

4th Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of Republic of Türkiye

Stakeholder Report





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the Universal Periodic Review
of Republic of Türkiye**

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Abbreviations

| | |
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| AK Party | Justice and Development Party |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CERD | Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus 2019 |
| DERBİS | Information System for Associations |
| ECHR | European Convention of Human Rights |
| ECtHR | European Court of Human Rights |
| ECTHR | European Court of Human Rights |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoFor | Youth Organizations Forum |
| GSB | Ministry of Youth and Sports |
| GSS | General Health Insurance |
| HAGB | Deferral of the Announcement of the Verdict |
| HPV | Human Papilloma Virus |
| ICCPR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights |
| ICERD | International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) |
| ICESCR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| ICTA | Information and Communication Technologies Authority |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| KETEM | Cancer Early Diagnosis, Screening and Education Centers |
| KHK | Presidential Decree |
| KYK | Higher Education Credit and Hostels Institution |
| LGBTI+ | Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Intersex Plus |
| MHP | Nationalist Movement Party |
| NEET | Youth not in employment, education or training |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organizations |
| NHRIs | National Human Rights Institutions |



| | |
|------------|--|
| NYC | National Youth Council |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| RTÜK | Radio and Television Supreme Council |
| SEC | Supreme Election Council |
| SOGI | Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity |
| TCK | Turkish Penal Code |
| TİHEK | Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye |
| TMK | Turkish Civil Code |
| TR | Republic of Türkiye |
| TURKSTAT | Turkish Statistical Institute |
| UDHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights |
| UN-HABITAT | The United Nations Human Settlements Programme |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| YÖK | Council of Higher Education |
| YÖKAK | Higher Education Quality Council |

Definition of youth

1. The definition of youth in Türkiye is officially found only in Article 58 of the Turkish Constitution, entitled “Protection of the Youth.” However, this definition is shaped around the founding codes and principles of the Turkish nation-state and defines youth not as autonomous individuals due to their age but rather as the guardians and heirs of independence and the Republic. In this context, the Article assigns the Turkish State the responsibility of providing conditions for youth to fulfill these duties. For instance, according to Article 58, “the State shall take measures to ensure the education and development of the youth [...] in opposition to ideas aiming at the destruction of the invisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation”¹. These measures include protecting youth from habits such as alcohol and substance use, committing crimes, and gambling². As a result, in Türkiye, youth are defined not as autonomous subjects but as objects that need to be protected by the nation and the State, forming the basis of the structural barriers they face in accessing their rights.

Recommendations

2. Article 58 of the Turkish Constitution should be revised through a constitutional reform. This revision should define youth as autonomous individuals, rather than treating them with paternalistic and protective approaches, while ensuring that their access to rights prescribed in international law is guaranteed at the constitutional level.
3. In the same revision, the Turkish State should be assigned a role in establishing, implementing, and upholding youth rights, and responsibilities should be introduced accordingly. These responsibilities should include protecting the autonomy and freedoms of young people from structural and systemic barriers based on age.
4. The entire revision process should progress with the effective and meaningful participation of youth and youth organisations. The new definition of youth should be shaped by incorporating their own perspectives, desires, and expressions, directly conveyed by youth and youth organisations.

Health

5. The right to health is a fundamental right enshrined in the UDHR, ECHR, the ICCPR, the European Social Charter, the Constitution of WHO, all of which Türkiye is a signatory party. ICERD also states that the right to health should be ensured for everyone without discrimination. While the 1961 Constitution defined health as one

¹ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 58. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

² *ibid.*

of the fundamental rights in Article 48 (VII)³, the 1982 Constitution, which is still in effect, designates the responsibilities of the Turkish State concerning the provision and supervision of healthcare services⁴.

6. Depression, waist and back pain, anxiety, interpersonal violence, and migraines are among the top five factors contributing to the illness burden for youth aged 20-24 in Türkiye. For those aged 25-29, the leading factors include waist and back pain, depression, COVID-19, gynaecological issues, and anxiety.⁵
7. Only 46% of youth express satisfaction with their lives and only 44% are hopeful about the future.⁶
8. HPV screenings at KETEMs are offered every five years for women aged 30-65 in Türkiye⁷, excluding younger women from early diagnosis and treatment. Men are only screened if symptoms like lesions or warts appear. HPV vaccines are not part of the national vaccination program, requiring individuals to pay high prices out of pocket⁸. Despite WHO recognizing HPV as a preventable cause of cervical cancer, Türkiye's lack of screening and prevention efforts has led to many deaths⁹, with no official tracking system or statistics available.
9. ₺ 33,690,000 was allocated by GSB in its 2024 budget to combat addiction, which accounts for only 0.02% of the total budget. Educational activities are the only category specified in the program¹⁰. The percentage of individuals who begin using drugs is 69,6%, and the average age of first drug use is 21,99.¹¹

³ Constitution of the Turkish Republic, #334. (1961). Article 48. <https://www.anayasa.gen.tr/1961constitution-text.pdf>

⁴ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 58. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

⁵ WHO. (2021). Global health estimates: Leading causes of DALYs <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/mortality-and-global-health-estimates/global-health-estimates-leading-causes-of-dalys>

⁶ Habitat Association. (2023). *Türkiye'de gençlerin iyi olma hali araştırma raporu 5* [Research report on the well-being of young people in Turkey 5]. <https://habitatdernegi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Turkiyede-Genclerin-Iyi-Olma-Hali-Raporu-5-Ozet-Rapor.pdf>

⁷ Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye. Kanser Erken Teşhis Tarama ve Eğitim Merkezi (KETEM) [Cancer Early Diagnosis, Screening and Education Centers]. <https://turkiyeyuzuyili.com/proje-kanser-erken-teshis-tarama-ve-egitim-merkezi-ketem>

⁸ Turkish Medical Association. (Mart 22, 2024). HPV bağışıklanması: Aşıyla önlenebilen kanser [HPV vaccination: Vaccine-preventable cancer.]. https://www.ttb.org.tr/haber_goster.php?Guid=0ca8f6d4-e81f-11ee-bb11-586c131e5d77

⁹ ibid.

¹⁰ GoFor. (2023). Gençlik ve Spor Bakanlığı 2024 Bütçesi hakkında bilgi notu [Policy Paper on the 2024 Budget of the Ministry of Youth and Sports]. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18364/1/

¹¹ Narkotik Suçlarla Mücadele Daire Başkanlığı [Department of Combating Narcotic Crimes]. (2023). Madde kullanıcıları profil analizi 2022 yılı narkolog raporu [Drug users profile analysis 2022 narcologist report]. <https://www.narkotik.pol.tr/kurumlar/narkotik.pol.tr/TUB%C4%B0M/Ulusal%20Yay%C4%B1nlar/NARKOLOG-2023-PROFIL-ANALIZI.pdf>

10. The state covers GSS premiums for high school graduates under 20¹² and higher education graduates under 25.¹³ Beyond these ages, unemployed individuals must pay a monthly premium of ₺600.08 and must have no GSS debt to access healthcare¹⁴. Students over 25 in higher education also pay this premium. From January to June 2024, 9,444,458 people had GSS debt.¹⁵, burdening unemployed youth and limiting healthcare access.
11. In periods of crisis such as the pandemic and earthquakes, youth are often the first social group to be neglected.¹⁶ Such marginalisation increases exponentially when other identities intersect with the identity of youth. Only 39.1% of young people reported being able to attend classes regularly during the pandemic, and 26.6% indicated they lost their jobs.¹⁷ 23% of young LGBTI+'s stated they were unable to access healthcare services during this time.¹⁸ Students' dormitories were closed and repurposed as quarantine spaces.¹⁹ This resulted in a housing crisis for students.

Recommendations

12. The lack of youth mental health policies negatively affects their well-being. Solutions like employment initiatives, well-being-focused education practices, and sexual health education are essential, especially given the high costs of therapy and the shortage of therapists.
13. HPV vaccines should be promptly included in the national vaccination program, and the population should be vaccinated starting in childhood. Access to HPV screening should be made easier, and age or gender restrictions should be lifted.

¹² Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu [Social Security Institution]. (2024). Gençler Genel Sağlık Sigortası'ndan nasıl yararlanmaktadır? [How do young people benefit from Universal Health Insurance?]. <https://www.sgk.gov.tr/Content/Post/46f39449-681c-4979-9780-9432d56c1478/Gencler-Genel-Saglik-Sigortasindan-nasil-yaralanmaktadır-2023-01-25-02-09-19>

¹³ ibid.

