

Achieving the Lisbon Goal: **The Contribution of Vocational Education and Training Systems**

Country Report: Turkey

Author: Ms Milena Corradini (ETF country manager for Turkey) and
Mr Haralabos Fragoulis with contributions from the Turkish
National Observatory

This report is one of a series of European country reports. It has been written to support a larger report: Achieving the Lisbon Goal: the contribution of VET, prepared by the Lisbon-to-Copenhagen-to-Maastricht Consortium for the European Commission. This report is not intended as an official view. But rather independent insight into specific aspects of National VET systems in Europe.



Theme 1: Progress of national VET systems towards meeting the challenges of Lisbon.

1. Strategies and barriers for improving the status, flexibility and attractiveness of Initial VET (IVET)

The demographic feature of the population, which accounts for almost 70 million people, out of which 20 million are in the age cohort 0-14 years, represents the key challenge for Turkey.

The Turkish State Institute of Statistics has made some projections up to the year 2020 and the results are that 40 million will be in the working age 14-44 and 10 million in the age cohort 45-64. This implies that almost 70% of the population will be in the working age. This represents a unique opportunity for Turkey both for the economic and social development, provided that there is a substantial increase in human resources development through adequate investment in education and training.

At the moment the situation is the following:

- total employment rate is 45,6% while average EU is 62,9%;
- unemployment threatens in particular the younger segment of the population (31.8% of young people in the age cohort 15-24 are unemployed);
- women's participation in employment is particularly low (28%) when compared to EU (55%);
- nearly 60% of the labour force is composed of basic education graduates or people who dropped from basic education.
- males have on average 6.8 years of education while female have 5.3;
- 12,5% of the population (7,5 million people) is illiterate (4,7% of men and 20,1% of women);
- the incidence of child labour is 948,000 in the age cohort 12-17;

significant disparities are registered between urban and rural areas as well as between Western and Eastern parts of the country;

The Ministry of National education (MoNE) has the responsibility for planning, development, execution, monitoring and supervision of all types and levels of education and training with the exception of higher (i.e. post-secondary) education. The Council of Higher Education (YOK) is an autonomous body set up by the 1982 Constitution responsible for organising, orienting and accrediting higher education.

Compulsory education has been extended to 8 years in 1997 by combining elementary school and lower secondary school into basic education. The Law 4702 enacted in 2001 provides the framework for extending basic education

to 12 years from 2004. However, since this extension implies quite a lot of investment in terms of resources and overall curricula reform, the deadline for its implementation has been so far delayed. Secondary schooling, which starts at the age of 14, consist of a minimum of 3 years of general or vocational high school or 4 years technical high school. One additional preparatory year in a foreign language is provided in general, vocational and technical high schools and, in this case, the schools organising it are defined "Anatolian".

Upper secondary school enrolment patterns are as follows: (2001)¹:

General education: 60.3%

Vocational: 39.7%, of which 7.7% in combined school and worked based programmes (programmes in which less than 75% of the curriculum is presented in the school environment or through distance education. Programmes that are more than 90% work-based are excluded)

Participation rates in education, at all levels (school year 2000/01) :²:

18 years old: 16%

Males: 18.5%

Females: 13.4%

15-24 age group: 19.4%

Males: 22.5%

Females: 16.2%

Participation rate in vocational programmes at upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) is of 19.4% in the age group 15-19.³

The VET system in Turkey includes:

- Vocational and technical high schools providing training in more than 130 occupations and giving access/leading to the qualification of specialised worker and technician respectively.
- Apprenticeship training, which is a combination of mainly practical training provided in enterprises and theoretical training provided in the apprenticeship school.
- Non-formal education is defined as the education, training and guidance provided for those who never entered the education system or dropped out without achieving any qualification level. Non-formal education can be provided in VET and apprenticeship training centres.

Turkish legislation conceives vocational training as a system of dual inspiration, with its theoretical (school training) and practical (in-company training) dimensions.

Vocational training policies and activities are mostly carried out by the MoNE within the framework of the Act n° 3308, which entered into force on 5 June 1986 and which brought about changes to the system establishing new and strong links of co-operation with industry and commerce. Its purpose was to

¹ Source: OECD, Education at a Glance 2003

² Source: Eurostat, Statistics in Focus, Theme 3 13/2003

³ ETF Key indicators database (provisional data school year 2002/2003)

lay down the principles regarding the training of apprentices, journeymen and masters and the vocational training to be organised in schools and enterprises. In fact, with the exception of Anatolian technical schools,

In 2000/2001, around 600.000 people were enrolled in VET, with the following breakdown⁴:

VET schools for boys:	23%
VET schools for girls:	8%
VET schools for Commerce and Tourism:	16%
Apprenticeship:	50%
Other type of schools:	3%

The Council of Higher Education administers the post secondary system.

