



Needs, Problems,
Future Expectations of
**Young People in Neither Education
nor Employment (NEET)**
in Turkey

April 2021

Research Team

Contributions (in alphabetical order)

Aylin Ezgi Yılmaz

Ayşe Pınar Gürer

Ceylan Özünel

Dr. Ulaş Tol

Efe Can Çoban

Elif Öztürk

Emirhan Özkan

Gül İçel

İrem Aydaş

Kübra Akkuş

Mehmet Ali Çalışkan

Rümeysa Çamdereli

Writers (in alphabetical order)

Ceylan Özünel

Dr. Ulaş Tol

Emirhan Özkan

Rümeysa Çamdereli

Graphic Design

Büşra Yurtseven

Research Design, Field Study and Analysis

Yaşama Dair Vakıf (YADA Vakfı)

Toplumsal Etki Araştırmaları Merkezi (TEAM)

www.yada.org.tr

www.teamarastirma.com

Table of Contents

4	1. Foreword	
6	2. Executive Summary	
10	3. Method and Sample	
12	4. Introduction	
15	5. Background	
	5.1. Definition of Youth and Variables	15
	5.2. The Concept of NEET and Sub-Categories	16
	5.3. Civil Society Activities Targeting NEET Youth in Turkey	21
23	6. NEET Categories	
	6.1. Youth Categories by Education and Employment Status	23
	6.2. Youth Groups by Tendency	24
	6.3. Who is in the NEET Group?	25
	6.4. Why Does Youth Become NEET?	33
41	7. Preferences and Needs of Youth According to Their Working and Educational Status	
	7.1. Concerns, Dreams	41
	7.2. Needs, Expectations	44
	7.3. Social and Political Choices	46
	7.4. Daily Life, Tastes	48
52	8. Conclusion & Suggestions	

Tables, Graphs, and Figures

Graph 1. Distribution by Employment and Education Status	12
Figure 1. Active and Passive NEET Decision Scheme	17
Figure 2. NEET Categorization of Eurostat	19
Figure 3. Criteria and Decision Tree of Eurostat NEET Categorization	20
Graph 2. Care Giving Responsibilities for the Youth by their NEET Status	26
Graph 3. Sex Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendencies	27
Table 1. Age Distribution of Youth by Employment and Education Status	28
Graph 4. Age Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendencies	28
Graph 5. Income Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendency	29
Grafik 6. Rate of Speaking a Native Language Other Than Turkish in Households of Youth Clusters by Tendency	30
Graph 7. Distribution of Health Problems in Youth Groups by Tendency	31
Graph 8. Distribution of Happiness of Youth Groups by Their Tendencies	32
Table 2. Discrimination Experiences of Young People with Employment History by Tendency	34
Table 3. Reasons for Not Continuing High School and Below Education for Youth Clusters by Tendency	37
Table 4. Reasons for Not Continuing Higher Education of Youth Groups by Tendency	38
Figure 4. Main Problems of Youth	41
Figure 5. Biggest Dreams of Youth	42
Table 5. Distribution of Three Main Dreams of Youth Groups by Tendency	43
Figure 6. Skills the Youth consider University Graduates should have	45
Table 6. Needs Regarding Finding a Job of Youth Groups by Tendency	46
Table 7. Support on Social Issues of Youth Groups by Tendency	46
Table 8. Political Party Choices of Youth	47
Table 9. Political Party Preferences of Youth Groups by Tendency	48
Table 10. Time Dedicated to Daily Activities of Youth Groups by Tendencies (hour)	49
Table 11. Emotional Relationship Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendency	49
Tablo 12. People Youth Groups Live Together by Their Education and Employment Status	50



FOREWORD

1 Foreword

As YADA foundation, we have designed and carried out various research projects targeting civil society organizations, public institutions, and private sector, that account for the views and preferences of civil society and citizens. We have carried out over 80 research projects, and published reports and books¹.

The research topics and fields that we prioritize can be summarized in four main points:

- + The structure of civil society and its situation in Turkey,
- + The trust for civil society in public, local administrations, and the government,
- + Topics that occupy the public agenda such as youth, gender equality, discrimination, and their connections to civil society organizations,
- + Monitoring-evaluating, shareholder analysis, institutional reputation, and impact evolution activities.

In May 2020, we have presented in a civil society workshop we organized as YADA Foundation that the concept of NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) which has been used widely in the recent years and the youth group the concept signifies is not recognized enough by civil society organizations. One of the suggestions of the workshop was to carry out research that would meet this need and help civil society organizations familiarize themselves with the NEET youth². We hope that the results of the research we carried out titled "The Needs, Problems and Expectations from the future of NEET Youth in Turkey" with the aim of providing a base for the activities of civil society and public institutions will light the way for effective practices and policies.

A majority of youth in Turkey is consistent of young people who can find a spot for themselves neither in education nor in employment. Although these young people differ from their peers in education and employment experience, they have similarities especially by their social preferences. It is worth considering that young people are unable to fulfill their potential despite the fact that they hold a critical position in the development of Turkey's both social and economic development. This report was prepared with a special focus on youth neither in education nor employment with the aim of creating a panorama of youth in Turkey by their education and employment status. The challenges, preferences regarding the future and the hopes of this youth group, also categorized as NEET, is of critical importance not only for their individual lives but also the future of the country. The report analyzes the problems and the needs of especially NEET youth and aims to back the public policies and civil society activities targeting this youth group by comparing and contrasting NEET youth and non-NEET youth in Turkey.

YADA Foundation

1 <https://yada.org.tr/en/yayinlar/>

2 https://www.sivilsayfalar.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/YADA_NEETGen%C3%A7lik%C3%87al%C4%B1%C5%9FtayRaporu_PDF_son.pdf



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 Executive Summary

As YADA Foundation, we aimed at identifying the main dynamics, preferences and needs of NEET youth with the project “The Needs, Problems and Expectations from the future of NEET Youth in Turkey”, as one of the projects with which we carry out with the aim of informing and guiding civil society and other respective stakeholders about political or social issues. We have carried out a desk study involving a literature review and an examination of previous studies regarding the situation of the youth. Besides, in-depth interviews with 15 NEET youth³ was carried out. A face-to-face survey with 1518 young people sampling Turkey was also carried out in the quantitative field stage which constitutes the main findings of our research. Our sample structure consists of 50% NEET, 50% non-NEET young people. This provided us with the opportunity to compare the varying needs, expectations, and lifestyles of the youth based on their situation of being NEET or non-NEET.

It is possible to classify the NEET under two main sub-categories: Active and Passive NEETs. Youth in Active NEET are determined and make efforts to change their current situation even though they currently have no employment or education. These young people may either actively look for work or prepare to receive an education. On the other hand, young people in Passive NEET group show no intention or effort in that direction. While it is a choice to be in this group for some, most stay in this category as a result of lack of opportunity or social obstacles. The unemployed young people within this group are not reflected in the official unemployment rates. Young people who lack opportunities of education or employment because of sickness, disability, individual or family responsibilities fall within this group. We have classified the youth under eight categories by their employment or education status while analyzing the research results. The categories: **Employed, Irregularly Employed, Housewives, Employed and Studying, Students, Officially Unemployed, Unemployed and Not Looking for Work, Preparing for Exams.** These groups consider both the education and employment status of youth and their intentions of changing their status. While education and employment groups consider tendencies, the intentions and tendencies of each participant requires a different grouping. Taking this into account, we have organized our findings with groupings of youth by their tendencies in our analysis. NEET groups by tendencies consider the possibilities of young people to stay in a certain group, their intentions, and future plans in more detail. These groups make a scale that covers a range from not clearly in NEET status to a permanent NEET status possible, that is, a scale of intensity in being or staying NEET. This scale has six groups: **Employed, On the Brink, Active, Passive, Hopeless, Permanent.** These groups were constructed in accordance with the future plans and intentions that were asked about to the participants.

While NEET groups clearly demonstrate how the youth diverge by their education and employment status and the heterogenous structure of the NEET panorama, it is still possible to identify a main demographic that distinguish NEET youth from non-NEET youth. Young people are more likely to be in the NEET group if they are female, aged 25-29, have low or middle income, have health problems, and are not Turkish. NEET group also bear more responsibility in their social environment and are unhappier compared to their non-NEET peers. Therefore, the research results demonstrate a NEET with important similarities as well as diversity.

³ There are multiple views regarding the age ranges in youth studies. We based our study on 18-29 age range which OECD employs, and we think that this range is more inclusive.

With this study, we aimed to understand the main tendencies of education and employment careers of the youth, the social factors affecting these tendencies, career preferences, personal likings, and the problems of the youth. In this context, we present the main elements that separate NEET youth from young people in education or employment, and the differences among young people in NEET group.

It is possible to summarize the main findings of the research as such:

- + Youth in Turkey differ in their economic needs and preferences by their education and employment experiences. Nonetheless, their social and political preferences do not follow accordingly. While they share tendencies as a generation, they have different economical needs because of their education and employment experiences.
- + The following categories are more likely to be in NEET group: Women, people aged 25-29, people with low or middle income, the non-Turkish, people with health problems, the unhappy.
- + Among the major reasons why those in NEET category are not in employment are education, lack of skills, health problems, psychological problems, care-giving responsibilities towards children or adults.
- + Young people are unhappy with the discrimination, inadequacy of social rights, lack of skill and experience. They consider these factors to reduce their chances of finding work.
- + While discrimination is a main point of criticism, young people are not distinctly liberal regarding social issues. The area where both NEET and non-NEET are most significantly progressive is limited to a positive attitude towards women's participation to the labor force.
- + The main reason for the transition of working youth into NEET groups is either inadequate social rights or a discriminatory view against women's participation to the labor force.
- + Among the major reasons why young people cannot continue education seem to be economical problems, health problems and family pressure. Family pressure and health problems poses an obstacle for education mostly on NEET group. While the first is a main obstacle for pre-university education, the second is part of a higher education experience.
- + The NEET status of youth majorly affects the concerns and dreams of youth. It is harder for those in NEET group to find employment and develop skills and more concerned with finding employment, financial problems, and anxiety for the future.
- + Young people are aware of the necessity for vocational training and foreign language education. They demand educational services to meet these needs. The skills they intend to develop are mostly relevant to service industry or jobs that rely on manual skills.
- + A significant portion of the young people share the view that there are no political parties that could represent them or recognize their needs. In this sense, young people expect solutions for their needs and especially for the problem of unemployment from politics.

Taking the research results into account, it is possible to summarize the main policy suggestions:

- + Policies developed targeting NEET youth should consider the heterogenous nature of the youth and the varying needs and demands of different subgroups.
- + Workplaces and education institutions should develop accessible and flexible opportunities and practices considering the varying health and disability circumstances.

- + Young people should be supported to meet their physical and psychological health needs. The self-esteem issues especially the permanent and hopeless NEET youth experience should be resolved.
- + Foreign language courses and vocational skills trainings or certificate programs should be organized apart from formal education, aiming at providing occupations for NEET youth.
- + Children's daycare or older adults home care services should be provided for women who are unable to work or continue education because of children or older adults care responsibilities.
- + Scholarship opportunities considering the needs of the students who are unable to continue education because of economic needs should be provided.
- + Legal regulations should be practiced against discrimination as well as civil society activities aiming at encouraging and empowering the groups that are subjected to discriminatory practices and perceptions of gender that are relevantly more complex and rooted in society.



METHOD & SAMPLE

3 Method & Sample

We developed a comprehensive methodology for this research study which combines qualitative and quantitative tools and aims to assess the needs, problems, and expectations from the future of NEET youth in Turkey. We carried out the research in three stages:

Stage	Steps	Objective	Data Collection Tools
Exploration	Literature review	Review of the studies regarding the current situation of NEET youth	Desk Study
Qualitative Stage	In-depth interviews	Examination of the reasons and the dynamics behind the current situation and future projections	In-depth interviews with 15 NEET youth
Quantitative Stage	Turkey representative research	Presenting the qualitative results by understanding the current circumstances, expectations and needs of NEET and non-NEET youth	Survey involving 1518 young people



With the desktop study during the exploration stage, studies were examined which describe the current situation of the youth in Turkey and around the globe. Background information that could form the basis of the study was compiled and observations on which areas have a lack of information was made during this stage where a literature review also took place. Based on these points, the main arguments of the study were determined and the framework of the goals was formed.

In the qualitative stage, in-depth interviews were carried out with 15 young people of NEET group with different representative profiles. The objective was to explore the reasons and the dynamics behind the current situation and future projections by listening to the preferences, needs, and dreams of the young people directly from themselves.

In the quantitative stage of the research, face-to-face surveys were carried out across the country with a total of 1518 young people (50% NEET and 50% non-NEET). Qualitative face to face interviews (Survey) was based on the regions in Level 1 in Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) with the method of CAPI Computer Assisted Personal Interview) to represent Turkey. The sample was distributed according to the voting rates of the Level 2 NUTS regions in Turkey, which were held in 12 representative cities. The twelve cities and their regions are Istanbul (Istanbul), Çanakkale (West Marmara), Izmir (Aegean), Bursa (East Marmara), Ankara (Western Anatolia), Adana (Mediterranean), Kayseri (Central Anatolia), Samsun (Western Black Sea), Trabzon (Eastern Black Sea), Erzurum (Northeast Anatolia), Van (Eastern Anatolia) and Diyarbakır (Southeast Anatolia).

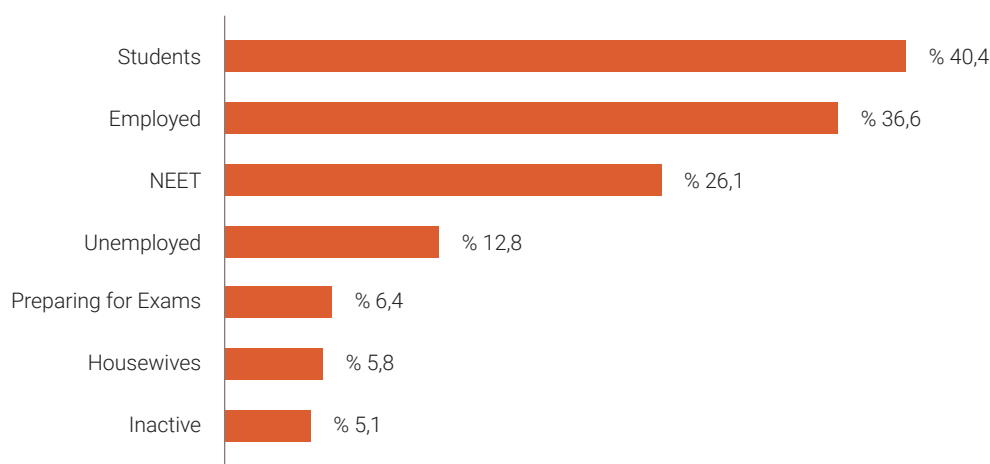


INTRODUCTION

4 Introduction

A significant portion of the youth in Turkey is excluded from both education and employment. The data provided by TURKSTAT points out that approximately 28% of young people are neither in education nor in employment⁴. In other words, one in four young people actively does not take part in self-improvement or participate in production. While there are those who actively prefer this, there is a significant number of young people who cannot find the opportunity to work or study because of individual or social causes despite they wish to do so. Hence, these circumstances of the lack of opportunity are not only because of individual reasons. Social factors are effective as much as individual factors. Moreover, the situation of young people not being able to work, or study does not only affect their individual lives. It also negatively affects the social and economic development of Turkey. These young people who are positioned in the complicated intersection of social and individual causes and effects are referred as NEET in literature, the term formed in English (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). This study analyzes the reasons why NEET youth belong to this certain group, the problems, needs and dreams of youth and aims to support civil society activities and general policies regarding NEET youth.

