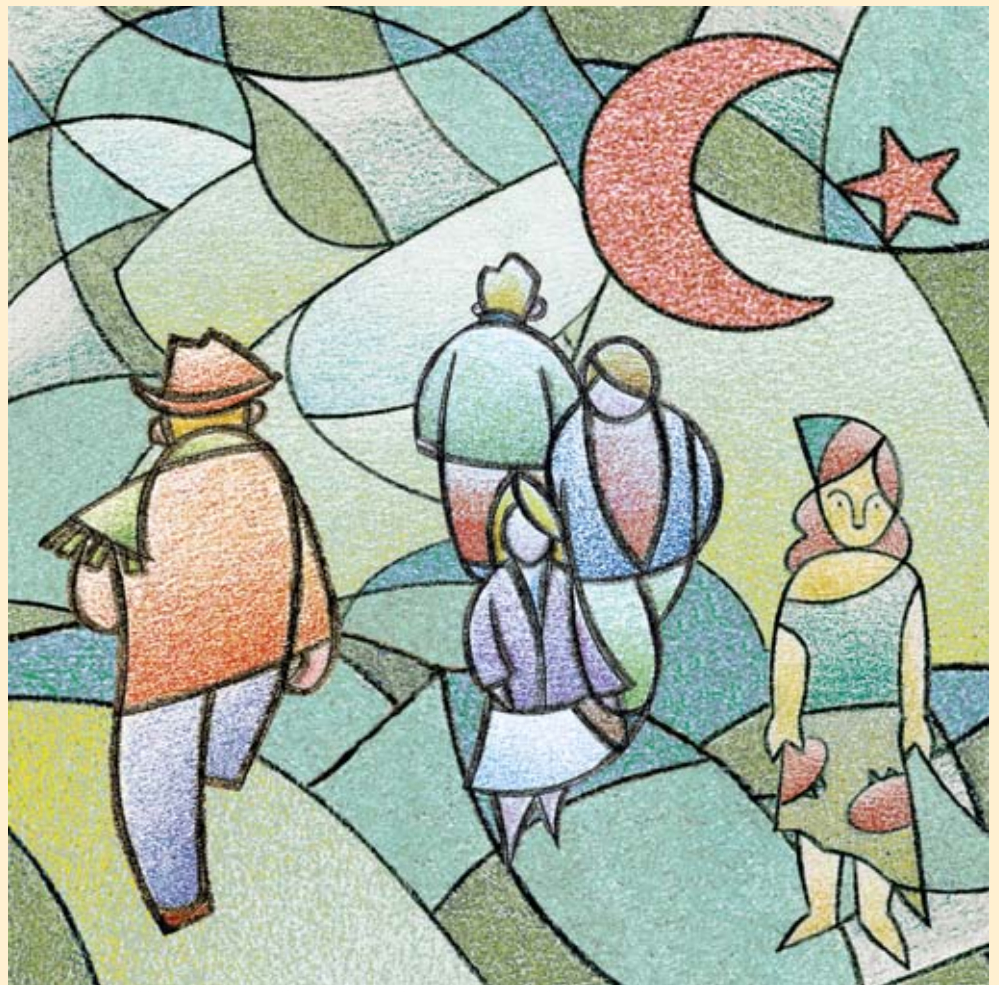




# First European Quality of Life Survey: Quality of life in Turkey



First European Quality of Life Survey:  
Quality of life in Turkey

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European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

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# Foreword

Diversity is one of the defining features of the enlarged European Union. With the prospect of further enlargement ahead, differences such as those in living conditions, quality of life and cultural traditions are likely to be more pertinent than ever. While the nurturing of cultural diversity lies at the heart of the European ideal, fostering greater cohesion is also a central priority.

Against this background, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions has been committed to obtaining more in-depth information about how people live and how they perceive their circumstances. In 2003, the Foundation conducted fieldwork for its First European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) in 28 countries: the present 27 EU Member States and the candidate country Turkey. The survey was a questionnaire-based, representative household survey, which aimed to analyse how various life factors affect Europeans' quality of life. In particular, it addressed a number of key areas: employment, economic resources, housing and local environment, family and household structure, participation in the community, health and healthcare, knowledge/education and training.

This timely report draws on some of the findings of the EQLS, along with other pieces of key research, on issues affecting quality of life in the candidate country, Turkey. Never before has a candidate country as unique and diverse as Turkey raised such interesting challenges for the EU. A country of contrasts, Turkey embraces many anomalies which are increasingly being placed under the spotlight, given its EU candidacy status. A nationalist secular state, Turkey has a predominantly Muslim population; formerly a mainly rural country, its population has shifted to a largely urban one; despite having a population size second only to that of Germany among the EU Member States, Turkey's income per capita is lower than any of the EU countries; and notwithstanding the forward-looking vision of the republic's founder, a significant majority of women in Turkey still do not participate in paid employment.

Such contrasts raise interesting questions with regard to quality of life in Turkey. This report explores the latter issue by comparing objective and subjective conditions in Turkey with those in both the older and new EU Member States. The comparison encompasses key factors affecting social inclusion or exclusion in Turkey – such as education and training, economic status, income distribution, social and health services – in addition to gender differences and participation in informal and formal social networks. Moreover, it addresses the key issue of people's perceptions of the quality of society, as well as assessing the overall life satisfaction of Turkey's citizens. The report culminates in an overview of some of the key challenges facing Turkey today and the implications of the report's findings both for Turkey itself and in relation to its EU candidacy.

We hope that the findings of this report will contribute to providing a greater insight into the complex range of issues that affect Turkey's candidacy, along with the quality of life and overall life satisfaction of the citizens of this unique country.

Jorma Karppinen  
Director

Willy Buschak  
Deputy Director

## Country codes used in the report (situation as at 2004)

### EU15

AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
DK	Denmark
FI	Finland
FR	France
DE	Germany
EL	Greece
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LU	Luxembourg
NL	Netherlands
PT	Portugal
ES	Spain
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom

### NMS

CZ	Czech Republic
CY	Cyprus
EE	Estonia
HU	Hungary
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
MT	Malta
PL	Poland
SK	Slovakia
SI	Sloveni

### Acceding countries

BG	Bulgaria
RO	Romania

### Candidate country

TR	Turkey
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### Abbreviations

EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
EU15	15 EU Member States (pre May 2004)
NMS	10 new Member States that joined the EU in May 2004
EU25	25 EU Member States (post May 2004)

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# Introduction

The distinctive nature of Turkey's history and culture raise important challenges in relation to its proposed membership of the European Union. In particular, major questions arise about quality of life in Turkey. Moreover, the fact that Turkey's income per capita is lower than that of any of the current EU Member States – and that its steadily increasing population will surpass that of Germany in little more than a decade – represent further causes for concern. At the same time, the recent enlargement of the EU raises issues about accepting diversity, whilst at the same time achieving social cohesion.

Quality of life issues constitute the social complement of the political and economic concerns of the Copenhagen criteria for entry to the EU. These criteria emphasise political institutions from the top down, a functioning market economy and national administrative capacity (Rose, 2006). At the same time, the quality of life concept focuses not only on the inputs of government to society, but also on outcomes for individuals (see Fahey et al, 2003; Phillips, 2006). Such a focus is consistent with the EU's Lisbon strategy aimed at the reduction of social exclusion and the creation of more cohesive national societies through the integration of individuals in all kinds of activities – at home, in the workplace and in informal networks of friends and family (Room, 1995; Atkinson et al, 2002; Fahey et al, 2003). The link between social and economic conditions is further underlined in the European Commission's Social Agenda (2005). Turkey's status as a candidate country places the spotlight on this country's quality of life standards. To what extent, for example, are Turkey's public policies effective in promoting quality of life, and how widely are the benefits of public policy shared within Turkish society? Similarly, to what degree does quality of life in Turkey today approach that of the new Member States which were admitted to the EU in the 2004 and 2007 enlargement rounds?

Another challenge concerns the expansion of the EU, which raises complex questions about the importance of recognising the diversity of more than two dozen countries, whilst also achieving social cohesion. Insofar as the quality of an individual's life is not entirely dependent on material conditions, then the existing diversity in national income within the EU is consistent with the finding of European citizens sharing a relatively high quality of life. However, insofar as household and national income greatly influence quality of life, then the admission of countries with lower income levels may reduce social cohesion or require a large financial commitment on the part of the EU to raise material living standards and quality of life. Turkey's application to join the EU, in particular, raises acute issues with respect to cohesion: not only is its income per capita lower than that of any of the EU Member States, but also its political and cultural history could be seen as endorsing different societal goals than those of existing EU countries.

Against this background, efforts have been made to explore the issue of quality of life in Turkey, by gaining an insight into what the country's citizens think and believe. The evidence examined in this particular report is based on findings from surveys by official and academic Turkish organisations and related social science studies, and on the results obtained from the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) conducted by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The latter survey was conducted by the Foundation in 2003 in 28 countries: namely, the present 27 Member States of the EU and Turkey. These countries were grouped according to their political situation regarding the EU at the time of publication of the EQLS findings. The three country groups that comprise the 28 countries covered in the survey are as follows: the original 15 EU Member States (EU15), the 10 so-called 'new' Member States (NMS) that joined the EU in May 2004 and the three acceding and candidate countries – Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Specifically, the EQLS examined six key areas of quality of life: employment; economic resources; family and

households; community life and social participation; health and healthcare; and knowledge, education and training.

## **Structure of report**

Based on this comprehensive range of findings, this particular analytical report compares the social conditions of people living in Turkey with those of people living in the EU15, the NMS and in Turkey's neighbouring countries Bulgaria and Romania, both of which joined the EU in January 2007. Gaining an insight into the objective conditions and subjective attitudes that affect quality of life requires evidence from nationally representative surveys of the Turkish population. It also requires an understanding of the structure and institutions of Turkish society. The first chapter of this report presents a contextual overview of Turkish life, including its national history and the relationship between the state and religion. The second chapter of the report examines the dramatic growth in Turkey's population, along with the migration between regions within the country and to Europe, and their implications for public policy. In Chapter 3, measures of social inclusion are examined, including those relating to education, economic status, income distribution, social and health services, and evaluation of national policies. The fourth chapter explores gender differences and informal and formal social capital networks in Turkey, in addition to the central issue of satisfaction with the quality of society and people's overall life satisfaction. The concluding chapter views Turkey from the perspective of European policy, emphasising the potential challenges that Turkey faces, whatever the tone or outcome of discussions on its EU membership. Each chapter examines differences between people living in Turkey and makes comparisons between social conditions in Turkey and those found in the EU's diverse Member States.

## **Data sources**

To gain an insight into the quality of life in a society, it is necessary to obtain data about how individuals perceive their conditions; this information is best obtained by that common social science method of nationally representative sample surveys. While some of the questions included in a sample survey, such as those in relation to age and education, are also asked in census surveys, census data concentrate on so-called objective indicators of social conditions. By contrast, quality of life surveys collect both subjective evaluations and objective indicators.

Since 2003, the Turkish Statistical Institute (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu*, TÜİK) has conducted a nationwide Quality of Life survey, and its initial survey (2003) is frequently cited in this report. The samples of these surveys are nationally representative and large: for example, the 2003 survey consisted of 5,304 respondents. The survey questionnaire was designed to reflect conditions in Turkey, for example, identifying individuals who are literate without having attended school. While TÜİK surveys reflect conditions specific to Turkey, the underlying concepts mirror concerns common to surveys throughout Europe.

The Foundation's 28-country EQLS survey is the primary source of comparative data used in this report. Using nationally representative sample surveys, the EQLS questionnaire asked the same questions in 28 countries – namely, in the recently enlarged 27 EU Member States and in the candidate country Turkey. A total of 26,257 face-to-face interviews were conducted in 2003 by national survey organisations coordinated by Intomart GfK (see Ahrendt, 2004; Nauenburg and Mertel, 2004). In Turkey, interviews took place during 14–28 July 2003 at 165 sampling points, which

were selected from a stratified random sample of the national population. A total of 996 persons were interviewed, representing a response rate of 37% of the eligible sample. While this was among the lowest response rates in the EQLS, comparison with census figures from three years before showed that the sample matched the national population in relation to age and gender (see Özcan and Rose, 2006). The EQLS questionnaire was the outcome of a lengthy deliberative process involving a team of European social scientists (see Fahey et al, 2003). It provides indicators assessing both the objective conditions of individuals and their subjective evaluation of quality of life (see Alber, 2004, pp. 484–492).

The EQLS also drew upon research from the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB). The latter organisation's European Welfare Survey was conducted in nine countries in 2001–2002. The Turkish Euromodule was undertaken in the winter of 2001–2002 under the auspices of sociologists at the Middle East Technical University. The total sample of 4,020 respondents was much larger than the EQLS survey; however, in comparison with the State Planning Organisation's data, the responses were skewed towards the more educated sectors of the Turkish population. Where the Euromodule provides additional indicators, it is cited, and its larger size has been helpful in confirming the reliability of responses to comparable EQLS questions. Since the European Welfare Survey was only able to cover one-third of the EU countries, it cannot be used for cross-national analysis.

In addition, a large number of market research firms in Turkey conduct nationwide surveys in accordance with the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) standards. PIAR, a research firm established in the early 1990s, has accumulated trend data on many topics, including religion and gender. Since its incorporation in the TNS international survey organisation, it participates in Eurobarometer surveys of the European Commission; its standard survey consists of a nationwide representative sample of approximately 2,000 respondents.

TÜİK also conducts the official census in Turkey, along with studies of special social groups. Turkey's first census was held in 1927 and the most recent one in 2000. The census is the primary source of data about trends measured over decades, such as population growth. In addition, a variety of key indicators are updated annually and published on the TÜİK website. Moreover, since Turkey was a founder member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1960, some lengthy time series of economic data have been calculated on a basis comparable with advanced industrial economies. The process of adapting Turkish methods to EU standards is ongoing (European Commission, 2006, p. 51).



## Legacy of history

The Turkish state is the successor of the multi-national Ottoman Empire, which for more than four centuries sprawled across the Near East and parts of southern and eastern Europe. This empire collapsed in the aftermath of defeat in the First World War. Subsequently, in 1923, the boundaries of contemporary Turkey were set by the Treaty of Lausanne, which ended the war between Turkey and Greece. In the same year, the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed. Except for the addition of Hatay in 1939, a province on the border of Syria, Turkey's boundaries have remained unchanged since the establishment of the republic. Divisions between Greeks and Turks on the island of Cyprus led the Turkish army to invade the country in 1974; however, the 200,000 people in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are not part of the Republic of Turkey.

The founders of the Turkish Republic, led by the famous general Kemal Atatürk, pursued a radical policy of modernisation (Rustow and Ward, 1964). For instance, the Arabic script was replaced by the Roman alphabet; polygamy was abolished; the Ottoman Caliphate<sup>1</sup> was replaced by a secular state; and European values and dress were upheld as the ideal. The state's capital city was moved from Istanbul (formerly known as Constantinople) to Ankara in Turkey's heartland of Anatolia, marking a symbol of the new state's orientation to the Turkish nation rather than to a multi-ethnic and polyglot empire. Like much of eastern Europe at that time, Anatolia was predominantly rural and economically backwards. Kemal Atatürk saw the state as playing an active role in developing the Turkish economy, but rejected the idea of forced industrialisation through a Soviet-style, non-market economy (Mango, 2004).

The Atatürk ideal was defined by the term *étatiste* – whereby the state is regarded as the central institution for modernising a society that had become backwards compared with the standards of western Europe. The Turkish army was assigned a major role in promoting development and in guarding the interests of the state that transcend the concerns of the government (Heper, 1985; Hale 1994). For more than half a century, governments have been chosen in democratic elections; however, the army has intervened from time to time to take temporary control of government. The current Turkish Constitution was adopted in 1982 after a military coup and authorises the appointment of a president and a Grand National Assembly. On the 10-point 'perception of corruption index', devised by Transparency International, Turkey was assigned a score of 3.8 in 2006. This rating was below that of every EU Member State, with the exception of Poland and Romania.

## Economic and geopolitical context

The rural economy of Anatolia has been slow to industrialise; nonetheless, in recent decades, it has demonstrated rapid but erratic rates of growth. With a population size second only to that of Germany among the EU Member States, Turkey's aggregate gross domestic product (GDP) is now greater than that of 16 EU countries. Economic growth reflects the activities of indigenous entrepreneurs in Anatolia in classic early industrial products such as textiles, as well as the growth of financial conglomerates based in Istanbul. Nonetheless, as a result of the country's population explosion, income per capita in Turkey remains well below the EU average. After adjusting for differences in purchasing power, GDP per head in 2004 barely reached one quarter of the EU15

<sup>1</sup> A caliphate is the office or jurisdiction of a caliph – the civil and religious leader of a Muslim state, regarded as a successor of Muhammad and by tradition always male.

average and two thirds of the average of the least prosperous EU25 Member States (OECD, 2005, pp. 13–16).

The geopolitical significance of the Republic of Turkey has shifted with developments in neighbouring states. Today, Turkey has land borders with Armenia and Georgia and multiple ties with Turkic peoples in Central Asia. The country's Black Sea coast faces towards Russia and the Ukraine in the north and Romania and Bulgaria in the west, while the Aegean Sea separates Turkey from Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in the south. Turkey also has land borders with Iraq, Syria and Iran. During the Second World War, the country managed to remain neutral almost until the end of the war, despite its strategic position in between the Axis powers and the Soviet Union. Turkey was an early member of the National Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) military alliance and has full diplomatic relations with Israel. It is also one of the 57 member states comprising the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

Consistent with the European orientation of Atatürk, in 1962 Turkey became an associate member of the EU's precursor – the European Economic Community (EEC). Economic and political difficulties delayed further action until 1987, when Turkey applied to become a full member of the European Community. This was followed by an agreement in 1996 which created a 'customs union' between Turkey and the EU. Since then, EU countries have been the main market for Turkish exports, as well as a source of Turkish imports (see Ugur and Canefe, 2004). In 1999, Turkey was officially recognised as a candidate country of the EU, with the proviso that it should take active steps to meet the EU's Copenhagen criteria for membership: namely, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human and minority rights, competence in administering the *acquis communautaire* (the cumulative body of EU laws and objectives), and a functioning market economy.

Formal discussions about the accession of Turkey to the EU opened in October 2005. Reflecting the concerns of some of the EU Member States regarding the level of development in Turkey, it was assumed that discussions concerning the application for membership would last for a decade or more. A year later, the European Commission concluded in its evaluation of negotiations (2006) that the Turkish government was not making sufficient progress with the introduction of reforms necessary to meet the EU's political standards. In December 2006, the Council of Ministers suspended discussion with Turkey on eight of the 35 chapters in the *acquis communautaire*, until the Turkish government agreed to open its ports to trade with the Republic of Cyprus, now an EU Member State. The Turkish government responded that the EU had failed to put sufficient pressure on the Republic of Cyprus to end divisions on the island.

## **Comparing quality of life in Turkey and the EU**

Governments at all levels of European society contribute to quality of life. Nevertheless, their outputs – whether measured in terms of public expenditure, public employment or spending on physical infrastructure, such as roads and houses – are not direct measures of the quality of life. The outputs of government constitute inputs into the lives of individuals, households and communities. An individual's quality of life depends on the combination of a multiplicity of resources from family and friends, from the market, and from the state (Rose, 1986). It also depends on how the consequences are evaluated.

