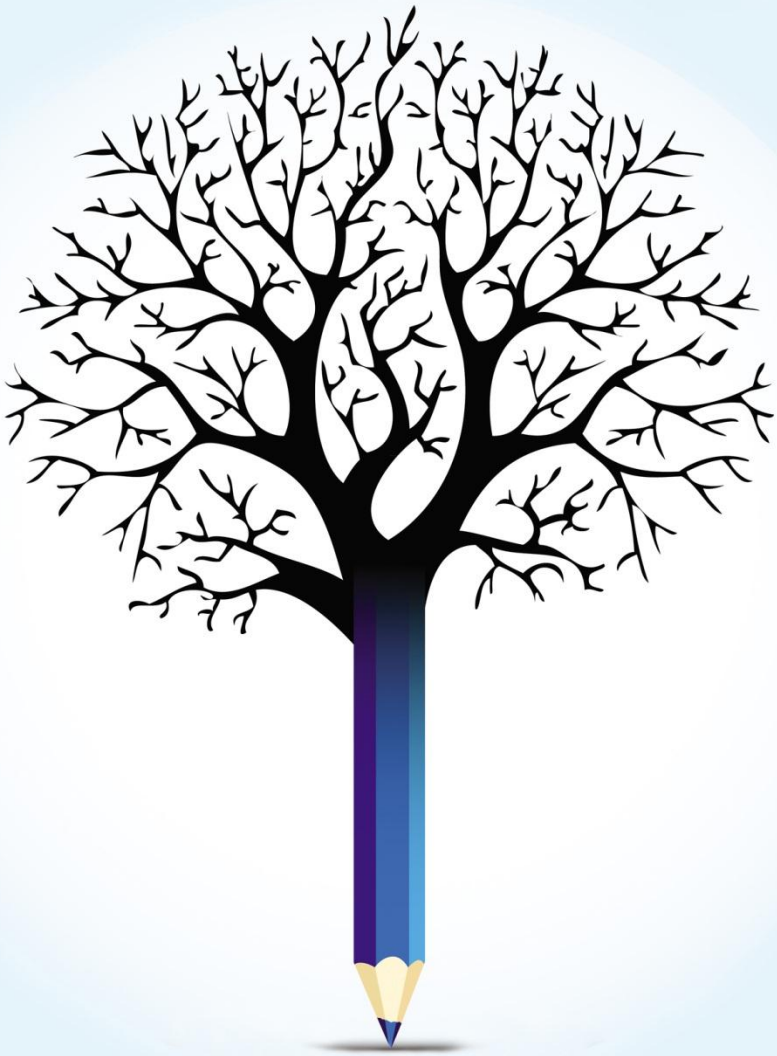
EDUCATION POLICY OUTLOOK: TURKEY



October 2013

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

EDUCATION POLICY OUTLOOK

This **policy profile on education** in Turkey is part of the new *Education Policy Outlook* series, which will present comparative analysis of education policies and reforms across OECD countries. Building on the substantial comparative and sectorial policy knowledge base available within the OECD, the series will result in a biennual publication (first volume in 2014). It will develop a comparative outlook on education policy by providing: a) analysis of individual countries' educational context, challenges and policies (education policy profiles) and of international trends and b) comparative insight on policies and reforms on selected topics.

Designed **for policy makers, analysts and practitioners** who seek information and analysis of education policy taking into account the importance of national context, the country policy profiles will offer constructive analysis of education policy in a comparative format. Each profile will review the current context and situation of the country's education system and examine its challenges and policy responses, according to six policy levers that support improvement:

- Students: How to raise outcomes for all in terms of 1) equity and quality and 2) preparing students for the future
- Institutions: How to raise quality through 3) school improvement and 4) evaluation and assessment
- System: How the system is organised to deliver education policy in terms of 5) governance and 6) funding.

Some country policy profiles will contain spotlight boxes on selected policy issues. They are meant to draw attention to specific policies that are promising or showing positive results and may be relevant for other countries.

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Sources: This country profile draws on OECD indicators from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and the annual publication *Education at a Glance*, and refers to country and thematic studies such as OECD work on early childhood education and care, evaluation and assessment for improving school outcomes, equity and quality in education, governing complex education systems, vocational education and training, and tertiary education.

Most of the figures quoted in the different sections refer to Annex B, which presents a table of the main indicators for the different sources used throughout the country profile. Hyperlinks to the reference publications are included throughout the text for ease of reading, and also in the References and further reading section, which lists both OECD and non-OECD sources.

More information is available from the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills (www.oecd.org/edu) and its web pages on Education Policy Outlook (www.oecd.org/edu/policyoutlook.htm).

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Turkey's educational context

Students: Turkey has made significant improvements in PISA mathematics and science assessments, but remains below the OECD average in reading, mathematics and science. The government has worked to improve the participation of children in education, but participation rates in early childhood education and care are low compared to the OECD average. Turkey has a higher-than-average proportion of underperforming students, and academic achievement is particularly low amongst disadvantaged students from low socio-economic backgrounds. System-level policies, such as the use of academic selection to select and sort students into specific pathways at an early age, hinder equity. The transition into upper secondary education and tertiary education is also highly selective. Graduation rates in upper secondary education and tertiary education for both academic and vocationally oriented programmes are below the OECD average, but they have increased significantly since 2005, and reforms have been introduced at both levels.

Institutions: While schools and their learning environments face many challenges, including a population influx from rural to urban areas, Turkish students have a positive view of their teachers and learning environments. The capacity of school leaders and teachers to respond to school needs can be limited by weak initial education and training and teachers' lack of experience, as well as by the lack of flexibility accorded to schools within the governance structure. At both system and school levels, evaluation and assessment tools are used to understand quality in terms of compliance with central regulations rather than for student improvement. Recent strategies are aimed at a more student-centred approach for improvement.

Governance and funding: Turkey has a highly centralised governance structure where education policy is steered by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and, at the tertiary level, by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). Schools have little autonomy and limited capacity to respond to their needs. Education is publicly funded, but schools can receive contributions from parents through their school-parent associations. The central and provincial governments are responsible for personnel and financial management of schools. Although overall funding has increased in the past decade, data suggests that primary and secondary education are underfunded compared to other OECD countries. Tertiary institutions have more autonomy than schools to address their needs, but central authorities oversee funding and student entrance exams for tertiary institutions.

Key policy issues

The proportion of the population below age 15 in Turkey is one of the highest among OECD countries; it is very important to ensure that these young people complete their education and are well prepared for the labour force and further learning. Improvements have been made, but both quality and equity remain a challenge. Turkey has various priorities to address, including improving equity between regions and urban and rural areas; addressing the needs of disadvantaged students; preparing quality teachers and school leaders; improving access to and completion of upper secondary education, vocational education and training (VET), and tertiary education; strengthening links to the labour market; and adequately funding the education system.

