



National system overview on education systems in Europe

2011 Edition



TURKEY

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1. Education population and language of instruction

According to the results of 2011 Address Based Census, the population of Turkey is 73 722 988. 0-14 age group constitutes 30 % of the country population, 15-64 age group 64 % of the whole population, while age group over 65 is 6 %. The population in compulsory education (6-14 ages) is 13 473 000.

Instruction language in all education levels is Turkish. However, foreign language education (mostly English, French and German) is provided to all students from 4grade of primary education to the end of higher education. Additionally, some secondary and higher education institutions provide education in a foreign language partly or fully. Some schools are permitted to offer education in their minority languages.

2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

Formal educational services at all educational levels are provided substantially (more than 90 %) by public education institutions. Private education institutions also exist. Private education institutions mean private financing and administration. Individuals, corporations or other types of institutions (such as associations, foundations) can open and run private schools profit based at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. Private education institutions are subject to the same regulations with public institutions in terms of educational arrangements and certification (curricula, teacher qualifications, length of school day/week/year, assessment, progression, diploma etc.). Public funds are given to private institutions in various ways to a certain extent. But no government-dependent private institution exists. In higher education level, only 'foundations' can run private higher education institutions without making a profit. Public fund can be provided for private higher education institutions within some limits upon meeting certain criteria determined by regulation. Although private higher education institutions are substantially autonomous in terms of their administration and management, they are subject to the same regulations regarding educational standards with public institutions.

Administrative legislation and supervision related to formal and non-formal education (except for higher education) is performed by Ministry of National Education – MoNE (*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı* MEB) is responsible for preparing curriculum, maintaining coordination between educational institutions, construction of school buildings etc.

Educational activities in the provinces are organised by the Provincial Directors of Education (*İl Milli Eğitim Müdürü*) appointed by the Minister.

Supervision of educational institutions is carried out at both central and regional (local or provincial) level. The supervision of primary education institutions is performed at provincial level by primary education inspectors, while inspectors delegated by the MEB supervise secondary education institutions.

Higher education institutions are autonomous for purposes of education and research. However, they have to submit annual reports to Higher Education Council (*Yükseköğretim Kurulu – YÖK*) which is responsible for the planning and coordination of higher education. Institutions are monitored at least once a year by Higher Education Supervisory Board (*Yükseköğretim Denetleme Kurulu*) acting on behalf of the YÖK.

3. Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education is an optional education stage covering the education of children between 36 and 72 months. However, a pilot project which started in 2010 is continuing to take all 5 years-old children to pre-school education. Main pre-primary education providers are MEB, some public and private institutions. All pre-primary education institutions (named as *anaokulları*, *uygulamalı an sınıfları* and *ana sınıfları*) are under the supervision of MEB.

In the 2010/11 school year, the enrolment rate in pre-primary education is 35% for 2-4 age, 43 % for 4-6 age. Aside from a parental contribution to expenditure on meals and cleaning materials, all public pre-primary institutions are free of charge. Private pre-primary education institutions charge fees.

4. Compulsory education

(i) Phases

Primary School (<i>İlköğretim Okulu</i>)	Grade 1 – 8	Ages 6 – 14
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The duration of compulsory education in a single primary school (*İlköğretim Okulu*) is eight years for the children between ages of 6 and 14. Net schooling rate in primary education is 98.6 % net in 2011/12 school year.

(ii) Admission criteria

Admission to primary education requires the children to finish the age of 72 months (6 years). Enrolment of children to the nearest schools to their homes is the general rule accepted.

Primary education is free of charge in public institutions. Parents are free to choose any private school for their children. Private schools charge fee.

(iii) Length of school day/week/year

It is essential that term of school year is not to be less than 180 work days in primary education and is divided into two semesters. Schools are open five days a week from Monday to Friday. The number of lessons (40 minutes) is 30 in a week and 1 080 in a year in primary education. In other words, the average number of lessons a day is 6.

(iv) Class size/student grouping

The maximum number of pupils per class as officially specified is 30. However, the size of the classes differs from 20 to 40 depending on the region. As the students generally start schools at

certain ages, classrooms mostly consist of the same age group of students with exceptional cases such as late start, repetition. All schools are in co-education. For grades 1 to 5, in general classroom teachers are individually responsible for their classes. Some subjects (e.g. physical education, music, art, foreign language) in grades 4 and 5 and all subjects for grades 6 to 8 are delivered by subject teachers (field specialists).

