



3

Possibilities and opportunities

– Best practices for young people on the labour market from Turkey and Sweden

Possibilities and opportunities

- Best practices for young people on the labour market from Turkey and Sweden

Foreword

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs and the Department of Youth Services at the Directorate for Youth and Sports in Turkey are working together in the project *Youth Policy Cooperation between Turkey and Sweden* between 2008 and 2010. One aim of the project is to increase knowledge of the living conditions of young people in both countries. Another aim is to demonstrate the potential of young people and increase their participation in society.

The project has five components with the following themes: concepts in youth policy, knowledge of young people's living conditions, networking for people who work with and for young people, promotion of best practices for young people on the labour market, and awareness of provided social services and rights for young people.

Within the framework of this cooperation project, this booklet is one of the outcomes. It consists of three parts: an overview of the Turkish situation for youth on the labour market by Associate Professor Hakan Ercan, followed by an overview of the Swedish situation for youth on the labour market by Professor Peter Waara. The researchers' texts are introductions to the area, and hope to inspire for further reading elsewhere. To complement the researchers' outlooks we also have included a summary of outcomes of three seminars held in Turkey and Sweden. This adds proposals, ideas and discussions specifically on strategies from school to jobs, entrepreneurship and the possibility of young people with disabilities to access the labour market.

Content

Youth Employment in Turkey 4

By Hakan Ercan, Associate Professor, Department of Economics,
Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Youth and the labour market in Sweden 11

By Peter Waara, Professor, Studies in Education, Culture and Media,
Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

**Young people in and outside the labour
market in Turkey and Sweden 15**

– Documentation of a collaboration between two
countries focusing on young people and the labour market
By Helena Gillinger, Journalist

Youth Employment in Turkey

By Hakan Ercan, Associate Professor, Department of Economics,
Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Turkey's recent strong economic growth performance in 2002-2007 did not translate itself into a matching performance in employment creation. In recent years, unemployment has replaced inflation as the number one economic problem in public opinion polls in Turkey, even before the current crisis. There is widespread perception of insufficient employment opportunities. This is a concern shared by other emerging market economies as well. Turkey and many Latin American countries have endured decades of economic hardships of chronic inflation, financial crises, and macroeconomic instability. The requisite official line for employment creation was also shared in these countries: A country needs macroeconomic stability for attracting foreign direct investment and job creation. Necessary but not sufficient, this is an obvious labour demand side truth.

Economic recovery comes without jobs in some cases, in the emerging markets as well as the U.S., because of productivity increases. Case in point: During the period 1980-2002, annual real GNP growth in Turkey averaged about 4%, compared to average employment growth rate of only 0.8%. Even in the more recent period of 2002-2007 when economic growth rate has exceeded 7%, the unemployment rate has stubbornly remained unchanged around 10%.

Employment growth rate in the period was also 0.8%.¹ This seems to be a cap for the Turkish economy. It is a failing mark in the Turkish economic grade report. The recent crisis has caused the unemployment rate to climb to 12% in 2008, and 16% in April 2009.

On the population side, Turkey has almost completed its demographic transition. This transition refers to a process that starts with a high fertility - high death rate state and ends up with a controlled low fertility – low death rate state. While this process took most European countries a century, Turkey has completed its transition in about half that time.² Turkish total fertility rate dropped surprisingly fast. It fell from 6.9 in 1945-50 to the replacement rate of 2.1 in the mid-2000's. In any case, fast population growth rates now belong to history in Turkey. Behar (1999) convincingly argues that this trend is irreversible.

Nevertheless, Turkish working age population (of 15+) grows at 1.9% per annum because of population momentum. The only thing that keeps unemployment rate from increasing is non-participation. Non-participants grow at 2.4% per annum. This suggests that the population that come out of agriculture drop out of the labour force. This is a mixed blessing. It keeps unemployment rate in check. At the same time, it is a waste of available human resources. Individuals' long-term success in the labour market in terms of 'desirable' jobs and wages is typically a supply side issue, one of human capital. For the most part, that means education (and then experience). Development literature is replete with analyses that look into the long-term positive relationship between education and growth. The relationship stands both at the aggregate level and at the individual level.

Turkey's economic growth performance came at the expense of serious income inequality and regional or rural-urban income disparities. Regional convergence is slow if there is one at all (Kirdar and Saracoglu, 2006). Such income discrepancies stand at the core of poverty (social exclusion) phenomenon. Employability is the panacea for social exclusion. The young age groups constitute a high-risk group in terms of new entrance to the labour market.

¹ All rates are calculated by the author using TURKSTAT data available at www.turkstat.gov.tr.

² Behar (1999) discusses the Turkish demographic transition at length. Shorter (1995) is an often-quoted source, as well.

Youth employment creation is a critical component of a country's long-term economic stability and growth. There are difficulties in Turkey in employment generation in general, in youth employment generation in particular. Turkey had a severe financial crisis in 2001. The recovery started in 2002 and growth continued to 2008. The recovery came without jobs in 2002-2004, however. In 2005-2006, the overall unemployment rate finally started to come down. It was 9.9% in 2006. This positive development was not reflected in youth unemployment rates, however. Youth unemployment rate stagnated at 17–18%. In just a few months, from late 2008 to early 2009, youth unemployment rate shot up by ten points to 28%! Note that, new entrants lack a major component of labour market skill, experience. They will have a harder time to find jobs when there is a recession.

Present day Turkish demographics and labour market dynamics are qualitatively and quantitatively very different from the demographically mature and educated labour force dynamics of the EU or OECD countries. Regardless, policy proposals will have to be necessarily in line with the EU guidelines on employment.

Currently, the rate of increase in the working-age population is faster than the rate of employment growth registered in recent decades. As a result, employment creation in general – and women's and youth employment in particular – has emerged as the key labour-market challenge for Turkey's development. We propose 'more education' and then lifelong learning for those who are leaving agriculture, 'skill upgrading' for the increasing numbers of better-educated urban youth who are participating in the labour market and not finding employment.³

This short presentation concludes with policy suggestions, which may later form the basis for the youth employment component of Turkey's future National Reform Programme on Employment, which is an EU candidacy requirement. Concomitantly, Turkey will have to prepare a youth employment strategy as a member of the United Nations Youth Employment Network (YEN), within which the International Labour Organization (ILO) is a core partner. Thirdly, and maybe most importantly, this mapping exercise may form the basis of specific pilot projects to be suggested to international organisations. The evaluation of outcomes of such projects should prove to be valuable in the context of how to allocate the EU's IPA funds (pre-accession funds) most efficiently in Turkey. (Maybe Turkey will go the way of Ireland and give priority to investing in human capital as opposed to building better roads first, as Greece or Portugal has done.)

A significant global effort to promote "Decent Work" for creating jobs, poverty reduction, and sustainable development has been initiated by the UN. In its Ministerial Declaration in July 2006, UN pointed to the necessity of the "Decent Work" agenda for the 1.4 billion working poor of the world. In order to keep this number at its present level, 40 million new jobs should be created every year.⁴ This is a global jobs crisis exacerbated by the recent financial crisis. The Declaration maps out some initiatives for governments to consider the employment impact of their policies. The move is in line with the EU's 'realignment' of its employment strategy, now called a growth and jobs strategy, uniting macroeconomic policies and employment related guidelines and targets (the integrated guidelines). ILO is charged with promoting a decent work agenda for reducing poverty and obtaining equitable and inclusive development.

