2017. As detailed under **3.1. Costing the Problem** section, since the NEET rate is higher for women, the cost of NEET women is estimated to be higher than NEET men.

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## Policy Options for Addressing NEET Youth

Reducing the rate of economic and social participation of youth poses a challenge for governments and policymakers.

In this regard, the social investment approach in the literature provides an important avenue within which new social risks such as rising youth unemployment and increasing early school dropout rates are discussed and the new welfare state approach is suggested.<sup>1</sup> This approach defends the design of social interventions ensuring to upkeep the quality and capability of human capital across generations, make sure welfare states stabilise the labour market and provide citizens with a buffered zone in the labour market where they can fulfil their potential without social and economic barriers.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, delving more into the Turkish context reveals that certain policies to address challenges of youth exist but without much emphasis on NEET youth and sustainably enhancing their skills, improving labour market conditions and opportunities and addressing gender-based disaggregation among NEET youth. To provide an overview of policies addressing the problems of NEET youth, this report seeks to unpack active labour market policies (ALMPs), social care service provisioning, employment opportunities for and educational attainment of the disabled and civil society participation of youth. Despite the existence of policy efforts to address the problems of NEET, this report argues that these policy efforts have a gendered character leaving females behind in the labour market and should have a diverse approach to address the heterogeneous structure of needs of youth.

## Alternative CSO Models for Positive Youth Development

Alternative models to engage youth that are already being implemented by youth CSOs are worth exploring and can be useful resources to contribute to the policy discussions. Civil society organisations (CSOs) are important players for activating and empowering young people in society. As part of this study, we have selected 4 youth CSOs in Turkey and have analysed their action models as case studies on how to increase economic and social engagement and involvement of youth in society. The case studies selected for study are: Young Guru Academy (YGA), Girls Without Barriers Project, Community Volunteers Foundation and Toy Youth Association. These CSOs each have different operating/action models, means of engaging young people in their activities and different target/beneficiary audiences. Even though these CSOs do not specifically target and work with NEET youth, they present positive models of youth engagement and empowerment that provide opportunities for youth to engage and become more active citizens. Based on certain definitions that focus on positive youth development and empowerment, the final section of this report looks at possible ways of increasing youth activities in the labour market and more widely in community and civil society actions by considering the models of these selected youth NGOs.

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<sup>1</sup> Esping-Andersen, Gallie, Hemerijck and Myles, 2002; Hemerijck, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Hemerijck, 2018



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

When the transition from school to the labour market is not successfully realised, young people may fall into an inactive situation where they are not attached to education, employment or training. While the expansion of compulsory education and opportunities to access further education has increased overall education levels in societies; this achievement does not guarantee a job in the labour market.<sup>3</sup> Despite the differences across educational systems and labour market dynamics, the mismatch between skills gained at school and skills demanded in the labour market has become a global phenomenon. While the transitions from education to employment is multifaceted and young people's patterns over the life course vary from one another, early experiences of unemployment often constitute a risk of weak labour market outcomes for later ages for all young people.<sup>4</sup> This young NEET population is potentially at risk of being socially and economically excluded from society.

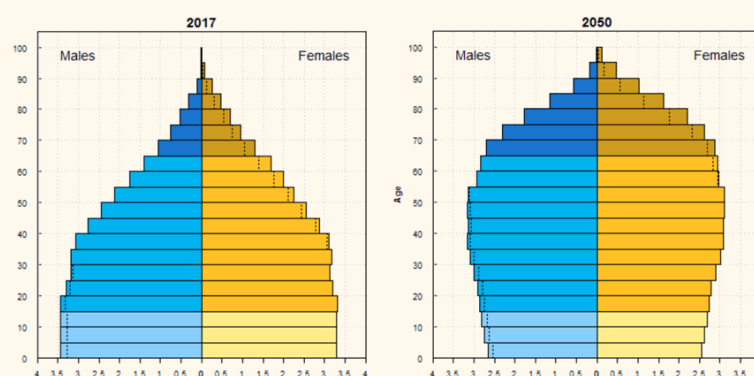
**Turkey has a young and dynamic population currently going through the demographic transition.**

One-third of Turkey's 78 million inhabitants are under the age of 20, and half are under the age of 30.<sup>5</sup>

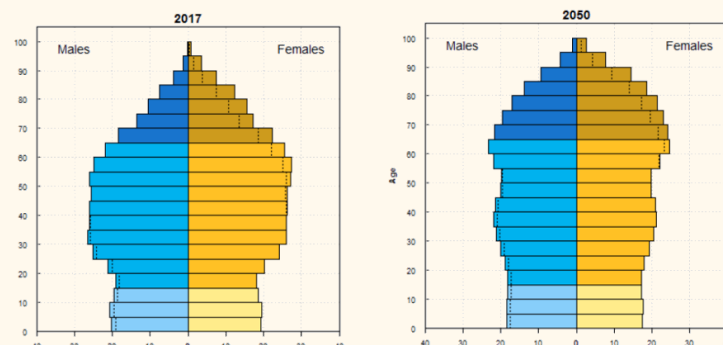
**Figure 1** provides a comparison of the population pyramid for Turkey and European Union countries as of 2017 as well as the projected population pyramid for 2050. Turkey is currently experiencing a youth bulge which is expected then to move onto the middle age category by 2050.<sup>6</sup>

*Figure 1. Population Pyramids*

*Panel A. Population in Turkey in 2017 and 2050*



*Panel B. Population in EU countries in 2017 and 2050*



Data source: UN Population Statistics, 2015 <https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/DemographicProfiles/>

<sup>3</sup> Vanttaja & Järvinen, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Müller & Gangl, 2003

<sup>5</sup> UN Population Statistics, 2015

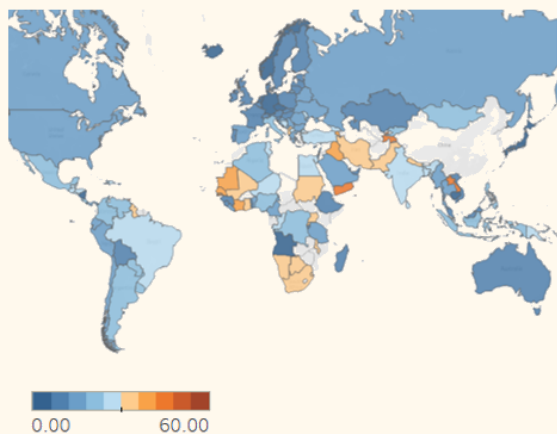
<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*



Given the needs of this dynamic and young labour force, and the opportunities (and risks) presented by the demographic transition in Turkey, issues of youth engagement and empowerment are currently extremely important. Hence, issues on youth disengagement, unemployment and inactivity are currently highly relevant in Turkey.

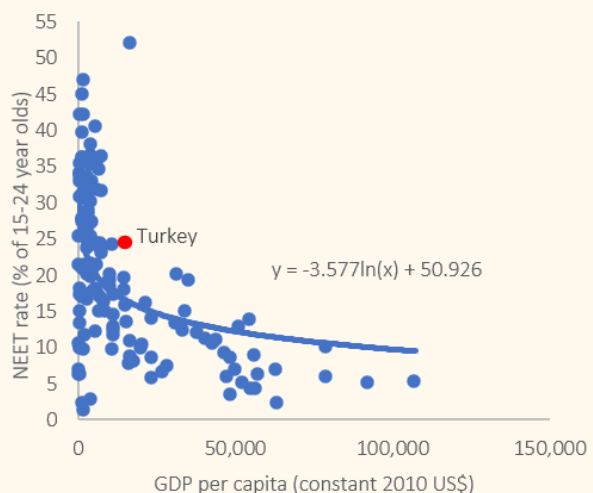
**A significant proportion of youth in Turkey are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET).** As of 2018, 27.6 percent of 15-29-year olds in Turkey are NEET, constituting a total of 4.9 million people.<sup>7</sup> Turkey stands out among other countries as one of the countries with a problem of engaging its youth in education and employment. In Figure 2, among 145 countries with data available, it can be seen that regionally countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and a number of countries in Asia like Nepal, Iran, and Pakistan have relatively higher NEET rates. Turkey's NEET rate among 15-24-year olds is about 24.4 percent, which is higher than the world average (at 19.9 percent). Turkey NEET rates are comparable to countries like Brazil (24.2 percent), Tunisia (25.2 percent), Egypt (26.9 percent) and India (27.5 percent) among others. Generally, a strong negative relationship exists between country GDP/capita levels and NEET rates, with the NEET rate decreasing with increasing levels of country wealth. Turkey's NEET rate, however, exceeds the level that is purely predicted by her GDP/capita (See **Figure 2**).

**Figure 2.** While it is not among the countries with the highest NEET rates, Turkey's NEET rate is higher than the world average



Source: ILOSTAT, Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training (%), the latest year the data is available. The years range between 2002 and 2018. 145 countries are represented in the graph, and only 8 of them have data before 2010.

**Figure 3.** Turkey's NEET rate is also higher than predicted by its GDP per capita



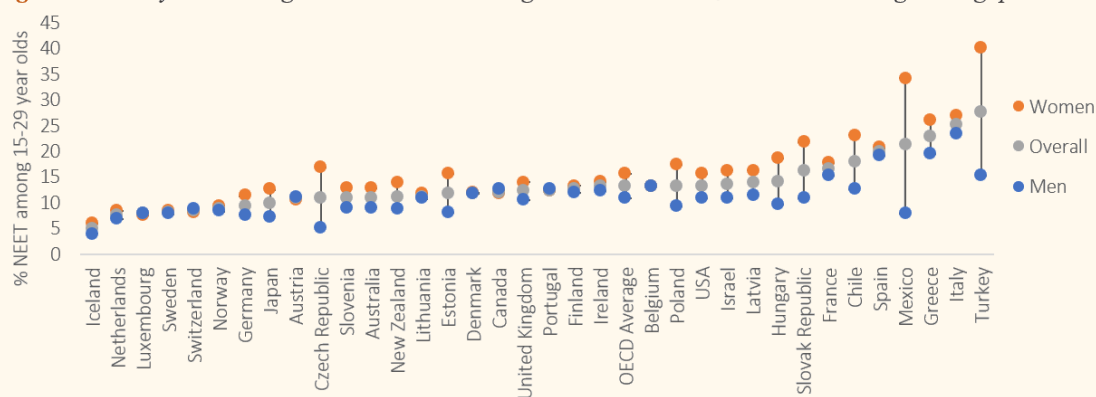
Source: ILOSTAT, Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training (%), the latest year the data is available. The years range between 2002 and 2018. 145 countries are represented in the graph, and only 8 of them have data before 2010. World Bank World Development Indicators, GDP per capita (constant 2010 US\$) for the same years as the NEET rates for each country.

<sup>7</sup> Source: The rate is as reported in EUROSTAT and the total number is calculated using data obtained from TURKSTAT.

**While in the majority of countries, women have a higher NEET rate compared to men, Turkey also stands out in global data with regards to the gap between men and women.** In 119 of the 146 countries, the NEET rate is higher among women. Turkey is among the countries with a high level of gap between men and women. When examined separately, 15.6 percent of young men are NEET in Turkey which is very close to the world average of 15.1 percent. However, with a rate of 33.5, Turkey has a high NEET rate among young women compared to the world average of 24.6 percent. In fact, the difference of 17.9 percentage points between young men and women in Turkey is a gap higher than 75 percent of the 143 countries with available data.

**Turkey also has the highest ratio of NEETs among all OECD member states.** While from 2005 to 2016 the percentage of NEETs in the 15-29 age bracket decreased in Turkey from 43.6 percent to 28.2 percent, it is still two times higher than the OECD average of 14.21 percent (see **Figure 4**). In other words, nearly one-third of young people in this age group in Turkey are not engaged in education or work. **During the last decade, the share of NEET in the whole population (age 15 - 24) has also decreased in Turkey similar to other OECD countries.** This decrease can partially be explained by the increase in the open high school enrolment among youth.<sup>8</sup> Despite this decrease, the share is still significantly higher than the European Union or OECD. On average 13.2 percent of youth aged 15-29 years old are in NEET status in OECD countries with rates of 10.9 and 15.6 percent respectively for men and women (see **Figure 4**). Turkey's rates for both men (15.3 percent) and women (40.2 percent) and especially for women are above the OECD averages. The difference between men and women is again highly visible. Such a large difference between NEET rates of men and women is only seen in Mexico among other OECD countries.

**Figure 4.** Turkey has the highest NEET rate among OECD countries, with the widest gender gap



Source: Data is obtained from the OECD dataset (OECD, 2018 ). Except for Chile (2015) and Japan (2014), the rates are from 2017. It includes all the 35 OECD countries except Korea for which the data was not reported. Data for Turkey is obtained from TURKSTAT, and it is for the year 2018.

<sup>8</sup> In the academic year 2006-2007, the total number of students who enrolled in open high school was 353,896, and this number has increased more than four-fold in a decade reaching 1,554,938 in 2016-2017. The percentage of students enrolled in open high school among youth aged between 15 to 19 increased from 5.4% in 2007 to 15.8% in 2012 and 23.5% in 2016. Because students enrolled in open high school are not counted as NEET, this proportional increase of youth enrolled in open high school can partly explain this outstanding decrease in the percentage of NEETs in Turkey. Source: Ministry of National Education Statistics Yearbooks (2006-2007, 2009-2010, 2012-2013, 2014-2015, 2016-2017). TÜİK (n.d.) Address-based Population Registration Results

**In light of this background, this study aims to analyse trends and determinants of NEET status in Turkey.** The study utilizes three nationally representative surveys in Turkey collected by TURKSTAT, to look at who is most at risk of becoming NEET using the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) dataset<sup>9</sup>, what some of the time use patterns of NEET youth are -using the Time Use Survey dataset<sup>10</sup> and the labour market attachment and aspirations of NEETs using the Household Labour Force Survey dataset<sup>11</sup>. The study also calculates the cost of NEET youth in Turkey based on a model built using Labour Force survey data and provides some background on policy options related to programmes that aim to activate young people. Lastly, the report ends with presenting alternative models to engage youth that are already being implemented by youth CSOs in Turkey.

## 1.2 Definitions of NEET

Many different definitions are used globally to define NEET youth. EUROSTAT and OECD define youth as those aged between 15 to 29 whereas the World Bank defines youth covering the age of 15-24. Studies focusing on youth in Turkey also have a variety of age categories to cover youth. For instance, Susanlı (2016) examining the determinants of being NEET in Turkey using a pooled sample from Household Labour Surveys from 2004 to 2013 cover the age group of 15-24 as being youth. On the other hand, Erdogan et al. (2017) underlining the importance of gender and educational attainment as important determinants of being NEET in Turkey covers the age group of 18-29-year olds as youth in their studies. This report covers the age group of 18-29 to define NEET and presents its analyses accordingly. The age group of 18 was selected as it is the legal age to define youth in Turkey, and this analysis focuses on youth within the scope of the EU-funded project “Enhancing Advocacy Capacities of Youth CSOs in Turkey: Guiding CSOs through Research”. For this reason, the age group 15-17 was excluded from the analysis as it is denoted as a childhood period. The upper bound of the age group is 29 to ensure broad coverage of youth in parallel with studies being carried out in Turkey and also with data sets in Europe. For further discussion on NEET definitions, please see Annex I.

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<sup>9</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017c

<sup>10</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015

<sup>11</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017b

## 2. PROFILES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NEET YOUTH IN TURKEY

### 2.1 Who are NEET Youth in Turkey?

In this section, we first summarize findings from existing global literature that discuss risk factors associated with NEET status (in other words, characteristics that are associated with young people becoming NEET). Globally, qualitative and quantitative studies on the issue have identified different sets of risk factors influencing the probability of being NEET. We also analyse microdata from SILC 2017 in this section to discuss the determinants of NEET status for young people in Turkey.

**Globally, gender is an important determinant of NEET status, and in the majority of countries around the world, women are more likely to become NEET compared to men.** While gender inequality in access to education has largely disappeared, there is still a persistent gender gap in labour force participation around the world, which also leads to gender disparity in NEET status. An analysis of data from OECD countries and emerging economies shows that the NEET rate difference between men and women is much smaller for 15-19-year olds and much higher for 25-29-year olds.<sup>12</sup> This result is consistent with the fact that equality in access to education is achieved more widely than gender equality in labour force participation.<sup>13</sup>

**Low educated and low skilled youth are overly represented among NEETs.**<sup>14</sup> Focusing on EU countries, education is identified as the leading risk factor for becoming NEET, increasing its likelihood by three-folds.<sup>15</sup> A more recent study on EU countries also finds that this negative correlation still exists among 15-29-year-olds.<sup>16</sup> A country-level macro analysis also finds a positive and significant correlation between early school leaving and NEET status for EU and European Training Foundation (ETF) partner countries.<sup>17</sup> Individual country analyses also point to similar findings. Using longitudinal data for the UK, Bynner and Parsons (2002) reveal that low educational achievement is the primary factor in predicting NEET status for 16-18-year-olds.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> OECD, 2017b

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Carcillo, Fernández, Königs, & Minea, 2015

<sup>15</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>16</sup> Eurofound, 2016

<sup>17</sup> Bardak, 2015

<sup>18</sup> Bynner, 2002

**Yet the relationship with higher levels of educational attainment and NEET status is not always linear.** According to a synthetic panel data analysis of 18 Latin American countries, while educational attainment of the youth increased overall between older and younger cohorts, NEET rates slightly increased as well, pointing to problems in school-to-work transition.<sup>19</sup> Among the EU28 countries, those with an upper secondary education, make up the largest group among the NEET population and are referred to as the “missing middle” in Eurofound (2016).<sup>20</sup> In countries like Georgia and Armenia, those with an upper secondary education are also more likely to become NEET compared to those with a lower educational level.<sup>21</sup>

**Socioeconomic status and household income level are other important predictors of being NEET.** Studies show that family background variables like household wealth or parental education have the potential to create disadvantages for the youth later in life. Household survey analysis of 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries shows that household per capita income is the variable that is most strongly associated with being NEET for 15-18-year-olds when the household size and household head’s age, gender, education, and employment status are also controlled for.<sup>22</sup> The study on the UK shows that a disadvantaged family background along with low educational attainment, early pregnancy, and low self-confidence are key risk factors on following an inferior labour market trajectory.<sup>23</sup> Alfieri and her colleagues (2015) show that for Italy, mother and father’s higher levels of education decrease the likelihood of being NEET for 18-29-year-olds.<sup>24</sup> For EU countries in general Eurofound (2012) finds that those with parents who have lower than secondary school education are found to be two times more likely to become NEET compared to those with parents who have tertiary level education.<sup>25</sup> Those who have divorced parents or parents who experienced unemployment were also found to be more likely to become NEET. The UK Department for Education research report indicates that “young people whose parents had two or three years of worklessness had an increased risk of being NEET at age 18 and more months of being NEET from age 15-18 – even when the interlinked risk factors were controlled for (e.g. socio-economic status, parental education, and parental health)” using the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE).<sup>26</sup>

**Poor health and having a disability could also increase the likelihood of becoming NEET.** According to Eurofound (2012), young people with a disability are 40 percent more likely to become NEET in the EU countries.<sup>27</sup> Among OECD countries, young people who are NEET are more than five times more likely to complain of poor health compared to non-NEET youth.<sup>28</sup> Having a disability is also found to be strongly correlated with being NEET in Georgia and Armenia.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> de Hoyos, Rogers, & Székely, 2016

<sup>20</sup> Eurofound, 2016

<sup>21</sup> Buitrago Hernandez, Fuchs Tarlovsky, Cancho, Lundvall, & Millan, 2019

<sup>22</sup> Cárdenas, de Hoyos, & Székely, 2011

<sup>23</sup> Dorsett & Lucchino, 2014

<sup>24</sup> Alfieri, Sironib, Martaa, Rosinab, & Marzanaa, 2015

<sup>25</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>26</sup> Schoon et al., 2012

<sup>27</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>28</sup> OECD, 2016

<sup>29</sup> Buitrago Hernandez, Fuchs Tarlovsky, & Cancho et.al., 2019



**Previous studies on NEET in Turkey focus on gender, educational attainment, and marital status as being important determinants of NEET status.** Susanlı (2016) examines the determinants of being NEET in Turkey using a pooled sample from Household Labour Surveys from 2004 to 2013 and finds that gender, and educational attainment are key factors in explaining NEET status in Turkey for 15-24-year olds.<sup>30</sup> The number of other household members in employment was also found to decrease the likelihood of being NEET, possibly proxying the economic conditions of the household. Dividing the sample by gender, the author also finds that being married increases the likelihood of being NEET for women while it decreases it for men and higher levels of education were found to reduce the likelihood of being NEET more for women compared to men with higher average marginal effects. Using Household Labour Force Survey 2012, Kılıç (2014) finds similar results with Susanlı (2016), pointing to the importance of gender and educational attainment in explaining NEET status in Turkey.<sup>31</sup> Kılıç (2014) also further looks into the labour force status and past employment experience of NEET youth aged 15-24 years old finding that the majority of the NEET youth are not looking for a job but close to half of them have some past work experience. Using a nationally representative survey collected in 25 provinces in Turkey, Erdogan et al. (2017) find similar results underlining the importance of gender and educational attainment as important determinants of being NEET in Turkey, this time for 18-29-year olds.<sup>32</sup> Higher levels of parental education and a better household economic situation also were found to decrease the likelihood of being NEET. Analysing the sample separately for men and women again shows the different dynamics for young men and women in Turkey. The authors find that higher levels of education have a linear relationship with being NEET for women decreasing its likelihood, whereas for men the probability of being NEET was found to be highest for university graduates. Marital status also has the opposing effect for men and women as it was found in Susanlı (2016) that being married increases the likelihood of being NEET for women while it decreases the likelihood for men.

