LITERACY IN TURKEY
COUNTRY REPORT | ADULTS

October 2015

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of its authors only, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.
This report reflects the point of view of literacy professionals assembled in this network. It is still a work in progress since we continue to gather and update information on literacy in Romania up to the year 2015. The contents of this publication may be reproduced in part, except for commercial purposes, provided the extract is preceded by a reference to “ELINET”, followed by the date of publication of the document.

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A PERFORMANCE IN LITERACY

As Turkey did not take part in PIAAC the OECD’s Survey of Adult Skills, and has not carried out any recent national surveys of adult literacy, there is no data available on levels of literacy among the adult population.
B  LITERACY POLICY
1 Provision

1.1 What types of adult literacy provision are there? What do you consider to be adult literacy provision in your country?

In Turkey, Public Training Centres\(^1\) under the Directorate of Lifelong Learning of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), are the institutions responsible for delivering the two levels of adult literacy courses. The first level adult literacy programme targets adults with no literacy skills, and the second level adult literacy programme target adults who are semi-literate. The examination administered at the second level also serves as the primary education (4 years) examination. Both programmes contain both a literacy and numeracy element. Each of the two courses offers 120 hours of instruction.

In addition to the programmes offered by MoNE, there are various adult literacy programmes in Turkey provided by several NGOs. All programmes provided by NGOs are equivalent to the national first level literacy programme. AÇEV is one of the leading NGOs in adult literacy advancement in Turkey, having trained over 150,000 individuals in basic skills.

AÇEV developed the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP) in 1995 with a comprehensive assessment of current literacy programme methodologies and implementation strategies. In 1995, AÇEV signed an agreement with the previously established MoNE Directorate of Non Formal Education and Apprenticeship (now the Directorate of Lifelong Learning), where FALP became a state-recognised literacy programme. FALP has also developed “FALP II”, a post literacy programme for graduates of FALP to improve reading and writing skills in preparation for further learning. Unlike with FALP, FALP II is not equivalent to the national second level adult literacy programme and does not provide any official certification. The second level adult literacy qualification is granted only by MoNE at Public Training Centres.

1.2 How is adult literacy provision funded?

Adult literacy programmes offered by MoNE (national adult literacy programmes) and by NGOs such as AÇEV are provided for free of charge in Turkey. NGOs providing adult literacy programmes do not receive any funding from the government.

1.3 Is there a statutory entitlement to literacy provision up to a certain level?

There is no statutory entitlement.

1.4 What is the rate of participation in adult learning, workplace training, and liberal adult education?

In Turkey, a distinction is made between formal and non-formal education. Most adult education provision falls in the category of non-formal education. According to the Non-formal Education

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\(^1\) Public Training Centres are established in provinces, districts, sub-districts and villages to carry out social and cultural courses and vocational courses in order to realise the general aims of Turkish national education and the aims and functions of non-formal education. Directorates of Public Training Centers carry out their activities in the offices of directorates, as well as in education rooms or in any rooms suitable for training in prisons, slum areas, public and private institutions of provinces, districts, sub-districts and in formal schools of villages.
Activities Survey 2012, the rate of the participation of adults (15 years and over) in non-formal education is 15.4%. This rate is 17.8% in urban areas and 10.1% in rural areas.