"Decent Work" agenda has four strategic objectives. These are creating jobs – generating opportunities for investment; guaranteeing rights of workers at work – in particular, disadvantaged workers; extending social protection by promoting inclusion; and promoting dialogue and conflict resolution – for peaceful negotiation and solving problems. These strategic objectives have almost one-to-one correspondence with the employment "pillars" of the EU.

³ Many non-participants are so-called 'discouraged' workers.

⁴ These numbers are taken from the *World of Work* magazine no. 57, published by the ILO.

None of the policy documents that Turkey will prepare, therefore, will be at odds with one another, be that it is prepared for the EU or for the ILO, for example. The imminent Turkish obligation is to prepare a national reform programme on employment, in line with the EU candidacy requirements.

Turkish youth employment prospects are not positive. The Turkish situation is different from the EU in that it is harder for young women to be formally employed than men are. Both the participation rates and the employment ratios are very low for young women. This may be explained in part by the rural-urban transition where former unpaid family workers would not participate at first in the urban labour market that requires higher skills. Given time, however, this group of young women will start participating more and one expects the group's unemployment rate to climb as well.

Turkish policy-makers acknowledge the severity of the youth employment situation, but there are no specific actions aimed to tackle the problem. It may soon become a priority after the current crisis as the long-standing macroeconomic woe of the country, inflation, is now in the single digits due to an IMF-backed restructuring and stabilisation program.

Strategic decisions on allocating funds to target groups should be made by the policy-makers with the involvement of social partners. They had a long history of working together in Turkey, until recent years. The present government tends to rely on the opinions of a few, rather than many. Regardless, Turkish employers are also used to assume responsibility in providing training and employment to young people through the apprenticeship system. This is a positive point.

The most important priority for the moment should be to finalise an employment strategy. Targeting youth employment may only make sense within the framework of a national action plan on employment.

The following specific recommendations could easily form the policy components of a national youth employment strategy.

Future steps to be taken to promote youth employment⁵

Some of the following policy recommendations are already in process. For example, the EU accession process has generated an increase in foreign direct investment. This will help therefore labour law compliance. The main obstacles in the way of social inclusion, however, are unemployment levels, which are increasing with current demographic trends and the recent crisis. Young new entrants are particularly negatively affected. There are no easy solutions.

Implications for education are easy to depict. Turkey must move to twelve years of mandatory schooling. It must revamp and upgrade its non-functioning vocational education system. Longer the status quo, later the labour force participation (LFPR) response, especially for women. If current young cohort is not adequately schooled and the median education level increases at its current slow pace, the LFPR of women will stay low relative to Turkey's income group of countries. Of course, if the demand is not forthcoming, Turkey may simply be working towards creating more educated and unemployed persons. This requires a labour market conducive to job creation.

⁵ These are taken from the ILO (2007) publication on youth employment, which was prepared by this author.

One would therefore need education and labour market policies such as:

- i) A concerted effort for more mandatory years of basic and vocational education: Compulsory education should be moved up to twelve years. Higher education levels will improve female labour force participation rates and help combat social exclusion. Note that, future educational success must start with the pre-school system, which covers only a fraction of children in Turkey.
- ii) a demand oriented curriculum especially for vocational education,
- iii) An adult education drive prior to skills upgrading through Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs): This is the first stage of skills training for prime-aged (mostly rural-urban migrant) women and, to a lesser degree, men, to be followed by ALMP initiatives including job search assistance.
- iv) More active labour market policies including ones on entrepreneurship: Disabled individuals, women and the youth (first time entrants) are disadvantaged in the Turkish labour market. Youth targeted labour market programs may be implemented conditional on successful pilot projects' outcomes, which are to be designed, funded, and implemented by, for example, ILO, UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and the World Bank with government cooperation and support.
- v) Enhancing the institutional capacity and effectiveness of the Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR): It is not up to the gargantuan task of implementing the suggested ALMPs now.

As well as legislative action for:

- vi) less bureaucratic red tape, which is an obstacle to job creation,
- vii) Reasonable tax burdens on employment: Heavy statutory severance pay regulation must be reduced along with other labour market rigidities that stand in the way of job creation.
- viii) EU acquires to be gradually incorporated into Turkish employment regulations: Effective enforcement will help fight informal employment. As the tax base improves, funding for social expenditures will be more feasible.
- ix) The Turkish labour code to move from protecting the job to protecting the worker: Unemployment insurance should cover more workers and means-tested welfare programs must be gradually phased in. At the same time, legal obstacles hampering unionisation in the workplace must be removed.

And finally:

- x) Removal of two major institutional obstacles to ease women's entry into the labour market: The first one is 'monitoring' with the involvement of social partners (such as monitoring the provision of day care facilities), and the second one is flexible work arrangements which are in place now on paper but not necessarily in practice.
- xi) Social welfare measures for disadvantaged groups.

In line with the above policy recommendations, some specific short-term activities may be as follows.

For the preparation of a National Youth Employment component of a larger employment action plan,

- TURKSTAT may conduct a specific Labour Force Survey on youth employment, disaggregated by gender;
- In addition, an analysis of youth labour market needs in selected provinces could be done, which will result in the “Occupational Outlook” which is expected to become a periodic publication of ISKUR.

The outcomes of these initial activities should lead to the design and implementation of target group specific training programs. Pilots should be conducted first. Successful activities may then be implemented widely.

For enhancing the institutional capacity of ISKUR on the issue, the following needs to be done:

- Setting up and delivering training for ISKUR officials in selected provinces;
- Preparing regional workshops for selected partners and ISKUR on youth employment issues.

All proposals could be achievable but need considerable political will in terms of both institutional change and financing. All stand to succeed, although item iii, the adult education drive, is more appropriate as a starting point.

Involving NGOs and social partners in determining and implementing policy strategies may be Turkey’s best chance of success in implementing policy proposals.