**This finding also shows up in cross-country comparisons.** Bardak and her colleagues (2015) compare EU countries along with the European Training Foundation (ETF) partner countries and emphasize the gender dimension of the NEET problem in Turkey. Turkey along with Jordan, Egypt and Palestine were the countries with the highest gender gaps in NEET status, unemployment and employment.<sup>33</sup> Turkey was found to stand out again among other countries with the share of NEET youth men and women who are inactive (rather than unemployed). Comparing a number of selected European case countries and Turkey and using EU-SILC datasets Goksen et al. (2016) find that the NEET rate increases in all countries but Turkey in the period 2005-2013.<sup>34</sup> Yet Turkey stands out among the European countries with the highest NEET rate among women. OECD (2019) also underlines the fact that the NEET rate decreased between 2007 and 2017 for Turkey while it remains to have the highest NEET rate among OECD countries.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Susanlı, 2016

<sup>31</sup> Kılıç, 2014

<sup>32</sup> Erdoğan et al., 2017

<sup>33</sup> Bardak, Maseda, & Rosso, 2015

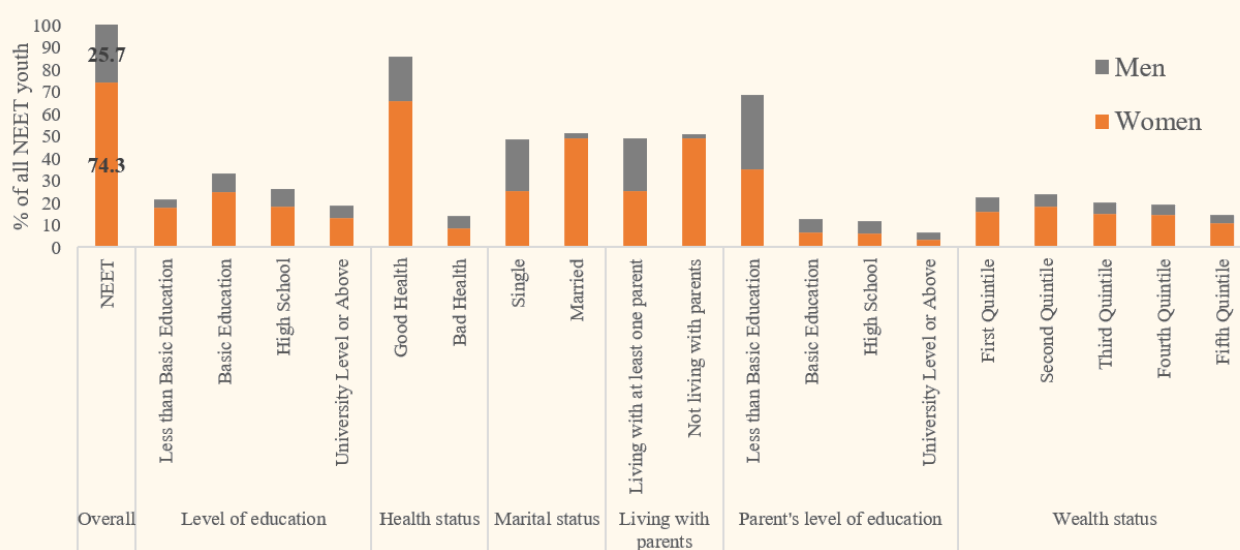
<sup>34</sup> Gökşen et al., 2016

<sup>35</sup> OECD, 2019

In our analysis, we find that gender, location and educational attainment are among the most significant determinants of NEET status (based on SILC 2017).<sup>36</sup> Gender is a particularly important determinant of NEET status in Turkey.

**Young women are overrepresented among the NEET Youth in Turkey.** Gender is one of the most important factors associated with being NEET. Young women are three times more likely to be in NEET status than young men in Turkey. Accordingly, the majority of the NEET youth (74.3 percent) are women (See **Figure 5**).

*Figure 5. Women are overrepresented among the NEET Youth in Turkey*



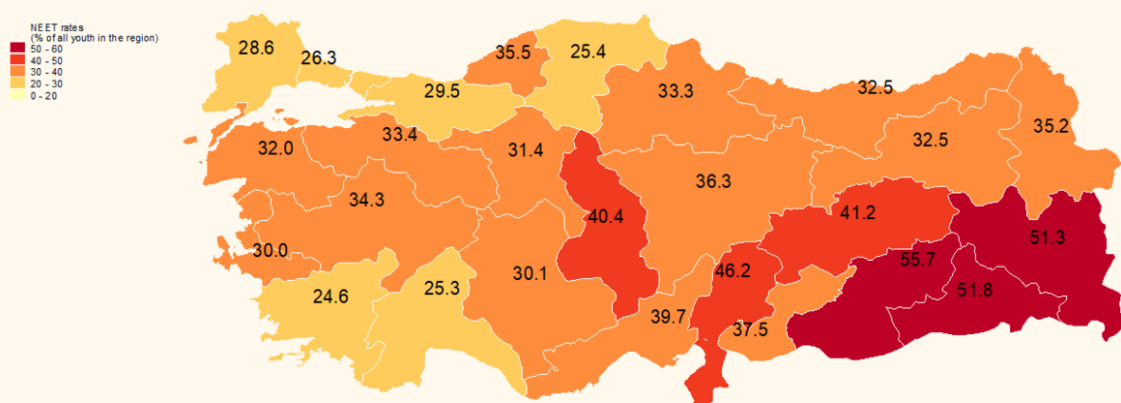
Source: SILC, 2017; Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29 and in NEET status.

**Another important determinant of NEET status is the location in Turkey.** NEET youth in Turkey are concentrated in big cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir and east and south-eastern Turkey. As expected, NEET concentration is high in regions where youth concentration is also high. For instance, Istanbul is the city with the highest NEET concentration as it is also the city with the highest youth concentration. Yet NEET concentration is higher than the youth concentration in the east and south-eastern Turkey. 16 percent of all youth live in these regions as opposed to 23.1 percent of all NEET youth. Hence being NEET is a more pronounced problem in these regions of Turkey.

<sup>36</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017c



**Figure 6.** NEET rate varies across regions with the highest rates seen in South-eastern Turkey

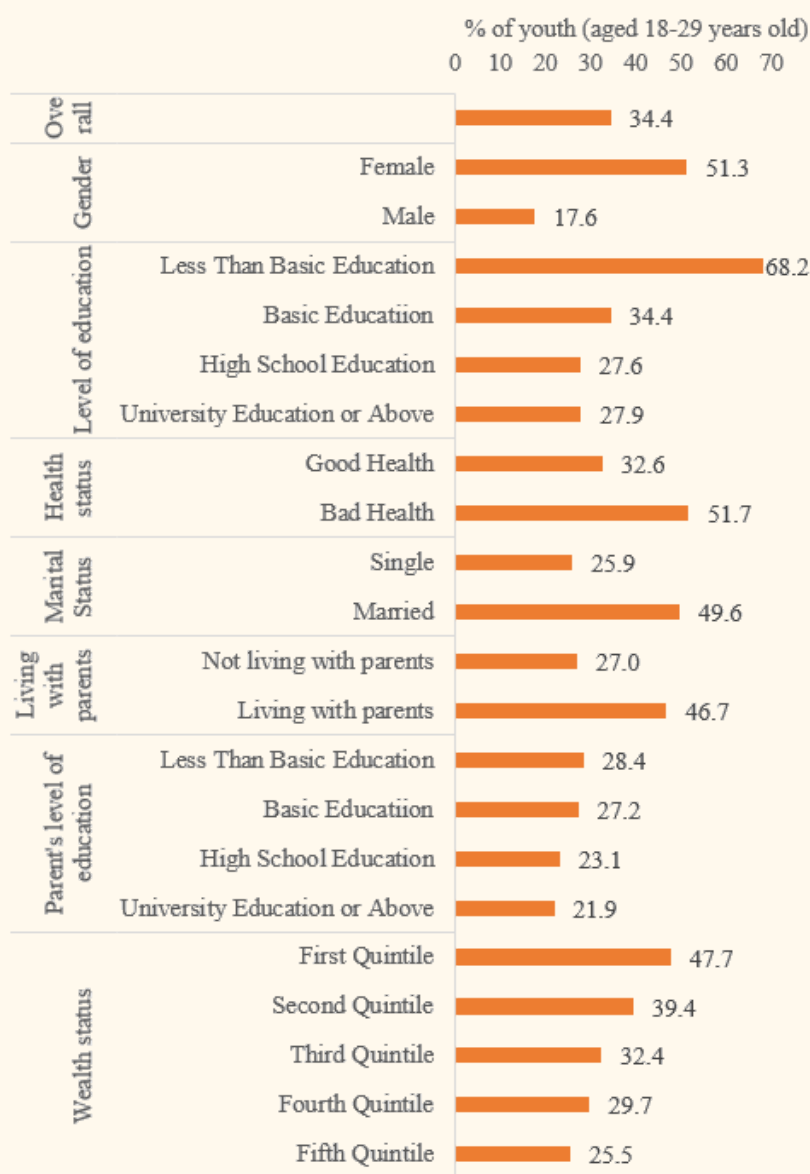


Source: SILC, 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**The likelihood of becoming NEET among the youth is highest in south-eastern Turkey.** The NEET rate among the youth population ranges between 24.6 and 55.7 percent across Turkey (See **Figure 6**). The lowest NEET rate among the youth is seen in the region composed of Aydın, Denizli and Mugla followed by the region composed of Antalya, Isparta and Burdur. Yet even in these regions with the lowest rates, one-fourth of the youth are NEET. A young person is twice as likely to be NEET in the region of Diyarbakir and Sanliurfa compared to a young person living in the region composed of Aydın, Denizli and Mugla with Diyarbakir and Sanliurfa having the highest NEET rate of 55.7 percent among youth. Hence in this region, 1 in every 2 individuals aged 18-29 are neither in education nor in employment.

**The third determinant of NEET status in Turkey is educational attainment: NEET youth tend to be less educated compared to their peers.** 54.9 percent of NEET youth have basic education or less as opposed to 38.5 percent of non-NEET youth (see **Annex Table 2**). The rest of the NEET youth have higher degrees while again less common than non-NEET youth. 26.2 percent of NEET youth have a high school degree as opposed to 35.9 percent of non-NEET youth, and 18.9 percent have a university degree or above as opposed to 25.6 percent of non-NEET youth.

**Figure 7.** Youth are more likely to be NEET when they are female, have less than basic education, in bad health, married, living with parents, or living in poorer households



Source: SILC 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

Overall a breakdown of youth by education level shows that youth with lower levels of education are more likely to become NEET (see **Figure 7**). Especially the youth with less than 8 years of education are the most disadvantaged group who are twice as likely to become NEET compared to youth who complete basic education. Overall 68.2 percent of youth with less than basic education are NEET while this rate drops down to 34.4 percent, 27.6 percent and 27.9 percent respectively for those who have basic education, high school degree, or university education or higher. Hence, having at least a basic education is an important factor in decreasing the risk of being NEET.

Controlling for other personal and household characteristics including gender, health, household wealth, marital status and having children higher levels of education are still negatively associated with being NEET with a basic education degree decreasing the likelihood of being NEET by 20.1 percentage points while a high school degree decreasing it by 21.4 percentage points and a university degree by 18.3 percentage points compared to having less than basic education (see [Annex Table 8](#))

**While most of the NEET youth report being in good health and having no physical restraints, having bad health increases the likelihood of being NEET.** Bad health is an important predictor for being NEET keeping people from engaging in education or productive activities outside of the household. In Turkey, overall, the majority of the NEET youth (85.9 percent) report having very good or good health (See [Figure 5](#)) and again the majority (88.3 percent) report that they have no physical or mental restraints. However, those with bad health have indeed a greater likelihood of being NEET. Reporting having bad health (mediocre, bad or very bad) or having a physical or mental restraint increases the likelihood of being NEET around 1.6 times. Controlling for other characteristics like gender, education and household wealth, ‘having bad health’ increases the likelihood of being NEET by 8.4 percentage points while ‘having a physical restraint’ increases the likelihood of being NEET by 10.1 percentage points (see regression results in [Annex Table 8](#)).

**NEET youth are more likely to be married and less likely to be living with their parents compared to non-NEET youth.** The marital status of NEET youth is important for a country like Turkey since it introduces cultural norms into the picture both for men and women but in separate directions. Overall, 51.4 percent of NEET youth are married as opposed to 27.3 percent of non-NEET youth. This difference is mostly driven by the NEET women as will be explained in the next chapter on gender. One could think that living with parents could be acting as a safety net for the youth keeping them from engaging in the labour market or education opportunities. This is not the case either in OECD countries overall or in Turkey. A cross country analysis of OECD countries shows that non-NEET are more likely to live with their parents compared to the NEET youth across OECD. Similarly, in Turkey, while a significant proportion of NEET youth is living with their parents, they are less likely to live with their parents compared to non-NEET youth. 49.2 percent of NEET youth live with their mothers or fathers as opposed to 69.7 percent of non-NEET youth (see [Annex Table 2](#)).

**NEET youth are slightly more likely to live with a parent with a low level of education or bad health.** SILC collects information on the mother and father of the individual if they live in the same household. Overall parents of youth in Turkey mostly are in bad health and have low levels of education. NEET youth are in a similar situation if not slightly worse. The highest education level obtained by the parents is less than basic education, with 68.7 percent of the NEET youth (who live in the same household with at least one parent) (see [Figure 5](#)). This rate is 64.1 percent for the non-NEET youth (who live with at least one parent), and the difference is statistically significant between these

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two groups (see **Annex Table 2**). Similar to the overall youth living with at least one parent, parents of NEET youth also mostly report that they are in bad health (at least one parent in the household reports bad or mediocre health). 65.4 percent of NEET youth (who live with at least one parent) are living with a parent reporting having bad health while this rate is 59.1 percent for the non-NEET youth and the difference is statistically significant.

**NEET youth are from households with varying levels of household asset index, but they are more likely to become NEET if they are from poorer households.** 46.2 percent of NEET youth are living in households in the first two quintiles (See **Figure 5**). This rate is lower among the non-NEET youth with 32.0 percent of them living in the households in the first two quintiles. Hence NEET youth are more likely to be living in poorer households which might affect their level of education and network connections as well as how they perceive gender norms. In fact, youth living in households with lower levels of wealth are almost twice as likely to become NEET compared to the youth living in the richest households.

## 2.2 Gender Dimensions of Being NEET in Turkey

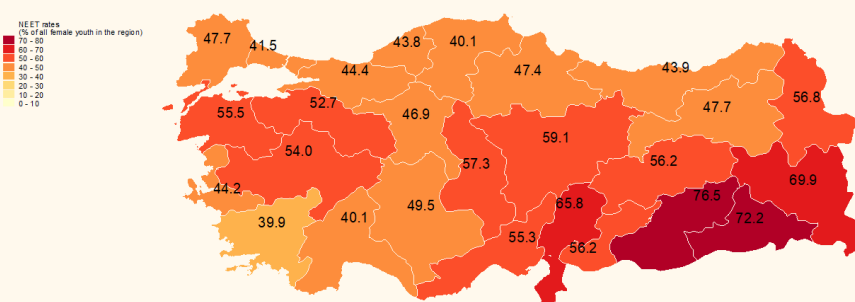
While having some commonalities, NEET women and NEET men in Turkey have very different profiles. In this section, we provide a gender-disaggregated analysis of determinants of NEET status.

**First of all, gender differences are striking in terms of NEET status of young girls and boys across regions.** NEET rate for young men is as low as 10.5 percent in the region composed of Tekirdag, Edirne, Kırklareli. NEET rate for men is highest in Sanliurfa and Diyarbakir with 35.5 percent. In contrast, NEET rate for young women is higher than 50 percent in half of the NUTS II level regions, and it ranges between 39.9 percent and 76.5 percent with the highest rate observed in the region composed of Sanliurfa and Diyarbakir again. NEET rates of women are as high as five times of NEET rates of men in the region composed of Agri, Kars and Iğdır. NEET rates for young men are below 20 percent in 15 regions out of 26 (see **Figure 8**)

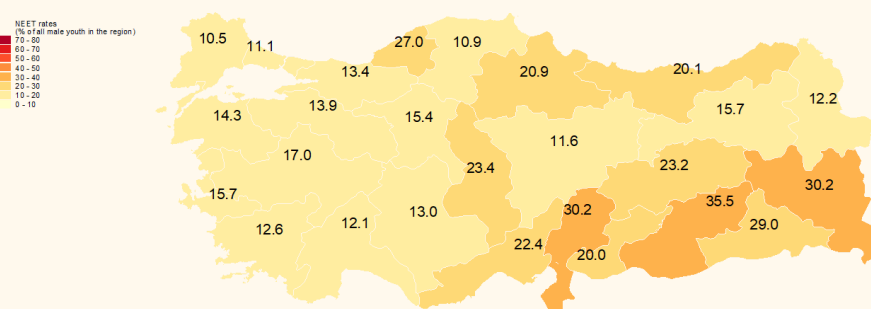
Young women in Turkey are much more likely to become NEET in Turkey as opposed to young men. Around half of the young women aged 18-29 years old (51.2 percent) are in NEET status as opposed to 17.6 percent of young men (see **Figure 9**). In fact, being a woman turns out to be the single most important contributor to being NEET in Turkey controlling for other individual or household characteristics like education, marital status, household wealth and having children, increasing the likelihood of being NEET by 32.9 percentage points (see **Annex Table 8** for regression results).

**Figure 8.** NEET rate changes in between regions significantly with the highest rates seen in South-eastern Turkey

#### Female Youth



#### Male Youth



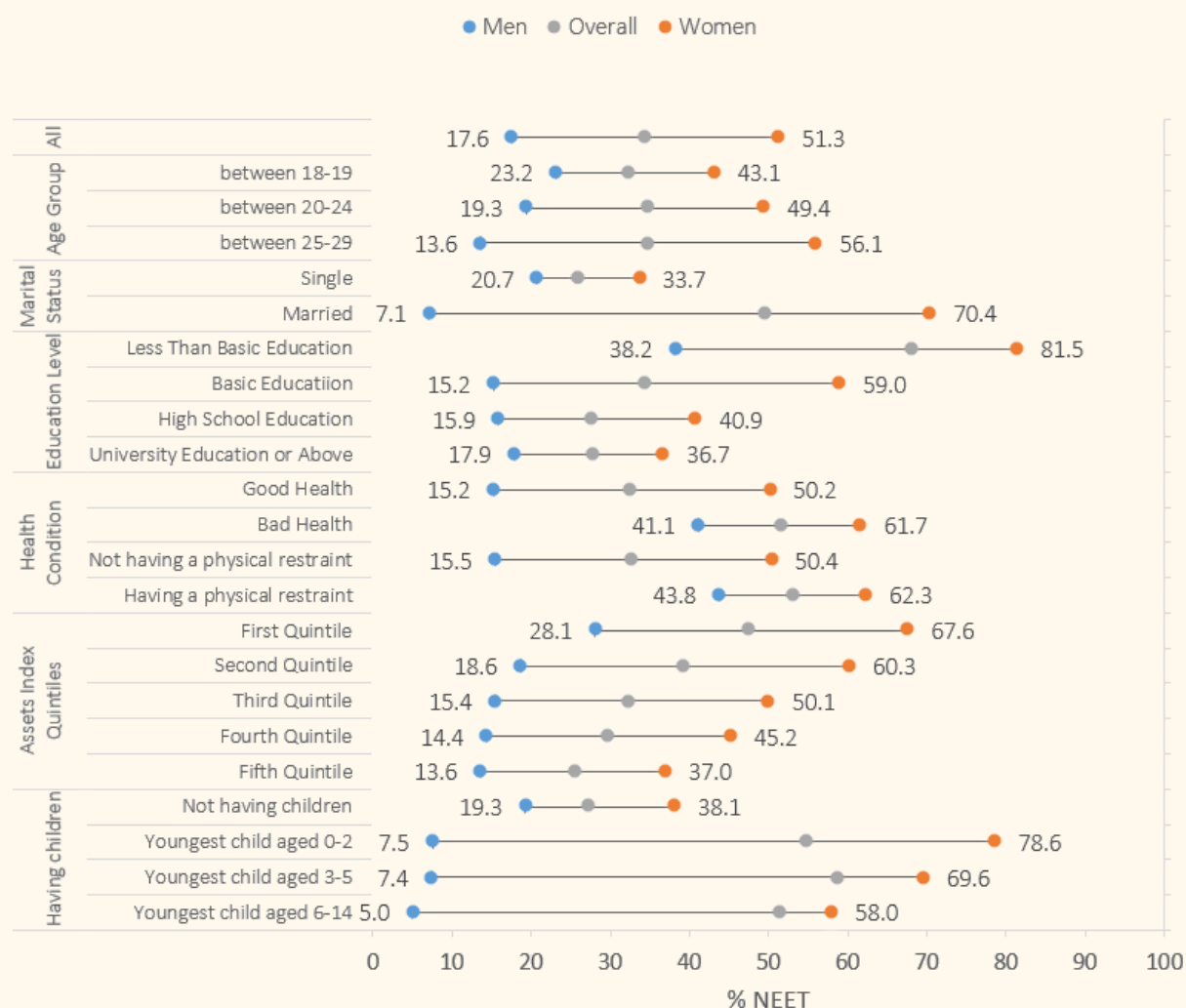
Source: SILC, 2017, Authors calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**For young men and women, a number of individual characteristics like low education or having bad health commonly increase the likelihood of being NEET.** Men aged 18-24, single men, those with less than basic education or university education or more, men having bad (or mediocre) health, or a physical constraint, men living in households in the first two quintiles (poorest) and men without children are the groups with above-average levels of NEET (See **Figure 9**). For women, similarly bad health, low level of wealth and having a low level of education increase the likelihood of being NEET.

**Yet education makes a greater difference for women than it does for men with respect to being NEET.** For instance, 81.5 percent of young women with less than basic education are NEET while this rate drops down to 59, 40.9 and 36.7 percent respectively for having basic education, high school education and university education or more (See **Figure 9**). For men, this rate is smaller and ranges between 38.2 and 17.9 percent. Education and NEET status are in fact endogenous. Women who receive higher levels of education are also those who are more likely to work due to other individual or household characteristics. Hence those who have a higher level of education are less likely to be NEET not only due to education but also these other characteristics that led them to get an education in the first place.

**Controlling for other individual and household characteristics, having higher levels of education compared to having less than basic education is negatively and significantly associated with being NEET for women** (see regression results in [Annex Table 8](#)). In comparison, for men having basic education or a high school degree is significantly negatively associated with being NEET while a university degree does not seem to make a significant difference. Overall for men, taking other characteristics constant, being older, being married, being healthy, being richer (in terms of asset ownership) decreases the likelihood of being NEET. For women, being older, being single, being healthy and not having children of their own and being richer decreases the likelihood of being NEET.

**Figure 9.** *Young women are always more likely to become NEET compared to young men while in some cases the gap grows wider*

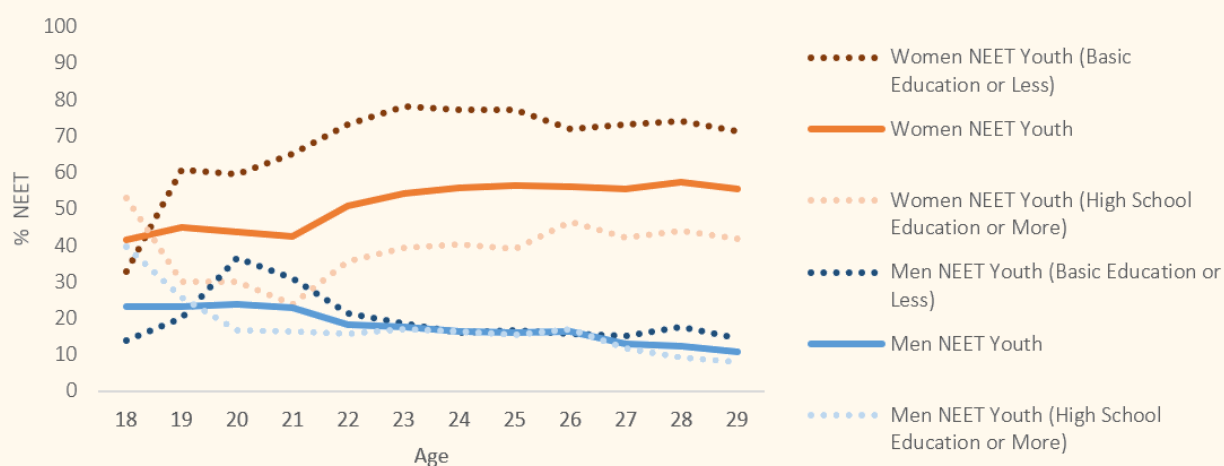


Source: SILC, 2017, Authors calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.



While young women are always more likely to be NEET than young men independent of their individual characteristics, in some cases, the gap is widened. The differences between NEET rate of men and women reach their highest level when they are married or when their youngest child is aged 0-2 years old (See **Figure 9**). Young married women are 10 times more likely to become NEET compared to young married men while young women with a child aged 0-2 are also 10 times more likely to become NEET compared to young men with a small child. On the other hand, the difference is the smallest when men and women are both single, when they have a university education or higher and when they have health problems (in which case they both are more likely to be NEET).