¹⁴ Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu [Social Security Institution]. (2024). 2024 yılı için Genel Sağlık Sigortası prim tutarı ne kadardır? [What is the General Health Insurance premium amount for 2024?]. <https://www.sgk.gov.tr/Content/Post/146ba5fa-f757-4fc1-b316-30859c42d21e/2024-yili-icin-Genel-Saglik-Sigortasi-prim-tutari-ne-kadardir-2024-01-12-03-17-48#:~:text=Bu%20kapsamdaki%20genel%20sa%C4%9Fl%C4%B1k%20sigortal%C4%B1lar%C4%B1n%C4%B1n,600%2C08%20TL'dir.>

¹⁵ Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı [Ministry of Family and Social Services]. (2024). 2024 Yılı Kurumsal Mali Durum ve Beklentiler Raporu [2024 Corporate Financial Status and Expectations Report]. <https://www.aile.gov.tr/media/173647/2024-yili-kurumsal-mali-durum-ve-beklentiler-raporu.pdf>

¹⁶ GoFor. (2022). Politika ve pandemide gençler [Young people in politics and the pandemic]. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18350/1/

¹⁷ Sağlıkta Genç Yaklaşımlar Derneği [Y-PEER Turkey]. (2020). Determination of Young People's Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a3yRzicFvkQ3HDQI2Hif_VO1kt8pbK4s/view?usp=sharing

¹⁸ Young LGBTI+ Association. (2020). The State of the LGBTI+ Community During the COVID-19 Pandemic Resarch Report. <https://genclgbti.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/covid-report.pdf>

¹⁹ Sivil Alan Araştırmaları Derneği [Civilian Area Research Association]. (Eylül 15, 2020). Kalacakları KYK Yurtları karantinaya çevrilen öğrencilere ne olacak? [What will happen to students whose KYK dormitories are quarantined?]. <https://sivilalanarastirmalari.org.tr/2020/09/15/kalacaklari-kyk-yurtlari-karantinaya-cevrilen-ogrencilere-ne-olacak/>

14. Rehabilitation efforts in the fight against addiction should be expanded, and a participatory strategy should be developed to address the economic and social inequalities that lead to substance use.
15. The requirement to pay the fee for GSS even if the young people do not possess economic freedom and/or security should be abolished. GSS debts of NEETs and unemployed youth should be cancelled, and their access to healthcare should be ensured by the State.
16. Emergency plans should be prepared for crises and efforts undertaken to prevent them from losing rights.

Housing

17. Türkiye ratified the UDHR and ICESCR, thereby recognizing the right to housing as a fundamental human right. Additionally, it hosted the second conference of UN-HABITAT in Istanbul and adopted the Istanbul Declaration, which endorsed the goals of 'adequate shelter for all' and 'sustainable human settlements'. In doing so, Türkiye acknowledged the right to housing at the international level and took on the responsibility to realise this right at the national level.
18. Access to housing in Türkiye is limited, largely due to a development model that treats housing as a tool for economic growth and investment rather than a public right. This approach benefits the top 10% while failing to distribute housing opportunities equitably, particularly impacting marginalised groups like youth. National and international data reflect this disparity:
19. As of the third quarter of 2024, Türkiye is the worst performer among OECD countries, with a score of 917.4 in the housing prices index.²⁰ The fact that Hungary, the country with the second-worst performance, ranks second with a score of only 187.2 demonstrates how poor Türkiye's performance is.²¹
20. From the third quarter of 2023 to the third quarter of 2024, housing prices in Türkiye increased by 112.2%, making it the country with the highest increase among OECD countries over the past year.²²

²⁰ OECD. (2024). Housing Prices Index.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/housing-prices.html?oecdcontrol-82d381eddd-var3=2024-Q3>

²¹ ibid

²² ibid

21. The average rental fee per square metre was ₺14 in August 2019 as opposed to ₺125 in August 2023.²³ In this vein, rental fees rose by more than 793% and housing price hikes stood for 927% in the past four years.²⁴ In provinces with the highest youth population, namely in Ankara and İstanbul, price increases corresponded to 833% and 713%, respectively.²⁵
22. The situation in private dormitories in Turkey is not much different. In the 2022-23 academic year, the average accommodation cost for a student staying in a private dormitory was ₺3,300 per month, which has tragically increased by 213.94% over the past year to ₺10,360²⁶. In cities with a high number of students, like İstanbul, private dormitory prices range from ₺40,000 to ₺320,000 annually.²⁷
23. Considering that the net minimum wage was ₺11,402 in the second half of 2023²⁸ and has been increased to ₺17,002 in 2024²⁹, while the cost of living for a single individual in July 2024 was ₺24,901.78³⁰, a young person in Türkiye cannot afford to buy a house, rent a home, or stay in private dormitories if they are a student.
24. Although dormitories offered by KYK are relatively affordable, they pose significant qualitative and quantitative problems in terms of the right to housing. There are only 785 KYK-owned-dormitories as opposed to 6,950,142 students in total for the academic year of 2023-2024³¹, while the capacity of these dormitories is merely 876,942 people³².
25. While this issue can be solved with the construction of more state-owned dormitories, the Turkish State puts additional beds in existing dormitories, forcing up to 14 students to live in the same room. This is evidenced by the fact that from the

²³ Endeksa. (2023). Emlak endeksi [Real estate index].

<https://www.endeksa.com/tr/blog/yazi/2023-3-ceyrek-sonu-itibari-ile-turkiye-genelinde-konut-fiyatlarinda-yillik-artist-109-kiralara-ise-136>

²⁴ ibid

²⁵ ibid

²⁶ İstanbul Planlama Ajansı [İstanbul Planning Agency]. (2023). *Kent gündemine bakış: İstanbul'da üniversiteli olmanın maliyeti* [A look at the city agenda: The cost of being a university student in İstanbul].

<https://ipa.istanbul.yayinlarimiz/genel/kent-gundemine-bakis-istanbulda-universiteli-olmanin-maliyeti/>

²⁷ Alagöz, G. (July 23, 2023). Üniversiteliler için kiralari ve yurt fiyatlarını araştırdık: Barınma sınavı başlıyor [We researched rents and dormitory prices for university students: The housing exam is starting]. Hürriyet.

<https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/universiteliler-icin-kiralari-ve-yurt-fiyatlarini-arastirdik-barinmasinavi-basliyor-42303026>

²⁸ Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı [Ministry of Labor and Social Security]. (June 20, 2023). 2023 yılı ikinci altı ay için yeni asgari ücret 11 bin 402 TL olarak belirlendi [The new minimum wage for the second half of 2023 was determined as 11,402 TL].

<https://www.csqb.gov.tr/haberler/2023-yili-ikinci-alti-ay-icin-yeni-asgari-ucret-11-bin-402-tl-olarak-belirlendi/#:~:text=T.C..Bin%20402%20TL%20olarak%20Belirlendi>

²⁹ Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı [Ministry of Labor and Social Security]. (December 27, 2023). 2024 yılında uygulanacak yeni asgari ücret 17 bin 2 TL olarak belirlendi [The new minimum wage to be implemented in 2024 was determined as 17 thousand 2 TL].

<https://www.csqb.gov.tr/haberler/2024-yilinda-uygulanacak-yeni-asgari-ucret-17-bin-2-tl-olarak-belirlendi/>

³⁰ Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu [Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions]. (July 30, 2024). Temmuz 2024 açlık ve yoksulluk sınırı [July 2024 hunger and poverty threshold].

<https://www.turkis.org.tr/turk-is-temmuz-2024-aclik-ve-yoksulluk-siniri/>

³¹ YÖK. (2023). Öğrenim düzeyine göre öğrenci sayısı [Number of students by education level]. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>

³² Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of Education]. (2023). *Milli eğitim istatistikleri örgün eğitim raporu* [National education statistics formal education report]. https://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/icerik_goruntule.php?KNO=508

academic years 2017-2018 to 2022-2023, the number of KYK-owned dormitories decreased by 5, while their capacity increased by 208,925 individuals.³³

26. In this situation, young people living in KYK dormitories are forced to endure serious violations of health, hygiene, and personal space.³⁴ These living conditions, filled with rights violations compounded by the effects of the economic crisis and inadequate oversight and security measures, contribute to an increase in incidents of suicide and death among students residing in KYK dormitories³⁵.

Recommendations

27. A national housing strategy should be established in alignment with inclusive development goals. This strategy should define housing not as a commodity but as a human right. Article 57³⁶ of the Turkish Constitution, which governs the right to housing, should clearly and effectively convey such an approach.
28. State-led housing initiatives should be implemented. To deter speculative landholding, land value taxes should be enforced, and social impact bonds should be introduced to ensure that companies in the housing market serve social needs.
29. Taxes should be imposed on speculative real estate purchases and luxury housing to control the speculative demand that triggers the financialization of housing.
30. To control speculative increases in housing prices, rent control and rent ceiling measures should be implemented. Additionally, financial incentives and obligations should be provided to property owners of vacant units to encourage them to bring these properties into the social housing market.
31. The government should construct new KYK dormitories that meet international standards and make qualitative improvements in existing dormitories to achieve these standards. The design, implementation, and monitoring processes of these services should be treated as processes where accommodation services are regarded as a public service in their entirety.
32. The budget planning processes concerning KYKs should ensure effective, meaningful, and sustainable participation of young people and youth organisations.