Recent policy responses

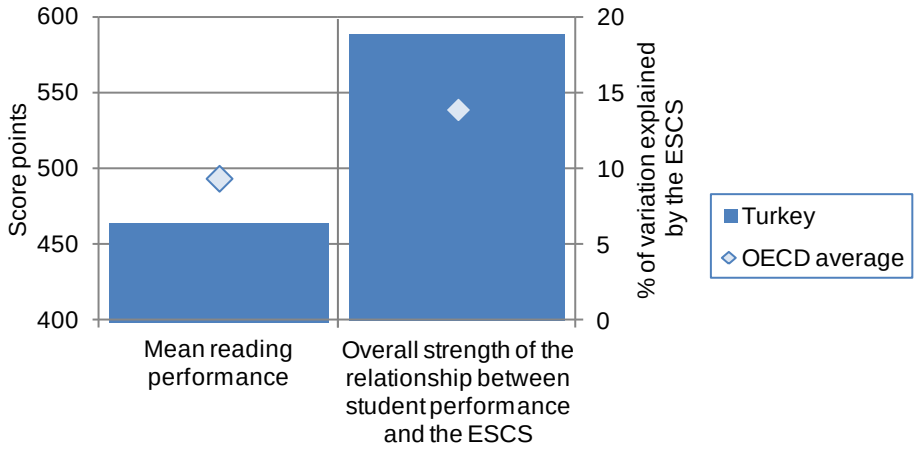
Many recent reforms have been supported by international organisations, in certain cases beginning as pilot projects designed to transform national education policy. The Basic Education Programme (1997) and the Secondary Project (2006-11), both with the World Bank, aimed to improve quality of education at these different levels. The Master Implementation Plan (2001-05) included multiple projects by UNICEF to improve both equity and quality of the education system. Initiatives in VET and tertiary education have been developed with the European Union to improve alignment with European standards. However, evaluations of certain projects indicate that not all targets or objectives were met and that it is difficult to transform pilot projects into nationwide policy.

To improve education quality and increase participation rates, legislation was introduced in 2012 to increase the number of compulsory years from eight to twelve and to redefine the education system into three levels (primary, lower and upper secondary education) of four years each (Compulsory Education for 12 years [4+4+4]).

Three key development plans steer education in Turkey: the "Strategic Plan for the Ministry of National Education" (2010-14), the recent *Tenth Development Plan (2014-18)* and the *Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper*. To increase funding, the government has provided incentives for private contributions to the education system.

Turkey's 15-year-olds achieve lower-than-average scores in the PISA 2009 reading assessment (464 mean score compared to the OECD average of 493). Their performance in both mathematics and science is also below the OECD average in PISA 2009, but Turkey is among the three countries with the largest performance improvement in PISA assessments of mathematics (between 2003 and 2009) and science (between 2006 and 2009). The impact of socio-economic status on students' reading performance (19%) is higher than the OECD average of 14% (Figure 1).

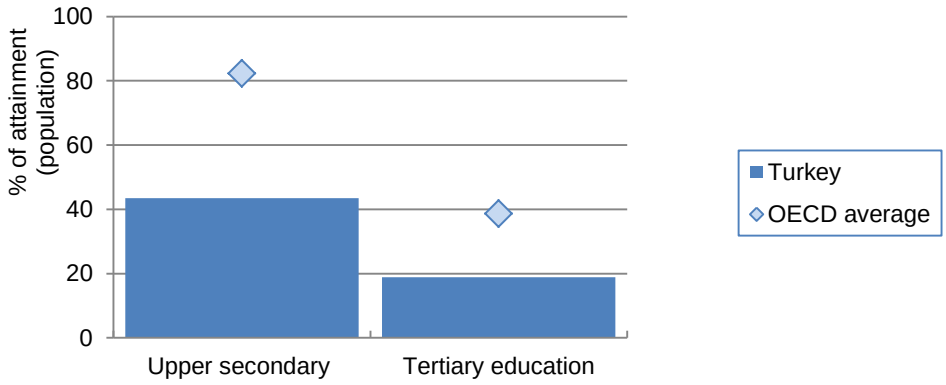
Figure 1. Student performance in reading and relationship between student performance and economic, social and cultural status (ESCS), for 15-year-olds, PISA 2009



Source: OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 Results: What Students Know and Can Do: Student Performance in Reading, Mathematics and Science (Volume I)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264091450-en.

Both secondary and tertiary education attainment in Turkey are lower than the OECD average, but both have increased significantly across generations and more than in most OECD countries (Figure 2). Forty-three percent of 25-34 year-olds have attained secondary education (compared to the OECD average of 82%) and 19% have attained tertiary education (compared to the OECD average of 39%).

Figure 2. Upper secondary and tertiary attainment for 25-34 year-olds, 2011



Source: OECD (2013), *Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2013-en.

EQUITY AND QUALITY: TARGETING PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

Equity indicators show that Turkey has further room for improvement in both quality and equity of the education system. Turkey has made significant improvement in PISA assessments in mathematics (from 2003-09) and science (from 2006-09), but remains one of the lowest performers among OECD countries in reading, mathematics and science; and the proportion of 15-year-olds who underperformed on the PISA 2009 reading assessment is above the OECD average (Figure 3). The impact of students' socio-economic status on performance and the difference in academic performance between boys and girls are both higher than the OECD average (see Annex B).

Participation in **early childhood education and care** (ECEC) benefits students, particularly those from a disadvantaged background. ECEC is compulsory for 3-6 year-olds in special education and available through public institutions and vocational teaching institutions, as well as through private institutions at a cost. About 12% of 3-4 year-olds and 67% of 5-year-olds (the typical starting age) are enrolled in pre-primary education. In Turkey, the majority of women with at least one child between 3 and 5 years old do not participate in the labour market (21.4% are employed compared to the OECD average of 64.3%, 2009), suggesting that they are staying at home with their children. OECD research on ECEC suggests that home learning environments can affect children's cognitive skills if parents are less involved or lack resources to provide the appropriate environment. PISA 2009 shows that more ECEC can be of benefit to disadvantaged 15-year-olds.

System-level policies, such as academic selection and multiple transitions can hinder equity in the education system. To ensure higher upper secondary completion rates, Turkey has increased compulsory schooling from 8 to 12 years, with a starting age of 5.5 years. The new legislation, Compulsory Education for 12 years (4+4+4) (see below), can improve student transitions between educational levels, but if not managed well, it can lead to more segregation among schools and further inequities. Currently, students are academically selected at age 13.5 and sorted into upper secondary schools based on results in a national examination. If the different pathways vary in quality, this can widen achievement gaps and hinder equity. Parents, particularly those with higher education and higher income, seek tutoring to prepare primary students for the national examination to improve their chances of entering top schools.

Although **disadvantaged students** face lower performance, as is the case in many OECD countries, Turkey has an above-average percentage of students who succeed academically despite the odds. Schools in Turkey tend to be homogenous in both student socio-economic background and academic performance, indicating low levels of social and academic inclusion. PISA 2009 indicates that most of the difference in academic performance between schools (51.7%) is explained by economic, social and cultural status of schools and students. Nonetheless, 42% of 15-year-olds from low socio-economic backgrounds performed better than predicted (compared to the OECD average of 30.8%). Targeted policies should aim to systematically support and strengthen schools' capacity to address the impact of low socio-economic background on performance.

The challenge: Ensuring disadvantaged students have a strong start and system-level policies do not hinder access to quality education.

