

Civic Participation Among Turkish Youth

Begüm Çoban
Psy 273



*“We cannot always build a future for
our youth, but we can always build our
youth for the future.”*

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Human Development Report by UNDP Turkey, 2008

State of Youth Survey

- 3,322 young individuals aged 15-24
- 12 different regions
- 24 focus group meetings with young people
- Face to face interviews
- nearly 40 academics and experts, at least 35 public institutions and more than 100 volunteer young people contributed
- more than 5,000 e-mails were reviewed

Results

- Different Levels of Participation:
 - economic participation
 - political participation
 - social participation
 - cultural participation
- Creative new ideas + power!
- The youth in Turkey  Lack of participation
- Reasons;
 - economic,
 - attitudinal
 - cultural
 - political factors

- Arguments:

1-Dynamic impact that early childhood experience

2-The role that open, responsive, responsible and accountable institutions play in advanced democracies

- The problem of young generations;

-family environment

-closest social circles

-insufficient economic resources



What can be done?

- Public funds
- Institutions and administrations' role
- Necessity for a mentality change
 - 35 people aged between 30-35, elected 2002-2007 parliament of 550 deputies
 - 19 people after the 2007 elections
- Change in the youth's perception of politics
 - “more reliable”, “more transparent”, “more honest”



Can civil society be an adequate channel for youth participation?

 While the youths' distrust towards politics seems to be rather widespread, civil society can offer some adequate participation tools for the youth.

- A 19-year-old girl:

“I expect solutions to problems only from outside the State. I also don't expect my father to solve problems because I cannot change him anymore. People can succeed in changing certain things by helping each other and making them feel valuable because the person who helps will become more social, she will feel that she is not useless and will spread this. This will have a chain effect”.

- Positive impacts of volunteerism and youth services
- 4% of young people who participated in the *State of Youth Survey* are members of NGO's.

46% of these are either university students or graduates.

- The important role of universities

Significant role of NGO's and the future

- NGOs transform youths into enterprising individuals.
- They should create social activity areas free of charge + open various courses to poor youth.
- Messages should reach not only the youth but also their parents.



References

The National Human Development Report, 2008, by the United Nations Development Programme in Turkey

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION 😊