References

- Akpınar, Aise and Hakan Ercan (2003). *Vocational and technical education system report: Turkey 2001*. Turin: European Training Foundation. (www.etf.eu.int and choose Turkey from the menu.)
- Behar, Cem (1999). "The general panorama of Turkey's population: 1923-2023," in C. Behar (ed.) *Turkey's Window of Opportunity: Demographic Transition and Its Implications*. Istanbul: TÜSIAD (Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association). Available at www.tusiad.org
- Bergemann, Annette and Gerard J. van den Berg (2006). "Active Labour Market Policy Effects for Women in Europe: A Survey," IZA discussion paper no. 2365 (October). www.iza.org
- Corradini, Milena, H. Fragoulis and M. Badescu (2004). *Achieving the Lisbon goals: the contribution of vocational education and training in Turkey*. Turin: European Training Foundation. (www.etf.eu.int and choose Turkey from the menu.)
- Dowrick, S. (1996). "Technological catch-up and diverging incomes: Patterns of economic growth 1960-1988," *Economic Journal*, 102 (May), pp. 600-610.
- Ercan, Hakan (2003). "Labour markets and expected demand for vocational education in Turkey: a demographic perspective." Paper presented at the International Conference on Innovation in Higher Education, Kiev (May).
- Ercan, Hakan (2005). "İstihdamsız Büyüme: Verimlilik Artışı mı, Yeni İş Yasası mı? Bir Ön Değerlendirme" (in Turkish). (Jobless Growth: Productivity Increase or the New Labour Law? A Preliminary Assessment.) Paper presented in the Turkish Economic Association's symposium, Mersin.
- Ercan, Hakan (2006). "Education and Employment: Turkish Labour Markets from the Supply Side." Paper presented at 'A Dialog on the Educational Systems in Turkey and Italy'. Ankara: Middle East Technical University and Italian Cultural Institute (March).
- Ercan, Hakan (forthcoming). "Flexicurity in Turkey." *European Employment Observatory Review*, (autumn 2006). Brussels: EU – DG Employment, SYSDem (System of National Labour Market Experts) Network.
- Ercan, Hakan (forthcoming). "Demographic Trends and Rural-to-Urban Migration in Turkey: Implications for the Labor Market and Education." Background chapter for the World Bank project on "Investing in Turkey's Next Generation: Making Youth Transition from School to Work Contribute to Turkey's Development."
- Garibaldi, Pietro and Giovanni L. Violante (2005). "The Employment Effects of Severance Payments with Wage Rigidities," *Economic Journal*, 115 (October), s. 799-832.
- Gürlel, Can (2004). *Türkiye'nin Kapısındaki Fırsat: 2025'e Doğru Nüfus, Eğitim ve Yeni Açılımlar (The Opportunity at Turkey's Gate: Population, Education and New Directions towards 2025)*. Istanbul: Eğitim Reformu Girişimi (Education Reform Initiative), Sabancı University.
- Kirdar, Murat and Sirin Saraçoğlu (2006). Middle East Technical University, manuscript.
- Lazear, Edward P. (1990). "Job security provisions and employment," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 105, pp. 699-726.
- Medeiros, Joao (2006). *Employment in Europe – The Flexicurity chapter*. Presentation of preliminary results to the meeting of SYSDem experts. Brussels (September).
- OECD (2006). *Turkey*. Paris.
- Rowland, Donald (2003). *Demographic Methods and Concepts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shorter, Fred (1995). "The crisis of population knowledge in Turkey," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, (Spring), vol. 12, pp. 1-33.
- Sapir, André (2005). "Globalisation and the reform of European social models." Brussels: Bruegel Policy Brief (November). (www.bruegel.org)
- Tasci, Mehmet and Aysit Tansel (2005). "Youth unemployment duration in Turkey," *METU Studies in Development*, 32(2), pp. 517-545.

TISK (monthly). *Isveren (Employer) (in Turkish)*. Ankara. (Available at www.tisk.org.tr)

TISK (Turkish Employer Unions Confederation) (2006). *2005 Labour Statistics and Labour Cost*. Ankara: TISK publication no. 277. (Available at www.tisk.org.tr)

Tunali, Insan (1996). "Labor market implications of the demographic window of opportunity," *Forum* (December).

Tunali, Insan, Cem Baslevant, Hakan Ercan and Orgül Demet Öztürk (2004). *Employment Background Study*. Torino: European Training Foundation.

Turkonfed (Turkish Confederation of Industrialists and Businessmen Associations) (2006). *Beceriler, Yeterlilikler ve Meslek Eğitimi: Politika Analizi ve Öneriler (Skills, Competencies, and Vocational Education: Policy Analysis and Proposals)* (in Turkish). Istanbul: Turkonfed. (Available at www.turkonfed.org)

Wilthagen, Ton, Frank Tros and Harm van Lieshout (2003). "Towards 'flexicurity': Balancing flexibility and security in EU member states." Invited paper prepared for the 13th World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association (IIRA), Berlin (September).

World Bank (2005). *Turkey: education sector study. Sustainable pathways to an effective, equitable and efficient education system for pre-school through secondary school education*. Report No. 32450-TU, available at www.worldbank.org.tr

World Bank (2006a). *Turkey Labour Market Study*. Document of the World Bank, report no. 33254.

World Bank (2006b). *Doing Business in 2006*. Washington DC.

Youth and the labour market in Sweden

By Peter Waara, Professor, Studies in Education, Culture and Media,
Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

Growing up in a labour intensive society where the vast majority of the adult population is members of the labour force means that access to a wage work is regarded as natural and also a necessary part of young peoples' way into adulthood. Images of wage work are communicated to children through their parents, among peers, through media and by attending compulsory education. At school children's educational interests are often mirrored against the possibility of getting a job after finishing primary or secondary education. Some educational pathways provide good labour market opportunities, others do not. Eventually a vision and idea of what kind of life the wage work represents merges into young peoples' mindsets. From this follows that values attached to a working life are established long before the individual has any direct experience of labour life and are linked to other dimensions as well (i.e. leaving the parental home and family formation). Without a proper job own housing and own family formation becomes postponed and also critically viewed. Shall young people accept the unemployment lines and the diminishing labour market opportunities or will they seek to find other ways (accepted or not) of making ends meet during their transition into adulthood? (Merton 1968) Today this transition is in most cases closely related to a wage work, which will provide the individual financial means, needed to fulfill dreams and expectations (Westerberg 2005).

Many young people experience difficulties in entering the labour market. Consequently young people move away from their parental home at a later stage in life than before and may also return home after a period of independent household. This could be labeled as a situation of "sporadic home leaving" or Yoyo-transition (Walther 2006). Some argue that in western societies (Europe and the US) a standard of "Nonfamily Living" has emerged, that is young adults living alone or with peers for a long time (Settersten et. al 2005). Alongside this young adults (women) are postponing family formation and delaying childbirth until they are around 30 years of age (Swedish conditions), which shall be compared to 1960-70 when women's average age at first birth was around 23 years (Ahrne et. al 2000). The societal consequences is crucial since deferred childbearing consequently mean that fewer children will be born, which eventually will result in a deficit of labour force in the future.

There are of course other factors than a gruesome youth labour market contributing to the prolongation of time spent as adolescent. Most young people (16–18 years) are enrolled in secondary education and half of each age group will attend studies at university and college after completing their grades at upper secondary school before the age of 25. During times of economic recession, such as in 1993-94 and 2009, a large share of youngsters in the age span 19–20 and 21–24 attend university education or likewise in order to "hibernate" or mitigate the effects of the economic recession and to enhance individual qualifications by adding up educational merits in the personal curriculum.

However, one cannot ignore a considerable difference between the image of working life as a natural and necessary part of adulthood and the reality young people face when trying to enter the wage labour society. With no jobs available entering adulthood becomes a difficult thing to manage for the individual and for the society.

Sweden as a working society

The image of *wage labour society* has a broad penetration into Swedish society (Furåker 1991). This image has been thoroughly emphasised during the last 10 years since the link between individuals at work (in labour) and their access to a social security system has been strengthened (unemployment insurance, health insurance and retirement pensions). Each day that the individual has an earned income will be important for the material welfare for long time. To explain this to an entire youth generation is, of course, an educational project in itself, nevertheless, a reality that runs the risk of leading to a welfare gap between generations, between those inside labour market and those outside (Vogel 2005).