Recent policies and practices

ECEC initiatives to increase participation include the *Tenth Development Plan* (2014-18), the Mobile Classroom for children 36-66 months from low-income families and the Summer Preschool for Children 60-66 months. UNICEF supported the Turkey Country Programme (2006-07) and the Pre-School Education Project (2010-13). To strengthen parent co-operation, the Childhood Development and Education Project and the pilot Pre-primary Parent-Child Education Programme Project (1999-2012) were implemented.

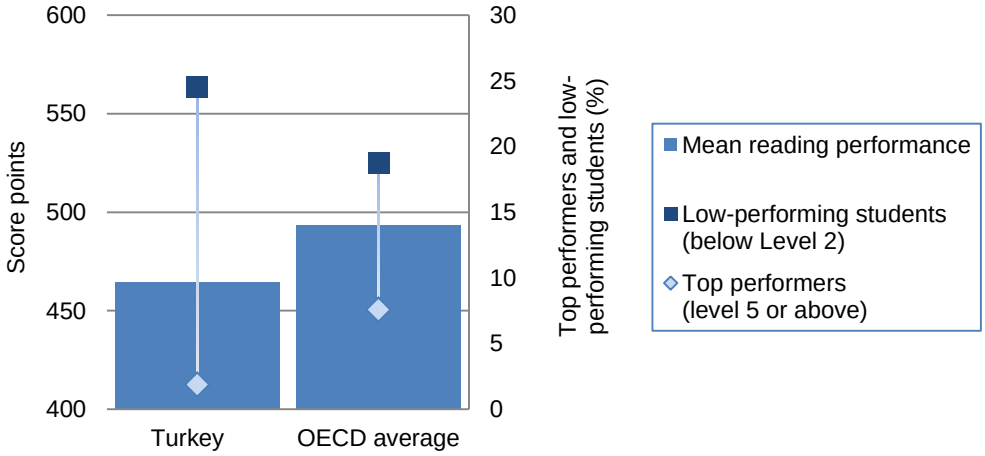
A structural reform (2012) increased the length of compulsory education from 8 to 12 years and redefined the system into 3 levels (primary, lower and upper secondary) of 4 years each (Compulsory Education for 12 years [4+4+4]). It implies additional funding, personnel and restructuring of schools to provide separate primary and lower secondary institutions.

Several initiatives aimed to increase participation in education: a complementary transitional training programme for 10-14 year-olds not in education; the Education with Transport programme for students who cannot get to school; and the Address-Based Population Register System (Law No. 5490 on Population Services, 2006), which, among other objectives, can help education authorities track children not in education.

The *Project for Increasing Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls* (ISEG, 2011-13) is a pilot project in 16 provinces with the lowest enrolment rates to increase primary and secondary school participation and improve family educational awareness and links to the labour market. UNICEF also aimed to increase girls' educational participation as part of the Master Implementation Plan (2001-05), which includes the Attendance of Girl Pupils to Schools project and the Girls to Schools Now campaign (2001-05).

The *Special Education Project* (2004), the *International Inspiration Project* (2011-13) and the *Strengthening Special Education Project* (2011-13) have helped improve outcomes for disadvantaged and special need students.

Figure 3. Mean score in reading performance and percentage of low and top performers, for 15-year-olds, PISA 2009



Source: OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 Results: What Students Know and Can Do: Student Performance in Reading, Mathematics and Science (Volume I)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264091450-en.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE: A HIGHLY SELECTIVE SYSTEM

Labour market perspectives can play an important role in educational decisions of young people. In the context of the economic crisis (2008-10), the unemployment rate in Turkey fluctuated. In 2011, it remained above the OECD average for 25-64 year-olds with upper secondary or tertiary education, but below the OECD average for those without upper secondary education. The share of 15-29 year-olds without upper secondary education and neither employed nor in education or training (36.5%) is more than double the OECD average (15.8%). Improving youth outcomes requires policies to address skills needs and support transitions into the labour market, such as creating stronger links to the labour market for youth.

Upper secondary education has selective entry tests, and graduation rates for both general and vocational programmes (56%) are below the OECD average (83%). Efforts have been made to improve enrolment and quality at the upper secondary level (see below). Since 2000, the share of 15-19 year-olds in education has more than doubled to 64%, but it still lags behind the OECD average of 84% (in 2011). Entry depends on test results at the end of lower secondary, and parents usually prefer that their children attend one of the highly selective elite schools where students have a higher possibility of being placed in university. In Turkey, not all schools have a counsellor, as assignment of a counsellor is dependent on student population, but policies aim to improve the guidance and counselling system. Guidance and counselling can help students and parents make informed decisions, based on students' interests and educational and labour market opportunities.

Vocational education and training (VET) in Turkey is offered in VET programmes, which last four years including apprenticeships, and in apprenticeship programmes. According to Ministry sources, enrolment in VET has increased considerably since 2003, from 36% of upper secondary students in 2003 to 51% in 2013. However at 25%, secondary VET graduation rates are still well below the OECD average of 47% (in 2011). Apprenticeship programmes are available to students who left the education system after primary education; they last two to three years, with most of the time spent in the workplace. Across OECD countries, workplace training can provide a learning environment as well as the opportunity to match employer needs to the supply of skilled students. The OECD 2007 review of basic education in Turkey found that communication with key stakeholders such as employers is a challenge. According to Turkish government sources, co-operation protocols have been signed with stakeholders to improve the co-operation and quality of VET. In addition, education consultation meetings have been organised to align secondary VET to international standards.

Having a **tertiary education** in Turkey pays off, and the government has aimed to better align tertiary education to the standards of countries in the European Union. Tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds can expect to earn 56% more than those with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, compared to the OECD average of 40% (in 2011). National examinations are used to select and place students in tertiary institutions. At 23%, graduation rates for academic (tertiary-type A) programmes are below the OECD average of 39%, while graduation rates from more technical (tertiary-type B) programmes, at 17%, are above the OECD average of 11%. In contrast to many OECD countries, males have a higher graduation rate in tertiary education than females. To improve tertiary education and students' competitiveness, the national qualifications framework aims to align higher education studies with the European Higher education area.

The challenge: Continue to increase participation and completion through quality options and better links to the labour market.

Recent policies and practices

The *Secondary Education Project* with the World Bank (2006-11) aimed to improve the quality, economic relevance and equity of secondary education and to develop lifelong learning. According to the "*Implementation, Completion and Results Report*", the project partially achieved its objectives: revision and implementation of general and vocational curricula, public availability of student achievement results, distribution of materials for teachers, improvement of vocational teachers' skills, introduction of an online Career Information System, training of school management teams on school development plans, and grant distribution to schools in low enrolment areas.

Multiple reforms in VET have occurred over the past two decades (see Spotlight 1).

Tertiary education initiatives include: a) increasing the number of universities from 115 to 168 between 2007 and 2012; b) introducing a two-stage university entrance examination: a common general knowledge exam and the Bachelor Programme Placement Examinations in Turkish, social sciences, mathematics, science and foreign languages to allow students to choose programmes (in 2010 by the Council of Higher Education [YÖK]); c) YÖK consultations with universities and other stakeholders to restructure and redesign Turkey's tertiary education system; and d) completing and piloting the competencies of the *National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Turkey* (2010), which are within the scope of the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy objectives.