Comparisons between social groups within a given society and between societies across Europe offer meaningful evidence on how people evaluate their quality of life. In this report, comparisons are made firstly between people living in Turkey. Whereas aggregate data about GDP make generalisations about Turkey as a whole, quality of life surveys can focus on the income of individuals and households. Such a comparison shows that GDP per capita does not in fact represent the income of most individuals: rather, some individuals have an income well below the national average, while others have an income above this level, in addition to those whose income is close to the average level.

Secondly, comparisons can give an insight into whether social conditions in Turkey tend to be much the same, below or above the conditions of countries accepted for admission to the EU. In the subsequent chapters of this report, countries are grouped according to the duration of their membership in the EU, a categorisation that tends to fit conventional economic indicators of well-being. The three main groups are as follows:

- the 15 ‘older’ EU Member States – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (UK). This particular group consists of countries that represent what is often described as the ‘European social model’;
- the 10 new Member States which joined the EU in 2004 – Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. In these countries, the great majority of people have lived for longer in a non-market, communist state than in a European social state;
- the two acceding countries which joined the EU in 2007 – Bulgaria and Romania. Both of these countries have many historic connections with Turkey, and similarities exist between their contemporary living conditions and those of Turkey (Margeian et al, 2006).

In the third instance, a comparison over time can identify the extent to which quality of life is changing (Rose, 1995). Over many years, census data have traced extensive changes within Turkish society, such as the shift from a predominantly rural society to a mostly urban population. A contemporary survey can also point to future developments. For example, comparisons between age groups can show the extent to which increased public provision of education has resulted in a better educated generation of young Turkish adults compared with the middle-aged generation of Turks, who are nevertheless in turn more highly educated than older Turks. The increased education of the adult population can thus be seen as a trend that is likely to continue indefinitely into the future.

Given the diversity of countries within Europe, it is unrealistic to expect that everyone will enjoy the same quality of life. However, regardless of past trends, it is possible that quality of life within each European country is beginning to improve. In countries that appear to have levels below the desired standard of living, the EU’s social cohesion policies aim to enable such societies to catch up with EU standards, by accelerating an improvement in living standards.

## **A secular state and Muslim population**

The Ottoman Empire ruled millions of people with different religions, including western Catholics, Protestants and eastern orthodox Christians, along with Jews and those practising multiple forms of



the Islamic religion. The Sultanate<sup>2</sup> maintained '*millet*' or minority institutions, which allowed groups defined by religion to exercise a number of civil powers according to their distinctive religious norms and practices. The Sultan was a Muslim, as were the great majority of the Turkish population of this multinational empire. As well as being the head of state, the Sultan was also a caliph, that is, the leader of all Muslims.

The founders of the Republic of Turkey had the goal of modernising what had effectively become a backward society. Included in this modernisation project was the promotion of scientific modes of thought and action. In place of the Sultan's dual role as head of church and state, Turkish republicans actively promoted the idea of secularism (or *laïcité* in French). The principle of secularism was consistent with the republican tradition of France and of other European countries, where the influence of clerical authorities on public policy was rejected in favour of modernisation (Finer, 1997, p. 1,478). Article 2 of Turkey's current Constitution declares that the country is a 'democratic, secular and social state', while Article 10 includes a declaration of individual equality before the law without regard to religion.

Since the population of the Turkish Republic is overwhelmingly Muslim in name and to a degree in practice, an Office of Religious Affairs was established to supervise religious institutions at the same time as the Caliphate was abolished in 1924; today, this body employs more than 60,000 people. The state appointment of *imams* is used as a means of preventing the encouragement of anti-state activities under the guise of giving religious instruction. Unlike the Soviet Union, where the regime sought to supplant religion with communist beliefs, the secularism of the Turkish state has tolerated religious institutions that are subordinate to the state (Toprak, 2005).

When Turks are asked about their religious affiliation, 97.5% respond that they are Muslims, 0.2% cite another religion, while 2.3% indicate that they have no religion. A majority of the respondents are Sunni Muslims (the branch of Islam that accepts the first four caliphs as the rightful successors of Muhammad); the second largest group is comprised of the Alevi Muslims (adherents of a specific Shi'a strand of Islam, with some pre-Islamic influences), characterised by Shankland (2003) as having a relatively 'secular' Islamic faith. A national survey by Carkoglu et al (2005) developed a three-point scale designed to measure the extent to which Turks are more or less oriented towards Alevi beliefs and practices: the results showed that 5% of Turks are positively oriented towards Alevi beliefs on the basis of at least two measures.

Frequency of church attendance, a standard measure of religious commitment in Christian countries, is not as relevant in Muslim societies, since Muslim devotions and prayers can be performed at work, at home or anywhere, and not just at a mosque (Table 1). When the EQLS assessed church attendance in the Turkish population as a whole, about two-fifths of the respondents reported attending services at least weekly, one-fifth at least once a month or once a year, while almost two-fifths reported never or hardly ever attending religious services. However, attendance is unsatisfactory as an indicator of religiosity, as it ignores the fact that mosque attendance for prayers is a common practice for men but not for women, for whom mosques represent a limited and segregated space. When asked about praying without going to a mosque, Turkish women appear more religious: 87% of women report praying at least weekly, compared with 75% of men. The extent of religious practice

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<sup>2</sup> A country ruled by a sultan, i.e. ruler of a Muslim country.

therefore shows that for the majority of Turkish citizens, the state's commitment to secularism has not led them to regard their Muslim beliefs as being inconsistent with living a modern life.

**Table 1 Religious participation in Turkey, by sex, %**

	Men %	Women %
<b>Mosque attendance</b>		
At least weekly	63	18
Once or twice a month	6	4
At least once a year	8	23
Never or very rarely	23	55
<b>Prays not at mosque but...</b>		
At least weekly	75	87
At least monthly	15	9
At least once a year	3	1
Never or very rarely	7	3

Source: Mosque attendance: EQLS, 2003; Prays away from mosque: World Values Survey, 2001(www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

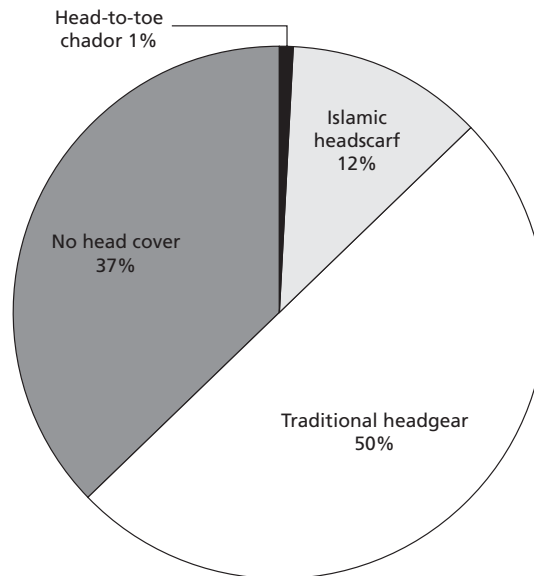
The coexistence of a secular (or *laik* in Turkish) state and a predominantly Muslim population underlines the distinctive nature of Islam in Turkish society, compared with many other predominantly Muslim societies in the world (cf. Heper, 1985, Hunter and Malik, 2005). As Kramer (1993, p. 4) has emphasised: 'It is not possible to talk about Islam and democracy in general, but only about Muslims living and theorising under specific historical circumstances' (see also Rose, 2002). One reflection of the Turkish state's rejection of tradition and its commitment to scientific and secular values is its ban on women wearing traditional headgear in some public places. However, leaders of so-called 'Islamist' parties in Turkey advocate that the state be more accepting of religious as well as secular practices. In the words of Turgut Özal, a former World Bank economist, prime minister and Muslim: 'The Turk is aware that faith in itself does not affect secularism, does not prevent him from being rational. In everyday life, there is no difference in this respect between a European Christian and a Turkish Muslim' (Pope and Pope, 2004, p. 170). Practical expression of the coexistence of economic modernisation and traditional practices is reflected in the industries developed by Anatolian entrepreneurs, who have been characterised as 'Anatolian tigers' or 'Islamic Calvinists' and who promote economic development alongside traditional values (see European Stability Institute (ESI)).

The readiness of Turks to respect both the secular norms of the state and religious traditions is also reflected in the country's marriage practices. The state requires a civil service in order for a marriage to be legally binding. According to a 2005 TNS-PIAR survey, some 95% of people describing themselves as married have had a civil marriage service, compared with 5% of respondents who cite only having a religious service. Of those who have had a civil service, an additional 64% also had a religious marriage ceremony.

Another indicator of religious practice and attitudes is reflected in the female dress code. The secular state has ruled against the wearing of Muslim headscarves in official buildings, including the presidential palace; these rules do not apply, however, to what is worn on the street or in most public spaces. Turkish women differ in their behaviour in this respect (Figure 1). In a 2006 survey by the

Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (*Türkiye Ekonomik Ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı*, TESEV), approximately three out of eight Turkish women reported that they did not wear any head covering whatsoever; moreover, the women in this category tend to be better educated and of a higher social status. Half of the women surveyed wear headgear that is consistent with Turkish national traditions and a latitudinarian interpretation of Muslim habits. Only 12% wear the traditional Islamic headscarf, and hardly any Turkish women (1%) cover themselves entirely in public by wearing a full-length *chador*<sup>3</sup> (Kalaycioglu, 2005).

**Figure 1** Proportion of women in Turkey who wear head covering, %



Source: TESEV, 2006

A clear majority of people in Turkey endorse the supremacy of secular civil law over *seriat* – that is, an Islamic code of behaviour which the state rejected with the abolition of the Caliphate and the closure of *seriat* courts in 1924. In three nationwide academic sample surveys, conducted between 1995 and 1998, an average of 60% of respondents disapproved of the idea of making Turkey a *seriat* state; 18% of respondents had no opinion on this issue, while an average of 22% endorsed the idea. When Turks were asked about their opinion on the state enforcing specific Islamic rules in relation to marriage, divorce and inheritance, an average of 81% of respondents rejected the idea of such a move (Carkoglu, 2004, 118ff). Moreover, a series of surveys since 1995 show a slow but steady trend toward less Islamic and more secular practices and beliefs (TESEV, 2006). For example, the percentage of people endorsing *seriat* has fallen from 21% in 1999 to 9% in 2006. Likewise, the proportion of women not wearing any head covering has increased from 27% in 1999 to 37% in 2006.

<sup>3</sup> A long robe covering the body from head to toe, including most of the face.

## Ethnic diversity in Turkey

The Ottoman Empire had established distinctive institutions for ruling a population that included millions of Greeks, Armenians, Jews and other nationalities. However, the collapse of the empire and Kamel Atatürk's war of independence resulted in the abandonment of these institutions and the removal from Turkey of most of its non-Turkish population. The 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty officially recognised three minorities – namely, Greeks, Jews and Armenians. Nonetheless, the majority of people in these minority groups left the Republic of Turkey, and today people in these groups only represent a small proportion of the country's population, thus holding no domestic political significance.

Atatürk's vision was that Turkey's many cultures would form one civilisation. In accordance with this ideal, the Republic of Turkey grants citizenship to its residents without regard to ethnic distinctions and on the basis of 'loyalty to the nationalism of Atatürk' (Kadirbeyoglu, 2007). The Turkish Constitution gives legal expression to this nationalism in Article 3, which states that: 'The Turkish state, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish.' Although Kurds share the same Sunni religion as the majority of Turks, the Kurdish language is in a different family to that of Turkish; thus, the Kurds question the description of Turkey as a 'nation state'. Millions of Kurds have lived in eastern and south-eastern Anatolia for centuries. Moreover, an estimated seven million Kurds live in adjacent parts of Iraq, while a further seven million live in neighbouring parts of Iran.

The constitutional definition of Turkey as being 'indivisible' in terms of language and nationality means that no official statistics exist on Turkey's Kurdish population. Unofficial figures estimate that between 10% and 20% of the population are Kurdish, that is, between seven and 14 million people. However, the higher the estimate, the more likely it is to include people who are ethnically mixed, for example, those who speak Turkish at work and Kurdish at home, or who are children or grandchildren of a Kurdish and Turkish marriage, or are themselves in a mixed partnership or marriage between a Turk and a Kurd (Pope and Pope, 2004, p. 254; Sen, 2006). The spread of education and compulsory military service means that young people who speak Kurdish at home are in fact bilingual citizens, since education is delivered in the Turkish language and not in Kurdish. For decades, the use of Kurdish in the media was strictly limited; however, a law against the use of the Kurdish language was repealed in 1991. Official restrictions on circulating printed matter in Kurdish have nevertheless discouraged survey organisations from asking questions about nationality or producing questionnaires in Kurdish. In areas where Kurds are known to be numerous, however, bilingual interviewers translate questions into Kurdish as is necessary for comprehension during an interview.

Another consequence of Kurds not being recognised as an official nationality is reflected in the fact that there are no legal barriers to citizens of Kurdish origins participating fully in political, economic and cultural life; as a result, many examples exist of individuals who participate in such fields, including as members of parliament and of government (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997). If committed Kurds were as numerous and united as nationalist leaders claim, the 10% threshold for winning seats in the Turkish parliament would not constitute a barrier to a Kurdish party. However, the vote for Kurdish parties has been half, or less than half, that of the claimed proportion of Kurds in the Turkish electorate.

In 1978, a Marxist as well as nationalist organisation, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Pariya Karkaan Kurdistan*, PKK), was formed in the Lebanon under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan, with the goal of creating an independent Kurdistan state. Such a state would not only disrupt the Republic of Turkey but also affect Kurdish populations in neighbouring Iraq and Iran (see Gunter, 1997; White, 2000). The PKK waged a guerrilla war in Turkey and from across its boundaries. In response, the Turkish army retaliated with force, clearing Kurdish villages suspected of harbouring PKK guerrillas and launching air strikes in Iraq (IDMC and TESEV, 2006). In 1999, the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya shortly after he left the Greek ambassador's residence was followed by a trial which culminated in Ocalan renouncing an armed struggle and endorsing the achievement of political and cultural goals through peaceful means. In 2002, the PKK was formally disbanded; nonetheless, breakaway Kurdish groups continue to endorse violence.

Historically, Kurds have lived in the poorest regions of eastern Turkey, where illiteracy, family size and infant mortality are higher, while incomes are considerably lower. Such social conditions tend to depress such people's quality of life; moreover, living in an area where a guerrilla war is being waged further undermines citizens' quality of life. In recognition of such facts, millions of Kurds have migrated to the more prosperous western parts of Turkey, including Istanbul, where an estimated one million or more Kurds are said to be living. However, owing to the absence of empirical indicators, it is not possible to assess the relative impact of social and economic factors, national identity and region of residence on the quality of life of Kurdish people.

### **Policy implications**

The pervading values of Atatürk have encouraged an attitude of openness towards Europe in Turkey. Nevertheless, the legacy of the Ottoman past and the trajectory of Turkey's development has distinguished the country from the old and even new EU Member States.

By EU15 standards, Turkey has been late to industrialise. However, unlike the 10 new Member States of eastern and central Europe, its economic development was not distorted for four decades by the imposition of a non-market economy. Instead, following decades of unsuccessful state-led initiatives (Sugar, 1964), its economy has developed by producing goods and services for export, without the rich energy resources that have thwarted development in parts of the Middle East. Turkey's acceptance of market-led growth is in fact more comparable to that of the Republic of Korea. Unlike many countries with a small population, Turkey is big enough to sustain economic conglomerates that possess the resources to finance development and support the country's application to join the EU.

Although the military continues to play a greater role in Turkish politics compared with that of any of the EU Member States, it defines its role as protecting the modernising goals of Atatürk and the Turkish Constitution. Military interventions in Turkey have tended to be contingent on circumstances rather than as a result of continuing competition for power between elected and military governments – a characteristic of many developing and low-income countries. Moreover, Turkey has a longer tradition of democratic elections than most of the new EU Member States, while pluralist institutions of civil society have been long established in Turkey.

Another distinctive feature of the Turkish Republic is the fact that the most pertinent church–state differences have emerged between the modernising secular values of the Atatürk revolution and the

tradition-based Muslim practices of a significant portion of the Turkish population – such as the tendency of most women to remain in the household rather than to participate in the labour market, a practice also observed in Catholic Europe until the 1970s (see Rose, 1994, chapter 3). This contrasts with the church–state divisions observed in Christian Europe or between different branches of Islam, as seen in many parts of the Middle East. Moreover, whereas many European governments are now only seeking to come to terms with their Muslim populations, the secular Republic of Turkey has done so decades ago. While religious differences between Turks still remain, they generally only relate to marginal issues such as the wearing of headscarves in public places, rather than to issues concerning the supremacy of civil law or the legitimacy of violence in the name of religion.

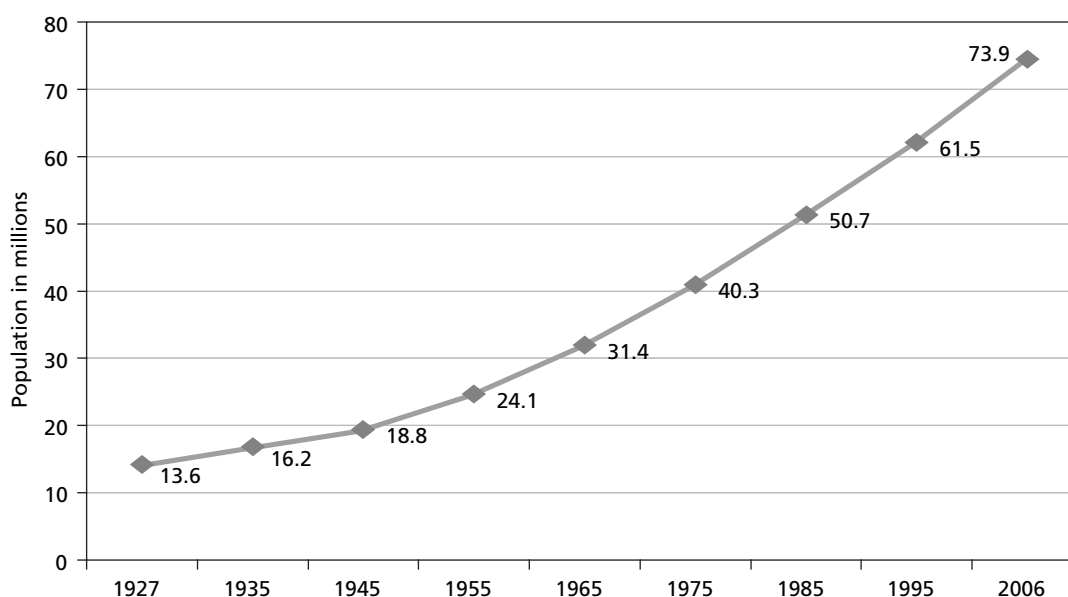


## Large and persistent population growth

Turkey's population is today more than five times greater than that which was recorded in the first census. In 1927, the country's total population consisted of some 13,648,000 people; in 2006, it is estimated to have grown to 73,905,000 people (Figure 2). No other European country has witnessed such a dramatic growth rate in its population. Only the Federal Republic of Germany has a larger population than that of Turkey; however, the difference in population size is not that considerable, nor is it expected to persist, since low fertility rates threaten to reduce the size of Germany's population.

