

VOLUNTEERING
INFRASTRUCTURE IN EUROPE
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CEV GREATLY APPRECIATES THE INPUT OF ECE
CIFTCI, SOSYALBEN FOUNDATION PRESIDENT,
EVREN ERGEC, PROJECT MANEGER AT OUT OF
THE BOX INTERNATIONAL, AND JACOPO
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1.VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE - CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

Volunteering in Turkey is often presented in an informal form. Charity is deeply embedded within society in Turkey. However, formal volunteering is not a common phenomenon. Events like the Marmara Earthquake highlight the lack of infrastructure regarding volunteering and increase the demand for volunteers. CSOs are often left in a position to have to form their own regulations due to the lack of legislation put in place by the government. Volunteering is understood as something that includes activities in civic participation through cooperation and collaboration, without any expectation of financial benefit (United Nations General Assembly, 2001). It should be conducted through individual free will.

The Action Research Report (2011) noted that formal volunteering in Turkey became significant after the push for support of the 'Foundation for Social and Volunteering Work', which was aided by the United Nations and from the creation of the Social Services Institute in 1959. After the support given to FSVW, there was an increase in social services by founding schools which led to educating social workers and indirectly helped to boost the volunteering infrastructure in Turkey. The number of volunteers and the impact of civil organisations have fluctuated significantly within Turkey's history. Within the 1945-1960 time period, there was a breakthrough for the freedom of associations as the Law of Associations broadened civil liberties and heightened the activities conducted by associations and trade unions. However, due to the state oversight in social life post-1945, the development of civil society was limited (Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, pp. 53-55, 2011).

By the 1960-1980s, there was an expansion of state dominance as well as control over the workings of associations. This was primarily due to the military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980. As for 1980-2000, essentially all CSO activities were suspended and some were conclusively shut down (p. 55). The social welfare of Turkey went into dissolution as they were still recovering from the 1970s financial crisis, which left basic rights to the market, and civil organisations were most often just used to meet the needs of those that required urgent care. This led to an increase in civil society organisations; both a national phenomenon and an international one. This positively encouraged volunteering in Turkey.

After the 1980s military coup, nearly all non-governmental organisations were put to a halt. The pushing factor behind the coup was to restrict the civic movement that was taking place in Turkey at the time. The 1982 newly drafted constitution after the coup had banned political activities of labour unions and associations. This led to the activities of 23,700 associations being suspended. In 1983 an Associations Law was upheld, which restricted the membership of many civil servants to associations. A law enforcement unit was created to apply this law and gave them the power to inspect and suspend activities by associations that were deemed illegal. NGOs began to occur again in the 1990s. The Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) and Education Volunteers Foundation of Turkey encouraged more youth volunteering in the 1990s. There was an amendment of Article 33 in 1995 which helped to restore the civil domain. After Habitat-II was held in Istanbul in 1996, a discussion around what was to happen with Turkey's civil domain was encouraged and pushed to establish ties between Turkish CSOs and international bodies.

Following the Marmara Earthquake on the 17th of August 1999, the importance of NGOs was much clearer. However, a decade after there was a fall in volunteering amongst the population in Turkey and it was considered a less important part of civil society. With the recent Earthquake in Izmir there has been a significant rise in applications to volunteer for the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), which is a state-managed disaster response agency. Within eight months of the disaster, 102,000 people applied to this agency. Due to the recent rise in volunteering, there is a potential to significantly change Turkey's volunteer structure. The limitations that come with volunteering in Turkey are the lack of structural features that ultimately restrict its growth. There is no established understanding of what it means to be a volunteer, of which further caps the growth of volunteering in Turkey. There are no formal public institutions in charge of volunteering policies and CSOs are usually placed in a position to come up with their own policies, however, this may protect the informal structures from being damaged by the formal ones.

