

## **Child Labor exploitation: Experiences of Student-Workers in Vocational Training Centers in Türkiye**

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### **Abstract**

*The aim of this study is to examine the reasons why students are enrolled in Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), which were opened as a result of the changes in vocational education and training with the reflection of neoliberal policies in education in Turkey, their experiences as students, learners and workers, how they define themselves and their rights as students and workers. Vocational Training Centres were established to implement programmes designed for on-the-job learning with a 4-day work, 1-day school system and aim to enable students to learn on the job. In the study, which used qualitative research methods, interviews were conducted with 14 students. As a result of these interviews, it was revealed that these students left formal education and transferred to vocational training centres for economic reasons such as poverty, inability of families to pay school expenses and also as a result of their academic failure at schools. However, in these programmes, in fact students are directly turned into workers, learning processes are not included, working environments are not suitable for children and education, necessary inspections are not carried out, and with the VTC programmes, young labor force in workplaces are also turned into students. It can be said that a “studentification” of young labor force and “workerization” of students goes hand in hand with neoliberal policies.*

**Keywords:** *Child labor, Reproduction of working class, Vocational training centers, Young labor force*

## **Introduction**

As is the case all over the world, education is one of the services most affected by the neoliberal policies introduced in Turkey with the military coup in 1980. The neoliberal policies and free market economy paved the way for commercialization and reactionaryism in education as well as in all public services. However, especially during the AKP period, marketization and religiousization have become the pedagogical logic of education (Keskin Demirer, 2012; Yıldız, 2012; Yıldız, Korkmaz & Doğan, 2019; Eğitim-Sen, 2020). Today, under global capitalism, the socialisation of the individual for social reproduction is largely mediated by the market. At every level of education, the aim is to "train human resources" in line with the needs of the economy and the market. Indeed, in both the Five-year Development Plans<sup>1</sup> and the Strategic Plans<sup>2</sup> prepared by the Ministry of Education (MoNE), the goals of 'making education compatible with the market' and 'structuring education to meet the demands of the labour market' come to the fore (Korkmaz, 2022). In line with these objectives, vocational education, which is directly related to the market and employment, has been transformed to meet the demands of the market.

In vocational education, in 2016, the Basic Law on National Education and the Law on Vocational Education were amended to include apprenticeship education, which was within the scope of non-formal education, within the scope of formal and compulsory education, and to link vocational education centres to the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education. In addition, the law introduced coverage for occupational accidents and illnesses for students who had undergone work experience as part of their vocational and

technical secondary education and for students who had undergone supplementary education or practical training as part of their vocational and technical secondary education. It was decided that the insurance premiums for these students would be paid from the unemployment insurance fund, i.e. from public funds<sup>3</sup>. In other words, this amendment ended apprenticeship as a non-formal education activity and paved the way for student-workers to be included in the formal education system for the first time in Turkey.

The 2021 amendments introduced new rules on which students can be admitted to Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), school and working conditions and fees<sup>4</sup>. After this change, anyone who has completed secondary school can enrol in VTCs. This situation has made student child labour even more "attractive". In accordance with the law, it has been decided that 9th, 10th and 11th grade students doing internships under VTCs will be paid at least 30 per cent of the minimum wage, and 12th grade journeymen will be paid at least 50 per cent of the minimum wage. The law now requires students to be insured against accidents at work and occupational diseases under the VTC programmes and that they should be paid a salary. Trainees' insurance and wages are paid by the unemployment insurance fund, not by the employers who employ them. This allows employers to employ trainees without any financial burden. Enrolment in a VTC starts with the signing of a 'contract for in-company vocational training' between the school, the company and the student/parent, which means that children are obliged to be 'workers' before they become students. Later they can go to the VTC and register as "students".

With the changes made, the number of students registered in these centres has increased rapidly due to the dissemination of VTCs, the encouragement of students to transfer from formal education to VTCs by the Ministry of National Education, and the economic crisis in Turkey. In fact, while the number of

students enrolled in VTCs was 87,000 in 2016, when the first change was made, this number increased to 159,000 in 2021. By June 2024, there has been 1,405,663 people registered in VTCs, of whom 421,520 have been students who are under the age of 18<sup>5</sup>. According to current data, this number of the students has increased to 510,918<sup>6</sup>.

