

# KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

**2025**

**TÜRKIYE**

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# ABOUT THIS PAPER

Each year, the ETF monitors developments in education, skills, and employment in its partner countries to identify trends, opportunities, and challenges for informed decision making. The results are reported by country, across countries, and by selected theme.

This document is the 2025 country-level report (Country Fiche) for Türkiye. Like all ETF monitoring, it draws on multiple sources of evidence and is the culmination of a year-long process of data collection, analysis, and consultations. One key source is the ETF KIESE database, which provides internationally comparable indicators on areas such as country demographics, economics, education, and employment. We mainly use indicators from international repositories, including UNESCO, the World Bank, the OECD, Eurostat, and the ILO, though some come directly from partner countries, e.g. labour force surveys<sup>1</sup>.

Another key source of evidence is the Torino Process, a flagship monitoring initiative of the ETF that compiles system performance indices (SPIs) using KIESE data and expert surveys. The SPIs combine selected KIESE indicators to track policy and system performance in education and VET in terms of access, quality, and system management. Where there is no KIESE data, the SPIs fill the gaps using expert surveys and contextualise the findings at the analysis stage. 'Performance' in this context refers to the extent to which policies and systems deliver results in these areas<sup>2</sup>. In 2025, the ETF compiled SPIs for a total of 32 performance areas and sub-areas, including for groups of learners such as youth and adults, males and females, socio-economically disadvantaged young people, and adults with no or low education.

ETF country missions go further by engaging with key policy stakeholders, gathering qualitative insights on policy developments, recently enacted legislation, and major reforms. Finally, where necessary, the ETF draws on third-party publications and analytical work to fill in gaps in available evidence or to clarify developments not fully captured in the ETF monitoring.

The country fiche begins with Chapter 1 – a country profile that describes the demographics and socio-economic conditions in the country. Chapter 2 sets out recent policies in education and training, together with the structure of the education system, including adult learning. Chapter 3 provides an overview of employment and labour-market policies and introduces the main strategies, institutions, and programmes. Lastly, Chapter 4, gives the results of policies and arrangements in education and training.

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<sup>1</sup> The full selection of KIESE indicators for 2025 can be found here <https://bit.ly/4j6taZW>.

<sup>2</sup> The subset of KIESE indicators used for the calculation of the Torino Process SPIs in 2025 can be found here: <https://bit.ly/433OR8j>. The full list of questions used in the 2025 round of Torino Process system performance monitoring can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3YUlbXE>. For a full overview of the Torino Process system performance monitoring framework, see <https://bit.ly/47YGA6l>. The methodology for calculating the SPIs can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3XJg101>.

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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Country profile and developments:** Türkiye is an EU candidate country. It has a population of over 85 million and while Turkish citizens make up the majority, there are significant migrant populations, mainly from Syria. There are also large Kurdish-speaking communities in the east. In demographic terms, Türkiye is a young society but also has high levels of emigration to EU countries. Türkiye has seen political and institutional shifts in 2025, including the arrest of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu in March that raised concerns over democratic backsliding and judicial independence, while in May the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) announced it was disarming. Persistent economic instability – high inflation, currency weakness, and investor uncertainty that creates pressure – has dogged the country this year. Though internationally Türkiye has strengthened its regional influence EU policy dialogue is continuing in parallel and EU assistance remains significant.
- **Developments in education and training:** Türkiye is working to advance wide-ranging reforms in education and training and vocational education and training (VET). The government, led by the National Education Ministry (MoNE), is continuing to try to build ties with employers and employers to have curricula align with industry needs. Apprenticeships and dual training models are expanding, supported by state-funded wage incentives. Vocational and technical schools are being modernised, with sector-specific and regional schools and the establishment of R&D and excellence centres. Broader curriculum updates integrate green and digital skills, while quality assurance mechanisms are being reinforced across education levels. Adult learning and lifelong learning policies are being reviewed to promote employability, upskilling, and recognition of prior learning, though take-up remains limited. Türkiye's education and training reforms aim to bridge education-to-employment gaps, promote innovation, and equip learners with future-oriented skills, yet challenges persist in adult learning, funding, and the implementation of quality assurance across all sectors. Micro-credentials are becoming more of a priority.
- **Employment and labour market developments:** Türkiye's labour market has shown moderate stability but continues to face major structural challenges. As national statistical data from TIUK the national statistical office shows, the unemployment rate has fluctuated between 8–9 %, while labour force participation remains around 54 % and employment about 50 %. Gender disparities persist, with female employment at roughly 32 % compared to 67 % for men. Youth unemployment is around 16 %, and over 30 % of young people (18–24) are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). The Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS), remains central to active labour market policies (ALMPs). It has expanded job-matching, skills training, and career counselling services, with targeted initiatives for youth, women, and vulnerable groups and this continues with the new Employment Strategy. There are EU supported programmes that focus on youth, and on research and innovation. The 2025–2027 Medium-Term Programme aims to raise employment and participation rates while reducing unemployment. However, informal working, skill mismatches and persistent gender and regional inequalities continue to limit inclusive and sustainable labour market growth. The Economic Reform Programme (ERP), published in January 2025, also addresses this.
- **Trends in access, retention and completion:** Primary and lower-secondary school enrolment is near-universal, but upper-secondary attendance is uneven, with 18.7 % of young adults (18–24) being early school leavers – double the EU average. Female enrolment in higher education has reached 51.7 %, as taken from TIUK and Ministry of Education information, reflecting efforts to improve gender parity. Access for disadvantaged groups, including over 1.2 million refugee children, is hampered by economic, language and social barriers. Completion rates have improved in upper-secondary education, though rural and low-income students face higher dropout risks. Information also shows that women continue to outperform men in completing tertiary education, showing gains in gender equality. Targeted policies aim to reduce dropouts and support disadvantaged learners. In summary, the country has improved access and retention, particularly

for women and marginalised groups, but more effort is needed to ensure equitable opportunities and reduce regional disparities.

- **Quality and relevance of learning:** The country is making some progress in aligning education and training with labour market needs, though challenges remain. Among bachelor's degree graduates, the registered employment rate stood at 75.0 % in 2024, slightly down from 75.6 % in 2023, while associate degree holders' employment fell to 66.4 % from 67.7 %. Fields such as medicine (96.4 %), special education teaching (95.1 %), and electrical teaching (92.4 %) reported the highest employment rates, highlighting strong alignment in certain sectors. Regarding field relevance, 56.1 % of bachelor graduates were working in jobs related to their studies, up slightly from 55.6 % the previous year, while for associate degree holders this declined slightly to 51.0 %. Average time to secure the first job remained 14.4 months for bachelor graduates and increased marginally for associate degree holders to 16.0 months. VET seems to show better outcomes, with Maths and Science graduates achieving an 88 % employment rate, which might reflect better alignment with labour market demand. Overall, even with some moves toward stronger education-labour market links, the country continues to face challenges in graduate employability and job placement.
- **System management and organisation:** Türkiye continues to work to strengthen the management and organisation of its education, VET, and lifelong learning structures, though challenges persist. Public spending on VET and lifelong learning has increased, and professional development for staff alongside digital platforms like Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (EBA) should improve human resource capacity. Data systems such as the National Vocational Information System (NVIS) and lifelong-learning databases also help in evidence-based decision-making, while digital guidance tools and quality assurance frameworks are in turn working to monitor learning outcomes. However, analysis shows that local-level coordination and wider stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation remain limited. MoNE, MoLSS and İŞKUR lead policy, with growing numbers of employers and employee and government representatives involved, supported by EU and ETF initiatives. Türkiye also engages in EU programmes like Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe, which promote VET development, digital learning and lifelong learning. Overall, while further strengthening is always welcome, Türkiye is making progress in structural organisation, data use and international cooperation.

# 1. COUNTRY PROFILE

**Table 1.1 Demographic and socio-economic context: key indicators, Türkiye**

Indicator	Amount	Year	Source
Total population (in thousands)	85326.0	2023	UN DESA, World Bank
Relative size of youth population (%)	22.0	2023	UN DESA
Population growth rate	0.4	2023	World Bank, UN DESA
Dependency ratio	46.7	2023	World Bank, UN DESA
Immigrant stock as % of total population	8.1	2024	UN DESA
Emigrant stock as % of total population	3.6	2024	UN DESA
GDP growth rate	5.1	2023	World Bank
GDP per capita (PPP)	42326.2	2023	World Bank
Migrant remittance inflows (US\$ mil.) as % of GDP	0.1	2023	World Bank
Inflation rate	53.9	2023	IMF
Poverty headcount ratio (\$8.30/day)	10.8	2022	World Bank
Gini coefficient (Income inequality)	44.4	2021	World Bank
Human development index (HDI)	0.853	2023	UNDP, World Bank

Source: ETF KIESE database

## 1.1 Demographics

In 2023, Türkiye had a total population of approximately 85.3 million (Table 1.1). Annual growth was modest at 0.4 %, equivalent to an increase of about 340 000 people compared with the previous year. A large share of the population – 68 % – was of working age (15–64), alongside a smaller share – 32 % – made up of children and older persons. With a dependency ratio of 46.7, the pool of people of working age is large by international standards, but so is the share of dependents.

Türkiye has a significant supply of potential new entrants to the labour market each year as outlined in TUIK data and as noted in documents from government ministries. In 2023, young people of working age (15–24) accounted for 22 % of the population, a substantial share that means education, training, and first-employment policies could have a major influence on overall labour market outcomes in the coming years.

## 1.2 Economics

According to TIUK, Türkiye's economic growth in 2024 – as measured by real GDP growth – was **3.2**, a pace that compares well with advanced economies. GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms was USD 43,932 (according to the World Bank), which reflects a relatively high average standard of living once differences in price levels between countries are taken into account. The combination of strong growth and high per capita output points to an economy that has a substantial productive capacity.

Income from citizens living abroad plays a marginal role in the economy. In 2023, migrant remittance inflows accounted for just 0.1 % of GDP, which is low in international comparison, especially considering the size of Türkiye's diaspora. At the same time, inflation reached 53.9 % in that year, driven by loose monetary policy, currency depreciation and increased public spending. In real terms, this means that consumer prices rose sharply over the year, leading to a substantial erosion of everyone's purchasing power.

## 1.3 Income and living standards

Türkiye's Human Development Index (HDI) stood at 0.853 in 2023 (Table 1.1), which places it firmly in the group of countries with 'very high' human development. However, not all the three dimensions of the HDI – health, education and income – are at the same level. Life expectancy has declined since 2018, while education – although still the weakest of the three – has improved over the same period. Income remains the strongest component (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2025), which reflects the upper-middle-income status of the country.

Despite these gains, in 2022 close to 11 % of people were living below the \$8.30/day poverty line. This is not among the highest by international comparison, but it is still sizeable for a country at this level of development. Taken together with a Gini coefficient of 44.4 (Table 1.1), it points to a pattern where advances coexist with an uneven distribution of economic opportunities and benefits.

National averages on poverty hide significant regional disparities between the more prosperous western regions and the poorer eastern regions of the country. For instance, a recent study into 'deep poverty' (those unable to meet basic needs) found about 20.7 % of people in the southeast living in this category – nearly three times the national rate. Overall, the east and the southeast account for a disproportionate share of the poor in Türkiye, and a disproportionate share of all poor children (48.5 %)<sup>3</sup>.