³³ ibid

³⁴ Fatima Çelik. (December 1, 2023). Öğrenciler anlatıyor: KYK yurtlarında neler yaşanıyor? [Students tell: What happens in KYK dormitories?]. BBC News Türkçe. <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/c51eel433eko>

³⁵ BirGün. (June 1, 2024). KYK yurtlarında 15 günde 6 ölüm [6 deaths in 15 days within KYK dormitories]. <https://www.birgun.net/haber/kyk-yurtlarinda-15-gunde-6-olum-534328>

³⁶ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 57. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

33. The State should provide rental assistance and housing grants to low-income youth and increase the financial resources of existing support mechanisms, such as scholarships for young students.
34. More powers and resources should be granted to local administrations. Particularly in metropolitan cities, the capacities of local governments to determine and implement housing policies should be enhanced, enabling them to develop solutions tailored to the problems, needs and expectations of young individuals.

Education

35. 1,113,000 university students dropped out of school between 2020 and 2022.³⁷ However, this data does not explain the reasons behind these dropouts. Meanwhile, an examination of the universities attended by these students reveals that those in Istanbul, Ankara, Kocaeli, İzmir, and Eskişehir have the highest dropout rates.³⁸ Given the fact that the economic crisis and housing crisis hit metropolitan cities harder, it may be concluded that economic factors are the primary reason for students dropping out of school.
36. High living costs emerge as the most pressing issue in the country, with 33% identifying it as such, followed by education at 14.6%.³⁹ When examining the most pressing issues by age group, living costs (29.2%) and education (19.6%) are the top concerns for those aged 18-24, often considered the "higher education" age group.⁴⁰ Economic problems (64%) are cited as the biggest problem for students, followed by issues related to education, tests and life at school, which account for 8%.⁴¹
37. KYK is a primary source of financial aid for higher education students, offering scholarships (non-repayable) and loans (repayable after graduation). In 2024, KYK set the aid amounts at ₺2,000 for undergraduates, ₺4,000 for graduates, and ₺6,000 for doctorate students, equating to 12%, 14%, and 35% of the minimum wage, respectively. Aid is determined by income and academic performance⁴², but most applicants are denied due to budget limits. Those who receive aid often struggle, as the amounts fall short of the minimum wage, forcing many to work while studying.

³⁷ The Higher Education Quality Council (YÖKAK) has removed the data from previous years for the indicator "Number of Students Leaving the University, Excluding Graduates" as of 2024 from the Indicator Values Report.

³⁸ Euronews. (16 January 2024). Türkiye'de son 5 yılda 2 milyon üniversite öğrencisi okulu bıraktı [2 million university students dropped out of school in Turkey in the last 5 years].

<https://tr.euronews.com/2024/01/16/turkiyede-son-5-yilda-2-milyon-universite-ogrencisi-okulu-birakti>

³⁹ TURKSTAT. (2023). *Yaşam memnuniyeti araştırması 2022 [Life satisfaction survey 2022]*.

<https://www.tuik.gov.tr/media/announcements/yasam-memnuniyeti-arastirmasi.pdf>

⁴⁰ ibid

⁴¹ GoFor. (2024). *Research on political preferences of the youth 2024*. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18668/1/

⁴² Yılmaz, V. (2016). Youth welfare policy in Turkey in comparative perspective: a case of "Denied Youth Citizenship". *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 17(1), 41 - 55.

38. This data demonstrates that students in higher education face difficulties in continuing their education, and are forced to choose between either earning a living or getting an education amid a much deeper economic crisis and housing crisis.
39. The appointments of rectors by the President continue to have an impact on academic freedom in universities. Following the coup on September 12, 1980, YÖK, established after the coup, abolished rector elections. In 1992, a legal amendment was made to regulate the process of appointing rectors, and elections were reinstated. According to the law, in public universities, rector candidates are initially elected by faculty members from among professors. The YÖK then presents three candidates to the President for approval, and finally, the President appoints the rector. In 2016, with a decree law, elections were abolished again; now, rectors are appointed by the President from among three candidates proposed by YÖK. In private universities, the rector is appointed by the President after receiving a positive opinion from YÖK regarding the candidate determined by the board of trustees.⁴³
40. In 2021, the President appointed a rector to Boğaziçi University, leading to ongoing reactions and protests from faculty and students that have persisted for more than three years. During this time, some faculty members were banned from teaching, students who participated in the protests had their student cards cancelled, and their rights to education were revoked. Many students were detained or arrested, deans were removed from their office and replaced by people appointed by YÖK. This entire process is interpreted as a series of rising violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, and as an attack against students' right to education.⁴⁴ Rector appointments saw reactions from students and academics of many other universities alongside Boğaziçi University, including Middle East Technical University, Yıldız Technical University and Istanbul University.
41. At 205 operational universities in Türkiye, rectors are appointed not through elections by faculty members but by the President. This situation turns into pressure on academics and students who are not pro-government or who criticise government policies within the framework of academic freedom and freedom of expression.. Meanwhile, it also curbs academic freedom and students' right to education, bringing about discussions on meritocracy.
42. In this context, appointed rectors restrict students' academic freedoms while simultaneously limiting their socialisation spaces for political purposes under the guise of budget constraints. Due to the economic crisis, student festivals at universities—one of the few institutions providing entertainment and cultural

⁴³ BBC News Türkçe. (January 8, 2021). Boğaziçi: Türkiye'de rektörlük seçimleri 75 yılda nasıl değişti? 2016 sonrası atamalar üniversiteleri nasıl etkiledi? [Boğaziçi: How have rectoral elections changed in Turkey in 75 years? How have the appointments after 2016 affected universities?]. <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-55585169>

⁴⁴ Scholars at Risk Network. (February 22, 2022). *Restore Academic Freedom and Autonomy at Boğaziçi University*. <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SAR-Letter-RE-Bogazici-University-2022.02.02.pdf>

activities for free, which are crucial for well-being—are being banned to prevent students from coming together, and access to such events is becoming increasingly restricted⁴⁵.

Recommendations

43. Financial assistance for students pursuing higher education should be diversified beyond scholarships and loans, and should be increased in terms of financial value.
44. Financial support amounts should be updated periodically to fully reflect economic realities, taking into account reel inflation rates and increases in the cost of living. In this process, generalising approaches should be avoided, and regional economic needs and demand differences should be considered.
45. Regulations should be enacted to ensure that university administrative positions, especially the rectorship, are elected through democratic means. Within this framework, the decree issued in 2016 regarding rector appointments should be repealed. The rights lost by academics and students affected during the appointed rector process should be compensated.

Political participation

46. Youth political participation, like that of other social groups, indicates a complex process. Moreover, young people face difficulties in exercising their political participation rights due to their age. Anti-democratic practices exacerbate these challenges. In this context, youth political participation can be divided into two categories: formal and non-formal. Non-formal participation is addressed under the freedom of association.
47. As for formal participation, only 5% of youth state they are members of political parties and their youth chapters.⁴⁶ This rate is 3% among young women as opposed to 6% among young men. When asked why they are not becoming members of social organisations including political parties, 'not being interested' (48%) and 'not having time' (27%) are the most common answers. The lack of policies and political agendas focusing on daily lives and material living conditions of youth aggravates their scepticism and distance toward mechanisms of political participation.

⁴⁵ Gazete Duvar. (May 21, 2024). Üniversitede şenlik yasakları: 'Pahalılık nedeniyle festivaller eskisinden daha önemli' [University festival bans: 'Festivals are more important than ever due to rising costs']. <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/universitelerde-senlik-yasaklari-pahalilik-nedeniyle-festivaller-eskisinden-daha-onemli-haber-1692478>

⁴⁶ GoFor. (2024). *Research on political preferences of the youth 2024*. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18668/1/

48. The age group of 18-30 makes up 20% of the entire population and approximately 25% of the people who have the right to elect and be elected.⁴⁷ However, this demographic does not see corresponding representation in general and local elections. Of the 600 members of parliament elected in the 2023 general elections, only five are young. While 18.6% of all candidates are in the 18-30 age group, only 0.206% of these young candidates are able to get elected, and the elected young representatives make up only 0.83% of all those elected.⁴⁸ No young mayor was elected in the local elections of 2024, and only 0.82% of the elected mayors are young.⁴⁹ These statistics indicate that although there are no legal hurdles preventing youth from formally participating in politics, they face latent structural barriers. In particular, the financing of politics and the conditions for participation in political parties create a "glass ceiling" that hinders youth involvement in official political mechanisms.
49. The appointment of mayors by the President in place of elected mayors in provinces with a high Kurdish population following the local elections in 2016 and 2019 has negatively affected youth political participation. During the term of appointed mayors, services provided to women and youth were halted. Many youth centres run by municipalities were handed over to other public institutions, and policies and services prioritising gender equality and youth participation were suspended.⁵⁰ These practices, which violate the European Charter of Local Self-Government, have disrupted the right of youth to political participation in provinces with a high Kurdish population.
50. Türkiye does not have a current national youth policy. Not running participatory and inclusive processes with the participation of different youth groups and youth organisations to devise a common youth policy prevents youth from having a say in policies that have a direct impact on their lives.
51. Meanwhile, there is no NYC recognized by Türkiye. GoFor represents Türkiye at YFJ as NYC. However, Türkiye does not recognise GoFor's status as a NYC. Such non-recognition casts a shadow on youth political participation, and also prevents their participation in policy-making processes at the national level.