There are several reasons for the increase in the number of students enrolled in vocational training centres. One of these reasons is economic crisis and unemployment rates that Turkey has experienced in recent years. In fact, according to the OECD, Turkey is second only to Costa Rica in terms of child poverty.<sup>7</sup> With inflation rising rapidly in Turkey recently (75.45% in May 2024) and the majority of the population being wage earners (15 million 669 thousand 792 people were working for wage earners in May 2024), people's purchasing power is rapidly diminishing<sup>8</sup>. Unemployment is also quite high. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the unemployment rate among the young population aged 15-24 was 14.5% in April 2024. These conditions push children from poor and low-income groups to become student-workers.

Another factor directing students to VTCs is academic failure. Students who fail in formal education are referred to VTCs by both teachers and their families for reasons such as learning a trade and contributing to the family budget, and this is even encouraged by the Ministry. In fact, the Ministry has announced that students who repeat a grade in the 9th grade of secondary education in the 2023-2024 academic year will be considered to have passed the 10th grade if they apply for transfer to VTCs<sup>9</sup>. However, the reasons for school failure are very diverse and are mostly related to the socio-economic status of the family and the child. In fact, according to PISA reports, Turkey is one of the countries with the strongest and highest correlation between students' academic success and socio-economic status among OECD member countries (ERG; 2023).

Studies (see Çelebi and Gökmen, 2014; Freire and Giang, 2012; Gelişli, Beisenbayeva, Sultanbek, and Ussenova, 2016) show that vocational education is seen as a type of education attended by students with low socio-economic status and insufficient academic success, not only in Turkey but also in many countries around the world. Studies showing that socioeconomic status is a determinant of school choice at the high school level in Turkey (see Aksoy, 1996; Cengiz, Titrek, and Akgün, 2007; Nartgün and Yüksel, 2009; Serdar, 2016) also show that vocational education is mostly preferred by children from families of lower socioeconomic classes.

Another important factor in directing students to VTCs is the claim that Turkey needs intermediate staff and that VET graduates find jobs more easily. However, the high unemployment rate in Turkey undermines this argument. The need for intermediate staff can also be met by on-the-job training, especially for the unemployed over 18 years of age. On the other hand, as mentioned above, children from families in lower socio-economic classes continue their vocational education. It can be predicted that these people will have a lower tolerance of unemployment when they graduate than the children of the middle and upper classes and white-collar workers, and that they will have to work in the job they find without choosing a job. Therefore, although the employment rate of VET graduates is higher, according to Özer (2020), the rate of VET graduates working in their own field, except for some specific fields, is quite low. At the same time, the rate of academic graduates going on to higher education is quite higher than that of vocational graduates. In general, in today's global economy, very few student or internship positions lead to guaranteed, secure or permanent employment opportunities in the future.

This process, based on student work such as apprenticeships and internships, leads to an increase in the number of student workers and studentification of

young labor force (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017). The huge increase in the number of people employed as apprentices, trainees and interns is striking. According to the Social Insurance Institution, the share of apprentices, trainees and interns in the total number of employees has risen from 4% in 2009 to 10.2% in 2023 (Tumtis, 2024 ). However, while the number of student workers registered in VTCs is increasing, there is no study in this field that addresses the experiences of students who registered in VTCs after 2021. However, child labor is an important problem in Turkey as well as all over the world (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017). The concept of student workers has recently emerged as an educational problem that has been discussed in the world. Despite the ILO's ban on child labor under the age of 15, vocational training centers have legitimized the employment of children as workers starting at the age of 14. This situation includes conditions that may cause problems in terms of both the physiological and psychological development of children. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the reasons for students who registered in VTCs in Turkey after 2021 to register in VTCs, their student and worker experiences, how they define themselves, and their rights as student workers.

## **Methodology**

The qualitative research method was used in this study, which aims to investigate the reasons why VTC students enrol in these institutions, their functioning and the student experiences in this programme. The reason for choosing the qualitative research method in the study is that it is considered to be the most appropriate method to determine the experiences of students enrolled in VTCs and the reflections of these experiences on their identities.

According to Merriam (2015:24), all qualitative research is concerned with 'how meanings are constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds' and the primary aim of basic qualitative research is to 'uncover and

interpret these meanings'. In this context, qualitative research is fundamentally shaped by the construction of meaning and the interpretation of this constructed meaning.