**Figure 10.** Share of NEET increases among young women with age while it decreases among young men



Source: SILC, 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**The share of NEET among young women increases with age while it decreases among men.** **Figure 10** shows that between the ages of 18 and 21 NEET rates are mostly stable for young men and women. However, starting from 22 years old the gap starts to get wider and wider. While the likelihood of men being NEET decreases the older they get, it increases for women. Additionally, at every age young women are less likely to be NEET when they have high school education or more as opposed to when they have a lower level of education. For young men, the effect of education is rarely as high, and the gap mostly disappears after age 23. Yet when marital status and having children are controlled for, the likelihood of being NEET decreases for women with age (See regression results in Annex Table 8).

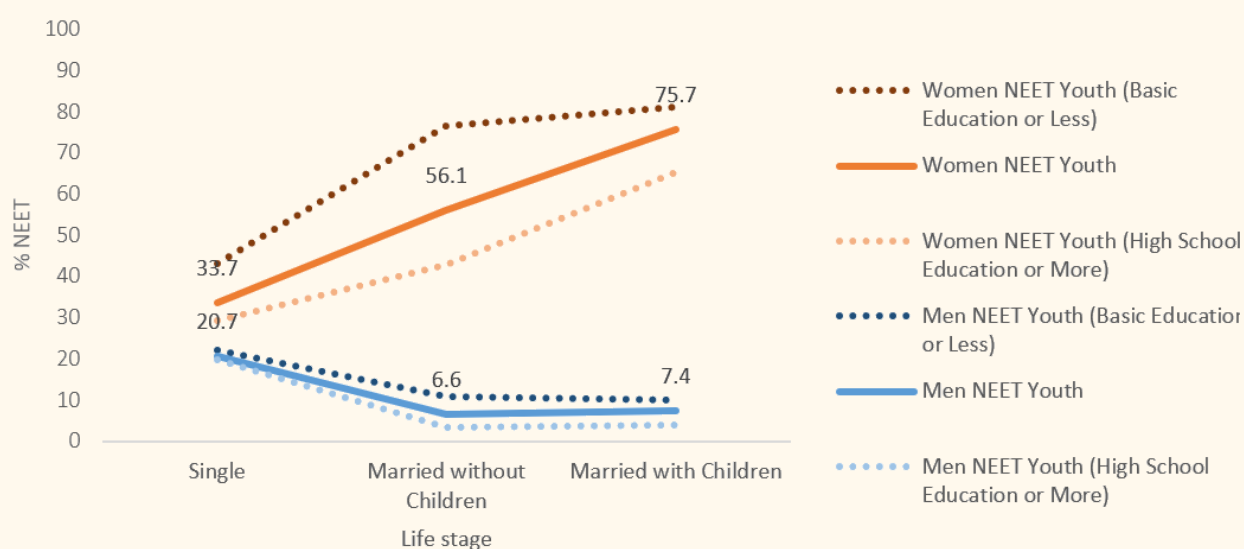
**Men and women's NEET levels change depending on the life stage they are at rather than their age.** Age is correlated with the life stages of men and women. Following these life stages from being single to getting married and having children, one can more clearly see the widening gap (see **Figure 11**).



Single young men and women have similar NEET levels with 33.7 percent and 20.7 percent respectively. However, when they get married NEET level increases by 22.4 percentage points among women and another 19.6 percentage points when they have children reaching 75.7 percent. In contrast, the share of NEET among young men decreases when they are in these life stages. In fact, being married among young NEET men is quite uncommon (9.5 percent) while more than half of NEET women (65.8 percent) are married. Accordingly having children is also quite uncommon among NEET men with only 6.2 percent having children as opposed to 52 percent of NEET women have children as opposed to 6.2 percent of men.

Furthermore, the analysis of marital status as one of the determinants of being NEET is of particular importance given that Turkey has the lowest female mean age at first marriage and a lower mean age of women at birth among OECD countries.<sup>37</sup> Female mean age at first marriage is 24.8 in Turkey whereas the OECD average is 30.2 in 2017. However, the male mean age at first marriage is 27.8, which is higher than the female mean age but is still the second lowest male mean age among OECD countries. Also, Turkey has one of the lowest mean age of women at birth<sup>38</sup>, which is 28.6 along with other countries such as Chile (28.5) and Slovak Republic (28.8) whereas the OECD average is 30.6 for this mean age. Erdogan et.al. (2018) argues that marriage accompanied by the workload of childcare and domestic chores is an important barrier for females to access education or employment opportunities in Turkey.<sup>39</sup> In line with the literature and notable position of Turkey in terms of the marriage and childbirth mean ages of females, this report puts particular importance on the gender dimension of discussions on NEET in Turkey.

**Figure 11.** Life events impact on women and men's NEET status in opposing ways in Turkey



Source: SILC, 2017, Authors calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29

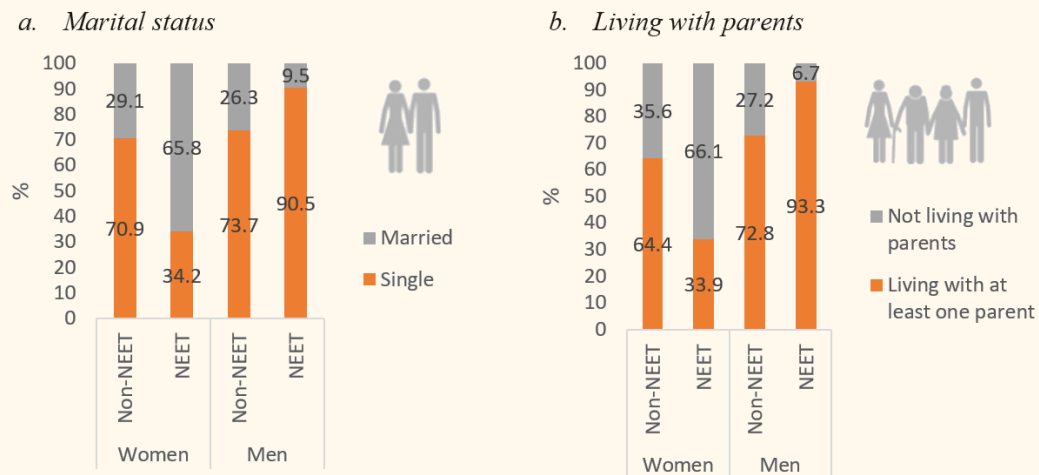
<sup>37</sup> OECD, 2018

<sup>38</sup> Mean age of women at first birth is not available for Turkey in 2017 in OECD Family Statistics.

<sup>39</sup> Erdoğan et al., 2017

**Living with parents is another household characteristic in which NEET men and women are completely different from each other.** While NEET men almost entirely live with their parents (93.3 percent), only one-third of NEET women live with their parents (33.9 percent) (See **Figure 12** Panels b). This is also in line with the fact that NEET men are more likely to be single while NEET women are more likely to be married (**Figure 12** Panels b).

**Figure 12.** Majority of young NEET women are married and not living with their parents while the majority of young NEET men are single and living with their parents

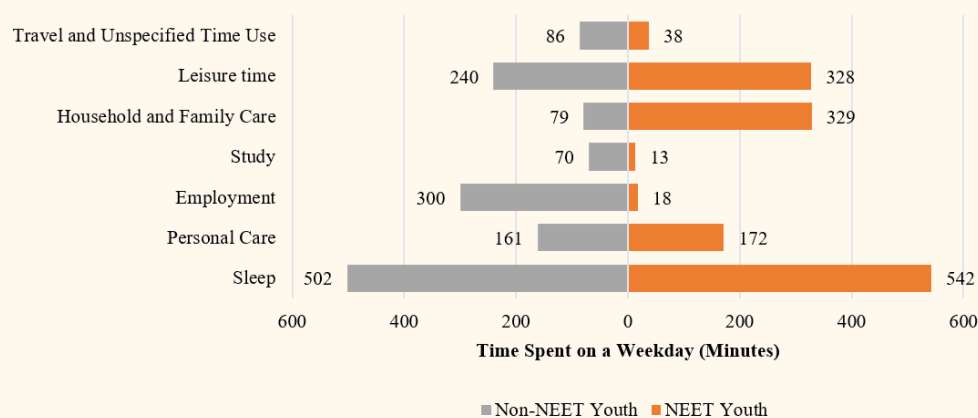


Source: SILC 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

## 2.3 Time-Use of NEET Youth in Turkey

**Since NEET youth are not engaged with education or employment activities it is worthwhile to see how they spend their time instead.** While they may not be engaged with market production and education activities, they may indeed be engaged in household production activities.

**Figure 13.** Time spent by NEET and non-NEET youth differs significantly on a typical weekday



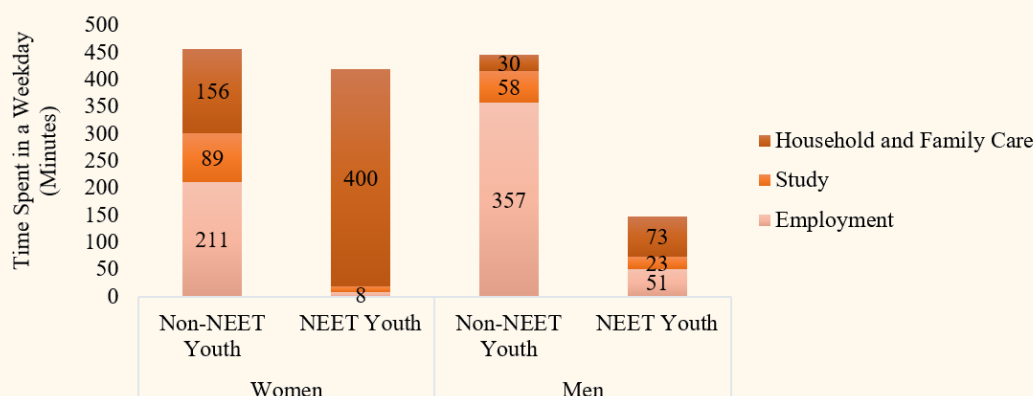
Source: Time Use Survey 2015, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**Overall, NEET youth spend more time in leisure, household and family care, personal care and sleep compared to non-NEET youth** (See **Figure 13**). NEET youth spend around 4 hours more per day in household and family care activities including activities like cooking, cleaning, washing the dishes, taking care of children or incapacitated adults (see **Annex Table 5**). Hence it seems that NEET youth indeed participate in household production activities significantly more compared to the non-NEET youth. Yet time spent in household and family care is high mostly among NEET women, and NEET men display a very different time use pattern which will be explored in the next section. On an average weekday, NEET youth spend more time on average in sleeping, personal care as well as leisure activities. Non-NEET youth, on the other hand, spend more time in employment, studying and travelling (including unspecified time use). The difference in NEET and non-NEET youth in their leisure time is due to NEET youth spending more time in voluntary work and meetings, social life and entertainment and also mass media (see **Annex Table 5**).

**However, the time use picture is completely different for NEET women and men in Turkey:** While NEET women spend most of their time on unpaid care and household responsibilities, NEET men are more likely to spend their time with leisure. The difference between time spent in household and family care by NEET youth women and men shows that women are not ‘idle’ and are participating in household production activities as opposed to most NEET men (See **Figure 14**). NEET women spend on average around 7 hours doing household chores as opposed to around only 1 hour spent by NEET men.

**While NEET women’s time use on household production (unpaid work) activities on average almost matches up to the employment activities of non-NEET women and non-NEET men, NEET men spend more of their time on leisure and sleep.** NEET women spend on average 7 hours in employment, studying or being engaged in household and family care while non-NEET women spend on average only around half an hour (38 minutes) more. However, NEET men do not participate in these activities as much as NEET women or non-NEET men do. On the contrary NEET men spend 2 and a half hours in total in employment, studying or being engaged in household and family care as opposed to 7.5 hours spent by non-NEET men (See **Figure 14**). On the other hand, NEET men spend more time in leisure activities or sleeping compared to non-NEET men as well as NEET women (see tables **Annex Table 6** and **Annex Table 7**)

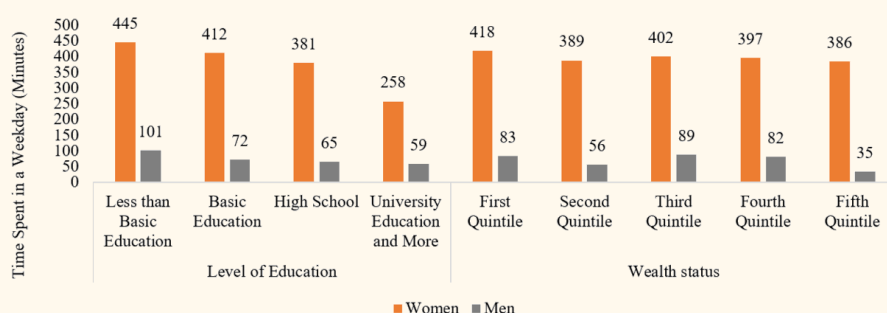
**Figure 14.** Women either NEET or non-NEET spend similar amounts of time in total in studying, employment (market production) or doing household chores (home production) as opposed to NEET men



Source: Time Use Survey 2015, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29. Study activities also include any kind of studying activity that is outside of school while employment also includes activities related to job seeking.<sup>40</sup>

**A woman's educational attainment more than household wealth is a determinant of whether women spend their time on household chores.** On average young NEET women with less than basic education spends around 7.5 hours in household and family care as opposed to around 4 hours spent by NEET women with a university degree (see **Figure 15**). Hence the difference reaches around 3 hours on average. In contrast, increasing levels of wealth creates only a small change for women in time spent doing household chores. NEET women living in the poorest households spend on average 7 hours doing household chores as opposed to 6.5 hours spent by women living in the richest households.

**Figure 15.** Time spent on household and family care decreases with increasing education levels, while it does not vary with household wealth status



Source: Time Use Survey 2015, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

<sup>40</sup> In the Time Use Survey 2015 questionnaire, "Study" includes three types of sub-categories "Unspecified study", "School or university" and "Free time study". Hence although NEET youth are not in school they may still be spending some time in "studying". Regarding employment, there are two categories under the activity "Employment" which are "Working time in main and second job" and "Activities related to employment" which include sub-categories "Lunch break" and "Other or unspecified activities related to employment". TUIK reports that the activity definitions are in line with HETUS (Harmonized European Time Use Surveys) Activity Coding List. In this list, the latter group "Other or unspecified activities related to employment" also includes activities connected with job seeking, e.g. calling at or visiting a labour office or agency, reading and replying to job advertisements, going to see the new employer. This is why NEET youth also seems to be engaged with employment related activities to a small extent. (HETUS Activity Coding List 2008: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/5909673/KS-RA-08-014-EN.PDF/a745ca2e-7dc6-48a9-a36c-000ad120380e>)

**NEET men spend less time in household and family care when they have higher education levels as well.** But the time spent has a smaller range (See **Figure 15**). NEET men with less than basic education spend around 1 hour and 40 minutes doing household chores as opposed to NEET men with a university degree who spend on average around an hour. Time spent in household and family care is the smallest for NEET men living in richest households. However, the relationship is not linear as it was in the case with increasing levels of education.

## 2.4 Labour Market Attachment of NEET Youth in Turkey

**Analysing the NEET phenomenon is not about providing a single snapshot of youth experiencing conditions of labour market detachment at one point in time but about addressing their employment trajectories, structural conditions constrained in their lives and their preferences.** In other words, treating this phenomenon as the simple experience of unemployment is too blunt to deal either with misguided stereotyping of NEET as “idle” or “too lazy to work” or indeed the complex trajectories of the school-to-work transition of youth. The fact that NEETs are regarded as being inactive in the labour market “create[s] the impression that they have a ‘passive attachment’ to the labour market, and questioning their willingness to engage with the world of work”.<sup>41</sup> However, youth does not simply fall into the labour market detachment in a standardised manner with a specific unemployment period. Conversely, subsequent journeys of youth through the labour market follow a so-called ‘yo-yo’ trajectory implying that youth may go back and forth between different flexible employment modalities, underemployment and unemployment in their transition to adulthood in the labour market becoming more and more unstable.<sup>42</sup> Labour market trajectory of youth which is not as straightforward as anticipated, therefore, warrants further investigation on the heterogeneity of the NEETs in terms of their labour market status (unemployed vs. inactive) as well as their reasons related to non-participation.<sup>43</sup> It is also of paramount importance to investigate different needs and characteristics of disengaged youth and alternate how youth can be supported through distinct and good quality re-engagement programs such as mentoring and wider skills development programmes.<sup>44</sup>

Following these discussions in terms of various paths and characteristics of labour market characteristics of youth, it is important to understand (i) if they ever worked, (ii) if they are looking for a job at the moment, (iii) the kinds of jobs they would prefer and (iv) if they are not looking for a job, reasons behind that decision. In this section, we, therefore, seek to unpack these questions related to skills (proxied by educational attainment), labour market attachment and aspirations.

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<sup>41</sup> Maguire, 2015

<sup>42</sup> Ramos, 2018; Chen, 2011

<sup>43</sup> Flisi, Goglio, Meroni, & Vera-Toscano, 2015

<sup>44</sup> Maguire, 2015

**According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS 2017) in Turkey, the majority of NEET youth was employed at some point in their lives.** Most of the NEET youth have been in and out of employment in their lifetime with most of them having a work history. Around 64.5 percent of NEET youth report having worked before. 79.7 percent of NEET men and 59.4 percent of NEET women reported having previously worked at some stage. The most cited reason for leaving this last job both for men and women was that ‘the job was temporary’ or that ‘they were not satisfied with the job’. Another common reason among NEET women is that they quitted their last job due to their spouse’s request or marriage (19.3 percent), or due to care responsibilities at home (9.3 percent report). So it is possible to say that more than 1 in 4 NEET women in Turkey has left their jobs due to marriage, their spouse’s request and/or care responsibilities. This is a significant sub-population of women, constituting 508 thousand people and 7.3 percent of all women in this age group in the country.

**While a significant proportion of NEET youth has actually worked in the past, currently the majority of NEET youth are not looking for a job or do not desire to start one even if they found one.** Overall only one-in-four (26.0 percent) of NEET youth are looking for a job in Turkey while the rest are inactive (See **Figure 16** Panel a). A small percentage (14.3 percent) of the inactive NEET youth reports that they are willing to start a job in the next two weeks if they found one (or established a business themselves). Yet overall 63.5 percent of NEET youth aged 18-29 are completely detached from the labour force neither are they looking for a job nor are willing to start one if they found (See **Figure 16** Panel a).

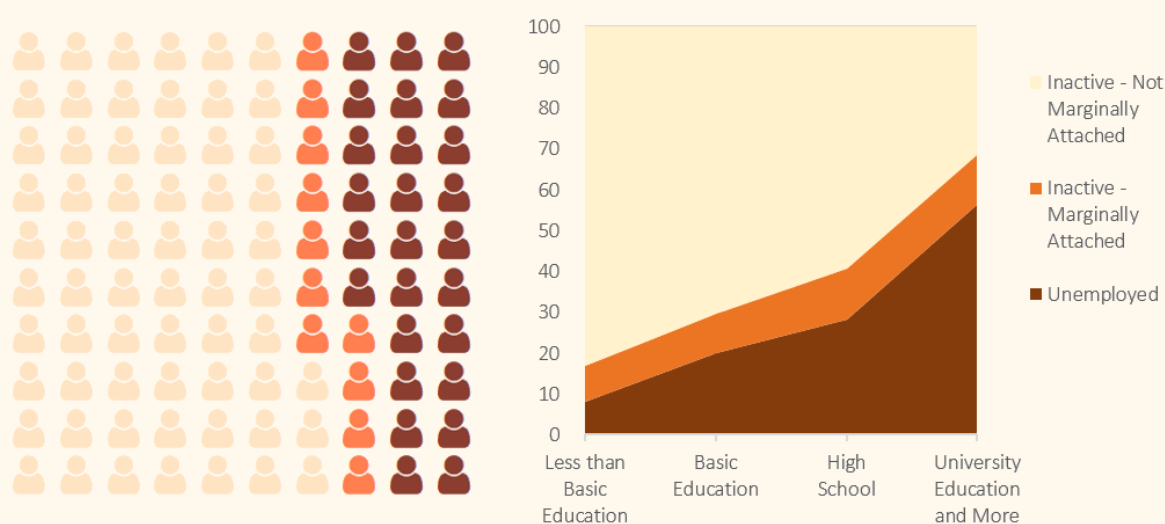
**The level of education of the NEET individual makes a difference in their labour market attachment.** Around half of the university, graduate NEETs are looking for a job (i.e. they are unemployed) as opposed to only 8.2 percent of those with less than basic education (**Figure 16** Panel b). In fact, 91.8 percent of NEET youth with less than basic education is completely detached from the labour market reporting that they are neither looking for a job nor are they willing to start one even if they found one.



**Figure 16.** Majority of the NEET youth are inactive, but inactivity decreases with rising levels of education

a. Labour market attachment is low among NEET youth

b. Labour market attachment among NEET youth increases with educational attainment



Source: HLFS 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**The most common reason for not looking for a job among NEET youth is to be engaged with household chores followed by looking after children/incapacitated adults** (See [Figure 17](#)). Apart from being the most cited reason for not looking for work being engaged with household chores has been cited entirely by women showing that gender norms are a strong factor contributing to being NEET among women in Turkey. Another most cited reason is other personal or family reasons.

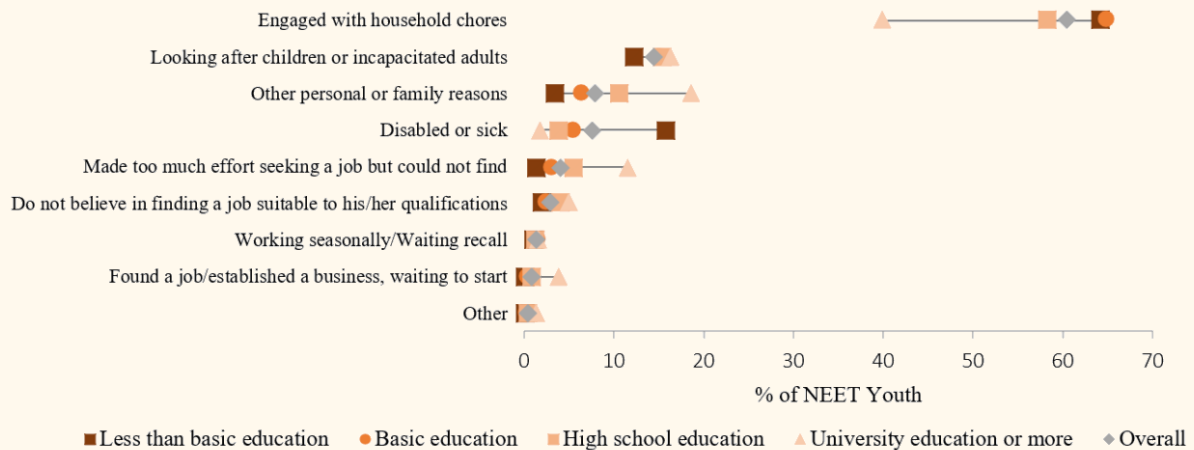
**Differences are seen in reasons for not looking for a job by levels of education.** While it is still the most common reason among youth with different levels of education “being engaged with household chores” is much less likely to be cited by university graduate NEET youth (See [Figure 17](#)).