Yet, there is substance behind the claim that Sweden is a wage labour society. The labour force⁶ participation is high in an international comparison and reached in the age span 16–64 years in 2008 (annual average) 81,8 percent (slightly higher for men than for women). The largest proportion of the workforce were found in the age span 35 to 44 years (92,7 percent) while the age group 15 to 19 years had a participation rate at 55,2 percent (Internet 1). In this latter group labour force participation rate is slightly higher for women than for men.

Over a period of 20 years labour force participation among young people have declined in Sweden as in many other countries. The largest reduction took place 1991-1994 during the severe economic recession. Parallel to the recession the Swedish educational system underwent a change and came to engage more pupils and students than ever before. The labour force decreased, in the age group 20–24 years, with almost 20 percent points in just a few years (especially among women). In terms of unemployment the crisis stroke young people considerably harder compared to the older population. In 1993 the youth unemployment reached levels not seen since the crisis during the 1930s, when 22 percent of all men and 14 percent of all women in the age group 20–24 years was registered as unemployed. Corresponding figures for the older labour force was 7 and 5 percent (SCB 2003 a, SCB 2003 b). The long-term effects of the 1990s economic recession were, however, that so-called "simpler" entrance jobs more or less disappeared from municipalities, government agencies and private entrepreneurs/companies (i.e. mail administration, janitor duties, cleaning and other service functions) (Åberg 2004). These were jobs the young and inexperienced labour force could utilize for getting access into the labour market and establish job related networks which could be beneficial later in life (see also Granovetter 1974). From the mid 1990s and onwards such jobs came to be outsourced to agency staff organizations or to companies specialized in such areas. The restructuring meant that the labour market thresholds became higher and young people found themselves competing with the more experienced labour force in finding their first job. From the recession during the first half of the 1990s and onwards, youth unemployment became permanent on high levels even in good times. In the midst of the economic boom in 2006/07 almost 10 percent of all young people in the workforce (16–24 years) were registered as unemployed (SCB 2007).

Today, at the fall of 2009, youth unemployment in Sweden has reached levels, which are comparable to the situation in the 1930s. Recent statistics reveals a picture where unemployment figures in July 2009 reached 7,9 percent for the entire population (increase since 2008 with 2,1 percent) and 20,7 percent in the age span 15–24 years (increase since 2008 with 4,2 percent).

⁶ The labour force comprises all working people (employed or self employed), all who are registered at labour market agencies and is unemployed (unemployed) or are on parental leave or sick leave from work. From October 2007 the category "full-time students who also seek employment" are included in the labour force and integrated in the group unemployed. Previously these were included in the category "not in workforce" (Internet 2).

Among the youngest (15–19 years) unemployment level reached 28,4 percent in July 2009. The labour force participation rate decreased by a total number of 126 000 which represents a decrease with 2,5 percent (Internet 2). Since the young ones aspiring for a labour market position (15–19 years) in many cases also lack formal educational qualification, the long term effects of being excluded is hard to estimate. Experiences from the previous recession in the 1990s with extraordinary high levels of youth unemployment reveal, however, a pattern where many of those who suffered long-term unemployment had severe problems getting access to the labour market after the crisis and have never entered a regular employment.

This development should not lead us to believe that setting up an own enterprise is a way out of this dilemma. According to a survey from 2007 in the midst of an economical boom as much as 75–80 percent of 18–30 year old adolescents and young adults claim that they can imagine themselves as being self-employed (Fölster et. al. 2007). Just around half of the population in the same age span claim that within 10 years they will start their own enterprise. In the end around 5 percent operate their own business. The gradual shift from *can imagine* through *believe they will do* into the harsh reality of those *actually operating* their own enterprise means that most people end up as wage workers regardless of interests and ambitions held during younger years.

Concluding discussion

The current youth unemployment situation in Sweden is gruesome as it is in many other countries. Combating youth unemployment is an important societal issue due to the important integrative dimensions associated to labour market access (Waara 2007). There are several different factors related to youth unemployment. Lack of jobs due to economic recession in combination with structural issues such as shortage of labour force in certain areas and a surplus of skilled labourers in other areas are two dimensions discussed. Another factor is related to the social phenomena of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, functional disability and age.

Here we find a two-edged problem: firstly the individuals own apprehension of personal capacities and, secondly, employers prejudices against young people, disabled, women/males and ethnic minorities. Such problems enhances the current youth unemployment situation and we find the most severe disintegrative problems in areas where the rate of immigrants are high, educational achievement is low and also among people who have some form of visible disability. Initiatives aimed at overcoming such prejudices and discrimination is seemingly rare, but should be encouraged in activities aimed at combating youth unemployment.

High unemployment rates among the youngest workforce alongside a social security system which is closely linked to previous employment, leads to a situation where the social security resources becomes distributed according to a track-record of previous labour market access. Without such access the distribution of material wealth becomes not only linked to a division between those lacking various forms of resources such as educational background (often associated to social class), but also related to generation. Previous crises reveals a pattern important to bear in mind when analysing the current situation, namely: individuals who are excluded from the labour market initially also runs a higher risk of being excluded at a later stage and this jeopardizes the personal well-being (i.e. self-confidence) as well as the social, material and political integration into society for these individuals. Sooner or later this will question the legitimacy of the system since, among other things; the welfare systems provide a security for those with a previous engagement in the wage work, rather than being optimized for those that risk labour market exclusion. Politicians and other decision-makers haven't been able to create structures adjusted to the younger generations needs and skills (Berggren 2008), rather the welfare system have been more or less oriented towards those already in the labour force. Since a large proportion of young adults are lacking job experience, they are running the risk of being marginalised not only from work but also from the large bulk of societal goods available for those in the labour force. One way of handling the integrative dimension connected to labour market issues is activities aimed at the *individual*, his or her *group association* and *system integration*

(developing structural conditions adjusted to the particular mindsets the young generation inhibit). A common denominator for success is sustainability and activities aimed directly towards individuals rather than aiming at systemic intervention. Enhancing the individuals' capacity, self-confidence and 'marketability' on the educational and labour markets, will eventually also alter existing negative group associations (social marginalisation) and will probably also alter the images and prejudices employers might have of young peoples' capacity in general.