The peak of participation in VET was reached in 1997-1998 with an enrolment of 49% out of the total secondary school enrolment and this can be attributed to the expansion of one branch of the system: the Secondary Islamic Education Schools (Imam-Atip Okullari), which are classified as VET schools.

Regulations were enacted by YOK in 1998 to limit access to higher education for VET graduates with the introduction of weighting coefficients to their scores achieved in the entrance examinations, which penalise them with respect to general education graduates.

These new regulations led in general to a sharp decrease in VET participation and influenced in particular the enrolment in Imam-Atip schools, which from 27.5% of total enrolment in VET in 1996-1997 went drastically down to 7% in 2000/2001. This implied a reduction of 14% in total VET participation since the academic year 1997-1998.

The issue related to the barriers to entrance to higher education for VET school graduates has been subject to a very hot debate in the country during the last months in particular in relation to Imam-Atip schools. An amendment to the present law, which was trying to redefine the role of the Council of Higher Education and eliminate the barriers to entrance to higher education, has been approved by the Parliament and has been considered by a part of Turkish public and by some international observers as an attempt to destabilise the country's secularist status. The Turkish President has put a veto on the draft law and the issue seems now postponed to next year. So, for the academic year 2004-2005, entrance examination to higher education rules remain unchanged.

Four National Directorate Generals within the MoNE manage the different schools and training centres of the VET system, namely:

- DG of Technical Education for Boys;
- DG of Technical Education for Girls;
- DG of Commerce and Tourism Education;
- DG of Apprenticeship and Non-formal Training.

⁴ Turkish national Observatory: Short Country Report on the latest developments in Education, Training and Employment Policies, Ankara – November 2002. Page 18. ibn

Although the principle of mixed (boys and girls) schools is recognised, the above-mentioned first two directorates reflect the actual allocation of students to different schools according to gender.

Boys' enrolment in VET schools for girls is in general very low (maximum 10%) and in some regions (South-East) almost nil. The same applies for enrolment of girls in VET schools for boys.

The system is horizontally and vertically inflexible as students have difficulties in moving between tracks and it is impossible to move from vocational to general education.

As regards participation of enterprises in the delivery of training, the existing legal framework makes provision for practical training of students attending vocational and technical high schools and apprenticeship on the basis of their field of specialisation. The time allocated for practical training in the last year of vocational and technical high schools is generally 24/hours/week. Students participating in this type of training receive two days theoretical training and three days practical training at the enterprises.

Theoretical training (at least 12 hours per week) may be provided by schools or by the training units of enterprises.

As regards apprenticeship training, only one day per week is spent in the school. Apprentices receive 30% of the minimum salary by the companies and the social insurance is covered by the State.

Other ministries organisations and institutions may establish formal and non-formal vocational education and training programmes at secondary level to meet their own skilled labour force needs. The most widespread among these are the health vocational high schools connected to the Ministry of Health. Other include high schools connected to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, finance high schools connected to the Ministry of Finance, deed and land survey high schools and meteorology high schools connected to the State Ministries (without portfolio). The curricula and regulations of these institutions are prepared in co-ordination with MoNE, which establishes also the certification standards and the equivalence of the degrees granted.

As regards planning, research and development, the Vocational and Technical Education Research and Development Centre (METARGEM) was established in 1986 in order to provide the above-mentioned services to the Ministry of National Education. A tripartite board governs METARGEM and its responsibilities cover research and planning, curriculum development, design of projects, testing and evaluation, educational technology and technical publications.

a) *Raise the status of IVET*

An attempt has been made in 2001 with the new Law 4702 to improve the status of IVET through the introduction of the following regulations:

1. Graduates of vocational and technical high schools may enter, without undergoing further examinations, post secondary vocational schools if the latter deliver programmes in the same or similar field.

2. Not less than 10% of the graduates of post secondary vocational schools, who entered these institutions without taking any further examination, will be allowed to vertical transition to higher education.
3. Foundations have been given the right to establish non-profit post secondary vocational schools not attached to universities or to higher technology institutions in order to train skilled labour force needed by the economy.
4. The Vocational Education Council (which has been established with the participation of related public and private sector organisations to give advice to the Ministry of National Education on the planning, development and evaluation of all types and levels of the VET system) has been re-organised extending participation to other public institutions and to the social partners.
5. Provincial vocational councils have been restructured with the aim of ensuring participation of municipalities.
6. Upper age limit for entry to apprenticeship training has been extended up to 19 years of age.
7. Flexibility has been brought to the duration of apprenticeship training, which may cover up to 3-4 years. In addition, allowance has been made to shorten the training period by half for those starting apprenticeships training after completing general secondary education.