Moreover, there are criticisms that the volunteering infrastructure does not do enough to promote non-violence. A study by CIVICUS (2009-2010) revealed that 43% of individuals believed that the promotion of non-violence from CSOs is limited, only 39% claimed it was significant, 17% moderate and 1% insignificant (TÜSEV, 'Civil Society in Turkey', p. 107, 2011). These structural limitations of the volunteering infrastructure impact the willingness of individuals to volunteer. Additionally, CSOs often complain about their unequal treatment from the government, which is a common criticism that volunteering institutions have of the government (TÜSEV, 2011, 'Civil Society Monitoring Report', p. 5).

2. VOLUNTEERING LANDSCAPE

A Western-styled civil society in Turkey was formed around the late Ottoman Empire; in which 'philanthropic institutions' were developed. This led to greater social solidarity through the form of charity-based activities (TÜSEV, 'Civil Society in Turkey', p. 53, 2011). CSOs became a constitutional right in the 1908 Constitution.

Culture plays a powerful role in volunteering in Turkey. Due to the collective societal structure in Turkey, support for each other is a leading factor behind volunteering and participating in civil society. Imece is a perfect example of the social solidarity present in culture in Turkey and represents collective work amongst people. Moreover, due to the Islamic feature of society in Turkey, there is an emphasis on religion-based charity, yet this doesn't always express itself into volunteering and has become a less significant player in why people volunteer. In 2015, 15% of individuals claimed that they volunteered for an organisation in order to fulfil religious obligations. However, by 2019, only 7% of people said this was their reasoning to volunteer (TESEV, 2019). Regardless of this, religious festivals still boost charity and donations which often translates to volunteering in Turkey.

Volunteering in Turkey is usually associated with charity that helps to improve neighbourhoods, families and poor people, giving food aid to the poor during Bayram and Eid and other aspects that help to raise society according to religious values. This style of informal volunteering is common in Turkey, and is arguably more common than formal volunteering (Herrera, 2011). The reasoning behind this is often explained by the importance of family relations in Turkey as opposed to wider societal implications. Culture in Turkey is inherently supportive of volunteering, however, the government has not historically placed volunteering as a priority.

The National Volunteering Committee (UGK) was established in 2013 and works towards improving and strengthening volunteering in Turkey. It aims to bring together different actors in the volunteering sector to reach a common goal, such as the recognition of volunteering. Organisations like this one highlight that the importance of volunteering in Turkey has been recognised, and institutions are taking volunteering seriously.

3. VOLUNTEERING TRENDS, NUMBERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Volunteering trends in Turkey have not been stable. Events like the 1999 Marmara Earthquake led to a spark in volunteering, but this spark has been shown to die after a while. Yet natural disasters have helped to normalise volunteering. The Mahalle Afet Gönüllüleri (Neighbourhood Disaster Volunteers, MAG) Foundation has trained and equipped over 5,500 volunteers within 120 neighbourhoods (Voluntarios ONU, 2016). After the natural disaster had occurred, Turkish CSOs and international ones built collaborations together. This consequently affected the language that was used in the civil domain and encouraged the use of international terminologies. The earthquake inspired mobilisation amongst people and it increased awareness around the positive impact that volunteering can produce and expanded the resources to support volunteering. It wasn't until then did volunteering genuinely become a "visible institution", according to the Volunteering in Turkey: A Snapshot (UNV, 2013).