For three-quarters of a century, the Turkish population has grown at a compound rate of 2.1% a year. Although the annual growth rate has been slowing down – for example, between 1996 and 2006, the growth rate was 1.8% per annum – the large absolute increase in population size is continuing. For example, even though the rate of increase in the population almost halved between 2000 and 2006, the absolute growth in population still amounted to 6.1 million people. Official statistics estimate that Turkey's population is continuing to increase by up to one million people a year.

**Figure 2 Population growth in Turkey, 1927–2006**



Source: TÜİK, 2005, Table 1.1

The rapid growth of the Turkish population reflects a decreasing infant mortality rate, along with a total fertility rate among women which is higher than that required to maintain a stable population and longer life expectancy. Although the level of infant mortality is greater in Turkey than in any EU country, TÜİK statistics show that a steady improvement in maternity care has resulted in a drop in infant mortality rates from more than 100 deaths per thousand births at the beginning of the 1980s, to 55 deaths per thousand births by 1990 and 24 deaths per thousand births in 2004.

The average number of children of women of child-bearing age has consistently been higher than the replacement rate required to maintain a stable population. In 1990, the total fertility rate was 3.07



children per woman. Since then, this rate has fallen to 2.21 children per woman. In contrast, among both old and new EU Member States, the total fertility rate is well below the replacement rate required to maintain a stable population (OECD, 2005, 10f; UNICEF, 2004, Table 2.9). Above-average Turkish fertility rates do not appear to reflect ignorance or avoidance of contraception. Decades of education about birth control methods has meant that, by 1990, 99% of the adult population knew about birth control methods; moreover, the proportion of people practising preventive contraception has risen from 63% in 1993 to 71% in 2003 (SIS, 1990–2004a). Meanwhile, official surveys find that the desired number of children – an average of 2.5 children per woman – is close to the average number of children that Turkish women bear today (SIS, 1990–2004b).

In addition, life expectancy has been rising steadily in Turkey: between 1995 and 2005, average life expectancy increased by 3.3 years for men and 3.6 years for women. As in other countries, the average life expectancy of Turkish men (68.9 years) is less than that of Turkish women (73.8 years). Although the overall average life expectancy in Turkey is lower than that in the EU15 or in the NMS, the increase in life expectancy in recent years has been greater. Moreover, male life expectancy in Turkey today is actually higher than that in Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania or Romania (European Commission, 2006, p. 79; OECD, 2005; UNICEF, 2004, Tables 4.2, 4.3).

The nuclear family is the norm in Turkey today. According to the Turkish Demographic and Health Survey (*Türkiye Nüfus ve Sağlık Araştırması*, TNSA), conducted in 2003, only 7% of households consist of individuals living alone, 17% comprise two persons, while 45% of households consist of three or four persons. Some 15% of Turkish households have five persons, 8% consist of six persons, while the remaining 8% of households are larger in size. Rural households tend to have more people per household: 28% of rural households have six or more residents compared with 14% of households in urban areas.

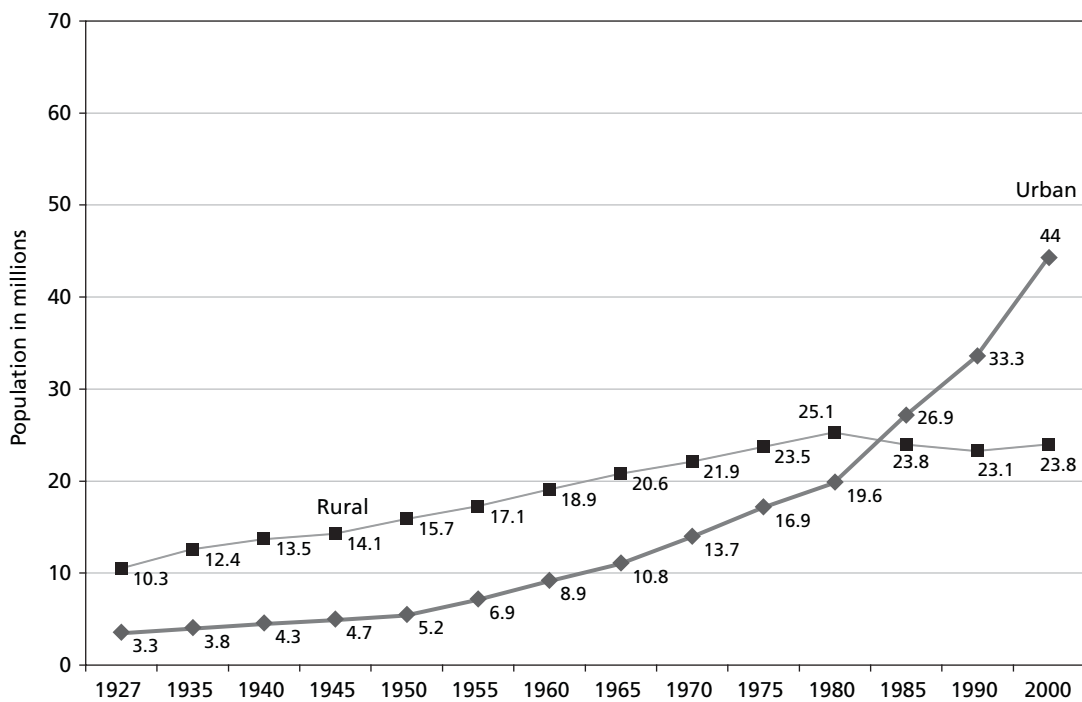
### **Growing urban population**

The Turkish census of 1927 classified 76% of the population as living in rural areas. In Istanbul, following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the population fell by more than a quarter. In 1940, the population of the country's new capital, Ankara, consisted of only 188,000 people. Although the urban population continued to grow thereafter, high birth rates in rural areas maintained rural predominance until the spread of migration, within and outside of Turkey; the increase in birth control methods also reduced rural population growth. Overall, the size of Turkey's rural population fell from a peak of 25.1 million people in 1985 to 23.8 million people in 2000 (Figure 3).

In the 1960s, urban population growth began to boom in Turkey and has continued to grow ever since. By 1990, Turkey's urban population exceeded the size of its rural population, and according to the 2000 census figures, 65% of the population lived in cities. Whereas the rural population has now peaked in size, the urban population has more than doubled in size between 1985 and 2000, resulting in an increase of 24.4 million people in absolute terms. The migration of people from rural areas has led to the growth of urban areas in which homes were built by squatters and where major burdens were placed on municipal services. Migrant districts in cities have served as links between villages and urban life and have themselves adapted, as their residents have become more acclimatised to urban conditions (see White, 2002, 59ff).

The combination of a large national population and a high proportion of urban residents has resulted in widespread population growth in Turkey's cities, particularly in major cities such as Istanbul (9.1 million people), Ankara (3.5 million people) and Izmir (2.7 million people). Eight of Turkey's cities have a population well over one million people, while an additional 10 cities have a population of between 500,000 and one million people. The development of big cities has also caused a high level of congestion. For example, according to the EQLS, the average commuting time of people travelling to work in Turkey is 45 minutes – five minutes above the EU average and six minutes above the average journey to work time in the UK. Even after allowing for differences in the administrative definition of urban and rural areas between EU Member States (Cameron et al, 2006), by any measure the number of large cities in Turkey is very high. Istanbul has a larger population than any city in the EU except for Paris. Moreover, Turkey has more cities with over one million people than any EU Member State: France has four cities with a similar sized population, Germany and Italy have three such cities, Spain has two, while the UK has just one city with a population of over a million people.

**Figure 3 Differential growth in urban and rural populations in Turkey, 1927–2000**



Source: TÜİK, 2005, Table 1.4

### Internal and European migration

The population explosion that took place in a predominantly rural Turkey after the Second World War put pressure on young Turks to leave rural areas, which no longer offered sufficient land and work to support large families. In line with the common practice across Europe at that time, many people moved to large cities within their region or to the country's biggest city, which in Turkey's case is Istanbul. The European Welfare Survey found that only 34% of Turks were living in the area in which they were born, and only half had been living in the same area since 1985.

The Turkish state divided the country into seven administrative regions before adopting the EU's NUTS<sup>4</sup> system in 2000. The region of Marmara, which includes Istanbul, is by far the most populous region with 17.3 million people. Three of the other regions are named after the seas that lie adjacent to their long coastlines: namely, the Aegean region, the Mediterranean region and the Black Sea region. Central Anatolia, in which the capital city Ankara is located, is an inland region. Eastern Anatolia and South-eastern Anatolia are mountainous and less populous regions. They also adjoin Syria, Iraq, Iran and successor states of the Soviet Union. For the sake of analysis, the administrative regions are combined here into three groups according to their level of development. The most developed category encompasses the Marmara and Aegean regions; the developed category consists of the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Central Anatolian regions; while the least developed category comprises Eastern Anatolia and South-eastern Anatolia.

**Table 2 Regional differences in Turkey, by level of development**

	Most developed regions	Developed regions	Least developed regions
Urban population (%)	85	74	54
Adult literacy (%)	87	83	67
Life expectancy (in years)	71.6	67.0	64.0
Unemployment rate (%)	7	8	11
Household income as % of average national income	117	98	64
Total % of Turkish population	41	42	17

*Notes:* Most developed regions: Marmara and Aegean regions; Developed regions: Mediterranean, Black Sea and Central Anatolian regions; Least developed regions: Eastern Anatolia and South-eastern Anatolia.

*Source:* TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute), 2005: adult literacy, life expectancy; EQLS, Interviews with 996 people in Turkey, July 2003

Internal migration from the eastern parts of Turkey has concentrated the population around the city of Istanbul and the Aegean region, where two-fifths of the population now live, and in developed regions such as Central Anatolia, where more than two-fifths of people live. Only one-sixth of the population currently lives in Eastern or South-eastern Anatolia. As the results in Table 2 show, level of development tends to be similar in the first two categories, that is, the most developed and developed regions, while Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia are substantially less developed. In the latter regions, one-third of adults are not classified as being literate, life expectancy is over seven years less than in the most developed parts of Turkey, and household income is more than one-third below the national average. Moreover, the relative backwardness of these eastern and south-eastern regions in terms of urban centres and university graduates limits their capacity to make good use of aid, whether from the national capital of Ankara or from the EU.

In addition to significant internal migration, large proportions of Turkish people have emigrated to other countries, either in Europe or elsewhere. In 1961, at a time when Germany's booming economy was facing labour shortages, the Turkish Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany signed an agreement aimed at encouraging Turks to take up unskilled labouring jobs in Germany. Since then,

<sup>4</sup> The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) was established by Eurostat more than 25 years ago in order to provide a single uniform breakdown of territorial units for the production of regional statistics for the EU.

Germany has become the destination for the majority of Turkish emigrants, a disproportionate number of whom have come from the relatively less developed eastern and rural parts of Turkey (Sayari, 1986). By the mid-1980s, an estimated 1.4 million Turks had emigrated to Germany, and almost 600,000 more to other countries in Europe (Table 3). In addition, a further 340,000 Turks emigrated to other parts of the world, more than half of these moving to the Arab countries. Between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, the number of Turkish emigrants in Europe rose by more than 850,000 people. However, political tensions resulted in a drop in emigration to Arab countries. During this time, money earned by emigrants and sent back home was a significant element in reducing the deficit in Turkey's foreign trade account.

Changes in the Turkish and European economies have also altered patterns of Turkish emigration. Dramatic increases in unemployment during the slow-growth years of the eurozone, along with the economic boom in Turkish cities, have reduced incentives for Turkish emigration. In the past decade, the total number of Turkish emigrants in Europe has fallen by more than 150,000 people (Table 3). This fall has been greatest in Germany, particularly as some Turkish emigrants are now old enough to qualify for a German pension, which allows them a much higher living standard if they return to Turkey. However, the settlement of families in Germany means that there are thousands of ethnic Turks who are German born. Nonetheless, emigration has increased to some parts of Europe; moreover, in the past two decades, Turkish emigration to the United States, Canada and Australia has doubled.

**Table 3 Proportion of Turkish emigrants living abroad, by thousands of people and country, 1985–2005**

	Around 1985 (thousands)	Around 1995 (thousands)	Around 2005 (thousands)
Germany	1,400	2,050	1,912
Austria	75	136	130
France	146	199	208
Netherlands	156	167	100
Rest of Europe	220	301	351
<b>Total Europe</b>	<b>1,997</b>	<b>2,853</b>	<b>2,701</b>
North America	80	120	160
Arab countries	200	127	107
Other	60	130	136
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,337</b>	<b>3,230</b>	<b>3,104</b>

Source: Icduygu, 2005

Given the flows and counter-flows in emigration, the total number of Turkish people who are estimated to live abroad has remained virtually stable over the past decade at around 3.1 million people (Table 3). Today, Turks constitute the largest non-EU nationality now resident in the EU. In order to maintain ties with its emigrants, the Turkish government has amended its citizenship laws to recognise dual citizenship or, if the particular country of residence does not permit dual citizenship, to allow Turks the status of 'privileged non-citizen'; the latter enables emigrants to return to Turkey to work or to buy a house for retirement (Kadirbeyoglu, 2007). While remittances from abroad continue, the boom in the Turkish economy has reduced the relative importance of such funds, falling from a peak of 62% of Turkey's annual trade deficit in 1994 to 20% in 2000 (Kirisci, 2003).

As well as the significant rise in emigration to other countries, a substantial proportion of people of Turkish descent have also immigrated to Turkey. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the new Turkish state encouraged people of Turkish descent to migrate to Turkey, resulting in the arrival of more than 1.6 million people from neighbouring countries. For generations after that, only a relatively small number of people immigrated to Turkey. However, with the collapse of the Soviet system and troubles in surrounding countries, people from a variety of countries have come to Turkey, for example domestic workers from Moldova who are now working in Istanbul. These people are not considered however as permanent immigrants, but rather as temporary workers who earn money to send home and who intend to return to their native country (Kirisci, 2003).

Statistics on international migration are notoriously inadequate. Nevertheless, a collation of data (OECD, 2005a, p. 19) indicates that the number of people settling in Turkey each year is now greater than the proportion of those choosing to leave. However, this difference is relatively small, amounting to just 0.15% of the population. Only 1.9% of the population in Turkey is foreign-born – a figure which has remained stable for more than a decade. In fact, the percentage of foreign-born residents is lower than that of any of the EU15 countries, thus reflecting the limited economic attraction of Turkey as a destination.

An adequate model of Turkish migration must take into account movement within Turkey, movement to and from EU countries, and the limited inflow of foreigners. Over the past four decades, the majority of Turkish people leaving their place of birth have migrated to larger and more prosperous parts of Turkey. Government statistics for the period 1995–2000 indicate that of the 6.7 million Turks who migrated within the country, 3.8 million people moved from one Turkish city to another, while just 0.3 million people moved between villages. Some 1.1 million Turks moved from villages to cities, slightly less than the 1.3 million citizens who moved from cities to ‘villages’, the latter often being settlements on the fringes of large cities rather than rural areas. Together, these figures imply a growing degree of equilibrium in the country’s population distribution, since movements in different directions within Turkey tend to offset each other; this also appears to be the case in relation to levels of Turkish emigration and the return of emigrants.

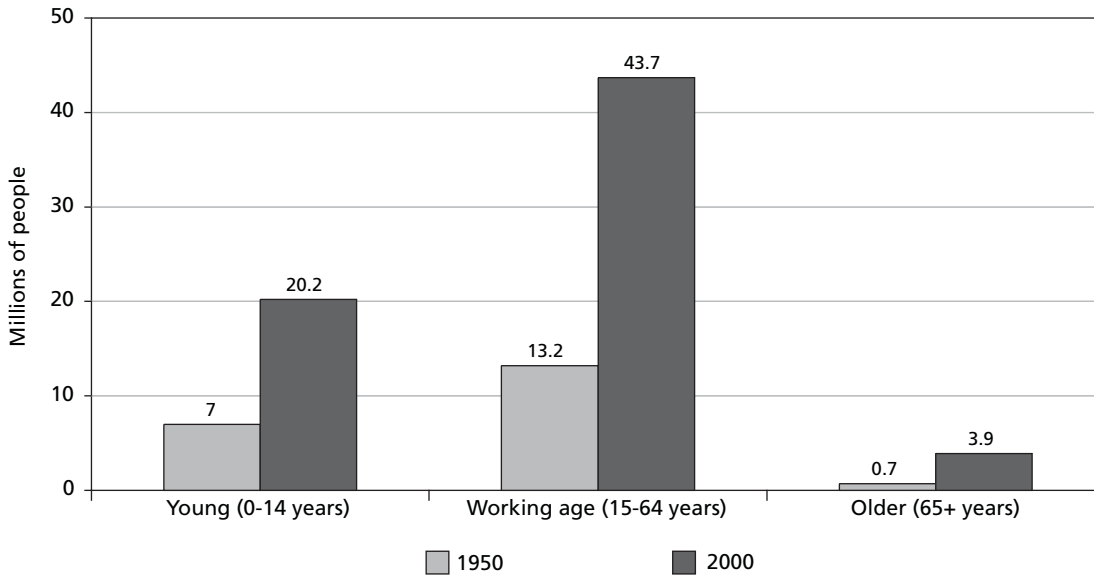
## **Growth in young population**

The population growth in Turkey has affected all age groups, albeit not necessarily in equal proportions (Figure 4). The share of young people in the population has almost trebled, while there has been more than a fivefold increase in the proportion of older Turks. However, given the differences in each group’s share of the population in 1950, the figures for the absolute growth in population by age show a different picture. Accordingly, between 1950 and 2000, the number of Turks of working age (15–64 years) has grown by 30.5 million people, while the number of young people (aged 0–14 years) has increased by 13.2 million people; however, the group with the largest percentage increase, older people aged 65 years and over, has increased by only 3.2 million persons.

Moreover, the age structure of the population in Turkey today is considerably different from that of the typical EU Member State (Figure 5). While the proportion of the working age population in the EU15 and Turkey is almost the same, it is 4.1% higher in the NMS. However, a much greater difference emerges in the proportion of young people in the population, with Turkey’s younger population proving to be two-thirds greater in size than that of the EU. The difference in the

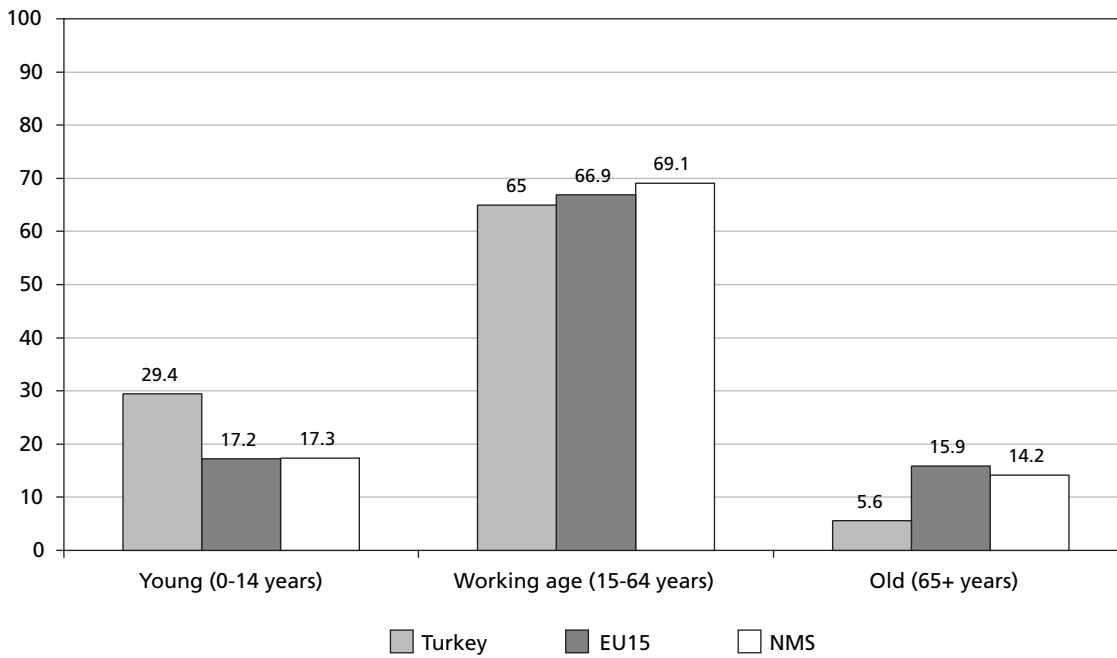
proportion of older people is also significant: EU countries have between more than one-half and two times the percentage of older people than Turkey does.