Companies employing 20 or more staff shall provide practical training to vocational and technical high school students in a ratio of 5%-10% on the basis of the number of the employees. In addition enterprises offering practical training to 10 or more students have to establish a training unit for this purpose.

It is necessary to point out that, given that the above regulations have been introduced in 2001, there is yet no feedback about the impact of their application. This refers in particular to the regulations concerning the application of above point (2) as it is still unclear how the selection and access to higher education of 10% of graduates from post-secondary education will be realised.

a) b) *Improve the attractiveness of IVET*

The 8th Five Year Development Plan for Turkey covering the period 2001-2005 identifies as an objective to be reached by the MoNE, that enrolment attains 35% in general secondary education and 65% in vocational education and training.

However, the attractiveness of IVET in Turkey is directly related to the equity of access to higher education. Everybody, involved in the system, is of the opinion that until this question will be solved, VET enrolment will continue to decline as it represents a second best option. This issue is directly linked to the fact that the present system wants to limit entrance to higher education of Imam-Atip graduates and that therefore, as these ones are classified as VET graduates, this restriction apply to the whole VET system. The question is whether it makes sense to classify Imam-atip schools as VET schools. As a matter of fact they follow the curricula of secondary general schools with additional weekly hours devoted to the study of Arabic and Kuran.

As it has already been mentioned, the new legal framework adopted in 2001 has been slightly improved but it is still too early to assess any impact.

A previous attempt to improve the system's attractiveness was made by the Directorate General of Technical Education for Girls, which has financed and implemented on a pilot basis during the period 1993-2000 the "METGE" project, whose aim was to assist schools to become more autonomous in planning their own activities. Starting from the school year 2001-2002 the project has been extended to the other schools under this Directorate.

c) *Increase the flexibility of IVET*

The EU funded programme for "Strengthening of Vocational Education and Training" started in September 2002 with the aim of assisting the Turkish Government through the MoNE in the process of modernisation and adaptation of the VET system to the socio-economic needs of the country and to the principles of life-long learning. The programme will end in September 2007.

Among its main objectives is the strengthening of the institutional capacity at national, regional and local level of public administration, social partners' representatives and companies. This is expected to lead to the establishment of an effective partnership agreement among all institutions and social and economic partners involved in VET and to define their role and contribution to the process of reform. To this end, the programme includes also an innovation fund for projects aimed at stimulating the participation of social partners in VET reform and development.

Under this programme 105 pilot training institutions will start implementing from 9th grade (which is the first year of vocational or technical high school) competence based modular curricula from the school year 2004-2005. Of the total teaching hours only 15% will be devoted to vocational subjects and this will allow students to choose at the end of 9th grade whether they want to continue in the VET stream or to move to general secondary. This represents the most significant innovation aimed at introducing flexibility in the system, since, as mentioned above, so far the horizontal transitional between VET and general secondary has not been possible. However, this will be done on a pilot basis and it should be subsequently extended to the rest of the system in order to ensure system wide implementation and sustainability.

Another EU funded programme for "The Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training" started in July 2003 and it will end in September 2007.

The objective of this programme, which is complementary to the first one, is to strengthen the capacity of Turkish authorities in organising and delivering a modern and efficient system of pre-service and in-service teachers training.

New competence based modular curricula will be developed in order to improve flexibility in the teachers training system.

In the framework of this programme, the training standards for VET teachers will be defined and subsequently 5 pre-service and 3 in-service modular and competence-based curricula will be developed.

During the life of the project, around 20 pilot projects - implemented by VET teacher training faculties, school and enterprises - will be supported.

Synergy and complementarity between the 2 EU funded programmes are ensured on regular basis by the MoNE and the EU.

d) *Main barriers to achieve these objectives*

Among the main barriers to introduce innovation into the system, the following can be mentioned:

- A certain resistance to change by all parties involved in particular by national authorities;
- Insufficient policy making capacities;

- Insufficient co-ordination between Government departments (Education and Labour);
- Rigidity and centralisation of the decision making process;
- Insufficient information on the labour market demand as there is a lack of communication between the world of work and education;
- Lack of statistical data and studies to monitor the results of the VET system. The availability of such studies could be very helpful in taking decisions for future strategic development;
- The perception that higher education diploma represents the key to employment reinforced by the high unemployment rate among secondary school graduates and people with lower educational level (page 1. section. 1).