Spotlight 1: Improving vocational education and training (VET)

To strengthen completion rates and develop skills suitable for the labour market, Turkey has aimed to improve VET through various projects and programmes targeting key areas, including links with the labour market, teacher quality and curriculum. According to an OECD review of VET, closer links between VET programmes and the labour market can help clarify expectations for all players – students, employers, trade unions, policy makers and other key stakeholders.

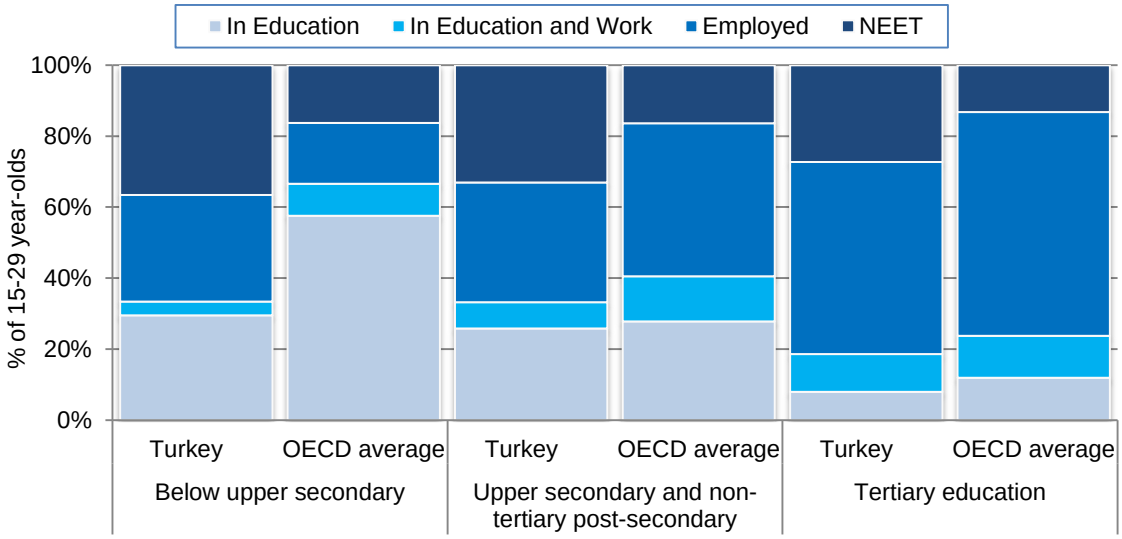
General VET reforms have been common in the past ten years:

- The Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training Project (MVET, 2003-06) included initiatives to improve VET teacher quality, such as the introduction of VET teacher competencies; development of modular curricula based on competencies; seminars on student-centred education and basic skills in select provinces; and quality assurance based on the European Network System.
- The Strengthening Vocational Education and Training System Project (SVET, 2002-07), in collaboration with social partners and with support from the European Union, was able to pilot a curriculum of 17 fields and 64 branches (2004-05), More recently, the Specialized Vocational Training Centers Project (UMEM, 2010-15) aims to build capacity of youth and increase employment rates,
- The *Vocational Education Project for Employment* (IMEP, 2009) aims to reduce unemployment rates by collaborating with the public sector.
- Most recently, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) are collaborating to support the vocational skills and entrepreneurship and leadership qualities of 15 000 VET school managers and teachers under the Teaching, Entrepreneurship and Leadership Training Cooperation Protocol for Managers and Teachers in Vocational and Technical Schools and Institutions.
- The Strengthening Special Education Project, financed by the European Union (2008 Financial Instrument for Pre-accession), aims to improve the quality of work and vocational training for individuals with special education needs by strengthening transition to work and vocational training.

To better match VET supply with the labour market, some projects focused on specific sectors, including tourism (the *Culture, Art and Education Cooperation Protocol* [2004] and the Employment of Tourism Training Centers [TUREM] Graduates Project*),* electricity *(*New Trends in Illumination Project [2009]) and railway (*Railway Operation in European Credit System for VET project* [2011-13]).

A number of initiatives aim **to collect data and strengthen labour market outcomes**. VET data is being collected through the Information System for Determining Educational Needs on Vocational and Technical Education Project (2005-13). A Follow-up Study of Graduates of Vocational and Technical Secondary Education Institutions (2007) was piloted to systematically track VET secondary graduates. Moreover, information on learning opportunities with medium- and long-term projections is available in the "Draft Turkey Vocational and Technical Education Strategy Paper and Action Plan", planned for 2014-18.

Figure 4. Percentage of 15-29 year-olds in education and not in education, by educational attainment and work status, 2011



NEET: Neither Employed, nor in Education and Training
Source: OECD (2013), *Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2013-en.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: CHALLENGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS WITH A CENTRALISED PLACEMENT SYSTEM FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS

Raising achievement in Turkey's primary schools (32 108 in 2012) and secondary schools is linked to developing the conditions for schools, their school leaders and teachers to succeed. Fifteen-year-old students have a positive view of their relationship with teachers and of their learning environment (Figure 5). Nevertheless, school principals reported on PISA 2009 that teacher and student behaviour hindered learning to a greater extent than the OECD average. On the 2008 OECD *Teaching and Learning International Survey* (TALIS), teachers also reported that the disciplinary climate was rather negative. Turkey's urban schools face an influx of large families from rural areas as well as above-average class sizes, double-shift schools and lack of resources, while key challenges facing rural areas include underpopulated schools, lower academic performance, teacher turnover and low participation of girls in education.

School principals tend to follow a style of administrative rather than pedagogical leadership, reporting on TALIS 2008 that they performed primarily tasks related to budget and its allocation. Principals are chosen based on passing an oral exam, as well as being selected by provincial directors. Principals of specialised schools might require experience in that particular type of education. According to the 2007 OECD review of basic education, in-service training was limited. Also on TALIS 2008, more school principals than the OECD average reported that a lack of qualified teachers, support, personnel and materials hindered instruction at their schools. With numerous reforms and challenges in schools, school leaders should have access to quality initial training and on-going support to develop their effectiveness, not only as administrative leaders, but also as pedagogical leaders to support school improvement.

On TALIS 2008, **teachers** in Turkey reported average levels of self-efficacy, but below-average job satisfaction. Teachers can begin their teacher training in specific secondary high schools. They must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited programme, be under 40 years old, and pass the Public Staff Selection Exam. They are placed in schools by the MoNE based on their exam scores and, to some extent, on their interests. In 2013, the teacher candidate test has been revised to include assessments on subject-specific knowledge. TALIS results indicate that 18% of teachers in Turkey were in their first two years of teaching in 2008 (more than double the OECD average), and also that beginning teachers tend to be assigned to disadvantaged areas, which can further hinder capacity in these schools. About 70% of school principals reported that a mentoring programme exists for first-year teachers and that in-service training is defined and planned by both the central government's Directorate General for Teacher Training and Improvement and the local government. However, the proportion of teachers reporting participation in professional development was below the OECD average. From 2000 to 2010, teachers' salaries more than doubled in primary and upper secondary education, but salaries in 2010 were still below the OECD average (by more than 15% for starting salaries and by 40% or more for salaries at the top of the scale).

The challenge: Ensuring that school leaders and teachers receive quality initial training and continued support to target improved school and student outcomes.