Graph 1. Distribution by Employment and Education Status



Before analyzing the needs and problems of NEET youth, it is useful to portray the frame of NEET concept and the limits and heterogenous structure of the NEET group. Indeed, this complex structure is beneficial in understanding the complexity in the problems and needs of the youth. Hence, the fifth chapter of the report explains the development and sub-categories of the concept of NEET. The sixth chapter defines the NEET groups by tendencies and study groups that were preferred in this research. A discussion of main variables that distinguishes NEET youth from their other peers is also included in the same chapter. Understanding who is grouped under NEET and why, and why they do not study, nor work is very critical in understanding NEET youth.

⁴ For detailed information please see: <https://m.bianet.org/english/labor/244360-turkey-has-the-highest-neet-rate-among-oecd-countries#:~:text=The%20share%20of%20young%20people,the%20highest%20in%20the%20OECD.&text=In%202019%2C%20the%20average%20NEET,OECD%20countries%20was%2012.8%20percent.&text=countries>.

The sixth chapter tackles the concerns, dreams, likings, needs, and problems of NEET youth in comparison to non-NEET, after an examination of the main characteristics and causes of NEET group. The objective is to highlight the similarities as much as their differences of NEET youth to their peers. A main result of the research, as a matter of fact, demonstrates that NEET youth has similarities to their non-NEET peers in terms of life preferences, likings and social and political preferences while differing in economic and educational needs and problems.

This research YADA Foundation has carried out with Social Impact Studies Center mainly aims to provide a comparison of NEET and non-NEET youth as well as making NEET youth recognized in a more detailed manner. Thus, the sample of the quantitative stage of the research is prepared with extreme sampling method and is consistent 50% of NEET and 50% non-NEET youth. With the help of this technique, we are able to observe the main tendencies of the NEET group in a closer and a more critical manner. However, the percentages in the report should be interpreted with this distribution in mind. In other words, the data in the report prioritizes presenting the tendencies of NEET group instead of directly showing the NEET distribution of Turkey.

The other factor that makes this research different is that it prioritizes the diversity and heterogenous structure of the NEET group. While many research focus on the active section of the NEET group that look for jobs or seeking education, this research sheds light on the relatively more passive and hopeless section of the NEET group. Thus, the aim is to create a general but detailed panorama of all the stakeholders of the NEET youth in Turkey.



BACKGROUND

5 Background

5.1 Definition of Youth and Variables

The concept of youth has many formulations depending on biological, social, and political variables. Despite all contextual differences, it is possible to say that the concept roughly points out to a transition phase from childhood during which the personal development of individuals depends on the environment into the adulthood during which individuals are entirely responsible from their own lives. Young people themselves also significantly vary sociocultural, ethnically and in other aspects even within the same framework. Thus, it is possible to observe an additional diversity under any agreed concept, much the same that we can talk about concepts that vary depending on social variables and the common framework of these different concepts. From this point of view, we can state that every individual youth experience is entirely unique. For instance, the youth experiences of a 22 years old woman with children living in a rural area and a 28 years old woman in employment living in a big city is different.

The concept of youth can be defined or scaled within different ranges depending on the field, priorities or the politic or legal goals of the field of respective research. United Nations (UN) defines youth as ages of 15-24 in the general statistical studies. However, the concept of youth may be scaled differently in different studies by the UN institutions. For example, youth is considered ages between 15-32 years in the UN Habitat Agenda21 document⁵. On the other hand, official age range of youth is recognized as 14-29 in Turkey according to National Youth and Sports Policy Document prepared by the Turkish Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2013⁶.

The individual experiences and the advantages and disadvantages of the social status of each young person varies depending on their socioeconomic circumstances, gender, social, and political identities, their bond to the family or another social structure, having a rural or urban background, and the skills they have acquired in time. Thus, besides these de facto categories of youth, there is a need for a more comprehensive and multidimensional discussion with reference to subcategories that covers the uniqueness and diversity of each young individual⁷.

It is important to create a political and social public space for the expression of diversity as well as understanding the diversity of youth. The 1982 Constitutional Law considers young people as a “problem” to be fixed, a group to be “protected” or as a “human resource” engine for the development of the country⁸. This framing of youth is far from preparing the youth for adulthood and helping them in the process of becoming independent adults. This approach not only ignores the needs of the youth but also paves the way for restricting their liberties. Instead of these shallow definitions, there is a strong need for policies to encourage young people in education, employment, political and social involvement, and to empower them economically and socially.

5 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2013. “Definition of Youth” BM, New York, NY, ABD, Address: < <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf> >

6 Ministry of Youth and Sports. 2013. “National Youth and Sports Policy Document ” Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ankara, Turkey, Address: <https://gsb.gov.tr/public/edit/files/Mevzuat/ulusal_genclik_ve_spor_politikasi.pdf>

7 Görgün-Baran, Aylin. 2013. “Young and Youth: Sociological Perspective.” Journal of Youth Studies. 1 (1): issue.

8 Community Volunteers Foundation. 2012. “Youth and the Constitution: Suggestions of the Community Volunteers Foundation in the New Constitution Making Process” TOG, Istanbul, Turkey, Address: < <https://www.tog.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Genc%CC%A7ler-Anayasada-Nas%C4%B1lOlmal%C4%B1-TOG-Go%CC%88ru%CC%88s%CC%A7u%CC%88.pdf>>

The urgency and the vitality of this need is better understood considering the demographics of Turkey. According to data provided by TURKSTAT dated 31.12.2021⁹, there is approximately 19,4 million young people within the age range of 15-29. The young people constitute approximately 23% of Turkey's population. This rate is 18,4% above OECD average. There are no other countries with a higher population rate of young people in Europe. In the light of all this data, the significance of the need for a political framework regarding the youth is better emphasized.

5.2. The Concept of NEET and Sub-Categories

The concept of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) was first used in a United Kingdom Social Exclusion Unit report dated 1999 which aimed to encourage policy making towards young unemployment. Since then, the concept became a useful indicator often preferred in youth studies. OECD defines young people aged 15-29 and participating no education, training nor in employment as NEET. It is possible to translate NEET as "Not in Education nor in Employment" to the Turkish language. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the ratio of NEET youth to total young population is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Ratio of NEET Youth (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total young population} - (\text{Young population in employment} + \text{Young population not in employment but in education or training})}{\text{Total young population}} \times 100$$

According to the data by Eurostat¹⁰, 14% of youth aged 15-29 in Europe is in NEET group while the rate is 32% in Turkey. While the NEET rate is 21.1% percent in men in Turkey, the rate is 42.2% in women. According to TURKSTAT data, which has been compiling NEET data since 2018, the NEET rate¹¹ in the 15-24 age group in Turkey was 28.3% at the end of 2020, while this rate was 35.7% for women and 21.2% for men in the 20-24 age group. It is thought-provoking that a significant portion of the youth is excluded from education or work not only for their individual futures but also the future of the society.

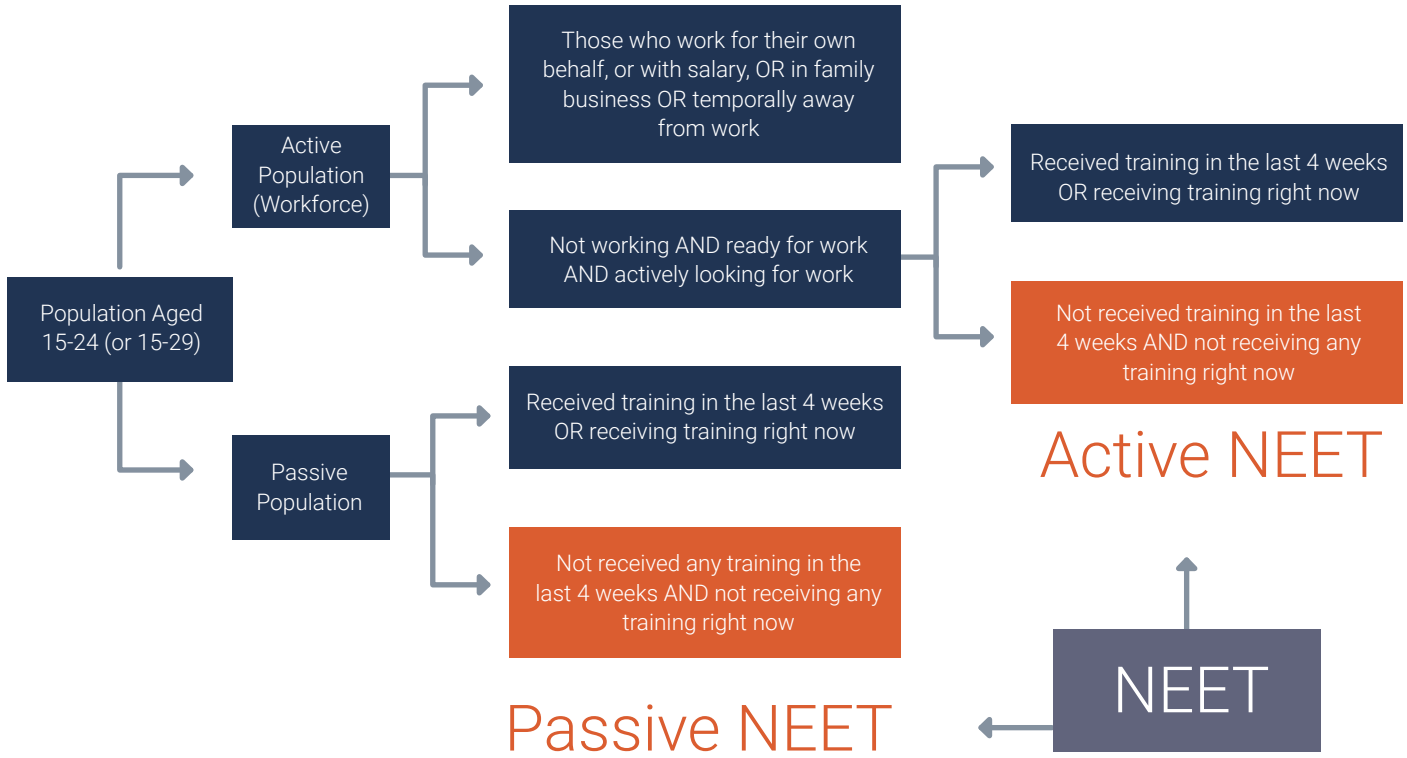
It is possible to sort them under two main sub-categories. Active and passive NEETs. While the Active NEET are not currently in education or employment, they hold intentions to change their current situation and show efforts to do so. These young people may be either actively looking for work or preparing to start in an educational institution. On the other hand, young people in the Passive NEET group do not show any intention or effort to change their current situation. While it is a choice to be in this group for some, most stay in this category as a result of lack of opportunity or social obstacles. The unemployed young people within this group are not reflected in the official unemployment rates. Young people who lack opportunities of education or employment because of sickness, disability, individual or family responsibilities fall within this group.

⁹ TURKSTAT, 31.12.2021 According to the Address Based Population Results, the population residing in Turkey is 84 million 680 thousand 273 people as of 31 December 2021, the population between the ages of 15-29 is a total of 19 million 448 thousand 188 people

¹⁰ https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfsi_neet_a&lang=en

¹¹ <https://data.TURKSTAT.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Genclik-2020-37242>

Figure 1. Active and Passive NEET Decision Scheme



The number of the research regarding the NEET concept or the youth that fall into the NEET group in the youth literature is still very small though increased. Previous studies examine the socioeconomic features of NEET youth with a macro perspective and official numbers, with complete disregard for the previously mentioned diversity among the youth. While there is qualitative research with a focus on the experiences and diversity of the youth, there are not any comprehensive research that portray the NEET youth in Turkey. Yet, we see an increase in the number of studies on this issue that lately came into the focus of various civil society and research institutions.

The previous studies list the factors that increase the risk of being in the NEET category as in the following¹²:

- + Insufficient education
- + Disability, suffering health problems
- + Being relatively younger, not having enough experience
- + Being female
- + Having an ethnic identity other than being a Turkish, being an immigrant or refugee

¹² Eurofound. 2013. "NEET." <<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/neet>> (9 April 2021).

Genç Hayat Foundation. 2017. "Quiet and Invisible Youth Survey" Genç Hayat Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey, Address: <<https://genchayat.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/sessizvegorunmeyengenclerarastirmaraporu.pdf>>

As the rate of NEET youth increases, the economic and social costs also increase on a national level because of the unused human resource. On the other hand, NEET youth are subjected to social exclusion and discouragement on an individual level. Parallel to this, their social involvement decreases and long term negative impacts occur in their career development. Lastly, when all these factors gather, they damage the physical and mental health of young people¹³. Despite these common problems and troubles, NEET youth represents a heterogenous population. The unemployed, those who look after children and adults who need care, those with no hope for looking for work and the outcasts within this heterogenous structure require special attention. While they need extra support and positive intervention from outside, they also have a profile harder to reach despite their increased risk of permanency in the NEET group¹⁴.

Alternative NEET Categorizations

While NEET category successfully summarizes the socioeconomic status of a significant portion of the youth, it is hard to call the NEET youth a homogenous group. There are a variety of reasons why young people in NEET group might leave education or employment. The studies on the field present alternative NEET categorizations in an effort to portray this variety. The NEET survey study carried out in Malta by European Commission classifies NEET youth in three categories by their potentials to stay in or leave the NEET group¹⁵:

1 Transition NEETs: Young people who take a break before continuing with a better job or education.

2 Floating NEETs: Young people who need guidance or motivational support. These young people are indecisive in whether or not to join the workforce or education.

3 Core NEETs: Young people with social and behavioral issues. The children of families with chronic unemployment issues and a disregard for education.

While this categorization by the European Commission scales the NEET potentials of youth at a basic ordinal level, it is insufficient to reflect the heterogeneity of the NEET group. The European statistics institution Eurostat has a more successful NEET categorization¹⁶. The main criterion in this categorization is the causes that push the youth into the NEET group.

¹³ Genç Hayat Foundation. 2017. a.g.e.

¹⁴ Eurofound. 2013. a.g.e.