**Figure 4 Population growth among young, working age and old people in Turkey, 1950–2000**



Source: TÜİK, 2005, Table 1.5

**Figure 5 Comparison between age distribution of population in Turkey and EU25, 2003**



Source: OECD, 2005b, pp. 6–7; Eurostat, 2006

## Policy implications of population growth

For the Turkish state, the enormous growth in its population represents both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it demonstrates the long-term effectiveness of measures aimed at raising low living standards through greater expenditure on education and health policies. On the other hand, it has made the need for greater expenditure on education an absolute priority, to ensure that more young people receive a basic education; this, in turn, has reduced the level of resources available to finance expenditure on raising levels of education. The addition to the education system of more than one million pupils a year has, in some regions, led to overcrowding or two-shift school days. It would take many years before a fall in birth rates could reduce current pressures on the country's education services. Claims for expenditure on education thus come before any dividend that education can generate in terms of increased economic growth.

Better health services are also needed for Turkey's much enlarged population, especially for mothers and infant children. However, Turkish policymakers have yet to fully face the pension challenge of EU finance ministers, who must spend more on pensions for a greater proportion of retired people while collecting relatively less in social security taxes from a decreasing number of people of working age. The percentage of older people in Europe has increased by almost seven percentage points in the past 50 years, compared with a 1.9 percentage point increase in Turkey. In absolute numbers, the Turkish population of working age will continue to grow more than the population of retirement age. However, costs of pension payments are increasing as policies are being introduced to increase the current limited coverage of social security and to raise pension payments. For the moment, however, the primary age-related problem in Turkey concerns educating a large number of young Turks to a higher standard than that of their parents, thus enabling Turkey's young people to acquire jobs and to remain secure in an increasingly open and competitive international economy.

Much of the impact of Turkish emigration induced by population growth has already been felt within the EU Member States. Substantial Turkish emigration has made Turks the largest immigrant group in Germany, although only representing less than 3% of the German population. However, excluding Germany, Turkish immigrants constitute well under 1% of the resident population of the other EU15 countries. The decline of emigration to Europe in the past decade demonstrates that Turkish emigration is sensitive to economic conditions within the EU, such as to low growth rates and competition from labour from the NMS. The state of the Turkish economy represents another influential factor. Given the interaction between supply and demand, future forecasts of Turkish emigration to EU countries cannot thus be confidently extrapolated from past trends.

## Education and training

The Ottoman tradition of education in Islamic schools placed an emphasis on rote learning, and a large proportion of the Turkish population was illiterate. Atatürk sought to replace this system with a state-run one, providing five years of primary education. However, the legacy of the past could only be eroded very slowly. In 1938, three-quarters of the population were classified as being illiterate. Secondary schools were only available in towns and the country had just two universities. Subsequently, the curriculum became secular and nationalist. Although state-controlled religious instruction was gradually introduced, public education has remained largely secular and progressive (see Mango, 2004, chapter 7; TÜİK, 2005, chapter 4).

Turkey's population explosion has led to a continuous expansion in the number of primary school pupils, teachers and schools. In the 1940s, expansion led to a pupil-to-teacher ratio as high as 50 to 1 in primary schools; this ratio subsequently began to fall and has fluctuated at around 30 to 1 since the early 1980s. The ratio has remained steady after the level of compulsory education was raised in 1997 to eight years for children aged 6 to 14 years. At the same time, the proportion of young people aged 12 to 14 years in work rather than education has dropped from 24% in 1990 to less than 4% in 2003, while over 90% of children of primary school age now attend school.

Secondary and third-level education is now available nationwide in Turkey. Secondary schools at junior level offer a minimum of three years' additional education, while secondary schools at senior level can prepare students for university entry. Although vocational and technical secondary schools do exist, they are not as common as the proportion of such schools in most EU Member States. An older tradition of private secondary education taught in English, French or German provides a European-oriented education for those whose parents can afford it. In addition, the state now finances a nationwide system of universities, entry to which is determined by a highly competitive examination. Today, some 83 universities exist in Turkey, of which 30 are private. More than 1.89 million students take the university entrance examination each year, but many fail to secure a place. The expansion of state education at all levels has resulted in an increase in public expenditure on education from 2.3% of GDP in 1995 to 3.8% in 2005, thus surpassing public expenditure on defence.

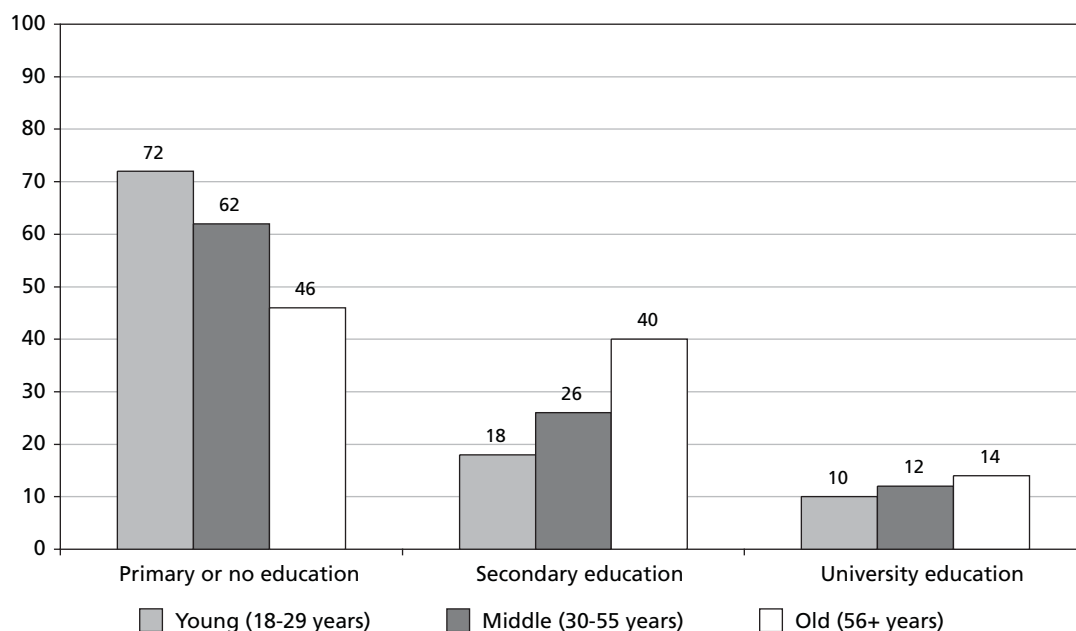
The Turkish state's long-term investment in education has resulted in rising levels of education from one generation to the next (Figure 6). Whereas 72% of the oldest generation (aged 56 years and over) have a primary education or none, 40% of young Turks (aged 18 to 29 years) have had some secondary schooling while 14% have attended university. The expansion of primary education has in turn reduced levels of adult illiteracy – which stood at 22% in 1990 – by more than one quarter. However, levels of education in Turkey are still relatively low. Among the adult population (aged 30 to 55 years), 62% have at most had a primary education, 26% a secondary education, while only 12% have been to university.

Thus, although levels of education have been increasing dramatically in Turkey, they remain low by EU standards (Table 4). Whereas about three-fifths of adults in the EU25 have had at least some level of secondary education, just over a quarter of adults in Turkey have had so, while two-fifths of Turkish adults have left school by the age of 12 years or earlier. Although no significant difference emerges between Turkey and the NMS in the percentage of people with a university education, Turkey is seven percentage points behind the EU15 countries in this respect. Nevertheless, given that Turkey's population is the second largest compared with the EU countries, the absolute number



of university graduates in Turkey is large by European standards. Moreover, in the highly competitive Turkish university system, the standard of education is high.

**Figure 6 Levels of education in Turkey, by age group, 2003 (%)**



TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003

However, when measured by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) – a triennial worldwide test of 15-year old schoolchildren’s scholastic performance developed by the OECD – the quality of educational attainment in Turkey appears to be relatively low. The latter assessment involves testing a sample of about 6,000 15-year olds in 41 advanced industrial societies (OECD, 2005, p. 150f). In relation to the science test, Turkish students scored 13% below the OECD average, as well as 15% below the average in the mathematics test and 12% below the OECD average in the reading test. In each of these three tests, Turkish children performed at a lower level than their counterparts in the EU Member States. Inasmuch as a smaller percentage of Turks were eligible for testing, since compulsory education stops at 14 years of age, the performance should have been higher than in instances where tests were administered to pupils of all abilities in compulsory education. Of course, average figures mask wide variations in achievement between pupils within a country and, in Turkey, between achievements in the best urban and private schools and in rural schools.

**Table 4 Levels of education in Turkey and EU countries, %**

	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
No education	8	0	1	0	3
Primary education	52	21	27	24	21
Secondary education	28	55	58	63	57
University education	12	23	14	13	19

Source: EQLS, 2003

Vocational training offers participants practical skills and is sponsored by a variety of government agencies in Turkey, including the military. As the school age population has increased, the number of pupils in vocational schools has also expanded, reaching a peak of 998,000 students in 1998. However, since then, the number of vocational students has declined. By 2001, of the 2.5 million pupils in secondary education, two-thirds were in academic secondary schools compared with just over one-third of students in vocational schools (TÜİK, 2005, Tables 4.3, 4.4). Young people who do not succeed in an academic setting and who do not receive vocational training face the prospect of having to work in semi-skilled jobs or in insecure jobs in the informal economy (OECD, 2006, chapter 5).

The earlier a young person leaves school, the greater the importance of training during working life to provide skills, or to enable people to retrain or increase their skills in an increasingly open and competitive international economy. In most EU countries, provisions for employment-related training are relatively widespread in both the public and private sectors. The EQLS survey found that only 14% of employed Turks had been on a training course during the past year compared with an average of 30% of employed respondents in the EU Member States. Moreover, of those who received some training, four-fifths of those in the EU countries were trained in broad occupational skills, such as computing or languages, compared with two-thirds of people in this category in Turkey. Thus, the overall proportion of the EU workforce who receive training to improve their skills is more than double that of Turkish people in this category.

The ability to use the internet is an example of a useful new vocational skill, particularly in a country where there has been a structural shift from agricultural work and trading in street markets to factory, office and service employment. The EQLS survey found that 27% of Turkish adults reported using the internet, and usually did so at least a couple of times a week. Thus, the level of internet usage in Turkey is higher than that observed in Bulgaria and Romania and than the overall average for the NMS. Nevertheless, a considerable difference remains between levels of internet use in Turkey and in the EU15, where the average level of usage is significantly higher at 46%; however, the difference is much less than would be expected, taking into account Turkey's relatively low national income per capita.

To communicate across national boundaries for work, trade or public affairs, people need a common language or *lingua franca*. Elite Turkish education has always recognised the importance of fluency in a European language, while the great expansion of tourism makes some knowledge of a foreign language useful in catering and related tourist trades. In today's Europe, English is the *lingua franca* of choice (Rose, 2006a, p. 33). The findings of the EQLS survey show that 22% of Turks report having some knowledge of English. This figure is slightly below the result recorded for Bulgaria but not far behind the 28% average of those reporting some knowledge of English in the NMS. Nonetheless, the figure for Turkey is well below the 58% average of people reporting at least some knowledge of English in the EU15 countries, excluding the UK and Ireland.

When judged by its own historic standards, levels of education in Turkey have been continually rising from the previously low standards, which were reflected in the country's widespread illiteracy a half a century ago. Moreover, standards have been rising at all levels of education. Today, eight years of education is compulsory for all children in Turkey, secondary and vocational schools are available nationwide, and more than 1.5 million young people are in higher education institutions.

Differences in access to education remain significant however, for example between the majority of young people and those whose parents can afford to pay for private education, the latter leading to greater opportunities for success in the university entrance examination or for a private university education. Nevertheless, given the increasingly higher rates of participation in education among young people, the turnover of generations will gradually raise education levels of the adult population, provided that the state continues to maintain expenditure to cope with the pressures of rising demands for education.

The large number of Turks with a basic education has resulted in a greater pool of semi-skilled labour capable of staffing the country's textiles industry and services sector catering for tourists, without having to rely on foreign workers. However, the textiles industry is a sector in which firms must compete globally, particularly with enterprises in Asian countries where wages are significantly lower. To avoid the low-level equilibrium trap that arises when workers are unable to shift to higher-skilled jobs when technological change creates a demand for increased skills, the Turkish labour force of today requires sufficient training and internationally competitive skills – for example, a knowledge of the English language, the internet and computing (Turgut, 2006).

### **Economic status**

The conventional definition of 15 years as being the age from which people can commence work is more realistic in Turkey than in the EU countries, since compulsory education ends at 14 years of age in Turkey. Official Turkish statistics follow the OECD practice of classifying those aged over 65 years as not being of working age; the latter category constitutes only a small percentage of the adult Turkish population today. Between 1955 and the early 1980s, the size of the population of working age doubled in Turkey, resulting in an increase of more than 14 million prospective workers. Between 1988 and 2004, the population of working age increased again by almost a half (Figure 7). This has brought the population of working age up to 49.9 million people (TÜİK, 2005, Tables 1.17, 8.1).

The size of the labour force has also grown, but not in the same proportion as the population of working age (Figure 7). Between 1988 and 2004, official Turkish statistics recorded a growth of almost five million people in the labour force, along with a reduction in the percentage of those in part-time or seasonal work. However, the proportion of the working age population in employment has fallen from 58% to 49%. The fall in participation levels is not due to an increase in the official rate of unemployment, which has fluctuated between 7% and 10%. Rather, participation has fallen because of an increase of 11 million people in the number of Turks aged 15 years or over who are outside of the labour force either because they are still in education, are homemakers or, much less likely, are retired.

The distribution of economic activities among Turkish adults today differs substantially from the patterns observed in both the old and new EU Member States. Whereas almost a half of the adult population in EU countries are conventionally employed, only 34% of people in Turkey are in employment (Table 5). A further one-third of Turks, largely women, are homemakers – a status that can be characterised as non-waged household work; this compares with just 11% of people in this category in the EU15 and only 3% of the working age population in the NMS. The status of homemaker is also shared by the 3% of Turkish adults who are classified as 'family helpers'. While the level of official unemployment in Turkey – that is, 8% of adults of working age – is not particularly

high by EU standards, it is much higher as a proportion of those in employment than is the case in the EU15 countries. At the same time, the percentage of retired persons in the EU Member States is almost double the proportion found in Turkey; this reflects both longer life expectancy and the more comprehensive social security systems in EU countries, which enable citizens to retire more easily without losing an income.

**Figure 7 Population of working age and size of labour force, by millions of people, 1988–2004**



Source: TÜİK, 2005, Table 8.1

**Table 5 Economic status of population aged 18+ years, by country, %**

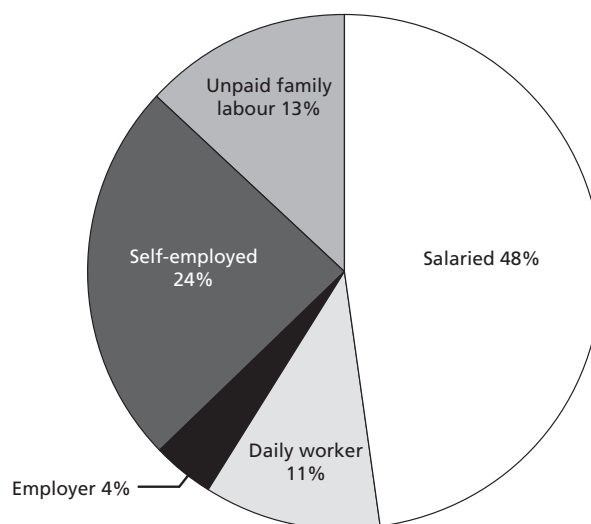
	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Employed	34	44	41	47	49
Family helper	3	1	1	1	0
Unemployed	8	16	5	11	6
Homemaker	33	2	14	3	11
Retired	14	32	30	24	25
In education	8	4	9	7	7
Ill/disabled	0.4	1	0.4	6	2

Source: EQLS, 2003

The pattern of employment in Turkey today has much in common with patterns found in countries at an earlier stage of economic development than with the patterns observed in EU Member States. Only 52% of working Turks either have a salaried job or are employers, while almost half have insecure sources of income (Figure 8). Interestingly, one quarter of people in Turkey's labour force are self-employed – a proportion which is twice the average of EU countries, as recorded by the EQLS. Moreover, TÜİK statistics identify 13% of people as being unpaid family workers on a farm –

a level which is similar to that found in France and Germany a half a century ago (Rose, 1985, pp. 99, 131). In addition, 11% of Turkey's working age population are in the precarious position of casual workers employed on a daily basis, not knowing from one day to the next whether they will remain employed (Figure 8).

**Figure 8 Proportion of different forms of employment in Turkey, %**



Source: TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003

The extent to which employment is informally rather than legally regulated is reflected in the EQLS data, which reveals that 53% of employed people in Turkey do not have a written employment contract; this is in stark contrast to the 90% of people in the EU15 who report having a written contract. Moreover, only 27% of Turks report that they have a permanent contract of employment, compared with up to three-quarters of workers in the EU countries. In such circumstances, working in the public sector offers Turks both greater job security and social security coverage than working in the private sector; nevertheless, just one-fifth of Turkey's labour force is employed in the public sector. Informal employment practices are reinforced by the fact that 71% of employed Turks work in enterprises with less than 50 employees, and as a result are likely to know and be known by their employer; this is even more true in relation to the 49% of employed people in Turkey who work in enterprises with less than 10 employees, which is twice the proportion of workers in the EU15 countries who do so.

In the EU countries, many individuals see their work as having both positive and negative features. Consistent with the high level of self-employment and work in small enterprises, a majority of employed people (52%) in Turkey say that they can influence the way in which they go about their work (Table 6). However, an even greater majority (75%) perceive their work as being too demanding and stressful, while almost half of workers find that they constantly have to work to tight deadlines. Just one quarter of employed Turks consider themselves as being currently well paid, while only two-fifths believe that their job offers good prospects.