Within the context of non-formal education 77,715 courses were organised in 2012: 4,546,985 people applied for the courses and 3,095,003 people completed these courses. The classification of these courses is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields of education (FOET)</th>
<th>Toplam</th>
<th>Ministry and subsidiary</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Confederation / trade union</th>
<th>Foundation and association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64,236</td>
<td>77,715</td>
<td>42,400</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>16,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General programmes</td>
<td>2,756</td>
<td>2,754</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10,845</td>
<td>12,726</td>
<td>9,334</td>
<td>13,844</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and arts</td>
<td>10,279</td>
<td>12,917</td>
<td>1,949</td>
<td>2,856</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences, business</td>
<td>11,951</td>
<td>12,703</td>
<td>9,333</td>
<td>9,865</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, mathematics and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computing</td>
<td>6,664</td>
<td>6,515</td>
<td>4,139</td>
<td>3,151</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, manufacturing</td>
<td>7,767</td>
<td>9,095</td>
<td>7,149</td>
<td>9,330</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and veterinary</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and welfare</td>
<td>7,587</td>
<td>6,664</td>
<td>5,842</td>
<td>2,853</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>5,335</td>
<td>11,720</td>
<td>3,126</td>
<td>7,974</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Non-formal Education Activities Survey, 2012

1.5 Are studies available on factors that inhibit or prevent participation in literacy education and in using literacy outside educational contexts? If yes, what are the factors?

No such studies are available.

1.6 What progression routes are there from adult basic education courses to VET/HE courses?

There is no official policy on progression routes from adult literacy to VET.

1.7 Does a right to information, advice and guidance (IAG) regarding educational opportunities exist? If yes, who provides this IAG?

There is no ‘right to advice’ in Turkey.

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2 Quality monitoring

2.1 Is there an inspection service to monitor the quality of adult literacy providers (including classroom practice)?

In Turkey, Public Training Centres are responsible for the monitoring and certification of adult literacy courses that lead to a qualification (regardless of the provider). However, Public Training Centres do not have any systematic model to monitor literacy courses.

2.2 Are there national quality standards for the quality of adult literacy providers?

There are no national quality standards.

2.3 Are there national benchmarks / standards for adult literacy performance? How are adults’ progress in reading and writing assessed / monitored?

There are no national benchmarks or standards. In Turkey, there are only two national adult literacy levels and their exams. Adults can go to Public Training Centres and apply for the exams or courses in these two levels. The exams are not standard and can vary depending on the Public Training Centres.

2.4 What accountability measures are in place for adult education providers?

There are no accountability measures.

3 Literacy curricula/reading instruction

3.1 Is there a national literacy curriculum framework for adults? How is this linked to school curricula?

The national adult literacy and numeracy curricula are organised into two levels. The 2nd level adult literacy qualification is equivalent to the primary school (4 years) qualification. Adults who have a 2nd level adult literacy qualification can start with "open middle school" and receive the 8-years primary education qualification.

3.2 What is the accepted methodology for the teaching of literacy to adults?

The accepted methodology in adult literacy programmes is very similar to the accepted methodology in literacy programmes for children. Both rely on the explicit teaching of phoneme-grapheme correspondences through direct instruction of decoding skills, exploiting the high correspondence between letters and sounds in the Turkish writing system.

3.3 How do curricula and learning materials cater for diversity of learner groups and learning needs?

We cannot say that curricula and learning materials cater for the diversity of learner groups and learning needs.
3.4 Is there a specific focus on literacy in VET provision for adults?
There is no specific focus on literacy in VET.

4 Screenings/assessments/support

4.1 How are adults with literacy needs identified?
Adults self-identify their literacy needs and then have to find provision.

4.2 How are adults’ prior literacy knowledge and skills recognised and validated?
Prior literacy knowledge and skills are recognised and validated through the 1st level and 2nd level adult literacy exams. Since 2009, 1st and 2nd level adult literacy qualifications can be received without attending the respective programmes.

4.3 Are there any standard tests to assess literacy needs or learning progress in literacy programmes?
There are no standard tests to assess literacy needs.

4.4 How are adults with dyslexia identified and supported?
Currently, adults with dyslexia cannot be identified and supported.

5 Special support for second-language learners/migrants

5.1 Is there literacy provision for adult migrants whose home language is not the official language of the host country?
There is no language provision for adult migrants.