References

- Ahrne, G., Roman, C. & Franzén, M. (2000). *Det sociala landskapet. En sociologisk beskrivning av Sverige från 50-tal till 90-tal*. Göteborg: Korpen.
- Berglund, Leif (2008). Upprättad för livet eller inrättad i ledet?: en studie av sju utvecklingspartnerskap inom Equalprogrammet. Lic.-avh. Luleå : Luleå tekniska univ., 2008.
- Furåker, B. (red.) (1991). *Arbetets villkor*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Fölster, Stefan – Sekund, Mikael (2007) *Alla kan bli bättre. Så skapar du det bästa företagsklimatet*. Stockholm: Svenskt näringsliv.
- Granovetter, Mark S. (1974). *Getting a job: a study of contacts and careers*. Cambridge, Mass.: SCB (2003a). *Sysselsättning och arbetslöshet. 1975 – 2002*. Statistiska centralbyrån, avdelningen för arbetsmarknads- och utbildningsstatistik.
- Internet 1 www.scb.se/arbetsmarknad
- Internet 2 (2009). *Pressmeddelande från SCB 2009-08-27 09:30 Nr 2009:126*
- Merton, Robert K. (1968). *Social theory and social structure*. 1968 enl. ed. New York: Free press.
- SCB (2003b). *Ungdomars etablering. Generationsklyftan 1980-2003*. Levnadsförhållanden no 108.
- SCB (2007) *Pressmeddelande från SCB. 2007-06-20*.
- Settersten JR., Richard A – Frank F. Furstenberg JR. and Rubén G Rumbaut (eds) (2005) *On the Frontier to Adulthood. Theory, Research and Public Policy*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- Waara, Peter (2007). Utanför arbetslivet i arbetssamhället. www.ntglar.se
- Walther, A. (2006). "Regulating Youth transitions: trends, dilemmas and variations across different 'regimes' in Europe" I *Participation in Transition. Motivation of Young Adults in Europe for Learning and Working* (eds Andreas Wlather, Manuela du Bois-Reymond and Andy Biggart). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag. Berglund, Leif (2008).
- Westerberg, A. (2005). *Becoming an adult. Living conditions and attitudes among Swedish youth*. Umeå: Sociologiska institutionen.
- Vogel, J. (2005). *Ungdomars etablering: Generationsklyftan 1980–2003*. Örebro: SCB SCB 2003.
- Åberg, R. (2004). "Vilka jobb har skapats på den svenska arbetsmarknaden de senaste decennierna?" ur *Ekonomisk Debatt* no 4, 2004. s.37-46.

Young people in and outside the labour market in Turkey and Sweden

– Documentation of a collaboration between two countries focusing on young people and the labour market

By Helena Gillinger, Journalist

Introduction

Within the framework of the cooperation project on youth affairs between Turkey and Sweden, one of the components of cooperation is about young people and the labour market. During three seminars Swedish and Turkish participants exchanged experiences and ideas on the area, and especially on the topic “best practices regarding young people and the labour market”.

The participants were all in one way or another concerned by issues that involve young people and the labour market. From Sweden, representatives from the municipalities of Kiruna and Kristinehamn participated together with different NGOs in the field of labour market. Turkey was represented by participants from four different regions; the Black Sea region, Central Anatolia region, Aegean region and Eastern Anatolia region. Also, representatives from the Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Organisation (KOSGEB), as well as Turkish Employment Organisation (ISKUR), who are the state organisations who deal with labour market issues, were present. The participants also included the two authorities The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs and the Youth Services Department in Turkey.

The meetings were:

- Seminar on young people and the labour market in Ankara, November 2008.
- Seminar on cooperation between schools and businesses to combat youth unemployment in Ankara, March 2009.
- Seminar on young people with disabilities on the labour market in Kristinehamn, April 2009.

From school to work and young people with disabilities

The overall objective of the labour market component is to combat youth unemployment. As unemployment among young people is higher than in other age groups in both countries, this work is of great importance. The situation varies between regions in the two countries and some social groups have fewer opportunities to find employment than others. In this perspective, both countries’ participants need to acquire new ideas to attract young people and help them to find their place on the labour market. The purpose was to discuss and change experiences about methods used to achieve this, but also to define concepts and acquire knowledge relevant for combating youth unemployment.

The second seminar focused on investigating how schools and employers could cooperate to fight youth unemployment. One way of doing this is to help young people to get in touch with presumptive employers. It is also important to give information and knowledge to young people in order to make them more attractive to employers and to make sure the needs of local enterprises match courses given at schools and universities.

During the third workshop opportunities for young people with disabilities to find work was looked into. This is a group that often faces discrimination, and there is sometimes a lack of interest from the society to benefit from the potential of this group. Therefore there are few opportunities for those who are young and disabled to realize their dreams and intentions in the labour market. During this workshop strengths and opportunities for disabled young people were identified.

Youth policy in national contexts

Sweden and Turkey are two countries with very different conditions. Until not long ago Sweden was the world's leading welfare state, an industrial and service oriented society with traditionally low unemployment figures. The population is nine million and the age of the population is relatively evenly distributed in the age groups. Turkey has 72 million inhabitants. Twelve million of those are between 15–25 years of age and it is estimated that two thirds of the population is under the age of 30. Turkey has a mixed economy of traditional agriculture, industry and commerce. Development disparities between urban and rural areas are significant, as are the geographical differences. Western Turkey is highly developed with a European standard, while the south-east part is marked by poverty.

The distinct difference between an individual-based approach in Sweden and a patriarchal family-based approach in Turkey was expressed several times during discussions at the seminars. "Is it not inappropriate to encourage young people to leave their families and traditions?", one of the Turkish participants asked during Swedish sociologist Peter Waaras's lecture on growing up and becoming independent in Sweden. No one answered the question. Society having a dominant position vis-à-vis the family is a rather new phenomenon in Turkey and it is clear that the issue is highly controversial. But it is also clear that the western model, with a focus on the individual rather than on the family, is starting to get a foothold in Turkey.

Reservations towards the Swedish individual focus concerning older people were also raised. Older people in Sweden feel lonely; it is not rare that they live by themselves without family helping them.

Youth policy in Turkey

In Turkey, youth policy is not particularly well developed. Young people are not often defined as a separate group with special conditions and needs and the cooperation between various social institutions on matters relating to young people is inadequate. There are specially developed national programs for young people as a category in the areas of training and abuse prevention. The Turkish constitution thus dictates that:

- The state should provide training/development for young people
- The state should protect young people from drugs, alcohol, gambling and ignorance.

However, youth policy issues are changing rapidly, along with many other aspects of Turkish society at the moment. One step in that direction is to separate youth affairs from sports affairs. These two issues currently sort under the General Directorate of Youth and Sports, but a proposal has been submitted to the Parliament to change this in order to enhance young people's status. The Youth Services Department (YSD) is the part of the authority that deals with young people and it is the only institution in Turkey, which has a national mission to encourage young people and stimulate activities involving young people. Currently efforts for young people are generally more focused on leisure issues. Through different programmes and projects YSD aims to create activities that strengthen the development of criteria for youth work and youth policy. There are NGOs for young people in Turkey, but there is little cooperation between these organisations and the authorities, and so far, there is no umbrella organisation that can bring together people from different NGOs.

The family is still the foundation of the Turkish society. The welfare system is poorly developed and the overall responsibility for young people lies with the family. It is estimated that as much as 40 percent of adolescents and young adults are outside the education and labour market systems. Many of these are girls and young women who stay at home with their parents waiting to get married. Another part of the 40 percent is disabled young people, who have great difficulty entering the labour market. There is no system in place to reach these groups with initiatives that help them enter the labour market. However there are some successful local initiatives.

Youth policy in Sweden

In Sweden young people have been a well-defined group for more than fifteen years. The municipalities are responsible for everyone under the age of 20 and there is a fairly clear picture of what young people devote themselves to. Social control is well developed in Sweden and there are comprehensive population statistics.