Turkey's employed population is substantially more likely to perceive negative features in their work compared with employees in the EU15 countries or the NMS. Less than one-sixth of EU workers describe their job as being dull and boring compared with more than two-fifths of Turks. Fewer than half of EU workers describe their job as being stressful compared with three-quarters of employed people in Turkey. In the latter country, as in the EU Member States, a significant majority of workers do not see their work as involving a risk to their health or safety; nevertheless, the proportion of workers who do perceive health or safety risks is 10 percentage points higher in Turkey than it is in the EU15 states, although lower than the proportion of people in the NMS who perceive such risks. Greater similarities emerge between the proportion of Turkish and EU workers who perceive positive features in their work, such as being able to influence their work or having a job that offers good prospects (Table 6).

**Table 6 Positive and negative evaluations of working conditions in Turkey and EU, %**

	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
<b>Positive evaluation: agree, strongly agree</b>					
Can influence how I work	52	47	49	48	64
Well paid	26	16	22	21	42
Job offers good prospects	38	22	21	26	35
<b>Negative evaluation: agree, strongly agree</b>					
Work too demanding, stressful	75	62	47	48	46
Constantly working to tight deadlines	46	21	37	45	45
Work is dull and boring	42	10	11	17	10
Working in dangerous, unhealthy conditions	24	29	32	29	14

Source: EQLS, 2003

Employed people in Turkey are less likely than workers in EU countries to perceive no difficulties in balancing the demands of work with the responsibilities of family life. Results of the EQLS reveal that 50% of Turks cite difficulties in finding time for household tasks at least once a month, compared with 38% of respondents in the NMS and 26% of workers in the EU15. The physical demands of work cause 53% of Turkish workers to feel that they sometimes lack energy for household tasks, which is less than the proportion of workers in the NMS who cite this to be the case (61%), and only marginally higher than the respective proportion of workers in the EU15 (51%).

While more than two-thirds of employed people in Turkey cite little or no difficulties in concentrating at work because of family responsibilities, 28% of respondents report that this sometimes presents a problem – more than double the proportion of workers in EU countries who claim that their concentration at work is affected by family responsibilities.

## Economic resources

The importance of money as the measure of all things is less appropriate in societies where the problems created by low wages are resolved by relying on informal resources – whether on income from the illegal economy or on non-monetary resources, such as exchanging services with family, friends and neighbours. Economic development has made monetary incomes and the public provision of benefits important in Turkey, but not all important. Given that a large proportion of

people in Turkey are not in paid employment, most people pool a multiplicity of resources within their household (Rose, 1986), based along the lines of the following equation:

$$\text{Total welfare in household} = \text{State} + \text{employment} + \text{household}$$

### **Sources of income and resources**

Even though three-fifths of Turkish adults are not in paid employment, their household can be dependent on the monetary income of another member. TÜİK data show that 38% of Turkish households have two or more members contributing monetary incomes, while 62% of households rely on the income of one person. Furthermore, 71% of households benefit from home ownership, which saves them the pressure of having to pay regular rent. EQLS data indicate that 18% of households in Turkey grow at least some of their food, while 19% report receiving assistance in monetary or other form from family members who are no longer living in the same household. In addition, 11% of households have access to income from savings, rent or other properties. Even though a second job benefits people whose first job is low paid, few Turks report having a second job, if only because the low monetary income of Turks limits the demand from those who are capable of paying people cash-in-hand for work in the informal economy.

Turkey differs from EU countries in that fewer citizens receive income maintenance or benefit payments from the state. According to TÜİK data, only 13% of respondents in Turkey report being in regular receipt of a pension. The EQLS data indicate, on the other hand, that 24% of respondents in the NMS receive a pension, while 23% of people do so in the EU15. The lower level of pension coverage in Turkey not only reflects the lower life expectancy of people in the country, but also the fact that social security coverage is incomplete rather than widespread, especially for the oldest Turks. A second difference concerns child benefit payments. In EU countries, benefit payments are normally given to families with children. However, in Turkey, where birth rates are higher, this is not the case. The EQLS survey reveals that only 3% of households report receiving child benefits and that the payments themselves are very small. Moreover, only 2% of people report receiving benefits from the state on the grounds of being unemployed or disabled.

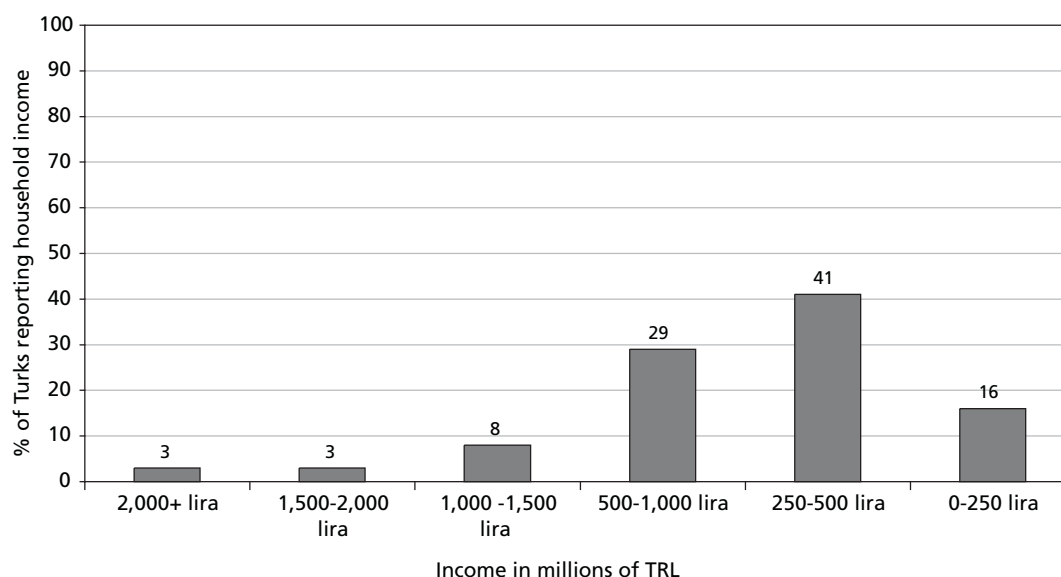
### **Income distribution**

The conventions of economic analysis reduce multiple streams of income to a single monetary figure for each household. While cash-in-hand is significant for every Turkish household, an inflation rate that recently soared above 50% a year and which was 21% in the year of the EQLS survey (2003) make numerical assessments of income rapidly obsolescent. Cross-national comparisons are further complicated by fluctuations in foreign exchange rates, particularly when a currency as unstable as the Turkish lira interacts with international currencies, such as the US dollar or the euro. Moreover, the impact of inflation can differ on people at different levels of income within a society, for example, between individuals living on a fixed pension or wage as opposed to those working as traders or who are self-employed. Evaluating income by creating a notional unit – namely the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) dollar, that is, the amount required to purchase a given set of goods – takes into account the lower prices evident in Turkey compared with those of most OECD countries; however, it also involves contestable and multiple assumptions about the spending patterns of households.

By examining the distribution of income within Turkey itself, it is possible to avoid problems arising from attempts to create a constant-value unit of measurement within a society in which money has

not had a constant value. Such efforts underline the significant level of income inequality in Turkey (Figure 9). Findings from the 2003 TÜİK survey reveal that 16% of people in Turkey reported earnings of less than TRL 250 million (old Turkish lira<sup>5</sup>) a month (about €134 as at 19 March 2007), while 41% reported having a monthly income of between TRL 250 million (€134) and TRL 499 million (€267). More than half of the respondents had an income of less than TRL 500 million (about €268) a month. In contrast, 29% of people reported earning a monthly income of between TRL 500 million (€268) and TRL 1,000 million (approximately €536). At the top end of the income distribution scale, just 3% of respondents reported having a household income of more than four times the size of the national average household income, while one in seven people reported earning an income of more than double the average Turkish household. A World Bank (2002) study of Turkish poverty characterised Turkey as a 'medium to high inequality country'. It noted that while extreme poverty is quite low in Turkey, many people are economically vulnerable as they earn a small income or are in unstable employment.

**Figure 9** Distribution of household income, in old Turkish lira (TRL), %



Note: 1 million TRL = approximately €0.54 (as at 19 March 2007)

Source: TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003

The minimum income required by a household to make ends meet can be defined as that which is sufficient to pay for necessities such as food, electricity and housing. While a majority of Turks can buy each of these necessities without difficulty during a given year, the percentages of people who can do so are less than those recorded for most of the EU Member States (Table 7). Overall, according to the EQLS findings, 51% of households reported having no difficulties in affording all three necessities, compared with 69% of households in the NMS and 84% of households in the EU15.

In Turkey, 27% of respondents reported that they had experienced problems buying one necessity; 17% had problems paying for two necessities, while 5% faced problems paying for food, utilities and housing. Difficulty buying food can be deemed as a by-product of urbanisation, which prevents apartment dwellers from growing some of their own food on adjacent land. However, this has not led

<sup>5</sup> The old Turkish lira has since been replaced by the new Turkish lira (TRY) on 1 January 2005; one new lira is the equivalent of one million old lira.



to widespread malnutrition. Just 1.3% of the population in Turkey are classified as being undernourished, while 3.9% of children Turkey are underweight at the age of five years (SIS, 1990–2004a).

**Table 7 Ability to afford basic necessities, Turkey and EU, %**

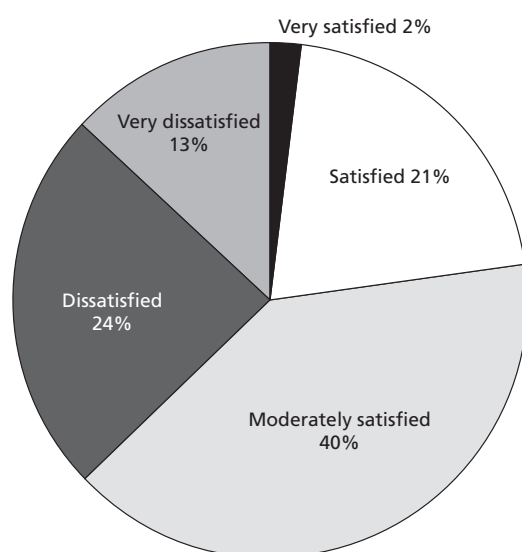
	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Able to pay rent regularly in last 12 months					
Yes	89	96	92	85	93
No	11	4	8	15	7
Able to pay electricity, utility bills in last 12 months					
Yes	74	95	70	79	93
No	26	5	30	21	7
Have had enough money to pay for food in last 12 months					
Yes	61	71	45	82	91
No	39	29	55	18	9

Source: EQLS, 2003

The extent to which individuals are satisfied with their living standards depends on the basis on which the comparison is made. Older Turks who make a comparison between living standards in the traditional economy of their youth and today's economy could be very satisfied. However, the high proportion of young people in Turkey's population reduces the relevance of longer-term comparisons. Insofar as Turks look to their immediate surroundings, then the distribution of income could create dissatisfaction among a majority of people in Turkey (Figure 10). The accessibility of information about living standards in the EU through the media may also create widespread dissatisfaction with living conditions, which may be deemed as being below the average of those depicted in foreign media. However, reports from friends and relatives of economic difficulties in slow-growth European countries may have the opposite effect.

Satisfaction with income implies that people feel that they are sufficiently well off. The question regarding how much is actually enough tends to be based on people's subjective opinion. When the TÜİK survey asked Turkish people how satisfied they were with their household income, the largest group of respondents (40%) indicated that they were only moderately satisfied. The proportion of respondents who reported a degree of dissatisfaction (37%) was greater than the percentage of people who reported a degree of satisfaction (23%). Moreover, people who were very dissatisfied with their household income significantly outnumbered those who were very satisfied (Figure 10).

Comparing the income satisfaction of Turks with that of EU citizens reveals a tendency among people in Turkey to be less satisfied. On the basis of the 10-point scale used in the EQLS to evaluate the extent to which people are satisfied or dissatisfied with their income, the average overall rating of 5.6 for Turkey is significantly below the NMS average of 6.1, and well below the EU15 average of 7.3. However, these aggregate statistics mask significant differences between individuals within each country, including among people in Turkey. Whatever the national average, substantial variation exists in relation to the average level of satisfaction with household income, with some people being satisfied with their income while others remain unsatisfied.

**Figure 10** Level of satisfaction with household income in Turkey, %

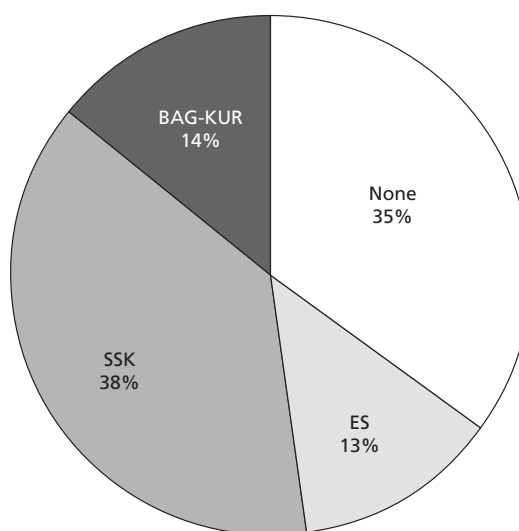
Source: TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003, Q, 65

### Social security and health services

Maintaining good health and having an income in retirement are central elements of quality of life; EU Member States provide these services to all citizens through social security and health policies (see Esping-Anderson, 1990). Under the Turkish system of social security, three major support funds exist, each of which provides both healthcare services and a social security pension to those who are affiliated to the respective schemes. White-collar public employees are affiliated to the *Emekli Sandığı* (ES) fund; manual workers in the public and private sector are members of the SSK scheme; while self-employed individuals are members of the BAG-KUR scheme. The benefits provided by these funds differ: the ES fund for white-collar public employees offers the best range of benefits. The benefits provided to self-employed and manual workers restrict the health facilities that are accessible to members and offer lower pension entitlements. Non-working spouses of employed people and widows are also entitled to receive social security benefits. Those who are badly off can claim a 'green card' entitling them to certain forms of medical treatment; in 2005, some 15% of people in Turkey had a green card. However, the level of green card coverage differs within the country: in Istanbul, only 4% of people have a green card, while in Eastern Anatolian regions as many as 56% of people do.

Social protection funds in Turkey fall short in guaranteeing coverage for the entire population: for example, 35% of Turkish adults are not members of a scheme that provides social security and health insurance benefits (Figure 11). The small group of university graduates in the labour force are among those most likely to have social security coverage. Older persons are also more likely to have some form of social security coverage as are rural residents. The two social security funds that together cover the greatest proportion of people in Turkey – that is, the SSK and BAG-KUR – provide a lower level of benefits than the ES fund, which is restricted to white-collar public employees. When asked about the size of their pension, four-fifths of those concerned admit that it is a problem.

Figure 11 Level of social security coverage in Turkey, by type of social security fund, %



Note: Emekli Sandigi (ES): retirement fund for civil servants; SSK: fund for manual workers in the public or private sector; BAG-KUR: a fund for self-employed people.

Source: TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003

Although social security expenditure is very low in Turkey by EU standards, it has increased greatly; moreover, even though the percentage of retirees in Turkey is relatively low compared with EU countries, the proportion is growing in absolute terms (see Figure 4). The cost to employers of social security contributions encourages the employment of low-skilled workers in illegal jobs in the informal economy (OECD, 2006, chapter 4; OECD, 2006a). However, new social security legislation has introduced reforms to the system and provides for the merging of separate pension schemes in 2007. Nevertheless, incentives remain that encourage middle-aged employees covered by social security legislation to collect a small pension and severance pay by retiring from their job and then working in the informal sector.

When asked about their health status, the majority of EQLS respondents in the 28 countries concerned expressed positive evaluations. The chief difference between the countries relates to the proportion of people who indicated that their health was either very good or excellent. In Turkey, 26% of respondents reported that their health was either very good or excellent, virtually the same proportion as the 25% average recorded for the NMS. However, in the EU15, where there is a higher proportion of older people than in Turkey, the percentage of people who cited that their health was either very good or excellent was higher at 37%. Throughout the EU, the proportion of people who described their health as being poor was limited; in Turkey, 7% of people cited that this was the case, which is not significantly different from the EU15 proportion. Up to a point, good health is a reflection of people's individual lifestyle choices, for example, whether or not they choose to smoke or drink; in the case of Turkey, it is worth noting that practising Muslims do not drink.

**Table 8 Proportion of respondents experiencing great difficulties in accessing healthcare services, by country and type of complaint, %**

	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Cost of seeing a doctor	33	34	29	15	8
Delay in getting an appointment	30	41	15	14	11
Long waiting time at doctor's surgery	30	34	25	15	11
Long distance from treatment centre	28	41	15	6	4

*Note:* Persons who indicated that they never need to see a doctor or who have no opinion on this matter were excluded from the percentages shown in this table.

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

In Turkey, more people experience difficulties in accessing healthcare services than citizens in EU countries do, where a comprehensive system of national health insurance exists (Table 8). An overall 33% of people in Turkey cite the cost of healthcare services as an obstacle to seeing a doctor, which is more than four times the proportion of those in the EU15 who cite this to be the case. Moreover, some 30% of respondents in Turkey indicate that delays in getting an appointment or long waiting times in a doctor's surgery create 'great difficulties' in accessing services, almost treble the respective proportion recorded in the EU15. At the same time, some 28% of Turkish people cite long distances from the treatment centre as a significant problem, compared with just 4% of people in the EU15 and 6% of those in the NMS. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the proportion of Turkish people who report problems in accessing healthcare services is sometimes similar, or even lower, than the respective proportions of people in Romania and particularly Bulgaria who cite such problems.

When all four obstacles to healthcare services are taken into account, more than two-thirds of people requiring healthcare in both the EU15 and NMS have no difficulty in accessing services, whereas only two-fifths of people in Turkey cite no such difficulties. At the same time, one-third of Turkish people overall report that they usually have great difficulty in accessing services, far more than the respective proportions recorded for the EU15 and NMS (Table 8). Multiple regression statistical analysis shows that obstacles to healthcare services have a significant impact on people's health in Turkey. After controlling for the effects of age, education and income, people who experience major difficulties in accessing healthcare services are likely to rate their health a full point lower on the five-point EQLS scale used for evaluating health status.

## Evaluation of national policies

The subjective evaluation that citizens make of public policies is important in a democracy, for it indicates the extent to which citizens consider that their needs are being met by the actions of government. Public opinion can also direct policymakers towards areas of public policy in which greater effort may be required to avoid losing votes.

The EQLS study asked respondents to evaluate five different types of social policy on a 10-point scale (Table 9). The replies underline differences both within societies and between Turkey and most of the EU Member States. In Turkey, policies concerning education and health – areas of primary importance for individual well-being and for human capital contributing to economic growth – are rated poorly by a large majority of people. Based on the 10-point scale, the country's health service

is rated at the bottom half of the scale by 78% of people in Turkey. In contrast, a majority of Romanians and 71% of people in the EU15 rate their country's health service positively. Furthermore, 71% of Turks rate public education in the bottom half of the evaluation scale. Conversely, 71% of respondents in the EU15 countries are positive about their national education system, as are the majority of citizens in the NMS.

**Table 9 Evaluation of quality of public services, by country**

	Turkey	Bulgaria	Romania	NMS	EU15
Public transport	4.9	4.9	6.2	5.7	6.1
Education	4.4	4.4	6.6	5.8	6.4
State pension system	4.4	3.4	5.3	4.6	5.5
Social services	4.2	3.6	5.6	4.4	6.2
Health	3.9	3.5	5.6	5.0	6.5

*Note:* Figures show average satisfaction levels with quality of public services on a scale of one to 10, where one means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'.