## 1.4 Recent political developments

Türkiye's politics have been dominated by the AK party since 2002. The last parliamentary election was in 2023 when the party won a reduced majority against rivals, including the main CHP opposition party. In March 2025, protests erupted nationwide following the detention of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and over 100 opposition figures. These protests, involving students, teachers, and academics, expanded to 400 cities and towns and sparked large anti-government demonstrations in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir.

Data in the EU Country Report Enlargement Package and similar publications outline that Türkiye's economy has shown resilience despite challenges. GDP grew by 4.8 % year-on-year in the second quarter of 2025, supported by strong private consumption and increased investment, though inflation remained high at 47 % in November 2024. The Government has pursued monetary tightening, moderating growth to 3.2 % in 2024. The World Bank has revised Türkiye's 2025 growth forecast upward, reflecting some improved confidence in economic policy.

Bilateral trade with the EU reached over EUR 210 billion in 2024. In July 2025, the EU eased Schengen visa procedures for Turkish citizens, even though the European Parliament had reiterated concerns over insufficient progress on democratic reforms in May. Türkiye's long-standing EU integration efforts, dating back to the Ankara Association Agreement and the 1995 Customs Union, remain central to its national policies.

The end of the Syrian civil war in 2024 has had implications for Türkiye and Syrian refugees. Hosting over 3.6 million Syrians, Türkiye saw around 700,000 returns by mid-2025, mainly to Aleppo and Damascus, facilitated by less stringent 'go-and-see' visits. Türkiye is supporting the reconstruction and is offering training to the new Syrian authorities. Returning remains challenging, with destroyed homes, weak infrastructure, and security concerns. The UN estimates 1 million refugees have returned since December 2024. Continued international support is crucial for safe, sustainable reintegration, highlighting the human capital development dimension of this process.

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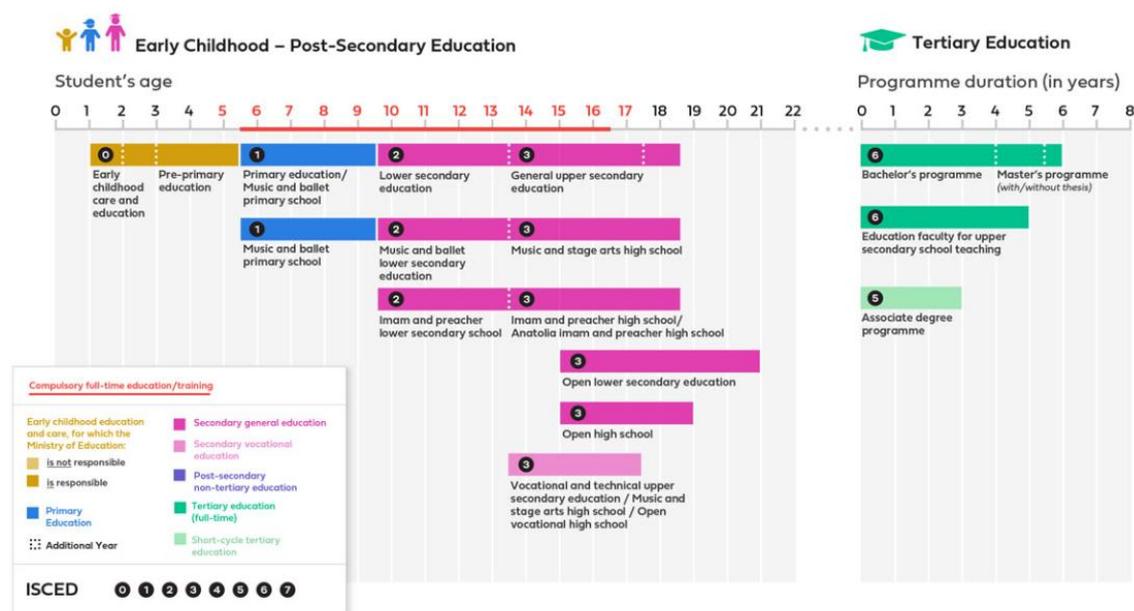
<sup>3</sup> BETAM Economic Growth Forecasts: October 2025 Seyfettin Gürsel, Oğuz Yurtoğlu  
[betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/en/2025/11/economic-growth-forecasts-october-2025/](https://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/en/2025/11/economic-growth-forecasts-october-2025/)

## 2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING: POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

### 2.1 Structure and levels of education, including VET

This section provides a brief description of how the education system is organised across different levels, including pre-primary, primary, secondary (distinguishing between general and vocational tracks), tertiary, and adult learning. It uses the UNESCO ISCED classification and is based on monitoring information collected through the Torino Process expert survey<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 2.1 Structure of the education system: Türkiye (2025)**



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2021

### Formal education

Formal education in Türkiye spans early childhood to tertiary levels. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) oversees education up to upper secondary, while the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) manages universities. Compulsory education lasts 12 years, divided into elementary (grades 1–4), lower secondary (grades 5–8), and upper secondary (grades 9–12).

Pre-primary education is optional for children up to six, including nurseries and daycare, with special programmes for children with additional needs. General schools deliver primary and lower secondary education alongside specialised institutions such as for music or ballet, and Anatolian imam/preacher schools. Schools work on the basis of automatic progression and places are allocated according to place of residence.

Upper secondary education offers pathways including Anatolian high schools, vocational and technical schools, science and fine arts high schools, and imam/preacher schools. Vocational students can earn Journeyman's and Master tradesperson certificates and Europass Certificate Supplements.

Higher education comprises associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral courses at public and foundation universities. Admission requires completion of secondary education and centralised exams,

<sup>4</sup> The full questionnaire can be found here: <https://bit.ly/418jfwC>. In this document, the survey may be referred to interchangeably as the 'monitoring survey', 'expert survey', or 'Torino Process monitoring survey'.

with some disciplines requiring talent-based assessments. Regulated professions, such as medicine, follow dedicated pathways, while arts courses focus on original work and advanced specialisation.

## Adult learning

Adult education in Türkiye spans programmes that build literacy, support entrepreneurship, and strengthen personal and professional skills. Provision involves multiple public bodies, notably the MoNE, the MoLSS, and various NGOs. The Directorate General of Lifelong Learning oversees non-formal adult education delivered through Public Education Centres, Advanced Technical Schools for Girls, and Open Education Schools, offering classroom, vocational, and distance learning options.

Private education providers (regulated under the Law on Private Education Institutions and aligned with national curricula and qualifications frameworks) offer vocational and personal development training. Literacy courses target basic reading and primary-level competencies.

The Vocational Qualifications Authority develops occupational standards, while MoNE provides vocational courses to support labour market (re)entry. MoLSS implements the Active Labour Market Programmes, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates Erasmus+ adult learning, and KOSGEB delivers entrepreneurship training. These structures operate within Türkiye's broader education sector and under the Twelfth Development Plan (2024–2028).

## 2.2 Strategy and legal framework

Türkiye's recent education reforms focus on expanding access, improving quality and addressing inequalities, particularly in early childhood education and vocational training. In 2024–2025, major legislative changes centred on the 'Century of Türkiye Education Model', approved in May 2024 and introduced gradually, starting with pre-school, 1st, and 5th grades. The model aims to modernise and streamline the system in line with future needs.

These reforms align with the Twelfth Development Plan (2024–2028), which sets national priorities for improving lifelong learning, access to quality education and diversifying educational provision. A key initiative is the strengthening of public education centres. Launched in 2024, it seeks to expand the capacity, accessibility and quality of lifelong learning, with a second phase in 2025 upgrading 1,000 centres nationwide. The country is also advancing digital transformation through its participation in the Digital Europe Programme and Horizon Europe to enhance innovation and digital competencies.

Assessment and evaluation reforms move examinations away from the traditional multiple choice toward process-oriented and continuous monitoring approaches, with tools aligned to course content and learning outcomes. Language education now includes an assessment of all four skills—reading, writing, listening, and comprehension – supporting more comprehensive literacy development.

Teacher-focused reforms are enhancing professional development to equip educators for future challenges. Inclusivity measures are expanding support for girls and disadvantaged students, while new policies are addressing dropouts, exam standardisation, truancy, and transitions to open education. Law No. 6698 also strengthens student data protection.

2025 saw the introduction of the Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy Document and Action Plan<sup>5</sup> (2025–2029), outlining national priorities and strategic goals for integrating AI into education and aligning with the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy.

## General education

The Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) was established in 2015. It aims to integrate qualifications from various education and training sectors into a single system, thus fostering lifelong learning and international recognition of qualifications. The Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA)

<sup>5</sup> [yegitek.meb.gov.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/2025\\_07/19150909\\_egitimde\\_vz\\_politika\\_belgesi\\_18072025\\_en.pdf](https://yegitek.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2025_07/19150909_egitimde_vz_politika_belgesi_18072025_en.pdf)

(called MYK in Turkish), MoNE, and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) are jointly responsible for developing and implementing the TQF. There are eight levels, encompassing all types and levels of qualifications and certificates. It is designed to be compatible with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), facilitating international mobility and recognition of qualifications. The framework encourages lifelong learning by integrating qualifications from various learning environments, including formal, non-formal, and informal learning. Plans are being devised for a system of Quality Assurance built into the wider framework.

The TQF integrates the NVQS, which focuses on vocational qualifications based on occupational standards. The TQF also incorporates the qualifications framework for higher education, ensuring alignment with the European Higher Education Area and this also helps in the recognition of prior learning, enabling individuals to gain formal qualifications based on their existing knowledge and skills – even where this is an area that the authorities are working to upgrade and modernise. A coordination council with representatives from the MoNE, CoHE, and VQA forms the decision-making body for the TQF.

## Vocational education

Türkiye has, in 2024 and 2025, moved ahead with reforms<sup>67</sup>. This work builds on a policy framework that included the MoNE Strategic Plan (2015–19), the foundational Vocational and Technical Education Strategy Paper and Action Plan (2014–18), the National Lifelong Learning Strategy (2014–18), and Türkiye’s National Employment Strategy (2014–23, as well as the latest 2025–2028 Strategy), contributing to TQF implementation<sup>8</sup>.

Current reforms prioritise modernising vocational and technical curricula to reflect evolving industry needs and technological developments. Digital learning content, skills-based courses and work-based learning models are being expanded to enhance practical learning. It is reported that cooperation with the private sector is on the rise. This is because of new protocols put in place to align training with industry requirements and increase workplace training opportunities. Quality assurance and inclusiveness remain central, guided by the 2024 Vocational and Technical Education Policy Document and aligned with the Twelfth Development Plan.

The National Youth Employment Strategy and Action Plan (2021–2023), which aimed to reduce the NEET rate to 20 %, continues to inform youth-focused policies. Alongside this, the National Youth and Sports Policy Document (2013), covering education, employment, entrepreneurship, inclusion, and well-being, is undergoing revision, with a new updated version expected in 2025. The new National Employment Strategy has also relevance in this area.