5.2 Who pays for this provision?
Not applicable.

5.3 Does this provision employ specialist teachers?
Not applicable.

5.4 Is there specialist provision for those who have poor literacy skills in their L1?
Not applicable.

5.5 Is there a separate national curriculum framework for this type of provision?
Not applicable.
6 Reading environments to stimulate reading motivation

6.1 Are there schemes to promote reading and writing for pleasure among adults?

There are no schemes to promote reading and writing for adults.

6.2 Is there systematic cooperation with civil society – e.g. libraries, bookstores, literature institutions, theatres, media, newspapers, publishers etc. in reading and writing promotion for adults?

Not applicable.

6.3 Are there family literacy programmes with a focus on supporting adult literacy?

There are a number of examples of family literacy programmes in Turkey, which have been implemented between 1993 and 2010, which had a focus on supporting children and their families who cannot receive any institutional early childhood education.

*Family Literacy Programmes implemented between 1993 and 2010*:

1) Mother-Child Training Programme for 0-4 Age Group (MoNE, in cooperation with UNICEF and Gazi University) 1993-2004

2) Mother-Child Training Programme for 0-6 Age Group (MoNE, in cooperation with UNICEF) 2003-2005

3) My Family for 0-6 Age Group (MoNE, in cooperation with UNICEF) 2005-2010

4) Mother-Child Education Programme for 5-6 Age Group (MOCHEP) (MoNE, in cooperation with AÇEV) 1993-2010

5) Basic Education Programme for Family (AİTEP) (MoNE, in cooperation with UNICEF) 2007-2010

6) Father Support Programme (BADEP) (MoNE, in cooperation with AÇEV) 2003-2015

*Mother Child Education Programme (MOCHEP)*:

The origins of MOCHEP date back to 1982 and rest on the research project entitled “Turkish Early Enrichment Project” (Bekman, 1998a, 2003, 2004; Kagıtçibasi, 1991, 1992, 1996, 1997; Kagıtçibasi, Bekman and Göksel 1995; Kagıtçibasi, Sunar and Bekman, 2001; Kagıtçibasi, Sunar, Bekman, Cemalciler, 2004). The original project lasted four years (1982-1986). In 1993, the implementation rights for MOCHEP were given to the Ministry of National Education. Since then, the programme has been implemented in 70 provinces (out of 81) in Turkey, as well as in Belgium, Germany, France, Holland, Bahrain and Jordan. In Turkey, 237,000 mothers and children have been reached, and 900 teachers trained.


4 Sevda Bekman, Bogazici University; Family Literacy Programmes : “Examples from Turkey”. 

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The MOCHEP targets the child and the child’s immediate environment, rather than reaching only the child. The programme aims to promote school readiness by providing cognitive enrichment to children and by creating an environment that will provide optimal psychosocial health and nutritional development. Child management methods and communication with the child, emotional security and self-esteem of the mother, family planning and reproductive health are also targeted in the program. Thus, it is an example of both an adult education and a child development programme. Encouraging mothers to learn together with their children enhances the literacy skills acquisition process for both.

The MOCHEP reaches children and parents before children start formal schooling. The understanding is such that the mothers will be more receptive to new information during this period.

The Programme has two main elements: a programme to foster cognitive development of the child and a programme to sensitise mothers to the overall development of the child. It lasts 25 weeks and targets children who are “at risk” due to their environmental conditions.

In addition to being the reason why AÇEV was originally established, the MOCHEP pioneered making “family education” an essential component of education policy and also supported the MoNE’s development of the “Family Training Program 0-18”. Longitudinal research on the effects of the MOCHEP clearly shows that it is beneficial to both mothers and children.

**Family Training Programme 0-18 (AEP 0-18)**

The objective of “The Family Training Programme for 0-18 Age Group” by the MoNE is to develop the “parenthood skills” of parents with children at the age of between 0 and 18, and thus enable the children or the adolescents to fulfil their potential. As a part of the programme, Father Support Trainings and Mother Support Trainings (both developed by AÇEV) have been organised. The father support programme aims to inform the fathers about the needs of a child, adopt a democratic and equal approach in distribution of the household responsibilities, develop and enhance intra-familial and marital communication, and employ the skills and approach they have acquired as a result of the programme, in their close environments. 216,264 attendants in total benefitted from the AEP for the 0-18 Age Group between 2012 and 2013. AEP trainings are carried out in all of the 81 provinces.