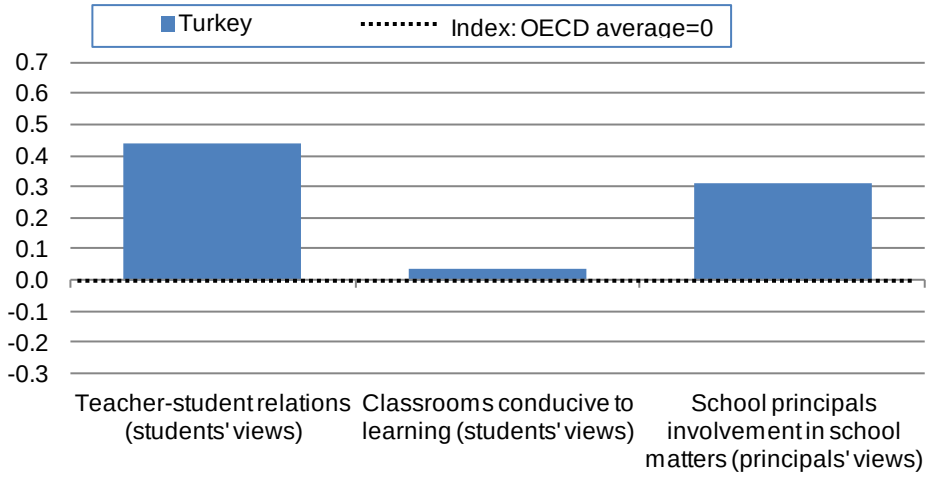
Recent policies and practices

To improve teacher education, the Teacher Training Programmes of Education Faculties (2008) aimed to increase the number of general knowledge and elective courses and credits, to give more autonomy to faculties on courses taught, to link the courses to the MoNE's primary and secondary curricula and classroom practice, and to introduce a new course entitled Community Services Practices.

The New Teacher Programme (2011) was introduced to provide in-depth subject content and stricter requirements for certain subjects. The length of upper secondary teacher programmes for subject teachers (2008) was reduced to one year, although the requirements were the same as for other upper secondary teachers. The Transportable Schools and Mobile Teachers Programme aimed to improve quality of education in rural areas with pre-fabricated mobile schools and more teachers.

The MoNE has developed Standards for Primary Education Institutions, which were piloted in 2010 and expanded to all primary education schools from 2011-12. These standards have the following objectives: a) defining what quality means for primary education institutions; b) guiding primary education institutions to achieve the defined quality; c) developing a system through which every school will be able to carry out a self-assessment to determine the extent of its quality status and make its own improvement plans; and d) providing a basis to plan activities at the central and local level (provincial and district) to address differences in quality. Self-assessment of schools will be provided through a module added to the e-school database. Schools are required to develop an improvement plan on the basis of the self-assessment. The tool aims to empower schools and support the decentralisation plans of the MoNE.

Figure 5. The learning environment, PISA 2009



Source: OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 Results: What Makes a School Successful? Resources, Policies and Practices (Volume IV)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264091559-en.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES: USING ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR COMPLIANCE

Under the Basic Law of National Education, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is responsible for **evaluation and assessment of the education system**. According to an OECD study, integrated evaluation and assessment frameworks for improving school outcomes should align with educational goals and student learning objectives.

System evaluations are carried out by the Board of Education, which is responsible for development of national curricula, grading criteria and general guidelines. Situation Assessment Studies, carried out by the MoNE is a sample survey to track student achievement at various grades and in different subjects and to collect student information, such as socio-economic status. Using the survey results, the MoNE can compare regions, schools and programmes to develop education policy. International studies, such as PISA assessments, are also used to evaluate achievement at the system level. In addition, comparable statistical information is collected at the national level and, in some cases, at the school level.

School evaluations are traditional, focusing on compliance with central regulations of various aspects of the schools. The 2010-14 MoNE Strategic Plan aims to build a culture of quality at central and local levels, as well as a quality assurance system. The independent provincial school inspectorate (the School Development and Quality Bureau) is responsible for the evaluation of primary schools under the direction of the central Board of Inspection, while ministerial inspectors are responsible for secondary schools. Evaluations occur annually for primary schools and every three years for secondary schools. School leaders carry out internal evaluations. New standards for primary schools can contribute to developing school capacity for self-assessment (see school improvement reforms).

School leaders are responsible for **teacher appraisal** under the guidance of the local inspectorate, using teachers' competencies set at the national level and adapted by the regional and local governments. OECD evidence in TALIS 2008 suggests that teacher appraisals should enhance teacher professionalism and encourage improvement through an established framework.

Student assessments are used in most cases to determine the quality of students and teachers (Figure 6). Student assessments are also used to select and sort students entering secondary education. There is also a university entrance examination administered by the Assessment, Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM). It is important for the ÖSYM to take into account not only the needs of higher education, but also the goals of the MoNE, including students' knowledge and skills and the labour market. According to the 2007 OECD review, student assessments should be student-centred and should draw on a variety of assessment tools to understand how students are achieving key competencies, in order to better understand how to improve student and school outcomes.

The challenge: Enhancing evaluation and assessment tools within a comprehensive framework aligned with educational goals and objectives to improve student outcomes.

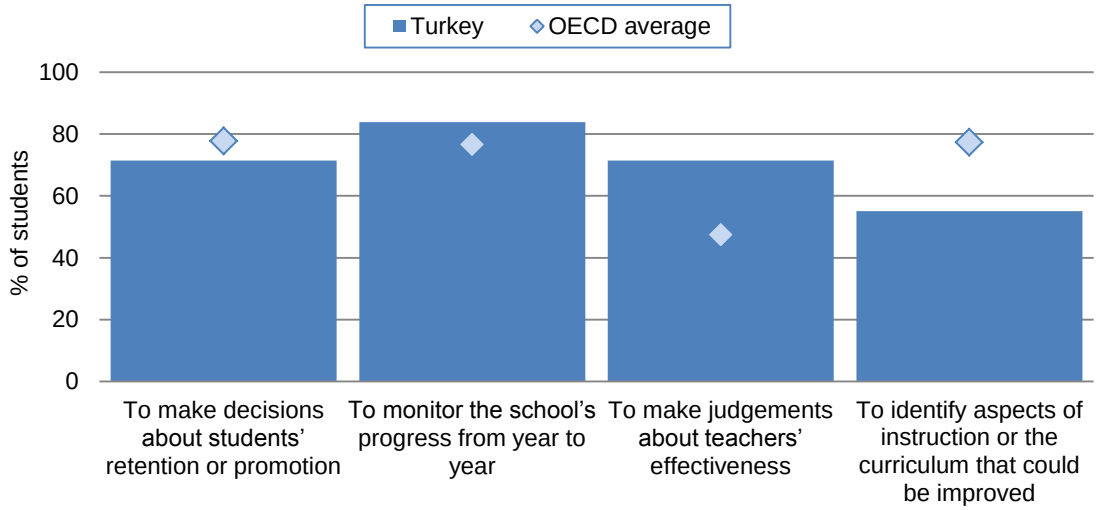
Recent policies and practices

The UNICEF Master Implementation Plan (2001-05) included the implementation of the Child-Friendly School Project in 326 schools, with the aim of creating school project teams to further develop evaluation and assessment through performance assessments, work plans, and standards and indicators.