2. *Reducing the number of early school leavers*

a) *Those who leave education or training at the earliest opportunity and with few or no recognised qualifications.*

Early school leavers in Turkey are 53.4% compared to a EU average of 15,9%⁵, out of which males represent 45.5% and females 60.6%. 10% of young girls and boys are not enrolled in basic education.

The inequality in education due to social class, region and gender is very apparent. For instance, according to 2000 Census the rate of illiteracy amongst women in Ankara is 7,5% in general but the ratio increases to 18,5% in poorest areas.

In order to improve the participation of girls in education, the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with UNICEF started the “Girls to Schools “Haydi Kızlar Okula” campaign in June 2003. At present the campaign is ongoing in 33 provinces and a financial incentive is given to the families in order to encourage them to send their girls to school. As a result of the activities carried out under the campaign, the share of girl students who have newly

⁵ ETF key indicators database provisional data referring to third quarter.

enrolled in basic education in total has risen to 47.8%. The objective is to increase this ratio to 50% by 2006 and thus remove any differences between gender enrolments in basic education.

School expectancy for Turkey is the lowest among the OECD countries: a child aged 5 in 2001 expected only 11.5 years of schooling, OECD average (16.9).

As previously mentioned (page 1. section 1.1.) non-formal training is organised by the MoNE in particular for individuals who have dropped out of compulsory basic education and illiterate women in the age cohort 14-44. These courses are organised in a flexible way as regards duration, location and level, in order to accommodate the needs of those who are working.

b) Those who leave formal education with low levels of basic skills at the age of 15

Basic education (compulsory education) is 8 years in Turkey and it ends at the age of 14-15. Compulsory education aims to equip individuals with core competencies that will allow them to be active citizens. These competencies do not include any vocational competencies that will prepare them to enter into work life.

PIRLS (Progress in Reading Literacy Study) of the IEA (International Association for Evaluation) refers to performance of 4th grade (9-years-old) students in reading literacy (as opposed to PISA which refers to students aged 15-years-old in reading, mathematic and science).

Turkey participated in PIRL process and scored the lowest in both subscales (reading for literacy and reading for information) with 448 (OECD mean 531) and 452 (OECD mean 527) respectively. The results should be a matter of reflection and concern.

Main reason for leaving school after compulsory education is the economic difficulties.

As described above, apprenticeship training is the main form of training of young people who, after compulsory education, start to work in enterprises.

It is worth mentioning also MEKSA Foundation, a German-Turkish non-profit making organisation, which is very active in providing training to those who have low level of basic skills through a network of 29 training centres spread all over Turkey.

3. Increasing VET at tertiary level

With the possibility for transition from vocational and technical high school to post secondary education without examinations, considerable increases were observed in the number of VET graduates in post secondary education institutions. In the 2002-2003 academic year 182.891 students have graduated from secondary vocational and technical education schools and in the 2003-2004 academic year 130.275 VET graduated enrolled in post secondary education programmes. In parallel to this application, noteworthy increases were observed in the number and capacity of post secondary

education institutions. In the 2003-2004 academic year a total of 469 institutions (of which 443 were public institutions) were operational. In order to cope with the sudden increase in the demand for enrolment, the MoNE has authorised vocational schools to organise post-secondary training courses. The time available and the resources to train teachers or to supply adequate equipment were sometimes insufficient and the result was that the quality of these courses in certain occasions was questionable and differing very much from region to region.

4. Incentives for updating knowledge & skills

a) Government

The participation in lifelong learning of the population aged 25-64 in 2003 was as follows⁶:

Total 1.1%
Males: 1.6%
Females: 0.7%

In order to improve the above-mentioned situation, in 2001 the MoNE set up of a special working with the aim of developing proposals promoting “lifelong learning” principles.

As a result of that working group, the MoNE introduced in 2002 new regulations aiming at improving the quality of the labour force. In accordance with these regulations, each employer would need to ensure that his/her workers can attest their educational level being holders of one of the following state recognised certificates: a secondary vocational and technical high school diploma, a journeyman and mastership certificate. Workers would have the right to obtain leave of absence, to be considered as working time, in order to attend the necessary training courses to obtain such certification. However the social partners were not consulted on this regulation and they never agreed on that, in particular because it was not combined with any financial incentive. The result is that, for the time being, this regulation has not been applied.

Among state agencies, the Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR), which is responsible for organising active employment measures, provides sometimes assistance for up-grading the skills of employees.

Through its local branches, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs provides training on agriculture and home economics to villages.

By law, Municipalities are responsible for organising courses aimed at assisting individuals in acquiring skills and finding employment.

KOSGEB, which is an agency under the Ministry of Trade, through its 25 enterprises development centres, 12 technology development centres and 10 laboratories spread throughout the country is one of the major providers of consultancy and training services to SMEs and potential entrepreneurs. KOSGEB is also implementing the “Developing Young Entrepreneurs

⁶ ETF key indicators database provisional data.