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### 7 Digital environments/use of technology in education

#### 7.1 Is there a digital gap? How are adults supported in acquiring literacy and digital skills?

There is a digital divide in Turkey. Turkey is ranked 57th in the ICT development index (IDI) for 2012. There is a huge digital gap between then women and men, and between the uneducated and educated in Turkey. Statistics demonstrate that only 1.5% of women who have no school qualifications and 13.4% of women who have only a primary school qualification have used the computer and Internet in the last 3 months (Eurostat, Information Society Statistics, 2013). These statistics show clearly that the digital divide applies mainly to women with low education in Turkey.

There is a computer literacy programme called “Basic Computer Literacy Program” which is offered by MoNE. The program has eight modules (each module consists of 40 hours of instruction). But this
programme is yet to be widely implemented across the country. There is no available data on the attendant numbers of this programme, which is provided by Adult/Public Education Centres.

7.2 Which population groups are excluded from access to ICTs due to lack of literacy skills?

According to the results of ICT Usage Survey in Households and Individuals carried out in April, 2012, 47.2% of Turkish households have access to the Internet. According to the results of ICT Usage Survey in Households and Individuals, 59% and 58.1% of men aged 16-74 use computers and use the Internet, while for women these proportions were 38.5% and 37% respectively. In urban areas, the proportions were 57.8% for use of computers and 56.6% for use of the Internet; in rural areas the respective proportions were 27.6% and 26.4%. In Turkey, low educated adults, in particular women and the rural population, are excluded from access to ICTs.

7.3 Are there any web-based or mobile-based programmes for adults to improve their literacy & numeracy skills?

AÇEV developed the ‘Web Based Literacy Programme’ (WBLP) in 2011 to reach adults seeking to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. WBLP mainly targets adults who have had no access to learning opportunities but are motivated to learn. WBLP operates mainly through a learning portal\(^5\), where users can login from anywhere and at any time, provided they have access to a computer and an internet connection.

AÇEV’s Web-Based Literacy Programme was designed around a distance-learning model with the aim of making literacy education accessible to individuals through an internet portal. The portal’s purpose is to support young people and adults who are just beginning to learn to read and write, who want to refresh their skills, and who are preparing for literacy-qualification exams. In Turkey, there are currently 970 Public Training Centres (PTC) which are municipal institutions providing first level and second level literacy courses throughout the country. In order to return to open schooling, adults need to pass two levels of literacy courses or exams. Open schooling is an alternative learning system for people outside the age of compulsory education (those aged 15 years and older). Using the WBLP learning portal, adults can acquire the knowledge and skills that they need to pass the first and second level literacy exams in PTCs.

7.4 What classroom resources (E-books, notebooks, internet, mobile phones...) are used to support the development of adults’ literacy?

The participants of AÇEV’s face-to-face literacy programmes, who account for the remaining quarter of the total users, also use the learning portal. In AÇEV’s face-to-face literacy programmes, the learning portal is used in two ways: both as a tool to complement regular face-to-face literacy programmes, and as an integrated part of the curriculum in “technology supported literacy courses”. In regular face-to-face literacy courses, the participants are introduced to the learning portal by their tutors and encouraged to use it during classes and after their course time if they have internet access at home.

In locations where the participants have access to computers and internet, the courses are conducted as ‘technology supported literacy courses’. In this course modality, the web-based resource is being used as an integrated part of the existing curriculum, instead of a support system. These courses last for thirteen weeks, and consist of six hours of face-to-face classroom work and three hours of activities on the learning portal each week.