⁴⁷ TURKSTAT. (2024). Adrese dayalı nüfus kayıt sistemi sonuçları, 2023 [Address-based population registration system results, 2023]. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Adrese-Dayali-Nufus-Kayit-Sistemi-Sonuclari-2023-49684>

⁴⁸ SEC Open Data Portal. (2023). Milletvekili Seçimleri (14 Mayıs 2023), Seçilen milletvekillerinin yaş grubu dağılımı [Parliamentary Elections (May 14, 2023), Age group distribution of elected MPs]. <https://acikveri.ysk.gov.tr/aday-istatistik/secilen-parti-yasgrubu>

⁴⁹ SEC Open Data Portal. (2024). Belediye Başkanlığı Seçimleri (31 Mart 2024), Seçilen belediye başkanlarının yaş grubu dağılımı [Mayoral Elections (March 31, 2024), Age group distribution of elected mayors]. <https://acikveri.ysk.gov.tr/aday-istatistik/secilen-parti-yasgrubu>

⁵⁰ Özgürlük için Hukukçular Derneği [Association of Lawyers for Freedom]. (2024). Kent hakkı bağlamında kayyum uygulamaları [Practice of appointments via presidential decree in the context of the right to the city]. <https://ozgurlukicin hukukcular.org/tr/detay/kent-hakki-baglaminda-kayyum-uygulamalari#>

52. Türkiye ranks last in youth participation within the Western Balkans and Türkiye region⁵¹. The limited number of young people in political offices, the lack of youth policies and the few local governments with youth participation mechanisms are among the reasons behind such ranking⁵². Similarly, Türkiye also holds the last place in the youth development index⁵³. When index scores and GDPs of the countries are compared, Türkiye is significantly below the global trend⁵⁴.

Recommendations

53. The financing of politics should be revised to facilitate youth's access to political participation. Increased public funds at the disposal of young candidates in election campaigns may encourage them to take on a more active role in political parties and elections. Candidacy fees should also be lowered for youth and incentive packages be provided to empower them in election campaigns.

54. Beyond the youth wings in political parties, a specified, effective, and meaningful quota for young people should be implemented in party executive boards and candidate lists. Legal regulations should be formulated to make sure that youth are placed in spots with higher likelihood of being elected, and to reform quota practices that are either not implemented or exploited.

55. A NYC, the most effective institution for ensuring youth participation in politics, should be established in Türkiye. Currently, GoFor operates both nationally and internationally as the NYC of Türkiye, but it is not officially recognised. Its legal status should be defined in a way that recognises it as the NYC. This recognition would enable young people to actively and meaningfully participate in national policy-making processes.

56. Municipalities should develop mechanisms to enable youth participation in decision-making processes. Youth assemblies should be formed and decisions passed at these assemblies should be integrated with municipalities' decision-making processes. Special budgets should be allocated for local projects geared towards youth, and funds should be provided by central and local governments to enable them to implement their own projects.

57. A comprehensive national youth policy should be developed to ensure that young people have a say in shaping the policies that affect their lives. In this process, the active participation of youth organisations, civil society organisations, and diverse youth groups should be ensured, and the policy-making processes should be transparent and democratic.

⁵¹ YouthHub. (2023). *Youth participation index: Monitoring report of political, social and economic participation of youth 2022*. https://youthwbteu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Divac_YPI-2022_Brosura-210x297mm-1.pdf

⁵² *ibid*

⁵³ YFJ. (2023). *Youth progress index 2023*. <https://www.youthforum.org/files/Youth-Progress-Index-2023.pdf>

⁵⁴ *ibid*

58. The practice of appointing local governors via presidential decrees in place of democratically elected local officials must be put to an end. These practices, particularly in regions with a high Kurdish population, negatively affect youth political participation, undermine the democratic process, and erode young people's trust in politics.
59. Anti-democratic practices targeting opposition parties and efforts towards organising should be abolished to enhance youth political participation in Türkiye.

Freedom of expression

60. Freedom of expression is a right protected under ICESCR, ICCPR, and CRPD, to which Türkiye is a party. Article 26 of the Turkish Constitution⁵⁵ defines this right accordingly and specifies the circumstances under which it may be restricted. Although the restrictions defined here are in accordance with international treaties, the manner in which the laws are implemented infringes upon this right. The application of Articles 125, 215, 216, 299, 301, and 318 of TCK⁵⁶, as well as Law No. 2911⁵⁷, demonstrates that the scope of these laws is broadly defined, leading to violations of the right to freedom of expression.
61. 37% of young people view freedom of expression as the most important human right but feel it's being restricted by the government⁵⁸. One major issue is access restrictions on websites. By the end of 2022, over 712,000 domain names, 150,000 URLs, and 55,000 Tweets were blocked, with most blocks issued by ICTA without judicial approval.
62. In 2023, RTÜK issued 63 fines totaling ₺70,000,000 and imposed 1,289 days of broadcast blackouts. Penalties mainly targeted government critics and advocates for social groups like LGBTI+. Fines for opposition channels were 35 times higher than those for pro-government ones⁵⁹. RTÜK also monitors online platforms and censors content based on vague criteria like 'conformity with Turkish family values' and 'public morality'.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 26. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

⁵⁶ Penal Code of Turkey, #5237. (2004).

[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF\(2016\)011-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2016)011-e)

⁵⁷ Toplantı ve Gösteri Yürüyüşleri Kanunu [Law on Meetings and Demonstrations], #2911. (1983).

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=2911&MevzuatTur=1&MevzuatTertip=5>

⁵⁸ Hafıza Merkezi [Truth Justice Memory Center]. (2022). *Gençlerin insan hakları algısı: Kamuoyu araştırması* [Young people's perception of human rights: Public opinion survey].

<https://konda.com.tr/uploads/konda-hafiza-merkezi-genclerin-insan-haklari-algisi-3-1d5d738c15179fff1a3c31f279b2225cc860ebc218bb1f955ae77d2d1dc116d9.pdf>

⁵⁹ Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA). (Mart 17, 2024). MLSA analyzes Turkey's media watchdog RTÜK's 2023 record: Earthquake, Elections, and Crisis alongside Usual Suspects. <https://www.mlsaturkey.com/en/mlsaturkey2023report>

⁶⁰ Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA). (2024). Yok edici bir sansür mekanizması olarak RTÜK [As a destructive censorship mechanism: RTÜK]. <https://www.mlsaturkey.com/tr/yok-edici-bir-sansuer-mekanizmasi-olarak-rtuek>

63. Law no. 7179⁶¹ requires all men aged 20 and above, who meet health criteria, to complete compulsory military service. Those paying ₺217,871.04⁶² must serve for 28 days, while others serve for 6 months. This fee equals about 13 months of minimum wage, creating severe inequality. Conscientious objection is not legally recognized, and no alternatives exist. Objectors or those who do not report face voting, employment, education, and travel restrictions, along with daily monetary fines.⁶³

Recommendations

64. The articles of TCK that restrict freedom of expression must be restructured in accordance with international law, and data in this area should be disclosed transparently.
65. Access restrictions violate the rights to information and freedom of expression. The imposition of access blocks without a court order should be legally prohibited, and legal regulations must be established to ensure freedom of expression on digital platforms.
66. New regulations should be established in accordance with international law to combat disinformation and information pollution. Ambiguous expressions in the existing legislation should be removed, and provisions must be made to safeguard freedom of expression and the right to criticism on social media.
67. The broad powers of the RTÜK over broadcasts should be restricted, and the legislation should be purified of ambiguous expressions to align with international standards. The practice of monitoring subscription-based broadcasts and those made freely available to the public under the same regulations should be abolished, as should the provision allowing the distribution of RTÜK representatives to favour the party with a majority in general elections.
68. The compulsory military service should be abolished, and alternative services should be developed, as indicated in the decisions of ECtHR. The right to conscientious objection should be legally recognised, and the restrictions on the rights of individuals who do not report for military service should be eliminated.

⁶¹ Recruiting Law, #7179. (2019).

