

# EUROSTUDENT PROJECT SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES: CASE OF TURKEY

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# Higher Education Structure in Turkey

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## ***Definition of Higher Education:***

“Higher Education” is defined in Turkey as all post-secondary programs of at least two years duration.

Universities are composed of faculties offering bachelor's level, graduate and advanced professional programs.

## ***Authority: Higher Education Council***

Fully autonomous supreme corporate public body responsible for the planning, coordination, governance and supervision of higher education with the provisions set forth in the Constitution (Articles 130 and 131) and the Higher Education Law (Law No. 2547).

## ***Number of universities:***

State: 68, Foundation: 25 (5.7% of total)

# Student Profile

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**Total number of students in higher education in 2006:**

around 2,3 million

**NOTE:** The high level of new admissions in the same year (662 thousand)  
Hence, the higher education sectors continues to expand at a fast pace.

**Gender:**

Male: 58 %,      Female: 42 %

**Age Distribution:**

Below age 18	% 3
Between 19-29	% 87
Above 30	% 10

**Vocational Training Schools** (Two-years, offering Associate's Degree) % 13

**Undergraduate** (four-years, offering Bachelor Degree) % 40

**Graduate** (Master degree & Ph.D) % 8

**Distance Learning** (Vocational and undergraduate programs) % 39

Courses are based on the USA-course structure with "associate degrees" of two years, four year BA courses and masters and doctoral students.

# Admission to Undergraduate Programs

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**Very competitive national entrance examination (test, single session like in Japan & China)**

Students are placed centrally based on their preferences and a compounded score (normalized score from this test and normalized grade point average of high school)

This requires school pupils to attend special lessons outside of school to prepare them for their exam (social class differences).

About 39-40% of the total candidates can enter the University. (Only 10 % Bachelor Degree four year)

# Tuition/Fees & Estimated Costs

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Tuition fees are paid by all students.

Fees include medical health care on campus.

***State universities fees:*** 150-900 USD/year

***Foundation (private) universities fees:*** 5000-20000  
USD/year

A state agency (YURTKUR) provides loans to students for the tuition and living costs.

Due to financial reasons, students prefer staying at home, if it is possible.

We estimate that cost of living for students amounts to between €240 and €320 on average per month, including about €160 for food.

# Method and Time Schedule For the Eurostudent Survey

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In response to a letter addressed to all Directors Generals for Higher Education, Turkey's participation was initiated by the Vice president of the Higher Education Council of Turkey (YOK), which is the central steering and financing body in Turkish higher education. He is also the Turkish member of the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

The Student Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM) provided the logistics for the project. The scientific work is carried out by members of METU.

# Method of Survey

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**Survey Technique:** Online survey

**Population(Universe):** 10% of all **BA students** (ISCED 5A; full-time, not distance and not MA)

**Sample Selection Procedure:**

Simple Random Sample using the database from the Student Selection and Placement Centre

**Sample Size:**

73 thousand sent a paper invitation to fill-out the questionnaire

# Database Design & Follow-up Procedure

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The database was designed by METU Computer Center

Pilot survey applied at METU

Personalised invitations, with a personalised password were sent to the universities at which students are registered and these are distributed internally.

Since the invitations are personalised, it will also be possible to only send reminders to those students, who have still not taken part in the survey



# Estimated Response Rate

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We estimate a (very ambitious) response rate of 30% (=24 thousand students).

However, if the response is lower (eg. 10% = 8 thousand students), it would just mean that the data could give an aggregate picture of Turkey (important for EUROSTUDENT), but no regional comparison.

We hope to receive data by the end April and delivery to EUROSTUDENT **June–July 2007**.

# Experienced Difficulties Regarding the Questionnaire

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## **Q1.3. Family Status**

- not married, with long-term partner
- not married, without long-term partner
- married

**Objection:** to the term “family status” since the question refers to the relationship between the respondent and the other people than the family. Culturally not appropriate.

## **New Design of the question**

Which one identifies your marital status?

- Single
- Single, but have relationship
- Single, but engaged (committed relationship)
- Married

# New questions are added to understand the social class background characteristics of the families

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1.6. Including yourself, how many people are there in your family?

1.7 How many people are working in your family?

1. 8. Where did you grow up until age 12?

- city center
- district
- town
- village

1.9 Including yourself, how many siblings do you have?

1.10 Including yourself, how many students are there in your family?

## ***Q. 2.1. What was your route to higher education?***

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### ***Objection:***

The main route to Turkish higher education is through the entrance examination. In this sense there are very few alternative (=non-traditional) routes.

### ***New Design of the Questionnaire:***

2.1. Kind of the finished high school type:

- Vocational high school (State)
- Science School (State but requires passing high school entrance exam)
- Special High School (State but requires passing entrance exam)
- Normal High School (State)
- Private High school (Private)

## ***Q.2.2. Before entering higher education, did you have vocational training or regular paid work?***

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### ***Objection:***

The term “casual minor jobs” caused some confusion. This should be defined more clearly. Due to the fact that in Turkey vocational training is not paid, it was decided by the national researchers to differ between vocational training and employment.

### ***New Design of the Question:***

2.2.1. Before entering the University, have you ever attended to any vocational training program ?

- Yes
- No

2.2.2. Have you ever worked before entering the University?

- No, I have never worked.
- yes, but just in summer, weekends and my leisure time in minor tasks
- Yes, I have regularly worked and paid at least six months

### ***Q.3.3 Which Description best fits your current status as a student?***

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- full-time student
- Part-time student as formal status
- Guest student
- Student of distance education
- Student of continuing professional development or life-long learning
- Other..

Since only full-time students will be take part, this question is superfluous for Turkey.

## ***Q.4.3. Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense***

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Students make no social welfare contributions to universities in Turkey. So difficult to understand the question..

We are uncertain on the reliability of expense details from students living at home (with family/partner).

Indeed, this question did not work in pilot so we decided results will be checked for plausibility (this is a common issue with this expense data).

Also, in the recent past the national currency's value has fluctuated significantly. We agreed that an appropriate exchange rate should be used once all the data is collected to express the data in Euros.

## ***Q.5.8. To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?***

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### ***Objection***

We consider that the leading question on obstructions to mobility should be differently formulated according to whether student have been abroad in the past or not (i.e. according to response to 5.3).

### ***Question 5.3.***

Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?

- yes
- no



## Q. 6.2. Your father / mother is

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- Employed
- Unemployed
- Not occupationally active
- Retired
- Deceased
- Do not know

### ***New Design of the Question:***

- Seasonally working
- Regularly paid (salary or wage worker)
- Employer (employed workers)
- Self-employed
- Unpaid family worker
- Unemployed (but looking for job)
- Not working (housewife)
- Retired
- Passed away
- I don't know



# Future Considerations

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Challenging experience upto now, BUT

Some of the questions may not work- how do we do reliability check?

What can we do if end up very low response rate?

What sort of difficulties we will face in the analysis?