Unfortunately, due to issues like the lack of promotion of volunteering, volunteering drops. In comparison to other developed countries, Turkey is particularly behind when it comes to volunteering. It wasn't until April 2013 did Turkey reach 100,000 CSOs in a population of 75 million. Turkey was not included in the 2015 World Giving Index, yet according to TÜSEV (Individual Giving and Philanthropy in Turkey, 2019) Turkey would have ranked 138th in time spent volunteering. In 2018 Turkey ranked 131st in the World Giving Index. This emphasises the lack of participation in volunteering. According to the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Youth and Sports, 1.7% of people engage in volunteer activities. As of September 2020, there were 126,753 CSOs, as well as 5,352 new foundations, of which work with many informal organisations and groups, that were established after 1923 in the foundation of the Republic (ICNL, 2021). However, this is not representative of the feelings of people in Turkey towards volunteering. 64% of Turkish people living in Germany participate in the volunteering industry in Turkish and German associations, groups, federations or initiatives (Frauen et al, 2005: cited in Erturan-Ogut, 2014). Moreover, 11.6% of Turkey's population involve themselves in activities such as individual and corporate activism as well as activities within their community or neighbourhood (TÜSEV, 2011, p.37). This suggests that the lack of volunteering in Turkey is due to a problem in its infrastructure and its development.

Financial hardships often have a factor to play into the reasoning behind why volunteering is at such a low in Turkey. In 2019, TÜSEV found that 27% of people claimed they didn't engage as much in volunteering because they did not have the money to fund it. This was the answer with the highest number of responses. After the financial crash of 2000-2001 in Turkey, the following five years blossomed with financial growth. Yet, by 2007 there was a dramatic slow-down in economic growth. Government spending grew, but productivity growth dropped. This explains some of Turkey's civil participation trends. Although volunteering trends demonstrated a rise, more general civil participation fell.

TÜSEV discovered that there was a 5.5% decrease in the number of people who made a donation other than membership fees in the years 2004-2015. This emphasises the fall in the population's willingness to participate in civil activities. An individual's income also has a part to play in whether individuals were more likely to volunteer in Turkey. If their monthly household income is over 3,500 TL, then 8% of these individuals claimed they spend time volunteering, in comparison to those that earn under 3,500 TL monthly within their household, in which only 5% of them dedicate some time to volunteering (TESEV, 2019). Gender disparity is also visible in Turkey's civil society. Only 16% of Turkish association members are women; having decreased from 22% in 2005 to 16% in 2008 (Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 76, 2011). This could be blamed on a feeling of isolation in civil society in Turkey, and highlights the need for more inclusivity in the Turkish volunteering infrastructure. Moreover, the lack of equal opportunities for women in the volunteering infrastructure may be another barrier as to why women have a less prevalent role in this sector. As of 2009, 63% of CSOs have no written policies in place to ensure equal opportunities and/or equal pay for an equal amount of work conducted for women (CSOS, 2009; cited in Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 105, 2011), and gender discrimination is a commonly accepted reality in the volunteering infrastructure; only 40% of participants believed that gender discrimination within CSOs does not occur (Toros, p. 409, 2007). This reveals another flaw that should be addressed in the volunteering infrastructure in Turkey.

In 2015, only 7.8% of participants in TESEV's study worked as volunteers. In comparison to other nations, this is significantly low. Volunteering amongst Britons in 2019-2020 was between 61% for men and 66% for women (Statistica, 2019/20). This difference in volunteering trends is likely due to the informality of volunteering in Turkey. Individual activism and informal volunteering in 2013, like neighbourly help or participating in community activities, accounts for 11.6% of the population. Due to the informality of volunteering labour in Turkey and the lack of support for volunteering from the government, it results in individuals becoming less likely to be as aware of the impact formal volunteering can have on them. However, those who do volunteer in Turkey often do so frequently. 30% of social volunteers, 21.6% of political volunteers and 11.5% of social members and 16.6% of political members are active in a minimum of two CSOs (Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 73, 2011). Moreover, 23% of volunteers work 9+ hours a week; a considerable amount of time dedicated to volunteering (p. 73).

Reasons for volunteering with organisations are varied. According to TESEV (2019), 26% of participants were volunteering for personal satisfaction. 16% answered that they wanted to meet and work with new people and 15% wanted to fulfil people's needs. To volunteer for religious reasons was only 7% of people, in comparison to 15% in 2015. Associations in Turkey have a mixed purpose; 18.1% work to give a religious service, 14.3% function as a sports association and 13.7% are social solidarity organisations (Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 61, 2011). This concludes that 65% of associations in Turkey are fixated on social services and delivery activities. As for foundations, only 1.28% of them have announced they execute activities that are understood as democracy/law/human rights (GDE, 2009; cited in TÜSEV, p. 61, 2011). However, these organisations are supported by funding from the EU and other foundations.