On the one hand Swedish youth policy is characterized by the focus on people between 13 and 25 years old. The Swedish youth policy makes a distinction between policies for young people and policies for children. Swedish youth policy is also broader than it is in many other countries, as it addresses many different areas for example labour market, education, and leisure time.

On the other hand, Swedish youth policy is highly connected with the post-war welfare policies in Scandinavia. It is a policy that is general and radical as it wants to give all young people the opportunity to establish themselves as independent adults.

A third feature of Swedish youth policy is the desire to see young people as a resource and to view this time of life as valuable. Swedish youth policy is one of the most developed in the world. It has been valid for more than 15 years and the overall aim is that all young people should have real access to influence and welfare. Although youth policy with a transversal approach is relatively new, there is a well-developed structure in place for gathering knowledge and measuring progress in the youth policy field and there are well-established efforts to follow up the various measures. But when it comes to the actual implementation of youth policy at local level in the municipalities there are still improvements to be made.

In addition, Sweden has been active in designing the European youth policy, which creates good conditions for the country to link Turkey closer to the European cooperation.

Labour market and education

Both Sweden and Turkey are countries with significant unemployment, particularly among young people, where Sweden has poor statistics from a European perspective. In some Turkish cities unemployment among young people is over 20 percent. These figures, however, are uncertain. In Turkey right now there exist no policy to make every adult citizen self-sufficient. The family is the foundation of Turkish society and a large family can sometimes live on several small salaries. In such a structure, several family members might have other functions than salaried work, without being part of the unemployment statistics. In Sweden, each adult is expected to be a part of the labour market, and thus to have their own income. Society, not family, is the load-bearing structure of the country.

Education and job opportunities in Turkey

In Turkey there are two different ways for a young person to get a job. One is the standard education system, with primary school, secondary school and universities. The other is an apprenticeship system of vocational training centres, where one can learn various crafts such as carpentry or painting or acquire computer skills. Job opportunities are possible and within reach for people who choose either of these routes. There is also a type of public centre in some towns where young people who have ended up outside the system, mostly girls who remain at home waiting for marriage, can learn a handicraft that can result in some income.

A lot of people are, however, entirely outside the school system and widespread illiteracy is a reality in Turkey. The country has eight years of compulsory education, but it is estimated that half a million children leave school before the age of fourteen every year. Of those who go to higher education it is estimated that 75 percent go to the theoretical colleges and 25 percent go to polytechnics.

Education and job opportunities in Sweden

In Sweden, the vast majority of young people concludes a twelve-year-long elementary education while the apprenticeship system is poorly developed. Sweden has a nine-year compulsory school but in practice it is assumed that Swedish students attend school for at least twelve years. This is today considered to be a prerequisite to stand a chance on the labour market. For those who do not complete secondary education job opportunities are limited considerably. In recent decades, the Swedish focus has been to get as many people as possible to undertake higher studies, an ambition which, however, is changing. The number of alternative ways to get work has increased in recent years. An apprenticeship course at secondary level has recently been introduced in Sweden but it has proved difficult to arouse interest among employers, who are interested in skilled workers. The apprenticeships available at the employment agencies as part of various employment programs are aimed at young adults between 20 and 24 years with a lack of basic education.

Employment agencies in the two countries

In the description of different activities the Swedish group constantly returned to the individual's role and rights of the individual. This was not least reflected in a discussion about the employment agencies in both countries. In Turkey, the employment agency mainly functions as a kind of matchmaking service, linking workers with companies, while in Sweden, at least in theory, the activities of the employment agency are based on each job applicant's need to find a job that is suitable.

"We look into what kind of skills and knowledge the businesses are in need of and try to find the right people," said Hüseyin Gökmen, employment expert at the employment agency, ISKUR, in Ankara.

But employment agencies are under development in Turkey. During the ongoing cooperation with Sweden, and partly as a result of this, the idea of a more detailed and separated national database of young people's job applicants formed in terms of gender, age, disability etc. A web page has also been developed that provides information about ISKUR's services.

"The number of job applicants who register will increase rapidly now that we have a web site that provides information on this opportunity," said Hüseyin Gökmen.

The web site that contains information about ISKUR's services has existed since early 2009 and much of the work that ISKUR carries out is relatively new. The Department is not as well known and established with the general public as the employment agency in Sweden, but it is developing rapidly and plays an increasingly important role.

In Sweden, the principle is that all people between 15 and 64 years old who do not have severe obstacles due to disabilities or are students should be in salaried employment. The Swedish employment service's aim is to get all registered job applicants into employment. "The goal is that every unemployed person gets a job," said Maria Nyman representing the Swedish employment services. "It should not matter who you are or where you live. Employment agencies must have the same standard throughout the country and everyone has the right to equally good help."

Special efforts are also made to help young people to find work. As examples of such efforts Maria Nyman mentioned a website aimed at young people and specific financial incentives for employers hiring people under the age of 25. This can, for example, be a reduced general payroll tax or that parts of the salaries are paid using public funds. The Swedish employment agency also works to motivate young jobseekers. It's all about instilling confidence in each individual, to help each and everyone to find his or her place in professional life. In Turkey, the situation is slightly different, although the economic benefits are also provided here to employers who employ young people.

"We have a lot of courses aimed at people who have difficulty finding a job," said Hüseyin Gökmen.

As a good example he mentioned a cooperation with UNICEF, where young women who left the countryside for urban areas are trained to be secretaries or hairdressers and a project where children from poor families receive help with their basic education.

"It is a way to keep them off the streets," he said. "But the long-term goal is for them to be able to enter the labour market."

When it comes to legislation for the disabled young people on the labour market, Turkey sets a good example. The law requires, inter alia, that four percent of public employees and three percent of those working in private companies must have a disability. The only problem is that too few people know about it. Here ISKUR has an important role in supporting individuals to claim their rights vis-à-vis employers. For a person with a disability to be able to demand his or her right to work, he or she must register with the ISKUR and obtain a statement from a special insurance doctor. Only then will the person then be able to assert their rights. However, there is no functioning national or regional structure in place to disseminate this awareness in Turkey and only a small fraction of people with disabilities are registered with the ISKUR.

"There is of course information about the regulations on the ISKUR website," said Abdulkadir Yanici, who works for the rights of people with disabilities at ISKUR. "But that is no help if you don't know that there is a website or if you don't have access to a computer."

Financial penalties that are quite noticeable are given to those employers that do not fill the quota of disabled employees at their company. Fines are collected by the ISKUR and the money is conveyed to organizations working for the rights of the disabled. The rules, however, only apply to companies with more than 50 employees.

Coaching and entrepreneurship

In Sweden and Turkey alike there are a variety of routes that young people can take to gain a foothold in the labour market. Alternative courses and labour market projects were presented through lectures and study tours during the seminars. Information on the Turkish apprenticeship system and visits to various forms of combined training- and apprenticeship centres aroused great interest among the Swedish participants. The Turkish delegation also included representatives from various youth centres, institutions that have an important social and public role in the country's various provinces. Although youth centres are not directly related to the labour market, many youth leaders and other professions contribute to facilitating a positive entry into professional life for young people. One might also say that the leaders at the youth centres have a coaching function, although it is not directly related to their work. From the Swedish

delegation a number of labour market projects characterized by individualistic and coaching approaches were presented. Empowerment was a constant maxim in the Swedish reasoning. Empowerment is a method that aims to strengthen any individual or group in order to give persons access to the greatest possible well-being and use of their own potential.