The interview method was used to reveal the experiences of the participants regarding being a student at VTC. The interview can be defined as "a process of mutual interaction and communication based on the style of asking and answering questions for a predetermined and serious purpose" (Stewart and Cash, 1985:7. Cited in Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016:129). Accordingly, the interview is also a form of research based on understanding.

The participants in the study were selected through purposive sampling. For this purpose, students between the ages of 13 and 18 who were enrolled in different vocational training centres in Ankara were identified as the target group. After determining the target group of the study, maximum diversity sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling strategies, was used to select the study group. "Maximum diversity sampling also allows the study to be conducted on similar and different situations related to the problem under investigation in the universe" (Büyüköztürk. et al. 2013: 90). In this context, when selecting the target group of the study, the VTC programme, the students' class, age and gender were determined as diversity criteria. The number of people to be included in the study was decided during the interviews and was based on data saturation. No new codes emerged from the analysis of the interviews and the data collection process was stopped when the codes started to be repeated.

### **Study Group**

All 14 participants, 3 girls and 11 boys, who make up the study group of the research are students enrolled in VTCs. The small number of girls is due to the fact that it is mostly boys who are enrolled in VTCs. At the request of the

participants, their names were not used and each of them was given a pseudonym. The demographic data of the participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Demographics of participants interviewed in the research*

<i>Nickname</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Sex</i>
<i>Ömer</i>	<i>Motor Vehicles - Bodywork Workshop</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Arda</i>	<i>Metal Iron and Steel Industry</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Ulaş</i>	<i>Electrical / Winding</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Mehmet</i>	<i>Air Conditioning Systems</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Zekai</i>	<i>Electrical Installations and Panel Assembly</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Beyza</i>	<i>Motor Vehicles - Automotive</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>Emre</i>	<i>Furniture Workshop</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Cafer</i>	<i>Motor Vehicles - Heavy Machinery</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Adnan</i>	<i>Motor Vehicles - Heavy Machinery</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Sinan</i>	<i>Industrial Maintenance and Repair</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Elif</i>	<i>Clothing Technology</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>m</i>
<i>Zeynep</i>	<i>Shoes and Saddlery - Saddlery Production</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>Aynur</i>	<i>Interior Design and Furniture Technology</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>Ali</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>m</i>

## **Findings**

The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data obtained from the participants participating in the research are included in this section. First, the reasons why participants enrolled in VTCs, their experiences in the places where they worked and how they defined themselves in relation to these experiences were discussed. The findings regarding their rights and responsibilities were then presented.



## **Reasons for registering for VTCs**

Two reasons for enrolling in VTC programmes emerged from the interviews with participants. These are: economic reasons and academic failure.

### ***Economic reasons***

All participants stated that the first or second reason for their enrolment in VTCs was economic, such as the poor financial situation of their families, the need to contribute to the family budget by working, and the inability to pay school fees. For example, Elif, one of the participants, explained that she came to Ankara from Istanbul with her mother and 3 siblings to escape her father's violence and that the house they fled to had no furniture. She said

: "How can we study? There is no furniture in the house. There is no money. We have all started new jobs. If I don't work, we will starve. If I work, I won't be able to study anyway. Even if I want to go to school, it is not possible. School uniforms, bags and books cost a lot of money."

Poverty and financial difficulties, the family budget not being able to cover the cost of education, the economic crisis and similar reasons are becoming one of the most important reasons for students to leave formal education and transfer to VTCs. This is because children who work as labourers for four days and go to school for one day in these institutions continue to be in the scope of compulsory education while at the same time working as labourers and earning a low income. Ali's words, which begin with "*I work both to support my family and for myself*", reveal this situation:

"I work 6 days a week. It is 10 thousand a month, there is no insurance. We come at 8 in the morning, it is 9-10 at night to leave work. We had to be here, we had to study at school. It had to be like this. There was no money, it was not enough for school,

something would happen, my family could not afford it. So I quit, so I am both a student and a worker. I had no choice but to work.”