**“Being disabled or sick” is one of the most important reasons for not looking for a job among NEET youth with less than basic education.** This reason is most commonly cited by the youth with less than basic education with 15.8 percent (See [Figure 17](#)). In fact, it is the most common reason for not looking for a job for this group after being engaged with household chores (which is the most common reason for youth with any level of education). Disabled people are at a serious disadvantage in terms of institutional and social barriers they face when they want to access the labour market and education despite the comprehensive legal frameworks in Turkey. For this reason, it is important to



design inclusive and comprehensive policies beyond de jure implementations and make sure respective measures are taken to address their problems and experiences to increase educational attainment and labour market participation.

**Figure 17.** Differences are seen in reasons for not looking for a job by the level of education



Source: HLFS 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**The majority of NEET youth who are looking for a job are looking for skilled, full-time jobs where they can work as regular employees.** NEET youth who are looking for a job are not interested in part-time jobs, unskilled jobs or founding a business themselves. 87.7 percent of the unemployed NEET youth are looking for skilled jobs, and this rate is higher for NEET women compared to NEET men with 92.2 percent and 84.0 percent respectively. Almost all of the NEET youth (97.8 percent), both men and women are looking for a regular job rather than founding their own business. And again, neither men nor women are looking for part-time jobs with 95.0 percent of NEET women and 96.6 percent of NEET men looking for a full-time job.

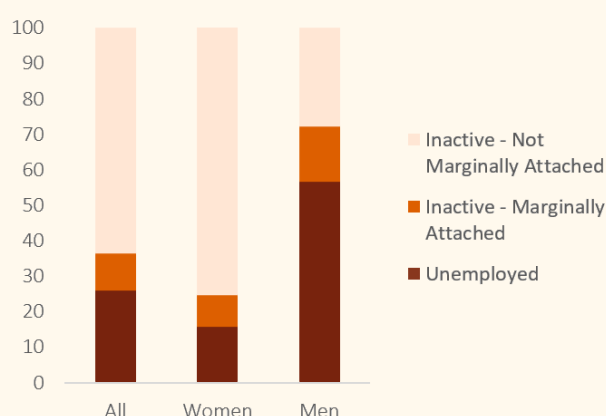
**Among NEET youth, the most popular job search channels are through friends and relatives or directly applying to employers.** 67.2 percent of NEET youth who are looking for a job reported applying to employers directly while 89.7 percent reported that they tried to find a job through their friends and relatives. Job searching through Turkish Employment Office and private employment agencies (such as kariyer.net) are also other popular methods with 31.0 percent and 29.1 percent of NEET youth who are looking for a job using these methods.

**Most of the NEET youth who are looking for a job have been looking for one for six months or less.** 67.3 percent of NEET youth who are looking for a job has been looking for a job for six months or less. 21.9 percent have been looking for a job for 7 to 12 months, and 10.8 percent have been looking for a job for more than a year.

## Labour Market Attachment by Gender

As mentioned in the previous section, the majority of NEET men and women have a work history (79.7 percent of NEET men and 59.4 percent of NEET women). However, NEET women who have worked before are more detached from the labour market compared to NEET men who worked before. Or in other words, NEET women on average are out of employment for a longer time compared to NEET men. The majority of the NEET men (82.8 percent) who have worked before have left their job in the year of the survey or a year ago while 40.9 percent of NEET women who have worked before and left their last job left it in this same period. Hence, the majority of the NEET women with a work history have been out of employment for more than a year. Hence while men are in and out of employment due to various reasons women are more likely to be out of employment and not to return.

**Figure 18.** Majority of NEET women are completely detached from the labour market while the majority of NEET men are not



Source: HLFS 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

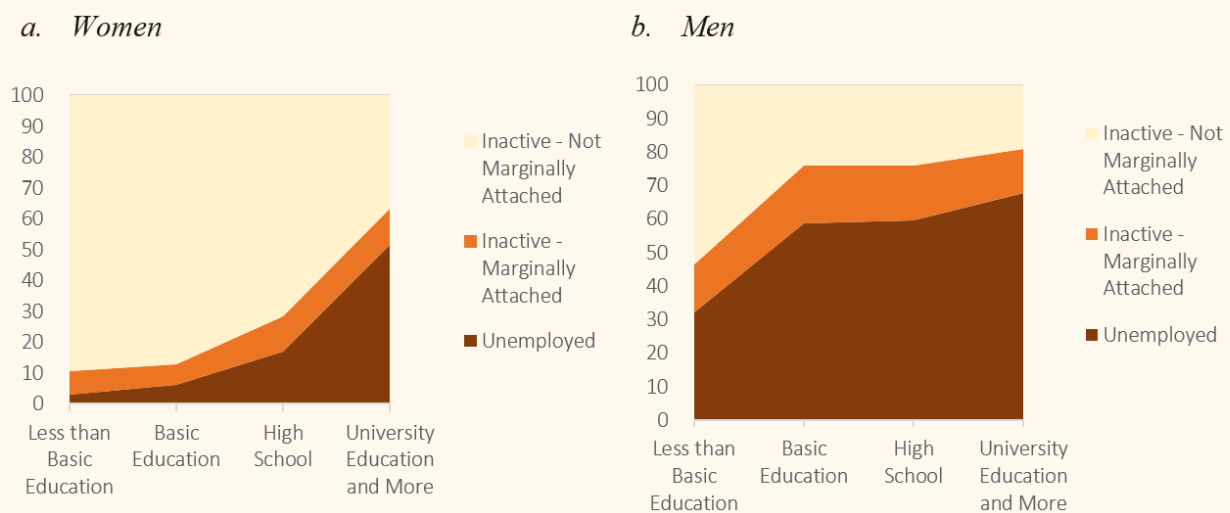
If for other individual and household characteristics like level of education, age, and marital status being a man still increases the likelihood of looking for a job by 21.6 percentage points among NEET youth (see [Annex Table 9](#) for regression results).

Marginal attachment to the labour market is also higher among NEET men with 15.7 percent of them reporting being ready for work, although they are not looking for one as opposed to 8.9 percent of NEET women.

Accordingly, the majority of NEET youth women are not looking for a job or willing to start a job even if they found one while this is not the case for men. Gender differences are significant in unemployment status (i.e. looking for a job) of NEET youth. A much higher share of NEET men are looking for a job compared to NEET women or in other words, a significant share of NEET men do not want to be in NEET status. More than half of NEET men (56.7 percent) are actively looking for a job as opposed to only 15.8 percent of NEET women. In fact, controlling

**For NEET women level of education and especially university education is a strong determinant of labour market attachment** (see Figure 19 Panel a). 51.6 percent of university graduate NEET women are looking for a job as opposed to 3 percent of those with less than basic education, 6.1 percent with basic education and 17.1 percent of high school graduates. University education increases the likelihood of looking for a job for NEET men as well, but NEET men with basic education or high school education are also almost as likely to be looking for a job as NEET men with a university degree. Hence for men, the strong relationship that exists for women between education status and labour market attachment does not seem to exist when we look at the averages .

**Figure 19.** For women, a strong determinant of labour market attachment is educational attainment while for men, this is not the case.



Source: HLFS 2017, Authors' calculations. Includes a sample of young men and women ages 18-29.

**The reasons for not looking for a job differs between young NEET men and women.** The most cited reasons among NEET men are “being disabled or sick” (31.2 percent), “other personal or family reasons” (30.0 percent) and have looked for a job before but not being able to find one (17.6 percent). While for women, 71.0 percent cite that they are not looking for a job because they are engaged with household chores and 17.0 percent cite that they are looking after children and/or incapacitated adults. Being engaged with household chores as a reason for not seeking a job is cited by none of the inactive NEET men and looking after children and/or incapacitated adults is cited by only 0.4 percent of them.

## 2.5 Civil Society Participation of NEET Youth in Turkey

**An important measure of youth inactivity is related to social and civil society participation.** While economic participation and educational attainment of youth is important for its dynamic and medium- to long-term impact on growth and income generation, social and community participation of youth is also important for maintaining that young people are active and engaged in society's development and problem-solving around social issues.

**High levels of unemployment and inactivity are associated with low levels of civic engagement, and civic engagement might act as a mediator both for achieving higher youth participation in civil society and also to activate youth through their transition from school to work.**<sup>45</sup> Interventions through civil society may help to activate and to empower young people to achieve higher participation in civil society as well as being more active in transitioning from school to work, leading to better, faster and more secure job placements. Inclusive participation of youth in well-developed civil society also lead to better-performing communities and governments.<sup>46</sup>

**Civic participation of youth also remains critically low in Turkey.** Several studies underline the fact that in Turkey, youth may be disengaged from civil society and community involvement. A nationally representative research study conducted among young people aged between 18 and 24, showed that 73 percent of young people did not have any membership in civil society organizations. Among those who have a link to a civil society organisation, 12 percent of them mentioned membership of student clubs in the universities, 6 percent of them mentioned association memberships, and 2 percent of them mentioned professional chambers.<sup>47</sup> Based on the same data (a nationally representative sample of 2,508 young people at age 18-24), young members of CSOs are more likely to be particularly university students. A UNDP study that collected data on 3,322 young people in the 15-24 age group in Turkey (in 2008) also has a similar finding that while on average civil society participation is about 4% in the sample, the level increases to 46% for university students and graduates.<sup>48</sup>

**Similar to the findings in global literature, in Turkey as in other countries, a strong connection exists between low economic participation and low civil society participation.** A more recent study by KONDA collected in 2011 from 2,366 young people in the age group 15-30, suggests that while civil society engagement is about 20 percent in this sample, among those who are out of employment, education or training (NEET), the level of engagement is much lower at 4.8 percent.<sup>49</sup> Low levels of social engagement, therefore, is likely to be correlated with low levels of economic engagement and with unemployment and NEET status.

Erdoğan et al. (2017) examine the consequences of being NEET in terms of the trust, political participation and political efficacy (i.e. an empowerment module).<sup>50</sup> The authors find that both NEET women and men have lower trust to people in their immediate environment compared to non-NEET youth and young NEET women further have lower trust for other people outside their immediate circle while young NEET men were found to have similar trust levels with non-NEET men to the outer world. The findings were similar regarding political participation such that being NEET was negatively associated with political participation activities such as signing a petition, attending a peaceful

<sup>45</sup> Mauro & Mitra, 2015

<sup>46</sup> Camino & Zeldin, 2002

<sup>47</sup> Yilmaz & Oy, 2014

<sup>48</sup> UNDP, 2008

<sup>49</sup> KONDA, 2011

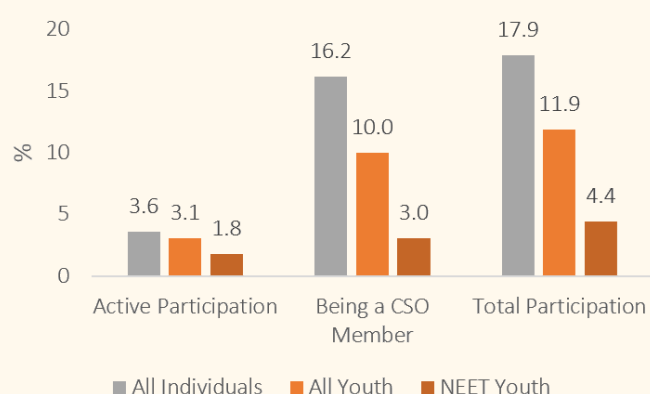
<sup>50</sup> Erdoğan et al., 2017

demonstration or participating in a boycott. Political efficacy measured with questions like “to have many opportunities to turn the neighbourhood into a better place” and “to have the opportunity to work with other people in turning the neighbourhood into a better place” was also lower for NEET youth and especially for women.

As part of this report, we have analysed Time Use Survey 2015, a national level representative dataset, for looking at young people’s civic participation in Turkey.

**The Time Use Survey (TUS) asks respondents if they have volunteered in the last month and if they are a member of a CSO.** TUS 2015 survey includes detailed questions about volunteering in the last month and CSO membership. Volunteering to a variety of groups is questioned including social welfare groups, sports clubs, places of worship, political groups, youth groups, security/first-aid groups, environmentalist groups, justice/human rights groups, countrymen associations, hobby groups, parent-teacher associations, professional solidarity associations, and adult education groups. Hence volunteering in one of these groups in the last month is assumed as active participation in the analysis. CSO membership is also asked separately for non-profit professional chambers, cooperatives and professional associations, unions, political parties, sports clubs, foundations, and associations.

**Figure 20.** *Young people in Turkey have low levels of civic engagement, while the NEET youth are even more disengaged.<sup>vii</sup>*



Source: Time Use Survey 2015, Authors’ calculations.

Even among non-NEET youth with university education civic participation is lower than 30 percent. In contrast, in European Union countries, civic participation among youth is much more common. According to the results of the Eurobarometer survey half of the youth (49 percent) aged 15-30 in EU-28 countries participate in some kind of organization including sports clubs, youth clubs, local organizations to improve the local community, political party or other types of NGOs.<sup>52</sup>

**Analysis of the Time Use 2015 data suggests that in Turkey civic participation of the population is already low.** Only 15.4 percent of people aged 18 or more report being a member of a CSO or having participated in voluntary activity in the last month as opposed to 11.9 percent of the youth.

**Civic participation among youth is lower in Turkey compared to European countries.** In Turkey overall, around 1 in every 10 people aged 18-29 are a member of a CSO or volunteer in a group.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015

<sup>52</sup> Eurostat, 2017



**While young people in Turkey have very low levels of civic engagement, NEET youth are even more disengaged.** Since NEET youth have more leisure time, they might be more involved in CSO activities or volunteering. However, this is not the case. Civic participation of NEET youth is even lower with only 4.4 percent reporting being a CSO member or volunteering in the last month.

**The largest difference between NEET youth and non-NEET youth is due to CSO membership.** 12.8 percent of non-NEET youth have a CSO membership as opposed to 3.0 percent of NEET youth. This difference is mainly due to memberships in vocational CSOs like a union or a professional chamber. Naturally, vocational CSO membership is almost zero for NEET youth as opposed to 5.9 percent among non-NEET youth. None of the NEET youth is members of a professional union or a professional cooperative or association. Yet a small percentage (0.4 percent) report being members of professional chambers. These vocational memberships are more common among non-NEET youth comparatively, yet still quite low.

**Interestingly, while it is also quite uncommon being a member of a political party is the most popular CSO membership type among NEET youth.** 2.0 percent of NEET youth report being a member of a political party as opposed to 3.1 percent of non-NEET youth. NEET youth are also less likely to be members of sports clubs, associations or foundations compared to non-NEET youth.

**Volunteering (i.e. active participation) in the last month is already low among the youth in Turkey, and it is even lower for NEET youth.** In Turkey 3.2 percent of people aged 18 or more report volunteering in the last month. Among youth 3.1 percent report volunteering while among NEET youth this rate is only 1.8 percent. 'Helping at a place of worship', 'volunteering in security/first aid groups', 'social welfare groups' and 'parent-teacher associations' are the most popular volunteering options among NEET youth.

None of the NEET youth report volunteering in a youth group, sports club, political party, environmentalist group, justice/human rights group, countrymen associations, hobby groups (amateur dramatics, photography associations, garden clubs, choirs, art associations, etc.) or adult education groups.

**Among youth, civic engagement is higher among men, older youth, youth with higher education and youth living in wealthier households** (See **Figure 21**). Young women are less likely to participate in civic activities. Among youth aged 18-29 years old, 15.2 percent of men have a CSO membership or are volunteering as opposed to 8.6 percent of women. Civic engagement increases with the level of education. While 5 percent of the youth with less than basic education are involved in these activities, with university graduates this rate reaches near 23 percent. Youth living in wealthier households are also more likely to participate. 5.7 percent of the youth living in the poorest households participate in these activities as opposed to 19.5 percent of youth living in

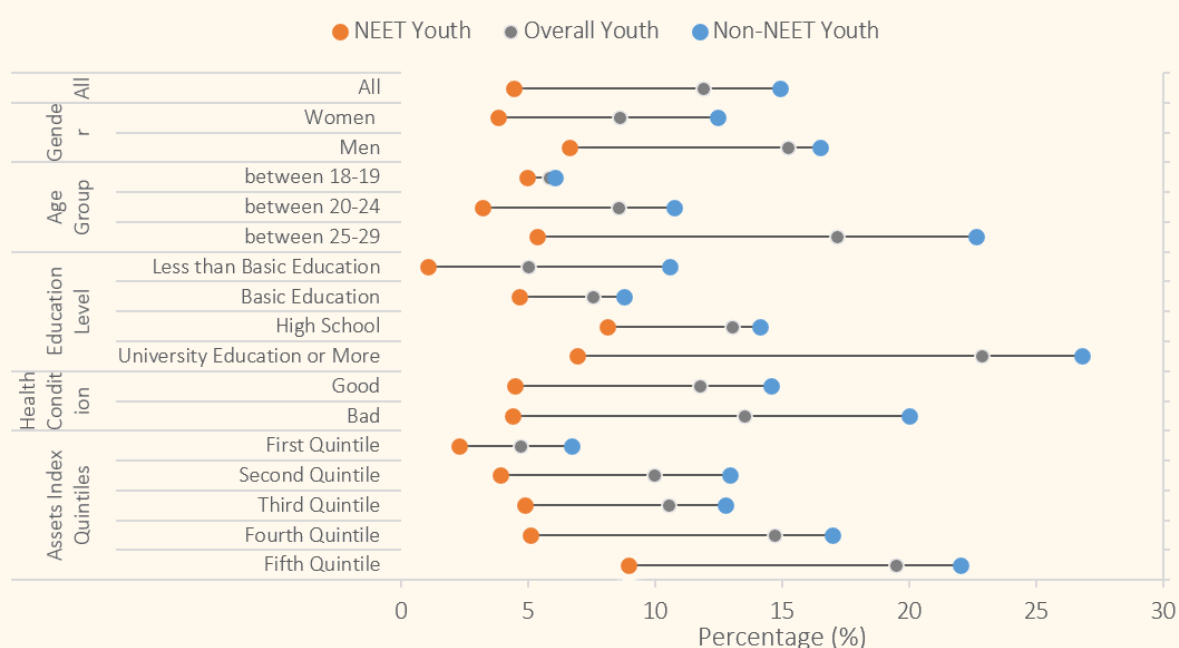
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richest households. Being older also increases civic engagement with 17.2 percent of 25-29-year olds reporting participation as opposed to 5.8 percent of 18-19-year-olds. Civic participation among NEET youth also increases with age, level of household wealth and level of education.

**Not being in education or employment is negatively associated with civic engagement controlling for other individual and household characteristics.** Regression results show that among youth, civic engagement is significantly less likely for NEET when controlling for other variables like gender, education and household wealth. Being NEET decreases the probability of civic engagement by 8.1 percentage points (See [Annex Table 10](#) for the regression results). When looked separately being NEET decreases volunteering (i.e. active participation) by 1.2 percentage points and CSO membership by 7.8 percentage points. Overall being male, being older, having high school education or higher and household wealth are other variables that are significantly positively associated with civic engagement for youth. Having good health and household size is negatively associated with civic engagement. Those reporting mediocre health or lower might be more likely to be members of CSOs focusing efforts on health issues, or it might be picking up the effect of an omitted variable.

**Figure 21.** Among youth, civic engagement is higher among men, older youth, youth with higher education and youth living in wealthier households



Source: Time Use Survey 2015, Authors' calculations

# 3. COST OF NEET AND POLICIES TO ADDRESS YOUTH INACTIVITY

This section of the report focuses on putting a value to the cost of NEET and then considering public policies and civil society interventions that address the problem of youth inactivity, by engaging and empowering youth through various programmes.

## 3.1 Costing the Problem

**Being NEET has serious costs for the individual and society.** Years of youth are the time where individuals improve their human capital by investing in themselves. However, when young people neither are in school nor work, they spend these key years not gaining the valuable human capital or job experience that they will accumulate on and use to build a healthy and successful life in adulthood. Loss of this opportunity to become a more productive version of oneself is also a loss for the communities and economies and create interlinked and negative consequences at different levels.

**First and foremost being NEET has negative effects at the individual level.** Unemployment is associated with poorer psychological and physical health according to a meta-analysis of 104 empirical studies.<sup>53</sup> Apart from unemployment, the inactive NEET youth seems to report even more poorly of their current health status. Using a survey conducted in 33 European countries “disengaged” or “inactive” NEET youth’s self-reported health status was found to be poorer than the non-NEET youth or the unemployed.<sup>54</sup> The disengaged youth were also found to score less on trust and social activity as well. Being NEET does not only create current problems but has long-lasting and scarring negative effects on health and was found to be associated with poor physical and mental health outcomes years later. The length of NEET spells was found to be positively associated with psychotic drug purchases and inpatient and outpatient mental health service use in Finland.<sup>55</sup> According to a longitudinal study from Scotland analysing the effect of being NEET 10 years later the risk of depression or anxiety prescription is around 50% higher for the NEET youth compared to non-NEET youth.<sup>56</sup> Hospitalizations after an emergency care visit are also found to be significantly higher for the NEET youth as well as the prevalence of limiting long term illnesses compared to non-NEET youth 10 years and 20 years later. Another health hazard NEET status creates is a higher incidence of substance abuse. Duration of unemployment was found to be associated with alcohol dependence and substance abuse as well as major

<sup>53</sup> McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005

<sup>54</sup> Nordenmark, Gådin, Selander, Sjödin, & Sellström, 2015

<sup>55</sup> OECD, 2019

<sup>56</sup> Cox et al., 2015

depression and lower life satisfaction among youth in New Zealand.<sup>57</sup> Especially those NEET youth who are not engaged in home production activities either, hence the inactive among the inactive or those who are completely idle, were found to be the most vulnerable group in terms of substance abuse according to a study of the youth aged 19-26 years old in Mexico.<sup>58</sup>

**Being NEET has detrimental and long-lasting effects on future employability and future earnings of the individuals.** The same longitudinal study from Scotland found that being NEET has a “scarring effect” in employment outcomes as well.<sup>59</sup> Young people who are NEET in 2001 were found to be 2.8 times as likely to be unemployed or inactive compared to their non-NEET counterparts 10 years later. And the negative effect was found to accumulate such that those who were NEET in both 1991 and 2001 were found to be 9 times more likely to be NEET in 2011 compared to their non-NEET counterparts in 1991. Gregg (2001) also finds a similar effect using data from the UK finding that cumulative unemployment experiences up to age 23 increase the probability to be unemployed in the following years.<sup>60</sup> Being NEET is also found to constitute a trap according to a study from Mexico such that being NEET today increases the likelihood of being NEET one year later.<sup>61</sup> Youth unemployment was also found to leave a “wage scar” as well. According to a study from the UK, a year of youth unemployment was found to decrease the wage at age 42 by 13-21%.<sup>62</sup> Another study this time from the US also finds a similar long-lasting effect on earnings showing that six-month unemployment at the age of 22 yielding about a 4 percent earning deficit at the age of 30.<sup>63</sup>

**At a more macro level, high levels of NEET are harmful to society creating large economic costs.** NEET youth population have economic costs for the country through (i) foregone productivity, (ii) loss of human capital and (iii) possible increase in public finances (as a result of unemployment benefits or other allowances) in countries where they are available. The economic costs are estimated by different publications as 1% of the aggregate GDP of EU member states and between 0.9% and 1.5% of aggregate GDP of OECD countries.<sup>64</sup>

**High levels of NEET also have social costs.** NEET youth are at risk of total alienation not only economically but also socially. According to a study conducted in EU countries, NEET youth were found to have lower levels of institutional and interpersonal trust, political engagement and social and civic engagement compared to non-NEET youth.<sup>65</sup> Increased levels of youth unemployment are also found to be associated with increased levels of crime creating another risk factor for the society. Comparing county-level youth unemployment levels with crime rates, Fougere et al (2009) found that there is a significant positive correlation between youth unemployment and crime rates in burglaries, theft and drug offences.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Fergusson, McLeod, & Horwood, 2014

<sup>58</sup> Gutiérrez-García, Benjet, Borges, Ríos, & Medina-Mora, 2018

<sup>59</sup> Cox et al., 2015

<sup>60</sup> Gregg, 2001

<sup>61</sup> Ranzani & Rosati, 2013

<sup>62</sup> Gregg, 2001

<sup>63</sup> Mroz & Savage, 2003

<sup>64</sup> OECD, 2016 ; Eurofound, 2012

<sup>65</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>66</sup> Fougère, Pouget, & Kramarz, 2009

NEET youth are also often considered to be at risk of problematic psychosocial outcomes given that they are more likely to be coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. One study carried out in Canada shows that mental health problems, addictive behaviours, depression, and involvement in crime are higher among NEET youth.<sup>67</sup> Research in the UK described the cost of NEET population in the following categories, educational underachievement, unemployment, underemployment, inactivity, early motherhood, crime, poor health status, and substance abuse.<sup>68</sup>

**The cost of the NEET population is often estimated in public finance costs and resource costs.** Public finance costs are derived from welfare benefits, lost taxes, and national insurance payments. Resource costs are a combination of estimated loss in foregone earnings and welfare losses.<sup>69</sup> International studies looking at the cost of NEET estimate, for instance, that in the UK, the average per capita cost of NEET population at age 16-18 is as high as 45,000 GBP in resource costs and 52,000 GBP in public finance costs.<sup>70</sup> A comparative study found that in 2011, the cost of NEETs, in absolute terms, were €32.6 billion in Italy, €22 billion in France, €18 billion in the UK, and €15.7 billion in Spain.<sup>71</sup>

OECD's *Society at a Glance* report for 2016 uses this approach and using the number of methods estimates that for the year 2014, the foregone income in OECD countries is between 0.9 and 1.5% of the OECD GDP or between USD 360 billion and USD 605 billion.<sup>72</sup> The report estimates Turkey to have the highest opportunity cost between OECD countries due to having the highest youth NEET rate. The report only reports the lower bound estimate for Turkey which is calculated as 3.4 percent of the GDP for the year 2014. In our report, we build on the OECD model and update the results using more recent data<sup>73</sup> and three different assumptions on potential wage rates. In each methodology, different net hourly earnings of NEET youth are used to get a sense of different possibilities and have a range of values. These methodologies are: (i) predicted wage, (ii) mean wage by gender and age group and (iii) minimum wage methods. Details of these methodologies and calculation steps are provided in **Annex 2. Methodology Note for Cost of NEET Estimation** of this report.