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

People in Turkey also tend to have negative perceptions about two policies of critical importance for preventing social exclusion – namely, the state pension system and social services. In contrast, two-thirds of respondents in the EU15 are positive about the quality of social services and the state pension system. In Turkey, where the majority of households don't own a car, public transport is considered more important. Therefore, it is less likely to be given an unfavourable rating, as reflected by the fact that more than two-fifths of Turks give a positive assessment of the country's public transport system. A similar tendency can also be found in Bulgaria and Romania, where public transport is rated more favourably relative to other public services.

### **Implications for social inclusion**

The preceding analysis has identified many conditions that not only affect people's quality of life but which are also the responsibility of the Turkish government. These findings have important implications for policies aimed at enhancing social inclusion and involving the following key areas:

- Education – the difference in the education levels of older and younger people in Turkey is evidence of the significant progress that has been made in providing primary school education for all children and of the diffusion of secondary school education. However, the disproportionate number of children of school age in the population highlights the need for rapid measures on the part of the government to prevent an increase in class sizes. Secondly, Turkey lags far behind the EU Member States in the provision of vocational secondary education, aimed at equipping many young people with the skills necessary for employment in an increasingly open international economy (OECD, 2006, chapter 5). Thirdly, notwithstanding a major expansion in Turkish universities, the demand for university places still by far exceeds the level of supply, thus resulting in the exclusion of many applicants from universities.
- Low income and income distribution – almost half of Turkish households experience difficulties in paying for one or more necessities at some point during the year. This highlights the importance of raising the income levels of those in the lower half of Turkey's income quartiles. The contrast between the poor evaluation of public services' quality by a majority of Turkish householders

and the positive evaluation of services by only a minority of people emphasises the need to improve the access and standard of state services for the majority of Turkish citizens.

- Health – people in Turkey are far more satisfied with their own health than they are with the government’s provision of health services. On a 10-point scale, Turkish people’s satisfaction with their own health averages at 7.1, whereas satisfaction with government health policies only averages at 3.9. The reduction of infant mortality rates by almost three-quarters in the past two decades demonstrates that public health measures can achieve major improvements in health by Turkish standards, while current performance implies scope for further improvement. Public expenditure on health is concentrated on hospital and public health services rather than on routine treatment by doctors (OECD, 2005a, p. 199). One consequence of this is that many Turks must either pay for routine medical services or do without such services. The priorities should be to achieve universal coverage of social security and health services and to remove barriers preventing access to health services.
- Social security – the social security reforms due to come into effect in 2007 are aimed at strengthening the existing state system. Failure to expand social security coverage will maintain a system for insiders who are covered by publicly supported social security funds, excluding others who are left vulnerable and without cover (OECD, 2006, chapter 4). However, expanding coverage to include low-wage workers could also increase fiscal pressures on the state when the number of people reaching retirement age starts to increase.



# Participation in society and life satisfaction

Participation in society and life satisfaction take many different forms, including informal associations with friends, living in a congenial neighbourhood and meeting people at work or through voluntary activities. Similarly, influences on life satisfaction are variable: friendships are formed on the basis of personal choice, whereas housing reflects income levels, while trust in public officials mirrors the character of national government. The EQLS asks the same questions about involvement in society and life satisfaction in both the old and new EU Member States, along with Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria. However, the answers are not always the same.

## Women's participation in society

As Atatürk proclaimed: 'The ancient Turk considered men and women to have equal rights'. Believing that Islam limited the rights of women, Atatürk sought to promote a secular way of life for women as well as men. Articles 2 and 10 of the country's Constitution reflect this aspiration. For example, Turkish women gained the right to vote before women in France and Switzerland. However, in keeping with its national traditions, Turkey remains a society in which gender roles are often sharply differentiated (see Alber, 2006, pp. 378–82).

Attitudes about gender roles differ between generations. When TNS-PIAR asked a nationwide sample of married Turks in 1997 about the circumstances of their union, 69% of respondents said it was an arranged marriage, and the modal response was that the couple had not met prior to the marriage being agreed. In 2005, in response to the same question, 46% of respondents reported that they had met their spouse before the marriage, while the proportion of people with an arranged marriage had fallen by 15 percentage points. Among younger, unmarried Turks, 90% think that the best way to meet a spouse is through dating and getting to know a potential partner, while only 10% endorse an arranged marriage.

Although women have tended to lag behind men in education, this gap is closing. According to official statistics, 90% of adult men but only 67% of adult women were literate in 1990. By 2003, a rise of 14 percentage points in female literacy and six percentage points in male literacy narrowed the gender literacy gap to 15 percentage points. The almost complete mobilisation of children into primary education has reduced the gender gap in primary schools to six percentage points (SIS, 1990–2004c). Levels of education have been rising among women as well as men. In the 20–24 years age group, some 34% of women have completed a good secondary or third-level education, compared with 16% of women aged 40–44 years and just 3% of females aged over 60 years. Urban–rural differences in the attendance of girls at primary schools have also narrowed, with attendance levels rising to 94% in urban areas and to 88% in rural areas. However, large regional differences still persist. While 75% of girls are in secondary or third-level education in developed regions of Turkey, in the least developed parts of the south and east, only 31% of girls participate in education (Koc and Hancioglu, 2003, pp. 24, 26). Official statistics indicate that the increased attraction of secondary and third-level education has led to a decline in the proportion of both men and women aged 15 years and over who are in the labour force (SIS, 1990–2004d).

Striking gender differences emerge in the employment patterns of men and women. Men are more than five times as likely as women to participate in paid employment (Table 10). Moreover, women



are more than twice as likely as men to be unpaid family helpers rather than working in paid employment. Since a majority of female adults are homemakers, who are unpaid and have no retirement age, women are much less likely to be eligible to avail of the social security benefits of retirement.

Gender differences account for the substantial discrepancy between labour force participation in Turkey and in the EU countries (see Tables 5 and 10). While no statistically significant difference emerges between the proportion of adult men in employment in Turkey and the EU, a large gap in the labour force participation of women is evident. The EQLS survey found that three times as many women in the EU15 are in paid employment than in Turkey; conversely, three times as many women in Turkey are homemakers compared with women in the EU15.

**Table 10 Economic status of women and men in Turkey, %**

	Women %	Men %
Working	12	67
Family helper	8	3
Unemployed	3	10
Homemaker	69	-
Retired	4	15
In education	1	3
Ill/disabled	2	2

Source: TÜİK, Quality of Life Survey, 2003

The low level of female participation in Turkey's labour force cannot be explained by large families, which are found in a limited minority of households. Rather, the concentration of women in activities within the home is consistent with Muslim norms, which segregate men and women in the mosque and which stipulate that women should not work with strangers. However, women who have a higher education are more likely to be employed. Among women aged 15–29 years, a 40 percentage points' difference emerges in the likelihood of employment between those with a university education and females with only a primary school education; this difference drops slightly to 35 percentage points among women aged 30–44 years, and to 26 percentage points among women aged 45–60 years. In contrast, education makes little or no difference to men's likelihood of being in employment.

While some gender differences can be found in how Turkish men and women evaluate their working conditions (see Table 6), no consistent pattern emerges in this respect. Men are more likely than women to say that they can influence their working conditions and less likely to find their job stressful or constantly involving tight deadlines. However, Turkish women are more likely to regard their work as being well paid and less likely to perceive their job as being boring or unhealthy. Women are just as likely as men to view their job as offering good future prospects. The marginal differences between Turkish men and women in the way they evaluate their working conditions are much smaller than those found between Turkish workers and employed people in the EU15.

However, Turkish women find it more difficult than men to balance the demands of home and working life. Interestingly, the minority of Turkish women who work are more likely to be unmarried or without family commitments that could increase demands on their time (see, for example,

Hancioglu and Ergocmen, 2005). Nevertheless, more than three-quarters of Turkish women in employment report that they lack the energy for household tasks at least once a month, while two-thirds claim that they don't have enough time for household duties (Table 11). In contrast, in the NMS and EU15, few differences emerge between men and women in the problems they encounter in balancing the demands of work and other aspects of social life.

**Table 11 Proportion of workers experiencing work–life balance problems, by sex and country, %**

	Turkey		NMS		EU15	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Problems with:						
Having energy for household tasks	48	77	61	61	50	52
Finding time for household tasks	47	66	40	35	26	25
Concentrating at work due to family responsibilities	28	27	11	14	9	11

*Notes:* Figures concern people who experience problems at least monthly or more often. NMS includes Bulgaria and Romania, since the replies of respondents in the latter two countries are very similar to those of respondents in the NMS.

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

Although substantial differences emerge between the roles of men and women in the Turkish economy, no significant differences are evident in their evaluations of standard of living. On average, men and women both record a score of five points on the 10-point scale of satisfaction with living standards. Likewise, among the Turks who are clearly dissatisfied with their standard of living, no significant difference emerges between men and women.

### Informal and formal social networks

Individuals are normally involved in both formal and informal relations with other members of society. Friendship networks not only provide affection but can also be useful in securing help in times of need. Involvement in formal organisations is a necessary step in linking individuals to a vertical network that can represent individual views at national and European levels (Rose, 2006a). The more integrated individuals are in networks, the less likely they are to feel the effects of social exclusion.

Collectively, informal and formal social networks are often referred to as 'social capital', representing a stock of non-monetary resources that individuals can rely on to get things done on a routine basis, for example, childcare or a lift to work, or to access help in the event of emergencies, for instance when needing to borrow money (see Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2000). In the most developed EU countries, policies of the welfare state guarantee citizens benefits through public organisations. However, even formal bureaucracies can continue to be complemented by informal social networks. In the NMS and developing countries, informal social networks are essential in helping individuals achieve a satisfactory quality of life in the absence of the welfare state support common in developed EU countries (Dasgupta and Serageldin, 2000).

Networks exist at three different levels of society. Bonding networks bring people face to face and are often informal, involving strong ties between friends, neighbours and people in a single community. Such networks are relevant in enabling people to get things done in their immediate vicinity. However,

bridging organisations are also necessary for integrating people in national affairs and even more so at European level. Membership in the local branch of a nationwide voluntary organisation, whether a charity or a political action group, has elements of both bonding and bridging networks, as local organisations are linked with national affairs through a national headquarters. Bridging ties that cross national boundaries are particularly relevant in countries where there is a shortage of resources for enhancing individuals' quality of life.

### Informal bonding networks

The basic informal bonding social network is the household. In Turkey, very few people are isolated by living alone. The results of the EQLS found that whereas 25% of people in the EU15 lived alone, along with 14% of people in the NMS, only 4% of Turks lived alone.

An overwhelming majority of Turks have access to a multiplicity of informal networks on which they can rely for psychological or material support (Alber, 2006, pp. 372–76). The household does not insulate or isolate its members from informal social contacts. In the EQLS survey, 89% of Turkish respondents reported having contact with friends and neighbours at least once a week, – the same proportion as that found in the EU15 and NMS. Moreover, most Turks either live near their parents or have adult children living nearby and are nowadays able to keep in touch by phone.

Informal contacts provide social support to individuals, independently of the state. Friends can offer emotional support to a person who feels depressed, wants advice on personal matters, or needs help because of illness. If short of money in an emergency, a person may turn to someone in an informal network for assistance, as well as, or instead of, to a public institution. In Turkey, the level of informal support is significantly high. Large majorities of people report that they can access support from others, ranging from 96% of people who are confident of receiving help if ill to 80% of respondents who believe that they would be able to borrow money in an emergency (Table 12). Altogether, 71% of Turks report being integrated in all four informal support networks, while just 1% of people claim that they are not involved in any such network. The level of involvement in informal networks of support is just as high in Turkey as it is in the EU15 and NMS.

**Table 12 Availability of informal support networks in Turkey and EU, %**

	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
% of people saying they would have someone to offer support...					
If ill	96	97	98	99	98
If in need of advice on a personal matter	91	94	98	96	97
If feeling depressed	95	95	97	95	96
If in need of money in an emergency	80	79	79	83	89

*Note:* Figures show response rates to Q: 'From whom would you get support in each of the following situations?'

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

The level of confidence that Turkish people expressed in terms of being able to access support from others is grounded in experience. During the previous 12 months, the EQLS found that 39% of respondents in Turkey had regularly given money or food to others, while 19% reported receiving informal help. The larger proportion giving help implies that households in need often receive help

from two different sources. Consistent with Turkey's lack of a universalistic welfare state, Turkish people were more than half as likely to give or receive help as were citizens in the EU15 countries.

### **Voluntary organisations**

Voluntary organisations of civil society provide a link between the top-down activities of government and the bottom-up demands of citizens for government action to improve quality of life. Civil society organisations reflect many interests, ranging from sports, culture and local affairs to local branches of national organisations, such as trade unions, agricultural cooperatives and political parties.

In Turkey, involvement in voluntary organisations is low: results of the 2003 TÜİK survey found that only 9% of people reported belonging to any voluntary organisation. In contrast, an average of 45% of people in the EU Member States belong to at least one voluntary organisation (Rose, 2006a, p. 15). The EQLS survey revealed similar findings: just 4% of Turks reported that they had attended a meeting of a charitable or voluntary organisation in the previous month, while only 3% had served on a committee or done voluntary work for an organisation. In addition, just 7% of respondents said they had contacted a politician or public official on matters of broad policy concern. Since a large proportion of the labour force work in marginal jobs or are self-employed (see Figure 8), membership in trade unions is low in Turkey. Statistics from the Ministry of Work and Social Security indicate that just under three million Turkish workers belong to trade unions.

Throughout Europe, involvement in voluntary organisations tends to be limited to a minority of the country's population. However, the EQLS survey indicates that the size of this minority tends to be larger outside of Turkey. In the EU15, a total of 14% of respondents had attended a voluntary organisation meeting in the previous month, along with 7% of people in the NMS, compared with the aforementioned 4% of respondents in Turkey. Similarly, 13% of people in the EU15 and 7% of those in the NMS had been involved in a political action group in the previous 12 months, compared with 6% of respondents in Turkey. Nevertheless, the very low level of political involvement in Turkey is matched by similarly low levels in Bulgaria and Romania.

Conversely, a large majority of Turks do, in fact, participate in elections; in the six parliamentary elections held since the 1982 Constitution was adopted, an average of 86.8% of Turks voted. The Turkish practice of voting but not participating in civil society institutions is common to the great majority of EU countries (Rose, 2006a, chapters 3–4). Turkish elections are competitive; however, the requirement that a party secures a minimum of 10% of the popular vote to qualify for seats in parliament limits the number of parties that are represented there (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜB TAK), 2005, chapter 7).

### **Bridging networks**

Bridging networks enable individuals to make contact with people in other cities or regions, or even in another country. Such networks are therefore of central importance for population migration. Regardless of the incentive urging people to leave a backward region, those who choose to migrate need guidance about where to go, while emigrants can benefit from the support of friends, kinsmen or former neighbours when they arrive in a foreign country.

The migration of Turks from rural villages to cities indicates that people living in remote villages have bridging networks that can be accessed when leaving home in search of a better quality of life for

themselves and their children. Migration to cities has also created 'village type' networks in cities, where migrants from the same village or social group can cluster together for mutual aid (White, 2002). The scale of Turkish emigration to Germany has also created transnational bridges, linking Turks with the EU countries. About one in 16 Turkish-born adults currently live abroad, while an additional proportion of Turkish residents have worked in another country. This implies that most Turks are likely to have at least one relative or friend living abroad.

The revolution in telecommunications has radically altered the way in which Turkish people learn about events outside of their local community (see, for example, Lerner, 1958). People in Turkey are no longer only dependent on the radio or television for news. Today, many Turks maintain kinship and friendship ties with the Turkish 'diaspora': for example, when family or friends migrate to another part of Turkey, to Germany or to another EU country, ties can be kept active through the use of mobile phones and the internet.

However, it should be mentioned that the bridging networks connecting Turkish people in Anatolia with fellow Turks in distant European countries are limited. Moreover, whereas a phone conversation with a relative in Germany can be conducted in Turkish, contacts with non-Turks usually requires knowledge of a foreign language. The low proportion of Turkish adults who report a basic knowledge of the English language – the *lingua franca* of Europe today – reflects the relatively recent introduction of compulsory secondary education in Turkey. It is also a reminder of the divide that exists between the well educated, cosmopolitan Turkish elite and the greater majority of the Turkish population.

## **Quality of society**

Society can be viewed by individuals in terms of a set of concentric circles. The home and neighbourhood represent the most immediate circle, in which adequate housing space and a clean, safe neighbourhood make a difference to the quality of everyday life. Beyond that, people are more or less involved in circles of society with which they come into contact less frequently or are more remote from in terms of income, ethnicity or other social characteristics.

### **Housing and neighbourhood**

Turkey is the land of the homeowners: results of the 2003 TÜİK survey showed, for example, that 72% of people in Turkey were living in an owner-occupied household, divided equally between those who own a house and those who own a flat or apartment. Years of high inflation in Turkey have prevented the development of a competitive mortgage market; as a result, Turkish people have not been able to use bank loans to buy their own house. Instead, many Turks in both urban and rural areas live in houses that have been built with the help of family and friends. Among those who are not homeowners, one-fifth of people live in rented accommodation, while the remainder live with relatives or in a house connected with their work.

The physical stock of housing in Turkey is below that which exists in the EU15 countries. According to the EQLS survey, one-third of Turks cite a shortage of space compared with one-sixth of people in the most prosperous EU countries. Moreover, almost one-third of the respondents in Turkey complained of dampness or rot in their housing – three times the proportion of people who did so in the EU15 countries. However, seven-eighths of Turkish people reported having an indoor toilet, virtually the same proportion as that found in the NMS and higher than the respective proportions

found in Bulgaria and Romania; moreover, the proportion of Turkish people who report having an indoor toilet was also not far behind the average for the EU15 countries, where there is virtually complete provision of indoor plumbing. Notwithstanding some complaints, Turks tend to be relatively satisfied with their housing. In the 2003 TÜİK survey, 63% of people indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their housing, compared with 25% of respondents who described themselves as being moderately satisfied and just 12% of people who described themselves as being dissatisfied.

Although Turkish people tend to be satisfied with their housing, the EQLS findings show that many report problems in their neighbourhood with conditions that are the responsibility of municipal or regional authorities (Table 13). As a result of urbanisation, almost half of citizens live in areas with insufficient access to recreational green areas, while the inferior infrastructure in rapidly expanding cities causes two-fifths of people to rate water quality as being low. In addition, more than a quarter of respondents complain about air pollution and noise. Crime prevention is a responsibility of public agencies; however, 39% of respondents in Turkey admitted that they feel unsafe when walking alone in their neighbourhood at night – almost double the percentage of those in the EU15 countries who feel unsafe.