[https://www.msb.gov.tr/Content/Upload/Docs/7179_Askeralma_Kanunu_\(%C4%B0ngilizce\).pdf](https://www.msb.gov.tr/Content/Upload/Docs/7179_Askeralma_Kanunu_(%C4%B0ngilizce).pdf)

⁶² Milli Savunma Bakanlığı [Ministry of National Defense]. (2024). 01 Temmuz - 31 Aralık 2024 tarih aralığını kapsayan bedelli askerlik müracaat duyurusu [Announcement of paid military service application covering the period between July 1 - December 31, 2024]. <https://www.msb.gov.tr/Askeralma/Duyuru/02df52ce9b0d476aaee8e08f26ecca46>

⁶³ Vicdani Ret Derneği [Association for Conscientious Objection]. (2021). *Türkiye'de Askerlik Hizmetine Karşı Vicdani Ret Raporu* [Report on Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Turkey]. <https://vicdaniret.org/turkiyede-askerlik-hizmetine-karsi-vicdani-ret-raporu-yayinda/>

Fight against discrimination

69. Discrimination is prohibited under the UDHR, ECHR and ICERD, which impose several responsibilities on states regarding the fight against discrimination. Türkiye put a reservation to Article 22 of ICERD, stating that its explicit consent is necessary prior to a file being referred to the Court of Justice of the EU.
70. As for domestic law, Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution addresses Prohibition of Discrimination⁶⁴, and Article 122 of the Turkish Penal Code addresses offences of Hate and Discrimination⁶⁵ but definitions in both instruments have a narrow approach. Similarly, the Law no. 6701 that founded the TİHEK⁶⁶ has adopted this narrow definition, leading TİHEK to reject SOGI-based discrimination files, citing that such provisions are not included in its founding law.⁶⁷ Due to the same narrow definition, there are considerable differences between the incidents of hate crime officially reported by Türkiye and reports issued by NGOs. Türkiye officially reports religion-based hate crimes in its reports to the OSCE, whereas racial, xenophobic, gender-based and anti-LGBTI+ hate crimes are only covered in NGOs' reports.⁶⁸
71. The topic of discrimination is only covered as part of Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy classes delivered to fourth grade students in formal education, and there is no other class on discrimination in the 12-year mandatory education program.⁶⁹
72. In its 2021 report, TİHEK proposed the establishment of a special protection mechanism to ensure effective youth access to fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as to combat discrimination against youth, along with the introduction of comprehensive regulations on youth rights. However, no steps have been taken by public institutions in this direction.⁷⁰
73. Politicians and decision makers tend to take a position that produces or spreads hate speech, with a higher tendency to do so at times of elections. In this context,

⁶⁴ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 10. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

⁶⁵ Penal Code of Turkey, #5237. (2004).

[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF\(2016\)011-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2016)011-e)

⁶⁶ Law on the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye, #6701. (2016).

<https://www.tihkek.gov.tr/public/editor/uploads/1660833133.pdf>

⁶⁷ Tar Y. (2021). Kronoloji: Adında insan hakları ve eşitlik olan bir kurumun LGBTI+ hakları karşıtlığı [Chronology: An institution that has human rights and equality in its name is against LGBTI+ rights]. Kaos GL.

<https://kaosgl.org/haber/kronoloji-adinda-insan-haklari-ve-esitlik-olan-bir-kurumun-lgbti-haklari-karsitligi>

⁶⁸ OSCE. (2023). 2022 hate crime report for Turkey. <https://hatecrime.osce.org/turkey?year=2022>

⁶⁹ Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of Education]. (2024). Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli öğretim programları [Türkiye Century Education Model curriculum]. <https://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/>

⁷⁰ TİHEK. (2023). *Gençlik Hakları [Youth Rights]*. https://www.tihkek.gov.tr/public/editor/uploads/gen%C3%A7likhaklari_.pdf

hate speech puts LGBTI+'s⁷¹, Kurds,⁷² the Roma⁷³, asylum-seekers⁷⁴ and many other groups on target.

Recommendations

74. The definition of hate speech in the law should be expanded to promote inclusion, and effective reporting mechanisms and preventive practices should be developed. Recommendations highlighted in CERD's Concluding Observations on Türkiye's 4th – 6th Periodic Reports (CERD/C/TUR/CO/4-6) such as the condemnation of hate speech, including from politicians, and effective investigation of hate crimes, as well as detailed, segregated statistics should be put in practice.
75. The curriculum should be stripped of discriminatory discourse and approaches, and course content that promotes diversity, human rights and anti-discrimination should be developed.
76. A clear definition of youth, including the needs of youth groups, should be formulated at the legal level to combat discrimination against young people, and youth rights and age-based discrimination should be incorporated into anti-discrimination legislation. Practices should be developed to combat discrimination against young people.
77. Special legislative arrangements should be adopted to counter hate speech propagated by politicians and representatives of public institutions, and effective methods of combating hate speech in politics should be developed.
78. NHRIs should be ensured to operate independently and effectively, conducting systematic monitoring, reporting, and providing recommendations on human rights violations.

Freedom of association

79. Freedom of association is described in detail in the ICCPR, ILO Conventions No. 87, 98, and 151, and the ECHR. The scope of association is narrowly defined in national laws, as the term association is strictly limited to associations, foundations, political

⁷¹ Unikuir Association. (2023). *Cumhurbaşkanlığı ve 28. Dönem Milletvekiliği Seçimlerini LGBTI+ Hakları Bağlamında İzleme Raporu* [Monitoring Report on the Presidential and 28th Term Parliamentary Elections in the Context of LGBTI+ Rights]. <https://www.unikuir.org/assets/public/projects/dosyalar/2023-08-cumhurbaa-kanla-a-a-ve-28-da-nem-milletvekillia-i-sea-imlerin-i-lgbta-haklara-baa-lama-nda-a-zleme-raporu.pdf>

⁷² Adal H. (Şubat 10, 2021). Nefret söylemi: Siyasetin çok ilkel bir biçimi [Hate speech: A very primitive form of politics]. *Bianet*. <https://bianet.org/haber/nefret-soylemi-siyasetin-cok-ilkel-bir-bicimi-238978>

⁷³ *ibid*

⁷⁴ Pınarbaşı, M. S. (2023). Türkiye'de milliyetçi siyasetçilerin Suriyeli sığınmacılara bakışlarının nefret söylemi bağlamında incelenmesi [Examining the views of nationalist politicians towards Syrian refugees in Turkey in the context of hate speech]. *Bilgi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* [Bilgi University Journal of Social Sciences], 25(1), 1-29.

parties, and unions. This narrow definition excludes informal or partially formal structures such as civil initiatives and student societies. In practice, Articles 11 and 13 of the ECHR, as well as Article 33 of the Constitution⁷⁵ guarantee freedom of association for everyone, but national legislation in this field is insufficient.⁷⁶ Although the fight against hate crimes and discrimination, as detailed in the relevant section, is not solely a matter of freedom of association, legislative deficiencies, the state's limited approach in practice, and the position of decision-makers as producers of hate crimes serve as obstacles to organisation.

80. While 73% of young people state that they are not organised anywhere, the area with the highest level of organisation is student societies, at 12%. The main reasons for not being organised include, in order: lack of interest, lack of time, and fear of being monitored.⁷⁷
81. 2,077 students were detained, 203 students were arrested, lawsuits were brought against 658 students, 152 were sentenced to prison, 720 were injured, and 23 students lost their lives while exercising their freedom of association between 2015 and 2019.⁷⁸ An in-depth look into freedom of association at campuses reveals a series of backlashes including the shutting down of students' societies, banning their activities, intervention by the police and private security forces, disciplinary proceedings, and penal sanctions.⁷⁹
82. Two big students' movements of the past five years that are worth attention present an important example on this topic. The first is the Boğaziçi protests which were sparked by the appointment of Melih Bulu, former candidate running for an MP status from AK Party, by President Erdogan to Boğaziçi University as an appointed, not elected, rector on January 2, 2021. The second movement is called the 'Barınamıyoruz' [We Cannot Find Shelter], which began as a response to inadequate dormitories and high rents. Both actions have spread nationwide since their inception, and their effects continue to be felt today. In both actions, young people who sought to exercise their right to organise faced police intervention, lawsuits, detentions, and arrests. Students participating in these actions have experienced

⁷⁵ Constitution of The Republic of Türkiye, #2709. (1982). Article 33. https://anayasa.gov.tr/media/7258/anayasa_eng.pdf

⁷⁶ Karan U. (2018). *Örgütlenme ve toplanma özgürlüğü* [Freedom of association and assembly]. Council of Europe. https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/media/3546/03_organlenme_toplanma.pdf

⁷⁷ GoFor. (2024). *Research on political preferences of the youth 2024*. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18668/1/

⁷⁸ Human Rights Foundation of Turkey. (2021). *Demokratik yurttaşlık alanının daraltılması TIHV Akademi bilgi notu 1: Öğrencileri hedef alan ifade, toplantı, gösteri ve örgütlenme özgürlüğü ihlalleri (2015-2019)* [Narrowing the area of democratic citizenship TIHV Academy information note 1: Violations of freedom of expression, assembly, demonstration and organization targeting students (2015-2019)]. https://tihvakademi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Yurttaslik_Alani_Bilgi_Notu_1.pdf

⁷⁹ Sivil Alan Araştırmaları Derneği [Civilian Area Research Association]. (2023). *Kelepçelenmek istenen kampüsler: Pandemi sonrası kampüslerde ifade özgürlüğü bağlamında örgütlenme ve barışçıl toplanma hakkı* [Campuses that are being shackled: The right to organize and peacefully assemble in the context of freedom of expression on campuses after the pandemic]. <https://sivilalanarastirmalari.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Kelep%C3%A7elenmek-%C4%B0stenen-Kamp%C3%BCsler.pdf>

punitive measures that violate their fundamental rights, such as the cancellation of their KYK scholarships and expulsion from KYK dormitories.⁸⁰