Programme” (DYEOP) under the World Bank Privatisation/Social Support Project. The objective of this programme is to promote entrepreneurship culture at university level by presenting it as an option for young people in planning their future career. Candidate entrepreneurs, who complete this programme, may get financial support to start up their business.

b) Employers

A number of NGOs offer continuing training activities. Among these, particularly visible are a number of foundations established by affiliates of employers’ organisations, namely the MESS Training Foundation, established by the Metal Industry Employers Union, or the Turkish Textile Foundation established by the Turkish Textile Industries Employers Union and the Turkish Construction and Plumber Workers Training Foundation established by the Turkish Construction and Plumber Contractors Employers Union.

Available information suggests that larger companies do organise training activities for their staff, but since this is done under their own responsibility and funding, it is largely undocumented and therefore not reflected in the official statistics.

c) Other Stakeholders

Universities also play a role in the delivery of continuing training, usually in co-operation with public and private organisations and institutions.

d) Examples of contribution of VET to successfully promoting inclusion

Active employment measures continue to take place mainly through the financial support of foreign donors. The World Bank has provided support through various programmes for privatisation in order to implement measure assisting laid off workers to find a new job or to set up a business.

It is noteworthy the World Bank’s programme for “Redeployment and training” which was implemented during the period 1993-2000 and included:

- the delivery of training to over 84,000 unemployed people;
- establishment of tripartite local and national employment councils to arrange vocational training courses;
- preparation of draft regulations on private employment agencies;
- establishment of 40 career information centres and 15 job-career counselling services.

In order to start familiarising Turkey with European Employment Strategy, a programme supported by the EU for “Active Employment Strategy”, started in October 2003 with the aim of promoting a human resources development culture in the country along with the implementation of active employment measures, which are mainly taking place with the financial assistance of foreign donors. The programme ends in March 2006.

ISKUR, as Turkish Employment Agency and main beneficiary of the above programme, is supposed to become a catalyst in developing this culture and to raise awareness of public opinion and government on this issue. A National Action Plan for Employment will be developed under the programme, which is providing a fund for implementation of active employment measures, including

also promotion of social inclusion. The call for proposal for such measures has been launched countrywide and 700 proposals have been received.

However, at policy level, VET is not yet seen in Turkey as an instrument to promote social inclusion for disadvantaged groups of people and therefore there are no specific actions undertaken in this direction.

5. Meeting the challenges of an ageing population

Active aging has been included in Turkish pre-accession agenda, but it has not yet been translated into national policies and concrete activities.

The fact that Turkey has a young population and that a large portion of this group is still faced with unemployment (around 30% in big cities, according to data from State Institute of Statistics) has led to rank the employment of those above 55 of age as a second priority.

To counteract excess in labour force supply, early retirement is widespread in Turkey. Those working in enterprises, which are under privatisation, are forced to early retirement. However, among those that take up early retirement, there is an increasing proportion of people willing to invest in upgrading their competencies and to continue to work, but there is a lack of organisations able to support these individuals in their endeavours. Another issue is that, in the present system of continuing vocational education and training, individuals with a long professional career are only marginally involved in the transfer of know-how and experience to the young work force.

6. Effectiveness and efficiency of VET

a) In the current national debate, how effective is the system of VET perceived to be?

There is no system in place to measure how effective the VET system is perceived to be.

The MoNE stopped few years ago collecting data on school dropouts at any level and this is serious constraint in assessing the effectiveness of the system.

However, the effectiveness of the VET system is being regularly discussed in platforms at various levels that allow the participation of all related parties. Some of these platforms are national symposiums organised by the Ministry of National Education, National Vocational Education Council, Provincial Vocational Education Councils, preparatory activities for the Five Year Development Plans, conferences and seminars organised by professional organisations and universities etc. The points frequently raised are the following:

- It is believed that the participation of all social partners in the planning, development and evaluation of VET has a multiplier effect. In this respect, the

interest of enterprises, professional organisations and NGOs has increased in the past 10 years.

- There is a wide spread belief, especially among the private sector, that VET is still supply driven. All related parties support the notion that in order to have a demand driven structure, the National Competencies/Occupational Standards System has to be established as soon as possible. It is also expressed at all platforms that with the establishment of an Institution regulating occupational standards the effectiveness of VET can be enhanced.
- In general it is believed that VET can offer a valuable path to employability. However, it is also generally accepted that the system with its current structure is unable to fulfil this mission. One of the most debated issues is the very low percentages of VET graduates finding employment.