(v) Curriculum control and content

The curriculum is determined at national level by Turkish Board of Education (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu* – MEB). In primary schools, courses are determined by grades. They can be categorised as follows:

- Compulsory core courses including Turkish, Mathematics, Sciences, Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Civic, History, Foreign Languages, Religion and Ethics, Drawing, Music, Physical Education, Traffic and First-aid Training and Miscellaneous Individual and Various Activities.
- Elective courses such as Computer Education, Drama, Speech and Writing, A Second Foreign Language, Tourism, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, and Local Handicrafts.

Textbooks are determined by Turkish Board of Education (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu*). Teachers are given no freedom for textbook selection. Although teachers are free to choose the way they teach, the selected approaches available in the textbooks force them to stick to certain instruction styles in accordance with the approaches utilized in the textbooks employed.

(vi) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Being parallel to the changes in curricula in 2006, assessment and evaluation methods have changed and 'process-based assessment' has been put into practice. Achievement of primary schools students at the end of each school year are assessed by teachers individually considering their performance (projects, exam scores, performance homework, classroom participation, attendance, behaviours etc.) during the entire year. Students who are successful according to a required level move to the next stage. Repetition is possible for underachieved students.

Pupils receive the diploma of primary education (*İlköğretim Diploması*) upon successful completion of eight year compulsory education.

5. Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

Education is compulsory until the age of 18. Full-time secondary education is described in the previous section, while secondary dual vocational education and training is presented below, as well as non-higher post-secondary education (CITE 4).

(i) Types of education/institutions

General Secondary Education	General High School (<i>Genel Lise</i>) Anatolian High School (<i>Anadolu Lisesi</i>) Science High School (<i>Fen Lisesi</i>) Social Science High School (<i>Sosyal Bilimler Lisesi</i>) Fine Art and Sports High School (<i>Güzel Sanatlar ve Spor Lisesi</i>) Anatolian Teacher High School (<i>Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi</i>) Multi-Programmed High Schools (<i>Çok Programlı Liseler</i>)	14-17
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Vocational and Technical Secondary Education	Technical and Industrial Vocational Schools (<i>Teknik Lise ve Endüstri Meslek Lisesi</i>) Technical and Industrial Vocational Schools for Girls (<i>Kız Teknik ve Meslek Lisesi</i>) Hotel and Tourism Vocational High School (<i>Otelcilik ve Turizm Meslek Lisesi</i>) Business High School (<i>Ticaret Meslek Lisesi</i>) Health Vocational High School (<i>Sağlık Meslek Lisesi</i>) Special Education Vocational Schools (<i>Özel Eğitim Meslek Lisesi</i>)	14-17
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In general, secondary education is provided at a variety of institutions including vocational and technical education institutions offering four years of education for those who have completed primary education. In 2011/12 academic year, net schooling rate in secondary education is 69.33 %.

(ii) Admission criteria

Anybody with a primary education diploma is eligible to pursue secondary education. Admission requirements depend on the particular type of school concerned. All high schools (name given for all general and vocational secondary education schools, equivalent of high schools) receive their students by direct enrolment. Some privileged schools (which are generally categorized as Anatolian schools having more foreign language lessons, limited number of students in classrooms, etc.) accept their students via centrally organized examination named Level Determination Exam (SBS – *Seviye Belirleme Sınavı*). Parents can choose any type of high schools for their children among the schools accepting their students via direct enrolment.

(iii) Curriculum control and content

Turkish Board of Education (MEB *Talim Terbiye Kurulu*) as the authority to determine the curricula, the content of courses, the number of lessons allocated to each type of school per week, and the years in which they should be delivered. In secondary education schools, the average number of weekly lessons in each grade ranges from a minimum of 30 hours to a maximum of 45. Curricula consist of common courses in general culture, field courses, field-based elective courses and elective courses which are set up in accordance with the subject concerned. Courses may be chosen in line with students' personal preferences and interests.

- Common general courses are compulsory for all students in secondary schools. In the first year of secondary education, common general subjects usually include Turkish Language and Literature, Religious Culture and Ethics, History, Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Hygiene, A Foreign Language and Physical Education.
- Field courses steer pupils towards a profession or the programme for which they wish to enroll in higher education. From the second year onwards, pupils in general high schools may choose to attend branches specialising in the natural sciences, literature, mathematics, social sciences, foreign languages, arts or physical education.
- Field-based elective courses are offered in a particular field chosen by individual students. Students are expected to choose field based elective courses in accordance with their personal interests.
- Elective courses seek to develop the individual skills and abilities of pupils. They may be chosen on an individual basis from any of the courses specified above.