¹⁵ European Commission [2018. "NEET Census." European Commission. Brussels, Belgium. Address: < <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20135&langId=en>>

¹⁶ Eurofound. 2016. "Exploring the Diversity of NEETs." Eurofound, Brussels, Belgium. Address: < https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1602en.pdf>

Figure 2. NEET Categorization of Eurostat

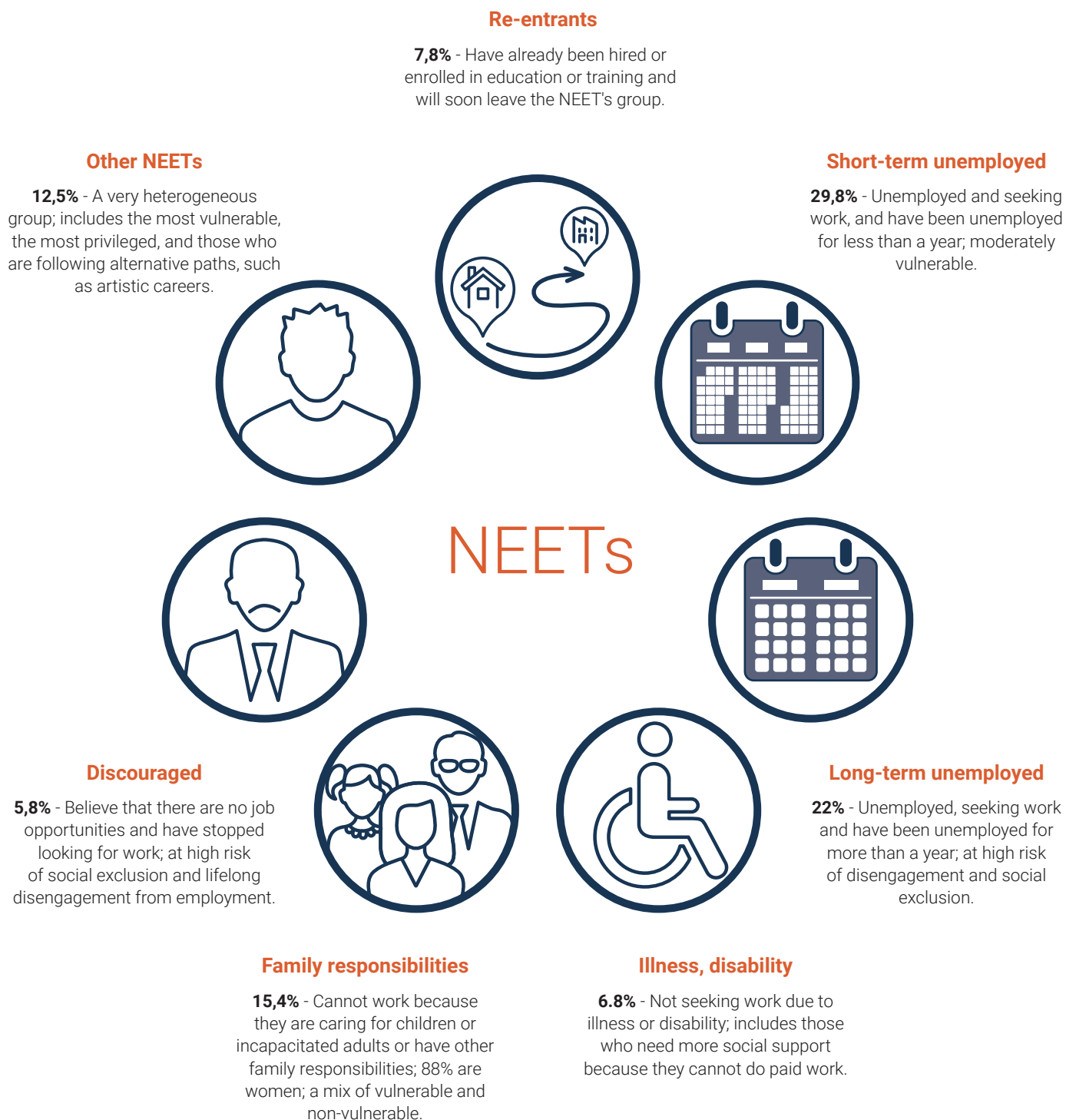
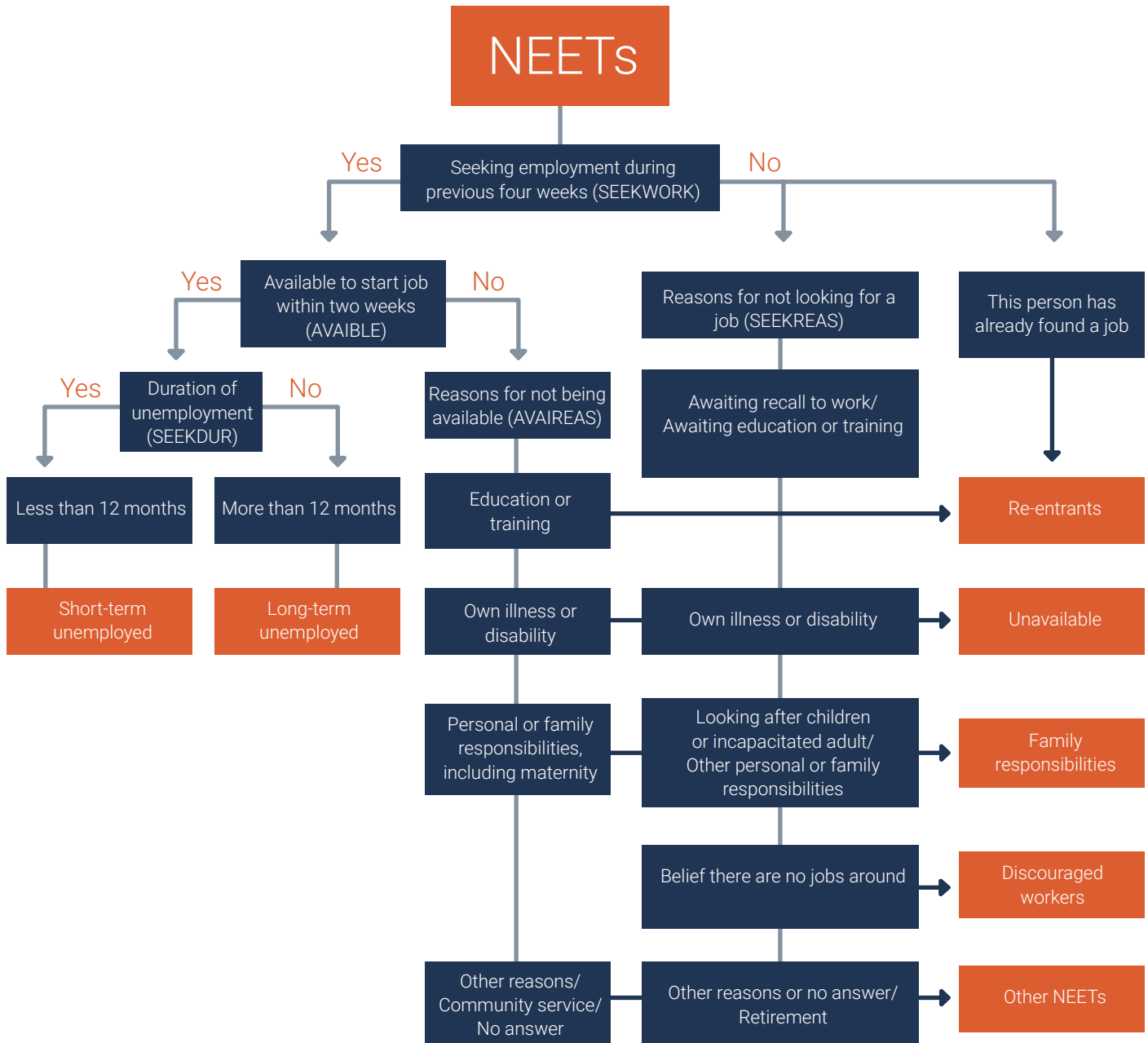


Figure 3. Criteria and decision tree of Eurostat NEET Categorization



Both of these categorizations demonstrate the diversity of NEET youth based on their causes of becoming NEET. The conceptualizations and categorizations done by researchers may vary greatly by the goals and contexts of any specific research. From this point of view, using any single categorization in other research without questioning their nature cannot be considered efficient. This research aims to determine the presence of the youth in NEET group and their risks of staying as NEET. Therefore, a categorization devoid of causes but still considers the education and employment status and intentions of the youth is more suitable for the present research. This type of a categorization not only allows an observation of the intersection points of different causes, but it also offers a more convenient frame for policy suggestions regarding the youth as it focuses on the risks of youth staying in the NEET group.

5.3 Civil Society Activities Targeting NEET Youth in Turkey

There is little civil society activity targeting the NEET youth category as it is not yet very prevalent in Turkey. Yet, it is still possible to examine the civil society organizations that either already reaches or has the potential to reach the youth under two categories:

1. Organizations directly targeting the youth

This category consists of organizations that identify as Youth CSOs and targets the youth. Their primary focus is often youth exchange programs such as Erasmus Plus and volunteering as well as skills training for technology and coding, vocational training, civic engagement, youth unemployment and culture, art, and sports. These activities mainly target high school or university students. We can say that the groups that organizations such as TOG (Community Volunteers Foundation) which targets the volunteering of young people come into contact during rights-based volunteering activities in fields such as gender equality or refugee issues involve especially the aforementioned NEET youth under the title of “youth that was subjected to or under the risk of social exclusion”. Yet, it is evident that NEET youth was not considered as a target group and no activities have been planned to meet their unique needs in these studies. There are very few studies that directly address the NEET category and recognize them as their main target group. One example is “Looking Upon Urfa with the Youth” which was conducted by Genç Hayat Foundation in 2017-2018. The project aimed at improving the vocational skills of young people who were pushed out of formal education systems and unable to acquire a profession by identifying the employment fields in tourism in Şanlıurfa, helping young people into the workforce by bridging the gap between young people and local employment opportunities and preventing youth unemployment.

2. Organizations that come into contact with NEET youth by unintentionally involving them in their target group

It is possible to observe that there are organizations with no focus or targeting of youth that reach NEET youth because they carry out rights-based activities that target vulnerable groups such as women who married early, LGBTI+, the disabled etc. There are two observable tendencies:

1. Although rare, there are some organizations that define their target group as NEET youth. One example is “Women’s Empowerment through Political Involvement Project” Mother Child Education Foundation which has a thematic educational focus carried out within the frame of education for adults. It is observed that the women trained within the framework of this project are aged 18-35 and are neither in education or in working life. It is seen that the studies carried out with NEET youth in organizations in this category contribute to the recognition of this category and create awareness of their unique needs.
2. A more common case is that organizations reach NEET youth while they carry out projects targeting the disadvantaged groups because NEET category overlaps with their focus group in terms of social exclusion and disadvantageousness. For instance, Tarlaşaşı Community Center, which was established in one of the disadvantaged regions in Istanbul with an agenda to promote equal involvement of the residents to urban life, provides Tarlaşaşı youth with training and psychological support as well as its projects targeting mainly children. Similarly, organizations working with children and youth under protection or combating drug addiction often target the most vulnerable groups among NEET youth despite not directly addressing the NEET category.



NEET CATEGORIES

6 NEET Categories

NEET category involves individuals who do not receive regular education in a formal or open education institution or do not work full-time. While analyzing our research findings, we classified these individuals under different categories by their employment status or intentions of receiving education and employment intentions. Before making a detailed analysis of youth in Turkey by their education and employment status, it is useful to identify the subcomponents of NEET and non-NEET youth. Thus, the two following sub-chapters discuss the scope of these components.

6.1 Youth Categories by Education and Employment Status

NEET group involves those who work regularly, those who do not work full-time or work part-time, or irregularly. Namely, irregular, or part-time employees also qualify as NEET. The concept of NEET does not imply having no connection to work or education life. This nuance is a critical point to be considered when comparing NEET and non-NEET youth. Another important point is the fact that an individual's intention to leave their current group is as important as their main field of activity in understanding the heterogenous nature of the NEET group. In this sense, the report distinguishes the youth that actively looks for work and hopeless youth that stopped looking for work. The research ultimately classifies the youth under eight categories by their education and employment status: employed, those who irregularly work, housewives, those who both work and study, students, officially unemployed, unemployed and not looking for work, preparing for exams. This sub-chapter of the report explains the limits and extents of each category.

Those who work: This group includes the youth who actively participates in the economic life. The youth in this group either work full time or part time in salaried positions or hold employer or entrepreneur positions in companies they start. These young people are not in the NEET group because they are in employment on a regular basis.

Those working irregularly: Young people in this group are within economic life but not in the center. They work either part-time or in waged positions or irregularly as seasonal workers. Those in this group are within the scope of NEET group.

Housewives: Young people in this group do not work in any job or receive education in any formal or open education institution. The members of these group which consists of women are mostly busy with housework. Those in this group fall under NEET.

Both working and studying: Young people in this group work full-time or part-time in addition to studying in a formal or open education institution. Those in this group are not included in the NEET because they are involved in education.

Students: This category includes young people who continue their education life affiliated with any formal or open education institution. Those in this group can be high school or university students. Unlike working students, students in this group are completely focused on education. Young people in this group are not included in the NEET because they are involved in education.

Officially unemployed: Young people in this group do not work in any institution and continue to actively seek employment. Unemployment rate in TURKSTAT data actually consists of this group. This group is considered under the NEET.

The unemployed and not looking for work: This group consists of young people who have stopped looking for work and have lost hope. Although young people in this category can be classified as unemployed by TURKSTAT, they are less likely to join the workforce. Those in this group may be motivated to continue their education and strive to increase and diversify their education status. However, if they declare that they have not applied for a job in the last three months, they are not included in TURKSTAT official unemployed category. This group is also within the scope of NEET.

Preparing for exams: This group consists of young people who aim for a higher education level or who are studying for an exam for career advancement. Those in this group are not educated in any formal or open education group, nor have they an employment status. Therefore, young people in this group are also considered in NEET status.

As is seen, it is possible to examine young people from Turkey in eight different categories by their working and education status. These groups take into account both the educational and employment status of young people and their intention to change their status. While the study and education groups consider the tendencies, each participant's intentions and tendencies also require a different grouping. The next sub-chapter discusses NEET groups by their tendencies.

6.2 Youth Groups by Tendency

Youth groups by their tendencies consider the probability of young people staying in a group, their intentions and future plans in more detail. These groups also enable a scale that ranges from a clearly non-NEET status to a clear and permanent NEET status, with an increasing probability of becoming or remaining NEET. This scale consists of six groups: **Employed, On the Brink, Active, Passive, Hopeless, and Permanent**. These groups were structured within the framework of the future plans and intentions asked to the participants while conducting the survey.



Employed:

This group overlaps with the employee group. Young people in this group work either as full-time or part-time employees or as employers. In addition to the employed group, working students are also in this group. **This group is not included in NEET.**



On the Brink:

Young people in this group are still working or studying. However, their current employment contract is about to expire, or they are about to graduate from their school. The main factor distinguishing this group is that they don't have a clear future plan yet and are therefore close to non-NEET group. **Those in this group are not included the NEET.**



Active:

Young people in the Active NEET group make an effort to work or study at the same time, even if they do not attend regularly attend work or education. Irregular workers, those preparing for exams and formally unemployed looking for work are included in the active NEET group. Although they are in the NEET group, they are on the brink of the NEET group.



Passive:

Unlike the active NEET group, the passive NEET group consists of young people who have been out of work and education life for a long time. Although those in this group will work, if possible, they are more likely to stay in the NEET group than the active group. The educational background and skills of those in this group may not match the education and skills demanded by the market.



Hopeless:

The hopeless group is the chronic segment of the passive NEET group. Young people in this group have stopped looking for a job or trying to start an educational institution. Although they may leave the NEET group if given the opportunity, they are less likely to leave the NEET group in terms of motivation and opportunity.



Permanent:

Unlike other groups, those in the permanent NEET group do not have the intention to work or attend training and prefer to keep their status. Housewives are in this group.