Different views on entrepreneurship

One interesting difference became evident in a discussion on entrepreneurship. It was Mattias Mellgren from Swedish Communicare who talked about his views that all people are potential entrepreneurs. All you have to do is help them to develop that side of themselves. He gave an example, giving young people at a school the chance to make their own study schedule and choose their own schoolbooks. This, he believes, is an example of how initiative and action can be encouraged if everyone is given responsibility.

"An entrepreneur is a person who can see opportunities and exploit them," he said. "It is our task to help everyone to see their potential."

The participants from KOSGEB had a completely different opinion on the definition of entrepreneurship. "We are working to support entrepreneurs," Hakan Söğüt said. "But to do that we need to believe in a company. Far from everyone has what it takes. It is a spirit, something you are born with. No one can learn to be entrepreneurial."

This difference in the interpretation of the word entrepreneur was telling for the different attitudes that sometimes became apparent between the groups, obviously rooted in the different situations that exist in the Turkish and Swedish society. The most distinctive difference was the Swedish individualistic approach that puts the focus on each person's needs, desires and abilities, while the Turkish stance is more about collectivist solutions and the needs of the businesses. But this difference is far from absolute. Several Turkish examples addressed the individual's needs and the implementation of the Swedish models does not always succeed. There is also a big difference between different municipalities.

Ways to access the labour market

Below we present some information and different ways to access the labour market that were presented during the various seminars.

Turkey

- In the province of Zonguldak young people got access to the labour market through the construction of a recreation area. This was done in collaboration with the forest authorities, which released land for the project, and the municipality which contributed with materials and some labour.
- The Turkish universities organize career days on a regular basis and they also provide training opportunities to link students closer to the labour market. Gazi University arranged an extra semester in the middle of the summer when students could try their hand at various jobs and had the chance to make contact with employers.
- The General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity cooperated with ISKUR and KOSGEB in a nationwide project aimed at helping young graduates from poor families to get work..
- At Erkunt vocational centre young people are trained in advanced technology. Two types of programs are offered at the centre, one of which is an apprenticeship programme and the other is an advanced course for selected students. These are mainly selected from families with limited financial resources that don't normally have the opportunity to have their children attend higher education. Teachers will suggest suitable students and the course is carried out in collaboration

with a German organization. Students who undertake this training are very attractive on the labour market and they always get in contact with an employer during their studies. The responsible authority for the school is the Ankara Chamber of Industry and the school has large resources in terms of equipment and educators. The vast majority of the students are boys, although some girls also participate.

- Yenimahalle Public Training centre is a training centre for, mainly, women and girls. The aim is for them to learn simple handicraft or develop a hobby like sewing or the like, and achieve a good enough standard to be able to contribute to the family economy.
- In the province of Zonguldak disabled young people have had the opportunity to work and train in various types of handicraft. However, this kind of work gives very little income and can only serve as a small addition to an entire family's livelihood. Money from this kind of work can also be put into funding for the benefit of disabled young people.
- The Public Education Centres provides a large variety of non-formal education with a focus on people who are outside the regular education system. Both hobby courses and vocational training are offered at these centres.
- ISKUR offers apprenticeship courses. The applicant has to be 15 years old and must have finished school. ISKUR supplies food and transport costs for the trainees, and gives a salary to the educators. The trainee also gets a small salary. The apprenticeship system in general is very developed in Turkey. There are several varieties, one of which is the professional centre and school where young people who found an apprenticeship can receive additional training one day a week in combination with practices in companies. These are run by government in close cooperation with the labour market. The centres and schools are active in every province of Turkey.

Sweden

- Klivet is a local service in Södertälje helping young unemployed people to find work. It started as a state financed project in 2003, gave very good results and is now a regular activity in the social services. Success factors have included to put the individual in focus and to work in teams with different professions, coaches, project officers, pedagogy- and administrative personnel, which collaborate to get the best tailor-made solution for each individual.
- Communicare is an organization that works with young people and entrepreneurship. Coaching is one of the foundations of their work and the approach is very individual-based, it is important to take advantage of each individual's ability, desire and dreams. There are special projects and training for young people who for various reasons find it difficult to gain a foothold on the labour market.
- The labour market project Basta is a cooperative that works with rehabilitation of drug addicts through entrepreneurship. The idea is to focus not on knowledge but on the individual's desire. The project has proved very successful and is aimed not just at drug addicts but has also opened up to other groups that have difficulty getting a foothold on the labour market, such as newly arrived immigrants and youth.

Labour market for young people with disabilities

During the seminar, inputs were given by representatives of Handisam, the Swedish authority that works with issues concerning the disabled, as well as by a representative of a local organization for the disabled in Turkey, and by Peter Waara, Professor in sociology.

In his lecture Peter Waara took his starting point in the municipality of Kristinehamn in Sweden and focused on the disabled, but his reasoning must be said to be applicable across the board. "What have they done in Kristinehamn?" he asked. "Well, they have an organization that sees the potential in individuals and they have activities that individuals and organizations find meaningful."

The conclusions from Peter Waara were: Strengthen the individual = empowerment, which has been a keyword in the Swedish activities.

"This is extremely important if you want to make a change in society," Peter Waara said. "By enabling people to develop as individuals among other people you strengthen the individual, which in turn strengthens the group and the group is not just the disabled but everyone that belong to the group, both disabled and non disabled people."

"When this happens, we abandon the idea that an unemployed disabled person is to be served best solutions instead of having empowerment. The individual along with a group leads to a structural change, which can include legislation." Peter Waara claims that if you don't start with the individual you can't achieve real change.

Laws in Turkey and in Sweden

The legislation in Turkey that demands, among other things, that four percent of public employees and three per cent of those working in a private company must have a disability, is clear. The only problem is that too few people know about this right. Although ISKUR does what it can to spread the information on legislation, it reaches far from everyone who could make use of it. There is no nationwide organization that takes care of disabled young people's interests in the labour market.

In Sweden, a law governs the rights of the disabled in professional life. The law is for rights that guarantees that people with severe and lasting disabilities have good living conditions; that they receive the help they need in daily life and that they can influence what kind of support and what services they receive. The aim is that the individual should have the opportunity to live their life like everyone else.

Youth policy in the European Union

Turkey is a candidate country to the European Union and Sweden is a relatively new member nation. This fact is highly relevant in terms of the cooperation, which is taking place in the light of European integration and EU guidelines. One of the intentions of the whole project is to help Turkey to align its youth policy to the EU. Sweden has been active in the formation of the European youth policy, which creates conditions for the country to guide the Turkish partner into the European cooperation. The EU dimension of the cooperation was highlighted during the seminar in Kristinehamn in Sweden. Susanne Zander from the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs participated with a presentation on the EU's employment policies from a youth perspective. Presentations included development of the common employment policy, particularly the Youth Pact, which is part of the employment strategy in Europe. The European Social Fund was presented, which is used in Europe to develop best practices in a special area. A compilation of methods that help young people from unemployment to employment is on its way in the European Social Fund project Youth.