### ***Academic Failure***

Apart from economic reasons, another reason why participants left formal education and enrolled in VTCs was academic failure. Participants who failed their classes at school and had to repeat a grade stated that they preferred to transfer to the VTC. However, it is clear from the participants' statements that the family budget allocated to education and the socio-economic and cultural background of the parents also play a role in academic failure. Most of the participants who said that they left school because of academic failure said the same things as Zeynep:

“My grades were bad, I couldn't understand it, I always failed in exams. Most of my friends either took private lessons or their families helped them. There was no one to help me at home, there was no money for private lessons. So I dropped out of school.” Similarly, Ömer said, "I found it difficult to understand the lessons during the pandemic. I was in the village at the time, the internet didn't work, I accessed EBA<sup>10</sup> through my mother's internet. I fell behind a lot, then we came to Ankara, I couldn't get used to school, I got bad grades in exams and had to repeat a grade".

By saying this, he reveals the link between his failure and his economic situation.

### **Participants' working and learning experiences in their workplace:**

#### **Workers or students?**

All children of school age registered with VTCs programmes work as child labourers. In describing their experiences at their workplaces during this process, most of the participants stated that they work under difficult and harsh

conditions, are humiliated, do not have enough time to sleep and rest, do the same work as adult workers, and no one teach them anything at workplace.

### *Working Conditions*

The majority of children registered with the VTC work in places that require heavy physical activity, such as organised industrial zones, construction work, factories, furniture making and car repair. As a result, they are forced to do difficult and inappropriate work for children. Aynur, Adnan, Cafer, Mehmet, Zekai and other participants stated in their testimonies that they work like regular workers, not apprentices, that they are very tired and that they are not given enough time to rest, eat or meet their urgent needs.

During the study, visits and observations to the workplaces where the participants worked also revealed that the workplace environment was not suitable for children to work and live in. Most of the workplaces were not clean, the adult workers smoked heavily and they also let apprentices do all kinds of work. In fact, Ulaş's words both summarise the participants' workplace experiences and confirm these observations:

“They expect us to do all kinds of work in their workplaces. The foreman acts like a boss. He gives us orders and makes us do his work. There are no lunch or tea breaks at work. We start working again as soon as we eat. Sometimes they expect us to do work that is beyond our strength. For example, they made me carry bags of cement and sand. They made me break the sink tiles. They made me do all the work.”

Most of the participants, like Ali, said that the environment at their workplace was not suitable for them, that they could not even clean themselves, that the work was heavy and tiring for them, that they could not find enough time to rest, and that they were subjected to humiliation at work:

"I miss sleeping the most because I get very tired, we work six days a week. It is not as they say, 4 days at work and 1 day at school. They even call us on some Sundays because the work is very busy, we have to come. It is also a very dirty place to work, the work is already hard and bad, the masters make the work even harder. There are those who swear, there are those who shout... There are some customers, for example, who put you down. They look down on you because you are a worker and a child at the same time. I go to work, but I go reluctantly. Both the work and the bosses make us tired. We get very tired. When I go to bed, I feel the pain in my leg. I try to sleep with the pain, but sometimes the pain doesn't let me sleep. I wake up 2-3 times a night because of the pain, I can't even get up to drink water because of the pain in my leg".

In addition, student-workers, like all workers, do not have adequate workplace safety and precautions against accidents and injuries. Given that student-workers are children and more vulnerable to injury and disability, these precautions are crucial. However, according to the participants, the precautions taken in the workplace are often limited to the presence of a first aid kit. Again, according to the examples given by the participants, accidents that occur in the workplace are often not taken seriously, are not reported and the schools are not informed about them. However, as most student-workers are unaware of their rights, they consider workplace accidents to be normal, as in the statements of Adnan and Zekai below:

"It is hard work. Nobody tells us that nothing will happen to you anyway. It will happen. If necessary, you get under a car that weighs a tonne. The jack lifts the car, but who knows? If the jack's hydraulics fail, a car weighing several tonnes will suddenly fall on you. How do you know if the jack's hydraulics are good or bad? You don't. There is no doctor at work, there is a first aid kit. (Adnan)

"Nothing happened to me, thank God. But a friend of mine came to see me recently and his eye was black and bloodshot. I asked him what had happened. The nail from the forklift hit his eye. If it had been any higher, it would have taken his eye out. It hit

his cheekbone. They put a bandage on it and didn't take him to hospital. Thank God nothing happened.” (Zekai)

### ***Learning experiences***

When asked if they were taught a job in the field in which they were enrolled at the VTC at their workplace, the participants stated that no one taught them anything, that they tried to learn only by their own observations from the first day they started working and did what was asked of them. Although the VTCs are called on-the-job learning centers, the students are treated directly as workers and no one, including the foremen in charge of them, tries to show, explain or teach them how to do the job. Arda describes the situation as follows:

"The first day I arrived, they gave me huge pieces of metal and asked me to assemble them, I found out on my own what to use where".