The e-State Project (2009) is part of the e-transformation plan that Turkey introduced to improve access for key stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, students and parents. This project includes a number of initiatives: the e-Personnel Project to provide teachers and students with exam information and enable teacher requests; the e-Graduate Project to help vocational and technical secondary graduates locate employment and higher education opportunities; the e-Registration Project for parents to register their child in neighbourhood schools; and the e-School Information Management System to collect student information.

The Ministry of National Education Information Systems (MEBBİS) (2002-03) was launched by the MoNE to collect and publish formal education statistics from school directors using the e-school module. Data are taken from the school records at the beginning of one school year and the end of the previous school year. From 2008-09, data on students and buildings for pre-primary and primary education have been collected using the e-school module and, as of 2009-10, the same data are being collected for secondary education.

Figure 6. Percentage of students in schools where the principal reported assessments of students in national modal grade for 15-year-olds, PISA 2009



Source: OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 Results: What Makes a School Successful? Resources, Policies and Practices (Volume IV)*, OECD Publishing, Paris http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264091559-en.

GOVERNANCE: A CENTRALISED SYSTEM WITH LITTLE SCHOOL AUTONOMY

Turkey has a **centralised governance structure**. Under the Basic Law of National Education of 1973, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is responsible for the education system, and general directorates and their units are responsible for different aspects of education and policy compliance, such as basic education, secondary education, vocational education, special education and guidance and counseling. Provincial and District National Education Directorates across 81 Turkish provinces support the implementation of education policy. Other bodies that help shape education policy in Turkey include:

- The National Council of Education, which convenes every four years, advises the MoNE.
- The Board of Education develops curriculum, plans and objectives, and approves textbooks.
- The Directorate for Strategy Development serves as the consultation unit and coordinates the work of establishing education strategies, policies and goals. The Directorate for Guidance and Inspection serves as the inspection unit. The Directorate General for Innovation and Education Technologies and the Directorate General for European Union and Foreign Relations coordinate involvement in international assessment studies.
- The Vocational Education Council decides on planning and development, with representatives from relevant ministries, trade and employers' unions and other key social partners. The Vocational Qualifications Authority aligns VET professional qualifications with professional standards; and for each province there is a Board of Vocational Education.
- The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and its committees are responsible for higher education policies, while the Higher Education Board supervises the institutions.
- The Assessment, Selection and Placement Centre is responsible for university entrance examinations and placement of teachers, in collaboration with the MoNE.
- The National Council for Teacher Training is an advisory body which coordinates between the YÖK and the MoNE.
- Consultation with external stakeholders includes work with international organisations (such as the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, the United Nations, UNICEF and the European Union), the private sector, non-governmental organisations and teachers' unions.

The central government makes schooling decisions on planning and structure and responds to the needs of education institutions and the labour market across the regions (Figure 7). Decisions on personnel and financial management are shared with provincial authorities, while schools organise instruction. Educational institutions have to respond to multiple changes in population and the labour market, but Turkey's highly centralised system and bureaucratic structure limit the capacity of schools to address their immediate challenges. Tertiary institutions and vocational education institutions do have sufficient autonomy to address these needs.

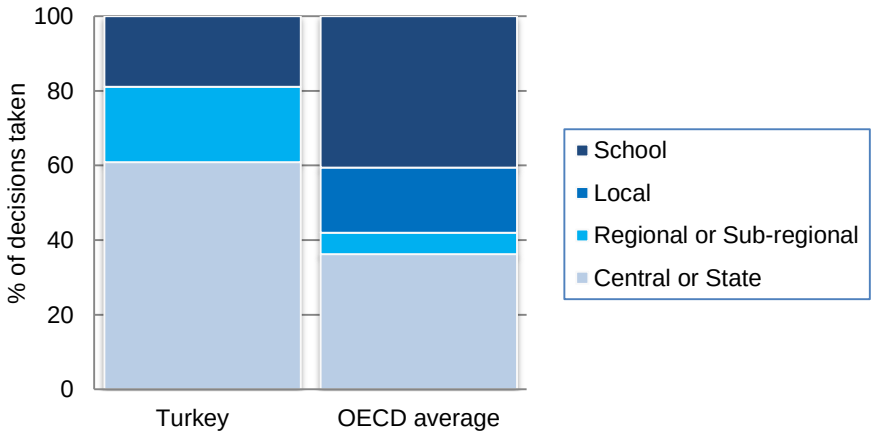
The challenge: According provincial authorities and education institutions the capacity to address local challenges while aligning to national priorities.

Recent policies and practices

Turkey has three key documents which steer education: the Strategic Plan for the Ministry of National Education (2010-14), which sets the medium- and long-term education goals; an overall government strategy which includes education, currently established in the *Tenth Development Plan* (2014-18); and the *Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper*, which is linked to the European Union's strategy.

By 2023, the Turkish government aims to: a) achieve a society of educated individuals; b) launch the Movement of Enhancing Opportunities and Improving Technology project (FATIH), which aims to equip each classroom with an interactive white board and each student with a tablet computer; c) increase participation rates in pre-school, basic and secondary education to 100%; d) promote the importance of vocational education; e) implement reform of the YÖK; f) increase the number of private universities; g) improve the quality of universities; h) increase the number of academics in universities; i) implement a policy of language learning; j) terminate gender and regional disparities; and k) prepare students for upper education and the future in a more flexible structure.

Figure 7. Percentage of decisions taken in public lower secondary schools at each level of government, 2011



Note: Value for local government level is not available for Ireland.
Source: OECD (2012), *Education at a Glance 2012: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2012-en.

FUNDING: LOW PUBLIC FUNDING BUT POLICIES DESIGNED TO INCREASE SOURCES OF FUNDING

Annual expenditure per student in Turkey was less than half of the OECD average in 2010: USD 2 490 (PPPs) in pre-primary education (compared to the OECD average of USD 6 762); USD 1 860 in primary education (compared to the OECD average of USD 7 974); and USD 2 470 in upper secondary education (compared to the OECD average of USD 9 014).

In pre-primary, primary and secondary education, the central government allocates **public funding from the national budget** to public institutions and private institutions (for students in special education) for operational and personnel costs, such as staff and teaching material. Education reforms are funded through the government and also through contributions from international organisations, private institutions and non-governmental organisations. Expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education was 2.5% of the GDP in 2010, lower than the OECD average of 3.9%, but it has increased by 0.7 percentage points since 2000. In 2010, public expenditure on public educational institutions per student in primary education, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education was USD 2 008 (compared to the OECD average of USD 8 412), while for private institutions it was USD 2 413 (compared to the OECD average of USD 5 029).

Within a highly centralised budgeting system, schools receive **public funding** and private contributions and have little autonomy over school financial management. School funding is allocated based on an increase over the previous year's school budget. With changes in student population and the need to provide more non-personnel-related resources, schools have difficulty responding to their needs, given the lack of financial autonomy and the allocation method of funding. However, parental contributions to fund supplemental equipment can be received through the school parents' association. Secondary vocational and technical schools can also undertake fundraising activities.

