

Next Generation Turkey research report is commissioned by the British Council and conducted by Yaşama Dair Vakıf (YADA) and Gelecek Daha Net (GDN) Gençlik Platformu.

According to this research, young people in Turkey, like many of their peers around the world, are constantly striving to strike a balance between their sense of individual self and independence, and their allegiance to the fixed structures in their lives like communities, family, education and marriage.

Among the findings:

- Young people in Turkey are optimistic: most think their living conditions will be better in the future
- Half of them spend over two hours a day on social media; Instagram is cited as one of three most frequently used social media channels by 29 per cent of young people, followed by WhatsApp with 27 per cent and Facebook with 26 per cent.
- 70 per cent spend no time on art activities (playing an instrument, drawing, painting, etc.). Half of them spend no time at all engaged in sports or exercise.
- Experiences in the labour market lead over half of them to believe that networks are more important than academic achievement when it comes to securing success.
- 26 per cent of young people between the ages of 18 and 30 are in neither employed, in education or training (NEET). The NEET rate among young women is twice as high as it is among young men (36 per cent against 17 per cent).

The research also found that:

Young people see marriage as the key for both independence and security. They describe it as desirable for conventional reasons – falling in love, having a life partner, and building a secure future – but it also reflects a level of independence from families, an exit strategy to have their own houses, follow their dreams and to live their own lives on their terms.

They are increasingly liberal, and report having close friendships within their local communities. There is considerable diversity within their networks, including people from a variety of ethnic, religious and political identities. However, there remain signs that some young people do not tend to have a close relationship with groups such as Syrian refugees, non-Muslims and members of the LGBT community.

Young people find no time for arts or sports. Their activities centre on meeting with their friends, relatives and neighbours at homes, cafés, restaurants and parks; while cultural activities, such as visiting museums, art galleries and historical places, or going to concerts or the theatre, are rarely pursued.

They value education – but are dissatisfied with the education system. On a 1 to 10 scale (with 1 being least satisfied and 10 being very satisfied), almost all factors of the education system scored below 5. Half of them believe that they need to move to a western country to get a good education. More than half of them believe that when it comes to securing success, it's who you know, rather than what you know, that counts. On top of this, they strongly feel the need for good levels of English language to succeed in the labour market both nationally and globally.

Based on these findings, the report suggests:

- Improving quality and inclusive access to education (in all forms) and preparing young people for work and the wider world
- Empowering young people to be independent and active participants in their society and take greater ownership of their own futures
- Supporting an inclusive society with tolerance and respect for all young people.