**Table 1.** *Cost of NEETs (as % of GDP)*<sup>74</sup>

	Women	Men	Overall
Predicted Wage Method Estimates	1.62	0.74	2.37
Mean Wage Method Estimates	2.49	0.67	3.15
Minimum Wage Method Estimates	1.95	0.67	2.62

<sup>67</sup> Henderson, Hawke, & Chaim, 2017

<sup>68</sup> Coles, Godfrey, Keung, Parrott, & Bradshaw, 2010

<sup>69</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>70</sup> Godfrey et al., 2002

<sup>71</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>72</sup> OECD, 2016

<sup>73</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017c

<sup>74</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017a

Since the NEET rate is higher for women all three methods estimate the cost of NEET youth women to be higher than NEET youth men. The cost of NEET youth women ranges between 1.62 and 2.49 percent of the GDP while the cost of NEET youth men is less than half of these values and ranges between 0.67 and 0.74 percent of the GDP. In total NEET youth costs Turkey TRY 74 billion (18.5 billion EURO) and TRY 98 billion (24.7 billion EURO) corresponding to 2.37 and 3.16 percent of the GDP.

**Table 2.** *Cost of NEETs (in billion EURO in 2017)<sup>75</sup>*

	Women	Men	Overall
Predicted Wage Method Estimates	12.7	5.8	18.5
Mean Wage Method Estimates	19.5	5.2	24.7
Minimum Wage Method Estimates	15.2	5.3	20.5

## 3.2 Public Policies to Address the Problem of NEET Youth

**Addressing the problem of NEET youth within the policy framework firstly entails a broad discussion on welfare state change toward social investment perspective and then positioning youth in this policy paradigm.** The academic debate on analysing welfare state change has been devoted to understanding unresolved challenges resulting from macroeconomic and demographic changes and the emergence of new social risks.<sup>76</sup> Straddling between retrenchment and recalibration, post-industrial welfare states have encountered the portents of tension between employment-friendly recalibration and labour market competitiveness.<sup>77</sup> The generosity of welfare states came under pressure with the onset of the 1980s, and new social risks such as precarious employment, human capital depletion due to technological changes, youth and long-term unemployment, increasing levels of early school dropout and rapidly ageing society came to fore.<sup>78</sup> Amid these challenges, scholars and politicians propounded new approaches to define the transformation of welfare states, among which the idea of “social investment” gained considerable attention in academic and political debates. The social investment approach argues that the sustainability of welfare states lies in a costly but potentially productive social investment strategy relying on “*capacitating and compensatory*” policy interventions.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, it is important to raise and upkeep the quality of human capital and capabilities and break the social disadvantages transmitted across generations in this approach. From a lifespan perspective, people from childhood to elderhood shall be supported with “skill enhancement and training services in case of unemployment, health, family and housing support”.<sup>80</sup> Social

<sup>75</sup> Exchange rate is taken as 3.97 TL/EURO as the June 2017 exchange rate. [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en)

<sup>76</sup> See, for instance, Hausermann and Palier, 2008; Hemerijck 2018; Pierson 2001

<sup>77</sup> Hausermann and Palier, 2008

<sup>78</sup> Esping-Andersen, Gallie, Hemerijck and Myles, 2002

<sup>79</sup> Hemerijck, 2018

<sup>80</sup> Ibid



interventions are also needed to ensure efficient and optimal allocation of employment, have a “buffer” function with universal minimum income protection and also stabilise the labour market and, therefore, become a buffer zone in case of economic shocks.<sup>81</sup> This intervention logic based on social investment approach is highly related to address public policy endeavours struggling to tackle the NEET problem, improve the stock of youth labour and provide them with sustainable economic conditions where they can fulfil their capacity without structural barriers that this report seeks to address.

**Negative consequences of being a NEET may persist later in life, hence, early interventions matter.** Addressing the issue of NEET and reducing the number of NEETs pose a great challenge for governments and policymakers both in developed and transition economies. Knowing that NEET is often composed of already disadvantaged youth with low educational attainment, targeted interventions starting from early stages, e.g. when the person is still in education, play an essential role.<sup>82</sup> There are a variety of interventions, ranging from skills development training to mentoring and cash benefit programmes, addressing NEET youth in different countries. While nation-wide youth policies are crucial, programmes delivered by civil society actors are also of great importance and may lead to positive outcomes.

**Reducing the rate of economic and social participation of youth still poses a challenge for governments and policymakers.** Evidence abounds in the literature to support the view that education, training and labour market institutions appear to be related to the risk of being NEET.<sup>83</sup> As reviewed in the Eurofound (2012) report, prominent discussions revolving around the determinants of NEET focus on the role of labour market institutions (i.e. employment protection legislation, minimum wages and active labour market policy (ALMP)), vocational education programmes and adult unemployment rate.<sup>84</sup> The report analyses the variation in the share of NEETs aged 15 to 29 years across the EU member states between 1992 and 2009 using the European LFS and various data sources on institutional country characteristics.<sup>85</sup> On the institutional side, the research provides robust evidence that ALMPs supporting the matching process of youths with the labour market and a dual system of vocational training (i.e. combining classroom-based vocational education with workplace-based training) can foster lowering the NEET rate.<sup>86</sup> On the supply side from the labour market from a macro-level perspective, Kelly and McGuinness (2013) analyse the extent to which transition to employment among NEETs and prime-aged unemployed changed in Ireland during the economic recession between 2006 and 2011 using the longitudinal data from the Quarterly National Household Survey.<sup>87</sup> The researchers argue that the transition rate of NEETs and prime-aged unemployed individuals to the labour market decreased due to recession-related external factors such as a rise in the marginal value of

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Bruno, Marelli, & Signorelli, 2014 ; Kelly & McGuinness, 2013 ; Tamesberger & Bacherb, 2014 ; Tamesberger, Leitgöb, & Bacher, 2014 ; Eurofound, 2012

<sup>84</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Kelly & McGuinness, 2013



education. They suggest the importance of improving the labour market conditions through structural and long-term regulations focusing on investing in human capital and skill-matching and designing the vocational education accordingly.<sup>88</sup> In this regard, various interventions ranging from mentorship programmes to subsidised employment programmes are being implemented in different settings.<sup>89</sup>

**Despite these well-defined conceptual frameworks in the literature, how to contextualise these interventions and, more broadly, youth policies in Turkey to address the problem of NEET youth is an important intellectual challenge.**

In the literature, social policy discussions related to youth have long been neglected in the country, and there are a few studies particularly focusing on youth to discuss social policies. Yilmaz (2016)'s study, in this regard, provides analytical parsimony that attunes readers to the main characteristics of social policies for young people in Turkey. Referring to seminal discussions related welfare state regime typologies, and particularly to Chevalier's two-dimension typology of cross-national youth welfare citizenship models, Yilmaz (2016) argues that the Turkish state plays a minor role in providing income support for youth, treats youth not as individual adults and makes youth rely on family income support. Turkey also follows a selective strategy in terms of providing educational and labour market outcomes for youth. The author argues that the higher education attainment is comparatively low in Turkey given that "four out of ten young people pursue higher education" whereas those who graduate from the lower secondary education or complete the 12-year compulsory education either participate in the labour market "from the bottom end" (and this group is mostly male) or stay out of the labour market (and this group is mostly female).<sup>90</sup> In this regard, Turkey fits with the denied youth citizenship type in Chevalier's typology, leaving youth dependent on their families for income support, vulnerable to labour market conditions (mostly for young men) or staying at home (mostly for young women). To talk of Turkey representing "the denied youth citizenship type" is to denote to the fact that addressing the problems of NEET cannot be simply restricted to individual preferences or a single policy area targeting youth in Turkey. Rather, policy decisions and contexts within which youth live shape their lives and their access to education and employment. The undermentioned policy discussions in this chapter, therefore, seek to address challenges of NEET and youth policies to tackle these challenges in the country for a comprehensive view.

**Active labour market policies (ALMPs) also comprise one of the nation-wide policies considered as an important policy tool to tackle youth unemployment.** ALMPs are defined as "labour market policy interventions that the welfare state uses to 'actively' increase the employment probability of jobseekers and decrease aggregate unemployment" and mainly consist of four

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<sup>88</sup> Kelly & McGuinness, 2013 ; Eurofound, 2012

<sup>89</sup> Carcillo et al., 2015

<sup>90</sup> Yilmaz, 2016, pp.10-12

types of programmes: i) job search assistance, ii) (labour market) training, iii) private sector employment incentives, and iv) public sector employment.<sup>91</sup> The main features of these programmes mainly include but not limited to job search training, counselling, work practice, basic or life skills training, wage subsidies, self-employment assistance, start-up grants and direct creation and provision of public work. Even though providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of ALMPs in tackling youth unemployment entails a comprehensive approach considering a diverse set of programmes and country-specific policies, there are seminal studies reviewing evidence on youth-oriented ALMPs across several countries.<sup>92</sup> European Training Foundation (2014) carrying out the traditional literature survey (i.e. a narrative review) and a quantitative review using a meta-analysis identify systematic patterns of effectiveness by ALMP programme types.<sup>93</sup> For instance, **wage subsidy programmes** are found out as effective in addressing the need of youth to enter the market provided that these subsidies are designed for specific target groups in well-defined contexts (i.e. sector or regions) so that they do not distort the labour market with the large scale of intervention.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, **skill training programmes** are found to be “the most popular and most frequently used programme and theoretically also the most promising one due to the human capital formation component”, but the impact of these training programmes is materialised in the long run and programmes “with durations of about four to five months seem to achieve maximum effectiveness”.<sup>95</sup> Despite the importance of this existing body of evidence to understand the effectiveness of youth-oriented ALMPs, it is important to note that ALMPs cannot solve structural labour market problems and “create jobs, particularly during periods of slack demand” whereas, as pointed out by ILO (2015), ALMPs can “help redress education and labour market failures, while promoting efficient allocation of labour and social justice” and “prevent labour market detachment and prepare youth to take jobs after crises”.<sup>96</sup>

**Delving more into the Turkish context in terms of the implementation of ALMPs and its effectiveness reveals that ALMPs is an important youth employment measure in the country, but there are still further steps needed to integrate youth to the labour market and improve their skills.** The implementation of ALMPs at the national level dates back to 2004 through the policy reforms mainly informed by the EU and the World Bank, and the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) has played a leading role in carrying out ALMPs in the country.<sup>97</sup> Under this role of İŞKUR, labour force development courses, entrepreneurship training, the KOSGEB entrepreneurship support program and on-the-job training (traineeship) programs have been implemented to reduce unemployment and improve the labour skill.<sup>98</sup> In terms of the ALMPs specifically addressing youth, in line with the Tenth Development Plan, policy measures have been developed in the Mid-term Plan as follows<sup>99</sup>:

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<sup>91</sup> Kluve, 2014

<sup>92</sup> See, for instance, Kluve, 2014 and Maibom, Rosholm, & Svarer, 2014.

<sup>93</sup> Kluve, 2014

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Rosas, 2015

<sup>97</sup> Gökşen, Yüksek, Kuz, & Öker, 2015

<sup>98</sup> European Commission, 2017

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

- *Individuals will be instilled with basic and vocational skills suitable to the demands of the labour market; policies aimed at reduction of youth unemployment, facilitation of integration of young people in the labour market and ensuring appropriateness for working and family life will be implemented, and the active labour policies will be implemented based on the effect analyses made on a regional and sectoral basis.*
- *Youth employment and entrepreneurship will be supported under the policy to accelerate the integration of young people in the labour market and to enhance their skills. Loan support, monetary support in blank and income tax exemption for young people finding a job for the first time, establishing a new business, wishing to run their own business and young farmers will be provided.*

**While ALMPs within the frame of skill training and entrepreneurship were addressed with specific mentions to youth in policy documents, there are not any specific regulations prioritizing and targeting youth, in general, or NEET youth in a direct way.** Furthermore, the World Bank report analysing the impact of İŞKUR programmes in 2013 indicates that the overall impact of İŞKUR training on employment is negligible whereas courses are found to have a small but significant effect on the quality of employment.<sup>100</sup> Based on its findings, the report highlights the importance of well-designed targeting for training and the existence of mismatch between expectations and reality, particularly among youth, that “overestimate future benefits and underestimate future costs of action”.<sup>101</sup> Even though the report does not specifically focus on youth-oriented ALMPs in Turkey, these findings provide an important overview to guide policy actions to design ALMPs targeting youth and matching their specific needs and expectations to integrate them in the labour market effectively. Furthermore, educational attainment of young women is correlated with higher levels of labour market attachment and increased opportunities for young girls for attaining university degrees may have a positive impact on their future employment opportunities. Active labour market policies targeting specifically youth and women, such as a reduction in employment costs and subsidization of social security benefits, are also welcome options for improving their engagement early on in the labour market, that should be continued and promoted.

**As the three-quarters of NEET in Turkey are women, and their labour market disengagement is linked to unpaid household chores and care activities, one important step in addressing this problem, is through making publicly and widely available services that would replace these young women’s domestic chores and give them the option and opportunity to engage more fully in the labour market outside their homes.** Related to this finding, it is important to contextualise social care service provisioning in the nexus of female employment and welfare regime in Turkey. As aforementioned before, the Turkish welfare regime has a gendered character meaning that the institutional setting of policies leaves females dependent on the patriarchal family relations and discriminate against women in terms of their access to the labour market.<sup>102</sup> Within this context, “the availability of high-quality, affordable social care

<sup>100</sup> World Bank, 2013

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Bugra and Yakut-Cakar, 2010

services and the alleviation of the constraints on female labour supply” is of paramount importance not only to address the problems of NEET female youth but also to offer inclusive policy solutions at the same time.<sup>103</sup> In this regard, the seminal study conducted by Ilkcaracan, Kim and Kaya (2015) reveal that additional public investment in the early childhood care and preschool education (ECCPE) sector for Turkey to catch up with the average OECD preschool education enrolment rate would create 719,000 new jobs in ECCPE and other sectors (and 73% of these jobs were estimated to be allocated for women). Comparing the ECCPE sector investment with the construction investment, the authors also argue that this investment in the ECCPE sector would create more decent work than the construction sector in terms of generating new jobs with social security benefits. Furthermore, from the perspective of the demand-side economic rationale for public investment, expansion in the ECCPE sector would provide “*decent employment creation, gender equality, and poverty alleviation, as well as fiscal sustainability*” and be an important catalyst to increase the labour market participation of women. Therefore, this study opens up a creative avenue where it is possible to discuss that the prioritisation of public investment to the ECCPE sector can be a good example as a policy practice to engage women in the labour market and create inclusive and sustainable growth in the country.

From the policy side, it is also important to note that the gendered character of social care provision offering cash transfers to families to take care of children, the disabled or the elderly consolidates the role of women as caregivers in Turkey.<sup>104</sup> This social care policy “*towards the replacement of institutional care by family care*” provides substitution of at-home care for labour market participation, and, therefore, encourages women to undertake traditional family activities and keeps women out of the labour force.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, as discussed by Bugra (2017), “*the combination of low wages, long working hours and the inadequate public social care provision does not encourage female labour force participation*”.<sup>106</sup> From the demand side in the labour market, there is persistent gender inequality, and women are more likely to be employed in low-paid jobs and in lower-ranked occupations than men<sup>107</sup>, which can also exacerbate a higher proportion of NEET females among youth.

**Providing policy incentives specifically focusing on the restricted employment and education prospects of the disabled is also an important step to tackle the NEET problem in Turkey.** As Yilmaz (2019) suggests in his explanatory qualitative study that low educational attainment, low level of physical accessibility and accessibility of information are important obstacles for the disabled to participate in the labour market along with other structural discriminations such as workplace discrimination and gender inequalities.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Ilkcaracan, Kim and Kaya 2015

<sup>104</sup> Bugra & Yakut-Cakar, 2010; Yilmaz, 2018

<sup>105</sup> Bugra & Yakut-Cakar, 2010

<sup>106</sup> Bugra, 2017

<sup>107</sup> Gedikli, 2015

<sup>108</sup> Yilmaz, 2019



Even though a reduced level of income tax is offered to increase the labour market participation of the disabled and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified in 2009, there is a more holistic approach deemed necessary to provide the rights-based legal framework and ensure the transformation of social attitudes towards the disabled in Turkey.<sup>109</sup> In other words, current policy incentives shall be supported by effective anti-discriminatory, inclusive and systematic policy efforts combined with measures to ensure the social integration of the disabled. Furthermore, labour market integration and effective education policies are not mutually exclusive for the disabled as is the case for the whole population. Although the right to access education for the disabled is ensured de jure through the comprehensive legal framework in Turkey<sup>110</sup>, experiences regarding the education of the disabled indicate the inadequate practicalities for ensuring access to education for this group.<sup>111</sup> Up-to-date and disaggregated data on disability is scarce in Turkey. The survey on problems and expectations of disabled people was conducted by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and TÜİK in 2010.<sup>112</sup> According to this survey, 41.6% of registered disabled people over 6 are illiterate and 18.2% of them are literate but without a diploma. Of these registered individuals over the age of 6, 7.7% of them have a high school degree or above.<sup>113</sup> On top of these striking numbers indicating how the disabled people are at a serious disadvantage in access to education, Sart et. al. (2016) discuss that, even if disabled children are enrolled in school, they face with physical infrastructural problems, material shortages, the shortage of key staff such as counsellors, exclusion and discrimination from teachers, other students or parents.<sup>114</sup> For this reason, it is important to incentivise employment and education measures distinctively focusing on the disabled to make sure they are inclusively engaged in labour market and education without institutional and societal challenges that they currently face.

**Increasing youth civic participation has been on Turkey's official policy agenda since 2012 although much of the emphasis on policy documents remains limited to encouraging 'volunteer activities of youth'.** The National Youth and Sports Policy Document dated 2012 and numbered 4242 emphasises targets of increasing young people's volunteering activities, raising awareness, and supporting their engagement in NGOs.<sup>115</sup> While the definition of youth civic engagement in this target had been limited to volunteering activities, we must encounter an explicit pronouncement of 'youth' in a policy document.

**Alternative models to engage youth that is already being implemented by youth CSOs are worth exploring and can be regarded as useful resources to contribute to the policy discussions.** The 11th Development Plan (2019-2023)

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Please see, for instance, the Law No.5378 for Persons with Disabilities (LPD) passed in 2005, the Statutory Decree No.573 on Special Education ratified in 1997 and the Special Education Services Regulation (SESER) revised in 2012.

<sup>111</sup> Sart, Barış, Sarıışık and Düşkün, 2016

<sup>112</sup> This survey was restricted to the target population of 280,014 disabled individuals recorded in the National Disabled People Database.

<sup>113</sup> Ministry of Family and Social Policy and TÜİK, 2010

<sup>114</sup> Sart, Barış, Sarıışık and Düşkün, 2016

<sup>115</sup> Dereci & Ersen, 2017

Youth Working Group Report provides an array of policy suggestions concerning institutional reforms to ensure collaboration between civil society and public institutions and increase the democratic participation of youth and youth volunteering. The ‘participation’ section under the report addresses the necessity of increasing the participation of youth in civil society organisations.<sup>116</sup> The report specifically emphasises that youth policies should take into consideration of NEETs separately in gender and regional breakdowns, create a system to monitor NEET youth and improve their access to social and public services. However, the report does not offer a detailed approach to how this system can be designed and what it entails for in terms of the involvement of civil society organisations and designing institutional structures. As for volunteering, the report accepts that new regulations are deemed necessary to support youth volunteering and formalise channels to meet the basic needs of youth volunteers such as providing financial support. This point raised in the report is particularly important to legalise and recognise the contribution of youth into society and ultimately increase their engagement but needs to be urgently structured and implemented legally. Engaging civil society organisations in increasing the democratic participation of youth and improving the legal structure to encourage youth participation may help to empower youth and potentially present volunteering models in social and public domains for scale-up.

### 3.3 Civil Society Models for Youth Development and Empowerment in Turkey

**Civil society organisations (CSOs) are important players for activating and empowering young people in society.** To prevent the loss of human resources, and offset the difficulties revived related to unemployment and school dropouts, countries have also been developing various strategies both with public policies and with the support of non-governmental actors in the field.<sup>117</sup> Many examples in CSOs’ involvement in youth programmes are effective in various OECD countries. This trend is not limited to Europe, OECD-MENA countries in the region such as Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia are also working on expanding youth civic engagement (OECD, 2018). Youth empowerment and activating youth with increased participation in society have certainly become an important policy topic.