83. According to the Law on Associations⁸¹, the establishment of an association requires only seven individuals to come together and prepare a charter. Due to the lack of a standard application for student societies, each university establishes its own standards, resulting in, for instance, the founding member count varying, with some reaching up to 25 individuals. Moreover, the establishment of student societies has been left to the approval of the relevant units of the universities. This makes the establishment of student societies more difficult than the establishment of associations.
84. An amendment to the Regulation on Associations in 2018⁸² obliged all associations to report their members to DERBİS of the Ministry of Interior. This escalated individuals' fears of being monitored, causing associations to lose members.
85. The Law no. 7262⁸³ adopted in 2020 brought about practices that curbed freedom of association by intensifying surveillance on associations, making it more difficult to collect donations and totally attributing individual crimes to the association.⁸⁴
86. Associations report the funds they receive from abroad to the Ministry of the Interior through DERBİS. Although this notification is intended for the prevention of the financing of terrorism and the fight against money laundering, the data obtained from these notifications are being used in a way that criminalises receiving funds from abroad. The former Minister of the Interior misleadingly shared this data with the public, making statements that targeted organisations working in the fields of human rights, youth rights, LGBTI+ rights, and electoral security. Additionally, some media outlets have produced targeting news based on the lists of organisations that receive funding abroad.⁸⁵
87. This year, a bill has been brought to the parliamentary agenda, referred to as the "Agent of Foreign Influence Law," which proposes equating working with funds

⁸⁰ Sivil Alan Araştırmaları Derneği [Civilian Area Research Association] (2023). Boğaziçi direnişi kronolojisi [Chronology of the Bosphorus resistance]. <https://sivilalanarastirmalari.org.tr/kronoloji/>

⁸¹ Law on Associations, #5253. (2004).

https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/kurumlar/siviltoplum.gov.tr/Mevzuat/Kanunlar/Dernekler_Kanunu-Ingilizce.doc

⁸² Dernekler Yönetmeliği [Associations regulation], #25772. (2005).

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=8038&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

⁸³ Prevention of Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, #7262. (2020).

[https://ticaret.gov.tr/data/6050a37613b87603ac1c4f42/Rehber%20\(%C4%B0ngilizce\).pdf](https://ticaret.gov.tr/data/6050a37613b87603ac1c4f42/Rehber%20(%C4%B0ngilizce).pdf)

⁸⁴ Amnesty Türkiye. (Ekim 21, 2021). Türkiye: Terörün finansmanının önlenmesi hakkında kanun şimdiden sivil toplum üzerinde 'caydırıcı etki' yarattı [Türkiye: Law on preventing financing of terrorism already has 'chilling effect' on civil society].

<https://www.amnesty.org.tr/icerik/turkiye-terorun-finansmaninin-onlenmesi-hakkinda-kanun-simdiden-sivil-toplum-uzerinde-cay-dirici-etki-yaratti>

⁸⁵ International Federation for Human Rights. (May 6, 2021). Turkey: Ongoing crackdown poses existential threat to independent civil society.

<https://www.fidh.org/en/region/europe-central-asia/turkey/turkey-ongoing-crackdown-poses-existential-threat-to-independent-26851>

received from abroad to the crime of espionage. The possibility of such a bill becoming a law means that receiving funds from abroad is going to be criminalised legally, further shrinking already-limited financial capacities of youth NGOs and halting their operations.

88. There are 100,896 associations in Türkiye.⁸⁶ The Law on Associations provides tax exemptions and incentives for those recognized as public benefit associations, a status granted by the President since 2008⁸⁷. Currently, 364 associations hold this status, with only 34 receiving it post-amendment.⁸⁸ Donations require state approval, but 50 organizations are exempt⁸⁹; data on permits granted is unavailable. Youth associations struggle with resource access, citing this as a major barrier.⁹⁰ The GSB has reduced support for youth projects in its 2024 program⁹¹, and most EU youth funds are directed to pro-government groups⁹². Consequently, youth organisations face unfair access to resources, and when they receive foreign funding, they become targets of scrutiny. The state controls rather than supporting civil society, impeding the right to association.

Recommendations

89. A national standard for the establishment of student societies should be specified, and this standard should not be more difficult than that for founding a non-governmental organisation.
90. Current practices that penalise the exercise of freedom of association via withholding of scholarships, expulsion from dormitories and suspension from education should be abandoned and prohibited by law.
91. The regulations governing associations should be rewritten with a perspective that facilitates and protects their activities rather than restricting them. The requirement

⁸⁶ Sivil Toplumla İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü [Directorate General of Civil Society Relations]. (2024). Dernek sayıları [Number of associations]. <https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/dernek-sayilari>

⁸⁷ Law on Associations, #5253. (2004).

https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/kurumlar/siviltoplum.gov.tr/Mevzuat/Kanunlar/Dernekler_Kanunu-Ingilizce.doc

⁸⁸ Sivil Toplumla İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü [Directorate General of Civil Society Relations]. (2024). Kamu yararı statüsüne sahip olup faal olan dernekler [Associations that have public benefit status and are active].

[https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/kurumlar/siviltoplum.gov.tr/istatistikler/Kamu-Yarari/kamu_yararli_dernekler\(1\).pdf](https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/kurumlar/siviltoplum.gov.tr/istatistikler/Kamu-Yarari/kamu_yararli_dernekler(1).pdf)

⁸⁹ Sivil Toplumla İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü [Directorate General of Civil Society Relations]. (2024). İzin almadan yardım toplama hakkına sahip kuruluşlar [Organizations that have the right to collect donations without permission].

<https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/izin-almadan-yardim-toplama-hakkina-sahip-kuruluslar>

⁹⁰ GoFor. (2022). Türkiye'deki gençlik örgütlerinin yerel katılımı ve ihtiyaç analizi raporu [Local participation and needs analysis report of youth organizations in Turkey]. <https://go-for.org/turkiyedeki-genclik-orgutlerinin-yerel-katilimi-ve-ihtiyac-analizi-raporu/>

⁹¹ GoFor. (2023). Gençlik ve Spor Bakanlığı 2024 Bütçesi hakkında bilgi notu [Policy note on the 2024 Budget of the Ministry of Youth and Sports]. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18364/1/

⁹² Teke, C. B. (August 22, 2024). Ulusal Ajans'tan TÜGVA, TÜRGEV, Ensar, İlim Yayma Cemiyeti ve tarikat derneklerine AB fonu yağdı [EU funds rained down from the National Agency to TÜGVA, TÜRGEV, Ensar, Science Dissemination Society and sect associations]. T24.

https://t24.com.tr/haber/ulusal-ajans-tan-tugva-turgev-ensar-ilim-yayma-cemiyeti-ve-tarikat-derneklerine-ab-fonu-yagdi,1180189#google_vignette

for associations to report their members should be abolished, and the protection of personal data should be ensured.

92. Practices that enable the public institutions to treat associations unequally, such as the permission to collect aid or public benefit association status, should be revised on an equitable basis.
93. The mentality of criminalising receiving funds from abroad should be abandoned, and inspection mechanisms should be formed to ensure fair distribution of public resources to NGOs. The Law no. 7262⁹³ should be revised in consultation with civil society.
94. The definition of civil society should be expanded in legislation, in a manner to enable civil initiatives and platforms to be recognized.

Employment

95. In 2003, Türkiye ratified the ICESCR and 59 ILO Conventions. 52 of them are in effect. In this vein, In this context, Türkiye is obliged to provide full, efficient, freely chosen employment that is dignified and free from discrimination.
96. As Türkiye adopts a development model in constant pursuit of a higher GDP, it fails to deliver on its legal obligations. Positioned as a peripheral country in the international division of labour historically⁹⁴, Türkiye exports raw materials and low-value-added while importing other necessities⁹⁵. In addition, as Türkiye has adopted a growthist model, attracting FDI has become central to country's development policies⁹⁶. To attract FDI, legal and political reforms that promotes deregulation across sectors has been introduced to maximise the profit margins of foreign companies⁹⁷. These policies are steering the demand within the domestic labour market towards irregular and insecure forms of labour.⁹⁸

⁹³ Prevention of Financing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, #7262. (2020). [https://ticaret.gov.tr/data/6050a37613b87603ac1c4f42/Rehber%20\(%C4%B0ngilizce\).pdf](https://ticaret.gov.tr/data/6050a37613b87603ac1c4f42/Rehber%20(%C4%B0ngilizce).pdf)

⁹⁴ Özdemir, Y., & Özçelik, E. (2022). Political economy of global capitalism: A framework for Turkey's dependent development. In Y. Özdemir & E. Özçelik (Eds.), *Political economy of development in Turkey: 1838 - present* (pp. 1 - 45). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹⁵ Kepenek, Y. (2022). Transition to dependent development. In Y. Özdemir & E. Özçelik (Eds.), *Political economy of development in Turkey: 1838 - günümüz* (pp. 135 - 162). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹⁶ Boratav, K., & Orhangazi, Ö. (2022). Neoliberal framework and external dependency versus political priorities, 2009 - 2020. In Y. Özdemir & E. Özçelik (Eds.), *Political economy of development in Turkey: 1838 - present* (pp. 287 - 314). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹⁷ Özdemir, Y., & Özçelik, E. (2022). Political economy of global capitalism: A framework for Turkey's dependent development, 1838-2020. In Y. Özdemir & E. Özçelik (Eds.), *Political economy of development in Turkey: 1838 - present* (pp. 1 - 45). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹⁸ ibid

97. Türkiye has one of the highest ratios of youth unemployment among OECD countries, ranking 14th with 15.5%⁹⁹. As for NEETs, it ranks 3rd with 29% among OECD countries and is the worst performer in Europe¹⁰⁰.
98. Amidst such high ratios of youth unemployment, youth in Türkiye face a severe social mobility paralysis. Türkiye ranks 64th among 82 countries, possessing one of the lowest social mobility rates with a score of 51.3.¹⁰¹
99. Despite having qualified diplomas and certificates, young people are often excluded from the labour market due to reasons such as 'inexperience' and 'lack of sufficient skills.'¹⁰² Those who do work often find themselves in jobs that do not align with their education and skills, and they are deprived of dignified wages and working conditions.
100. Internships, which are one of the most effective ways for young people to gain experience and skills, also present harsh structural problems to youth. Regulations regarding internships in Türkiye are governed by the Law no. 6899 on Vocational Education and Training¹⁰³. However, the Law only covers vocational training processes defined as mandatory within the framework of higher education programmes.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, NEET youth remain deprived of basic labour principles and rights, especially wages and social security, while on an internship, which is key for NEET youth to improve their competencies and enhance their chances in the labour market. In addition, there is no obligation for employers to provide wages and insurance in internship processes outside of mandatory internships, leading to the perception that internships in many sectors are a means for employers to employ individuals for free and without security under the guise of 'vocational skill development'.¹⁰⁵
101. An analysis of the social and economic conditions of young workers reveals that the situation persists with no improvement. Weekly average working hours of youth aged 15-24 in Türkiye is 45.6 hours, which makes Türkiye the place with the longest weekly working hours for youth among OECD countries.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹ OECD. (2024). Intra-annual labour force statistics.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/insights/statistical-releases/2024/04/labour-market-situation-updated-april-2024.html>

¹⁰⁰ OECD. (2024). Youth not in employment, education or training.

https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.html?oecdcontrol-dec63071aa-var6=15_29&oecdcontrol-00b22b2429-var3=2024

¹⁰¹ World Economic Forum. (2020). *Global social mobility report: Equality, opportunity and a new economic imperative*.

<https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-social-mobility-index-2020-why-economies-benefit-from-fixing-inequality/>

¹⁰² Ece Göksedef. (2021). 19 Mayıs ve Türkiye'de genç işsizliği: 'Bana ait bir hayatım olsun istiyorum, bunun için işe ihtiyacım var' [May 19 and youth unemployment in Turkey: 'I want to have a life of my own, I need a job for that']. BBC News Türkçe.

<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-57160022>

¹⁰³ Mesleki Eğitim Kanunu [Vocational Education Law], #3308. (1986). <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.3308.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ ibid

¹⁰⁵ Dost, Z., Bilgin, K. (2020). Gençlerin işgücü piyasasına geçişinde deneyim ve staj etkisi [The effect of experience and internship on the transition of young people to the labor market]. *Çalışma İlişkileri Dergisi [Labor Relations Journal]* 1, 119-153.

¹⁰⁶ OECD. (2023). Average weekly hours worked in the main job. <https://data-explorer.oecd.org>

102. Within these long working hours, young people are largely exposed to working conditions that can be characterised as modern slavery. Türkiye ranks 5th in the Global Slavery Index due to 1,320,000 of its workers being subjected to conditions of modern slavery.¹⁰⁷ Due to the low level of state regulations, Türkiye ranks 10th highest in the world for fatal workplace accidents and 11th highest for non-fatal workplace accidents.¹⁰⁸
103. In addition to this, young workers in Türkiye are subjected to one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world. With a Gini coefficient of 0.44, Türkiye ranks as the 9th highest country in terms of income inequality globally.¹⁰⁹ As for income distribution, the wealthiest 10% of the population possess 51.7% of all the wealth in Türkiye¹¹⁰.
104. Young workers strive to organise and struggle against such poor working conditions. Yet, workers' freedoms and rights are always under attack in Türkiye. Unions and their members are targeted with fabricated crimes; employers lay off workers, who undertake efforts to unionise, to create a dent in union movement; and strikes are suppressed through anti-democratic means¹¹¹.
105. In view of these figures, Türkiye ranks as the 10th country in the world with the worst employment conditions, especially for young workers who are just about to enter the labour market¹¹².

Recommendations

106. Economic policies aimed at transforming the productive structure of the economy should be implemented. In other words, Türkiye should adopt economic policies that diversify its economy, which currently heavily relies on FDI. Specifically, the State should provide subsidies and incentives for high-tech and knowledge-intensive sectors that have the potential to create employment, where young people can apply their high skills and competencies. This way, Türkiye's economy may be diversified, job opportunities may be expanded, and the risks of unemployment arising from external fluctuations may be reduced.
107. In response to the discrimination present in the labour market, a youth employment guarantee program should be implemented by the government. This

¹⁰⁷ Walk Free. (2023). *The global slavery index*.

<https://cdn.walkfree.org/content/uploads/2023/05/17114737/Global-Slavery-Index-2023.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ ILO. (2024). Statistics on safety and health at work. <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/>

¹⁰⁹ World Bank. (2024). Gini Index. <https://pip.worldbank.org/poverty-calculator>

¹¹⁰ World Inequality Database. (2022). Top 10% national income share.

https://wid.world/world/#sptinc_p90p100_z/US:FR:DE:CN:ZA:GB:WO:TR/last/eu/k/p/yearly/s/false/24.722500000000004/80/curve/false/country

¹¹¹ International Trade Union Confederation. (2024). *Global Rights Index 2024: The world's worst countries for workers*.

<https://www.ituc-csi.org/global-rights-index?lang=en>

¹¹² *ibid*

program should ensure that every young person who has completed their education or training is guaranteed a job in sectors aligned with their skills and qualifications within a specific timeframe, as determined by the initial policy proposal. This approach may help prevent young people from being unjustly excluded from the labour market for arbitrary reasons.

108. To reduce income inequality, policies such as increasing the minimum wage and broadening the tax base should be implemented, enabling disadvantaged groups like youth to allocate a larger portion of their income to consumption. This will enhance demand for domestically produced goods and services. Increased demand will lead to greater production, boost investment, and subsequently promote employment. This multiplier effect can create more job opportunities across various sectors, offering young people more skilled employment options.
109. Wage incentives and tax exemptions should be provided for young workers. By implementing policies that offer specific economic incentives to enterprises employing young people, the perception that hiring youth is risky may be diminished. This approach may make it financially attractive for businesses to invest in young workers.
110. The current law on vocational education should be expanded beyond mandatory internship processes to encompass all interns.
111. All internship processes should impose a mandatory payment obligation on employers at least at the minimum wage level for interns. Free internship practices should be abolished, and the labour of interns should be economically compensated. This regulation should cover both mandatory and voluntary internships.
112. Interns should be required to be covered by social security. All interns should have access to social security rights to protect against workplace accidents, illness, wrongful termination, and work-place harassment (mobbing).
113. The rights of workers to association and collective bargaining should be supported. Article 25 of the Trade Union and Collective Labor Agreement Law No. 6356, which pertains to the freedom of association, should be fully and effectively implemented.¹¹³ Anti-democratic practices such as dismissals aimed at deterring unionization should be legally prosecuted. By establishing fair and secure working conditions in accordance with international law, the productivity of young people should be supported.

¹¹³ Law on Trade Unions and Collective Labour Agreements, #6356. (2012).
<https://natlex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/natlex2/files/download/91814/TUR91814%20Eng.pdf>

Gender equality

114. Türkiye signed CEDAW but it withdrew from the Istanbul Convention despite being one of its first signatories in Europe. Türkiye also signed ILO Conventions No. 100, 111, 122, and 142, which guarantee gender equality and promote women's employment. Overall, the steps taken to combat violence against women, early marriage, hate crimes, intersectional discrimination, workplace discrimination, and gender income inequality are inadequate.¹¹⁴
115. Pro-family approaches come to the fore instead of gender equality in the current government's policies. In 2011, the Ministry of State for Women and Family was renamed to the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (its current title is Ministry of Family and Social Services), and the term "women" found a place only at the General Directorate on the Status of Women.
116. "Family" was placed above individuals in the Law no. 6284, which was enacted in 2012 for alignment with the Istanbul Convention¹¹⁵, and terms pertaining to SOGI as specified in the Convention were not used in the aforementioned Law. Türkiye withdrew from the Istanbul Convention in 2021, arguing that it undermined the institution of family by also providing protection for LGBTI+'s against violence.¹¹⁶
117. The Gender Equality Project conducted by YÖK was terminated in 2019 allegedly because "it did not conform to social values" and the position paper was subsequently removed from the institution's website.¹¹⁷ Of 205 universities in Türkiye, only 26 has a unit or policy paper on the prevention of sexual harassment and violence. The de facto shut down of Boğaziçi University's relevant unit and heightened difficulties that many other units face in their activities have been outlined in the reports of NGOs.¹¹⁸
118. 82% of young women report facing gender-based discrimination, compared to 75% percent of young men. Additionally, 53% of youth state that they were unable to adequately respond to the discrimination they experienced. Among those surveyed, NGOs are viewed as the most competent organisations in combating discrimination, with 24.8% expressing this sentiment. In contrast, youth generally perceive