Tertiary institutions receive funding from the national budget, tuition fees and self-generated revenues. About 25% of national students in tertiary-type A education obtaining their first degree receive scholarships or grants (2011). Public university budgets are ratified by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. While tertiary institutions have some autonomy, the central authority oversees preliminary and implementation stages of funding. Non-profit foundation universities meeting specific criteria can also receive funding from the government. The criteria specified in the regulation on Foundation Higher Education Institutions, include the age of the institution, the rate of full scholarship students, the number of academic staff and the quality of research.

Disparities in financial resources between regions and schools can affect student learning opportunities in Turkey. Based on the 2007 OECD review, differences in resources across schools and regions highlight the need to review resource allocation policies and methodologies. Implementing funding strategies, such as a weighted funding formula, could help meet the needs of disadvantaged schools and ensure a more balanced system of allocation. Funding allocations should be responsive to the needs of students and schools.

The challenge: Ensuring effective allocation of funding to better meet the needs of schools and students.

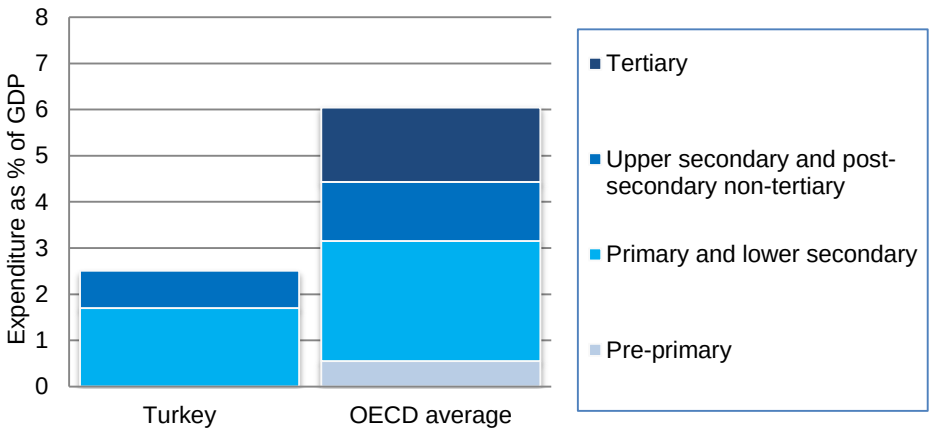
Recent policies and practices

The Campaign of 100% Support for Education is intended to increase financial support for education from private and non-governmental organisations through tax exemptions on educational spending. USD 1 billion in private contributions has been collected. Under the 193 Income Law (September 2003), a 100% tax deduction can be provided for contributions to education.

Funding support is being introduced for students from outside the European Union and the European Economic Area to attend higher education institutions in Turkey.

Under the Private Teaching Institutions Law (January 2013, n. 5580), government funds have been provided to private vocational and technical schools in organised industrial zones in addition to the funding available to private schools with students in special education.

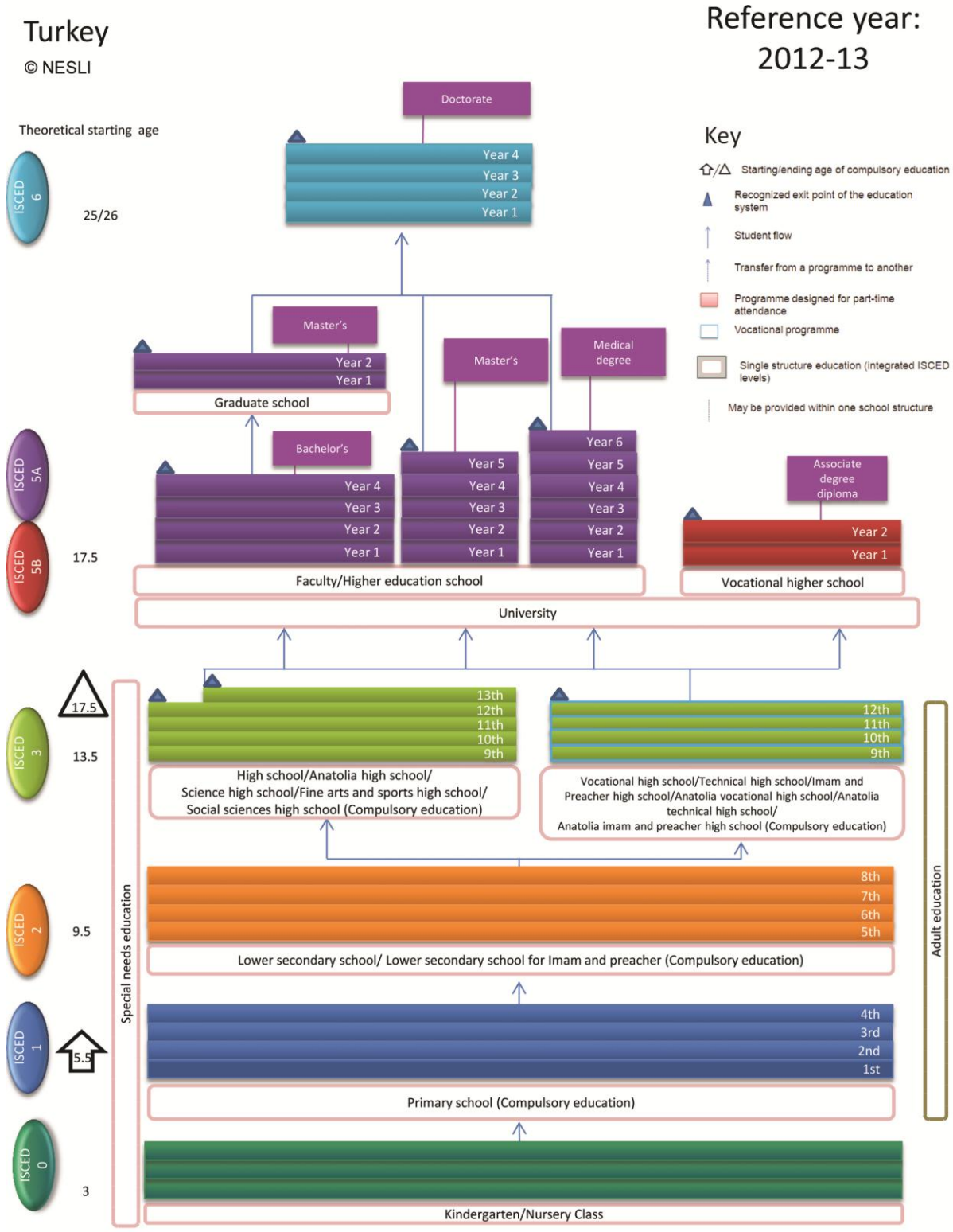
Figure 8. Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP, by level of education, 2010



Note: Data on tertiary education are not available for Turkey in 2010.

Source: OECD (2013), *Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris,http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2013-en.

ANNEX A: STRUCTURE OF TURKEY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM



Note: This chart presents the structure of Turkey's education system from the school year 2012-13, taking into account recent structural changes in primary and secondary education.