## 2.3 Main actors and governance

### National

The MoNE is the government body responsible for overseeing the public and private education system. It manages the national curriculum and handles agreements and authorisations related to education. The Ministry of National Education has provincial organizations in 81 cities and 850 towns, 58 of them being the central towns of metropolitan cities. The Ministry of National Education has representation offices in 22 countries with 21 education undersecretaries and 17 education attaches.

The office of the Ministry consists of the Training Council, main service units, counselling and inspection units and auxiliary units. Chairmanship of the Occupational and Technical Training Research and Development Centre and Chairmanship of the Project Coordination Board Centre are also included in the central organisation

<sup>6</sup> [Pre-Accession-Economic-Reform-Program\\_2022-2024.pdf](#)

<sup>7</sup> [CoHE President Özvar Unveils Türkiye’s Higher Education Roadmap for 2030](#)

<sup>8</sup> [uis-ingilizce.pdf](#) Turkish National Employment Strategy 2025-2028

The Ministry is also divided into several specialist Directorate Generals, including those for EU and Foreign Relations, Innovation and Educational Technologies, VET and Lifelong Learning.

## International: donors

International donors play a role in supporting Türkiye's education sector, with the EU as the largest contributor. Between 2014 and 2020, the EU invested over EUR 318 million in education and social reforms under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), focusing on system modernisation, capacity building and refugee education following the 2015 Syrian crisis. EU sector operational programmes, the Stabilisation and Association subcommittees and the annual Enlargement Package continue to guide reforms.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has financed IT infrastructure and R&D projects, including 6,800 IT classrooms in primary schools, and funds national research and innovation schemes. The ETF, as part of this EU approach, cooperates closely with Turkish authorities to strengthen VET and lifelong learning. Other donors, including the UNHCR, UNICEF and the German agencies GiZ, and KfW, provide financial aid, educational resources, and infrastructure support, particularly for Syrian refugees and earthquake-affected areas, including scholarships, cash grants, and school renovations. The World Bank contributes to curriculum reform, teacher training, assessment improvements and expanding access to education, including the eight-year basic education cycle. EU Member States and other donors also fund civil society organisations active in the wider education sector.

Under the Osnabrück Declaration (2020), Türkiye has modernised its VET, emphasising digital and green transitions, quality, inclusiveness, and lifelong learning through initiatives such as IQVET III and cooperation via the Network for Excellence (ENE) and CoVES. The Herning Declaration (2025), signed in September 2025, covering 2026–2030, expands the agenda to AI, inclusion, and skills shortages, working towards measurable goals, stronger stakeholder engagement, lifelong learning, and learner mobility. The ETF will continue to support its Turkish partners in implementing this vision for resilient, innovative and future-ready VET systems.

It remains to be seen what the impact of changes in donor funding globally will be in the country.

## 2.4 Policies and developments

### Overview

Türkiye is working to modernise both general education and VET to better align with labour market demands and global trends. General education reforms aim to shift from a traditional, exam-focused model toward a more student-centred approach. This includes fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills; integrating technology; and encouraging project-based learning. However, challenges such as teacher training, resource limitations, and regional disparities may hinder this transition.

VET, once seen as a secondary path for those not pursuing higher education, is gaining recognition for its role in preparing a skilled workforce. Reforms focus on modernising course content, strengthening ties with industry, and improving practical training through updated equipment and digital tools. Greater flexibility and diverse learning pathways are being introduced to enhance the attractiveness of VET. Still, VET faces hurdles such as lingering stigma, the need for qualified instructors and the difficulty in keeping pace with the rapidly changing job market.

Overall, Türkiye's education reform agenda seeks to build a more adaptable and future-ready system. The Green and Digital agenda are critical, as the latest Turkish Economic Reform Programme, published in January 2025, amply outlines. The aim is to ensure both general and vocational education embrace lifelong learning and so better prepare students for the challenges of the 21st-century workforce.

## Qualifications, validation and recognition

The TQF is a national structure against which you can classify, describe and compare all quality-assured qualifications. Established by a 2015 Council of Ministers decision and reinforced by the 2018 Regulation on the Quality Assurance of Qualifications, it is a core element of the VQA Strategy Plan 2024–2028. The VQA is legally responsible for maintaining, updating, and developing the framework. Supporting legislation regulates how qualifications are identified, updated, cancelled, how databases are managed, recognition of prior learning (RPL), and increasingly the focus on micro-credentials, ensuring transparency, consistency and quality across education and training.

The TQF covers qualifications from general, vocational, higher, non-formal and informal education and work-based learning. Its objectives include improving national and international recognition, enhancing labour-market relevance, supporting job mobility, and fostering cooperation among institutions, employers, awarding bodies and employee organisations. The ETF regularly makes an inventory of these qualifications.

Lifelong learning is a priority as outlined in Türkiye's 2014–2018 Lifelong Learning Strategy, which expanded access beyond formal education and encouraged the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL). Moreover, the 2022 procedures on RPL aligned national processes with the EU 2012 Recommendation, covering identification, documentation, assessment and validation. Modernisation continues with system development, quality assurance, stakeholder collaboration, rural opportunities, skills training, entrepreneurship, and EU-backed accreditation to ensure learning remains flexible and responsive to evolving economic and social needs. As part of this, there is also increased interest in addressing how to incorporate and adapt to micro credentials.

## Work-based learning

Work-Based Learning (WBL) in Türkiye aims to integrate real-world work experience into formal learning to bridge the gap between VET and labour-market needs. WBL enhances employability by aligning training with employer requirements and developing both technical skills and soft skills, including communication, teamwork and problem-solving. It is delivered via internships, apprenticeships and short-term placements, with significant employer involvement in course design, mentoring and in providing work opportunities.

Key initiatives supporting WBL include the Work-Based Learning Programme (İŞMEP), funded by Germany and implemented by the ILO, which provides formal employment and training for Turkish citizens and Syrians under temporary protection. The SELFIE WBL initiative, supported by also the ETF, assesses the digital readiness of vocational institutions engaged in WBL. Employer associations play a role in shaping strategies and ensuring relevance to industry needs.

WBL improves employability, reduces skills mismatches, encourages people to explore new careers, and builds professional networks. Challenges remain in monitoring, evaluation, and long-term sustainability. Ongoing reforms, with ETF and stakeholder support, aim to strengthen infrastructure, enhance outcomes and ensure Türkiye's VET system meets evolving labour-market demands.

## Career guidance

Career guidance in Türkiye is part of both education and employment policy, designed to support students and adults in making informed study and career decisions. In schools, the MoNE provides guidance through school-based Guidance and Research Centres, where psychologists and counsellors support secondary school students in exploring education and career options. For adults and jobseekers, İŞKUR delivers career counselling, vocational guidance, and job-search support, often free of charge. The Euroguidance Türkiye unit complements these services by promoting EU best practices and assisting in the training of practitioners and integration of international labour-market information.

Recent innovations aim to modernise career guidance and improve alignment with labour-market needs. The MoNE has introduced digital tools, such as the Vocational Interest and Vocational Skills

Inventories, which help students map their aptitudes and interests to potential study and career paths. For adults, İŞKUR is implementing a profile-based counselling system enhanced with AI-supported tools to tailor advice to individuals' skills and backgrounds. Universities are increasingly using web-based career counselling information systems to integrate labour-market data into student guidance. These initiatives seek to reduce education-labour market mismatches and improve employability outcomes. According to October 2025's Statistics Bulletin, councillors held around 44 million interviews and made more than 200,000 school visits.

Despite these advances, there are still hurdles to overcome. Effectiveness varies across regions due to differences in counsellor training, workloads and resource allocation. Coverage is uneven, and employer engagement in school and work-based guidance remains informal and inconsistent. Long-term monitoring and evaluation systems are still developing. Ongoing reforms supported by national and European stakeholders aim to strengthen infrastructure, improve data collection and expand access, ensuring that career guidance in Türkiye continues to support lifelong learning, workforce alignment and sustainable employment outcomes, as outlined by the OECD.

## Quality assurance

Higher education quality assurance is managed by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC/YÖKAK), established in 2015 and fully autonomous since 2017. The THEQC oversees external evaluations, accreditation and quality assurance, aiming to maintain national and international standards, enhance transparency and foster continuous institutional improvement in collaboration with the MoNE. THE QC operates through its Council and General Secretariat, with units handling institutional evaluation, accreditation agency registration and stakeholder engagement. It authorises national accreditation agencies, recognises international ones, and aligns policies with the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area, ensuring compliance with European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).

While the THEQC focuses on higher education, the MoNE manages quality assurance in primary, secondary and vocational education, implementing initiatives such as the Turkish VET Map. Stakeholder involvement – including students, faculty, and external partners – is central to Türkiye's integrated approach to education quality assurance. In 2025, Türkiye's vocational education quality assurance is anchored in the TQF and managed by the VQA. The framework ensures that all vocational qualifications, including micro-credentials, meet national and EU standards, supporting transparency, recognition and labour-market relevance. Sectoral Centres of Excellence and the IPA programme METEK have worked to strengthen implementation, teacher training, and institutional QA. Weaknesses persist in non-formal learning, recognition of prior learning and consistent monitoring, requiring ongoing capacity-building and regulatory updates.

## Centres of excellence

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) are specialised institutions designed to enhance the quality, relevance, and impact of VET. Their purpose is to elevate VET standards by encouraging collaboration, innovation and networking among education providers, employers and industry partners. CoVEs may be set up as designated entities within national or regional frameworks or operate independently to serve specific sectors or localities. They share best practices nationally and internationally, drive the development of local ecosystems and align with regional development plans and smart specialisation strategies to strengthen workforce skills and economic growth.

T–These fall into two main types: structured designated CoVEs and independent VET providers contributing to sectoral or local development. Public-private partnerships are a large part of what they do, enabling close collaboration with businesses and aligning training with labour market needs. CoVEs support SMEs through applied research projects, foster entrepreneurship and establish hubs for innovation and knowledge. They also facilitate international cooperation, helping Türkiye's VET system to remain aligned with global standards and trends. Through applied training, innovation and industry engagement, CoVEs modernise vocational education and strengthen employability and skills development nationwide.

## Digital education and skills

Türkiye is advancing digital and AI education through coordinated national and university initiatives. The MoNE has established an Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Applications Department within its Directorate General of Innovation and Educational Technologies to bring in AI integration, data-driven decision-making and digital transformation across the education system. The National AI Strategy's aim was to increase the number of AI graduates and foster a sustainable ecosystem by 2025. Complementing this, the Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy Document and Action Plan (2025–2029) sets out the MoNE's vision, goals and strategic priorities for AI in education.

Universities are expanding AI-focused courses, reflecting demand for STEM and business skills aligned with national economic needs. Digital technologies help provide personalised learning, AI-enhanced administration, online platforms, digital textbooks, interactive tools, and AI chatbots. The Smart Türkiye initiative integrates AI and skills development into regional innovation strategies using the Smart Specialisation (S3) methodology and the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process. Pilot regional strategies include curricula co-developed with industry, applied research, internships, foreign language and technical skills, and cross-innovation initiatives. These emphasise stakeholder collaboration, lifelong learning and educational infrastructure as cross-cutting enablers of the twin green and digital transitions.

The area is not without its challenges, including raising AI literacy and equipping educators with relevant skills. However, Türkiye's comprehensive approach combining policy, education, university courses and regional innovation strategies sets the country up well to harness AI in education, strengthen human capital and meet future workforce and competitiveness demands.

## Green transition

Green transition education in Türkiye is moving ahead, integrating sustainability and environmental awareness from primary schools into vocational and higher education. The Eco-Schools scheme, managed by the Turkish Education Foundation (TÜRÇEV) since 1995, plays a key role in early education by raising environmental consciousness and sustainable practices among young learners. In vocational education, schools are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly practices such as energy efficiency, recycling, and improving green spaces, and take a 'think global, act local' approach.

Higher education initiatives, including a UNDP supported climate education programme, incorporate systems thinking and interactive simulations to teach students about climate change, migration, and greenhouse gas emissions. Teacher training is aimed to equip educators with the skills needed to integrate green transition concepts effectively into their teaching.

One new development is the National Green Taxonomy, guiding sustainable investments and shaping future education and training. The focus on 'green skills' – renewable energy, sustainable technologies and circular economy practices – addresses the changing needs of the labour market. Government initiatives, including a national green transition strategy and action plan, are backed by collaborations with industry organisations. Collectively, these efforts aim to ensure alignment with international standards, preparing students, educators, and the private sector for a sustainable, green economy.

## Adult learning

The MoNE and its Directorate General of Lifelong Learning oversee non-formal and adult education. According to the Regulation on Lifelong Learning Institutions, adult education includes learning activities for individuals at any stage of formal education, or those who have completed it, and is aimed at improving personal, social and employment-related skills. Institutions such as Public Education Centres, Advanced Technical Schools for Girls, and Open Education Schools provide adult education, offering courses, vocational training and recognition of prior learning as well as related research, development and cultural activities.

Training is coordinated with stakeholders including the MoNE, İŞKUR, VQA, Ministry of Family and Social Services, and Turkish National Agency, which supports Erasmus+ mobility and cooperation.

Private providers operate under the Law on Private Education Institutions, following national curricula and occupational standards aligned with international vocational standards. In 2025, there were 1,000 public education centres offering courses in vocational skills, literacy, digital competencies, and personal development as outlined by the OECD, 2025. Digital platforms like e-Yaygın provide remote, certified learning, while teacher training focuses on integrating digital and green skills. International collaboration under Erasmus+ enhances innovation and inclusivity.

Challenges remain, including low participation rates compared with European averages, uneven regional access, limited funding and gaps in monitoring. Strengthening non-formal and informal learning, recognising prior learning and improving outreach are essential to enhance employability, human capital, and lifelong learning culture in Türkiye.

## 3. LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT: POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

### 3.1 Strategy and legal framework

Türkiye's labour market is characterised by a growing young population and a significant informal employment sector. In response, the government is implementing policies to boost employment, improve vocational education, and increase the inclusion of women and youth. The National Employment Strategy 2025–2028, revised in early 2025 and led by the MoLSS, describes the plans to address these priorities.

Key objectives align with the Twelfth Development Plan's 'Employment and Working Life Goals': reduce unemployment to 7.5 %, increase overall employment to 52.5 %, reduce informal employment to 23.4 %, raise labour force participation to 56.7 %, increase women's participation to 40.1 %, and lower youth unemployment to 16.6 % (as reported by TUIK) by 2028. Policies focus on promoting green and digital jobs, inclusive employment, social protection, and sustainable rural employment.

Efforts include reforming vocational and technical education, expanding adult learning, integrating digital skills, and implementing ALMPs to enhance employability. Special attention is given to youth employment and facilitating school-to-work transitions. Measures to overcome rigid work structures and improve childcare are designed to increase the number of women in the labour force. Work is ongoing to formalise informal work and strengthen legal protections.

Türkiye's policies are influenced by EU labour and international standards, thus ensuring alignment with broader frameworks. Despite progress, there are still challenges to overcome in youth unemployment, skill mismatches, gender inequality, informal employment and the digital divide. The government's multifaceted approach – combining education, flexibility, digitalisation and inclusion – aims to create a resilient, equitable and productive labour market capable of supporting long-term economic growth.

### 3.2 Main actors and governance

#### National

In Türkiye, several key national bodies shape labour market policy, with the MoLSS serving as the central authority. This Ministry is responsible for developing and implementing national labour policies, coordinating employment programmes, and regulating workplace standards. A key institution under the Ministry is İŞKUR, which functions as the public employment service. İŞKUR administers ALMPs, delivers job-matching services, offers vocational training and supports both employers and job seekers to enhance employment opportunities. Other ministries, including the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Industry and Technology, contribute to labour market dynamics through policies related to economic sectors and industrial development.

The Social Security Institution plays a crucial role in managing social insurance benefits such as pensions, unemployment and healthcare, while also contributing to labour market regulation and worker protection. The Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Organisation (KOSGEB), affiliated with the Ministry of Industry and Technology, encourages entrepreneurship and SME growth.

Employers and trade unions are also essential stakeholders in the labour market. As partners in trade relations, they help align vocational education and training programmes with actual labour market needs, contributing to dialogue around policy and improved workplace standards. The non-profit sector, including NGOs and community-based organisations, complement government efforts by implementing local employment projects and offering training, mentoring, and support services,

including to vulnerable groups. Together, these bodies and institutions form a complex multi-stakeholder ecosystem aimed at building an inclusive, skilled and resilient labour market in Türkiye.

### International: donors

International bodies play a key role in shaping Türkiye's labour market policies, particularly in areas such as integrating migrants, developing skills and fostering conditions for decent work. Key contributors include the European Union first and foremost, but also the ILO, the World Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), providing funding, technical assistance, research, and policy guidance to support labour market reforms.

The EU is central to policy dialogue and funding initiatives in lifelong learning, vocational training, and migrant integration. Programmes aim to close skill gaps and enhance employability, while EU resources, sometimes delivered through organisations like the World Food Programme, support vulnerable refugee populations with cash assistance, healthcare and access to education. The European Investment Bank (EIB) finances infrastructure, SMEs, green transition and innovation, including earthquake recovery and climate-focused investments, often aligned with the EFSD+ (European Fund for Sustainable Development) financial guarantee mechanism. The ETF plays an important role in engaging with key stakeholders to support policy implementation.

The World Bank and EBRD contribute through economic research and policy advice, highlighting issues such as automation risks and recommending human capital development strategies, including skills training, productivity and innovation. The ILO cooperates with the government, employers, and trade unions to promote the Decent Work Agenda, with a focus on job creation, social protection, formalisation of informal employment, and programmes for Syrians under temporary protection. Other bodies, including UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, and OSCE, facilitate projects, skills training and social protection.

Key obstacles include the need for improved data exchange, better coordination among international and national stakeholders and stronger institutional capacity to ensure programmes are sustainable and align with national strategies. Addressing these gaps is crucial for maximising impact and supporting a resilient, inclusive labour market in Türkiye. These challenges may increase as the donor environment changes.

## 3.3 Policies and developments

### Overview

Türkiye's labour market is evolving due to a wide range of issues. Economic challenges, economic reforms, technological shifts, and demographic changes. One reform includes a 30 % increase in the national minimum wage, currently TRY 22,104 per month. The government is also promoting formal and productive job creation to reduce the informal economy. Developing education and skills is central to labour reforms, focusing on addressing mismatches and enhancing vocational training. Efforts are also underway to improve digitalisation.

Despite progress, challenges remain, e.g. the large share of the workforce, especially women, that remains in the informal sector, limiting productivity and with no access to social protections. Skill mismatches persist due to gaps between educational outcomes and labour market needs. Rising automation poses risks to existing jobs, necessitating proactive retraining and digital upskilling. Additionally, some analysts argue that rigid labour regulations, such as severance pay, may discourage formal hiring. Low labour force participation, particularly among women, further constrains growth. The country's reforms aim to build a more dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready labour market, but addressing informal working, digital readiness and the right skills for the right jobs remains critical for long-term success.

## Youth Guarantee

While Türkiye does not have a formal EU-style Youth Guarantee, it actively pursues similar goals through national policies that integrate young people into the labour market and support their overall development. These efforts emphasise vocational training, entrepreneurship and youth participation.

İŞKUR plays a key role by providing active labour market programmes and vocational training aligned with labour market needs, especially in digital and green sectors. Support for youth entrepreneurship includes financial incentives such as loans, grants, and social security premium subsidies to help young people start their own businesses.

Türkiye is seeking to increase youth involvement in policymaking. There are various initiatives encouraging young people to contribute to decision-making processes. The Turkish National Youth Policy (2013) addresses broad themes including employment, education, civic engagement and culture.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports oversees youth development policies and supports personal and social growth through volunteering and participation opportunities. Although Türkiye is not part of the EU Youth Guarantee, it participates in EU-funded projects that support youth employment and policy innovation, reflecting a multifaceted approach to youth development. The now closed EU-financed Labour Market Support Programme for NEETs (NEET PRO), implemented together with İŞKUR, targeted young people (15–29) not in employment, education, or training. It provided vocational and personal-skills training, internships, career counselling and active labour-market measures.

### 3.4 Active labour market programmes (ALMPs)

Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMPs) delivered via İŞKUR aim to promote employment and reduce unemployment by supporting individuals – particularly young people – entering or re-entering the workforce. Services include job and vocational counselling, vocational training, on-the-job training and financial support for entrepreneurship. In 2024, over 3 million jobseekers benefited from individual counselling sessions, and İŞKUR counsellors conducted more than 780,000 employer visits. Nearly 70,000 job seekers participated in training and retraining initiatives, especially on-the-job training.

ALMPs are designed to align training with labour market needs. Vocational programmes target diverse industries and skill levels, while on-the-job training provides hands-on experience in real workplaces. Emphasis on digital and green jobs, including digital literacy, sustainable technologies, and environmentally friendly business practices, is growing. Financial incentives such as loans, grants and social security premium support encourage youth entrepreneurship and facilitate first-time employment. Special programmes focus on women, refugees and other vulnerable groups, promoting inclusive labour-market participation.

Cooperation with industry and educational institutions ensures training is relevant and improves job placement outcomes. In addition to training, İŞKUR provides job-matching services to help individuals find suitable employment. By combining counselling, targeted training, financial support and employer engagement, Türkiye's ALMPs enhance workforce adaptability, address skill mismatches and aid inclusion. Ultimately, these initiatives aim to reduce unemployment while building a resilient, skilled workforce capable of responding to automation, digitalisation and evolving labour-market demands.

## 4. KEY INDICATORS: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

### 4.1 Headline indicators

#### Education and VET

Monitoring a complex education and training system typically starts with three straightforward questions: Who takes part? What do they achieve?, and What underpins the process?

The first question explores the extent to which learners engage in education or training. The indicators grouped under *Participation and access* in Table 4.1: net enrolment rates at lower and upper secondary levels, the share of students in upper-secondary VET, the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, and adult participation rates in lifelong learning provide the response. The second question – what learners achieve – examines key education outcomes, such as learner progression and the skills or qualifications they obtain. These are reflected in the indicators under *Attainment, completion and outcomes*: the share of adults with tertiary qualifications, the rate of early leavers from education and training, and the percentage of 15-year-olds underachieving in mathematics. The third question considers the financial, physical, and informational resources that sustain the education process, reflected by the indicators under *Resources and data*: public expenditure on education as a share of GDP, the adequacy of infrastructure, and the availability of internationally comparable data.

**Table 4.1 Headline indicators: education and VET (Türkiye, EU average) (2022–2024)**

<b>Participation and access</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>EU (1)</b>	<b>Source</b>
Total net enrolment rate (lower secondary)	99.9	M.D.	M.D.	98.1	UIS UNESCO
Total net enrolment rate (upper secondary)	94.0	M.D.	M.D.	93.6	UIS UNESCO
Students in VET as a % of total upper secondary students	37.5	M.D.	M.D.	48.8	UIS UNESCO
Gross enrolment ratio (tertiary)	127.6	M.D.	M.D.	79.7	UIS UNESCO
Participation in training/lifelong learning in the previous 4 weeks (% aged 25–64)	6.7	7.4	7.9	13.3	LFS
<b>Attainment, completion and outcomes</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>EU (1)</b>	<b>Source</b>
Educational attainment of total population: % with ISCED 5–8	19.1	19.9	20.7	30.2	LFS
Early leavers from education and training (% aged 18–24)	21.4	19.6	18.7	9.3	LFS
Underachievers in maths (% aged 15)	38.7	N.A.	N.A.	31.1	PISA OECD
<b>Resources and data</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>EU (1)</b>	<b>Source</b>
Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	2.6	3.1	M.D.	4.7	UIS UNESCO
Inadequate or poor-quality physical infrastructure (2)	14.6	N.A.	N.A.	27.9	PISA OECD
Availability of internationally comparable data on education	N.A.	60.9	80.0	N.A.	TRP (3)

Notes: 1. EU average, latest available year. PISA data: OECD average. 2. Percentage of students in schools whose principal reported that the school's capacity to provide instruction is hindered at least to some extent by inadequate or poor-quality physical infrastructure. 3. ETF Torino Process (TRP).

Source: ETF KIESE database

Learners of compulsory-school age in Türkiye have near-universal access to schooling. In 2022, the total net enrolment rate at lower secondary reached 99.9 %, slightly above the EU average of 98.1 % (Table 4.1). Upper-secondary net enrolment was also high at 94.0 %, showing that retention into upper secondary education is strong and on par with the EU average of 93.6 %. However, the data indicate that some learners at this level struggle to complete their studies: in 2024, 18.7 % of 18–24-year-olds were early leavers, double the EU average of 9.3 %. The distribution of learners across

pathways also differs from the EU pattern; in Türkiye it is more skewed towards general education. In the reference period, students in vocational education and training accounted for 37.5 % of upper-secondary enrolment, more than 11 percentage points below the EU average of 48.8 %.

Higher education in Türkiye offers wide opportunities for advanced study to both students entering directly from upper secondary and those who start or return later in life: the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education was 127.6 % in 2022, almost 48 percentage points higher than the EU average. Nevertheless, the share of the population with a tertiary qualification (ISCED 5–8) in 2024 stood at 20.7 %, still nearly 10 percentage points below the average for EU countries. Given the lower level of educational attainment among older cohorts, even the high take-up of tertiary education will take time to shift the overall attainment profile of the workforce.

Adults in Türkiye are less likely to engage in lifelong learning than their peers in EU countries. Although participation in training or other learning activities rose by 18 % between 2022 and 2024, reaching 7.9 %, it remains well below the EU average of 13.3 %. This modest take up may limit the ability of job seekers and employees to keep pace with evolving labour-market needs.

There are also signs of difficulties in ensuring that the youth population acquires the foundational skills needed for further education and work. Data on the learning outcomes of students in secondary education (including VET) from the OECD’s PISA show that in 2022, close to 39 % of 15-year-olds performed below the baseline level of proficiency in mathematics required to fully participate in society – a share that is 7.6 percentage points above the EU average.

Public investment in education has increased but remains below the level in the EU. Expenditure rose from 2.6 % of GDP in 2022 to 3.1 % in 2023, yet it is still 1.6 percentage points lower than the EU average of 4.7 %. If that level of spending leads to resource shortages, they do not seem to affect capital investment to a great extent: substandard school facilities are less widespread in Türkiye than in the EU on average. In 2022, PISA data show that 14.6 % of students attended schools where principals reported inadequate or poor-quality infrastructure, compared to 27.9 % in the EU. However, this is a national average that may mask disparities between regions. It also does not rule out the possibility that other areas of education experience greater pressure due to resource constraints, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

## Employment and demand for skills

The set of labour-market indicators follows the same question-and-answer logic applied to education and training, but from the perspective of employment. The indicators are split into two complementary groups. The first group, *Employment and labour-market outcomes* (Table 4.2), addresses how effectively the labour market absorbs people. It consists of the overall employment rate (aged 15+), youth employment rate (aged 15–24), employment rate of recent graduates (aged 20–34, ISCED 3–8), unemployment rate of the overall population (aged 15+), youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24), and the NEET rate (aged 15–29). The second group, *Demand for skills* (Table 4.2), looks at the types of jobs and skills that the economy generates. It consists of employment by broad economic sector (agriculture, industry or services), the incidence of vulnerable employment and educational mismatch.

**Table 4.2 Headline indicators: employment (Türkiye, EU average) (2022–2024)**

Employment and labour market outcomes	2022	2023	2024	EU (1)	Source
Employment rate (% aged 15+ or similar age group)	47.5	48.3	49.5	54.7	LFS
Employment rate (% aged 15–24 or similar age group)	35.3	37.7	39.5	35.0	LFS
Employment rate of recent graduates aged 20–34 (ISCED 3–8)	62.1	64.7	64.5	82.4	LFS
Unemployment rate (% aged 15+ or similar age group)	10.4	9.4	8.7	5.9	LFS
Unemployment rate (% aged 15–24 or similar age group)	19.4	17.4	16.3	14.9	LFS
NEET rate (% aged 15–29 or similar age group)	27.2	25.8	25.9	11.0	LFS

Demand for skills	2022	2023	2024	EU (1)	Source
Employment by broad economic sector (%): agriculture	15.8	14.8	14.8	3.3	LFS
Employment by broad economic sector (%): industry	27.7	27.5	27.3	24.1	LFS
Employment by broad economic sector (%): service	56.5	57.6	57.9	72.1	LFS
Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	25.0	24.1	24.4	10.0	LFS
Employment by 'educational mismatch': % matched	54.0	54.7	M.D.	M.D.	ILOSTAT

Notes: 1. Data refer to 2019. 2. Data refer to 2019, age group 15–59. 3. Data refer to 2019, age group 16–24. 4. Data refer to 2019, age group 15–24.

Source: ETF KIESE database

In 2024, the labour market showed signs of improvement. Overall employment for those aged 15 and over reached 49.5 %, up from 47.5 % in 2022 (Table 4.2). Unemployment fell to 8.7 %, its lowest in recent years. Despite improvement, employment remains 5 percentage points below the EU average and unemployment is still higher than in the EU.

There were also encouraging developments with the labour market and participation outcomes for young people. The share of 15–24-year-olds in work rose to 39.5 % in 2024, above the EU average. Youth unemployment has also declined, though it is still slightly higher than in the EU. However, one area of concern is the share of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). That share remains high at 25.9 % and has shown little improvement in recent years.

The situation for recent graduates (aged 20–34) is challenging, too, in international comparison. Employment among this group is stable at around 64.5 %, but still almost 18 percentage points below the EU average, which indicates that the move from education to employment is not always smooth. Strengthening the links between education and the labour market could be one way to improve these outcomes: according to the latest data available, just over half of workers (54.7 % in 2023) are in jobs that match their qualifications.

Looking at the structure of employment, services continue to expand slowly and now account for 57.9 % of jobs, but their share in the economy remains well below that in the EU (72 %). Agriculture still employs nearly 15 % of workers, and industry over 27 %, both above EU levels. This structure tends to go hand in hand with a high incidence of vulnerable employment (jobs without secure contracts or adequate protection), which affects around one in four workers, more than twice the EU rate (Table 4.2).

## 4.2 System performance indicators

As noted in the introduction to this paper, 'performance' in ETF monitoring describes the extent to which VET systems deliver on their commitments to learners and stakeholders in support of lifelong learning. These commitments typically cover three key areas: ensuring broad and equitable access to opportunities for education and training; delivering high-quality and relevant education; and maintaining effective and efficient organisation and management of the education system, including adequate resourcing.

To measure performance systematically, the ETF uses System Performance Indices (SPIs), which summarise the extent to which education and training systems fulfil each of their commitments. Each SPI is plotted on a scale from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating stronger performance.

Both the headline indicators in Section 4.1 and the SPIs set out in this section answer the same core questions: Who takes part? What do they achieve? How do education and training systems support them? The main difference between these two sets of data lies in how these questions are answered. Headline indicators answer the questions with single, stand-alone measures drawn directly from international data sources. The SPIs, on the other hand, are evaluative, composite measures. They are explicitly designed to assess how well VET systems fulfil broader policy commitments that individual statistics cannot adequately capture.

## Access and participation

This section presents system performance in VET and adult learning against two specific policy outcomes: support for equitable access and participation for young people and adults, and support for young people in initial VET (IVET) to successfully complete their programmes.

The scope of SPIs tracking access differs according to the target group of learners. For young people, the SPI assesses access specifically to IVET, while for adults it looks at access to continuing VET (CVET) and other adult learning opportunities, such as those provided through ALMPs. A separate SPI measures how effectively young learners in IVET are supported in progressing through their courses and achieving graduation.

In each case, performance depends on the policies and measures the country is implementing. They provide the opportunities, incentives, and guidance needed to encourage participation and successful completion. The SPI results, therefore, reflect the extent to which these policies achieve their intended objectives.

### Access by age and gender

Türkiye has significantly transformed its initial VET system through a set of measures. Framed under the principle that ‘Everyone Should Have a Profession’, these measures have integrated VET into secondary, higher, and non-formal pathways, many specifically aimed at increasing access and participation.

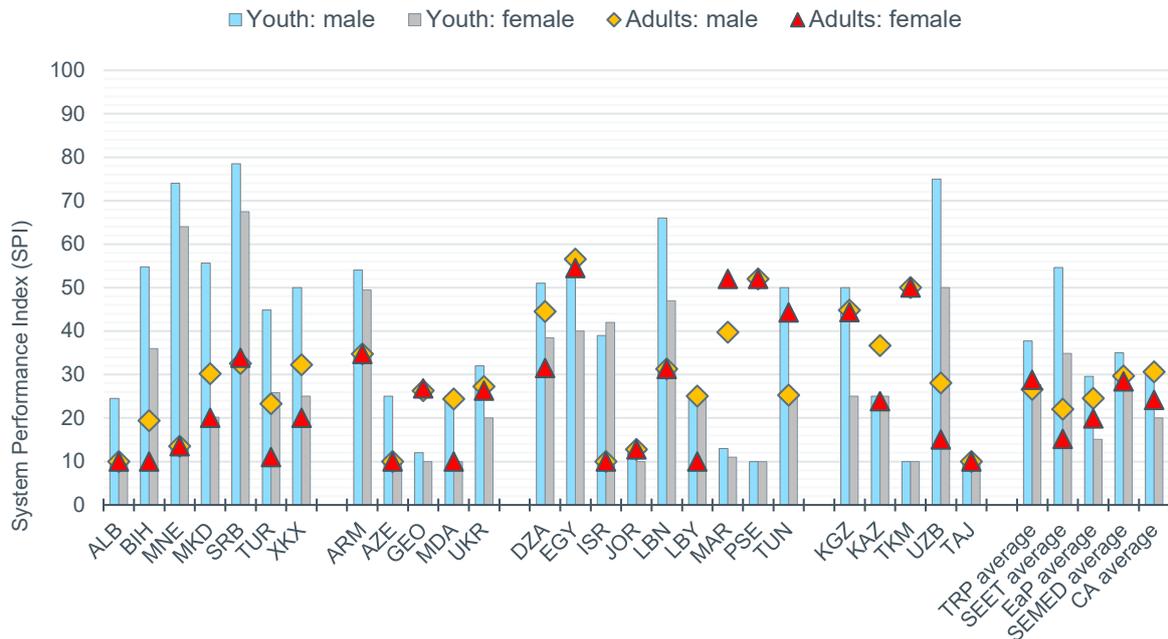
At the secondary level, IVET is mainly delivered through Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools (VTAHs) and Vocational Training Centres (VTCs). While VTAHs retain centralised admission exams, VTCs have flexible entry with no age limit and year-round enrolment, an important arrangement for reducing NEETs. Public VET is free of charge, and subsidies cover one-third to two-thirds of students' wages during training, with stipends set at 30% of the minimum wage (50% for VTC Master tradesperson training). Türkiye paid out over TL 2.7 billion for training wages from 2017 to 2021. VET students are insured against occupational accidents and receive free textbooks and materials. Disadvantaged learners benefit from free lunches, and refugees, international students, and other vulnerable groups can access scholarships.

Participation data suggest that these measures have improved access. The overall VET enrolment rate is 38 % (KIESE SPI Indicator 4), above the OECD average of 32 %, and the share of upper secondary students in VET (46 %) exceeds the OECD rate (42 %). Turkish students also enter VET earlier – at around age 16 compared with 21 in the OECD – and 99 % of courses grant direct access to tertiary education, far above the OECD average (70 %). Yet KIESE SPI Indicator 1 shows that VET graduates account for only 24.9% of all upper secondary graduates, and there is no post-secondary non-tertiary vocational pathway (Indicator 14), indicating gaps in progression.

Despite comparatively broad access, disparities persist. The SPI looking at VET participation for boys is 45, above the Torino Process average (38) but below the SEET average (55). For girls, the SPI is only 26, below both the Torino Process average (28) and the SEET average (35). This gender gap reflects socio-cultural norms, stereotypes and occupational segregation, with boys more often enrolled in industrial and engineering courses, and girls clustering in services, care, and retail training.

For adults, Türkiye also provides multiple opportunities through public education centres, Maturation Institutions, Open Education Schools, VTCs, and İŞKUR. These institutions offer free courses, distance learning, work-based options, and ALMP training, such as on-the-job schemes, public works, entrepreneurship, and vocational counselling. Target groups include women, young people, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, and Syrians under Temporary Protection, and they are eligible for measures such as conditional cash transfers, counselling and childcare.

**Figure 4.1 Access to learning opportunities by country, age and gender of learners – system performance index, ETF partner countries and international average (2025)**



Note: Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100<sup>9</sup>  
 Source: ETF KIESE and Torino Process databases

Despite this broad provision, results remain weak. Access to adult learning is an area of generally poor performance across countries, and Türkiye is no exception. For men, the SPI is 23, below the Torino Process average (27) and close to the SEET average (22). For women, it falls to 11 – less than half the Torino Process average (29) and the SEET average (15) and among the lowest recorded, pointing to a significant gender gap.

Low participation helps explain these outcomes. KIESE SPI Indicator 16 shows that adult take-up of lifelong learning is 5.8 %, about half the EU average. TURKSTAT’s 2022 Adult Education Survey reports 15.6 % in non-formal education, down from 16.8 % in 2016. Eurostat data place lifelong learning at 17.1 %, well below the EU average of 44 %. Participation is particularly low among older adults, less educated individuals, and women with family responsibilities.

Barriers for women include unpaid care work, lack of childcare, financial costs, weak returns on training, and occupational segregation into low-paid fields. When women do partake, their work is often concentrated in care, education, and retail. Regional disparities, cultural norms, and digital literacy gaps further reduce access, particularly in rural areas. While women accounted for over 60% of PEC participants in 2022, these opportunities remain unevenly distributed, and performance results confirm that access remains limited.

Evaluations of ALMPs and CVET programmes show mixed results. On-the-job training and targeted initiatives generate short-term employment gains, but overall effects are modest and longer-term improvements in job quality are limited. For women, the sustainability of outcomes is particularly uncertain, and gender-disaggregated impact evaluations remain insufficient. The monitoring results, therefore, point to a dual challenge in Türkiye: expanding participation in adult learning overall and narrowing the substantial gender gap, particularly among certain groups of women.

<sup>9</sup> The Torino Process makes a distinction between theoretical (full) index range and index range used for reporting purposes. For reporting purposes, rare instances of extreme values on the low end (SPI < 10) and on the high end (SPI > 90) of the index scale are truncated at the upper (10) and lower (90) decile end. This means that reports do not specify SPI values below 10 and above 90. The international average, on the other hand, is calculated using the full range of the index.

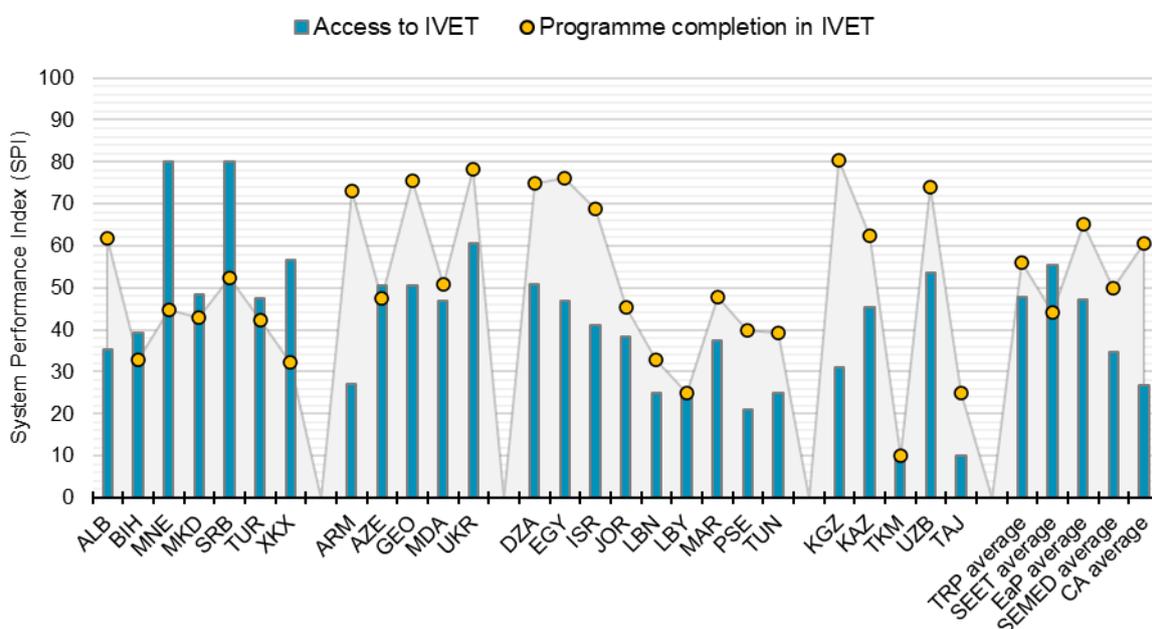
## Retention and programme completion

Despite strong policy commitment by national authorities and high levels of initial participation, IVET completion rates in Türkiye remain a concern due to difficulties sustaining student engagement through to graduation. According to the ETF Torino Process monitoring data, system performance in programme completion (SPI of 42) is below both the monitoring sample average (56) and the SEET regional average (44) (Figure 4.2).

National figures provided through the monitoring survey support this assessment and suggest that IVET in Türkiye faces a ‘leaky pipeline’ problem<sup>10</sup>, in which strong student intake is not consistently translating into qualifications. Although IVET enrolment is high – 46 % of all upper secondary students and 38 % of students across lower secondary to short-cycle tertiary levels – only 62 % of VET students complete their courses on time, compared to 77 % in general upper secondary education. Moreover, an estimated 27% of IVET students are unlikely to complete their courses.

This gap appears to have several causes. Socio-economic disadvantage is a primary cause of dropout, as students from low-income households often face financial pressures (e.g., the need to work to support their families or the inability to cover education-related expenses) that lead to premature withdrawal. Historical perceptions of VET as a lower-status track, which are reinforced by past policies that disproportionately channelled lower-performing students into vocational schools, also affect student motivation and retention. Skill mismatches also contribute to dropout rates by reducing the perceived value of completing a programme. For instance, in schools with low in-field employment rates, e.g. the VTAHs, where fewer than one in ten graduates work in the field they trained in, dropouts are more common than in the VTCs, which achieve high in-field employment (88 %). In other words, stronger employer engagement, combined with practical training, can improve qualification rates and labour market outcomes.

**Figure 4.2 Access and programme completion in IVET – system performance index, ETF partner countries and international average**



Note: Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: ETF KIESE and Torino Process databases

Policy measures have sought to address these challenges but have yet to gain full traction. Compulsory education has been extended to twelve years to increase the number of students

<sup>10</sup> The term ‘leaky pipeline’ originated in gender studies on STEM education and careers. Its early conceptual framing is credited to Sue Berryman, who in 1983 introduced the pipeline metaphor to describe how women’s representation narrows at successive stages – from B.A. to M.A. to Ph.D. – in quantitative disciplines.

completing more senior levels of schooling, while financial incentives, scholarships, and targeted support for disadvantaged groups aim to reduce the risk of dropout. The government is also strengthening vocational guidance and career consultancy as well as developing curriculum updates with sectoral input.