NEET groups by tendencies take the provide the opportunity to tackle the NEET to non-NEET scale as an ordinal measurement. This measurement makes it possible to examine what kind of effects would be generated in the case the NEET status becomes chronic or weakens. Thus, a significant portion of the report mainly refers to these groups.

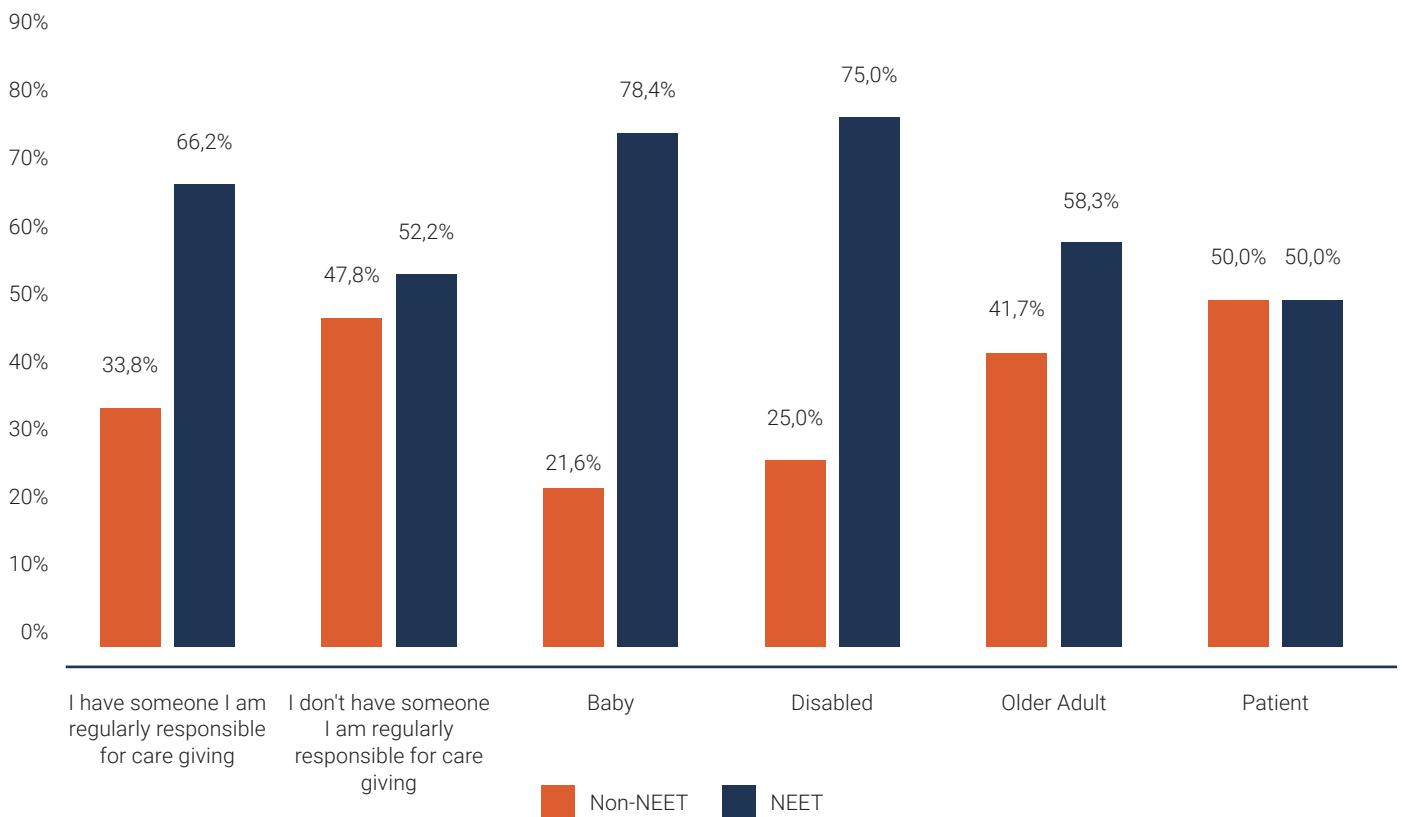
6.3. Who is in the NEET group?

While NEET groups clearly demonstrate how the youth is grouped by their education and employment status and their tendencies, and reveal the heterogenous structure of the NEET panorama, it is possible to speak of a basic demographic that distinguishes NEET and non-NEET youth. Young people are more likely to be NEET if they are female, aged 25-29, have low to middle income, have health problems or are not Turkish. NEET group also bear more responsibility in their social environment and are unhappier compared to their non-NEET peers. Therefore, the research results demonstrate a NEET with important similarities as well as diversity.

Before delving into the details of the picture, it would be useful to correct certain misperceptions. As mentioned before, those in the NEET group are not entirely away from working life. NEET youth also work although irregularly. Nonetheless, the distinction of regular-irregular employment brings about an important income gap. While the average income is 3340 Turkish liras for the regularly working participants to the study, the monthly income of the NEET group is 1928 Turkish liras. In other words, the income of the NEET group is under starvation line. That is, NEET youth work but have low income.

Although those in the NEET group do not regularly work or receive education, they are not irresponsible in their social circles. On the contrary, youth in the NEET group are more likely to take responsibility for their environment. For example, young people in the NEET group are much more likely to be in regular care of someone compared to a non-NEET youth. Although housewives are a dominant factor in the infant care rate, the NEET youth is more likely to be responsible for the care of the disabled and the elderly, indicating that NEET groups are more likely to take responsibility for their social environment.

Graph 2. Care Giving Responsibilities for the Youth by their NEET Status

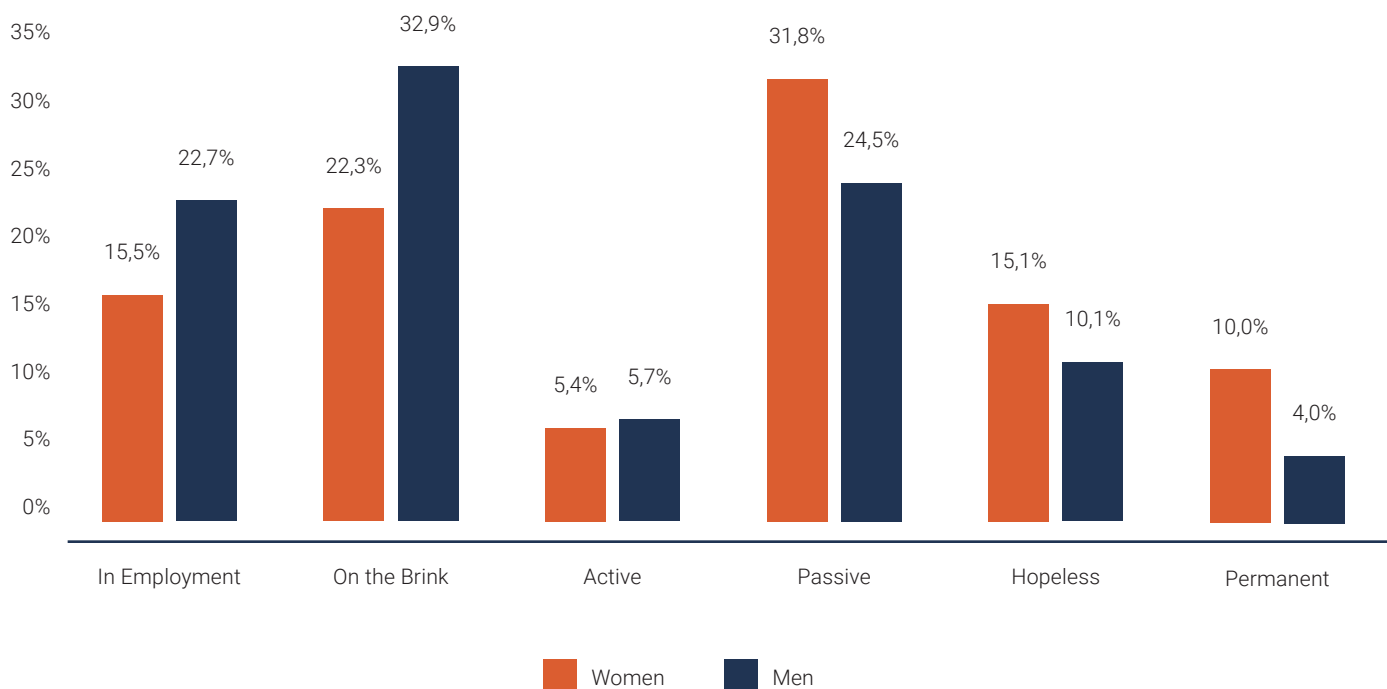


According to the research results, the probability of being in the NEET group is higher for four demographic groups: women, 25-29 age group, low and middle income group, those with health problems and the non-Turkish.

Women

Women are more likely to be in the NEET group than men. Nearly 58% of the women surveyed were in the NEET group, while these numbers drop to 47.5% for men. The distinction between men and women becomes even more evident when analyzed with NEET categorizations. While more than half of men are in employment or on the brink, this rate is about 38% for women. Moreover, women are more likely than men to be in the passive, hopeless, and permanent NEET groups. In other words, women are also more likely to be in the NEET group, and more likely to stay in the NEET group.

Graph 3. Sex Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendencies



|| How would they react if I wanted to work, well of course they would have a strong reaction. I mean, not my own family, but my husband's family. My own family wouldn't interfere in any way right now. (How would it be possible for your husband's family to approve of this?) If my son is older, he can go to school by himself, maybe cook for himself, but most of it is very difficult. What kind of a business can it be, it can be a store, it can also be a hairdresser maybe, but if I have my own hairdresser, it can be nothing other than a store... (What if the store is in a distant place?) No, it can't be, it has to be a store with certain working hours, and at a certain distance. My husband doesn't want me to work right now. (Despite financial difficulties) He doesn't want that, yes, he is persistent."

22 years old, Female, Married with Children, Not Looking for a Job

25-29 Age Group

Research participants were evaluated in three age groups: 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29. While the probability of being NEET and non-NEET in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups is almost equal, in the 25-29 age group, NEET group has significantly more weight. 60% of the 25-29 years old participating in the study are in the NEET group.

An important cause behind the increase is considered to be university graduate youth not being able to find work. Indeed, this is more evident when participants are classified under NEET groups by education or employment status. When the 20-24 age group is compared with the 25-29 age group, we see that the portion of students reduced while the rate of the unemployed and housewives who are not looking for work increased. Another striking detail is that there is already an official unemployed youth group of about 15% in each age group. In other words, not only normal unemployment increases after the age of 25, but chronic unemployment also increases significantly. From this perspective, the 25-29 years old NEET rate is much higher due to the difficulties of period of university graduation and finding work.

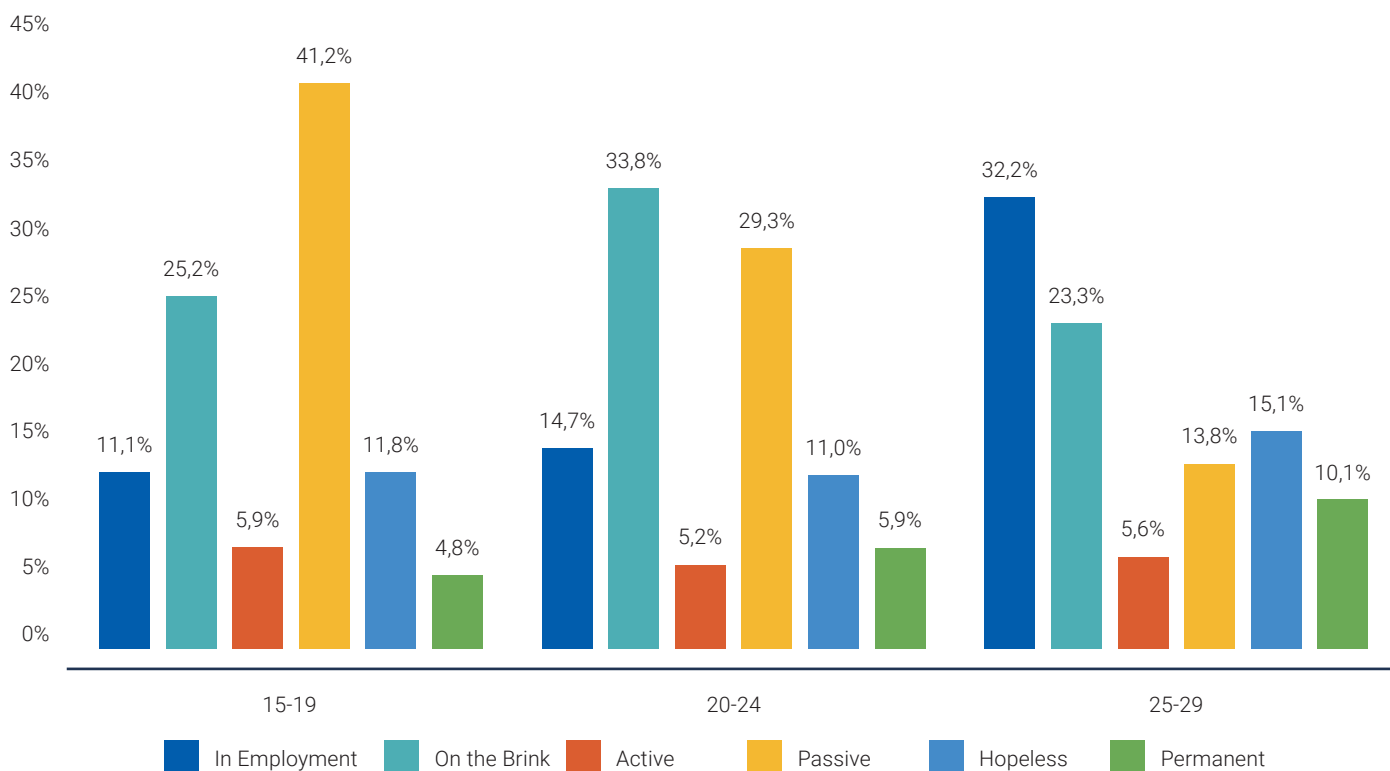
|| I mean, I would like to make good use of them, it is everyone's desire to show up with a good resume when applying for a job but improving yourself means having money because it is very expensive to attend a course in Turkey. Let's say it's a language course or driver's license course or a training, all of them are very expensive in Turkey. That's why your resume always stays the same, so the fact that I have free time is not in my advantage in any way, it only causes me to get older and makes it harder to find a job."

Aged 28, Male, Single-Lives with His Family, Looking for a Job

	15-19	20-24	25-30
Working	9.0%	13.3%	30.1%
Irregularly Working	3.2%	6.8%	4.9%
Housewife	2.7%	3.1%	12.8%
Both Studying and Working	6.9%	7.6%	3.7%
Unemployed / Not Looking for Work	12.2%	15.1%	23.3%
Student	34.0%	30.6%	5.6%
Officially Unemployed	14.5%	17.1%	16.3%
Preparing for Exams	17.4%	6.5%	3.3%

This chronic unemployment trend is also evident in NEET groups by tendencies. The proportion of hopeless and permanent NEET groups which is about 15% in other age groups, rises to over 25% in the 25-29 age group. Young people in the predominantly passive NEET group within the 15-19 age group, are replaced by the hopeless and permanent group in the next age groups unless the individuals enter the workforce.