\(^5\) http://www.acevdeokuyaz.org.
8 Teachers

8.1 What are the professional roles within adult education?

In Turkey, adult literacy courses offered by Public Training Centres are delivered by primary school teachers (retired or working). Primary school teachers can conduct 1st level and 2nd level literacy courses. In addition to these primary school teachers, volunteer teachers who have successfully completed the “Literacy Educator Certificate Programme” can also conduct adult literacy courses. The Literacy Educator Certificate Programme is a 3 weeks programme developed by AÇEV. AÇEV is the only NGO in Turkey which has the right to train volunteers as Literacy Educators.

8.2 What is the status / reputation of teachers and other professionals who work in adult education?

Unfortunately, there are no professionals with a specialisation in adult literacy education. Where there is a need for adult literacy provision, Public Training Centres assign a teacher with whom they work already, or propose the closest primary schools to conduct an adult literacy course.

For 2nd level literacy courses, there is a shortage of teachers, because primary school teachers are reluctant to teach adult literacy courses because:

- Primary school teachers are not trained in adult education; their expertise is in teaching children.
- Conducting adult literacy classes is viewed as low-paid work. Primary school teachers earn more money when they conduct a course for children at their schools.

8.3 What are their working conditions?

Primary school teachers who conduct adult literacy courses have to complete 120 hours of instruction. Regarding duration of the literacy courses, there is no official limitation, but the courses are mostly completed in 4 months. Primary school teachers, who are still in service, have to teach adult classes after or before their class time during the week or at the weekend. Primary school teachers are generally contracted to work 30 hours class time during the week.

8.4 How do salaries compare to the national average?

Primary school teachers (in service or retired) do not receive any salary for adult literacy courses. In addition to their salaries, primary school teachers are paid hourly for the literacy courses they conduct. The hourly rate is standard but also varies according to the time of the day the class is held and the educational background of the teacher.

9 Teacher education

9.1 What are the statutory qualification requirements for adult literacy teachers?

The qualification requirement is that adult literacy teachers should be primary school teachers (in service or retired), or a volunteer with the “Literacy Educator Certificate”.
9.2 Are there specialist qualification routes for adult literacy teachers?
No.

9.3 What are the entry requirements for Initial Teacher Education for adult literacy teachers?
For entry into primary school ITE, there are two entry requirements:
- High school graduation
- Getting enough points at the university entrance exams for the teacher training.

9.4 Who pays for initial teacher education?
Students pay for tuition fees, but these fees are low. In general, higher education is free of charge in public schools/universities in Turkey.

9.5 Is there a curriculum framework for adult literacy initial teacher training?
There is a framework for primary school ITE.

9.6 Are there compulsory (or optional) language and literacy modules in all adult education ITE?
Not applicable.

9.7 What is the length of the required initial teacher training?
Four years for primary school ITE.

9.8 Are there quality standards for ITE?
No.

9.9 Is there continuous professional development (in-service training) for teachers which focuses on literacy development?
Not applicable.

9.10 What is the take-up among teachers?
Not applicable.

9.11 Who delivers this training?
Not applicable.

9.12 How is it quality assured?
Not applicable.
10 Policy-making

10.1 Who is involved in policy-making for adult literacy education?
The Lifelong Learning Directorate at MoNE.

10.2 How is inter-sectoral and interministerial cooperation promoted and coordinated?
There is insufficient information available to comment on an existing interministerial cooperation.

10.3 What financing mechanisms exist that facilitate inter-sectoral cooperation?
There are no financing mechanisms to facilitate inter-sectoral cooperation.

10.4 Which policies promote for the provision of broad and varied access to adult literacy education?
Not applicable.

10.5 How are the motivation, interests and needs of adults taken into account in the policy-making processes?
Not applicable.

10.6 Does government promote adult literacy in its lifelong learning policy?
Yes, the government promotes adult literacy, but the definition of literacy is very narrow.