Like in the majority of countries, those that are 18-30 are the most likely age group to participate in volunteering. 8% of this age group claimed that they'd volunteered for an organisation, in comparison to 7% in the 31-45 age bracket (TESEV, 2019). Another common variant that determines whether individuals will participate in volunteering is one's level of education. In Turkey, 11% of those that have been to university had participated in volunteering within a certain month. 7% of those that surpassed high school had participated in volunteering and only 5% for those that only completed primary school education. This demonstrates the importance of education on whether individuals will volunteer.

The lack of trust for CSOs in Turkey has resulted in a lack of willingness for individuals to volunteer. Many CSOs do not disclose how the public's donations are being spent as there is no obligation to. This leads to a mistrust of CSOs amongst the public and encourages people not to volunteer. In 2019, 60% of people said they do not receive reports from the organisation they actively participate with (TESEV, 2019). 14% of individuals claimed that a lack of transparency from organisations came as a second reason as to why they do not volunteer (TESEV, 2019). This poses a problem for volunteering in Turkey and suggests why formal volunteering through an organisation is less common than informal civil participation and volunteering.

Nonetheless, those that do decide to volunteer usually have a positive response to it. SosyalBen Foundation (2019) found that 82.8% of the 384 participants in their study agreed that volunteering has an important place in their hearts. Moreover, 70.6% of these volunteers believed that engaging in volunteering activities has increased their life satisfaction, with 69.8% of them claiming that it has improved their level of happiness. The primary reason for volunteering amongst these participants was due to the fact that it fits into their world view and philosophy (60.9%), with 53.6% choosing it to help others. When it came to gains obtained from volunteering, 64.3% said their most significant gain was from the moral satisfaction that came with helping society without any returns, and 33.6% believed their gains came from teamwork skills. Only 0.3% used passing their course or getting credit as their main gain and only 2.3% of individuals claimed that their main motivation for volunteering was for academic purposes, which emphasises a strong willingness to volunteer in Turkey (SosyalBen Foundation, 2019). Furthermore, TEGV volunteers have been revealed to have obtained a significantly higher level of self-esteem, trust, empathy and better ethical and social standards in comparison to other young people (TEGV, Impact Analysis Research, p. 18, 2008).

3. IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

The most influential event that emphasised the importance of volunteers was the Marmara region earthquake. Thousands of buildings were destroyed and more than 20,000 people died. There were communication channels that called for the “need for volunteers”. This opened up a discussion about the importance of volunteering in Turkey.

Although the government has aimed to increase a volunteering culture in Turkey between 2020-2023 through means like promoting technology (GÖNÜLLÜLÜK YILI STRATEJİSİ, 2019), Turkey is still very behind when it comes to recognising the importance of volunteers. According to ISTAT (The Italian Institute for Statistics), the COVID pandemic forced NGOs to close for 8 months, with Turkey having the lowest participation rate among young people in informal and formal volunteering, being 6% for the age range of 18-29. Despite the fact that the Turkish government may be slowly acknowledging the potential that volunteering can provide for Turkey, it has a long way to go.

4. ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

According to Volunteering in Turkey a Snapshot, there are no calculations on the value of volunteering economically for Turkey. The social aspect of volunteering has played a larger role in research into volunteering in Turkey.

However, as the government is pushing towards encouraging technology within volunteering, this could lead to a new aspect of volunteering that has significant economic importance.

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLICATIONS

The legal framework for volunteering in Turkey is limited and there is no law to define volunteerism, volunteer management, nor the rights of volunteers. This is a huge limitation for volunteering in Turkey as it prevents any potential progress in its infrastructure. The majority of CSOs found that the legal framework for them is extremely limiting (69%), and only 13% of CSOs argued that they could function freely without the help of mediation from the state (Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 23, 2011), a result of a limiting legal framework for volunteering.