Graph 4. Age Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendencies



Low and Middle Income Section

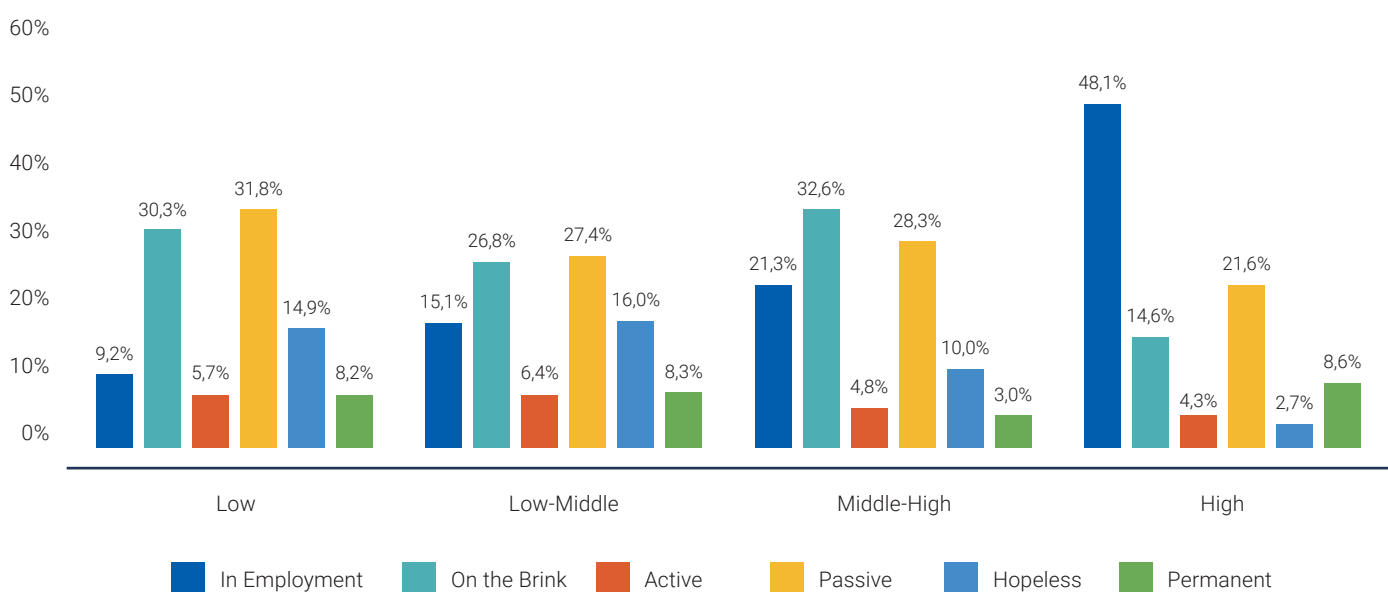
Young people in the NEET group are more likely to be low- and lower-middle-income than high-income. Nearly 60% of the low-income youth that participated in the research are in the NEET group, compared to 54% in the low-middle income group. In the high-income group, this situation is the opposite. 63% of the high-income group are not NEETs. In other words, the NEET problem mostly concerns the low- and low-middle-income group.

When we examine the income distribution of NEET groups by tendencies, a more complex but similar income-NEET status relationship is observed. The higher the income group, the higher the employment rate; however, this rate is significantly higher only in the high-income group. In other words, there is no significant employment group in low, low-middle, and middle-high income groups. Moreover, they are more likely to be hopeless and on the brink of low- and middle-income groups. Although there is a linear relationship between income and NEET status, 21% passive and 9% permanent NEET groups are observed in the high-income group. Namely, although the probability of leaving the NEET group increases as the income group scales up, the NEET reality is observed significantly in every group.

|| *Everyone in my family is civil servants, working for the state. Both parents. My sister is also one, that is, a family of civil servants. While I used to be middle class in Turkey, the disappearance of the middle class in Turkey in the last 10 years, what I mean by this, that is, the gap in salaries and income, caused the middle class to disappear. This came down to the fact that the middle class belongs to the low-income class now. In other words, as a result of this, your access to many things decreases. In other words, these are not just luxury consumption, you need to reduce even your normal general consumption. And especially if you are in a family with many children, my family is a family of 5, so a little more solidarity, struggling..."*

28 years old, Female, Single-Living with a Family, Looking for a Job

Graph 5. Income Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendency



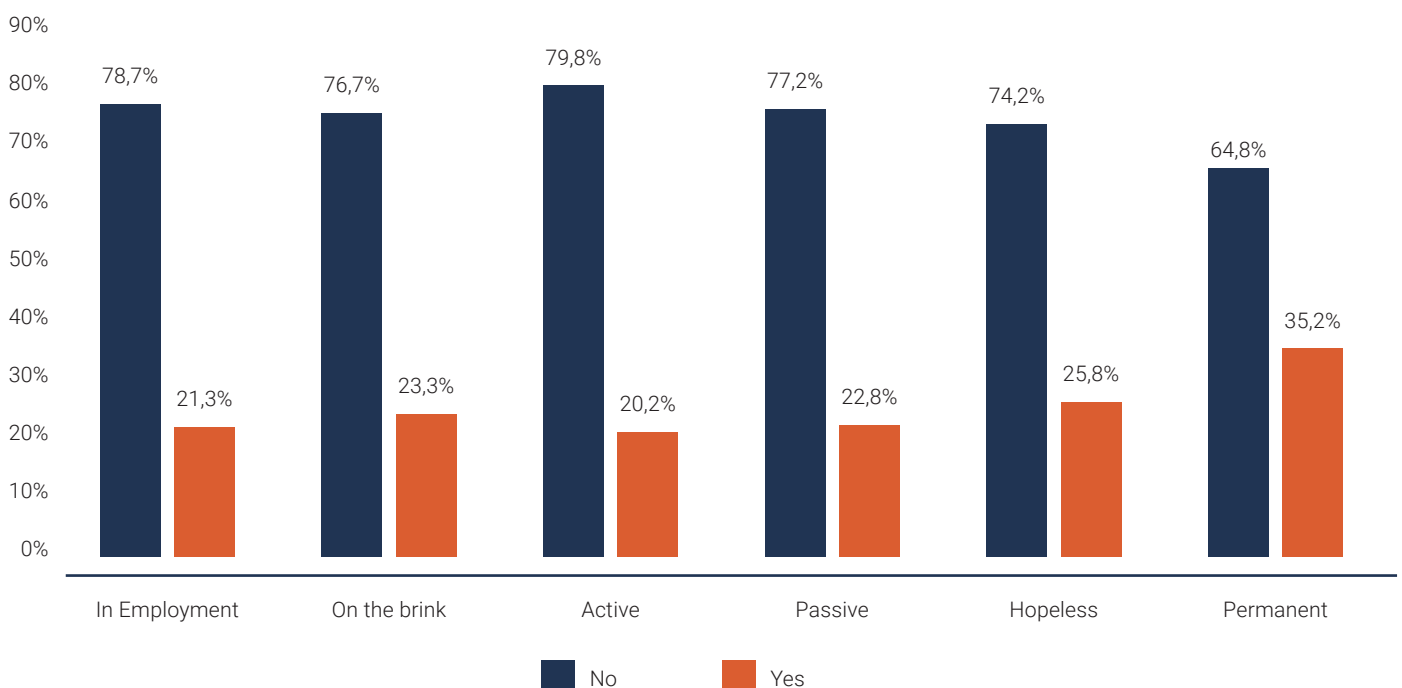
The relationship between income and NEET status is, of course, mutual. Young people who find a job leave the NEET group. Young people in the NEET group, on the other hand, have a hard time finding a job. However, the fact that the distribution in NEET groups only changes significantly from the high-income group indicates that the probability of being NEET is a problem that concerns the low and middle sections. For these groups, the main determinant of NEET status is the lack of access to social opportunities. The presence of NEET in wealthy groups can be explained rather by the lack of need for working

Non-Turkish

Research results show that there is a significant parallel between ethnic identity and NEET status. While the distribution of NEET status among young people whose households do not speak a language other than Turkish is almost half, this ratio changes in accordance with the NEET status in other ethnic groups. 59% of young people whose households speak a language other than Turkish are NEET. In other words, the access of different ethnic identities to education and job opportunities in Turkey, especially the Kurdish, is more limited than the Turkish. Being Turkish has no effect on NEET status, while other ethnic groups are excluded from education and work life due to discrimination, opportunities, and lack of education.

The relationship between ethnic identities and NEET status is more complex and striking within the context of subcategories beyond general NEET categories. Research results demonstrate a strong relationship between speaking a mother tongue other than Turkish in the households of the participants and the intensifying of NEET status. More specifically, the non-Turkish, especially the Kurdish youth are more likely to be in permanent and hopeless NEET groups. Although the majority in all NEET categories state speaking Turkish at home, the percentage of non-Turkish people increases gradually beginning from the passive NEET group. This means that the ethnic identity-NEET relationship also has a linear character. Young people who are not Turkish are more likely to remain in NEET status as well as being in the NEET group. Therefore, discrimination due to ethnic identity is of a chronic nature.

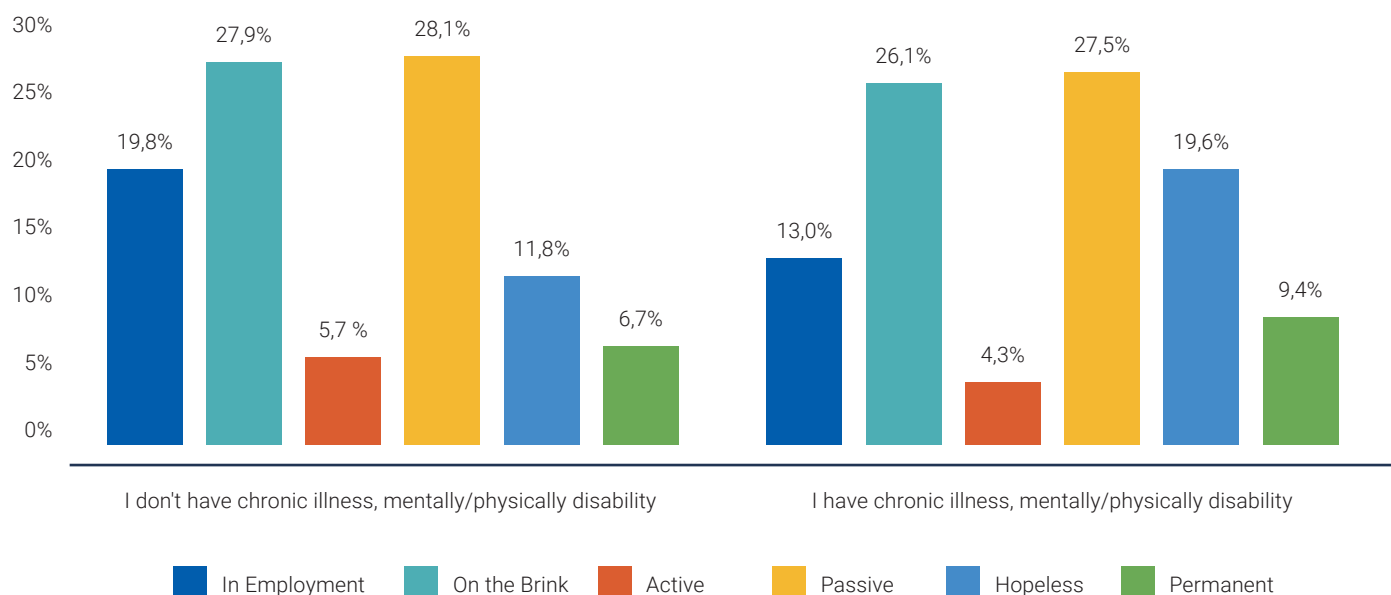
Grafik 6. Rate of Speaking a Native Language Other Than Turkish in Households of Youth Clusters by Tendency



Those with Health Problems

One of the most important determinants of NEET status is health problems. Nearly 61% of participants who state having a chronic illness or mental/physical disability are in the NEET group. That is, only one out of four people in the group struggling with health problems had a chance to work or study. The NEET status of those who do not have such problems is observed as 50-50. Considering that the research sample was distributed 50-50, this data shows that health problems are a statistically significant determinants. Discrimination against people with health problems in employment, and the failure to design work and education opportunities in an accessible way to different health needs may explain this clear relationship between having health problems and having NEET status.

Graph 7. Distribution of Health Problems in Youth Groups by Tendency



The social dimension of the NEET status of those with health problems is seen more clearly when NEET groups are evaluated by tendency. Participants in the NEET group due to health problems are significantly more likely to be in hopeless and permanent NEET groups. This indicates that people in this group have more chronic problems in finding a job or attending education.

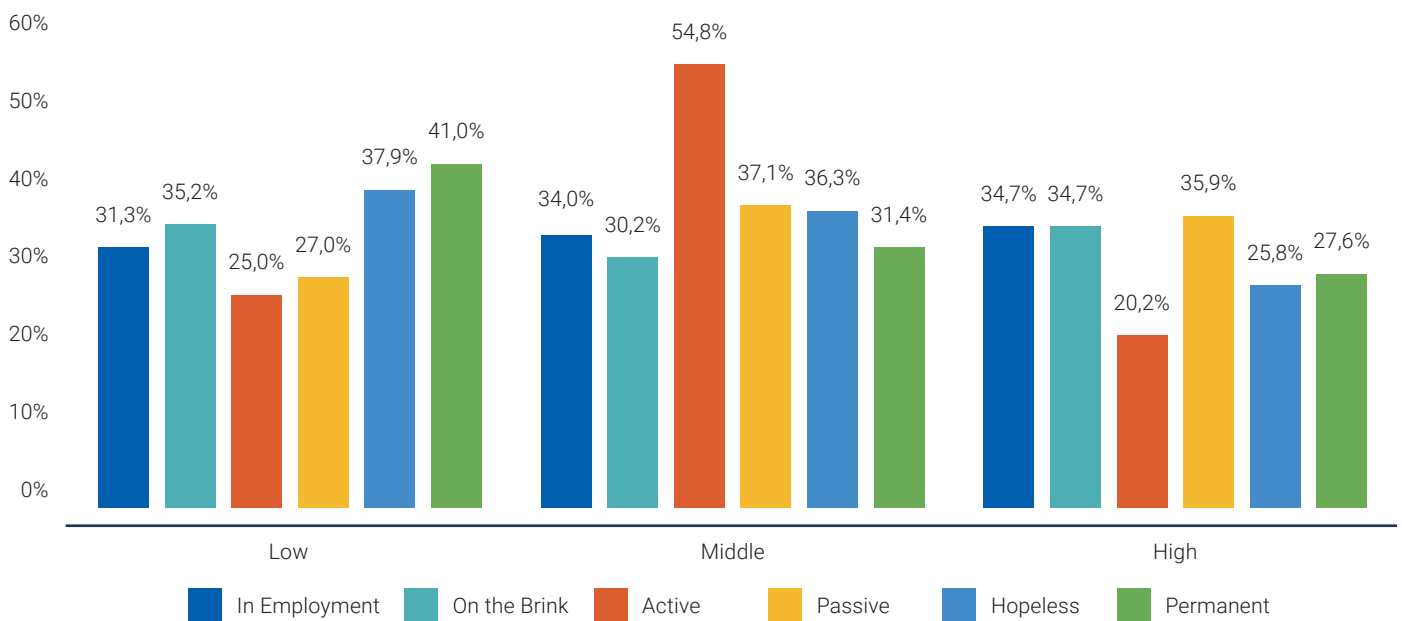
|| So while looking for a job, 1304 people were recruited for the disabled recruitment this year. This 1304 is divided, primary school graduates, high school graduates, university graduates, associate degree graduates and so on, the recruitment rates fall. My score is not that high either, entered the exam two years ago just to see the questions, it doesn't meet the requirements, no way. Some are appointed with 87 points or something. Because the appointment rates are low, 35-40 thousand people apply for a position in which they take 1304 people. It is not possible, what are the chances. Also, if you look for something in the private sector, they view the disabled like, I should pay your insurance, pay your salary, you don't need to come to work, I don't have the mindset to get paid for nothing, I'm still young, could mean something maybe if I was a little older."