Until now, European youth policy consists of two parts, the European Youth Pact and the White Paper on Youth. The European Youth Pact is a political instrument adopted by the European Council in 2005 as part of the revised Lisbon strategy. The Youth Pact aims to improve education, mobility, employment and social inclusion of young people, while helping to achieve a good balance and possibility to combine work and family. The White Paper on Youth was adopted in November 2001 which made the EU Member States increase cooperation in four youth priority areas: participation, information, voluntary activities and better understanding and knowledge of young people. During 2009 the youth policy framework within the European Union is revised and updated for the coming years.

The Lisbon strategy and the guidelines on employment policy is in existence since 2005 and have their starting points in the following:

- The world economy is going global
- Knowledge is becoming an increasingly important success factor – well-educated citizens
- Europe's economy needs to be modernized – EU economy rules were outdated and needed to be modernized
- EU Member States are more integrated with each other. National employment policies are not sufficient.

In the Swedish as well as in the Turkish delegation there is a small, but growing, awareness of the regulatory framework and the opportunities that the EU offers. Several training courses and labour market projects in both countries have exchanges with the EU in various ways.

Regional and local dimension

Turkey

In Turkey the municipalities have a limited role related to youth issues while the main part of youth policy and youth work are carried out in the provinces, headed by the provincial directorates of youth and sport. The provinces have more of a political and administrative function. There are a lot of regional initiatives to get young people be a part of the labour market, but there is also a national policy designed to offset inequalities between provinces and create common objectives. Provincial characteristics are taken into account and efforts are adapted to different local needs. It is also largely a question of individual players, of enthusiasts who run projects and personnel resources in the form of dedicated civil servants or politicians.

KOSGEB is a central organization that works with labour market projects around the country and with the promotion of various businesses. KOSGEB has the comprehensive knowledge, research and awareness of the different regional needs.

"It sounds good that the regions develop in their own fields. But won't this make permanent the loss of investment if they must continue with businesses that aren't profitable", said Hakan Söğüt, representing KOSGEB at the seminars held in Ankara. "We assess the potential of an area and we support only the start-up projects, not the established businesses. If they cannot support themselves it's likely that there is no need for such a business. There are differences between the East and West in Turkey. We focus on equality and look to the local dynamics and we find different models to bridge the inequalities between regions. We contact the various stakeholders in the regions, within industries and schools."

He gave an example of an industry where not long ago crafts were made with very primitive methods. Now it has, with support from KOSGEB, developed into a modern and nation-leading industry.

KOSGEB have the opportunity to help with research and information, and they can also support campaigns to highlight a company. KOSGEB also has a number of other tools to support the local Turkish business community including the local/regional level. Microloans, training courses and counselling are some of their activities. Infrastructure is an important part of the business as well. And extra resources are invested in deprived areas like the south-eastern region.

"But it is not only the south eastern parts that are disadvantaged, a part of the Black Sea region is also weakly developed," said associate professor Hakan Ercan, Turkish labour market researcher, who gave a good overview of Turkish society and the labour market.

Sweden

The Swedish system is much more developed and interconnected, although here too there are differences between municipalities and parts of the country, not least in the case of successful labour market projects. The municipality of Kristinehamn had been chosen to participate in the cooperation specifically because of its successful youth policy, which means that young people's needs permeate all decisions and choices in the municipality.

"And that means all young people," said Berndt Jendry, who is head of development in the municipality. The goal is that everyone should be part of the open labour market, a disability should not be an obstacle here."

To make use of young people's power, Berndt Jendry said, is a long-term investment for society.

"Investing in young people results in growth for society."

He continues: "In Kristinehamn a strategic action plan for implementation a model of influence and youth policy has been created. Part of this is lack of prestige and a youth council with real influence. "

Success factors

During the different seminars success factors have been identified for successful labour market projects. This is a compilation of Swedish and Turkish views:

- Cooperation – such as between authorities and local initiatives, NGOs and local institutions or EU-programs and national/local organizations.
- Empowerment – a method that aims to strengthen an individual or group in order to give every person access to the greatest possible well-being and use of their own potential. In the Swedish labour market projects this method was frequently used and it is considered very successful.
- Special efforts to capture young people that for social or other reasons find it difficult to gain a foothold on the labour market pay off. This benefits individuals and society alike.
- Opportunities to link students closer to the labour market.
- We value the individual's life.
- The State's commitment is not to legislate but to ensure that law is observed.
- Awareness among citizens, that they know what rights they have.
- Identification of needs.
- Good cooperation between the various offices and organizations. Trust instead of suspicion and competition.
- Open policy. Transparency.
- Analysis of individuals' needs and desires.
- Good methods (for example, that barriers for disabled people should be eliminated, rehabilitation opportunities are target-oriented and personalized).
- Focus on solutions.
- Individual efforts and enthusiasm in addition to group work.
- Not just a system that works and then control function, but a system that follows up and monitors its performance in accordance with its intentions.
- People in focus.
- The municipality's strategic vision to develop work pervades all activities.
- Humour, kindness and lack of prestige pervades activities.
- Pride among the participants.
- Well-developed methods adapted to activities and individuals, easy to change practices if necessary.
- The young people are allowed to be involved in the activities, they are encouraged to speak up and criticize.
- Organization among students/participants/young people. Workplace meetings, student clubs etc.
- The municipality's goodwill and support.
- Common and clear objectives.
- Enthusiasts, the right person in the right place, passionate commitment among the staff.

Ideas for further cooperation

Participants had new ideas to use in their future work. The good results of the Turkish apprenticeship system sparked new ideas for a system which had previously been common in Sweden, with apprenticeship training as an alternative way to skilled work. It is also very unusual for employers to recruit workers directly from the schools in Sweden the way they do in Turkey. The Turkish participants have been influenced by the more established Swedish Employment Service, which reaches most of the Swedish jobseekers and has high ambitions for securing employment for everyone. The individualistic approach also impressed and inspired several Turkish participants. Examples of ideas for further cooperation were:

- Partners working with disability issues would like to work further with common methods for inclusion of persons with disabilities throughout society.
- Youth exchanges with focus on profession and education. Young people should be involved in the work from the beginning by participating in focus groups. A first step is to seek funding from the EU.
- The employment agencies in the two countries will work together on service towards young people. They could review the methods used and the various authorities and stakeholders.
- Collaboration on projects to combat unemployment. Development of methods to use in everyday life, providing the opportunity for young people's own initiatives. The project will include young people and youth workers.
- Exchange of volunteers through EU Youth in Action and EVS program (European Voluntary Service).
- Collaboration between municipalities and regions on how to get disabled people into employment, through visits to enterprises and organizations in the other country.
- Three Turkish cities would like to cooperate on culture, education and employment for disabled people, with inspiration from the Swedish example.

© Ungdomsstyrelsen 2009

editor **Lotta Jarvenius Rössner and Vildan Görbil**

review **Space 360**

cover **Christián Serrano**

distribution: **Sweden and Turkey**

website Sweden **www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/publikationer**

website Turkey **www.ghdb.gov.tr**



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL
BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS
www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se