In this section of the report, we present some civil society models for youth empowerment in Turkey.

#### Sample Selection for CSO Case Studies

**As part of this study, we have selected 4 case studies of youth empowerment CSOs in Turkey and have analysed their action models as case studies for how to increase economic and social engagement and involvement of youth in society.** The CSOs each have different operating/action models, means of engaging young people in their activities and different target/beneficiary audiences. While we acknowledge that these CSOs do not specifically target and

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<sup>116</sup> Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018

<sup>117</sup> Eurofound, 2012; Müller & Gangl, 2003



work with NEET youth, they bring forth positive models of youth engagement and empowerment that provide opportunities for youth to engage and become more active citizens. In this section of the report, we aim to highlight some of the positive ways that youth NGOs manage to increase the involvement of youth in civic and economic engagement and activities. The study uses the following definitions, which refer to the stages of inclusion/involvement of the youth in civic engagement activities, based on the current literature on youth studies:

**Development** (Positive youth development): processes and studies aimed at making young people feel confident, adequate, useful, valued and strong while developing their technical and social skills.

**Empowerment** (Collective youth empowerment): processes and studies aimed at improving young people's factual judgement competencies, decision-making and problem-solving skills and creating an environment in which they can do group work, lead groups and conduct activities for their communities. These processes and studies also include the development of the youth.

**Involvement** (Social involvement of the youth): Processes and studies aimed at enabling young people to see themselves as strong actors in creating positive, egalitarian and equitable social change and improve their technical, social, analytical and questioning skills by enabling them to actively participate in public life and make decisions that concern them, influence decisions and develop their critical awareness in the context of social involvement.<sup>118</sup> These efforts also include the empowerment of the youth.

Based on the above definitions, social involvement is considered a stage that foregrounds creating positive, egalitarian social change that involves the individual development and collective empowerment of the youth through being in constant interaction with these processes. Generally, these definitions focus on positive youth development and empowerment, and in certain ways, these models, while not directly and specifically targeting the problem of “NEET”, focus on ways of empowering and engaging young people – hence provide positive options/means for increasing youth activity. Hence, they provide positive solutions/and engagement models for increasing youth activity in the labour market and more widely in community and civil society actions.

**The study examines 4 different civil society organizations in Turkey, whose common goal is to work with young people voluntarily and/or within the context of social responsibility projects, concerning the sample programs they run with the youth.** These institutions are as follows, based on the order in which they are cited in the report: Young Guru Academy (YGA), Girls Without

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<sup>118</sup> As the focus of the study was limited to the involvement of young people in civic engagement activities, the concept of involvement exclusively refers to social involvement. Political and economic involvement with reference to the participation of young people in political decision-making processes and policy-making mechanisms, were excluded from the scope of the study.

Barriers Project, Community Volunteers Foundation and Toy Youth Association. These institutions and their programs which we consider examples of good practice were identified following a preliminary investigation of civic organizations developing youth projects and/or working with young volunteers.<sup>119</sup>

As part of the study, written documents kept by the institutions were examined, semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers and youth workers and a focus group discussion was held with the young volunteers. Also, semi-structured interviews with experts in youth studies were conducted at the beginning of the study. The review seeks to understand how the action model supports the development, empowerment and involvement of the target group with a focus on the programs' intervention models.

## Case Study 1: Young Guru Academy (YGA)

The Young Guru Academy (YGA) is a non-profit non-governmental organization established in 2000. The organization has been working to empower young people through the development of technological innovation projects that address



social needs. They develop international projects to help solve the problems their communities face. The innovations, alongside the climate of cooperation, that they create make them role models.

### Empowerment Model

YGA defines its primary and holistic purpose as raising young generations with entrepreneurial skills that can become role models. The institution's vision of "implementing technology-based innovations for the benefit of humanity" and exporting these innovations to the world determines the focus and scope of the work of the entire institution. YGA aims to raise the leaders of the future who combine compassion with innovation. These criteria point towards the kind of mental development YGA seeks to achieve in the youth as well as YGA's criteria and preferences for its target group.

The main approaches and methods used by YGA for the development, empowerment and involvement of the youth within the above-cited mechanism are as follows:

- **Mentoring / Role modelling:** Learning by watching/observing, working closely with, discussing things and exchanging ideas with the mentor. Mentoring is considered at YGA a very important role and one of the most important tools for personal development. Mentors have the responsibility to be a role model for volunteers with their behaviours and attitudes. This is also an important part of YGA's close interaction model that contains only a

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<sup>119</sup> The following were taken into account when selecting examples of good practice: the effectiveness of the programs and availability of data that can prove it, the structure and capacity of the institutions, the way the programs interact with young volunteers and their approach to youth and youth empowerment. The study tried to include a broad cross section of programs. The voluntary participation of institutions in the study was also decisive for the selection of cases.

few young people in small groups.

- **Providing a safe environment for young people (An environment of trust):** This is one of the most basic approaches of YGA. All of YGA's work and the system is based around the assumption that the development of young people and seeing them reach their true potential can only take place in an appropriate “environment” where they feel safe. Young people can show their full potential in a productive work environment within the team and the institution that promotes interaction, that is about the only way they can fully mature and develop into fully-functioning individuals. YGA operates a very comprehensive system to provide that kind of environment for young people as well as enabling young people to fully contribute to the creation of such an environment: systematic assessment of the environment on an individual and team basis is one of the most important tools in this process.
- **Teamwork and team learning:** “Achieving together” is a principle that is central to the YGA approach. Achieving together means that young people are empowered together, learn from each other while working on a project, question each other constructively; sharing their observations and experiences with one another. These processes are also supported by a climate of trust. One of the most important tools for teamwork and team learning are the 1.5-hour progress meetings held at the beginning of each week. In these meetings, young members share their experiences and observations that have influenced them over the past week, and the brought up topics are discussed by the team from different perspectives.
- **Structured freedom:** While this concept gives young people the freedom, and the space to express their ideas and bring them to life (i.e. youth involvement), it also means there are structures and mechanisms in place that support young people and their work, help them make/implement decisions and learn.

One of the main objectives of the YGA program is to allow young people to approach the work they do for delivering social benefits from a systematic perspective wherein they ask: “How can I do this work better, more effectively and reach out to more people?” This approach is not limited to volunteers but also determines how YGA employees deal with YGA-related processes and decisions. Based on concrete observations in the field, the question of how science sessions can be more effective and impactful and how they can be held at more schools to touch the lives of more children is therefore always on the agenda of YGA.

## Target Group

YGA defines its target group as young people who are aware of and concerned about social problems in Turkey and the world (responsible), who believe that these problems can be resolved and that things can change (hopeful) and are willing to invest time and effort to bring about the changes necessary to solve the problems (capable).<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> In youth studies, these categories roughly correspond to the concepts of critical awareness, efficacy and agency.

These criteria also form the definition of the wings of YGA youth with one wing defining “**compassion**” wing of YGA and the other “**innovation**”.<sup>121</sup>

Young people should have awareness of social issues, assume social responsibility and act to contribute to positive change for humanity. It is very important for YGA that the youth keep an eye on the latest trends in technology that can be used to create social benefits and have the knowledge and skills to keep up to speed with them. In this way, young people can create lasting, effective, practical social benefits through effective teamwork and using technology. This change is supported by the approach of YGA towards attitude and safe environment: Young people can show their full potential in a properly designed environment in the team and the institution where they can work efficiently and interact with one another.

## Activities

In YGA, annual programs are run with primary school, secondary school, high school and university students (YGA volunteers) to bring to life social innovation projects. Start-up companies are structures that have evolved from technological inventions that are a product of activities run as part of YGA programmes; reaching a level where they can independently conduct their activities. The best-known examples known to the public are TWIN science sets to inspire a love for and teach technology to children, and also WeWALK, a talking stick for the visually impaired to help improve their mobility. Both projects were developed and implemented by graduates who became YGA volunteers and then later returned to YGA.

YGA programmes for university youth, on which we focus in the study, accepts into its 1-year program between 30 and 50 young university students each year after a rigorous selection process. One of the most important components of the YGA action model is that it sees itself as a *entrepreneurship school* and has adopted the principle of one-to-one interaction and in-depth cooperation with young people. Although YGA is a relatively large institution, this is one of the main reasons why there is a limited number of young volunteers admitted to the program each year.

Young people involved in the programme work with YGA graduates in their first year on the Project for Promoting Science in Anatolia and also receive training delivered by their dream partners. In these early years, young people and their teams conduct science sessions with children in disadvantaged village schools in various cities of Anatolia using the TWIN science sets. They participate in the planning, execution and evaluation stages of these sessions. Science sessions in Anatolia are a very important part of the “young university students” program, an event in which all young volunteers participate in their first years, and a fundamental part of YGA's “hands-on learning” approach, which we will mention below.<sup>122</sup> The aim in doing so is to enable young people to put their skills such as project execution and teamwork into practise as well as develop an

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<sup>121</sup> It should be noted that the youth accepted to the program following the assessment mostly study at leading universities in Turkey. And these criteria have mostly to do with “professional competencies.”

<sup>122</sup> YGA conducts its scientific sessions in 2019 under a protocol signed with the Ministry of Education

awareness regions of Turkey. After the first year, young people have the opportunity to continue the programme depending upon their interests, wishes, achievements and the assessments by their mentors.<sup>123</sup> In addition to the science campaign, young people who continue the programme after one year have the opportunity to take part in other projects of YGA, support work in start-ups and develop their area of expertise in the process (marketing, technology development, etc.).

In summary, YGA defines its youth entrepreneurial programme within the framework of an approach that aims at continuous improvement and development of the solutions it offers and their impact; allowing a continuous review of the programme and its impact on children and letting team members take innovative (creative) action where necessary for a more effective program that can be accessed by broader sections of the society. And these innovative actions offer volunteers a new environment within which to continue their development within YGA.

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<sup>123</sup> YGA states that they receive almost 50,000 applications each year.



## Case Study 2: Girls Without Barriers Project

Girls Without Barriers (Kizlar Atakta) is a project to empower underprivileged young girls between ages of 12-18. The project aims to increase the mental and physical capacities of socially excluded disadvantaged young girls via sports, nature and teamwork. The Girls without Barriers project takes place in the form of one-week summer camps, 2-day-weekend camps, long term one to one mentorships (role model volunteer women) and open-source educational resources.



### Target Group

The project focuses on the adolescence period in which young girls have the highest risk of losing their self-confidence and aims to empower young girls in subjects like self-confidence, basic living skills, gender and social sensitivity. The starting point of the project is to be supportive/supplementary for personal growth areas in which the classical education system falls short. While fictionalizing the project, it was thought that being guided at a young age in the above-mentioned areas of self-confidence, basic living skills, gender and social sensitivity creates a significant change. Under the scope of the project, young girls coming from different ethnic groups, cultures and social-economic classes get together for weekly periods and experience weekly camp programmes prepared for them.

The project which was supported by The Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, related civil society associations and private sector, is brought into action in Dreams Academy's Kaş facilities with the donation fund of the Empower Foundation.

### Empowerment Model

The long-term vision of the programme is raising “highly motivated, confident, courageous and socially active young girls” In the context of this vision, the programme defines its role as developing sustainable social change programmes that enable young girls in this age group to empower themselves by enhancing their mental and physical abilities through sport, nature and teamwork.<sup>124</sup>

While one-week may not be a long time, the goal of the programme is to instil in the girls a sense of empowerment and awareness of their strength. The camp programme emphasizes that the program has a very important and realistic goal for change and that is to make young girls aware of their strength. In other words, the aim is to show young girls concretely that they can do many things that they think they cannot do (which for that reason they have never tried). To that end, camping activities are designed to make them push themselves a bit beyond their limits so that they can experience a concrete sensation of having

<sup>124</sup> Website of the Girls without Barriers Project: <http://kizlaratakta.org>



achieved something. The model assumes that this experience may lead to them feeling more secure and confident when making future decisions and taking personal steps about their lives.

## Role of Volunteers

Six volunteer young women between the ages of 20 and 30 visit the camp every week as role models. The project gets many applications for volunteer work each year, and volunteering role models are selected following an assessment based on the field requirements and the past experiences of the applicants. An effort is made to select young women who can voluntarily help with the busy schedule of the camp as well as physiologically endure the tough conditions at the camp. Other admission criteria are: volunteering experience, the inclination for nature sports, motivation and excitement, education, art, sports, a successful business career.

Volunteering young women stay in the camp area during this time, take part in all activities, constantly interact with the participants, support the work done based on task allocation and above all become a role model for all the young girls in the camp. At the Girls without Barriers Project,



each volunteer is a role model. Being a role model means leading by example, through behaviour, approach, attitude and mentality. It means giving girls tips and clues about how they can improve their lives and make better decisions.

## Assessment of Impact:

At the end of each day, the day's assessment is made with the volunteers who share their observations and assessment about the development of the participants; and any difficulties encountered or any questions volunteers may have are discussed within the group. The following day's workshops are planned. Also, volunteers are asked to keep a diary throughout the camp. These anonymous diaries reflect the observations of the volunteers about themselves and the participants as well as acting as a tool for the programme team to perform an assessment of the week.

On the last day of the program, after the girls have left the camp, there is a final evaluation meeting with the volunteers where they can share their observations, experiences, feelings and thoughts about the camp from a holistic perspective. According to one group leader: "The meeting is usually executed in an emotive and emotionally charged environment where the volunteers are brought to tears talking about their experiences and the things they have learnt".

In 2017, there was a social impact study that measured the participant girls on a number of outcome indicators before and after participating in the programme. The study found that on average girls showed an increase of 16 percentage points on a life satisfaction scale and 17% points on a self-esteem scale (Rosenberg self-esteem scale) within the course of the week's activities.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, in 2018, an independent evaluation of the project was carried out covering the period between 2015 and 2018 and using a mixed methodology based on the data collected through a survey, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, desk research and discourse analysis. The study evaluates *“the change in the participants’ perceptions of confidence, social sensitivity, core life skills and positive gender”* and indicates that there is a positive change in confidence, positive gender perception and core life skills among participants.<sup>126</sup> This finding is also important given that the intervention period is not long within the camp period.

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<sup>125</sup> See Kızlar Atakta (2017). Sosyal Etki Raporu [in Turkish]. Retrieved from: [http://kizlaratakta.org/portfolio\\_page/kizlar-atakta-sosyal-etki-raporu-2017/](http://kizlaratakta.org/portfolio_page/kizlar-atakta-sosyal-etki-raporu-2017/)

<sup>126</sup> Kızlar Atakta (2018). Girls Without Borders Independent Social Impact Report 2015-2018 / Executive Summary.

## Case Study 3: Community Volunteers Foundation

The Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) is a nationwide youth organization that has been active since 2002 and is the largest youth NGO network in Turkey.

TOG Groups, which are put together by volunteering university students at universities, form the most important component of TOG, on which this study focuses. Moreover, the foundation



upports youth and youth studies through research, skills training and awareness-raising programs for young people, scholarships, the GençBank scholarship program, partnerships with companies within the context of social responsibility projects, creative projects such as the Living Library, Youth Centres of the Community Volunteers Foundation intended for 15-25-year-olds etc.

Headquartered in Istanbul, the Community Volunteers Foundation is a relatively large organization with more than 50 employees and various departments supporting its work. A majority of the staff of the Community Volunteers Foundation working with young people and doing youth work are social volunteers themselves with an experience of the approaches and processes unique to the Community Volunteers Foundation.

### Empowerment Model

The long-term vision of the Community Volunteers Foundation, which brings together young people and adults in its projects, is to “ensure social peace, solidarity and change **led by the youth and guided by adults.**” The Foundation defines its role in realizing this vision as follows: (a) empowering young people and (b) ensuring social peace, solidarity and change with young people.<sup>127</sup> In line with its vision and mission, the Foundation has been striving since day one to reach out to young people and contribute to their development; raising “self-confident, entrepreneurial and responsive individuals who can develop solutions for problems affecting their community.” In this context, the target group of the Foundation usually consists of young people from all over the country, mainly young people between 18 and 25 years of age studying at a university.

Six basic principles shape the nature of the work the Foundation does, which it also tries to instil in its young members from day one: The Foundation defines these six principles as follows:

- *Lifelong Learning*: “Being open to innovation, feedback, change and continuous improvement.”
- *Teamwork*: “Identifying problems together, planning and executing work responsibilities together, providing information and feedback regularly, embracing the mantra ‘altogether, for all of us.’”

<sup>127</sup> See Community Volunteers Foundation, Social Impact Report

- *Principle of entrepreneurship*: “Acting. Taking initiative. Seeing the social, economic and ecological dimensions of the projects as a whole and realizing them accordingly.”
- *Transparency and Accountability principle*: “Sharing the works that are being done and their nature, the experiences gained, the know-how, processes, use of donations and the budget, material and moral results in a clear, unambiguous and comprehensible way with all the stakeholders.”
- *Local Involvement*: “Identifying local needs, encouraging residents to get involved in and support projects thus creating a wide base of stakeholders. Ensuring the sustainability and popularity of the projects by raising awareness among the local population.”
- *Respecting Differences*: “Working with the team to solve social issues, driven by a sense of equality while being fully aware that differences are a social asset.”

## Target Groups and Organization

TOG communities, the most basic organizational units of TOG, are volunteer groups of university students from universities across Turkey which carry out local social responsibility projects and are supported by the Foundation.

Establishing volunteer groups at universities has been embraced by the Foundation as an effective means of reaching out to such a broad target group. If a university does not have a TOG Group, students can create their community by contacting TOG or by joining a community of their choosing outside their university. As of the end of 2019, there were 133 TOG Groups established by young people in 119 universities in 80 provinces of Turkey.

TOG Groups are autonomous when it comes to decision-making and project execution, are managed by community volunteers according to a horizontal hierarchy and determine their work areas and projects. This autonomy offers young people a safe environment in which they can practice their negotiation, leadership, teamwork and decision-making skills and learn from their experiences.

The Foundation's head-office regularly supports the work of volunteers and communities through training, research, supervision etc. The six principles of the Foundation mentioned above serve as a framework for values and approaches that structure this autonomy nationwide.

TOG Groups are open to all young people who want to join the community and embrace the TOG's principles. Young people who join the community can participate in social responsibility projects executed by the Foundation straight away after their orientation training, work with their more experienced peers and learn from them, participate in all training programs, including the Foundation's 5 key training courses, take part in local and national social responsibility projects (TOG attacks) and develop their social responsibility projects.

## Activities and Proposed Impact

Social responsibility projects represent the main activity area of TOG Groups. The projects involve young community volunteers working together as a team to develop solutions for problems in their community, designing a project for the solution, finding resources for the execution stage, communicating with local actors in the process and executing the project. The main objective of social responsibility projects is the development and empowerment of young people in the areas included within the model of change through their involvement in social life. Each project is seen as an opportunity for team members to develop and gain experience, and it is more important for the volunteer to gain experience while working on a project than to do it well.

Also, as young people gain experience as community volunteers, they can gradually take on more responsibility within the community or between communities, take various positions within their community, participate in further training, represent their community in the Council, become a volunteer trainer at the Foundation by participating in trainer training programs, train peers in different communities and finally, participate in the Board of Directors elections, the highest management body of the Foundation, and represent young people if they win.

TOG's ultimate goal is that all TOG Groups are sustainable and self-managing, ideally strong enough to manage their community work without support from the Foundation's head office. This also means that young people who make up the community can effectively transfer their knowledge and skills as well as the Foundation's principles to their peers. The Foundation's head office supports empowerment processes of communities and therefore young people through various training programs and mentoring activities.



## Case Study 4: Toy Youth Association

Toy is a youth association established by the employees and volunteers of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Centres at the end of 2017. The association currently has 24 members, most of whom are under the age of 30. In this sense, Toy is an initiative established by young people for young people and led by young people. Born out of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center, Toy still maintains close relationships with the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center.



Toy's vision is about the protection and development of youth rights at the local, national and international level, creation of a holistic youth policy on a local and national level by involving young volunteers in the process; it also aims at building a sustainable and eco-friendly life wherein the youth is encouraged to take part in the process by offering their solutions to problems. Toy defines its role/mission based on two main axes: (a) supporting the development, awareness, empowerment and involvement of young people in all aspects, (b) providing the youth with the necessary means and opportunities and environments, and encouraging other relevant actors to do the same.

### Empowerment Model:

Toy is an association of young people who are dedicated to youth works and work voluntarily or professionally in this field who have come together to take their work to the next level and make dreams which they would not be able to realize under the umbrella of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center come to fruition. Hence, there is an emphasis on learning by doing for young people involved in the association and empowerment is a function of the activities and involvement they have at Toy Association.

Toy uses the following approaches in all its projects:

- **Studies shaped according to the needs of the youth:** It is very important for the Toy team to be in close contact with the youth locally and to be realistically aware of their needs. This is based on the premise that meaningful efforts to support young people can only be made when young people's needs are truly understood. Toy's approach to benefiting from the GençBank grant program for needs analysis offers a different model in this sense: Toy sees all applications to the program by young people as data providing insight into the needs and requirements of the youth without discrimination and looks at the nature and objectives of the projects from that perspective, regardless of whether the projects are accepted or not.

- **Experimental learning and non-formal education:** Toy uses experimental learning and non-formal educational approaches that emphasize hands-on learning and observation to help empower the youth and develop and enhance their knowledge and skills. In this sense, it is important for Toy that the experience and learning environments created to meet the needs of the youth.
- **Volunteering to create permanent change:** The Toy team thinks that the assumption that young people can be empowered through volunteer social responsibility projects on a local level is off the mark. Accordingly, if the focus is enabling young people to contribute to meaningful social changes in the long term, volunteering by the youth and their involvement in civic engagement activities should be redefined. The focus of volunteering should move away from bringing/providing service, which has no lasting impact, towards the creation of lasting change, taking responsibility and initiative for it and it should be supported by universal values and rights-based approaches.

## Activities and Target Group

The following are youth activities conducted by Toy in Eskişehir.

- **Eskişehir GençBank** is a youth grant program conducted in collaboration with the Community Volunteers Foundation to “increase young people's involvement in social life and help support their efforts for improving the quality of life in their communities.”<sup>128</sup> Within the framework of the program, young people are given financial and moral support and also mentoring to help develop ideas for local youth or social responsibility projects. The aim of doing so is to help young people identify problems in their communities and develop solutions to address them. The target audience of Eskişehir GençBank is young people aged 15-25 living in Eskişehir. The primary target group of the program, is high school students, i.e. young people aged 15-18, who are disadvantaged in terms of leading an active social life and having the means to do so compared to university students.
- **Üstünüze Afiyet**, is a social responsibility and ecological activism project initiated in 2015 by volunteers of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center, some of whom are currently members of Toy.<sup>129</sup> Toy has been running the project that had been originally supported by the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center since 2017. Toy explains the project as follows: “Üstünüze Afiyet draws attention to environmental problems facing the world, approaches the consumption habits of today from a critical perspective and offers alternative solutions.” An important feature of Üstünüze Afiyet is that it combines the perspective of empowerment and support of the young through youth works on a local level with a global ecological awareness that remains true to the local perspective.

<sup>128</sup> Quote, Toy's website. GençBank was launched by the Community Volunteers Foundation for the first time in 2012 and then grew in scope with various local partnerships. Currently, GençBank has local partnerships in 10 different provinces, including Eskişehir. Please visit [www.gencbank.org](http://www.gencbank.org) and [www.toygenclik.org/gencbank](http://www.toygenclik.org/gencbank) for more details.