Aged 23, Male, Single-Living with Family, Looking for a Job

Unhappiness

One of the main distinctions that distinguishes youth in NEET groups from non-NEETs, although it is more of an effect than a cause, is related to their happiness levels. Within the scope of the research, the happiness levels of the participants were measured with the Warwick-Edinburgh Happiness Index¹⁷. According to the results of the research, the youth in the NEET group are slightly more unhappy than the non-NEETs. While 35% of non-NEET youth show high levels of happiness, this rate drops to 30% for youth in the NEET group.

Graph 8. Distribution of Happiness of Youth Groups by Their Tendencies



There is no significant difference in terms of happiness between employed ones and youth that are on the brink of employment. However, young people in the active NEET groups are more likely to have moderate levels of happiness. A more temporary trend is that youth in hopeless and permanent NEETs have lower levels of happiness. Namely, the determinants of low levels of unhappiness in the NEET group are mostly due to the hopeless and permanent NEET groups. This tendency implies that those in the NEET group do not aspire to their current status. Indeed, a significant portion of the participants in the NEET group emphasize good relations with money and family as sources of happiness. This situation can be interpreted as a sign of the NEET group's desire to leave their current status and to be accepted in their social environment.

“ There is nothing much good about being young in these times, I can still say it's the energy, but I have to count myself young because of my age even though I'm old on the inside. Being energetic, looking at things little more hopeful, I mean, a 50-years old right now cannot guarantee they won't die within the next ten years under the current health conditions. I mean, I can't either, but it's more predictable. So we have more time. Time is abundant. There's extra time for me when I'm unemployed. I used to be mad all the time while I was working because I didn't have time left for anything else. But now the situation is not better either. So I guess there's no advantage for any age.”

Aged 28, Female, Single-Living with Family, Looking for a Job

17 <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/about/>

Analyzing all these variables together, we see that the youth in the NEET group are more represented in certain demographic groups than the non-NEET, although the youth in Turkey has a heterogeneous character by their education and employment status. Women, 25-29 age group, low-middle income group, non-Turkish people and young people with health problems are more likely to be in the NEET group. Young people consider themselves to be both more unhappy and less accepted in their social circles. However, these characteristics do not directly explain why young people are in the NEET group. The following section of the report aims to answer this question.

6.4. Why Does Youth Become NEET?

While for some young people it is a personal choice to stay out of work or education, for many, NEET status is something they do not want but inevitably find themselves in due to social condition. Many young people are unable to participate in work or education due to lack of talent and skills, health problems, weak social rights, or lack of support from their close circles. This part of the report discusses in detail why young people do not work or study.

Reasons of Not Working

Personal and Family Reasons, Chronic Group:

A portion of the participants do not prefer to work due to personal reasons and caring responsibilities. Only 38% who state that they do not want to work are permanent NEETs and 36% is in passive NEET group. 60% who do not want to work full time are in passive NEET group. The dominant position the passive NEET group rather than the permanent NEET group points out to youth that has accepted their situation after not being able to find a job. Another group states that they are unable to work because they have care-giving responsibilities. Those that base their unemployment reasons on responsibilities of childcare are entirely in the passive NEET group. 31% of the participants, who addressed care-giving responsibilities in general as their cause of unemployment are in the passive NEET group and 40% are in permanent NEET groups. Another group states that their financial situation does not require working. 70% of this group is in the passive NEET group. The fact that participants who addressed personal reasons and caregiving responsibilities as causes of unemployment are largely in the relatively intense NEET groups implies that those who do not work for these reasons are relatively unlikely to return to work.

Psychological and General Health Problems, Lack of Skills, Transformative Group:

The participants wanting to work but unemployed due to the lack of necessary opportunities and support present a different picture. A significant part of this group is on the brink. They are more likely to participate in the workforce if the necessary support is provided and arrangements are made. Nearly half of the young people who state not working full-time due to psychological reasons are on the brink. While 27% of the participants who addressed their unemployment causes as psychological reasons are on the brink, 33% are in the hopeless group. This tendency suggests that NEET positions of youth may become more permanent unless they receive the necessary support. Similarly, one-third of those who state not working for health reasons are on the brink, while another third is in the hopeless

NEET group. Another group sees the lack of skills as the main reason for unemployment. About a quarter of this group is on the brink. The fact that a significant part of the young people who put forward all these reasons is on the brink, shows a transformative potential. Young people need opportunities to develop their skills, opportunities to solve their physical and psychological problems, and finally accessible work environments that allow them to work in all these conditions.

Comparison of Chronic and Transformative Group:

When participants were asked about factors that would make it harder for them to find a job in the case of searching, their answers further highlighted the distinction between the relatively easily transformative and less transformative NEET groups. 73% of those who think they cannot find a job because they have children are housewives. On the other hand, 50% of those who think that they will have difficulty in finding a job due to lack of knowledge and equipment are on the brink and 40% are the officially unemployed people looking for work. Similarly, 42% of those who assume they would not find a job due to the lack of foreign language skills are on the brink. Those who think that they will have difficulty in finding work due to health problems fall between these two groups. 42% of this group are in the unemployed group not looking for work.

Discrimination, Social Dimension:

Young people also state suffering from discrimination. 50% of the young people who think that they will have difficulty in finding a job due to discrimination are on the brink, 35% are students and 30% are officially unemployed. In other words, young people who are currently or will be looking for work are worried about being discriminated against. The statements of the participants who have been in employment and discriminated against show that young people have reason for concern.

Table 2. Discrimination Experiences of Young People with Employment History by Tendency

	Due to being female	Due to being young	Due to Ethnic Identity	Due to Choice of Religious Beliefs	Due to Sexual Orientation
Employed	30.4%	32.0%	33.3%	36.4%	25.0%
Irregular	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	12.5%
Housewife	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Both Studying and Working	4.3%	16.0%	14.3%	9.1%	0.0%
Unemployed, Not Looking for Work	8.7%	8.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
Student	21.7%	24.0%	28.6%	18.2%	25.0%
Officially Unemployed	13.0%	16.0%	23.8%	18.2%	37.5%
Preparing for Exams	8.7%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Research results demonstrate that discrimination against the young is experienced in every field and identity. Majority of those who are employed think they are discriminated either due to being female, due to their religious choices or ethnic identity. They are followed by those who think they are discriminated due to being young or due to their sexual orientation. A significant portion of the officially unemployed youth state suffering from discrimination based on sexual orientation and ethnic identities.

|| *I mean, I could work if it happened... there's this place my sister works, and I applied there. But the working hours didn't fit me... I asked a couple of stores on X street but they were a bit like, telling me because I wear the hijab. Having a child is already a major difficulty, being a woman, they assume I'll just say I had guests over one day, another excuse the other day... I think being a woman is already the main reason to look for work."*

Aged 25, Female, Married with Child, Looking for Work

Social Security, the Political Dimension:

Quitting work experiences are also different for NEET and non-NEET youth as well as starting work. NEETs leave their jobs especially because they have weak social rights. While 65% leaves work on the basis of physical exhaustion, 71% do so due to lack of insurance, and 75% do because their salaries are not paid on time. Namely, the main cause of working youth becoming NEET later is this weakness in social rights.

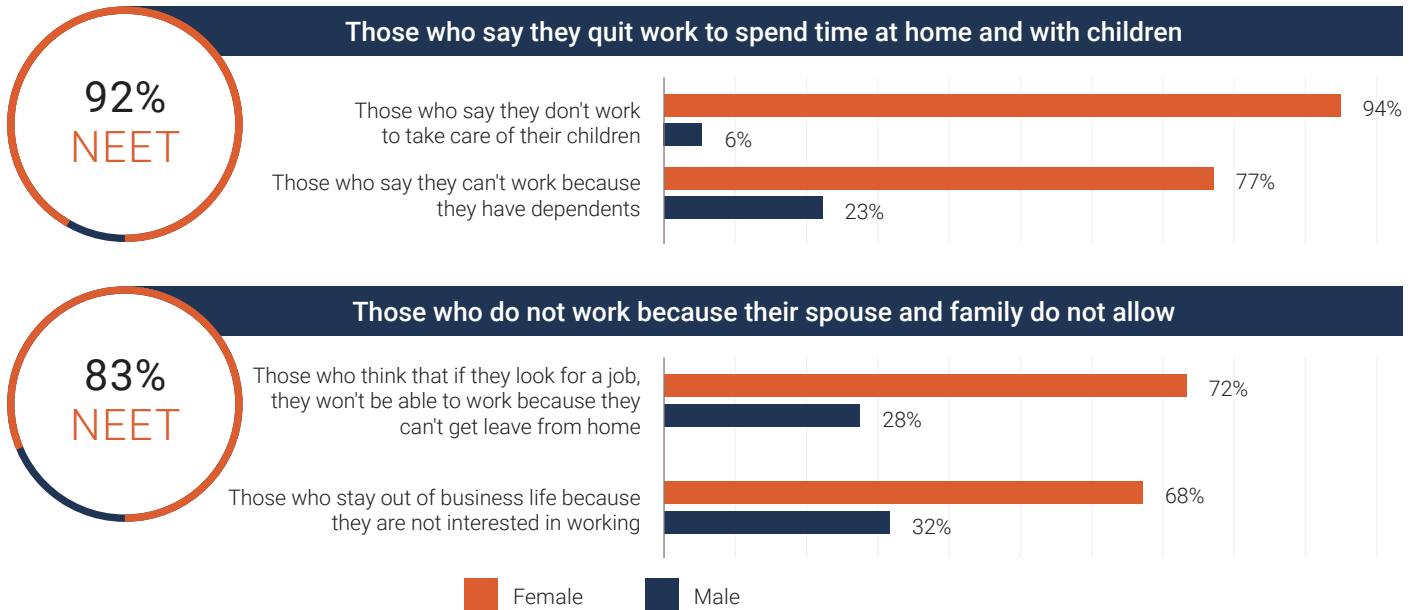
|| *I wouldn't want to continue working in a lot of places under these conditions. They provide very little income, they would just keep me from a lot of opportunities. Some of these did me more harm than good just by not being able to use the cafeteria. I already believe I can do better than this. So, I wouldn't prefer many of these. But as I said, I wouldn't reject working at a cafe at school for 15 liras an hour, but I also know there aren't any open spots."*

Aged 23, Male, Single, Not Looking for Work

Discrimination against Women, the Gender Dimension:

It was demonstrated in the previous section that women are more likely to be in the NEET group than men. Perceptions towards women, lack of support from families and spouses, and prejudices seem to be the main obstacles to women's employment. Being subjected to negative views against women's employment is one of the factors that distinguishes NEET youth from non-NEETs. 92% of those stating they quit work to spend time at home and with their children are in the NEET group. Subject-based gender distributions also show that this situation is caused by the view against women. 94% of those stating they do not work to take care of their children are women. 77% of those stating that they cannot work because they have dependents are women. The view that home care services should only be provided by women prevents many women from working.

Another obstacle is the fact that families and spouses prevent women from working. 83% of those who do not work because their spouse and family do not allow them are in the NEET group. 80% of this group consists of women. 72% of those thinking that they would not be able work even if they look for work because they would not be permitted are women. In other words, in addition to the social prejudices against women's entry into the workforce, there is also a direct hindrance from families. On the other hand, 68% of those who stay out of the workforce because they are not interested in working are women. That is, there are those who do not work by choice as well as those who are prevented from working.



|| *I started in a hairdresser at about age 11-12. I quit at 18, before I got married. In fact, I quit when I got engaged. (Did you quit by your own choice?) No, not that I wanted but my parents were working, there was no one to look after the house, after my siblings, to do the cooking and the cleaning, so I had to quit but I still went when I had the time. I even received job offers from other hairdressers."*

Aged 22, Female, Married with Child, Not Looking for Work

|| *So, when I quit work, about formation, state work when I think about it, I didn't make the decision on my own. I first asked my parents and my husband. I acted on their guidance. If were to decide on my own, it would be faster. This issue is negative for me. I see myself in charge in making decisions about my own life. When making a decision, I observe my own interests. If my father or husband interferences, they care about their own interests, my husband, for instance, has to provide for the house or my father has to support my financial needs. It seems to me that they mostly care about their own interests. If I was the only person to decide, I think I would make a healthier decision."*

Aged 24, Female, Married, Not Looking for Work

Reasons for Not Receiving Education

The reasons why NEET and non-NEET groups do not receive education are largely similar. Economic reasons are the leading reason for both groups. However, lack of interest in education, health issues and pressure from family or spouse seem to be more effective in abandoning of education for the NEET group. Although the effect of family or spouse pressure weakens in continuing into higher education, it seems to be effective in not attending high school and earlier education for the NEET group.

Economic Reasons, Common Factor:

Economic reasons have the greatest impact on both NEET and non-NEET groups not continuing education. 33% of NEET youth and 39% of non-NEET youth state economic reasons as the main cause for not attending high school or earlier education. The behavior of not attending high school or lower education due to economic reasons is mostly seen in men. 60% of those who answered yes to the related question are men. Economic reasons are especially important for the NEET group that are on the brink. When NEET groups are examined by tendency, although economic reasons lose their influence on the decision to continue higher education for many groups, it remains important for those in the permanent NEET group.