The dominant focus of VET policies, is considered to be into meeting the needs of the labour market, but not enough emphasis is placed on meeting social and individual needs. There is a need to restructure the system with modular competency based programs, to give priority to individual needs and choices, and to prepare teachers to become actively involved in the process.

- It is thought that the transition of VET high school graduates to post secondary vocational education institutions without examinations may increase the flexibility and attractiveness of VET. However, it has already been mentioned that it is still unclear how the selection of 10% of post secondary education graduates to higher education will take place. It is therefore still premature to say that the above measures have improved the effectiveness of the system.

A new regulation has been introduced to ensure VET provision to general high school graduates that have not been able to enter higher education in order to allow them acquiring occupational skills and thus easing their entry to the labour market. However there has been no feedback as regards the application of this regulation.

b) In the current national debate, is the VET system considered able to offer efficiency/ good value for money?

- The strengths of the present VET system are its wide availability and its diversity.
- The endeavour to increase the number of VET teachers with foreign language capabilities is supported.
- It is stated that VET graduates are more easily adaptable to technological changes. However, it is also pointed out that most VET graduates do not work in the areas they have been trained for.
- It is believed that practical training delivered in enterprises provides students with a valuable experience of real work life.
- Students/adults enter the VET system without any prior vocational guidance services and it is believed that this lowers the efficiency of the system.

Attention is drawn to idle capacity at some VET schools and departments due to insufficient number of students. The workshops established at VET schools

are usually fixed investments. Rather than transferring the equipment to other places when the demand decreases, efforts should be made to stimulate demand in close contacts with enterprises. The lack of strategic planning in the optimisation of available resources is considered one of the main reasons that hamper the efficiency of VET.

c) *The main trends in terms of investment in VET*

Financing of education is mainly coming from Turkey's general budget and the largest part of this is distributed among the MoNE, the YOK and Higher Education Loans and dormitories (YURT-KUR).

The 16th National Education Council, which met between 22 and 26 February 1999, decided that the portion allocated for education from public resources should be at least 10% of GNP and at 25% of the consolidated budget in the 2000/2010 period and that the share of VET should be increased.

In 2000 expenditure on education as percentage of GDP was 3.4% from public resources and negligible from the private ones.⁷

A fund was established in 1986 with the aim of collecting public, through the MoNE, and private (including companies' contributions) resources to finance formal and non-formal vocational education and training. However the fund was terminated in 2001.

Schools may generate their own income (the so called "revolving funds"). Such income is raised through use of internal workshops for commercial production; part of these funds serves as an indirect way to increase teachers' salaries. Net profit resulting from these commercial activities has to be transferred to the Treasury with the exception of a part, which can be used for procurement of equipment subject to previous permission by MoNE. Trainees receive also part of the revenues.

Theme 2: Innovation in Teaching and Learning Processes

7. Improvements in learning processes and contents

Piloting new approaches in learning and teaching processes is usually done in the framework of foreign funded projects. For example, the concept of "student centred education" is being piloted within the Project for Laboratory Schools established under the World Bank programme for support to basic education. It is planned that the successful results achieved within these schools will be then transferred to VET schools.

The most relevant innovations in the VET system are being introduced through the implementation of the above-mentioned EU programme for Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (page 5. section 1.1.c).

⁷ Source: OECD, Education at a Glance 2003

8. Improving the integration of different learning sites; integration of formal and informal learning

Some enterprises and training institutions organise training activities that strengthen the school-enterprise cooperation through the protocols that they have signed. In this context, there are around 100 protocols that have been signed between enterprises/professional organisations and the General Directorates of the Ministry of National Education responsible for VET.

The enterprises where students will receive practical training are selected according to pre-determined criteria. However, the possibility that enterprises will be able to meet all the needs for practical training as foreseen in the curriculum is low. Keeping this in mind, complementary practical training is provided at the workshops of apprenticeship schools or training centres. Within this scope, TESK (The Turkish Craftsmen and Tradesmen Associations) has established 16 supra training centres for this purpose. However, this initiative could not be extended yet to the whole system.

Another problem regarding school-enterprise cooperation is the coordination of theoretical knowledge with practical training. In order to solve this problem, teachers frequently visit the enterprises where students receive practical training. During these visits, teachers address the students' questions and, according to their own observations, design the theoretical part of the programme in line with the practical training.

People responsible of students' training at enterprises are normally masters who have received pedagogical training. These individuals also contribute to providing students with theoretical knowledge when necessary.

9. Evaluation and quality assurance of VET provision

a) For the individual (assessment of competences and knowledge)

Students' assessment is school-based and there is no national standard examination system.

The theoretical part of the students' work is assessed through written and oral tests.