ANNEX B: STATISTICS

#	List of key indicators	Turkey	Average or total	Min	Max
	Background information				
Political context					
1	Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP, 2010 (EAG 2013)	m	5.8%	3.8%	8.8%
Economy					
2	GDP per capita, 2010, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs (EAG 2013)	15 775		15 195	84 672
3	GDP growth 2011 (OECD National Accounts)	8.5%	1.8%	-7.1%	8.5%
Society					
4	Population density, inhab/km^2, 2010 (OECD Statistics)	94.3	138	2.9	492
5	Young people, aged less than 15, 2010 (OECD Statistics)	25.8%	17.3%	13%	28.1%
6	Foreign-born population, 2009 (OECD Statistics)	m	14.1%	0.8%	36.9%
	Education outcomes				
7	Mean reading performance (PISA 2009)	464	493	425	539
8	Change in mean reading performance, 2000-09 (PISA 2009)	m	1	-31	40
9	Change in mean mathematics performance, 2003-09 (PISA 2009)	**22**	0	-24	33
10	Change in mean science performance, 2006-09 (PISA 2009)	**30**	3	-12	30
11	Enrolment rates in early childhood education and primary education, ages 3 and 4, 2011 (EAG 2013)	11.6%	74.4%	11.6%	98%
12	Population that has attained below upper secondary education, 25-64 year-olds, 2011 (EAG 2013)	68%	25%	7%	68%
13	Population that has attained at least upper secondary education, 25-34 year-olds, 2011 (EAG 2013)	43%	82%	43%	98%
14	Population that has attained tertiary education, 25-34 year-olds (EAG 2013)	19%	39%	19%	64%
15	Population whose highest level of education is vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary, 2011 (EAG 2013)	8.4%	33.5%	8.4%	73.9%
16	***Unemployment rates, 25-64 year-olds, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	Below upper secondary	8.4%	12.6%	2.7%	39.3%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	8.9%	7.3%	2.2%	19.2%
	Tertiary education	7.6%	4.8%	1.5%	12.8%
	Students: Raising outcomes				
Policy lever 1: Equity and quality					
17	First age of selection in the education system (PISA 2009)	11	14	10	16
18	***Proficiency levels on the reading scale (PISA 2009)***				
	Students below Level 2	24.5%	18.8%	5.8%	40.1%
	Students at Level 5 or above	1.9%	7.6%	0.4%	15.7%
19	***Between- and within-school variance in reading performance (PISA 2009)***				
	Between schools	6 536	3 616	665	6 695
	Within schools	3 245	5 591	2 795	8 290
20	Students reporting that they have repeated at least a grade in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary schools (PISA 2009)	13%	13%	0%	36.9%

#	List of key indicators	Turkey	average or total	Min	Max
21	Variance in student performance explained by student socio-economic status (PISA 2009)	19%	14%	6%	26%
22	Difference in reading performance between native students and students with an immigrant background, after accounting for socio-economic status (PISA 2009)	m	27	-17.0	85.0
23	Gender differences in student performance on the reading scale (PISA 2009)	-43	-39	-55	-22
Policy lever 2: Preparing students for the future					
24	***Upper secondary graduation rates, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	General programmes	31%	50%	18%	82%
	Pre-vocational/ vocational programmes	25%	47%	4%	99%
25	Change in upper secondary graduation rates (average annual growth rate 1995-2011), (EAG 2013)	2.6%	0.6%	-1%	3.6%
26	***Graduation rates, first-time graduates, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	Tertiary-type 5A	23%	40%	21%	60%
	Tertiary-type 5B	17%	11%	0%	29%
	Tertiary-type 5A (average annual growth rate 1995-2011)	8.2%	4%	-1%	11%
	Tertiary-type 5B (average annual growth rate 1995-2011)	12.7%	0%	-20%	14%
27	Youth population not in education, employment or training 15-29 year olds, 2011 (EAG 2013)	34.6%	15.8%	6.9%	34.6%
Institutions: Improving schools					
Policy lever 3: School improvement					
28	Index of teacher-student relations based on students' reports (PISA 2009)	0.44	0	-0.42	0.44
29	Index of disciplinary climate based on students' reports (PISA 2009)	0.03	0	-0.40	0.75
30	***Teachers younger than 40 years-old, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	Primary education	m	41%	15%	60%
	Lower secondary education	m	39%	11%	56%
	Upper secondary education	m	34%	7%	47%
31	***Number of teaching hours per year in public institutions, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	Primary education	639	790	589	1 120
	Lower secondary education	a	709	415	1 120
	Upper secondary education	567	664	369	1 120
32	***Ratio of teachers' salaries to earnings for full-time, full-year adult workers with tertiary education, 2011 (EAG 2013)***				
	Primary education	m	0.82	0.44	1.34
	Lower secondary education	m	0.85	0.44	1.34
	Upper secondary education	m	0.89	0.44	1.40
33	Change in teachers' salaries between 2000 and 2011 in lower secondary education (2000 = 100), (EAG 2013)	8.16%	16%	-9%	103%
34	Impact of teacher appraisal and feedback upon teaching, 2007-08 (TALIS 2008)	33.3%	33.9%	10.9%	69.1%
35	Teachers who wanted to participate in more development than they did in the previous 18 months, 2007-08 (TALIS 2008)	48.2%	55%	31%	85%
36	School principals' views of their involvement in school matters, mean index, (PISA 2009)	0.31	-0.02	-1.29	1.03

#	List of key indicators	Turkey	average or total	Min	Max
Policy lever 4: Evaluation and assessment to improve student outcomes					
37	***Assessment purposes (PISA 2009)***				
	To make decisions about students' retention or promotion	71.4%	78%	1%	100%
	To monitor the school's progress from year to year	83.9%	77%	35%	98%
	To make judgements about teachers' effectiveness	71.4%	47%	8%	85%
	To identify aspects of instruction or the curriculum that could be improved	55%	77%	47%	98%
38	***Frequency and source of teacher appraisal and feedback, 2007-08 (TALIS 2008)***				
	Once every two years or less	29.9%	35.8%	13.8%	65.6%
	At least once per year	57.8%	52.2%	27.6%	68.6%
	Monthly or more than once per month	12.4%	12%	3.3%	29.8%
Systems: Organising the system					
Policy lever 5: Governance					
39	***Decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education, 2011 (EAG 2012)***				
	Central or state government	61%	36%	0%	87%
	Regional or sub-regional government	20%	6%	0%	36%
	Local government	m	17%	4%	100%
	School government	19%	41%	5%	86%
Policy lever 6: Funding					
40	***Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions, for all services, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, 2010 (EAG 2013)***				
	Pre-primary education	2 490	6 762	2 280	20 958
	Primary education	1 860	7 974	1 860	21 240
	Secondary education	2 470	9 014	2 470	17 633
	Tertiary education	m	13 528	6 501	25 576
41	***Relative proportions of public and private expenditure on educational institutions, 2010 (EAG 2013)***				
	Public sources	m	83.6%	57.9%	97.6%
	All private sources	m	16.4%	2.4%	42.1%
	Public sources, index of change in expenditure on educational institutions (2000-10)	m	136	101	195
	All private sources, index of change in expenditure on educational institutions (2000-10)	m	211	104	790

Note: The average, minimums and maximums refer to OECD countries except in TALIS where they refer to participating countries. "m" refers to data not available.
PISA values that are statistically significant are indicated in bold.

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