

Youth Social Entrepreneurship in Turkiye

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In recent years, Turkiye has experienced a significant boom in its entrepreneurial and business activity and, more specifically, in the so-called social entrepreneurship, in which many young people have been interested, driven by a range of initiatives, programmes and funds launched by the government. These young people, many of them social entrepreneurs, assume business leadership from an innovative perspective that aims to cover a social need that the system cannot reach. To do so, they invent and adapt their own resources and tools, often with the help of universities, which, in recent years, have also made an effort to meet the demand of young people and help them find development opportunities. Thus, youth entrepreneurship is a very promising and advantageous self-employment option in Turkiye, which young people take advantage of without hesitation.

Introduction

In recent years, Turkiye has seen a rise in the popularity of and interest in entrepreneurship. Young people now have a greater interest in entrepreneurship due to the high unemployment rates across the country, technological advancements, and new opportunities. Nowadays, educational programmes from elementary school to university include classes on entrepreneurship. Financial assistance for entrepreneurship in Turkiye is also provided by the government, industry groups, and funders.

Youth entrepreneurship has gained great relevance in Turkiye in recent years. Also, social entrepreneurship, which aspires to provide social value and promote social transformation via the development of initiatives on a variety of topics, has grown to be a significant contributor to the

nation's development and social welfare. The government and corporate sector have supported social entrepreneurship through initiatives, funding and incubation programmes despite the fact that it faces challenges in Turkiye, such as limited access to funding and a lack of knowledge. As a result, there are now more social enterprises in Turkiye. Notwithstanding these obstacles, social entrepreneurship in Turkiye has a bright future because more young entrepreneurs and investors are becoming interested in it.

Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship

A person who starts and/or invests in one or more enterprises, taking on the majority of the risks and reaping the majority of the gains, is referred to as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is the

practice of starting a business. The entrepreneur is frequently viewed as an innovator, a source of fresh concepts for products, services, businesses and operational methods. A social entrepreneur is someone who spots a chance to address an unmet or vague need that the welfare system is unable to address, acquires the resources needed, and uses them to change things. They seek out gaps in services that are not covered by the public or the private sector and take on creative pursuits to do so. Social entrepreneurs inspire and encourage people to create the necessary networks, discover the required resources, overcome obstacles, and suggest suitable risk-controlling methods. Without being constrained by the available resources, they work as agents of change to generate and preserve societal value. Similar to business entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs launch new businesses, carry out ground-breaking initiatives, and plan or deliver novel services.

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A company with specific social goals that support its primary goal is referred to as a social enterprise or social business. The profits from social companies are mostly used to finance charitable initiatives. Social enterprises aim to maximise profits while maximising the benefits to society and the environment.

Social entrepreneurs are individuals who seek to make a difference by working towards the elimination of impoverishment, hunger, thirst, diseases, environmental pollution, and the progress of human consciousness. They work towards the same goal of generating social value throughout all economic systems in nations with various political ideologies and different religions. Social entrepreneurs incorporate elements from the commercial world, such as marketing, communication

and business development, in line with their objective, and use the necessary leadership and entrepreneurial spirit to contribute to society.

Social entrepreneurs focus on serving long-term goals more efficiently through innovative approaches and taking risks on behalf of stakeholders, in contrast to entrepreneurs who usually focus on new needs and making a profit through business. Entrepreneurs are predominantly driven by the desire to establish new businesses, make money, and pursue profits, whereas social entrepreneurs are driven by the desire to effect social change and grow their clientele.

The data suggests that social entrepreneurship can help create inclusive, long-term jobs, especially for young people. By 2050, projections indicate that the estimated 1.21 billion individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 will represent 15.5% of the world's population. Social entrepreneurship can take full advantage of young people's skills and abilities to support personal growth and efforts to bring about change. Youth unemployment is one of the biggest worldwide challenges. Youths can handle development challenges on their own through social entrepreneurship, which also gives them a platform to voice their opinions and make a difference in society.

In order to better comprehend how social entrepreneurship among young people can foster their development and promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN published the "World Youth Report" on Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda. Placing social entrepreneurship in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, the study began by summarising recent discussions on the topic. The next section looks at how youth social entrepreneurship can support other areas of young people's development, like participation, by creating opportunities for employment. The study assessed youth social entrepreneurship's potential and obstacles as a tool for advancing youth development and sustainable development more widely. It also examines the ways that new technologies can help



Hot air balloons in Cappadocia.

young social entrepreneurs overcome challenges and obtain additional assistance. Finally, the study includes suggestions on how to create resilient, long-lasting national ecosystems that foster the success of young social entrepreneurs.

A social enterprise, according to the European Commission, is a company that prioritises societal impact and the social economy over profits for owners or shareholders.

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Social entrepreneurs work on various issues, from poverty to health, the environment to human rights, and prioritise social impact, innovation, sustainability, and growth. They develop long-term projects based on a problem or need and aim to establish sustainable systems that address social problems or needs. Social entrepreneurs possess the vision and determination to work tirelessly until a solution is reached.

Social entrepreneurship is not a recent concept but has existed as a social benefit movement for centuries. Bill Drayton called it social entrepreneurship in 1980, bringing awareness and change to this practice. Bill Drayton founded Ashoka, the first organisation in the world to engage with the topic of social entrepreneurship, in 1980 in Washington, D.C. In 1983, Muhammad Yunus established Grameen Bank, a revered illustration of social enterprise, and invented the idea of microcredit. Yunus was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his work in social business. Among the various historical examples of social entrepreneurs are women's rights advocates Susan B. Anthony from the United States, Vinoba Bhave from India, Florence Nightingale from England, and Jean Monnet from France.