In determining success in practical training, the assessment of cognitive, psychomotor, behavioural attitude and vocational competencies is the principle. The student is assessed on the projects, work pieces and experiments that he/she has done in a term. In addition to that, every student takes an "end of year competency assessment". The average of students' annual performance and the "end of year competency assessment" gives the final grade of the student.

The master trainer of the enterprises is responsible for assessing the practical training performance of students.

b) For the institution (internal/external quality management)

The "Ministry of National Education Local Organisation Total Quality Management Project" was implemented in 2001. Under the project concerned, "quality development teams" have been established and the

working rules have been defined. In addition, “organisational development-management teams” have been established at each institution. The work carried out by these teams is on going.

Some of the VET schools have completed the necessary procedure and have received ISO-9000 certificate. In addition, one of the objectives of the previously mentioned SVET Project is to develop a quality assurance system able to provide harmonisation and transparency in the VET system. Work related to this issue is on going.

Every year, skill competitions among VET schools and students are organised. The results of these competitions allow the evaluation of the success of skills training at school level.

c) For the system (monitoring and evaluation)

The VET system evaluation is responsibility of the Vocational Education Council where all the stakeholders are represented. However, the evaluation made by the council, which meets only a couple of times per year and which comprises very high level representatives, is not based on performance criteria but is of more general and empirical nature.

10. Professional development and status of teachers and trainers

Teaching is accepted as being a specialised occupation and in Turkey teachers are trained through 4-year university programs. VET teachers graduate from around 20 vocational and technical education faculties.

The weighting system of the scores in the entrance examination to higher education, gives somehow incentives to VET students to enrol in VET teachers training faculties and this leads to an apparent imbalance between the supply and the demand of VET TT in Turkey. The total supply of VET teachers exceeds the demand of public and private training providers with the consequence that they face serious employment problems in their profession. A considerable proportion of graduates of vocational and technical education faculties are employed outside the education sector. MoNE is potentially the main employer for the graduates of VET TT faculties; but while the number of teachers employed by MONE has been declining for years (on the basis of recent statistics only 5% are employed by the MoNE), the number of VET TT faculties and graduates has constantly and paradoxically been increasing as a path to higher education for VET school graduates. In addition, it is observed that education faculties base their student intake on capacity rather than demand.

As a result, while in some areas graduates cannot find employment as teachers, in other areas the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) cannot find graduates to employ (i.e. in the field of electronics). In areas where there are teacher shortages, the MoNE employs the graduates of the nearest thematic areas or other faculty graduates as teachers, after necessary pedagogical training.

It is noteworthy to mention that the faculties are under the Council of Higher Education, which regulates the offer whilst the MoNE as potential employer represents the demand. The lack of dialogue between the 2 institutions jeopardise the efficiency of VET teachers training system.

Theme 3: Building European Competence for a European Labour Market

11. Challenges & policies in relation to the Lisbon employment strategy

There is a very limited knowledge and debate in the country about objectives and targets of the Lisbon employment strategy.

As mentioned under theme 1, section 4.d., the EU funded programme for “Active Employment strategy”, which started in October 2003 is aimed at familiarising Turkish authorities with EU Lisbon employment strategy through the elaboration of the 1st Turkish National Plan for Employment, which should be ready by second half of 2004, along with the implementation of active employment measures.

ISKUR, the Turkish Employment Agency, as main beneficiary of the programme should become a catalyst in promoting the Lisbon employment strategy both at national and local and in order to reach this objectives is supposed to increase the present number of 1.400 employees up to 3.100 as it is foreseen in the law. Without adequate number of staff, it is very difficult for ISKUR to ensure full success and sustainability to the activities undertaken under the EU programme.

a) What are the main challenges to achieving the Lisbon employment objectives for Turkey, according to the European Commission ‘Kok Report’

The challenge of reaching 70% of employment by the year 2010 in accordance with the Lisbon strategy with a participation of 60% of women would imply for Turkey an increase of 25% and 32% respectively. These targets are over ambitious and it would be necessary for Turkey to define what could be realistically achieved by 2010 starting from the present situation.

Taking into consideration that the average educational attainment mentioned in section 1, page 1 is very low and that the target set in the Lisbon agenda by 2010 is that 85% of students of 22 years should have completed upper secondary education, its comes out very clearly that a lot has still to be done in Turkey in order to increase participation in education for girls. The 8th Five-year National Development Plan sets as target for 2005 extension of compulsory education from 8 to 12 years and this is expected to boost participation in education. However, as previously stated (page 3. section

1.1), this implies a very high investment in education and it is still unclear whether the Government has the necessary financial resources allowing the application of this extension. Probably a more realistic mid-term strategy will need to be developed by the MoNE to tackle this issue.