### ***Are they students or workers?***

According to the Ministry of National Education, students enrolled in VTCs and working in workplaces are considered students in the formal education system. However, when asked whether they defined themselves as students or workers, all participants said that they were workers, that they had no rights as students, that they were treated directly as workers, and that they worked under the same conditions as other workers in their workplaces.

In order to benefit from VTC programmes, students must first sign an agreement with a workplace and then they can register with one of the VTCs in their region. In other words, they must first be accepted as workers. This situation becomes a dimension of state encouragement and legitimisation of child labour. Sinan summarises the statements of all the participants on this issue:

"We only go to school from exam to exam, we have no other connection with being a student. We all work as labourers for a pittance, but our name is student".

### **Student-Worker Rights**

Although students enrolled in VTCs work under the same conditions as other workers, interviews showed that they often cannot benefit from either student or worker rights. They cannot benefit from 4-day work-1-day school rights, weekend breaks, public holidays and child rights because they are not recognised as workers and therefore cannot receive full wages, form unions, or benefit from employment and social security rights.

### ***Student rights***

Students enrolled in the VTC are accepted as students enrolled in the formal education system. However, as they are accepted as workers in the workplaces where they work and, as Beyza explained, "*if we don't agree to go to work for six days, we don't get hired*", they are forced to work six days a week. All participants stated that the rule of 4 days work, 1 day school is not applied in the VTCs. Therefore, like all students, they cannot have a 2-day weekend. In some cases, they even work on public holidays. Mehmet, who we spoke to the day after the Republic Day holiday, expressed this situation by saying: "*Yesterday was a holiday for everyone, but not for us, we had to work while our peers were celebrating in school.*"

Being forced to work at a young age, student workers are deprived of their rights to healthy socialisation with their peers, healthy psychological development, childhood and play. Just like 14-year-old Arda, who answered the question "Do you play games with your friends?" with:

"...I don't have time. I get home at 10 pm, I play on my phone for a while. Then I fall asleep because I'm tired", Adnan also answers with "I don't have time to play games now, I don't have any friends except the apprentices at work. When I save some money, maybe I will go back to school, play games, play ball, go out, have fun".

Another dimension of student workers being deprived of their student rights is the lack of support and guidance from teachers to look after them, give them the necessary information and protect their rights in the workplaces where they work. This is because it is the foremen, not the teachers, who are responsible for supervising the students working in the VTCs. However, as these foremen have no training in pedagogy or child psychology, they are unable to provide guidance on the children's learning, development and problems.

### ***Workers' Rights***

Although VTC students are considered the same as adult workers in terms of working conditions and responsibilities in their workplaces and can do any job, they are not officially workers but students, so they are prohibited from joining a union or organising. Therefore, they cannot become members of any organisation or union that will fight for their rights.

They also face deep inequalities in wages. Most of the participants said that employers employ them for only a third of the minimum wage set by the state. Emre describes the practice regarding wages as follows:

"We are paid a third of the minimum wage. The boss threatens us and says that if we don't like it, we have no right to ask for more. But then we have to make the apprentices work like apprentices. If you make them work like normal workers and pay them less, it would be unfair. We accept it because we have to. The rule on the paper is in favour of the boss. He uses the rule as he sees fit, whatever the rule is".

Some participants said that their bosses also deducted the wages paid by the state, but there was no room to complain and they had to learn a trade. For example, Ali said that his boss deducted the wages paid by the state for him and did not give him the full wage, only the weekly wage, but kept quiet so that he could learn a trade.

As students are not considered workers during the training process, they cannot benefit from social security and pension rights. VTC students are only insured against accidents at work and occupational diseases. As no insurance is paid for the days they work, these periods do not count towards the period required for retirement.

## **Results and Discussions**

As the economic crisis and poverty increase in Turkey, the number of student workers in VTCs, which have been turned into a legal form of child labour by the state with the changes in vocational education, is increasing day by day. This situation leads to an increase in the number of working children, especially “studentification” of the youth labor force and the reproduction of labour. The reasons for the enrolment of students in VTCs from the age of 13-14 are poverty, the inability of families to meet the increasing costs of schooling and academic failure, mostly due to economic reasons. This situation encourages child labour and exploitation.