<sup>129</sup> Following Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center's call for volunteers with the slogan “We seek volunteers with a sense of responsibility, and no slogans!”, a 182-strong team consisting of students coming to the city center to attend the Social Service Practices course at Eskişehir Anadolu University designed the project. Named the Social Initiative Team of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality Youth Center, the volunteers put their mark on other projects aimed at disadvantaged groups apart from Üstünüze Afiyet.

- **Youth Studies Academy Project:** Toy's second action area relates to the creation of opportunities to support young people in the long run and the concomitant development of youth works to make that happen. It is a relatively new area for Toy, and the work within this context is being conducted within the scope of the funded Youth Studies Academy Project. It is important for Toy that youth workers are acknowledged as professionals, and that youth workers find the professional, technical and moral support they need to work with young people. The project aims at raising young people between the ages of 18-30 from different parts of Turkey who wish to become youth workers, and producing information to support the development of youth works through needs analysis studies with youth workers that are also intended to guide the content of education.

The ultimate impact Toy seeks can be expressed as follows: “Young people actively participate in the solution of social and ecological problems and contribute to positive social change nationwide.” Here, the emphasis on **active, engaged young citizens** stands out.

# CONCLUSION

**Turkey has a significant youth inactivity problem, defined mainly along gender lines, but also linked to youth unemployment.** With more than a quarter of young people, not in employment, education or training, the country not only misses out on a potential source of growth and income (estimated at 2.37-3.15% of GDP in this report) but also reduces the chances of these young people to take part in vibrant social and economic activity at the beginning of their productive lives.

**Some salient facts coming through the analysis in this report are as follows:**

- Over a quarter of young people in Turkey are neither in employment nor in education or training. Three-quarters of NEET youth in Turkey are women, hence gender is an important determinant of NEET status. In certain regions of Turkey, particularly in the south-east, the NEET rate of women increases significantly (to more than ¾ of young women in certain areas).
- Education is an important determinant and driver of non-NEET status, especially for women. Household wealth is also correlated with lower levels of NEET but the correlation is smaller.
- The share of NEET increases among young women with age, while it decreases among young men. Life events, such as marriage and having children also change NEET rates in opposing directions for men and women, with young women being more likely to become NEET once they are married and have children. Most NEET men live with their parents while the majority of NEET young women are married.
- Time-use patterns of NEET youth women reveal that they are mainly busy with household chores and care activities and they have very little 'idle' time for leisure activities, unlike young NEET men, who spend the majority of their time in leisure.
- Most NEET youth have worked before, and have some connection to the labour market, however for women with lower than university degree attainment, the attachment to the labour market is very weak, with most of them not looking to return to work due to household chores and care activities.
- Young people in Turkey, have very low levels of civic engagement and NEET youth are likely to be even more disengaged from civil society activities. While only 10% of youth have a CSO membership, this level is only at 3% for NEET youth. In general, civic engagement is higher among men, youth with higher education and youth living in wealthier households. Hence, while civil society might be an actor in helping solve

the NEET problem by providing action models for empowerment, they cannot be expected to be in a position of addressing the NEET problem of Turkey, as civil society has a very low level of engagement with the target group.

**In summary, the analysis in this report points to the fact that much of the NEET problem in Turkey is gender-based, and that in terms of how NEET use their time there is a significant variation by gender.** Young women in this category are very likely to be busy with household chores and unpaid care activities, while for young men, the issue of NEET is one of youth unemployment and difficulty in engaging in the labour market. Young men in this category are more likely to be living with their parents, and younger and unmarried, while two-thirds of NEET women are married and are choosing to engage in domestic chores with little attachment to the labour market.

**Given these facts in the analysis, the issue of NEET in Turkey is predominantly also one of increasing female labour force participation.** Public policies that focus on active labour market policies with a particular focus on young women, not in employment, education or training, as well as the support provided to subsidized systems for child care that provide more affordable options to women for child care outside the home, are important infrastructure and policy factors that will over time change norms around care.

**The labour market attachment of young NEET women is very low, with most of them not looking for jobs and not wishing to start work even if the opportunity was there, while only those women with university degrees are likely to be looking to go back to work.** Increasing opportunities for young girls and women to engage in higher educational attainment and then providing the resources in communities to access affordable care should be the main policy lever for tackling the problem of NEET in the country. Beyond the provision of these services, active labour market policies that reduce the costs of hiring young people and especially young women, and engages them early on in labour market activities should be continued. An important piece of this puzzle is re-engaging young women in the labour market after they have been married and especially after childbirth, as a significant portion of NEET women, used to be in the labour market and got detached after the birth of their first child according to analysis in this report. Hence, new policies that may induce/subsidize the re-entry into the labour market for women who left the labour market and are looking for ways to return, should also be a high priority on the policy agenda.

**Beyond the public policies for youth engagement, this report has also focused on the activities of 4 youth CSOs that aim to develop and empower youth through various activities and increase their involvement both in civil society and economic life.** Providing public support to these types of initiatives that provide opportunities to young people to engage socially and economically and empower them to contribute and get involved in solving social issues around

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them, is another way that public policy can engage with the problem of reducing NEET youth, through support to CSOs that aim to do so.

**However, it should be noted that given the low civil society participation of youth in general and NEET youth in specific, while these types of CSO activities should be promoted and supported by public funding, they cannot be the answer to resolving the NEET problem of Turkey.** Comprehensive approaches that include the civil society and learn from the models introduced by youth NGOs, but also significantly support the care economy and subsidize the access of young people, especially young women, to higher levels of educational attainment and connect them to the labour market, are important policy levers for reducing NEET rates in Turkey in the future. Continued efforts and advocacy campaigns to change gender norms around care and household chores, subsidizing through public means centre-based care to attract more women into the labour market, as well as policies to engage, connect (and reconnect young people to the labour market especially after they have had children), will need to be central policies in reducing NEET rates in Turkey while also supporting civil society models for youth empowerment and engagement.

# ANNEX

## Annex 1: Data and Definitions

### How is NEET Youth defined?

**The origin of the term NEET stemmed from researchers' and policymakers' endeavour in the UK in the late 1980s to capture the labour market vulnerability of youths beyond traditional indicators such as the unemployment rate.**<sup>130</sup> The 1988 Social Security Act withdrew the entitlement for state income support from 16- and 17-year-old youths in case of unemployment in the UK in return for “...guaranteeing them a youth training place” under the Youth Training Scheme (YTS).<sup>131</sup> However, the British Youth Council estimated in 1992 that “(...) some 30,000 young people each year ‘vote with their feet’ and refuse to participate in YTS” as cited by Williamson in 1997.<sup>132</sup> This situation spurred further discussions on young people who are not in employment, education or training and at a higher level of societal risk without access to unemployment benefits. Accordingly, Istance, Rees and Williamson (1994) were among the first researchers who used the term Status Zer0 to define young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in employment, education or training in their quantitative study to estimate their number in South Glamorgan in Wales.<sup>133</sup> Status Zer0 was then referred to as “a powerful metaphor for young people who currently count for nothing and appear to be going nowhere”.<sup>134</sup> To avoid this negative metaphor, Status A – A standing for “abandoned generation” – was then preferred starting in the late 1990s.<sup>135</sup> Following this change from 0 to A, “the term NEET was coined in March 1996 by a senior Home Office civil servant who had detected resistance on the part of policymakers working with the original and often controversial terms of Status0 and Status A”.<sup>136</sup> NEET soon came to be an ‘official’ term with the Bridging the Gap report released by the Social Exclusion Unit of the New Labour government in 1999 and rapidly became an acronym “.. having a very powerful catalysing effect, capturing the attention of public opinion and mobilising policymakers” outside the UK.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Mascherini, 2018

<sup>131</sup> Williamson, 1997

<sup>132</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Istance, Rees, & Williamson, 1994

<sup>134</sup> Williamson, 1997

<sup>135</sup> Mascherini, 2018

<sup>136</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Social Exclusion Unit, 1999

**Despite being ‘officially’ formulated, there is not a standard way of conceptually interpreting the NEET acronym as it is inextricably linked with various characteristics and dispositions of youths across different country contexts.** As clearly pointed out by Holte and his colleagues (2019), *“the argument that NEET young people constitute a heterogeneous category has become an important basis for problematising the concept”*.<sup>138</sup> Different age brackets and cultural connotations, inter alia, used to identify NEETs in different countries has amplified this basis. For instance, in Korea and Japan, the term NEET refers to young people aged 15 and 34 who are “not employed, not handling family responsibilities, not attending either school or a private institution for job preparation and not married”.<sup>139</sup> Accordingly, in Japan, hikikomori is used to refer to mostly male NEETs staying inside their homes, living with their parents, filling hours with TVs, computers and video games and preferring not to socialise with friends.<sup>140</sup> On the other hand, in New Zealand, NEETs are “young people aged 15 to 19, not in education, employment, or training of at least one hour per week”.<sup>141</sup> In Spain where the age bracket is higher, NEET is a young person between 15 and 29-year-old, is used interchangeably with the term *ni-ni* referring to youths who neither want to study nor want to work and is interlinked with idleness and effort-avoidance.<sup>142</sup>

**In order to avoid different conceptual interpretations and allow comparative research on NEET across Europe, NEET was identified by the European Commission Employment Committee (EMCO) in 2010.**<sup>143</sup> Eurostat, ILO and OECD have adopted the definition of NEET as young people neither in employment (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to ILO definition) nor in education and training (i.e. having not received any formal or non-formal education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey) focusing mainly on youth people aged 15 and 29.<sup>144</sup> In Europe, where paths to education and the labour market are problematic, connotations attached to NEET in Europe focus on the labour market landscape and this problematic labour market transition.<sup>145</sup> In other words, as pointed out by Holte and his colleagues, *“in European NEET research the pendulum appears to have swung to an emphasis on structural factors, focusing on how economic and societal change impact on young people’s labour market transitions”*.<sup>146</sup> Therefore, NEET appears to have cross-cultural connotations through which its scope and underlying meanings are constructed in the literature.

**Eurostat, ILO, and OECD put forth the following equation to construct NEET as an indicator with a defined numerator and a denominator.**<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Holte, Swart, & Hiilamo, 2019

<sup>139</sup> OECD, 2017a

<sup>140</sup> Mascherini, 2018

<sup>141</sup> Hill, 2003

<sup>142</sup> Serracant, 2013

<sup>143</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>144</sup> Eurostat, 2019

<sup>145</sup> European Commission, 2010

<sup>146</sup> Holte et al., 2019

<sup>147</sup> Eurostat, 2019

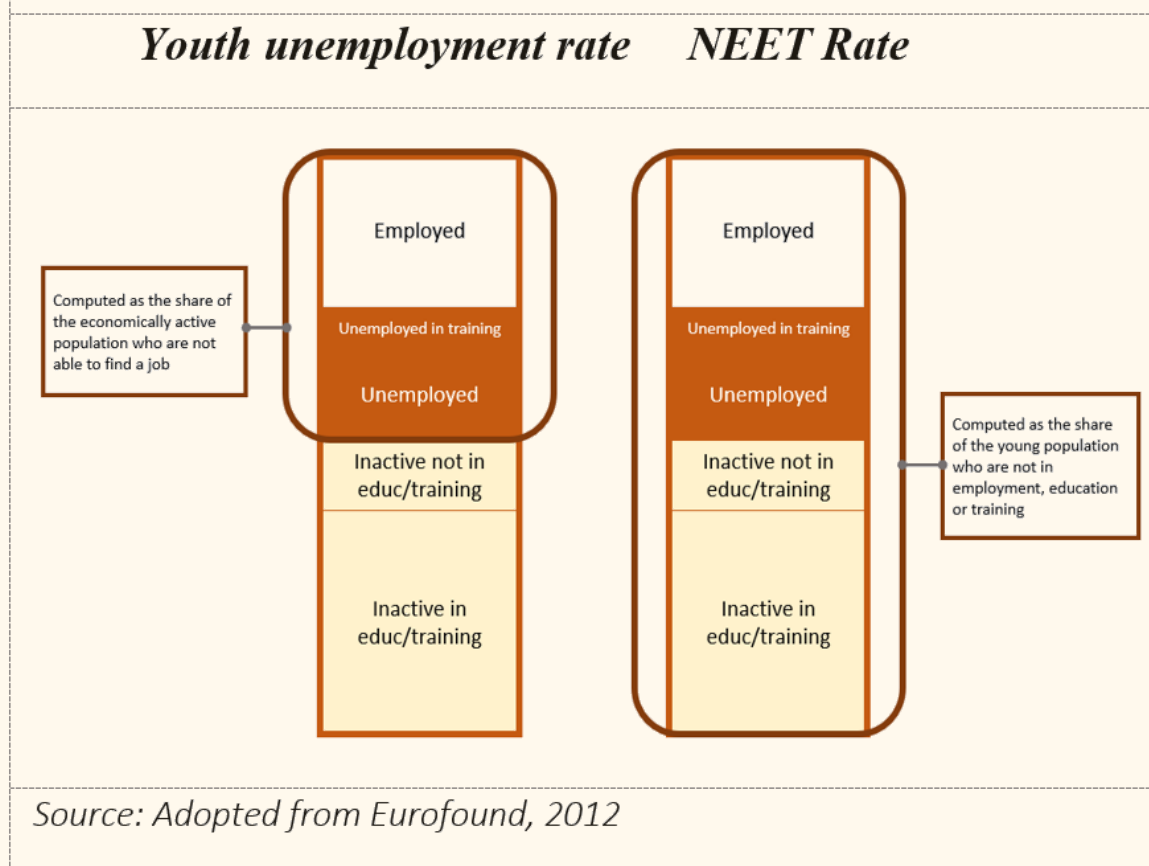
$$NEETrate = \frac{\text{Number of youths not in employment, education or training}}{\text{Total population of youths}}$$

The numerator is denoted to those meeting two conditions as aforementioned above:

- They are not employed (i.e. inactive or unemployed). This means that they are not working at all and not available or looking for work either (i.e. not being part of the labour force), OR they are not working but available to work within the next two weeks and actively have sought employment at some time during the last four weeks.<sup>148</sup>
- They have not received any formal or non-formal education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey.<sup>149</sup>

The denominator, on the other hand, refers to “the total population of the same age group and sex, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question ‘participation in regular (formal) education and training’”.<sup>150</sup>

**Figure 22.** Differences between the youth unemployment rate and the NEET rate



<sup>148</sup> Eurostat, 2010 ; Eurostat, 2018 ; ILO, n.d.

<sup>149</sup> Eurostat, 2019

<sup>150</sup> *ibid.*

**As it is a relatively new indicator, NEET has often been misinterpreted in terms of what it is measuring and is confused with the unemployment rate.**<sup>151</sup> NEET captures the youth population beyond the unemployed and, therefore, encapsulates the young population disengaged from the labour market and education. In other words, as explained by Eurofound, “while the youth unemployment rate refers just to the economically active members of the population who were not able to find a job, the NEET rate can be understood as the share of the population of young people who are currently not engaged in employment, education or training.”<sup>152</sup>

This also explains a higher rate of youth unemployment than the NEET rate despite a higher number of NEETs than the number of unemployed youths. This is because the denominator of youth unemployment is the number of young people economically active whereas the denominator of the NEET rate is the total population of young people, which is always higher than the number of economically active young people.<sup>153</sup> In particular, **Figure 22** indicates the differences between the youth unemployment rate and the NEET rate.

## Data Sources for Studying NEET Youth in Turkey

**The analysis in this report uses three different datasets that are nationally representative of Turkey to report on the status of NEET youth in the country based on the most recent statistics.** These data sets are the latest rounds of Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) 2017, Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) 2017 and Time Use Survey 2015.

- **Survey of Income and Living Conditions (2017):** SILC has been carried out by TURKSTAT every year since 2006. It contains information about the economic situation and living conditions of the households. At the individual level, information collected includes working status, education, and health status. The questionnaire was applied to individuals over 15 years of age. SILC 2017 collects information from 22.869 households, and it is representative of the population of Turkey at the country and at NUTS I and NUTS II regional levels. This survey is mainly used in the report for the determinants of NEET status analysis carried out in Section 3a.
- **Household Labour Force Survey (2017):** HLFS is carried out by TURKSTAT since 1988. It includes detailed questions on employment and unemployment variables, including past work experience. HLFS also includes questions on individual and household characteristics. The questionnaire was applied to individuals over 15 years of age. HLFS 2017 collects information from 149.465 households and 378.691 individuals, and it is representative of the population of Turkey at the country and at NUTS I and NUTS II regional levels. These data have been used in this report to analyse the labour market attachment of NEET youth in Turkey and patterns of seeking employment, as well as reasons for not looking for employment, where this is the case.

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<sup>151</sup> Elder, 2015

<sup>152</sup> Eurofound, 2012

<sup>153</sup> *ibid.*



- **Time Use Survey (2015):** The first Time Use Survey for Turkey was collected in 2006, while the second one was collected in 2015. TUS collects information on time use of individuals aged 10 or higher in the household for a weekday and a weekend day. The individuals record their time use during these days in 10-minute slots. The activities are recorded under numerous subheadings under the following main headings: (i) personal care (sleep, meals and other personal care), (ii) employment, (iii) study, (iv) household and family care, (v) voluntary work and meetings, (vi) social life and entertainment, (vii) sports and outdoor activities, (viii) hobbies and games, (ix) mass media (e.g. reading, watching TV, listening to radio), (x) travel and unspecified time use. Apart from the time use information, the survey collects information about the individual and the household. TUS 2015 collects information from 9.073 households and 25.109 individuals (aged 10 or above), and it is representative of the population of Turkey.

This survey is used in the report mainly to analyse patterns in time use behaviour for NEET youth versus other young people in the population. The analysis is also gender aggregated and allows us to look at patterns of time use for women and men NEET in the sample separately. The data are also used to report on civil society, social participation and any volunteering activities of NEET youth in Turkey.

The next sections report results using microdata analysis from the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) and Time Use Survey (TUS) collected by TURKSTAT. The results are reported for 18-29-year olds throughout these sections. Throughout the analysis, similar but different definitions of NEET have been used across these datasets. We provide detailed definitions of NEET youth applied to each data set below.

## Definitions of NEET Status across the Turkish micro datasets

### Turkey Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) 2017

- Those who have not answered “at work” to the question on self-defined current activity status (fk210) and
- Those who answered “no” to continuing education (fe010).

SILC does not include any questions on training.

### Turkey Household Labour Force Survey (2017)

- Those who have answered “no” to the following questions:

1. Have you continued in a formal educational institution ending with reference week within the last 4 weeks? (Including open education)

2. Have you received any special course or training program or course outside of formal education ending with reference week within the last 4 weeks? (Foreign language courses, computer courses, cutting-sewing course, courses related to the preparation of higher education, civil servant exam, open university, driving courses, university preparation courses, seminars and so on.)”

- “Labour force status of household member” is unemployed or not in the labour force. Labour force status of the person is an indicator generated by TURKSTAT using

### Time Use Survey (2015)

- Those who answered “No” to the following questions:

1. Are you at present attending any educational institution?”

2. In the last four weeks, did you attend/complete any course like vocational courses, foreign language courses, computer courses, attended as a hobby course, apprenticeship education, etc.?”

3. In the last week, to obtain an in-kind (goods) or cash (money) income (even if you are housewife, student or retired), did you work at least one hour paid or unpaid, or have a connection with an income-generating job?

4. Although you didn't work in the last week, is there a workplace or job which you are temporarily absent?”

questions in the dataset and the indicator that is recommended to be used.

And, those who have not answered “Continuing to his/her education or training” to the below question:

- What is your reason that you have not been seeking a job during the last 4 weeks ending with the reference week?

And those who have not answered “Continuing to education/training “ to the below question:

- What is the reason for not doing anything to find a job or not starting work, during the last 4 weeks?

## Annex 2: Methodology Note for Cost of NEET Estimation

We use three methodologies to estimate the cost of NEET youth in terms of hourly earnings values to estimate potential earnings (and hence loss to the economy). These methodologies are predicted wage, mean wage and minimum wage methods. We estimate the total value and also this value as a percentage of GDP using Income and Living Conditions Survey (SILC) 2017. The steps involved in the methodology are listed below:

Firstly, in the predicted wage method, using SILC 2017, we estimate potential earnings for all NEETs who are aged between 18 and 29. In the SILC data, annual net earnings and weekly working hours are provided for the employed youth. Hourly net earnings of the individual worker youth (casual or regular wage earners) are calculated by dividing annual net earnings by the number of hours the individual works in a week (times 52 weeks in the year). To build an equation capable of predicting earnings for non-working youth taking into consideration selection into the labour market, we used the Heckman selection method. We ran regression analyses for male and female samples (between the age of 18 and 29) in the SILC separately.

The Heckman selection model is a two-equation model whereby the first equation is a *probit* regression in which the dependent variable is the probability of working, and the second equation is the earnings equation, including the correction term for selection bias calculated using the *probit* regression. The Heckman selection model is used here to predict earnings for

all NEET youth women (and NEET youth men) because using a regular OLS regression would likely overestimate the predicted earnings of individuals since it would not take into account selection into the labour market. Those who are currently employed may have self-selected themselves into the labour market since they might have a higher earnings potential, hence the observed level of earnings in the labour force can be an overestimate of the earnings for the overall youth population. In other words, using the market wages of the working population of women (or men) without taking into consideration selection into the labour market would result in an upward biased estimate of predicted earnings. The results of the Heckman Selection model are presented in **Annex Table 1**.

The independent variables in the selection model are: age, age squared, the status of attendance of the individual to an educational institution, education levels, marital status, the total income of others who live in the household, the status of living with parents, health status, the status of having a health restraint, number of children (who are aged 0-2 or/and aged 3-5) and region dummies. These variables are selected as determinants in the youth's participation choice in the labour market. A subset of these variables is used in the earnings equation. These variables are age, age squared, education levels and region dummies.

Results of the Heckman Selection model confirm that there is indeed selection in the case of youth men. The coefficient of the inverse mill's ratio turns out to be statistically significant for this case. The sign of the coefficient is different as expected for men and women (See **Annex Table 1**, column 3 under women and men headings). While for youth women, the inverse mills ratio is positive, for youth men it is reported as negative in the results. Even though the coefficient of the inverse mill's ratio is not statistically significant for youth women, the sign is meaningful and as expected. The result can be interpreted concerning the signs as that the unobservable characteristics of women that affect their working decision are positively correlated with earnings. Hence women who are more likely to be earning higher wages are self-selected into the labour market while for men this is vice-versa, hence men who are more likely to be earning lower wages are self-selected into the labour market.

Secondly, in the mean wage method, it is assumed that if employed, NEETs would on average receive the same hourly net earnings and would choose to work average weekly working hours of employed youth. Average hourly net earnings are computed for each age separately by gender and multiplied by average weekly working hours times 52 to estimate the annual net earnings. After that, multiplication of annual net earnings with the number of NEETs of each gender and age-group yields the mean wage method estimates.

Lastly, in the minimum wage method, it is assumed that if employed, NEETs would receive a minimum wage of the year of 2017.<sup>154</sup> Annual net earnings are computed by multiplying minimum monthly wage by 12. Then, this fixed annual net earning for each NEET youth is multiplied by the total number of NEET youth and yields the minimum wage method estimates.