The only law that regulates volunteering in Turkey is the 2005 “Regulation on Voluntary Participation in Provincial Special Administration and Municipal Services” (SosyalBen Foundation, 2019). As part of Turkey’s 9th (2007-13) and 10th (2014-20) Development Plan, there was an emphasis on continuing an agenda to form a better environment for volunteering and to proceed with the development of volunteering. The 10th Development Plan was more explicit in acknowledging the importance of active citizens in achieving social objectives, including volunteering.

Both the Associations Law (2004) and the Law of Foundations (2008) offer a form of the legal framework for civil society organisations, making it simpler to establish activities than before. The Associations Law primarily deals with issues concerning some NGOs in Turkey and is put in place to regulate them. This consequently protects volunteers from NGOs by laying out some rules they must abide by. An example from this law is that 18-year-olds and over cannot work for child organisations. The Law of Foundations made NGOs in Turkey more accessible to foreigners and allowed Turkey’s NGOs to move into international territory. It also put in place measures to enforce pressure on NGOs that are engaging in criminal activities. Both these laws were a step towards protecting volunteers from unreliable NGOs. Although these laws have been updated, there is still much that needs to be done legally to protect volunteers and CSOs and to be in line with European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as well as many EU strategies. CSOs need to be more involved in the process of law and policy making into volunteering (European Commission, p. 4, 2020).

As reported by TÜSEV, volunteer work is usually informal, and there are no rights put in place to “protect them” as their engagement it is not formal. Some CSOs have decided to establish their own internal policies on how to manage their volunteering programs (TÜSEV ATÖLYE, 2015). TÜSEV has outlined the international suggested legal framework for volunteering. They suggest that CSOs must be transparent about their activities in which the law is complied with, monitored, and evaluated. Additionally, they emphasise that there is no legal requirement to register volunteers and that the process of becoming a volunteer should be a simple one. Lastly, volunteering should not come with restraints and spontaneous volunteering is still a benefit to the volunteering infrastructure. The United Nations Volunteer Programme has a coordinator office in Turkey and is working towards supporting improved conditions for volunteers as well as to raise awareness (SosyalBen, 2019).

International Volunteers Day in Turkey was celebrated with the 2019 11th Sustainable Development Plan. This Plan aims to encourage youth into volunteering activities as the government wants to encourage civil engagement amongst young people (SDP, 2019). It wasn't until 2019 did Turkey's government take volunteering, and what it has to offer young people, seriously. The young population, ages 15-30, makes up 25.3% of the total population. Young people are the target of the 11th development plan and it aims to encourage volunteering amongst them. The Ministry of Youth and Sports has taken a leading role in increasing volunteer awareness and has opted to use a corporate structure. To encourage volunteer awareness among young people and to boost volunteering activities is now a priority in governmental policies.

From this development, they aim to increase unity between NGOs and public businesses. NGOs and public institutions will be boosted into working with sustainable local, regional, and national development. There will be an emphasis on how inspiring volunteering and becoming a volunteer is. Turkey's strategic volunteering goals for 2023 will increase the relevance and importance of volunteering; not only for NGOs but also for the private sector and public institutions. They aim to provide more opportunities for young people to volunteer. The volunteering strategy was announced in 2019 in which they revealed their plan to strengthen volunteering culture in Turkey, to use technology efficiently in volunteering, to have more effective regulations and risk management, to increase education, to strengthen inter-institutional relations, and to recognise volunteering and the importance of it. It will improve different aspects of volunteering in Turkey:

The Volunteer Culture Strengthening - It's focused around young people in Turkey and aims to educate them about how volunteering can give them hope for their future. Flexible and free-thinking young people who can use technology well in volunteering will be an asset to the future of volunteering in Turkey and this is why there is a focus on encouraging volunteering amongst their demographic. Due to the focus on young people in the volunteering strategy, it will help build their self-confidence, their skills, and their social participation as well as to develop their entrepreneurship. By building a volunteer culture and creating more volunteering opportunities, a more flexible and fast decision-making process will follow, and will better equip volunteers.