¹¹⁴ Alsalem R. (2023). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences*, Reem Alsalem. United Nations Human Rights Council. <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/53/36/Add.1>

¹¹⁵ Law on Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence, #6284. (2012). <https://rm.coe.int/law-on-protecting-family-and-preventing-violence-against-women/1680a3bcd3>

¹¹⁶ Kadının İnsan Hakları Derneği [Women for Women's Human Rights]. (2022). İstanbul Sözleşmesi kronolojisi [Istanbul Convention chronology]. <https://istanbulsozlesmesi.org/istanbul-sozlesmesi-kronolojisi/>

¹¹⁷ Bianet English. (2019) Council of Higher Education Cancels Gender Equality Project. <https://bianet.org/haber/council-of-higher-education-cancels-gender-equality-project-205678>

¹¹⁸ Uni Kuir Association. (2022). *Üniversitelerde cinsel taciz ve mobbing ile mücadele için el kitabı [Handbook for combating sexual harassment and mobbing in universities]*. <https://www.unikuir.org/assets/public/projects/dosyalar/fh-cts-kitapcik.pdf>

institutions as inadequate, and political parties are the least trusted entities, with only 3.5% of respondents expressing confidence in them.¹¹⁹

119. Some legislative proposals by the ruling party coalition directly threaten gender equality. In 2022, the MHP planned a draft law to amend Article 40¹²⁰ of the TMK, aiming to ban gender reassignment except for medical necessity¹²¹, but it wasn't presented to parliament. The AK Party also proposed a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman to 'protect' the family¹²², though it wasn't tabled. In 2024, the AK Party's 9th judicial package included a clause preventing women from using their maiden name after marriage¹²³, currently under parliamentary consideration.
120. A Family and Youth Fund was formed to launch marriage loans to youth in late 2023, which marked the introduction of policies that promoted the institution of marriage as a solution to the economic crises that youth suffer.¹²⁴
121. Age of first marriage was 28.3 among men and 25.7 among women¹²⁵. Setting a lower age limit of 18 for the Family and Youth Fund poses a risk of diverting women away from education and employment. The ratio of NEET men is 15.6% and the ratio of NEET women is 29.8%.¹²⁶ As for the difference in earnings between genders, the widest gap in favour of men is seen among high school graduates with 19.6% and the smallest gap is seen among primary school and lower degree school graduates with 14.5%.¹²⁷
122. Although there are some provincial efforts, "National Action Plan and Strategy Document on Combating Early and Forced Marriages" is yet to be completed. The legally permissible marriage age is 18. However, children can marry at 17 with the

¹¹⁹ Yanındayız Association. (2022). *Gençlikte toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği algısı araştırması [Research on gender equality perception among youth]*.

https://www.yaindayiz.org/uploaded_files/dosyaKavim/220718092204_GenclikteToplumsalCinsiyetEsitligiAlgisiArastirmaRaporu.pdf

¹²⁰ Turkish Civil Code, #4721. (2001). <https://www.lawsturkey.com/law/turkish-civil-code-4721>

¹²¹ T24. (December 8, 2022). MHP'den, "tıbbi zorunluluk dışında cinsiyet değişikliği yasaklansın" teklifi [MHP proposes to ban gender reassignment unless medically necessary].

https://t24.com.tr/haber/mhp-den-tibbi-zorunluluk-disinda-cinsiyet-degisikligi-yasaklansin-teklifi,1077545#google_vignette

¹²² Sayın. A. (December 9, 2022). AKP, başörtüsü düzenlemesini de içeren anayasa değişikliği teklifini 336 milletvekilinin imzasıyla Meclis'e sundu: Teklifte neler var? [The AKP submitted its constitutional amendment proposal, which also includes the headscarf regulation, to the Parliament with the signatures of 336 MPs: What's in the proposal?]. BBC News Türkçe.

<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/cz9yrdwxd9e>

¹²³ Sayın A. (July 3, 2024) Yeni yargı paketi Meclis'te: Kadınlar bekarlık soyadını tek başına kullanamayacak [New judicial package in Parliament: Women will not be able to use their maiden names alone]. BBC News Türkçe.

<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/c72452wynjio>

¹²⁴ GoFor. (2023). Aile ve Gençlik Fonu Kurulması Hakkında Kanun Teklifi'ne ilişkin bilgi notu [Policy note on the Draft Law on the Establishment of the Family and Youth Fund]. https://go-for.org/yayinlar/#flipbook-df_18362/1/

¹²⁵ TURKSTAT. (2024). Women in Statistics, 2023.

<https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Kadin-2023-53675#:~:text=Ortalama%20ilk%20evlenme%20ya%C5%9F%C4%B1%20kad%C4%B1nlar,da,evlenme%20ya%C5%9F%C4%B1%2028%2C3%20oldu.>

¹²⁶ TURKSTAT. (2024). Youth in Statistics, 2023. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Genclik-2023-53677>

¹²⁷ TURKSTAT. (2023). Earnings Structure Statistics, 2022.

<https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Kazanc-Yapisi-Istatistikleri-2022-49750>

consent of a family member or legal guardian, and at 16 with a court decision. 10,471 girls and 706 boys aged 16-17 were officially married in 2023.¹²⁸ However, there is no available data on children who were forcibly married outside of civil marriage. In 2023, 6,505 children aged 15-17 gave birth, and 130 children under the age of 15 also gave birth¹²⁹.

123. The most recent example of the government's pro-family policies is the Vision Document and Action Plan for Strengthening the Family released on May 15, 2024. The document blatantly sets forth anti-LGBTI+ policies forward and defines women as wives/mothers. The vision presented in the document is alarming since it signals heavier anti-LGBTI+ practices, more difficult access to abortion, and a higher number of policies making it more difficult for women to participate in social life and to get a divorce.¹³⁰

124. After 2015, many protests and demonstrations organised by women and LGBTI+'s on the occasion of March 8, November 25 and Pride Month took place with several bans, police violence and judicial harassment. In spite of the fact that decisions to ban such protests were lifted by courts, new bans pop up every year; protestors are detained with use of force and tried. In 2024, the total number of detentions decreased, but this was achieved thanks to the creativity and alternative plans of the organisers of the marches.¹³¹

Recommendations

125. A corporate structure should be established to undertake ministry-level efforts to guarantee gender equality, and strategies should be devised to ensure gender equality.

126. The Istanbul Convention should be reinstated and provisions of the Convention effectively implemented. Public authorities should develop practices that protect the fundamental rights of LGBTI+'s rather than adopting policies that aim against them.

127. A national policy should be formulated to ensure gender equality at universities; an obligation should be imposed by law on all universities to take measures against

¹²⁸ TURKSTAT. (2024). People who got married by age group and previous marital status of the person they married, 2001-2023.

<https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/DownloadIstatistikselTablo?p=KW74bjqmT2HkEpG9qOaID4FZICjAXCm4V03XGEOp3ZyGvY3LIZAJDVckbJZ9Doux>

¹²⁹ TURKSTAT. (2024). Birth Statistics, 2023. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Dogum-Istatistikleri-2023-53708>

¹³⁰ Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı [Ministry of Family and Social Services]. (2024). Ailenin Korunması ve Güçlendirilmesi Vizyon Belgesi ve Eylem Planı 2024-2028 [Protection and Strengthening of the Family Vision Document and Action Plan 2024-2028]. <https://www.aile.gov.tr/media/165130/ailenin-korunmasi-ve-qu-c-lendirilmesi-vizyon-belgesi-ve-eylem-planı.pdf>

¹³¹ ILGA Europe. (2024). The Turkish LGBTI+ community resists bans on Pride events again this year, amid increased repression from the Turkish government. <https://www.ilga-europe.org/blog/the-turkish-lgbti-community-resists-bans-on-pride-events-again-this-year-amid-increased-repression-from-the-turkish-government/>

sexual harassment and violence; and every university should define a reporting mechanism.

128. An effective reporting mechanism should be put in place and preventive activities carried out to address the discrimination young women face.
129. Draft laws against women and LGBTI+'s should be withdrawn, and the parliament should conduct legislative work to ensure gender equality.
130. The ruling party should abandon its pro-family attitude, and come up with models and policies that strengthen the individual instead and guarantee equality. Regulations should be introduced to deliver an effective fight against early marriages rather than efforts to lower the minimum age of marriage.
131. Efforts to restrict freedom of expression and freedom of association in the case of women's and LGBTI+ organisations should be abandoned; an environment conducive for these organisations to safely voice their demands and claims should be provided rather than attempts to ban the protests where they express their demands.



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