(iv) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Progression to the next grade is based on students' achievement in all courses or the average annual level of attainment. Their performance is measured in terms of the results obtained in written or oral examinations, practical examinations, homework, and project activities during or outside normal school hours. Assessment is done by individual teachers. The average score for a course in a semester is calculated on the basis of the average of all course marks obtained during that semester. The averages of two semesters of a specific lesson result are given at the end of each year. Successful students in every lesson and students who attain a predetermined level of achievement from all lessons move to the next grade. Students who have more than two lessons underachieved are required to repeat the same grade.

The Secondary School Diploma (*Lise Diploması*) is awarded to students on the successful completion of secondary education in accordance with the MEB regulations concerning relating to the type of secondary school or courses concerned. The Secondary School Diploma (*Lise Diploması*) is the prerequisite for entry into higher education.

6. Higher education

(i) Structure

Higher education institutions consist of universities (*üniversiteler*), higher technology institutes (*yüksek teknoloji enstitüleri*) and independent private (foundation) vocational higher schools (*meslek yüksekokulları*). Except the very few independent private (foundation) vocational higher schools, higher education institutions are gathered under the frame of university or higher technology institute.

Universities (including higher technology institutes) consist of at least some of the following affiliated units:

- Faculties: bodies responsible for undergraduate education (four years), scholarly research and publications.
- Graduate schools: institutions for graduate education within universities. There are basically three kinds of graduate schools in the fields of health, social sciences and sciences.
- Vocational higher schools: Vocationally oriented two or four years school.

(ii) Access

In general, admission to higher education requires having a high school diploma (to be graduated from one of the academic or vocational and technical high schools) and being successful in entrance exams (named as *Yükseköğretime Giriş Sınavı* – YGS and *Lisans Yerleştirme Sınavı* – LYS) carried out on central basis by Evaluation, Selection and Placement Centre (*Ölçme, Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi* – ÖSYM). When the results of the examination are examined, the performance of students in secondary education is taken into consideration. The most successful ones are allocated to higher education institutions by ÖSYM depending on their ranking and personal preferences. There is a great competition in the transition to higher education. Most of the students attend university preparation courses (*dershane*) in Turkey.

(iii) Qualifications

On the completion of short-cycle vocational higher schools (2 years), a vocational qualification known as associate degree diploma (*Önlisans Diploması*) is awarded by two-year vocational higher schools (*Meslek Yüksek Okulları*). This diploma also is affiliated to universities. University degrees include first-cycle qualification, BA degree (*Lisans Diploması*), and second-cycle qualification

known as MA degree (*Yüksek Lisans Derecesi*). BA degree is awarded following the successful completion of a fulltime four-year university course of study. MA degree is awarded following the successful completion of a further two years of full-time university study (or one-and-a-half years in the case of Master's programmes not requiring a thesis). In medicine, the Doctorship Diploma (*Tip Doktorluğu Diploması*) is awarded after six years of study. Courses lasting five years in dentistry and veterinary medicine lead to the award of the Dentistry Diploma (*Diş Hekimliği Diploması*) and Diploma in Veterinary (*Veteriner Hekim Diploması*) respectively. In addition, duration of education in faculty of pharmacy and department of teacher training for secondary education in faculty of education has extended to 5 years. Qualifications awarded in these fields are considered to be equivalent to MA degree and graduates of these programmes can be directly accepted to doctoral programmes.

A PhD/doctoral degree (*Doktora Derecesi*), which may be taken following satisfactory completion of the Master's degree, requires a further four years of study and research.

7. Special needs education

Individuals with seriously mental disability, more disabilities than one, very seriously mental disability, attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity, impediment of speech and language, emotional and behavioural disorder, visual impairment, slight mental disability, hearing impairment, medium level mental disability, orthopedic disorder and autistic disorder are included in scope of individuals in need of special education. Although attendance to mainstreaming is basic rule for individuals with special education needs, various schools exist for the students who cannot attend regular schools. No data is available on the percentage of children in need of special education attending school.

Guidance and Research Centres (*Rehberlik ve Araştırma Merkezleri* – HEMs) seek to identify children in need of special education, and provide them with the best possible counselling facilities.

8. Teachers

Holding at least a four-year-bachelor degree is essential to be a teacher irrespective of the level of education. Teachers for pre-primary and primary education (generalist teachers and specialist teachers) are trained at bachelor's level. Secondary education teachers are trained at master's level (5 years). Some specialist teachers (foreign language, music, painting, physical education and computer) employed at both primary and secondary education levels are trained at bachelor's level. Newly appointed teachers who start the profession with the title of “teacher” (*öğretmen*) are employed as civil servants at state schools. Most teachers have the position of state officers, and they are generally employed at permanent position.

Information provided by the National Eurydice Unit in Turkey.

For more detailed information on education systems in Europe, you may consult EURYPEDIA which provides descriptions of educational systems and policies in the Eurydice network countries: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurypedia>