

CAREER ORIENTATION BEST PRACTICES - TURKEY

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Planning Career and Education

It is important at any age to make plans in order to take decisions for our future and make these decisions come true. Yet, it is more significant at younger ages as the decisions we have made at these ages affect our future job choices. The jobs we have chosen affect our income and the opportunities that the income brings (for instance, the house we live in, what we do in our free time, what kind of car we have, etc.) with whom we work, the position in community, the plans for retirement, shortly, all our lifestyle.

I.2. What is Career Orientation? Why is it Significant?

Generally, the word “career” is used for “occupation”; however, a career includes every job you do in your lifetime, the activities you do in your free time, the other roles in your life and every aspect of your life. For this reason, career planning includes the planning of all aspects of your life, your education, your job, what you do in your freetime. There are different sources and people that you can get help from while planning your career. Yet, it is important to take the responsibility of getting ready for life, and it is also important to have a plan while getting ready for this. Because the world of business has changed quite a lot due to the fast technological advances, social changes, the changing conditions of economy. The number of people working in the production of goods has decreased while the number of people working in service for other people has increased. The employees often change their jobs throughout their life. Communication has been getting faster. As the companies serve in many different countries, people can work in other countries, too. On the other hand, the conditions of the workplaces have also changed. Working hours get more flexible, team work is encouraged, employees are expected to improve themselves permanently. That is why one had better ask some questions while getting ready for these business conditions:

- Are you aware of the fact that it is high time you planned and thought about your future?
- Are you ready and willing to take the responsibility of leading your life on your own?
- What are you doing to get ready for the job you will be doing in future?

Furthermore, there are some principles that you should take into consideration while planning your career. They are as follows:

- a) Change is perpetual: Both you and the world is changing continuously. All these technological, economic and social changes affect the business world. You should follow the change.
- b) Learning is continuous: Lifelong learning is the slogan of the century. You should learn more and more about your job and improve yourselves.
- c) Listen to your heart: Your heart will help you choose the suitable career for you.
- d) Focus on your career: When you have decided on your career, do not give up and pursue your dreams.
- e) Create a network of relations: You will need people around you to discuss your decisions, to get help and support.

The principles above are some clues to help you decide on your future career. While planning your career , there are three main steps to follow:

1. Identify yourself;
2. Search for the choices of education and jobs;
3. Plan the career (by combining the information in the first steps).

I.3. What Influences Us While Choosing Our Career?

The factors that influence the selections of the jobs vary both as number and types. We cannot list certain factors accepted by everybody. In this process, the most important factor is the personality of the individual and how they perceive themselves. Besides, the interaction

between personal characteristics and social-economic structure affects the selection of the job. We can divide the factors that affect the selection of the job into four main groups;

- 1- Personal characteristics (interest, skill, value, aim, expectation, personality, physical features, the perception about oneself and the job, experiences, etc.);
- 2- Social characteristics (family, the perception of the culture about job and gender, social structure, media, etc.);
- 3- Political, economic, legal, and characteristics based on the system (the regime, the economy and the structure of the country, legislation, the education and the examination system, employment opportunities, etc.)
- 4- Chance (health conditions, natural events, unexpected encounters, etc.).

In fact, the interaction between all these factors influences the selection of the career. Some factors can be influential on some people while other people can be influenced by the other factors. We had better think of the factors in general while taking the decision of our future career because not only one of them is influential on our decisions.

I.4. The Background of Career Orientation in Turkey

It was in the 1950s when the counseling movement started in Turkey. With the help of the United States of America's system of counseling, it was aimed to train qualified manpower in order to solve the unemployment problem. Binnur Yeşilyaprak, a professor at the Department of Educational Science, Guidance, and Psychological Counseling at Ankara University, divided the Turkish vocational guidance and career counseling into three identifiable historical periods:

1. Beginning Period: taking initial steps (1953-1975)
2. Searching Period: undecided steps (1976-1995)
3. Developing Period: systematic steps (1995-)

It was 1954 when the Center of Guidance was opened, and in 1974, there were counseling services in many secondary schools. In the 1980s, the main object of counseling was to help students select the college major to attend. The concept of assessing the characteristics of people and those of jobs was taken into consideration. Hence, many tests and scales were adopted and developed to use objective measurement. In 1980s, undergraduate level of counseling programs were started. In 1990s, because of the process of entrance to European Union, some steps were taken in accordance with European system of

counseling. In 1997, the compulsory education was increased from five-year to eight-year, which enabled counselors to assign in the elementary school setting.

There occurred some significant applications with the start of the 21st century such as new tests, scales, textbooks, and books on employment. In 2003, there was a SWOT analysis of the policy and guidance in the country. In 2005, The Euroguidance Center as a branch of European Communities was established in Turkey, which co-operated with ISKUR (Turkish Employment Organization) for some projects on Vocational Information, Vocational Guidance, and Counseling Services. ISKUR also helped many unemployed people to get a job by training, guiding, and counseling. In 2006, two graduate programs were opened: one of them for master degree, the other for certificate in the state and private universities. Also, theory and practice oriented courses began to take place in all undergraduate programs in counseling education.

II. THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AND CAREER ORIENTATION IN TURKEY

II.1. The New Education System in Turkey (4+4+4)

The New School Term in Turkey started in 2012 and with this new term a new Education System in Turkey, which has been called the **4+4+4** system, has started. This system extends mandatory schooling from 8 years to 12 years. The schooling years also see the introduction of vocational classes starting with the 5th year. Children and parents can choose from a list of courses, the most controversial one being “The Quran and the Life of the Muhammad” where girls are also permitted to wear their headscarves during classes. Other courses on offer include Maths, English and Science.

Education in Turkey is governed by the national system which was established in accordance with the Atatürk’s Reforms after the Turkish War of Independence. Children are obliged to take 12 years of education between the ages of 6 and 18.

Annually, about 1.5 million students graduate Turkish high schools. About 95% of students attend public schools, but inadequacies of the public system increasingly motivate middle-class parents to seek private education.

By 2012 there were over 167 universities in Turkey. Except for the Open Education Faculty (Turkish: Açıköğretim Fakültesi) at Anadolu University, entrance is regulated by national examinations, **YGS and LYS**, after which high school graduates are assigned to university according to their performances.

We also see the change in the starting age for children attending school. Up until this term children would start school around 80 months or between 6 ½ to 7 years of age. The age for starting school has now been lowered to 66 months.

II.2. Formal and Non-Formal Education

The basic structure of the National Education system is outlined by the Basic Law. The educational system is divided into two main sections:

- Formal Education
- Non-Formal Education.

Non-formal education is organized educational activity outside the formal systems. Informal education is the life-long process in which people learn from everyday experience, informal interactions with friends, family, work colleagues, etc. Formal education is linked with schools and training institutions.

II.2.a. Formal Education

The new system of 4+4+4 was implemented on 12 April 2012. It comprises the following levels of study:

- 5 years-old: Primary School (ilkokul) begins. School attendance compulsory.
- 9 years-old: Secondary School (orta okul) begins. Students are asked to make pathway choices. School attendance compulsory. Religious high school is an option.
- 12 years-old: Tertiary School (lise) begins. Distance education, religious high school is an option.

Pre-primary Education

Pre-Primary education includes the optional education of children between 36 and 72 month who are under the age of compulsory primary education. Pre-Primary education institutions, independent nurseries are opened as nursery classes and practical classes within formal and non-formal education institutions with suitable physical capacity.

The purpose of Pre-Primary education is to ensure physical, mental and sensory development of children and the acquisition of good habits, to prepare children for primary education, to create a common atmosphere of growth for those living in inconvenient circumstances and to ensure that Turkish is spoken correctly and well.

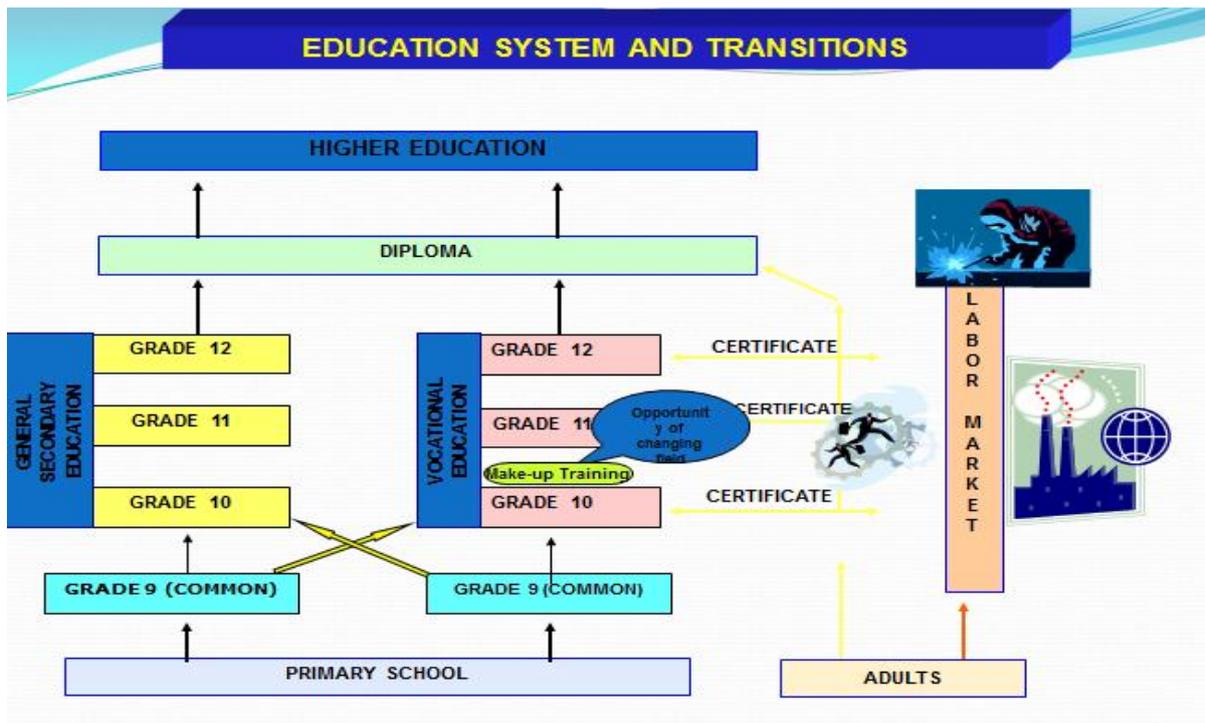
Primary Education

The purpose of primary education is to ensure that every Turkish child acquires the basic knowledge, skills, behaviors, and habits to become a good citizen, is raised in line with the national moral concepts and is prepared for life and for the next education level parallel to his/her interests and skills. They have a 3-year curriculum and prepare children for future higher education. Primary education is compulsory for all citizens, boys or girls, and is given free of charge in public schools.

TEOG Exam (Transition from basic education to secondary education)

When students start the 6th grade, they start preparing themselves for the national level placement test. At the end of 6th, 7th and 8th grade, each student takes this exam and at the end of the 3rd year, according to the total marks of their TEOG exams, students choose which high school they would like to study at. After primary education, students have a lot of different choices about the high school they can go to. After the TEOG exam, according to their wish and of course the total marks of their exam results, they may choose to study at:

- General High schools;
- Vocational High Schools;
- Anatolian High schools (including Religious High School);
- Science High schools.



General High Schools (High School / Lycee)

The purpose of secondary education is to give students a minimum common culture, to identify individual and social problems, to search for solutions, to raise awareness in order to contribute to the socio-economic and cultural development of the country and to prepare the students for higher education, for profession, for life and for business in line with their interests and skills.

In these schools, the system of one teacher for each class changes to a specialist teacher for each subject. Students can choose one foreign language from English, French or German. Religious Education lesson is often optional, and is actually a comparative study of religions rather than only of Islam. They have a 4-year curriculum and prepare children for future higher education.

Anatolian High Schools

These were established for the purpose of teaching students at least one foreign language, which they can utilize to further their education in the best possible manner. The educational period inclusive of secondary schooling covers 5 years with a one year preparatory course. (preparatory is up to students' level of foreign language). Aside from foreign language lessons the normal lycee programme is implemented with science and mathematics lessons given in English.

Science High Schools

They give 4- year education on the fields of Science and Mathematics. Students who got the top points from TEOG exam, can be placed in these schools.

Vocational High Schools

The tuition period is five years including a one-year preparatory course. Students are taught a minimum of one foreign language in addition to the lessons included in the Science Lycees. The professional industrial training prepares them for higher education and their future work. The programmes in these lycees include training in computers, electricity courses, journalism, construction, mechanics, remote control methods, electronics in medicine, aircraft engines and architecture.

In General High Schools and Anatolian High schools at the beginning of the 9th grade, students have to choose which field they would like to study for their further education. Options are:

- Science and Math
- Social Studies
- Turkish and Social studies
- Foreign Languages

At the end of the 10th grade they may choose to change the field of education but later then that it will be impossible to change it.

End of High School; YGS and LYS Exams (University Entrance Exams)

At the end of high school education, students who wish to study at universities have to take an exam which is called YGS and if they are successful in YGS they take LYS to study at a 4-year faculty. The YGS exam is based on the fields that students studied during their high school period. The exam is taken in March and lasts for 160 minutes. They have 160 questions to answer on Maths, Turkish, Social Sciences and Sciences.

In order to achieve a good future, students want to study in good departments at good universities. This is why they start studying for the entrance exams as much as two years in

advance, generally taking private courses as well. The students need to get at least 140 points to have a chance to study at two-year colleges and 180 points to study at the university.

After the results, students need to make their selections and then the YOK (Higher Education Council) places the students starting from the highest points they got. As there are more applications than quotas in universities not everyone will get placed. Generally speaking, 1/3 of the students could continue to the university. The others, if they can afford it, continue to the private universities, or start working, or wait for one more year.

The University Examination System

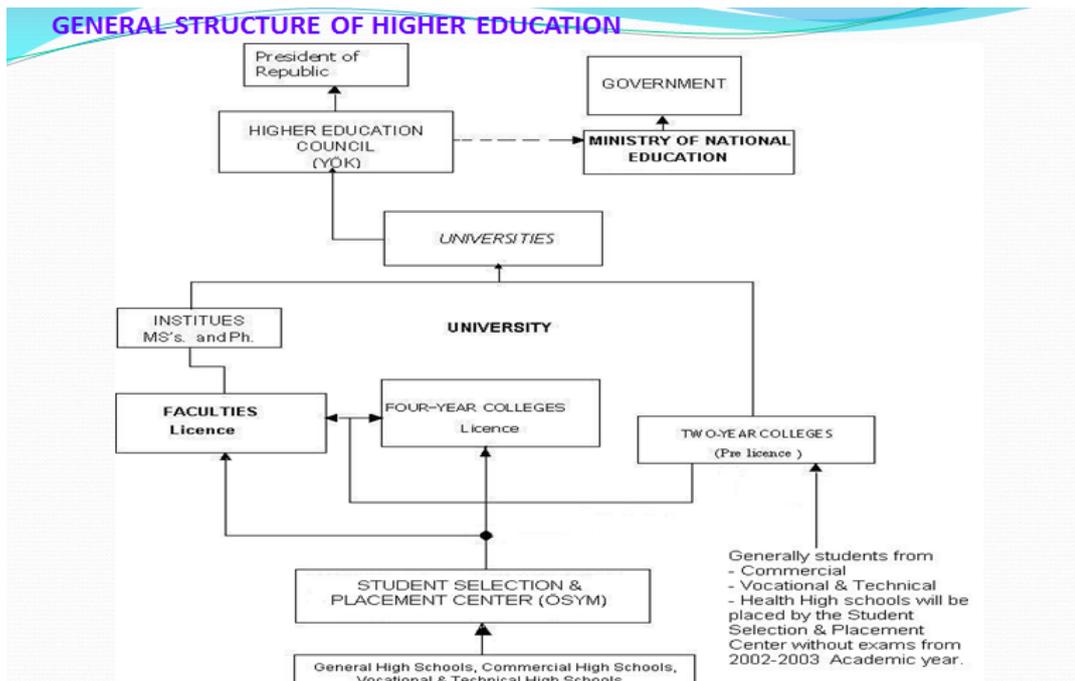
Approximately 2 000 000 students enter the university examination per year in Turkiye. 700,000 students get a chance to enroll at any faculty, four or two - year colleges and open universities according to their points.

Capacities of universities in the academic year of 2014-2015:

- Two-Year Colleges : 500,000 students
- Faculties and Four-Year Colleges : 490,000 students

Higher Education in Turkey

Higher education includes all educational programmes of at least two years and over. The aim of higher education is to offer education to individuals to meet the demands of the society at various higher levels and to develop scientific research for Turkiye to be a part of the developed countries, by preparing a suitable research environment. Each university consists of faculties and four-year colleges, offering bachelor's level programmes, the latter with a vocational emphasis, and two year vocational colleges offering pre-bachelor's (engineering technicians) level programmes of a strictly vocational nature. There are a total number of 60 universities excluding the private universities. After four years of study, they may also continue to do masters for one or two years.



II.2.b. Non-formal Education

Parallel to the rapid changes in society, the notion that the essential education is given in schools is also changing. In line with that notion, the Ministry of National Education is making rearrangements in the goals, programs and organizations of the school system, focusing on the development, expansion and restructuring of the non-formal learning and education system within continuing education and shifting the focus of education from formal to continuing (life-long) education.

Non-formal education activities are provided at various formal and non-formal schools and institutions with different programs which include as follows;

- To teach students reading-writing skills for them to have the opportunity to complete their education.
- To enable to acquire habits for evaluating their spare time.
- To prepare them to have the suitable jobs according to the employment needs of the Turkish and Global economy
- In general, non-formal education consists of General Non-formal Education and Vocational Technical Non-formal Education.
- The most of the non-formal educational activities take place at Public Training Centers. But there are some private Training Centers.

Non-formal education institutions

Public training centers

Apprenticeship training centers

Practical schools of art for girls

Maturation institutes

Vocational education centers

Technical training centers for adults

Education and application schools

Private classes

Private courses

Industrial practical schools of art

Science and art centers

Open primary education

Open high schools

Vocational and technical open schools

III. CAREER PLANNING AND CAREER ORIENTATION IN TURKEY

Non-seasonally adjusted main labour force indicators, January 2014 - 2015

	Total		Male		Female	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Population 15 years old and over	(Thousand)					
Population	56 571	57 475	27 943	28 385	28 628	29 090
Labour force	27 261	28 713	19 351	20 013	7 909	8 701
Employed	24 456	25 454	17 461	17 896	6 994	7 559
Agriculture	4 787	4 842	2 701	2 710	2 085	2 133
Non-agriculture	19 669	20 612	14 760	15 186	4 909	5 426
Unemployed	2 805	3 259	1 889	2 117	915	1 142
Not in the labour force	29 310	28 761	8 592	8 372	20 719	20 389
	(%)					
Labour force participation rate	48.2	50.0	69.3	70.5	27.6	29.9
Employment rate	43.2	44.3	62.5	63.0	24.4	26.0
Unemployment rate	10.3	11.3	9.8	10.6	11.6	13.1
Non-agricultural unemployment rate	12.1	13.4	10.9	11.9	15.5	17.3
15-64 age group						
Labour force participation rate	52.6	54.6	74.5	75.8	30.6	33.3
Employment rate	47.1	48.3	67.1	67.6	27.0	28.8
Unemployment rate	10.5	11.6	9.9	10.8	11.8	13.4
Non-agricultural unemployment rate	12.2	13.4	11.0	11.9	15.6	17.3
Youth unemployment rate (15-24 age)	17.7	20.0	16.6	18.7	19.8	22.4

Figures in table may not add up to totals due to rounding.

At the 2011 census, the population of Turkey was 77,803,927. It is the second largest country in Europe in terms of population. More than 60% of the population resides in cities. The rate of population growth is approximately 1.5%. 70% of the population is below 35 years of age. Students constitute 25.3% of the population. The number of teachers in preschools, basic and secondary education schools is 628.738.

In Turkey Turkish Employment Service (ISKUR) Guidance and Reserach Centers (RAM) coordinates the career guidance, and orientation and information services

According to the Basic Law on National Education No.1739, the Turkish education system comprises three main structures: pre-school education, basic education, and general secondary education and vocational secondary education. These include both public and private educational Institutions. The Ministry of National Education (MONE), which is responsible for the services concerned, consists of two main organizational structures: central and provincial.

Currently, alongside the 81 Employment offices across the country, there are 43 Career Information Centers operating in 39 provincial directorates, and 17 Job and Career Counseling Services operating in 16 provincial directorates: These centers and services cover 41 of the 81 provinces. They offer information about jobs, training and working life to those who need such information.

The guidance and counseling services in Psychological MONE integrate educational, vocational and personal / social guidance services. Vocational guidance services at schools are thus mainly provided by the school's guidance and Psychological counseling service. Reserach and Guidance Centers undertake coordination responsibilities with respect to guidance services in cities, including vocational guidance services. The Provincial Directorate for National Education, Special Education and Guidance Services Branch, the Provincial Directorate for National Education, and MONE's ORGM, Instead of these services are the structures that ensure Contents Provision. MONE's MBRD is currently the main service provider.

III.1. The Main Guidance Services

Schools

Preschool education

Preschool education programs include such objectives as raising awareness in terms of careers, raising awareness in terms of the jobs and careers of family members, introducing jobs and careers that attract the attention of the individual, and raising awareness about various roles in life. Guidance services in preschool education programs are provided by teachers.

Basic education

Children enter basic education at the age of 6 and usually remain there until the age of 14. The school guidance counselor in basic education works in a School Guidance Services Unit. This unit provides information to students in the second term of the 8th grade on which careers can be pursued after which secondary education programs and what standard of life can be expected from these careers. Some questionnaires and scales are applied to discover their interests and talents and to help them choose the most appropriate academic program.

General secondary education

In secondary education, there is a total of 1,489,865 students (54% boys and 46% girls) aged 14-17 in a total of 2,111 schools. Of these schools, 1,580 are general high schools, 425 are Anatolian high schools, 58 are science high schools, and 48 are fine arts high schools. The students of the last three schools are chosen through an examination. In general secondary education, career guidance services are provided at each grade, except the foreign language preparatory grade. Students are guided to one of the following fields: sciences, social sciences, Turkish, mathematics, foreign languages, arts (painting/music) and sports. Career guidance is mainly focused around entry to higher education. Pressure to gain university places is intense: schools are ranked in public league tables in terms of their level of success in the university entrance examinations.

The relationship of the main fields of study to higher education is presented in the 9th grade (which is regarded as an orientation grade); examination and evaluation of possible careers is covered in the 10th grade; and information about higher education choices, and preparation for entry to jobs and careers, are given in high school.

Vocational and technical education

Orientation in vocational and technical education may be carried out by the assistant principal, class teacher, guidance counsellor, or others. Students are guided to fields/branches in the 9th, 10th and 11th grades according to the level, type and properties of the programs implemented in vocational and technical schools and institutions.

III.2. General Comments

The quality and quantity of these services vary in public and private schools. It is a fact that the number of guidance counselors is higher, and that guidance and psychological counseling practices are implemented more extensively, in private than in public schools. This is true in relation both to basic and to general secondary education. Class sizes, too, tend to be lower in the private schools; many public schools still operate on a split-day basis, with some class groups coming in the morning and some in the afternoon. Where schools do not have a guidance counselor on their staff, specialist guidance services may be available from the local RAM (see below). Guidance counselors and class guidance teachers cover career education and guidance as part of their wider guidance responsibilities.

Visits are organized for basic and secondary school groups to Career Counseling Centers in areas where such centers are available. Here ISKUR plays a significant role.

Career education is included as part of class guidance programs in all types of school, integrated with personal and social education. For the 9th, 10th and 11th grades of secondary education, class guidance programs have been developed in order to ensure congruity in terms of class/group activities to be performed by class guidance teachers in weekly guidance hours at secondary education institutions throughout the country, and to prevent the use of these hours for other purposes. Teacher handbooks were introduced in 2000/2001 to guide teachers through in-class activities; support is also offered by the school's guidance counselor(s). On average, half of the guidance program and handbooks cover educational and career guidance topics and activities.

In basic education schools, there is currently no national policy regarding class time or MONE resources for group guidance, though some schools do make regular class time available.

III.3. Tertiary education

In Turkey, university entrance is based on an objective and impersonal competitive system administered by the Student Placement and Selection Center (OSYM). Going through the processes in some cases taking advantage of special support from private university entrance preparation courses, students enter university entrance examinations upon completion of their secondary education.

Higher education choices are made by filling out a common application form after the examinations. Students use career guidance support at their schools throughout the whole process. Much of this is concerned with choosing the maximum of 18 courses that can be listed on the common application form, taking account of the information published by OSYM on the examination and grade-point-average scores of successful applicants in the previous year. Places are allocated to the best-qualified candidates on the basis of clear and mechanically applied rules. Many students who fail to gain a place retake the examinations in the subsequent year.

Vocational and technical secondary education programs are arranged so as to prepare students for careers and higher education, working life and fields of work. Law No.4702 entitles graduates of vocational and technical schools to continue their education in vocational higher education institutions (2-year courses) without having to enter the university entrance examination so long as they remain in the same field: up to 10% may then have the opportunity to transfer from these 2-year courses to university. Vocational and technical secondary education institutions provide the necessary career guidance to their students about the higher education programs they can attend.

In Turkey, university programs are strictly defined and the only variation is through elective courses. In only one of the universities do students take basic and social sciences in their first two years and choose their specific fields at the end of the second year. When students choose elective courses at their university, they receive help from academic staff appointed as academic advisors.

Students may also get information and opinions from their departments about fields of careers presented in career information sources, opportunities of employment, levels of income after graduation, opportunities of promotion, similar careers and possible changes to careers in the future. They may in addition be able to attend conferences and sessions which aim at developing students' job-search skills. Where students are not certain which career they will choose, they can go through a career counseling process operated by guidance and psychological counseling services, and in some cases by career planning centers at the universities.

IV. Strengths of Career Orientation Process in Turkey

IV.1. Questionnaires

An Academic Self Concept Scale is used to help 8th grade students to discover their interests and talents and to help them choose the most appropriate academic program, including the choice between general secondary education and vocational/technical education, and the choice between science/mathematics, literature and social sciences in the general secondary education programs. Tests and techniques are employed to help students know themselves better and to decide on the education programs they wish to attend. Cooperation between school guidance services and class guidance teacher is necessary for the implementation of these tests and techniques. The responsibility for choosing the academic program that will be attended lies ultimately with the parents and the student.

In high schools, instruments administered by guidance counselors include the Academic Self-Concept Scale, the Career Maturity Scale, the Self-Exploration Questionnaire, and BILDEMER 2000 (prepared by the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) to help the students to explore their interests and abilities and match their self-assessments to various program alternatives). Career guidance services are provided to parents and to children on demand, as much as resources allow. The ultimate decision is usually made either by the parents or jointly by the parents and the student; some students make the decision on their own. Career guidance services in secondary schools are provided by guidance counselors and by class guidance teachers. They are included in more general guidance and psychological counseling services.

IV.2. School Trips

Visits are organized for basic and secondary school groups to Career Counseling Centers in areas where such centers are available. School trips are often organized by schools to let students experience their possible schools or jobs. During elementary education, some school trips are organized to take the students to different high schools in order to let them see the environment there, learn about classes and possible job opportunities. Hence, the students get some ideas and decide which high school to attend.

During secondary education, students are taken to some universities or workplaces to experience the atmosphere they will probably encounter. Students see the classes in universities, they see the conditions of the workplaces. They get the chance of speaking to people working or studying there.

IV.3. Career Days Events

In Turkey, one of the best activities for students to get help about their career is “career days” events organized by many different institutions such as universities, municipalities, colleges, governorships, etc. In these events, students get the chance of getting to know themselves, having information from different sources, meeting some well known people, listening to the experiences of people from different businesses, learning about different jobs from experts of them and drawing a path to the target.

IV.4. RAMs (Guidance and Research Centers)

Guidance and Research Centers undertake coordination responsibilities with respect to guidance services in cities, including vocational guidance services. Where schools do not have a guidance counselor on their staff, specialist guidance services may be available from the local RAM.

IV.5. Career Planning Centers

Another significant organization about career orientation in Turkey is “career planning centers” established in many universities. These centers organize some events such as career days in order to help students choose a career for themselves. It was 2005 when these centers started to serve, which means that they are not so experienced in orientation. Also, there are not so many experts to run these centers fruitfully. Guidance and Psychological Counseling

Centers within universities carry out individual and group activities to support individual and career development. In practice, however, they focus more on psychological counseling than on career guidance. Their services are generally provided in an integrated form, with the exception of three universities, namely Middle East Technical University (METU), Bogaziçi and Bilkent, which provide them separately. These universities have career planning centers which provide services for explaining job opportunities and offering job placement. METU is also in the process of setting up an entrepreneurship center. In a few other universities, student organizations run some career activities, including liaison with employers.

IV.6. ISKUR (Turkish Employment Agency)

ISKUR gives, in cooperation with schools, detailed explanations to students about the importance of choosing a career, its relationship to educational choices, and the sources from which career information can be obtained. These explanations are supplemented by videotapes and films. ISKUR also has a “library/resource centre” where students can make use of the career files, which include information about the definition of careers and their tasks, qualifications required to perform these tasks, work environments and working conditions, vocational training, fields of work, employment opportunities, income, and promotion opportunities during and after training; there are also printed documents (books, articles, pamphlets) which give detailed information about opportunities for vocational training and about the labor market.

Within the context of the protocol ISKUR also organizes classes:

- To offer specialist diagnostic services for students with special needs;
- To deliver individual and group guidance services in schools which do not have a guidance counselor on their staff;
- To offer a more general support resource to guidance services within schools.

They also provide, as a second role, around 6% of the total individual and group services delivered across all schools, including career guidance services.

In relation to the third role, they are not equipped to provide much support in the career guidance area beyond organizing some seminars and meetings for local guidance counselors (to which ISKUR staff may also be invited), and indicating to ISKUR which

schools do not have guidance counselors so that they can take this into account when deciding to which schools to allocate their resources. At least one RAM has also produced radio programs for students, parents and the general public on career issues. In general, the RAMs have serious limitations in terms of their number, the quality of their expert staff, and the technical equipment and hardware that they have to support their work. These problems currently prevent the RAMs from activating their full institutional potential.

Students may also use ISKUR's job placement services, which include special provision for university graduates: its formal current monopoly of such services may have inhibited the growth of more systematic services within universities

As previously mentioned, ISKUR provides career counseling services to students, and employment counseling and placement services to job seekers. These services contribute to the process which consists of relating the qualifications of the individual to the requirements of the job, identification of the job or career that best fits the inclinations and talents of the individual, and helping the individual to make use of the training opportunities for the job or career concerned, to find a job and to adjust to the job.

From ISKUR's perspective, however, its employment counseling services are not functioning adequately at present. There are problems in ensuring cooperation between different departments within the institutional structure. This is partly due to the negative image of the former Turkish Employment Agency, caused by the low productivity of its services in relation to job placement, career counseling, and job skills. The job counseling services being developed by ISKUR could contribute to changing this negative image by offering better and more comprehensive services, but this will require a sufficient number of qualified staff

Career counseling centers have career information files and briefs, information files on general and regional education and training opportunities, booklets on career fields in engineering, teaching and health, and related documents. Career information files are, as noted above, sources of information prepared by ISKUR. They include short texts on career definitions, tasks, qualifications, working conditions and environment, related vocational education, fields of work, job opportunities, income during and after education, and promotion opportunities, and are available for use by individuals from all sections of society.

These career files are also available on the Internet. Career information briefs are one-page documents prepared by the Ankara MDM. They include very short texts on career

definitions, tasks, equipment and materials used, qualifications required, working conditions and environment, fields of work, employment opportunities, promotion opportunities, places giving vocational education, duration and content of education, scholarships available, and credit and income opportunities. The briefs are open for use by all individuals who want to get information about the career concerned. 256 career information briefs have been prepared so far, 100 of which relate to intermediary careers and 156 to careers requiring higher education. Updates of career information files are extended to the briefs as well.

ISKUR has prepared 42 education and training information files that cover such topics as entrance requirements of educational institutions, application conditions, any quotas for male and female students, educational content, and opportunities for practical experience. In addition to information files on education and training at the general level, there are also regional files which cover information not only on formal provision but also non-formal provision such as apprenticeship training, general public education centers, and women's practical art schools.

There are also booklets on the career groups in the engineering, teaching and health fields. These booklets cover topics like the definition and practice of the career, working conditions and educational requirements. Similar booklets on other fields are planned. Career briefs on intermediary-level careers prepared by ISKUR were published in 1998 in the form of a book titled "Guide to Vocational and Technical Education Institutions and Careers" which was distributed to all provincial directorates of education. Videocassettes about occupations were also distributed in the same way.

In addition, there are posters and pamphlets giving information about the services offered by the Career Counseling Centers.

University catalogues and programs prepared by ÖSYM are also available on the net. Students can choose and apply to universities electronically in the final stages of the university entrance examination procedures. ISKUR provides career orientation services in accordance with:

- A decree having the force of law on the Establishment and Duties of the Turkish Employment Organization, No.617. Article 3 paragraph (i) includes provision "to perform career orientation services, to provide job and career counseling services, to implement education programs aiming at developing job-search skills, to provide psychological counseling services via career counseling centers..."

- Article 10 of the same law includes provision “... to expand and enlarge career orientation system gradually, to provide and improve guidance service, to offer employment and counseling services, to implement educational programs towards developing job-searchskills”
- Paragraph (i) of article 6 of the Career Orientation Letter of Recommendation No.88, approved by the International Labor Organization (ILO), includes provision “to register job applicants; to note their occupational qualifications, experiences and inclinations; to ask them questions for job placement; to examine their physical and occupational qualifications, if necessary; to help them in career orientation, career development and career re-adjustment, if necessary”
- Article 3 of the Agreement on the Place of Career Education and Orientation in Assessment Of Human Resources, No.142, states that: “Each member shall gradually make career guidance services, including continuous supply of employment information, more widely available in order to ensure that guidance is as accessible as possible and to provide extensive information to all children, youth and adults, including special programs for all people with disabilities. This information and guidance shall include levels of responsibility in career choice, career education and learning opportunities, expectations of employment, promotion opportunities, working conditions, occupational security, hygiene, economic, social and cultural activities and other aspects of the various sectors of working life”
- Article 9 of Part 1 of the European Social Charter states that: “Each individual is entitled to appropriate career orientation opportunities which will help them choose a career that is appropriate for their personal interests and talents”
- Article 4 of Part 2 of the European Charter states that: “The contracting parties undertake provision and improvement of appropriate career orientation, education and rehabilitation services to ensure that the right to work is actively enjoyed”.

V. Weaknesses of Career Orientation in Turkey

As it was expressed before, career orientation has a very short history in Turkey, that is why there are many problems about orientation and counseling. The following appraisals can be made about current issues in this field:

One of the basic issues in career counseling has to do with apparent misconceptions regarding the terms vocational guidance and career counseling, and also unreal expectations

about these services. There is no systematical approach and well-designed services, and no educated experts or professionals in this field, neither the standards for competencies of career counselors and nor codes of ethics, and adequate programs for training. On the other hand, lack of legal establishment of chamber of career orientation in Turkey is a main issue.

The Ministry of National Education (MONE) employs “guidance teachers” as school counselors and defines their basic role and function as helping the students to choose a major and job which fits for them. However, 31% of secondary schools and 70% of elementary schools have not got school counselors yet. Also distribution of the number of school counselors for schools or cities has no balance according to standards of ratio of students/counselor. The lack of a national plan and strategy of MONE related to “school counselor” is another significant problem.

In addition to inadequacy of number of school counselor, they are inadequate in education formation as a career counselor because the counselor education programs have just two courses in career counseling. However, many guidance teachers in schools which graduated from some other fields do not have the chance to take even those courses.

Career information is still limited for both young people and adults, and tends to be difficult to access for individuals, especially as to the labour market information on present and projected future supply and demand of occupation.

Career counseling services focus on helping the students choose a college leading a job, however there is a huge imbalance demand and capacity of university which stress and unsatisfactory results for young people. In the ratio of 1/5 universities have “career plan and placement center” but there is no professional as career counselor at these centers.

Although the Turkish career counseling movement derives its roots largely from advancements and developments from U.S. system of vocational guidance during the beginning and searching periods, at the last period because of the process of integration with the European Union, the route of these services turned from America to Europe. However, few of the European countries have much more experiences and knowledge compared to Turkey in this field.

References

Prof. Dr. Füsün AKKÖK, *Vocational Information and Career Guidance, Turkey Report*, 2003

Prof. Dr. Binnur YEŞİLYAPRAK, *The Paradigm Shift of Vocational Guidance and Career Counseling and Its Implications for Turkey*, 2011

Kırşehir Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, *Career Planning and Career Orientation in Turkey*, www.arge40.com