## Quality and relevance of learning outcomes

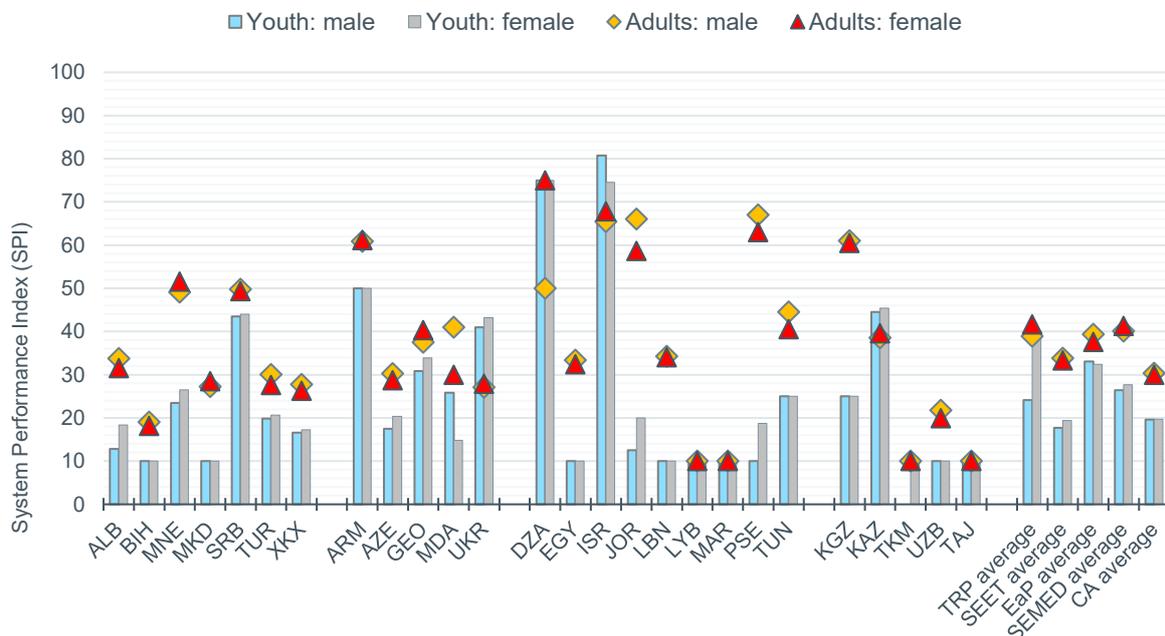
In this section, the SPIs assess the quality of teaching basic skills and key competences to learners in IVET, as well as the extent to which adults possess foundational skills. These results are complemented by selected KIESE indicators, which track the relevance of learning outcomes by examining employment rates of individuals aged 15 and over (disaggregated by educational attainment) in ETF partner countries.

ETF monitoring keeps quality and relevance distinct because, although they often reinforce one another, they do not always coincide. Learners with strong foundational skills may still struggle to secure suitable employment, whereas individuals might secure jobs without acquiring a comprehensive skill set. By tracking these aspects separately, monitoring is designed to identify both the intrinsic benefits of education and the extent to which it aligns with the needs of the labour market.

### Quality of learning by age and gender

According to the monitoring survey, the VET curriculum in Türkiye integrates the eight domains of the European Reference Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning into all programmes, with a common ninth-grade curriculum providing a universal foundation. Curriculum design, work-based learning, and initiatives such as the ‘1,000 Schools Project’ and Youth Centres guide students to competence.

**Figure 4.3 Quality of skills and competences by country, age and gender of learners – system performance index, ETF partner countries and international average (2025)**



Note: Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: ETF KIESE and Torino Process databases

Despite these measures, cross-cutting competences such as problem-solving, adaptability and communication remain underdeveloped. Monitoring data show that IVET students, boys and girls alike, are likely to graduate with significant gaps in both foundational and transferable skills (SPI of 20 and 21), more so than in other Torino Process countries on average (SPI of 24 for boys and 40 for girls). At the same time, similarly low results are observed across the SEET region (SPI of 18 and 19)

(Figure 4.3). PISA 2022 confirms persistent deficits in foundational skills: 15-year-olds in Türkiye scored below the OECD average in reading, mathematics, and science, with results stable since 2018, while students in VET high schools saw declines in all three domains (KIESE SPI Indicators 24 to 26). Boys and girls perform at similar levels in mathematics, but girls outperform boys in reading by 25 score points. From 2012 to 2022, mathematics performance improved by a comparable margin for both sexes.

Employer feedback and national research highlight gaps in VET's capacity to address these issues, linked to limited opportunities to apply skills in real work contexts. For girls, opportunities to develop higher-level technical competences are further reduced by low participation in STEM-related programmes, limiting exposure to advanced skills and contributing to their smaller presence in ICT, where women account for less than 20 % of the workforce.

System performance in support of quality skills and competences for adults in Türkiye (SPI of 30 for men and 28 for women) is well below both the Torino Process average (SPI of 39 for men and 42 for women) and the SEET regional average (34 for men and 33 for women). This aligns with the results from OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which shows that adults in Türkiye lag behind OECD peers in literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving in technology-rich environments (PSTRE). Most are at levels 1–2, with only 8 % reaching levels 2–3 (OECD average: 31 %). Low tertiary attainment further constrains the supply of highly skilled adults, with just 21.5 % holding an ISCED 5–8 qualification (KIESE SPI Indicator 35).

Functional literacy gaps persist despite high basic literacy (97.6 % for ages 6+; Indicator 59). Around 40 % of adults reported no computer experience or failed the ICT test. This reflects a sizeable digital divide, which is also seen in the low levels of participation in civic consultations (5.1 %, Indicator 46) and online courses (6.6 %, Indicator 57). Gender patterns in the SPIs mirror the international data: women score slightly lower than men, consistent with literacy gaps (94.0 % vs 99.0 % in 2019) and a persistent digital gender divide. In 2024, internet use was 85.4 % among women compared to 92.2 % among men, with even larger gaps in e-government and e-commerce (purchases: 40.8 %, Indicator 58). While women slightly outperform men in literacy when education is taken into account, and while they are more likely to complete adult learning courses, the quality and relevance of courses for them tend to be lower.

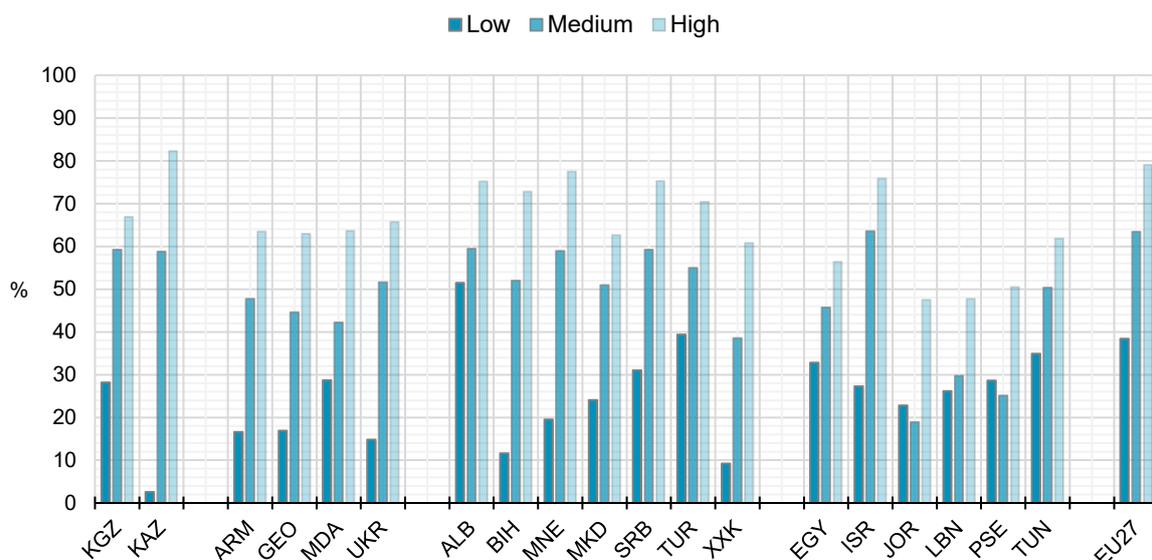
### Relevance and labour market outcomes

This section uses employment data to gauge how effectively education in Türkiye meets labour market needs. Specifically, it compares employment rates by the highest education level adults have reached with EU-27 averages.

In Türkiye, the likelihood of being in employment rises with the level of educational attainment, but the difference in employment rates between levels is smaller than in the EU-27. Among people aged 15 and over with low education, the employment rate is 39.4 %, almost the same as the EU-27 average of 38.4 %. For those with medium-level qualifications, the rate is 55.0 %, which is 8.4 percentage points lower than the EU-27 average of 63.4 %. The gap is similar for those with high-level qualifications: 70.4 % in Türkiye compared to 79.1 % in the EU-27, a difference of 8.7 percentage points.

The difference in employment rates between those with low and those with higher levels of educational attainment is smaller in Türkiye than in the EU-27: 31.0 percentage points in Türkiye, compared to 40.7 percentage points in the EU-27. Similarly, the gap between people with medium and low education is 15.6 percentage points in Türkiye, compared to 25.0 percentage points in the EU-27. This shows that although people with higher levels of education have better employment prospects, the increase in employment rates from low to medium or high education is smaller in Türkiye than in the EU-27, on average.

**Figure 4.4 Employment rate (age 15+) by educational attainment, ETF partner countries (2024)**



Source: ETF KIESE database

That adults in Türkiye with low educational attainment have an employment rate close to the EU-27 average stands out from the usual pattern of countries in the monitoring sample. The reasons for this are specific to Türkiye and include relatively more opportunities on the labour market for people without formal qualifications, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and parts of services where skills can be learned on the job. Economic necessity may also play a role, pushing many in this group into work despite lower pay, limited protection or insecure contracts. The economy's structure, with a large share of employment in low-skill sectors, also contributes to the low employment rate among the low-educated.

## System management and organisation

In this final section on policy and system performance, the focus shifts to how education and training are set up and managed, with particular attention to VET.

The analysis presents data on system performance in the form of SPIs in three areas: effective allocation and use of financial resources in VET; allocation, use and professional capacity of human resources, including leadership skills and professional competence of school management and staff; and system steering and management, which includes data, quality assurance, school leadership and the internationalisation of VET.

### Financial resources in VET and lifelong learning

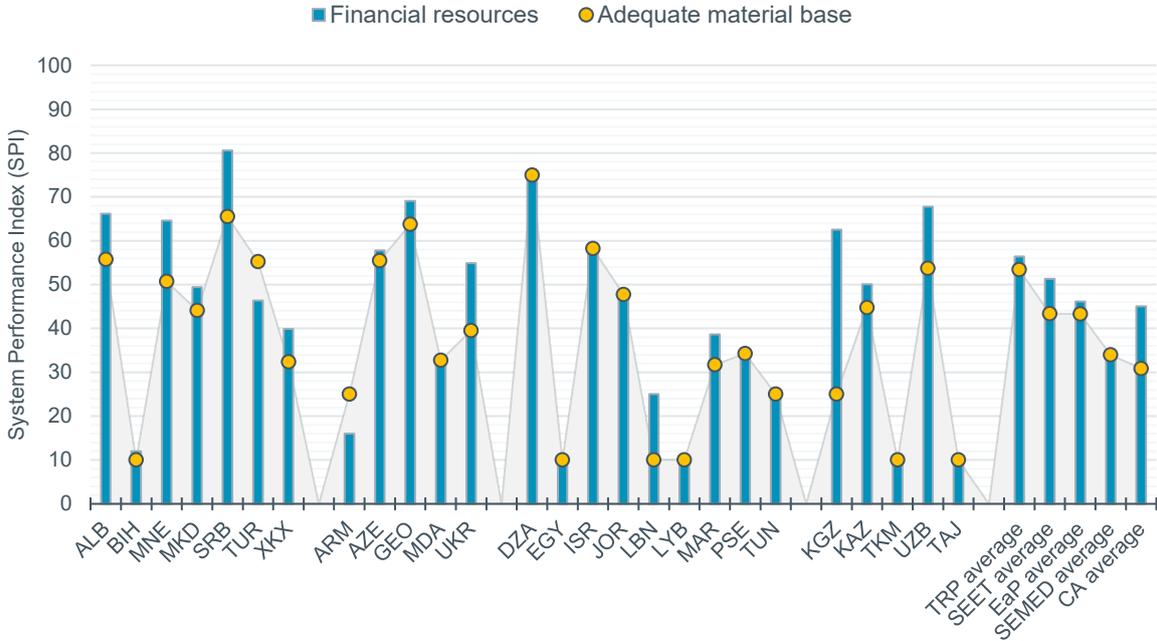
This section examines the availability of funding for VET in Türkiye and discusses how effectively this funding translates into tangible resources, such as well-equipped teaching facilities, workshops and appropriate instructional materials.