**Table 13 Percentage of people reporting problems with local environment, by country and type of problem**

Type of problem	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Shortage of green space	46	18	17	15	16
Water quality	41	31	21	20	15
Air pollution	29	24	26	21	18
Noise	29	19	19	19	18
Streets unsafe at night	39	39	35	32	21

Source: EQLS, 2003

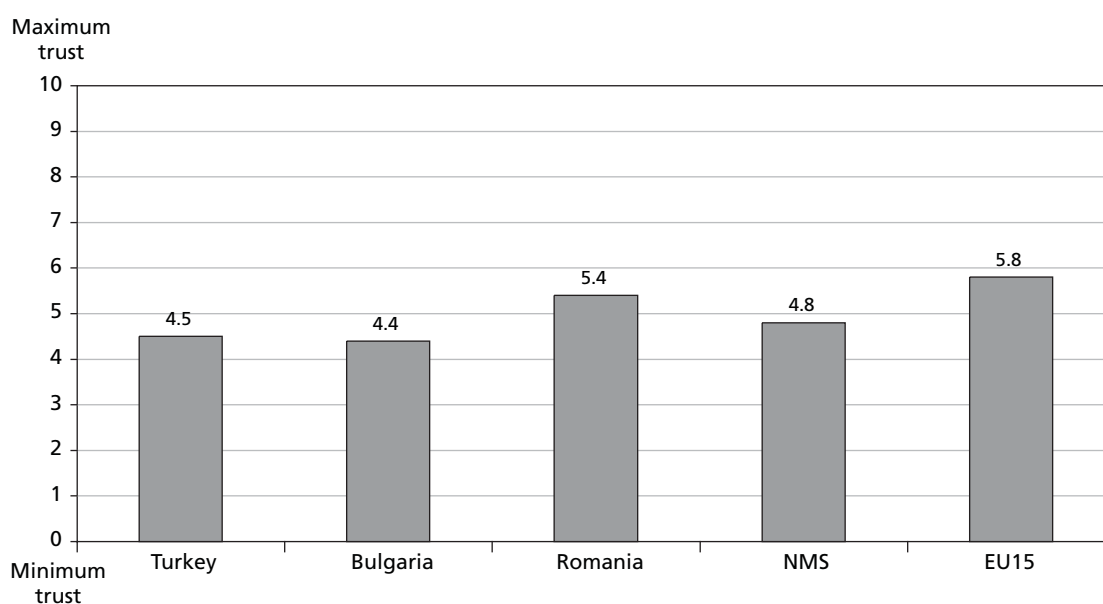
### Levels of trust and tension in society

Levels of trust in society are important for social cohesion, as trust in others predisposes people to cooperate in collective action for their mutual advantage (Fukuyama, 1995). Similarly, cooperation is inhibited if people are on guard and overly cautious in their dealings with others. The radius of trust varies substantially across European countries. In the EQLS, when Turkish people were asked to indicate their degree of trust in others, 69% of respondents were of the view that people can't be too careful in dealing with others, placing themselves at the lower end of the 10-point trust scale with 4.5 points; the latter score is a just little below the average of the NMS countries, where communist regimes bred distrust, but substantially below the average level of trust found among people in the EU15 (Figure 12).

Even if individuals prefer to keep their distance from those whom they distrust, people cannot live in isolation; however, social relations can be tense among different groups in society. In the EQLS, responses to a series of questions about relations between social groups reveals that many Turkish people perceive high levels of tension in their society (Table 14). Three-fifths of respondents in Turkey perceive high levels of tension between rich and poor people, while almost half of the respondents

perceive significant tensions between management and workers. In contrast, only a third of those in the EU15 sense tensions between rich and poor people. While the perception of tension among racial and ethnic groups in the EU15 countries is just as high as it is in Turkey, the causes are different. In Turkey, ethnic tensions arise due to problems with Kurdish groups claiming greater autonomy or independence. In the EU15, such tensions are a consequence of immigration from outside of Europe, particularly from the Muslim societies.

**Figure 12 Levels of trust in others, by country**



*Note:* Results show response to Q: ‘You can’t be too careful in your dealings with others’, on a scale of one to 10, where one denotes minimum trust and 10 denotes maximum trust.

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

**Table 14 Percentage of people reporting high levels of tension in society, by country**

Tensions between	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Rich and poor	60	53	53	52	32
Management and workers	48	37	49	47	34
Racial and ethnic groups	46	13	33	34	47
Men and women	34	9	17	8	12
Young and old	33	17	29	17	15

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

In addition, some 34% of people in Turkey perceive high levels of tension between men and women – a level which is substantially greater than that found in the NMS (8%) and the EU15 (12%). Moreover, the figure for Turkey masks an interesting gender gap: accordingly, some 42% of women in Turkey consider that there is a lot of tension between the sexes, compared with 25% of Turkish men. In contrast, little or no gender gap emerges in the EU Member States with respect to perceived tensions between the sexes. At the same time, one-third of respondents in Turkey sense high levels of tension between young and old people, although no difference is evident on this count between

the perceptions of the older, middle-aged and young generations. In the EU15 and NMS, where perceived tensions between young and old people are substantially lower, there is also no age gap in people's opinions in this respect.

## Life satisfaction

The policies for which governments are responsible are not an end in themselves, but rather a means to increasing citizens' welfare. Education, for instance, not only provides a means of securing a job that pays a good wage, but also gives people a better understanding of society and of an individual's role as a citizen, neighbour, parent or spouse.

People's levels of satisfaction differ between the various domains of life. In Turkey, citizens show the highest level of satisfaction with their family life, with the overall average score of 7.8 being closer to the top end of the satisfaction scale (Table 15). Moreover, the latter score is not significantly different from levels of satisfaction with family life found in the EU15 (7.9), while it is even marginally higher than that observed in the NMS (7.6). The high level of satisfaction with family life across Europe implies there is more than one model in play for a satisfying family life: the majority of Turks report that they are satisfied with family life, even though they are less well off than their EU counterparts, despite the fact that their children do not secure as good an education and regardless of the fact that most women do not work.

A large majority of Turks report that they are satisfied with their own health, notwithstanding complaints about the country's health services. The average score of 7.1 is only marginally lower than the score for the NMS (7.3), albeit lower again than the average satisfaction level recorded for the EU15 (7.7). The large proportion of young people in Turkey's population is an important factor for raising the national level of satisfaction with individual health. Among those aged under 30 years, a total of 82% of respondents are positive about their health. At the same time, 53% of Turks aged 60 years or over report that they are satisfied with their health. The effects of good national health services on older people is evident in the EU15 countries, where the proportion of older citizens who are positive about their health is 18 percentage points higher than that in Turkey.

Education is far more dependent than health on government policy. In Turkey, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the education system, as reflected by the country's average score of 4.7 for satisfaction with education – which is among the lowest of the satisfaction scores recorded for the six domains in question. Moreover, the gap between Turkey and the other countries is exceptionally large in this respect: the average score for satisfaction with education is 7.0 in the EU15 and 6.4 in the NMS. The negative evaluation of education is consistent with the fact that free public provision of education in Turkey is lagging a generation or more behind services provided in both the new and older EU Member States.



**Table 15 Average levels of satisfaction with life domains, by country, %**

	Turkey %	Bulgaria %	Romania %	NMS %	EU15 %
Family life	7.8	7.1	8.1	7.6	7.9
Health	7.1	6.5	7.3	7.3	7.7
Housing	6.5	6.4	7.2	6.7	7.7
Job	6.3	6.3	7.4	6.9	7.4
Education	4.7	6.4	7.8	6.4	7.0
Standard living	4.6	4.0	6.1	5.6	7.2

*Note:* Levels of satisfaction are measured on a scale of one to 10, where one means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'.

*Source:* EQLS, 2003

Turkish people's attitudes towards their material circumstances are mixed. Even though standard of housing is not as high in Turkey as it is in the EU countries, the average level of satisfaction with housing (6.5) is almost the same as it is in the NMS (6.7). People in Turkey also tend to be relatively satisfied with their job (6.3), although job satisfaction is not as high as it is in the EU15 (7.4) or the NMS (6.9). However, Turks tend to be dissatisfied with the standard of living that their work provides, with the average satisfaction score of 4.6 being much lower than that found in the EU countries. However, the cross-national difference in satisfaction with living standards is not as great as that between the per capita income of the EU15 and Turkey.

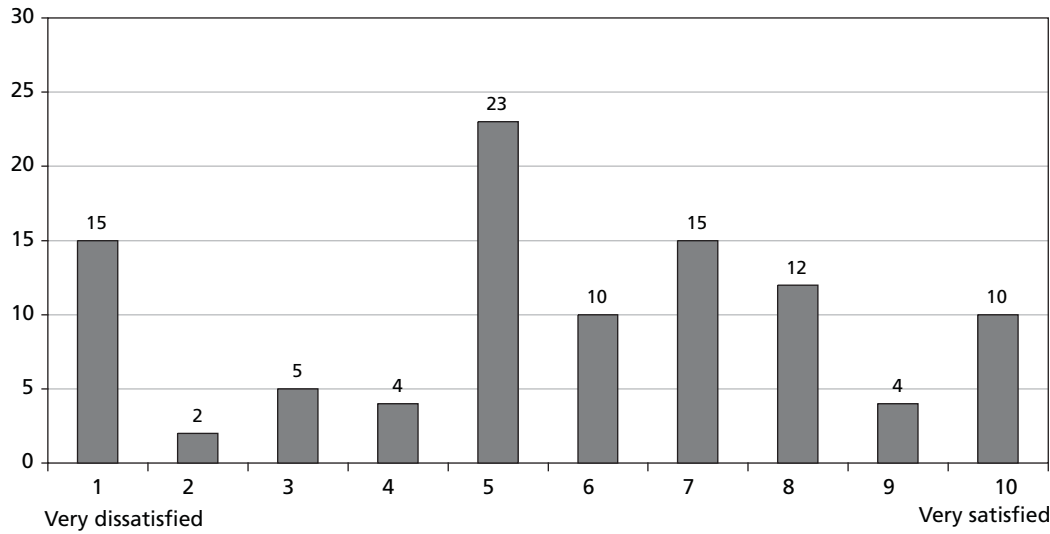
Satisfaction varies to a greater extent across the different domains of life in Turkey than in the EU countries. In the EU15, the gap between the domain of family life, where satisfaction is highest, and education, where satisfaction is lowest, is only 0.9 points on the 10-point scale. In the NMS, a gap of two points is recorded between satisfaction with family life and satisfaction with standard of living. In Turkey, the gap between satisfaction with family life and standard of living is relatively higher at 3.2 points. Nonetheless, the positive evaluation that Turkish people make of family life, health and jobs is significant, suggesting that these domains of life have particular importance for the majority of Turks.

### Overall life satisfaction

Whereas government departments subdivide their tasks between different domains, such as health, housing and education, individuals' lives are usually affected by all of these domains together. Thus, a holistic measure of overall life satisfaction is appropriate in order to capture the net effect of balancing more and less satisfying aspects of life.

Turks differ in the extent to which they express overall satisfaction with life (Figure 13). The results of the EQLS show that around half of the respondents in Turkey give an unambiguously positive reply of between six and 10 on the 10-point life satisfaction scale, while almost one-fifth give a five-point satisfaction rating. Overall, the average level of life satisfaction in Turkey is 5.6 points on the satisfaction scale. However, about one-sixth of Turks express extreme dissatisfaction with life, while around a quarter of the respondents give clear evidence of dissatisfaction, rating their life satisfaction at just at four points or below. In the EU, overall life satisfaction is highest in the EU15, where 83% of respondents express satisfaction with life, with the average level of life satisfaction standing at 7.4.

**Figure 13 Overall life satisfaction levels of people in Turkey, %**



*Note:* Levels of satisfaction are measured on a scale of one to 10, where one means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'.

*Source:* Calculated from EQLS results (Turkish interviews), July 2003

Substantial variations in life satisfaction within each European country reflect the differences between individuals in each society. Therefore, it is necessary to test the extent to which people who are subject to the same public policies differ in their life satisfaction because of individual differences, such as age, income, gender, health or other social characteristics. Ordinary least squares regression is an appropriate statistical method for identifying which of the range of potentially important influences has a statistically significant effect on life satisfaction. Conducting the analysis separately for Turkey and for a pooled data set of the EU15 countries can identify whether variations in individual life satisfaction are similar or differ between EU countries, where life satisfaction tends to be higher, and Turkey, where satisfaction levels are lower.

Altogether, regression analysis can account for 24.2% of the variance in life satisfaction in Turkey and 21.5% among citizens in the EU15 (Table 16). In both analyses, a number of the influences examined are large, a few are limited, while some lack any statistical significance at the .05 level. Figure 14 focuses on the six influences that have the greatest impact on individual life satisfaction in Turkey and in the EU15.

Self-assessed health has the biggest influence on life satisfaction. Accordingly, the healthiest Turks have a life satisfaction rating two-and-a-half points higher on the 10-point satisfaction scale than those who feel the least healthy, net of the effect of all other influences. In the EU15, the healthiest citizens also have a higher rating of one-and-a-half points on the scale of life satisfaction.

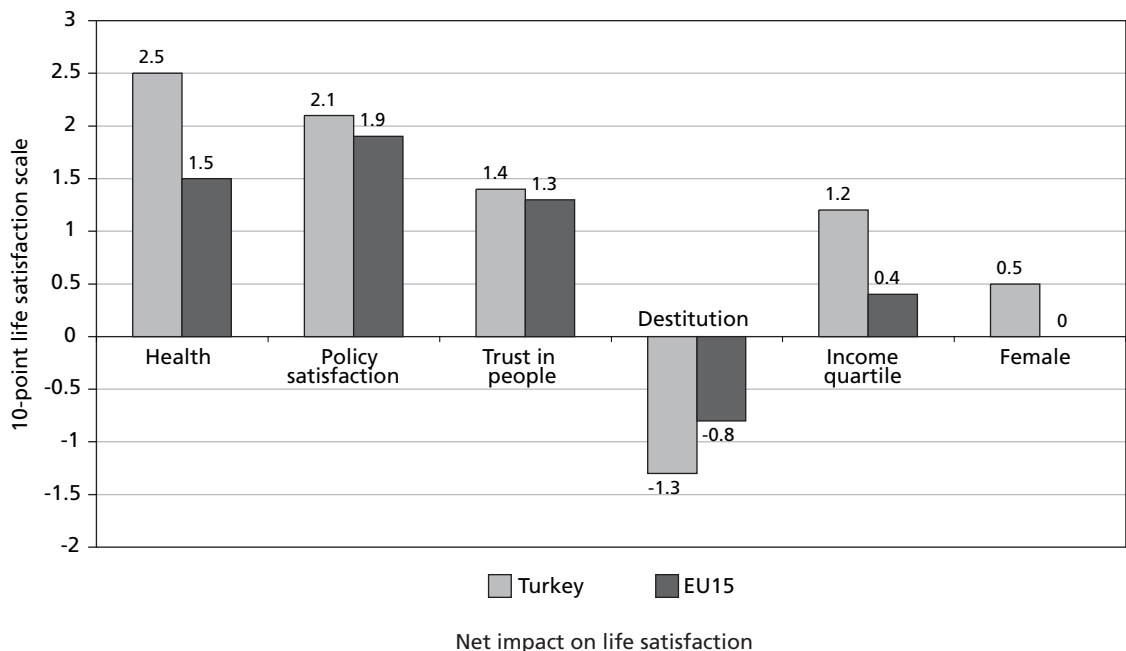
The extent to which individuals are satisfied with public policies also has a significant impact on overall life satisfaction. The more satisfied people are with the public provision of pensions, social services, education, health and public transport, the more likely they are to be satisfied with their own lives. Net of all other influences, those who are most satisfied with public policies are two points higher on the life satisfaction scale than those who are least satisfied. In Turkey, where policy satisfaction is much lower, the impact of policy satisfaction is virtually the same.

Table 16 Regression analysis of influences on life satisfaction, Turkey and EU15

Influences	Turkey			EU15		
	b	Beta	Sig.	b	Beta	Sig.
Health self-assessed	.62	.22	.000	.38	.23	.000
Destitute: rent, food, utilities	-.66	-.19	.000	-.42	-.12	.000
Policy satisfaction	.24	.18	.000	.21	.18	.000
Trust in people	.15	.16	.000	.14	.16	.000
Income quartile	.38	.15	.000	.11	.07	.000
Female	.45	.08	.025	.02	.01	.352
Age	.01	.03	.382	.01	.07	.000
Education (age finished)	.04	.01	.741	.11	.04	.000
Class tension	-.15	-.03	.263	-.15	-.05	.000
Safe neighbourhood	.09	.04	.236	.03	.01	.057
Church attendance	.02	.01	.672	.05	.05	.000
Manual worker	-.09	-.01	.639	-.14	-.04	.000
Urban area	-.20	-.03	.310	-.04	-.01	.098
Employed	-.01	-.002	.938	.01	.004	.592
R <sup>2</sup> : variance explained:		R <sup>2</sup> =24.2%			R <sup>2</sup> =21.5%	

Source: EQLS, 2003

Figure 14 Major influences on life satisfaction in Turkey and EU15



Note: Effects are calculated as the range of each independent variable multiplied by the b-coefficient reported in the OLS regression analysis in Table 16.

Source: EQLS, 2003

Although trust in other people tends to be relatively limited in most of Europe, substantial differences emerge between citizens within every country in the extent to which they trust others. A positive association is apparent between trust in other people and being more satisfied with life (Figure 14). Being at the top of the trust scale rather than being very cautious of others increases life satisfaction by one point. This is the case both in Turkey, where trust in others tends to be low, and in the EU15, where trust in others is somewhat higher.

Destitution, or being without necessities, has the primary economic influence on life satisfaction. The life satisfaction levels of Turkish people who frequently have trouble paying rent and utility bills, and who are short of money to pay for food, are likely to be around one-and-a-third points lower. In the EU15, the life satisfaction levels of a smaller group of very deprived people is likely to be almost one point lower. While the statistical impact is strong at the extremes, only 5% of people in Turkey fall into the category of having to do without all three necessities. By contrast, half of Turkish respondents report being able to pay for all three types of necessities throughout the year.

An individual's position within the national income distribution scale also has a notable impact on overall life satisfaction. The life satisfaction of Turkish people in the highest income quartile is more than one point higher than that of those in the lowest national income quartile. The substantial impact of income on overall life satisfaction appears to be associated with the relatively high level of income inequality in Turkey. In the EU15, the impact of income differences on life satisfaction only has one third of the same significance. However, being better off in income terms in Turkey is insufficient for raising people's life satisfaction levels to the same level as that found among low-income groups in the EU15 countries (Fahey et al, 2005).

In EU countries where differences in the social roles of men and women are far less pronounced than those observed in Turkey, gender has no statistically significant impact on life satisfaction. In Turkey, on the other hand, gender does have a significant influence but not in the direction expected. Net of the influence of age, health and other factors, women score a half a point higher on the life satisfaction scale than men do in Turkey. While the impact of gender is substantially lower than that of other indicators (see Figure 14), the fact that the distinctive position of women in Turkish society does not seem to generate dissatisfaction may indicate the need for caution in imposing western European ideas of gender priorities on Turkish society.

Among the many potential influences tested statistically, eight fail to achieve statistical significance at the .05 level in Turkey. Whether a person is employed, outside of the labour force or a manual worker makes no difference to an individual's subjective well-being. Nor does living in an urban or rural area or in a neighbourhood where there is a fear of crime. Moreover, people who perceive tensions in society are just as likely to be satisfied with their lives as those who do not, while Turks who go to a mosque (primarily men) are not significantly more likely to be satisfied with their lives. In the EU15, the regression analysis produces a similar pattern. Taking into account the many thousands of interviews included in the analysis, five other influences emerge as being statistically significant; however, the impact of each is limited, and four completely fail to register any major significant influence.