Turkey also needs to address in priority its high level of early school leavers as well as boost substantially lifelong access to education and training.

b) Policies and strategies being developed to tackle these challenges

The above-mentioned extension of compulsory education and the National Action Plan for Employment, which ISKUR will develop under the above-mentioned EU funded programme for “Active Employment Strategy”, are important steps forward in the achievement of Lisbon objectives.

In December 2003 the first Preliminary National Development Plan has been prepared by the State Planning Organisation as a basis for the financial assistance towards economic and social cohesion to be provided by the EU within the framework of Turkey-EU relations, during the 2004-2006 period.

The Plan is based on a mid-term strategy (2004-2006), which identifies 4-development axis towards economic and social cohesion with the EU, namely:

1. enhancing the competitiveness of the enterprises;
2. developing human resources and increasing employment;
3. improving infrastructure services and environmental protection;
4. reducing the development difference among the regions, ensuring rural development and reducing the social imbalances due to poverty and income inequality.

Axis 2 includes the following measures:

(i) **active labour market policies** (the promotion of employment of disadvantaged groups in the labour market, the employment of young unemployed people and redundant workers, adaptation of employees and entrepreneurs to changing market conditions, creation of new employment fields and of additional sources of income for households in rural areas);

(ii) **reinforcement of the education system** (enhanced links between labour market and education, increased use of information and communication technologies in education, enhancement of lifelong learning opportunities for adults).

A regional development strategy has been developed at national level to cover the 26 NUTS II regions with the view to activating internal potential of regions, on the basis of a human resources development approach linked to the promotion of local development initiatives and with the aim of providing a general framework for the 4 development axis mentioned above. The overall framework has the objective of reducing interregional disparities by raising employment level and competitiveness of 12 NUTS II regions targeted as priority in the scope of the development axis.

The total allocation to axis 2 for the 12 NUTS II regions is of 70 MEURO (48.5 From EU assistance and 21.5 from national public contribution) for the period 2004-2006.

12. Involving stakeholders

a) The role of stakeholders or social partners in the planning of VET at national, sector and company level

The “Vocational Education Council” is the highest platform where the effectiveness and efficiency of VET is evaluated. The Council takes decisions at national level concerning the planning, development and evaluation of VET. These decisions are implemented by the Ministry of National Education and related professional organisations.

The Council, which meets every three years, is made up of 21 members: 16 representing the Government, 3 from employers, 1 from employees and 1 from banking associations.

In accordance with the law, contribution of social partner representatives to VET is provided through:

- (i) preparation of legal documents after consultation with related parties and primarily with professional organisations;
- (ii) organisation of councils/symposiums (i.e. TESK, together with the MoNE and the MoLSS, calls upon the Central VET Symposium to meet every three years when deemed necessary);
- (iii) consultation on the Five Year Development Plan, which is prepared by the State Planning;
- (iv) the participation in the VET National Council⁸: which is responsible for all activities undertaken to plan, develop and evaluate VET throughout the country in accordance with the legal framework;
- (vi) the participation in Provincial Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Councils which have been established in each of the 81 provinces.

b) Actions to anticipate and recognise skills and qualifications needs (at national, sector or regional level) for Turkey that the European social partners identify as important in their recent report

⁸ Members of the National VET Council: Deputy Undersecretaries of MoNE responsible for VET, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Interior, Deputy Undersecretary of Finance, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Public Works and Settlement, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Health, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry of Culture and Tourism, State Planning Organization, General Directorates responsible for VET (MoNE), Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen Confederation, Turkish Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Maritime Trade and Union of Commercial Exchange, Worker's Confederation with the highest number of members, Union of Banks, Representative of Higher Education Council and Union of Chambers for Certified Public Accountants.

13. Transparency, recognition & mobility

a) Establishing credit frameworks

There is not provision for credit framework in Turkey at the moment.

b) Establishing or reforming the qualifications framework

In the framework of the previously described EU funded programme for “Strengthening Vocational Education and Training”, the establishment of a National Qualifications Framework is envisaged with the aim of:

- contributing to the determination of vocational competencies in accordance with developing needs of the labour market;
- providing VET in a modular and flexible framework based on competencies;
- providing participative and transparent testing and assessment, based on national qualifications;

c) Implementing Europass

There is no institutional arrangement for the time being in Turkey for the implementation of EUROPASS. It is necessary to point out that only very recently the Memorandum of Understanding for the participation in the Community’s programmes Leonardo, Socrates and Youth has been signed between the EC and the Turkish Government and therefore there is yet no experience in EU transnational programmes for education and training.