VET in Türkiye has benefited from a significant increase in education funding in recent years. In 2023, total education expenditure rose by 92.5 % compared with 2022, driven by high inflation, post-earthquake reconstruction and expansionary fiscal policy. The share of GDP allocated to education also grew. VET receives a larger share of total education funding than the OECD average (14 % compared with 10 %), while the public share rose from 79.1 % to 83.5 %. Household contributions declined to 7.9 %, and private sector contributions to vocational upper secondary programmes stood at about 8 %.

Despite these positive developments, system performance in resourcing for VET is not as strong as recent funding trends might suggest (Figure 4.5). With an SPI of 46, Türkiye is below the Torino

Process average (56) and the SEET regional average (51). One reason is that the growth in funding has not translated into adequate per-student expenditure. Spending per learner remains well below international benchmarks: USD 5,109 per full-time equivalent VET student compared with USD 12,312 in the OECD, USD 5,352 per student across all levels compared with USD 12,647, and USD 3,511 per secondary student, including VET, compared with USD 9,868.

**Figure 4.5 Allocation and use of financial resources in education and training – index of system performance, ETF partner countries and international average (2024)**



Note: Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100  
 Source: ETF KIESE and Torino Process databases

Türkiye performs somewhat better in converting resources into tangible improvements at a provider level (SPI of 55, Figure 4.5), close to the Torino Process average of 53 and above the SEET average of 43. KIESE SPI indicators show that major shortages in materials or infrastructure are not widespread: 12.9 %–15.1 % of students are in schools reporting inadequate educational materials (Indicators 97–98), and 14.6 %–14.7 % are in schools reporting problems with physical infrastructure (Indicators 99–100). This suggests deficiencies exist but are concentrated rather than system wide. The monitoring survey also highlights examples of good practice, such as selected Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools with advanced facilities and public-private cooperation through chambers of commerce, large firms and umbrella bodies.

Still, even this stronger result is only midrange. Material conditions for teaching and learning remain uneven across regions. Rural schools often report inadequate facilities, including cases where smart boards were installed without internet access. National initiatives, such as the Turkish national education programme (FATİH,) have yet to ensure reliable connectivity or widespread pedagogical use of ICT, and students’ use of ICT for learning is below the OECD average. Outdated workshop equipment is also common.

The financing arrangements contribute to these challenges: funding for VET and lifelong learning is fragmented across several ministries, and institutions have limited financial autonomy, reducing their flexibility to allocate resources promptly and in line with needs. National authorities recognise these issues, and key policy documents – the Vocational and Technical Education Policy Document (2024), Education Vision 2030, the Twelfth Development Plan (2024–2028) and the Mid-term Programme (2024–2026) – set priorities to improve infrastructure, modernise equipment and strengthen links with industry.

## Human resources: allocation, use and professional capacity

VET in Türkiye benefits from a sizeable and formally well-qualified teaching workforce with around 125,364 teachers for more than 1.5 million students in 2023, according to the monitoring survey. Formal credentialing across the profession is strong, as over 95 % of these teachers hold at least a bachelor's degree.

However, numbers and qualifications alone do not determine adequacy. The SPI for the adequacy of human resources in VET in Türkiye is at 46, below the regional (SPI of 59) and Torino Process averages (SPI of 61). Despite the strong formal qualifications of the workforce, VET principals report that there are too few teachers who combine high performance with both up-to-date vocational expertise and innovative pedagogical skills. This suggests that the main gap lies not in the availability of qualified teachers in general, but in the availability of teachers with an advanced and highly integrated skill profile.

The survey also notes that there are efforts to meet this demand through better and more intensive professional development, which have resulted in a sixfold increase in the provision of in-service training (CPD). However, systemic constraints such as limited funding, scheduling conflicts, and the absence of robust impact evaluation reduce the effectiveness of these initiatives. As a result, most teachers do not meet the Ministry of National Education's annual CPD target of 30 hours.

Another part of the human resource problem is that the attractiveness of the VET teaching profession is limited. The monitoring survey reports of factors known from other countries too, such as relatively low social status, potentially lower salaries compared to other professions, and insufficient career support structures. High workloads and concerns about school-level management practices also reduce job satisfaction and the attractiveness of the profession which, in turn, affects recruitment and retention. Reforms designed to introduce comprehensive performance evaluation and career advancement frameworks have been paused, which further undermines teacher motivation and retention.

## System steering and management

This section summarises the system performance results in the domains of data availability and capacity for informed decision-making, quality assurance, school leadership and the internationalisation in VET.

Among all countries in the ETF monitoring sample, Türkiye stands out for the strong availability of internationally comparable data, reflecting its long-standing participation in initiatives such as the OECD INES programme. As shown in Section 4.1, the share of internationally comparable headline indicators available for Türkiye has risen from 60.9 % in 2023 to 80 % in 2024, placing it among the best supplied with data. The SPI in this domain (49) is higher than the Torino Process sample average (44) and the regional average (46) but remains only mid-range.

Unlike the data-availability metric in Table 4.1, this result reflects whether indicators provide disaggregated, decision-grade evidence on system delivery. Here, there are gaps as data are incomplete for some key learner groups – males, females, socioeconomically disadvantaged youth, and adults at risk due to low or no education.

The monitoring survey notes that Türkiye benefits from a strong institutional and technical base for data collection, with responsibilities clearly divided between the Ministry of National Education, the Turkish Statistical Institute, and the Vocational Qualifications Authority, all of which are actively involved in international reporting. Yet, significant weaknesses persist in graduate tracking, programme effectiveness and the consistency of national reporting, limiting longitudinal analysis and systematic monitoring for decision-making.

System performance in quality assurance (SPI of 53) is somewhat weaker than the Torino Process average (56) and the SEET regional average (67) (Figure 4.6). VET in Türkiye rests on a well-developed QA framework anchored in the Turkish Qualifications Framework and aligned with the EQF and EQAVET. Institutional responsibilities are clear and mechanisms such as inspections, self-evaluations, accreditation and learning outcomes-based qualifications are in place.

**Figure 4.6 System steering and management – index of system performance, selected dimensions, ETF partner countries and Torino Process average (2024)**



Note: Theoretical index range: min/low performance=0, max/high performance=100

Source: ETF KIESE and Torino Process databases

The KIESE SPI indicators used to calculate the composite index confirm the presence of extensive QA in schools themselves: internal self-evaluation (99 %, indicator 84), systematic recording of data (indicators 88 and 89, both 99 %), curricular profiles (96.9 %, indicator 86), performance standards (94.9 %, indicator 87), student feedback (91.8 %, indicator 90), teacher mentoring (85.7 %, indicator 91), and standardised reading policies (92.9 %, indicator 93). Only external evaluation is less widespread (80.1 %, indicator 85). However, more demanding QA processes are less consistent: only 64.8 % of principals report regular consultation with external experts on school improvement (indicators 92 and 94). Public accountability is also uneven: while most provide data to parents (91.3 %, indicator 83), fewer report tracking by administrative authorities (72.4 %, indicator 82), and only 10.7 % post results publicly (indicator 81). These gaps explain why, despite the strong formal framework, QA performance remains modest. Quality assurance nonetheless continues as a policy priority, as set out in the Mid-term Programme 2024–2026, Education Vision 2030 and the MoNE Strategic Plan 2024–2028.

As in other countries, professional capacity of school leadership is an area of weaker performance (SPI of 25). Although most principals are formally well qualified, there are shortages of principals and capacity is limited by the small share with advanced qualifications and a highly centralised governance model. According to the monitoring survey, CPD participation remains below target, demand exceeds supply and critical areas such as multicultural teaching, special needs education and digitalisation are under-addressed. Recent reforms aim to counter these weaknesses through the requirement that at least two assistant principals be workshop or laboratory teachers, the creation of Sectoral Centres of Excellence for CPD and industry cooperation, and the inclusion of boards of teachers in key institutional decisions.

Performance in the area of VET internationalisation is stronger. Türkiye has a comprehensive strategy set out in frameworks such as the 2024 Vocational and Technical Education Policy Document and Education Vision 2030. According to the monitoring survey, schools engage through Erasmus+,

partnerships with the ETF and bilateral agreements in priority sectors. The referencing of the Turkish Qualifications Framework to the EQF in 2017 further demonstrates the priority attached to internationalisation. Challenges remain in professional recognition, funding and uptake of sectoral accreditations, and gaps in core professional skills persist despite curricular reforms.

# ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AK Party	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
BETAM	Bahçeşehir University Center for Economic and Social Research
CHP	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
CoHE	Council of Higher Education
CoVE	Centre of Vocational Excellence
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
EBA	Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (Education Information Network)
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EFSD+	European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ENE	Network for Excellence
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ERP	Economic Reform Programme
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FATİH	Movement to Increase Opportunities and Technology
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HDI	Human Development Index

ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILOSTAT	ILO Statistical Database
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INES	Indicators of Education Systems (OECD programme)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
İŞMEP	Work-Based Learning Programme
IVET	Initial Vocational Education and Training
KIESE	Key Indicators on Education, Skills and Employment
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German Development Bank)
KOSGEB	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organisation of Türkiye
LFS	Labour Force Survey
METEK	IPA-funded VET development programme
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NVIS	National Vocational Information System
NVQS	National Vocational Qualifications System
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOF	Out of Office
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PEC	Public Education Centre
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party

PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PSTRE	Problem Solving in Technology-Rich Environments
QA	Quality Assurance
R&D	Research and Development
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy
SEET	South East Europe and Türkiye
SELFIE	Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering Innovation through Educational Technology
SGI	Sustainable Governance Indicator
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPI	System Performance Indicator
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
THEQC / YÖKAK	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council
TIUK	Turkish Statistical Institute
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye
TRP	Torino Process
TÜİK / TURKSTAT	Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜRÇEV	Turkish Environmental Education Foundation
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VNFIL	Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning
VQA / MYK	Vocational Qualifications Authority
VTC	Vocational Training Centre

VTAH

Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School

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WBL

Work-Based Learning

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