The working style and routines at the core of labour-intensive production in VTC programmes detach young student workers from the processes of learning and acquiring production knowledge and dequalify them, while causing the student worker to see him/herself as an ordinary element in production. Student-workers work while being deprived of both student and worker rights. The physical and psychological development of children, who cannot benefit from



the rights deriving from the Labour Code and who experience all forms of exploitation in its most severe form, does not progress under "normal" conditions.

The current environments in the workplaces included in the VTC programme are not designed for the protection, health and development of children. Student workers work in environments that are prone to all kinds of accidents and injuries. In addition, these students are exposed to violence, abuse and humiliation at the hands of clients, employers and supervisors. No preventive measures are taken against these negative factors, and the workplaces are not sufficiently supported by schools and teachers.

In the name of vocational training, VTC students, almost all of whom are poor children, are encouraged to work for 30 per cent or half the minimum wage, with the hope of obtaining a master's or journeyman's certificate and opening their own business. However, in these programmes, which have nothing to do with school or education, the knowledge of production is the property of the employer, and in the division of labour and the organisation of the workplace, the employment of students is left to the authority of the employer. Therefore, the employer's control and supervision over the mind and body of the student worker increases.

Students in grades 9, 10 and 11 employed under the VTC receive one third of the minimum wage, while students in grade 12 receive half of the minimum wage. All wages and accident insurance for students in VTCs are also covered by the unemployment insurance fund, i.e. the public budget. In this way, the government provides the labour force that the market needs through education policy, and at the same time, the companies also benefit from incentives such as tax reductions and master instructor compensation programmes for employing

child labour, but in return, the companies and capital have no obligations or responsibilities such as employing graduates or contributing to the financing of education.

The use of the public budget to satisfy the labour needs of the market instead of the educational needs of the students shows that the priority of the government is not to provide quality education to the students but to satisfy the demands and needs of capital. As it is the case all over the world, the problems of education in Turkey are based on the commercialisation of education and its use in the market due to the neo-liberal policies. Like all the problems in education, the problems in vocational education should be approached from a social and public policy and class perspective and solutions should be produced in this context. Because every step in education that is compatible with neo-liberal policies, every educational policy that is far from social and public education, condemns the poor and the lower classes to deeper poverty, eliminates the possibility of social mobility and building a better future through education, reproduces labour under even worse conditions and deepens class inequalities and social separation. The oppressed can only achieve a better future through education and become citizens through the implementation of secular, scientific, social and public education policies and the access of all children to quality education.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For Development Plans see. <https://www.sbb.gov.tr/kalkinma-planlari/>

<sup>2</sup> For Strategic Plans prepared by Ministry Of Education see <https://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/1-stratejik-planlar-ve-hazirlik-programlari/icerik/331>

<sup>3</sup> See the law on official journal. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti (9th December 2016). "Resmi Gazete". Başbakanlık Mevzuatı Geliştirme ve Yayın Genel Müdürlüğü. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı. Date: 5th August 2023.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2021/12/20211225-1.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <https://meslekiegitimharitasi.meb.gov.tr/ogrenci.php>

<sup>6</sup> <https://e-mesem.meb.gov.tr/Login.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264424/child-poverty-in-oecd-countries/#:~:text=Among%20the%20OECD%20countries%2C%20Costa,United%20States%20did%20the%20same.>

<sup>8</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Ucretli-Calisan-Istatistikleri-Mayis-2024-53586#:~:text=T%C3%9C%C4%B0K%20Kurumsal&text=Sanayi%2C%20in%C5%9Faat%20ve%20ticaret%2Dhizmet,669%20bin%20792%20ki%C5%9Fi%20oldu.>

<sup>9</sup> [https://bostemel.meb.k12.tr/icerikler/sinif-tekrarina-kalan-ogrencilerden-mesemciraklik-programina-kayit-yaptiracak-ogrencilerimizin-dikkatine\\_15326505.html](https://bostemel.meb.k12.tr/icerikler/sinif-tekrarina-kalan-ogrencilerden-mesemciraklik-programina-kayit-yaptiracak-ogrencilerimizin-dikkatine_15326505.html)

<sup>10</sup> Education Information Network or EBA for short is a social educational electronic content network established by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey.

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