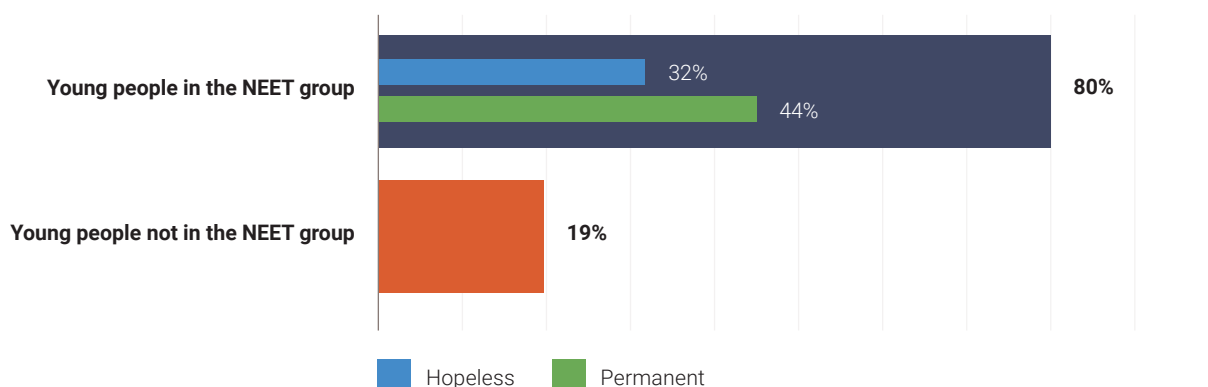
Table 3. Reasons for Not Continuing High School and Below Education for Youth Clusters by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
No Interest for Education	20.3%	20.4%	29.5%	31.0%	31.9%	45.7%
Economic Reasons	38.4%	52.1%	20.5%	17.2%	21.3%	14.3%
Having a Health Issue	0.0%	1.7%	6.8%	9.2%	6.4%	7.1%
Family/Work Pressure	1.7%	1.7%	2.3%	1.1%	2.1%	11.4%
Being Older	6.8%	4.6%	9.1%	10.3%	4.3%	5.7%
Personal Reasons	32.8%	19.6%	31.8%	34.0%	34.0%	15.7%

Reluctance, Indifference, Personal Factor:

Unlike economic reasons, reluctance and indifference to education are mostly observed in the NEET group. 29% of those in the NEET group state being uninterested in high school or earlier education. Nearly 80% of participants stating they are uninterested in education are in the NEET group. It can be inferred that the young people in the NEET group developed such a disinterested attitude as they are gradually losing hope. As a matter of fact, apathy towards high school and earlier education is observed in many NEET groups, but it is more dominant in hopeless and permanent groups. Approximately 46% of permanent NEET youth and 32% of hopeless NEET youth indicated that they were uninterested in education. However, it is worth remembering that 19% of young people who are not in the NEET group are also reluctant to study. That is, the characteristic disinterest in education should be considered comparatively with the relatively higher disinterest among the youth in general.

Participants who said they were uninterested in education



II *What we call education in Turkey is not much of a thing, university education is considered as a tool to acquire a profession and make money, so it's not highly regarded. People aren't interested in making sense of the world, connecting to the world and analyze their surroundings anymore. I unfortunately have some concerns. I wouldn't want to have them, will I be able to just concern myself with my courses like a regular European student, will I be able to pass my exams, what else can I learn, will I be able to reach those resources... While I can find ways to reach these resources in Europe, they're so restricted in Turkey so it pushes people to search for different ways. This is because an 18-19 years old immediately starts to work and probably be subjected to exploitation."*

Aged 28, Female, Single-Living with Family, Looking for Work

Health Problems, Distinguishing Factor:

It was discussed in the previous section that people with health problems and disabilities are more likely to be in the NEET group. Research results show that not continuing education due to health problems is a NEET problem in itself. All of the participants who showed health problems as a reason for not attending high school or higher education are all in the NEET group. In other words, young people who do not attend education due to health reasons do not participate in working life. This problem is more serious in high school and lower education than in higher education. While 5% of the participants in the NEET group who did not attend high school or below indicate health problems, this rate drops to 0.8% among those who do not attend higher education. Health problems are mostly stated in active, passive, hopeless and permanent NEET groups.

Table 4. Reasons for Not Continuing Higher Education of Youth Groups by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
No Interest in Education	59.1%	41.4%	60.0%	61.5%	58.1%	33.3%
Economic Reasons	12.1%	20.7%	0.0%	15.4%	16.1%	33.3%
Having a Health Issue	13.6%	19.0%	10.0%	3.8%	3.2%	25.0%
Family/Work Pressure	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Older Age	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Personal Reasons	1.5%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%

Family, Spouse Pressure, Discrimination Against Women, Gender Dimension:

Pressure from family and spouses is one of the major obstacles to continuing education. 3% of youth in the NEET group state family/spouse pressure as the main reason for not attending high school or earlier education, of which approximately 74% are women. The discriminatory point of view towards women stands in the way of education as well as working life. On the other hand, this factor does not appear to be an obstacle to attending higher education. It is possible to say that families reluctant to send their girls to school are a general obstacle to education and such a trend has emerged because the families of young people who are able to continue until university education do not have that prejudice against women.

The more implicit consequences of the viewpoint towards women, rather than the overt repression, are also seen as an obstacle to education. 60% of those who cannot continue their education due to the distance from the school are women. Nearly 90% of those who do not attend training for childcare are women because they have to help with the housework. 96% of those who could not continue their education because they got married, and all of those who could not because their families did not allow them are women. The idea that women are responsible for housework emerges as a major obstacle for many women to continue their education.

The steps required to increase the participation of young people in education is similar to the steps required to promote working life. There is a need for educational institutions that will attract young people, new opportunities for solving health problems, and finally educational institutions and regulations that will make education accessible. On the other hand, there are factors that are more intricate, more difficult to change and have deeper effects, such as gender perceptions, that keep young people away from education.



PREFERENCES AND NEEDS
OF YOUTH ACCORDING
TO THEIR WORKING AND
EDUCATIONAL STATUS

7 Preferences and Needs of Youth According to Their Working and Educational Status

NEET group status does not only affect young people's work and education lives. It is possible to see the influence of the NEET status of young people in many aspects of their individual behaviors, from concerns to dreams, from needs to preferences. However, young people show serious similarities with their contemporaries in their daily habits and preferences, as well as in their social and political preferences. In other words, although NEET status shapes the needs and concerns of young people, it does not eliminate generational experience in social and political choices.

7.1. Concerns, Dreams

Although NEET and non-NEET youth share basic economic concerns and dreams, they reveal a very different map of worries and dreams in many ways. While the dreams of the youth in the NEET group are mostly about finding a job and making a life, social events are more on the agenda of the non-NEET group. However, when we look at the sub-NEET groups, it is possible to see a more complex preference map.



The main problems of the youth are largely oriented around the economy. Employment, financial problems, education, and future concerns are among the main problems of young people. Young people in the NEET group and non-NEET tend to view education and financial problems as a cause for concern. 48% of those who see education level as a problem are in the NEET group. For financial problems, this rate is 47%. However, this percentage rises to 57% among young people who emphasize anxiety about employment. In other words, this anxiety is more common in the NEET group.

NEET status and differences in daily life practices and economic needs also create a difference in the anxiety map. 63% of young people who see the Covid-19 pandemic as a problem are in the non-NEET category. The fact that young people working or studying is more interested in the pandemic can be explained by the interruption of their daily lives. On the other hand, the current political/economic situation is more on the agenda of the NEET group. 58% of those who see the current political/economic situation as the most important problem of the youth are in the NEET group.

An interesting distinction between NEET and non-NEET is the sensitivity to freedom and social problems. While a significant portion of those who see the restriction of freedoms as a serious problem are in the non-NEET group (61%), social problems are more important for the NEET group (65%). These rates point to significant differences between the life practices of active working students and the NEET group. While those in the NEET group approach economic and political developments with greater concern for employment, those in the non-NEET group are more susceptible to the constraining of the work and life practice they already have achieved, through the pandemic or the restricting of freedoms.

Although the distinction between NEET and non-NEET gives information about the general orientation of young people, it is useful to remember the heterogeneous nature of NEET groups. In other words, there are subgroups that do not fit these general inferences in either group. For example, those in the passive NEET group are the most sensitive to freedom and pandemic among all groups including the non-NEET group (44% and 46%, respectively). On the other hand, the group with the highest employment and future anxiety is the non-NEETs that are on the brink (30% and 31%, respectively). Thus, although these general implications may be valid for on a general level, they may not be valid in subgroups.

Figure 5. Biggest Dreams of Youth



Young people's dreams are parallel to their main concerns. The goals that young people most dream of are related to professional dreams, financial comfort, starting a home and family. On the other hand, the gap between young people working with NEET and students is widening when it comes to dreams compared to concerns. For example, only 30% of those who dream of a car or living abroad are in the NEET group, while those in the NEET group share the dream of living individually apart from their families (60%). The dream of prestige is clearly more of the NEET group's imagination. 80% of people who dream of prestige are in the NEET group. The only ones who have the dream of retirement are the young people from the NEET group. This chart shows that the dreams of those in the NEET group are more about living an orderly and dignified life, and those in the non-NEET group dream beyond that.

II *I would want a child and having my child in a much better place first of all. Then I would want our financial situation to be better, I mean it's not so bad right now, but I would want it to be better. I would want my husband to get a better job. Then for myself, I would very much like to work. I'm already thinking of starting school, distance education, child development program. Then I want a daughter."*

Age 25, Female, Married with Child, Looking for Work

The difference between the NEET and the non-NEET group becomes highlighted when the participants are asked to make a clear choice between their dreams. Dreams of rising (57%), living abroad (65%), developing technological skills (61%) are more dominant in the non-NEET group, while the shared dreams of owning a house/car (64%), living in a quiet place (60%) were more prevalent in the NEET group. While those in the NEET group aim to establish a basic quality of life, employed ones and students prioritize improving their quality of life or improving their skills.

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
Happy Marriage	20.5%	28.5%	4.2%	25.5%	13.2%	8.2%
Freedom of Thought	18.9%	28.8%	6.0%	29.0%	10.1%	7.1%
Development of Turkey	21.6%	29.2%	5.8%	27.2%	9.9%	6.1%
Turkish People Ruling the World	24.1%	27.7%	8.4%	25.3%	8.4%	6.0%
A Good Religious Life	15.5%	20.6%	7.2%	23.7%	11.3%	21.6%
Muslimism Becoming the Dominant Religion in the World	19.7%	26.2%	6.6%	27.9%	6.6%	13.1%
Being Famous	11.5%	32.7%	9.6%	28.8%	13.5%	3.8%
Traveling a Lot	19.1%	24.0%	4.7%	30.6%	14.3%	7.2%
A Beautiful/Handsome Spouse/Lover	19.0%	27.6%	5.2%	22.4%	19.0%	6.9%
Graduating from a Distinguished University	13.4%	19.6%	5.4%	46.4%	11.6%	3.6%
Comfortable Life Abroad	22.3%	22.9%	5.1%	30.6%	11.5%	7.6%

The picture as a result of the answers participants gave about their three primary dreams summarizes all the results of the report so far. The preferences of the non-NEET subgroups are roughly overlapping. There is a striking similarity of the passive NEET group to non-NEET subgroups. The dreams of passive and on the brink NEET groups are more focused on developments that will improve their living conditions in an instant: graduating from a good university, being famous, a comfortable life abroad. Nearly half of the passive NEET group dreams of graduating from a good university, while those in the permanent NEET group are more prominent with their religious preferences. If this orientation of the permanent NEET group is excluded, NEET groups are generally more distant from social dreams than other groups. In addition, in line with previous findings, those in the NEET group aim to establish a basic quality of life while those in the non-NEET group have preferences for improving their quality of life.

|| *I mean, I know English, I am educated, I'm doing my master's now, I don't think I'm inadequate in any way. I don't even expect a big salary anymore, I just have very basic concerns such as having a job and a house. I already can't have big dreams. I don't want to get drowned in those dreams because I know I won't be able to realize them, but I can't even realize these most basic ones. It's so hard to find a job in Turkey even though I graduated from a really good university, I know a foreign language and went abroad."*

Aged 28, Female, Single-Living with Family, Looking for Work

7.2. Needs, Expectations

We have seen that the worries and dreams of young people are mostly oriented around the economy. Young people are more interested in vocational training that can improve their skills to achieve their dreams rather than being educated. The skills that the participants want to develop are largely related to proficiency in a professional field, foreign language and personal characteristics that will facilitate finding a job. The areas where young people want to improve their skills are mostly in the service sector or they prefer developing their manual skills. So, young people have a general idea of a way out to improve their situation.

Young people are generally distant to the idea of continuing formal education to find a job and build a life. While 78% of NEETs with less than high school education level do not want to continue their education, a significant 80% of those stating they do not want to study further at this level are NEETs. A similar situation applies to higher education, albeit at a somewhat lower intensity. 50% of young people in NEET groups do not want to continue their education. The NEET rate is 70% among young people who have graduated from high school or equivalent institutions and do not want to continue their education. All these findings show that young people in general, especially those in the NEET group, are not willing to continue their education to find a job.

|| *I don't believe education and academic discipline has given me anything at all. I haven't been there, either. University life, I see it as a new space where some help you out but also let you make mistakes. At least if you study in a different place, build a life of your own, just going to the market to purchase a cooking pan is a brand new experience for you. Building a life step by step is a good way to carry your own responsibilities. So, I consider it to be worthy, on the condition that it's not in the same city as your family, if you're to study independent from your family."*

Aged 23, Male, Single, Not Looking for Work

Although young people are distant from formal education, they are not distant from the idea of education. If a course or vocational training opportunity is provided, young people want to acquire skills targeted at the service sector, such as foreign languages, computer-related skills, health care skills. On the other hand, skills such as cooking and handicrafts are also popular in this context. University graduates tend to develop similar skills. Many participants are of the opinion that the field proficiency, foreign language, and general skills of university graduates are low. In addition to these, there are some who think that it is necessary to find a job in Turkey and think that they should network accordingly. Finally, another set of skills that young people focus on is more related to personal development. Many young people feel they don't have the personality traits the market demands. Among these characteristics, it is possible to see assertiveness, patience, and communication skills.

|| *Well, there are two things that make it easier to find a job after the academic career: first one is networking, how you connect to people. This should already be established during your time studying. If you have a good network, you find a nice job, gain a nice position. To be able to do that is a thing on its own, being shameless, having social skills better than everyone else, having the confidence, I think it fastens the process by a lot."*

Aged 23, Male, Single, Not Looking for Work

Figure 6. Skills the Youth consider University Graduates should have



These results are reinforced when we take a closer look at the skills needs of NEET groups. The employed and students state needing an improved English, computer skills, and math skills. English is especially on the agenda of the on the brink NEET group. Passive, hopeless and on the brink NEET groups also complain about not having any guidance. The environmental factor also seems to have significance for NEET groups. Young people in permanent, hopeless, and passive NEET groups complain about lack of support from their families and spouses. Those that are on the brink also have this problem. However, work experience is also seen as a need for young people. Finally, young people who feel that their personal characteristics such as self-confidence and assertiveness need to be developed are mostly on the brink, passive, or hopeless NEET groups. When we examine all the findings together, we see that the needs of young people are heterogeneous according to NEET groups and exceed a general NEET-non-NEET classification. As a matter of fact, while the needs of on the brink, passive and hopeless NEET groups have serious similarities to each other, the needs map of active and permanent NEET groups in employment is shaped by a different framework.