## Policy implications for social involvement and life satisfaction

In a democratic society, limits exist on the extent to which governments can or should try to influence many areas of an individual's life. Nonetheless, governments can have an indirect or direct influence on some domains of life and on the major determinants of overall life satisfaction. This is particularly true in the case of Turkey, since life satisfaction tends to be below that of most EU states. In this context and based on the aforementioned findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- Policy satisfaction and trust – satisfaction with public policies not only reflects the level of monetary resources that the government invests in such policies, but also whether or not such resources are well spent. The relatively low level of trust among people in Turkey, along with the comparatively high rating of Turkey in relation to corruption measures (see Transparency International), underlines the fact that, even without a major increase in funding, there is scope for increasing policy satisfaction through a more effective and fairer delivery of existing policies.
- Neighbourhood quality – since the majority of Turks are homeowners, there is a greater incentive for people to invest their own time and labour in home improvements. However, households cannot usually provide the services that make their neighbourhood cleaner and safer. Local government, even more so than national government, is in a position to reduce crime levels in neighbourhoods, along with noise and air pollution, and to deliver clean water to houses.
- Destitution and income distribution – while individuals in the bottom half of a country's income distribution scale are relatively poor, they may not necessarily be destitute, as the EQLS data confirm (see Table 7). The findings underline the need for specifically targeted policies to address difficulties that minorities of Turks have in paying rent, meeting the costs of utility bills and, to a surprising extent, in being able to buy enough food.
- Tensions in society – differences between rich and poor people represent major sources of tension in Turkey, which are compounded by both taxation and spending policies of the Turkish government. In addition, Turkish people appear to be very anxious about ethnic tensions. The halt in military engagements between Kurdish rebels and Turkish security forces offers opportunities for constructive, long-term measures to reduce ethnic tensions. Nonetheless, the state's capacity to take actions to ameliorate the relatively high tensions between women and men in Turkish society is problematic.
- Life satisfaction by domains – where life satisfaction is lowest in Turkey, namely in relation to standard of living, the government has the most influence. Standard of living depends on the rate of economic growth and sound management of social as well as economic policies. Education policies not only relate to the need for greater funding, which is inevitable given the country's demographics, but also highlight the need for more effective expenditure – particularly in terms of raising the skills and employability of the large proportion of young people who leave school between the ages of 14 and 16 years to take up employment.

# Policy implications from an EU perspective

Since its foundation, the original EU of six Member States has expanded rapidly to include a diverse range of societies, with disparate histories, size of population and standards of living. Earlier expansions which saw the entry of countries such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Sweden – countries that were similar in culture to existing Member States – did not pose a significant challenge to EU social cohesion. The addition of the three Mediterranean countries, Greece, Portugal and Spain, increased levels of diversity within the EU to a certain extent. The subsequent accession of another 10 countries in May 2004, along with the recent entry of Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007, has further expanded the level of diversity among EU countries.

The prospect of Turkish membership in the EU raises much larger questions. Turkey is more populous than all but one EU Member State, namely Germany; its GDP per capita is much lower; while its history and culture are rooted in the traditions of a nationalist secular state, which became modernised under military tutelage and which has a predominantly Muslim population. Challenges in relation to Turkey's development can be grouped under three broad headings: those challenges that Turkey faces independently of the progress in relation to discussions about its EU membership; pressures to adapt to the EU prior to deciding about Turkey's admission; and the longer-term dynamics of the relationship between Turkey and the EU.

## Challenges unique to Turkey

The dynamics of Turkey's demography will ensure that its population will continue to grow in the decades ahead, because the youngest cohorts in the Turkish population are larger than the oldest ones and growth does not depend on immigration from abroad. Between the 2000 census and 2010, it is forecasted that Turkey's population will increase by 10.5 million people (TÜİK, 2005, Table 1.1). Population forecasts for the decades beyond combine actuarial calculations about the current population and assumptions about future birth rates and immigration patterns. TÜİK data (2004) estimates that Turkey's population will exceed 90 million people by 2023, while the State Planning Office (*Devlet Planlama Te kilati*, DPT) predicts that the population may even reach 100 million people by 2050.

Population growth places a steady pressure on the Turkish government to invest in social infrastructure, starting with antenatal measures required to reduce an infant mortality rate that is higher than anywhere in the EU. At the same time, increasing the number of primary and secondary schools to accommodate a greater number of students is technically straightforward but costly, since new school buildings also require the recruitment of more teachers, thus increasing current as well as capital expenditure on education. Moreover, the cost of education must be met before additional pupils start contributing to the economy as productive workers. Public expenditure on education has already been growing at a faster pace than other budgetary claimants, such as defence.

The imbalance between the number of Turks entering the labour market and those leaving means that there is a large demand for more jobs, since the growth in young job-seekers is greater than the number of vacancies being created through workers' departure from the labour market either due to retirement or death. In the next decade, a net increase of upwards of five million jobs will be required to maintain the percentage of adults in employment at its current low level. The OECD *Economic*

*Survey of Turkey (2006)* has argued that existing government policies hinder job creation by reducing the flexibility of employers in hiring workers and imposing high non-wage labour costs.

The pressure to create better jobs that are more productive, as well as being higher paid, is also emerging as a greater priority. In the past, employment growth in Turkey has led to the creation of large numbers of low-skilled factory jobs in traditional industries, such as textiles, automobile manufacturing and service jobs in tourism, where wages are low by EU standards. However, the jobs that young school leavers of today want are often different from the unskilled jobs that many older workers are vacating. Furthermore, pressures from globalisation mean that Turkish employers must increasingly compete not only with EU workers receiving higher wages than Turks, but also with Asian workers whose wage demands are substantially lower. This is pushing Turkish employers to invest in value-added products that require workers with higher levels of skills and productivity (Turgut, 2006). In turn, it has increased the need for more secondary school courses offering vocational training to qualify young people as skilled workers and technicians.

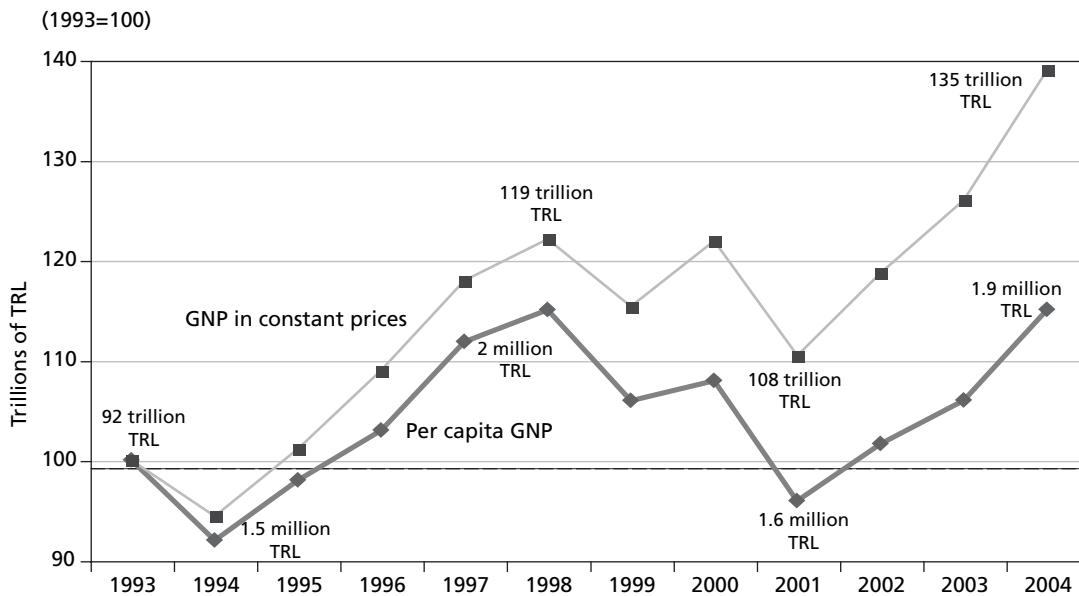
The traditionally low rate of female participation in the Turkish workforce represents a potential pressure for a further increase in demand for jobs, insofar as young Turkish women, who are generally more educated than their mothers and grandmothers, are more likely to seek paid employment outside of the home. Given the fact that over 15 million Turkish women of working age are not currently in paid employment, any shift in the proportion of Turkish women seeking employment would further increase already existing pressures on the demand for jobs.

High and steady economic growth will be required to create millions of additional jobs and fund the increased public expenditure necessary to educate and train more young people and to provide social security for their older counterparts. The Turkish economy has experienced spurts of very high economic growth: for example, in the mid 1990s, the economy grew by as much as 8.3% a year. However, the economy has also been subject to abrupt downturns; in 2001, for instance, the economy contracted by 9.5%. Comparisons with EU15 countries show that, over the years, the Turkish economy has grown relatively faster in general. However, the erratic development of the Turkish economy makes the picture about economic growth, as reflected by available statistics, very sensitive to the particular year in question.

Even though Turkish growth rates are often very high, the steady expansion in the population means that the economy must support an increasing number of individuals. As a result, per capita growth in gross national product (GNP) is always less than the percentage growth in aggregate GDP (Figure 15). For example, in 2004, the Turkish economy grew by 9.9% in aggregate GDP, while per capita GNP growth was lower at 8.2%. The effect on households is also stronger when the national economy contracts. For example, in 2001, a contraction of 9.5% in aggregate GDP resulted in an 11.1% contraction in GNP per capita.

The financial instability of Turkey in the past decade restricts economic comparisons between the Turkish lira and euro. The consumer price index (CPI) of inflation has been as high as 99% in 1997. Even when this was halved between 2001 and 2002, inflation was still at 30%. In 2005, the CPI registered inflation of 7.7%. While the fall in inflation has brought interest rates down from a high of 105% in 1995, the official interest rate was still 24% in 2005. Given the very high inflation levels, the exchange rate of the Turkish lira in relation to the euro depreciated by 97% between 1995 and 2005 (European Commission, 2006, p. 78).

Figure 15 Erratic economic growth in Turkey, by levels of GNP, 1993–2004



Notes: 1993 GNP: TRL 97.676 trillion (1 trillion = 1,000 million); 1993 per capita GNP: TRL 1.64 million  
 GNP in constant prices: 4% average annual growth in decade; per capita GNP at constant prices: 2.2% average annual growth in decade.

Source: TÜİK, 2005, Tables 21.5, 21.6

## Challenges regarding Turkey's EU candidacy

Development in the EU has never remained static and has instead been driven by internal and external challenges. Internally, the EU has expanded its functional responsibilities through the Single European Market and the regulatory activities arising thereof, including the creation of a single currency for the eurozone. The EU's expansion from six to 27 Member States first spread to the west, then to the Mediterranean countries, onwards to the Nordic countries and now across eastern Europe to the Black Sea. An expanding EU with more members and functions has led to demands for institutional reform, something which the draft European Constitution has sought to address.

International developments have posed further challenges to the EU. The collapse of the Communist Bloc and removal of the Iron Curtain, which had previously limited the EU's potential for enlargement, has raised fresh security issues in neighbouring trouble spots in the Balkans. The expansion of trade within Europe has been complemented by the expansion of the international economy. This has forced the EU to be concerned not only with strengthening social cohesion within its own boundaries, but also with increasing European competitiveness in relation to the dynamic economies of other continents.

The functional and geographical expansion of the EU has stimulated debate about its capacity to absorb additional Member States. Discussions about whether and how to strengthen the political, economic and financial institutions of the EU are being driven by problems regarding the current 27 Member States. Whether the EU could absorb a country as large and distinctive as Turkey thus depends not only on developments within Turkey itself but also on developments regarding the capacity of EU institutions. The EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, argues that it would



be 'hopelessly late' to delay action to strengthen EU institutions until 2017 or later, when the issue of Turkey's membership will be resolved (European Commission, 2006, p. 61).

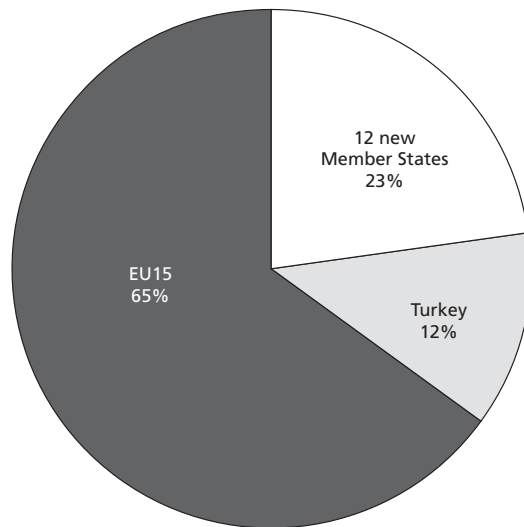
Meanwhile, although the EU has never been committed to a set of religious values, its Member States have had some form of Christianity as a state religion. The decline in religious participation across Europe has promoted indifference and tolerance between previously antagonistic forms of Christianity. Even though religion has no official standing in the criteria for EU membership, Turkey's Muslim heritage has emerged as an issue in the debate about whether Turkey belongs in the EU. This reflects current concerns that EU countries have about dealing with millions of immigrants from Muslim societies and following the terrorist attacks in London, Madrid and the Netherlands.

Although most Turks pray or attend a mosque, the Turkish interpretation of Islam makes much more limited demands on followers than in many parts of the Middle East. In contrast with western Europe, where religious friction tends to involve the dominant nationality and immigrant Muslims, religious differences in Turkey have been between secular and religious groups. These divisions have not been as extreme as earlier religious conflicts in Europe or contemporary divisions in the Middle East. There is also a difference between the role of *imams* in Turkey, who are supervised by the state and do not challenge its secular authority, and Muslim clerics in European societies, who have no civil obligations. Public opinion surveys find that the majority of practising Muslims in Turkey do not want to replace the modern Turkish constitution with the constitution of an Islamic state.

In relation to the gender issue, the EU's promotion of gender equality is challenged by the fact that relations between men and women in Turkey reflect both traditional Muslim mores on the one hand and Atatürk's advocacy of equal rights between men and women on the other. This creates substantial differences in gender roles between Turkish and EU societies. The labour force participation of women in Turkey today is lower than it has been in virtually every European country a half a century ago. While the EU's Copenhagen criteria do not make the promotion of gender equality an explicit criterion for membership, the European Parliament has adopted resolutions urging Turkey to take more active steps in implementing legislation that protects the rights of women.

In terms of demographics, the large size of Turkey's population is indisputable; however, the implications of its dramatic growth are ambiguous. In the next decade, the population of Turkey will surpass that of the largest EU Member State – Germany. Some forecasts estimate that the population of Turkey will be greater than Japan by 2050. Population size makes Turkey loom large in a European setting, whether it is inside or outside the EU. The country has a bigger and more rapidly growing economy than most EU Member States. It also has the largest army in Europe, constitutes a strategic location adjacent to Middle Eastern trouble spots and encompasses access routes for the movement of energy from Central Asia to Europe.

The combination of a low average national income and a large population could make Turkey's potential claim on EU social cohesion funds greater in magnitude than other countries. In the present EU of 27 Member States, the new entrants with strong claims on EU funds already constitute more than one fifth of its total population (Figure 16). The addition of Turkey could increase the population claiming EU social cohesion funds by half. Of course, the extent to which Turkish claims on EU funds would be destabilising depends on whether the current system of allocating funds remains unaltered in the decade or more before Turkey's proposed membership (Rehn, 2006, p. 60).

**Figure 16** Population of European countries as proportion of total EU population, %

*Note:* Romania and Bulgaria are included in the 12 new Member States.

*Source:* Eurostat, 2004: New Cronos – Free Data

## Discussions on EU membership

Discussions between Turkey and the EU have a long history and are likely to have a prolonged future. Turkey's interest in joining the EU was formally registered more than a quarter of a century ago, and while negotiations on its membership have since commenced, it is expected that it will be a decade or more before Turkey may be considered eligible for EU entry. Much will need to take place in Turkey and in the EU before membership can be realised. This will include predictable trends, such as continued growth in the population of Turkey compared with that of the EU Member States, and imponderables including political changes within Turkey and within the EU itself.

The opening up of discussions about EU accession creates opportunities, incentives and requirements for Turkey to converge with EU standards. The EU is not negotiating on the substance or conditions of accession, but rather asking Turkey as a candidate country to adjust to the EU's laws and policies. This requires ongoing discussions, since many requirements are not fixed and precise, and because the form, methods and pace of adjustment are negotiable. One Copenhagen criterion that Turkey clearly meets is its longstanding functioning market economy, unlike that of the NMS countries which were part of the Communist bloc. According to enlargement Commissioner Rehn, the greatest challenge for Turkey is the implementation of political criteria (European Commission, 2006, p. 82). The constitutional position of the military, which the country has invoked at times against elected governments, detracts from Turkey's democratic credentials. Laws restricting criticism of basic nationalist beliefs and the treatment of the Kurdish minority represent additional political issues, while the country's rule of law has been weakened by corruption and derogations from human rights. At the same time, existing shortcomings in governance raise questions about the administrative capacity of the Turkish state.

Turkey's application for membership represents a unique challenge to the EU because many European governments do not consider it a typical European country. However, the EU does not

define Europe geographically and its political boundaries have been transformed repeatedly in the past century (Rose, 1996). Setting boundaries on Europe would raise questions about its relations with countries just outside these limits. Associations with countries on the borders of the EU are problematic, for they can either be firmly labelled 'not European' or else contingently 'not yet European'. While such constructive ambiguity allows for flexibility in response to future developments, it can also be used to avoid resolution of existing EU differences of opinion about further enlargement.

The process of discussing EU membership is ongoing. The most recent accession countries started their journey towards membership with democratic elections in 1990. The timescale envisioned for the discussion of Turkey's proposed entry to the EU covers the following events: elections to the Turkish National Assembly in 2007, 2011 and 2015; more than 80 elections in the EU's current Member States; elections to the European Parliament in 2009 and 2014; and two more rounds of appointing and confirming members of the European Commission. Thus, the final decision on Turkey's proposed entry to the EU will not only reflect the more or less predictable trends within Turkish society which have been analysed in the previous chapters, but also political imponderables in the EU as it exists today, in Turkey and in the wider world of which both are a part.

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European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

**First European Quality of Life Survey: Quality of life in Turkey**

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*The recent enlargement of the European Union raises issues about the need to accept diversity while achieving social cohesion. Given the distinctive nature of Turkey's history and culture, its application for membership brings important challenges to the fore. Turkey's income per capita is lower than any of the EU countries and a significant majority of women do not participate in paid employment. This report explores factors relating to quality of life in Turkey, based on findings from the Foundation's 28-country First European Quality of Life Survey, as well as from national surveys and related social science research. It compares conditions in Turkey with those in both the older and new EU Member States. The comparison examines factors which determine social inclusion or exclusion in Turkey: education and training, economic status, income levels, social and health services, gender differences and participation in social networks. Most importantly, it addresses the key issue of people's perceptions of the quality of society, as well as assessing the overall life satisfaction of Turkey's citizens.*

**The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is a tripartite EU body, whose role is to provide key actors in social policymaking with findings, knowledge and advice drawn from comparative research. The Foundation was established in 1975 by Council Regulation EEC No. 1365/75 of 26 May 1975.**



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