Youth Population and Youth Social Entrepreneurship in Türkiye

According to TUIK data, as of the end of 2021, the total population of Türkiye was 84,680,273 peo-

ple, while the young population in the 15-24 age group amounted to 12,971,289 people. The young population made up 15.3% of the total population. 51.3% of the young population was male and 48.7% was female. According to the population projections, it is predicted that the proportion of the young population in the total population will decrease to 14.3% in 2025, 14.0% in 2030, 13.4% in 2040, 11.8% in 2060, and 11.1% in 2080.

When the young population in Türkiye is examined by age group, in 2021, 29.0% of the young population is in the 15-17 age group, 19.0% is in the 18-19 age group, 31.1% is in the 20-22 age group, and 20.9% is in the 23-24 age group.

It is worth noting that the young population rate of Türkiye at 15.3% is higher than the young population rates of 27 European Union member countries. When the youth population ratios of 27 EU member countries are analysed, the average young population was 10.6% in 2021.

The higher education net enrolment rate in Türkiye, which was 43.4% in the 2019/20 academic year, rose to 44.4% in the 2020/21 academic year. When the net enrolment rate in higher education is analysed by gender, this rate decreased from 40.6% to 40.5% for men, while it increased from 46.3% to 48.5% for women.

According to the results of the household labour force survey, the youth labour force participation rate was 39.1% in 2020 and 41.7% in 2021. While the labour force participation rate for young men was 50.1% in 2020, it was 53.1% in 2021, while this rate for young women was 27.5% in 2020 and 29.7% in 2021.

While the youth unemployment rate was 25.3% in 2020, it became 22.6% in 2021. While the unemployment rate for young men was 22.6% in 2020, it was 19.4% in 2021, and while this rate was 30.3% for young women in 2020, it became 28.7% in 2021.

While the rate of young people who are neither in education nor in employment was 28.3% in 2020, it became 24.7% in 2021. While the rate of young men who are neither in education nor in employment was 21.2% in 2020,

it was 17.5% in 2021, and while this rate was 35.7% in 2020 for young women, it became 32.4% in 2021.

When the employment of the young population is analysed by sectors, it is seen that 18.2% of employed young people are in the agricultural sector, 30.8% are in the industry sector, and 51.0% are in the service sector. It is interesting to note that while 16.8% of employed young men work in the agriculture sector, only 2.2% of employed young women work in this sector. On the other hand, 21.0% of young women work in the industry sector, while only 24.6% of young men work in this sector.

According to the Türkiye Family Structure Survey 2021, the rate of young people in the 15-24 age group who left their education (including university) despite wanting to continue their education was 7.6%. While this rate was 8.0% for young men, it was 7.1% for young women.

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When the reasons for young people leaving their education were examined, the primary one was economic, accounting for 48.1% of cases. The second most common reason was failure in education with 23.6%, followed by the family's disapproval with 10.8%.

In recent years, the voluntary sector has discovered what the private sector learned long ago, and the concept of social entrepreneurship has emerged in Türkiye. Social entrepreneurship is a term used to describe business activities that aim to create social value, as well as financial value. Social enterprises are becoming increasingly popular in Türkiye, particularly among young people who are interested in combining their desire for social impact with their entrepreneurial spirit.

Overall, while Türkiye's young population faces various challenges such as high unemployment and difficulties in accessing education and

job opportunities, they are also contributing to the development of new sectors and innovative approaches to social and economic issues.

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The Turkish government and private sector have made efforts to support entrepreneurship, particularly through the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Support Administration (KOSGEB), which offer financial support to entrepreneurs. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also been formed to represent the business world and establish angel investment networks, organise programmes specific to the needs of entrepreneurs, and raise awareness of the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Social entrepreneurs in Türkiye are creating unique and sustainable business models that address societal problems, such as education, healthcare and environmental conservation. The development of social entrepreneurship in Türkiye faces challenges, such as limited access to financing and limited awareness and understanding of the concept and regulatory hurdles, but the government and private sector are recognising its importance and taking steps to support its growth.

Universities in Türkiye have also shown an increase in interest in the field of social entrepreneurship, with some offering courses directly on social entrepreneurship and social innovation. Social enterprise activities in universities are generally carried out in the form of student club activities, seminars, conferences, award programmes, and competitions as extracurricular activities. Successful social enterprises in Türkiye include Gozde Gida, Arven Environmental, Simavi, Pegasys, Oyku, and Re-Pack. Social entrepreneurs be-

come role models in society, and youth social entrepreneurship represents a promising and socially advantageous self-employment option for young people.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Türkiye has a unique advantage in terms of its large youth population and favourable demographic conditions for entrepreneurship. Despite the challenges posed by the global economic slowdown and the COVID-19 pandemic, young entrepreneurship in Türkiye is on the rise, with more and more young people starting their own businesses. In addition, social entrepreneurship is gaining momentum in the country, with individuals and organisations working to create a positive social and environmental impact while generating income. While there are still obstacles to the development of social entrepreneurship in Türkiye, including limited financing and awareness, the government and private sector are increasingly recognising its importance and taking steps to support its growth. With its dynamic economy and talented young population, Türkiye has the potential to become a major hub for entrepreneurship and innovation in the years to come.

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