**Annex Table 1.** Heckman selection model results

	WOMEN			MEN		
Dependent Variable: Log of Actual Hourly Net Earnings	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	Outcome Equation	Selection Equation	Mills	Outcome Equation	Selection Equation	Mills
<b>Age</b>						
Age	0.195* (0.107)	0.334*** (0.0930)		0.0324 (0.0591)	0.430*** (0.0760)	
Square of Age	-0.00208 (0.00219)	-0.00518*** (0.00195)		1.06e-05 (0.00120)	-0.00730*** (0.00162)	
<b>Education Level</b>						
Basic Education	0.168 (0.120)	0.295*** (0.0849)		0.0573 (0.0526)	0.266*** (0.0740)	
High School	0.382*** (0.124)	0.578*** (0.0836)		0.306*** (0.0543)	-0.0680 (0.0769)	
University Education and More	0.781*** (0.146)	1.096*** (0.0830)		0.645*** (0.0549)	0.0529 (0.0815)	
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married		-0.384*** (0.0863)			0.302*** (0.0635)	
<b>State of Health</b>						
Very Good-Good		0.156* (0.0857)			0.198** (0.0834)	
Not Having a Physical Restraint		0.0968 (0.0928)			0.318*** (0.0902)	
<b>Number of Children in the Household</b>						
Aged between 0 and 2		-0.469*** (0.0557)			0.0374 (0.0550)	
Aged between 3 and 5		-0.473*** (0.0681)			-0.173** (0.0703)	
Status of Attendance to an Educational		0.00781 (0.0483)			-0.372*** (0.0405)	
Income Received by Other People in the		-9.95e-07* (5.81e-07)			-1.25e-06** (5.51e-07)	
Living with Parents		-0.161** (0.0804)			-0.440*** (0.0528)	
Regions	Controlled	Controlled		Controlled	Controlled	
Lambda			0.139 (0.09)			-
Constant	-2.175 (1.337)	-5.836*** (1.104)		1.076 (0.737)	-5.813*** (0.885)	(0.062)
Number of Observations	6,422	6,422	6,422	6,243	6,243	6,243

Standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

<sup>154</sup> Minimum net wage for year 2017 was 1406.06 TL. Aile ve Çalışma Sosyal Hizmetler Genel Müdürlüğü, 2019



# Annex Tables

## Set I. Descriptive statistics

**Annex Table 2.** Distribution of all youth, NEET youth and non-NEET youth by individual and household characteristics

	All Youth	Non-NEET Youth	NEET Youth	Difference	P-value
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	49.8	36.9	74.3	37.4***	0.000
Male	50.2	63.1	25.7	-37.4***	0.000
<b>Age Group</b>					
between 18-19	17.2	17.7	16.2	-1.5*	0.061
between 20-24	39.6	39.4	40.0	0.6	0.553
between 25-29	43.2	42.9	43.8	0.9	0.427
<b>Level of Education</b>					
Less Than Basic Education	10.9	5.3	21.7	16.4***	0.000
Basic Education	33.2	33.2	33.2	0.0	0.990
High School Education	32.5	35.9	26.2	-9.7***	0.000
University Education or Above	23.3	25.6	18.9	-6.7***	0.000
<b>Health status</b>					
Good Health	90.6	93.1	85.9	-7.2***	0.000
Bad Health	9.4	6.9	14.1	7.2***	0.000
Not having a physical restraint	92.5	94.6	88.3	-6.3***	0.000
Having a physical restraint	7.5	5.4	11.7	6.3***	0.000
<b>Marital status</b>					
Single	64.4	72.7	48.6	-24.0***	0.000
Married	35.6	27.3	51.4	24.0***	0.000
<b>Living with parents</b>					
Yes	62.7	69.7	49.2	-20.5***	0.000
No	37.3	30.3	50.8	20.5***	0.000
<b>Parent's Level of Education</b>					
Less Than Basic Education	65.3	64.1	68.7	4.7***	0.001
Basic Education	12.7	12.7	12.9	0.2	0.882
High School Education	13.7	14.4	11.7	-2.7***	0.006
University Education or Above	8.2	8.8	6.7	-2.1***	0.003
<b>Parent's health status</b>					
Good	39.2	40.9	34.6	-6.3***	0.000
Bad	60.8	59.1	65.4	6.3***	0.000
<b>Wealth status</b>					
Quintile 1	16.2	12.9	22.5	9.6***	0.000
Quintile 2	20.7	19.1	23.7	4.6***	0.000
Quintile 3	21.4	22.0	20.1	-1.9**	0.035
Quintile 4	22.0	23.6	19.0	-4.5***	0.000
Quintile 5	19.7	22.4	14.6	-7.8***	0.000
Number of observations	12,730	8,119	4,611	.	.

note: .01 - \*\*\*; .05 - \*\*; .1 - \*;

Source: SILC 2017. Authors' calculations. The sample is taken as the 18-29-year-olds.

*Annex Table 3. Percentage of NEET among youth in regions*

Region ID	Provinces in the region	% of NEET among All Youth	% of NEET among Women Youth	% of NEET among Men Youth
TR10	İstanbul	26.3	41.5	11.1
TR21	Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli	28.6	47.7	10.5
TR22	Balıkesir, Çanakkale	32.0	55.5	14.3
TR31	İzmir	30.0	44.2	15.7
TR32	Aydın, Denizli, Muğla	24.6	39.9	12.6
TR33	Manisa, Afyon, Kütahya, Uşak	34.3	54.0	17.0
TR41	Bursa, Eskişehir, Bilecik	33.4	52.7	13.9
TR42	Kocaeli, Sakarya, Düzce, Bolu, Yalova	29.5	44.4	13.4
TR51	Ankara	31.4	46.9	15.5
TR52	Konya, Karaman	30.1	49.5	13.0
TR61	Antalya, Isparta, Burdur	25.3	40.1	12.1
TR62	Adana, Mersin	39.7	55.3	22.4
TR63	Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye	46.2	65.8	30.2
TR71	Kırıkkale, Aksaray, Niğde, Nevşehir, Kırşehir	40.4	57.3	23.4
TR72	Kayseri, Sivas, Yozgat	36.3	59.1	11.6
TR81	Zonguldak, Karabük, Bartın	35.6	43.8	27.0
TR82	Kastamonu, Çankırı, Sinop	25.4	40.1	10.9
TR83	Samsun, Tokat, Çorum, Amasya	33.3	47.4	20.9
TR90	Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Rize, Artvin, Gümüşhane	32.5	43.9	20.1
TRA1	Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayburt	32.5	47.7	15.7
TRA2	Ağrı, Kars, Iğdır, Ardahan	35.2	56.9	12.2
TRB1	Malatya, Elâzığ, Bingöl, Tunceli	41.2	56.2	23.2
TRB2	Van, Muş, Bitlis, Hakkari	51.3	69.9	30.2
TRC1	Gaziantep, Adıyaman, Kilis	37.5	56.2	20.0
TRC2	Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır	55.7	76.5	35.5
TRC3	Mardin, Batman, Şırnak, Siirt	51.8	72.2	29.1

Source: SILC 2017. Authors' calculations. Sample is taken as the 18-29 year olds.

*Annex Table 4. Distribution of all youth and NEET youth among regions*

Region ID	Provinces in the region	All Youth	NEET Youth	NEET Youth Women	NEET Youth Men
TR10	İstanbul	20.7	15.8	16.8	13.0
TR21	Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli	2.3	1.9	2.1	1.4
TR22	Balıkesir, Çanakkale	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6
TR31	İzmir	5.1	4.5	4.5	4.6
TR32	Aydın, Denizli, Muğla	3.0	2.2	2.1	2.4
TR33	Manisa, Afyon, Kütahya, Uşak	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1
TR41	Bursa, Eskişehir, Bilecik	5.0	4.8	5.2	3.9
TR42	Kocaeli, Sakarya, Düzce, Bolu, Yalova	4.4	3.8	4.0	3.2
TR51	Ankara	6.9	6.3	6.4	5.9
TR52	Konya, Karaman	3.1	2.7	2.8	2.4
TR61	Antalya, Isparta, Burdur	3.3	2.4	2.4	2.4
TR62	Adana, Mersin	4.4	5.1	5.0	5.3
TR63	Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye	3.5	4.7	4.1	6.6
TR71	Kırıkkale, Aksaray, Niğde, Nevşehir, Kırşehir	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.6
TR72	Kayseri, Sivas, Yozgat	2.9	3.1	3.5	1.8
TR81	Zonguldak, Karabük, Bartın	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.6
TR82	Kastamonu, Çankırı, Sinop	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5
TR83	Samsun, Tokat, Çorum, Amasya	2.8	2.7	2.4	3.5
TR90	Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Rize, Artvin, Gümüşhane	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.9
TRA1	Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayburt	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.2
TRA2	Ağrı, Kars, Iğdır, Ardahan	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.1
TRB1	Malatya, Elâzığ, Bingöl, Tunceli	2.4	2.9	2.9	2.9
TRB2	Van, Muş, Bitlis, Hakkari	3.3	5.0	4.8	5.4
TRC1	Gaziantep, Adıyaman, Kilis	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.7
TRC2	Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır	5.3	8.5	7.8	10.7
TRC3	Mardin, Batman, Şırnak, Siirt	3.4	5.2	5.1	5.4

Source: SILC 2017. Authors' calculations. The sample is taken as the 18-29-year-olds.

**Annex Table 5.** Average time spent on a weekday in each activity by youth, non- NEET youth and NEET youth

	All Youth	Non-NEET Youth	NEET Youth	Difference	P-Value
<b>Main Activities</b>					
Sleep	514	502	542	40***	0.000
Personal Care	164	161	172	11***	0.000
Employment	218	300	18	-283***	0.000
Study	54	70	13	-57***	0.000
Household and Family Care	151	79	329	250***	0.000
Leisure time	266	240	328	88***	0.000
<i>Voluntary Work and Meetings</i>	20	16	31	16***	0.000
<i>Social Life and Entertainment</i>	91	81	116	35***	0.000
<i>Sports and Outdoor Activities</i>	9	10	9	-1	0.534
<i>Hobbies and Games</i>	26	28	21	-8***	0.001
<i>Mass Media</i>	119	106	151	45***	0.000
Travel and Unspecified Time Use	72	86	38	-48***	0.000
Number of Observations	4,841	3,477	1,364	.	.

note: .01 - \*\*\*; .05 - \*\*; .1 - \*;

Source: TUS 2015. Authors' calculations. The sample is taken as the 18-29-year-olds.

**Annex Table 6.** Average time spent on a weekday in each activity by youth, women, non- NEET youth women and NEET youth women

	All Youth Women	Non-NEET Youth Women	NEET Youth Women	Difference	P-Value
<b>Main Activities</b>					
Sleep	518	510	528	19***	0.000
Personal Care	166	162	171	9***	0.003
Employment	120	211	8	-203***	0.000
Study	54	89	11	-79***	0.000
Household and Family Care	266	156	400	244***	0.000
Leisure time	260	236	291	55***	0.000
<i>Voluntary Work and Meetings</i>	25	19	33	14***	0.000
<i>Social Life and Entertainment</i>	92	82	104	22***	0.000
<i>Sports and Outdoor Activities</i>	4	5	3	-2**	0.011
<i>Hobbies and Games</i>	14	17	9	-8***	0.000
<i>Mass Media</i>	126	113	142	30***	0.000
Travel and Unspecified Time Use	56	76	31	-45***	0.000
Number of Observations	2,490	1,409	1,081	.	.

note: .01 - \*\*\*; .05 - \*\*; .1 - \*;

Source: TUS 2015. Authors' calculations. The sample is taken as the 18-29-year-old women.

**Annex Table 7.** Average time spent on a weekday in each activity by youth, men, non- NEET youth men and NEET youth men

	All Youth Men	Non-NEET Youth Men	NEET Youth Men	Difference	P-Value
<b>Main Activities</b>					
Sleep	509	497	593	96***	0.000
Personal Care	163	161	176	15***	0.004
Employment	318	357	51	-306***	0.000
Study	54	58	23	-35***	0.000
Household and Family Care	35	30	73	43***	0.000
Leisure time	271	243	461	218***	0.000
<i>Voluntary Work and Meetings</i>	15	13	26	12***	0.001
<i>Social Life and Entertainment</i>	91	81	162	81***	0.000
<i>Sports and Outdoor Activities</i>	15	13	29	17***	0.003
<i>Hobbies and Games</i>	39	35	63	28***	0.000
<i>Mass Media</i>	111	101	181	80***	0.000
Travel and Unspecified Time Use	89	93	62	-31***	0.000
Number of Observations	2,351	2,068	283	.	.

note: .01 - \*\*\*; .05 - \*\*; .1 - \*;

Source: TUS 2015. Authors' calculations. The sample is taken as the 18-29-year-old men.

## Set II. Regression Analysis Results

### Determinants of being NEET

A probit regression was run on the sample of 18-29-year-olds and also 18-29-year-old women and men separately to understand the determinants of being NEET. The regression equation is as follows:

$$P(\text{Being NEET} = 1|x) = \Phi(\alpha_1 \text{ gender} + \alpha_2 \text{ Age between 20 and 24} + \alpha_3 \text{ Age between 25 and 29} + \alpha_4 \text{ Being married} + \alpha_5 \text{ Having basic education} + \alpha_6 \text{ Having high school education} + \alpha_7 \text{ Having university education or more} + \alpha_8 \text{ Subjective health good or very good} + \alpha_9 \text{ not having a physical restraint} + \alpha_{10} \text{ youngest child of the person is aged 0-2} + \alpha_{11} \text{ youngest child of the person is aged 3-5} + \alpha_{12} \text{ youngest child of the person is aged 6-14} + \alpha_{13} \text{ there are children in the household other than the individual's child} + \alpha_{14} \text{ Second asset quintile} + \alpha_{15} \text{ Third asset quintile} + \alpha_{16} \text{ Fourth asset quintile} + \alpha_{17} \text{ Fifth asset quintile} + \alpha_{18} \text{ Household size} + \Omega_1 \text{ region dummy1} + \dots + \Omega_{34} \text{ region dummy26} + \varepsilon)$$



**Annex Table 8.** Probit regression results for being NEET among 18-29-year-olds (marginal effects)

Dependent Variable: NEET Status	All Youth	Youth Men	Youth Women
VARIABLES	(1) NEET	(2) NEET	(3) NEET
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	-0.329*** (0.011)		
<b>Age Classification</b>			
between 20 and 24	-0.025 (0.016)	-0.021 (0.015)	-0.020 (0.024)
between 25 and 29	-0.099*** (0.019)	-0.050*** (0.018)	-0.068** (0.027)
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married	0.050*** (0.017)	-0.167*** (0.023)	0.242*** (0.024)
<b>Education Level</b>			
Basic Education	-0.201*** (0.018)	-0.134*** (0.021)	-0.156*** (0.027)
High School	-0.214*** (0.020)	-0.086*** (0.022)	-0.225*** (0.029)
University Education and More	-0.183*** (0.022)	-0.021 (0.024)	-0.237*** (0.031)
<b>State of Health</b>			
Very Good-Good	-0.084*** (0.023)	-0.079*** (0.023)	-0.058* (0.034)
Not having a Physical/Mental Restraint	-0.101*** (0.025)	-0.120*** (0.025)	-0.049 (0.036)
<b>Age of Own Children of the Individual in the Household</b>			
at least aged 2	0.134*** (0.018)	-0.002 (0.028)	0.195*** (0.026)
at least aged between 3 and 5	0.124*** (0.027)	-0.025 (0.054)	0.092*** (0.035)
at least aged between 6 and 14	0.086* (0.047)	0.165 (0.109)	0.011 (0.056)
Having Children other than Their Own in the Household	0.023 (0.017)	0.028* (0.015)	0.047* (0.025)
<b>Asset Index</b>			
Second Quintile	-0.009 (0.017)	-0.013 (0.017)	-0.018 (0.026)
Third Quintile	-0.032* (0.018)	-0.046** (0.018)	-0.043 (0.027)
Fourth Quintile	-0.052*** (0.019)	-0.050*** (0.019)	-0.064** (0.028)
Fifth Quintile	-0.123*** (0.020)	-0.097*** (0.020)	-0.145*** (0.030)
Household Size	0.003 (0.003)	0.007** (0.003)	-0.000 (0.005)
NUTS2 regions	Controlled for	Controlled for	Controlled for
Number of Observations	12,657	6,239	6,418

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Note: Reported here are the marginal effects. SILC 2017 dataset is used and the sample is composed of 18-29-year-olds. Omitted categories are women, 18-19-year-olds, being single, having less than basic education, being in the first asset quintile (poorest).

## Determinants of Being Unemployed (i.e. looking for a job) among NEET

A probit regression was run on the sample of 18-29-year-old NEET and also 18-29-year-old NEET women and men separately to understand the determinants of looking for a job. The regression equation is as follows:

$$P(\text{Being NEET} = 1|x) = \Phi(\alpha_1 \text{ gender} + \alpha_2 \text{ Age between 20 and 24} + \alpha_3 \text{ Age between 25 and 29} + \alpha_4 \text{ Being married} + \alpha_5 \text{ Having basic education} + \alpha_6 \text{ Having high school education} + \alpha_7 \text{ Having university education or more} + \alpha_8 \text{ Worked before} + \alpha_9 \text{ Household size} + \Omega_1 \text{ region dummy1} + \dots + \Omega_{34} \text{ region dummy26} + \varepsilon)$$

**Annex Table 9.** Probit regression results for being unemployed among 18-29-year-old NEET (marginal effects)

Dependent variable: Being unemployed (i.e. looking for a job)	All NEET	NEET Men	NEET Women
	(1)	(2)	(3)
VARIABLES	Unemployed	Unemployed	Unemployed
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	0.216*** (0.008)		
<b>Age classification</b>			
aged between 20 and 24	0.039*** (0.010)	0.070*** (0.024)	0.015* (0.008)
aged between 25 and 29	0.033*** (0.011)	0.090*** (0.026)	0.003 (0.009)
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married	-0.210*** (0.008)	0.084*** (0.025)	-0.171*** (0.005)
<b>Education Level</b>			
Basic education	0.091*** (0.010)	0.184*** (0.026)	0.027*** (0.009)
High school	0.161*** (0.011)	0.238*** (0.028)	0.094*** (0.008)
University education or more	0.328*** (0.012)	0.326*** (0.030)	0.201*** (0.009)
<b>Work history</b>			
Worked before	0.209*** (0.007)	0.400*** (0.022)	0.097*** (0.006)
Household size	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.006*** (0.001)
NUTS2 regions	Controlled for	Controlled for	Controlled for
Observations	23,426	5,707	17,719

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Note: Reported here are the marginal effects. HLFS 2017 dataset is used, and the sample is composed of 18-29-year-old NEET. Omitted categories are women, 18-19-year-olds, being single and having less than basic education.

## Determinants of Civic Engagement

A probit regression was run on the sample of 18-29-year-olds to understand the determinants of civic engagement among youth. Total participation, active participation and CSO membership are the three dependent variables that the regression was run for separately. The regression equation is as follows:

$P(\text{Being NEET} = 1|x) = \Phi(\alpha_1 \text{NEET status} + \alpha_2 \text{gender} + \alpha_3 \text{Age between 20 and 24} + \alpha_4 \text{Age between 25 and 29} + \alpha_5 \text{Being married} + \alpha_6 \text{Having basic education} + \alpha_7 \text{Having high school education} + \alpha_8 \text{Having university education or more} + \alpha_9 \text{Subjective health good or very good} + \alpha_{10} \text{Second asset quintile} + \alpha_{11} \text{Third asset quintile} + \alpha_{12} \text{Fourth asset quintile} + \alpha_{13} \text{Fifth asset quintile} + \alpha_{14} \text{Household size} + \epsilon)$

**Annex Table 10.** Probit regression results for civic participation among 18-29-year-olds (marginal effects)

Dependent variable: Civic participation		All Youth	
VARIABLES	(1) Total participation	(2) Active participation	(3) Being a CSO member
<b>NEET status</b>			
NEET	-0.081*** (0.013)	-0.012* (0.006)	-0.078*** (0.012)
<b>Gender</b>			
Woman	-0.039*** (0.010)	-0.008* (0.005)	-0.032*** (0.009)
<b>Age classification</b>			
between 20 and 24	0.023 (0.016)	-0.001 (0.008)	0.028** (0.013)
between 25 and 29	0.078*** (0.017)	0.000 (0.008)	0.077*** (0.014)
<b>Marital status</b>			
Married	0.005 (0.012)	0.011* (0.006)	-0.011 (0.010)
<b>Education level</b>			
Basic education	0.025 (0.019)	0.018* (0.011)	0.001 (0.016)
High school	0.056*** (0.019)	0.025** (0.011)	0.031** (0.016)
University education or more	0.092*** (0.020)	0.030*** (0.011)	0.060*** (0.016)
<b>State of health</b>			
Very good or good	-0.040** (0.018)	-0.025*** (0.009)	-0.024 (0.016)
<b>Asset index</b>			
Second Quintile	0.049*** (0.017)	0.014 (0.009)	0.040*** (0.015)
Third Quintile	0.035** (0.017)	0.009 (0.009)	0.030** (0.015)
Fourth Quintile	0.050*** (0.016)	0.013 (0.009)	0.041*** (0.014)
Fifth Quintile	0.076*** (0.016)	0.024*** (0.008)	0.061*** (0.014)
Household size	-0.011*** (0.003)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.011*** (0.003)
Number of observations	4,841	4,841	4,841

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Note: Reported here are the marginal effects. TUS 2015 dataset is used, and the sample is composed of 18-29-year-olds. Omitted categories are men, 18-19-year-olds, being single, having less than basic education, being in the first asset quintile (poorest).

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<sup>i</sup> Authors' findings according to data obtained from ILOSTAT on 145 countries.

<sup>ii</sup> Gross primary school enrollment rate for the World is 104.5 for girls while it is 103.7 for boys and for secondary school it is 76.2 percent for girls and 77 percent for boys. Source: World Bank World Development Indicators.

<sup>iii</sup> Labour force participation rate is 47.9 percent for women aged 15 or more as opposed to 74.9 percent for men in the same age group in 2018. Source: World Bank World Development Indicators.

<sup>iv</sup> An asset index is generated for every household using principal component analysis. Next the population is divided into 5 quintiles from the poorest to the richest.

<sup>v</sup> Leisure activities include voluntary work and meetings, social life and entertainment (meetings with family and friends, going to cinema etc.), sports and outdoor activities, hobbies and games and mass media (e.g. reading a book, watching tv, listening to radio etc.).

<sup>vi</sup> Yet when controlled for other individual and household characteristics a higher level of education increases the chances of looking for a job among both NEET men and women (See Table xx in Annex for regression results). Controlling for age, marital status, work history, household size and regions having a university degree or more increases the likelihood of looking for a job by 32.6 percentage points among NEET men compared to having less than basic education. The same rate is 20.1 percentage points for women.

<sup>vii</sup> Active participation is volunteering in the last four weeks in any group including social welfare groups, sports clubs, places of worship, political groups, youth groups, security/first aid groups, environmentalist groups, justice/human rights groups, countrymen associations, hobby groups, parent-teacher associations, professional solidarity associations and adult education groups. While total participation is being a CSO member or being engaged in active participation.

<sup>viii</sup> As civic engagement being a member to a CSO and volunteering in the last month (i.e. active participation) have been examined.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.  
This project is funded by the European Union.