- || *My profession is teaching, I'd like to improve myself in the field because I was educated in it. But unfortunately it is very hard to be a teacher in Turkey, there's a process and we have to go through it all successfully. If you still aren't appointed as official staff in state schools, you apply to private schools. Private schools expect you to be experienced. If you don't have experience in any private institution you're not accepted, and can't find a job in the private sector."*

Aged 29, Female, Married, Looking for Work

- || *First let me tell you this, guidance is really critical. We can go in the wrong direction when given guidance by our parents because they guide us as if in their own times. There's this case for example, that my nephew was about to start high school and the family was discussing which is best, regular high school or training high school. I told them to choose computer department in the training school, it has the potential up to software programming. Because it's a popular discipline in the world now, it's about technology. I referred them in that direction, but his family told him, you should go to a regular high school, improve yourself there, then you can either be a civil servant or be anything you want, you'll receive a better education. I thought this was a mistake because the kid loves technology, but his parents guided him wrong. I think for the guiding they have the counselors at schools, I think they're doing it now, but I don't think they're good enough either. What they mainly need is this, the kids should be able to talk to any professional they want. They can do that in high school or university. Then they can start their lives with good decisions."*

Aged 28, Female, Living with Family, Looking for Work

Table 6. Needs Regarding Finding a Job of Youth Groups by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
No one in my circle to guide me	13.3%	31.6%	6.8%	24.0%	16.7%	7.6%
Low self-confidence	16.1%	30.7%	7.8%	19.8%	19.3%	6.3%
Not good at English	22.0%	34.0%	4.8%	24.1%	11.6%	3.5%
Not good at math	26.5%	38.3%	3.9%	15.2%	10.0%	6.1%
Not good at computer skills	17.8%	43.6%	4.7%	18.2%	11.0%	4.7%
Not assertive	11.9%	33.6%	9.0%	25.4%	13.4%	6.7%
Not good at communication	16.7%	34.7%	2.8%	25.0%	15.3%	5.6%
No work experience	10.5%	21.2%	4.7%	38.7%	15.4%	9.4%
Family/spouse doesn't support	5.8%	23.1%	0.0%	32.7%	11.5%	26.9%
None	25.4%	23.9%	6.3%	30.6%	5.6%	8.2%

7.3. Political and Social Choices

One of the most striking results of the research is that despite all the heterogeneous nature of the economic life practices and needs of young people, there are serious similarities in their social, political preferences and general life preferences and tastes, regardless of economic factors. In other words, young people who are differ by their economic lives are united in their social preferences and in their daily lives.

In line with the YADA Foundation's previous youth research, the young people participating in the current research are not distinctly liberal on social issues. Young people do not take an open liberal stance on various social issues, such as the recognition of Cemevis as places of worship, the legal permission for same-sex marriages, the right to education in mother tongues. Moreover, there is no significant difference between NEET groups. The majority of social issues evaluated in a score of 1-5 receive support from the participants in an average of 2.5-3 points. In other words, young people are not oppressive, but it is difficult to say that they are openly liberal. As discussed in the previous sections, it is thought-provoking that young people who complain about discrimination in their working life do not take a more liberal stance on social issues.

Table 7. Support on Social Issues of Youth Groups by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
The Cemevis should be recognized as worship places	3,2	3,4	2,8	3,3	3,3	2,9
Women can perform the same jobs men do	4,2	4,2	4,1	4,2	4,1	4,0
Same-sex marriages should be permitted	2,4	2,5	2,6	2,6	2,7	2,1
Environment can be damaged for the purpose of national development when needed	2,0	1,8	2,0	2,0	1,6	2,2
I would want a different citizenship if I had the chance	2,8	3,0	2,8	3,0	3,0	3,0
Kurdish should be taught in state schools to those who want	3,0	3,3	2,8	2,9	3,2	2,7
I support the presidential system for Turkey	2,5	2,6	2,6	2,6	2,6	2,9

Contrary to the generally neutral positions of young people, the attitudes of young people become sharper under two headings: women's participation in the workforce and environmental problems. The majority of young people in each NEET group think that women can perform the same jobs that men do. Each NEET group gives an average of at least 4 points to this view that affirms women's participation in the workforce, while this subject remains at 2.5 on a scale of 1-5 in other subjects. It seems that young people are taking a more egalitarian position in the workforce, if not social, against the discrimination they face at work. Although not as strong as the support given to women's participation in employment, there is also a remarkable environmental awareness among young people. Many NEET groups support environmental damage for economic development by an average of less than 2 points. Only the permanent NEET group take a stance against the environment on the issue of economic development.

	non-NEET	NEET
AKP (Justice and Development Party)	20.2%	19.1%
CHP (Republican People's Party)	26.4%	22.4%
MHP (Nationalist Movement Party)	5.1%	5.0%
HDP (People's Democratic Party)	8.5%	11.3%
İYİ Parti (The Good Party)	2.3%	2.2%
Other	1.3%	1.7%
I don't vote	36.1%	38.4%

The similarity among young people on social issues becomes much more distinct on political issues. Young people's voting preferences seem independent of the NEET and non-NEET status. The voting rate of all parties in both groups is almost the same. While CHP is partially gaining more support in the non-NEET group, HDP attracts slightly more attention from the NEET group. The most striking trend is the tendency not to vote, exceeding 35% in both groups. The rate of this large group, which can be interpreted as political dissatisfaction, underrepresentation of young people in politics, or indifference, is at a similar level in both groups.

II *Well, young people cannot find a job, and nothing is really done about it, or while they are working, there is nothing done about it. I was working 12 hours for example, the last time and when a person works 12 hours, I only had one day off a week, and one day working full time. You leave at 6 in the morning and come back at 12 at night, your whole day is gone just like that. You only have one day off a week. In other words, no one should be employed under these conditions and politically, nobody is doing anything about it. There is no party that tackles this issue"*

Aged 23, Female, Single-Living with Family, Not Looking for Work

When we examine the NEET groups according by tendency, a higher variance is observed; however, it does not cause a significant change in the main findings. The biggest political party still consists of those who do not vote.. However, we see that political apathy is more concentrated in the on the brink, passive, and hopeless NEET groups. In addition, the votes of AKP are lower in these groups compared to other groups. Another important trend is that as the NEET status of young people intensify, the votes of HDP increase while the votes of CHP decrease. The gap between CHP and HDP in the employment group narrows considerably in the permanent NEET group.

Table 9. Political Part Preferences of Youth Groups by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
AKP (Justice and Development Party)	23.3%	16.1%	27.2%	19.3%	14.7%	28.2%
CHP (Republican People's Party)	27.6%	22.4%	24.7%	24.4%	25.5%	19.4%
MHP (Nationalist Movement Party)	6.1%	4.9%	6.2%	3.7%	4.9%	7.8%
HDP (People's Democratic Party)	10.8%	9.7%	8.6%	8.0%	10.9%	16.5%
İYİ Parti (The Good Party)	2.9%	1.7%	4.9%	2.4%	1.1%	1.9%
Other	1.4%	2.7%	1.2%	0.5%	1.1%	1.9%
I don't vote	28.0%	42.6%	27.2%	41.7%	41.8%	24.3%

It would be wrong to think that the parallel increase of the votes for HDP and the NEET ratio is directly due to the economic status. While examining the demographic groups that make up the NEET group, it was highlighted that one of the important components is the non-Turkish youth living in Turkey, especially the Kurdish. When we think about it in this context, it becomes clear that the relationship between HDP's vote increase and economic status is a misleading correlation. NEET status intensifies among the non-Turkish, especially the Kurdish. Therefore, the increased vote share as HDP's NEET status intensifies can be explained by political preference rather than economic reasons. From this point of view, the argument that NEET status is not as effective as economic preferences and needs in political behavior and preferences remains valid and strong.

7.4. Daily Life, Tastes

Young people are similar in their daily lives and tastes as well as in their social and political preferences. Shared generational experience has a more dominant effect on the daily life choices of young people than their economic status and needs. Young people are engaged in similar daily activities and even the distribution of their marital status is similar.

A significant part of the daily time of young people is spent on the internet and social media. This is followed by spending time with friends. Although NEET groups spend relatively more time on spending time with family and housework, there is no significant difference between groups. The rates of watching TV, reading books, and playing computer games are also quite low compared to the use of the internet and social media. Each NEET group allocates similar amount of time to all daily activities summarized in Table 10. The young people surveyed also largely matched in the frequency of other daily activities. The frequency of activities such as meeting friends in a cafe or restaurant, going out in the evening is similar in NEET and non-NEET groups. Even in relatively more expensive activities such as going to concerts, there is no gap in frequency ratio between groups.

Table 10. Time Dedicated to Daily Activities of Youth Groups by Tendencies (hour)

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
Sleep	7.53	8.15	7.85	8.42	8.08	8.43
Watching TV	1.38	1.43	1.80	1.48	1.81	2.21
Reading books, magazines, or newspapers	1.15	1.37	1.15	1.46	1.21	0.94
Playing video games	0.87	0.88	0.81	1.12	0.89	0.76
Time with friends	2.62	3.34	3.42	3.07	3.36	2.44
Chatting with family	1.90	2.10	2.04	2.07	2.40	2.39
House chores	1.20	1.63	1.87	1.34	1.81	2.17
Social media	2.56	2.78	3.01	2.73	2.96	2.45
Browsing the internet except social media. Watching content	2.04	2.21	3.00	2.21	1.86	1.48

II *I spend a lot of time on my phone, I don't like this, I feel like I'm always looking at my phone, the TV. It's almost that I become like housewives. This is how my day goes by, looking at my phone or the TV except for eating. I eat all the time, really this is how my day goes about... I follow the daytime shows. They feel ridiculous but I still do. I check them out as my mother watches them, so I got used to it I guess. Cooking shows, cleaning shows, I watch things like that."*

Aged 23, Female, Single-Living with Family, Not Looking for Work

The similarities amongst young people is also observed in their emotional relationships. Permanent and active NEET groups are more likely to be single for a long time than in other NEET groups. Young people in employment are more likely to form long-term relationships. However, there is no distinction between NEET groups in both the rest of these affective levels and the other affective relationship groups. When the marital status of the NEET groups is examined, some differences between the groups stand out. Housewives make up a significant portion of the married NEET group. About a quarter of singles are students. The NEET rate among singles is almost 60%. However, there is an average of 10% of hopeless, unemployed NEETs in every marital status. From this point of view, we can say that NEET status has no correlation with emotional relationship and marital status.

Table 11. Emotional Relationship Distribution of Youth Groups by Tendency

	Employed	On the Brink	Active	Passive	Hopeless	Permanent
I'm single. I haven't been in a relationship for a long time	33.8%	28.0%	42.6%	37.5%	35.8%	48.8%
I'm single. Recently broken up	17.2%	23.4%	18.5%	20.7%	21.2%	17.1%
I've been in an emotion-al relationship for a short time now	19.2%	26.1%	20.4%	19.3%	23.4%	17.1%
I have a long term relationship	29.8%	22.5%	18.5%	22.5%	19.7%	17.1%

Another interesting finding of the study is that young people in the NEET group prefer to live alone or with friends rather than living with their families, contrary to the common prejudice in the public. While a significant portion of those who live alone are in employment, NEET groups make up the remaining half of those who live alone. It's true that over 60% of those living with their families are in the NEET group. However, most of the NEET group do not live with their families.

Table 12. People Youth Groups Live Together by Their Education and Employment Status

	With Family	Alone	With Friends	In An Institution/ Dormitory
Working	15.1%	42.6%	26.9%	14.3%
Irregularly Working	4.6%	10.3%	13.5%	0.0%
Housewife	2.1%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Both Studying and Work-ing	6.2%	5.9%	7.7%	28.6%
Unemployed. Not Looking for Work	17.2%	13.2%	13.5%	0.0%
Student	27.7%	2.9%	13.5%	57.1%
Officially Unemployed	17.1%	16.2%	23.1%	0.0%
Preparing for Exams	10.1%	7.4%	1.9%	0.0%



CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

8 Conclusion & Suggestions

About a quarter of youth in Turkey stay out of work and education life. This research aims to portray a comparison of NEET youth in Turkey and their peers. In this context, the main finding of the research is that there are significant changes in the economic needs and demands of young people depending on their education and work experience, while there is no significant social and political differentiation.

Women, 25-29 age group, low and middle income earners, non-Turkish people and people with health problems are more likely to be in the NEET group. Lack of skills and qualification, physical and psychological health problems, and dependents are among the main cause for NEET youth to not work. Young people state suffering from discrimination, weak social rights, lack of skills and experience. They consider these factors to make it harder for them to find a job. The main reason for the transition of young people who were in employment into NEET groups is either weak social rights or a discriminatory view on women's employment or education.

The biggest reasons why young people quit education are economic problems, health problems and family pressure. Family care and health problems preventing education is mostly observed in the NEET group. While family pressure is an obstacle in attending high school and earlier education, health problems are the main obstacle to participation in higher education.

Young people's anxieties and dreams are heavily influenced by their NEET status. Those in the NEET group have more difficulties in finding a job and developing skills and are preoccupied with finding a job, financial problems, and the future. Young people are aware of the need for vocational education and foreign language education. They demand educational services to meet these needs. However, they would like this in the format of a vocational training or a course. For this reason, neither NEET nor non-NEET young people like to participate in formal education. The skills they want to develop are largely in the service sector or in jobs that rely on manual skill.

Young people are not distinctly liberal on social issues. The area in which both the NEET and non-NEET groups are seriously progressive is limited to women's participation in the workforce. NEET status is also not an indicator of political preferences.

Policies and Suggestions for NEET Youth in Turkey

Although the use of the NEET concept is on the rise, there are limited policy suggestions for these young people. Turkey's 11th Development Plan includes profiling young people who cannot take part in education and employment, developing a holistic approach, implementing incentive programs that will increase their participation in employment, conducting training needs analysis according to occupational fields suitable for participation, and directing them to KOSGEB and İŞKUR services. Although NEET concept is mentioned in the Turkey National Employment Strategy (2014-2023)¹⁸, it is evaluated in the axis of strengthening the education-employment relationship. Although the Youth Guarantee Program, which is a European Union program, is presented as a comprehensive policy

18 Official Gazette. High Planning Council 2017. National Employment Strategy (2014-2023) ve Action Plans (2017-2019). Ankara, Turkey: T.R. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

proposal, it seems that the program has not been implemented¹⁹. In this sense, it is possible to say that such policies are insufficient in Turkey. While the negative impact in adults may be limited to the unemployment period, young people are affected by unemployment for a relatively long time. This effect, called the scar effect, increases the risk that young people remaining unemployed in the future, and causes their probable wages to be relatively lower. Similarly, it is known that access to higher education is of critical importance in terms of participation and retention in employment. Individuals who cannot adequately benefit from services such as health, education, and social security due to poverty are at risk of social exclusion²⁰. Considering these points, there is a need to develop inclusive and sustainable policies for young people who are out of education and employment.

It is possible to summarize general policy suggestions of this study as in the following articles:

- + Policies developed targeting NEET youth should consider the heterogenous nature of the youth and the varying needs and demands of different subgroups.
- + All civil society organizations operating in the thematic fields from youth studies regarding the different needs of NEET groups to ecological studies to poverty studies should be introduced to the concept of NEET and revise their policies with the help of the data gathered around the concept.
- + Workplaces and education institutions should develop accessible and flexible opportunities and practices considering the varying health and disability circumstances.
- + Young people should be supported to meet their physical and psychological health needs. The self-esteem issues especially the permanent and hopeless NEET youth experience should be resolved.
- + Foreign language courses and vocational skills trainings or certificate programs should be organized apart from formal education, aiming at providing occupations for NEET youth.
- + Children's daycare or older adults home care services should be provided for women who are unable to work or continue education because of children or elderly care responsibilities.
- + Scholarship opportunities considering the needs of the students who are unable to continue education because of economic needs should be provided.
- + Legal regulations should be practiced against discrimination as well as civil society activities aiming at encouraging and empowering the groups that are subjected to discriminatory practices and perceptions of gender that are relevantly more complex and rooted in society.

19 T.R. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security. General Directorate of Turkish Employment Agency. 2016. Young People Not in Education and Employment (NEET): European Union Youth Garanti Program and Recommendations for Turkey. Ankara, Turkey: T.R. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

20 Yıldırım, Sinem ve Bora Yenihan. 2013. "Social Exclusion Youth in the Labor Market." *Mevzuat Journal*. 16(184): issue