More effective use of technology - By connecting volunteering and technology, the volunteering infrastructure can make a positive change. As young people are highly active on social media, institutions can communicate with volunteers better. Technology will also be used to make collaborations between institutions that support volunteering and volunteers themselves.

More effective regulation and risk management - Volunteering activities will have easier and equal access to safe and clear information in terms of volunteers' job descriptions, rights, and duties. By doing this, the barriers that have led to low numbers of volunteers will be reduced.

Volunteer management strengthening and training increasing - By strengthening the management of volunteers and offering more guidance and support for volunteers, there will be additional encouragement around volunteering and there will be a more positive response to volunteering.

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Interagency - Strengthening the relations - Turkey's state, NGOs, and various stakeholders hold a strong volunteering culture and can influence its infrastructure. The quality of volunteering activities will be developed with a strong representation and advocacy from these sectors.

Recognition of volunteerism and evaluation - Legal recognition and validation of volunteering and volunteers is a right. By giving volunteering more value, it will in turn support youths to become volunteers. Volunteers will be encouraged to take more responsibility and will be more included in the decision-making processes required in the organisation. As their efforts will be deemed more valuable, this will give more positive attributes to the young volunteers. Appreciation for volunteers will be further demonstrated through certificates and nominations to certain awards. Moreover, they will be provided with a reference document that can be used for job or school applications.

The year of volunteering and the development plan continues within the Ministry of Youth and Sports. As a result of the references made to volunteer activities in the 11th development plan, other ministries also took the issues regarding the lack of volunteering infrastructure in Turkey onto their agenda. While the Ministry of National Education made various preparations to teach volunteering, the Ministry of Internal Affairs held numerous meetings with experts on teaching volunteering at an early age in 3 different provinces. Consequently, volunteering is expected to be in the spotlight of society by 2022, with the motivation of the public.

Law No. 7262 is a recent law that was approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on December 27, 2020. It aims to prevent the proliferation of financing weapons of mass destruction within NGOs. It allows for an annual inspection of NGOs to tackle financial terrorism. However, this law did not come without its controversy. Almost 680 civil rights organisations signed a petition for this law not to be passed. Erdogan's government have expanded their anti-terrorism laws, but this has led to a significant increase in the number of journalists, civil society activist, and politicians being incarcerated. This has been argued to be a step back in the protection of volunteers and diminishes their freedom of speech within organisations, as well as reducing the freedom of associations, which is meant to be protected by the Turkish Constitution (ABC News, 2020).

6. STRUCTURE OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR IN VOLUNTEERING

The non-profit sector in Turkey holds a “hierarchical” structure for volunteering, according to TÜSEV, in which there is a lack of trust and motivation between volunteers and the organisation. Finding material sources poses a huge problem for CSOs in Turkey. Due to the lack of governmental funding, there are some CSOs that are unable to cover the necessary financial costs of their volunteers. Article 13 of the Laws of Associations claims that a CSO member cannot work for pay, and if they are indeed being paid then they are asked to resign; however, they can be paid for their work, then decide to become a member (Active Participation in Civil Society, 2015, p. 75). Books and records must be kept on the spending within associations, and if their books are not kept accordingly, those responsible can be fined 500TL. These books must be kept in Turkish (p. 86). The annual income for 44.6% of CSOs is under 10,000TL, and for 15.7% it's under 2,000TL. The annual income for associations is 45,961TL, but for foundations, it is 386,312TL (YADA, 2010; cited in Civil Society in Turkey, TÜSEV, p. 91, 2011).

Some NGOs have occupational-skill building and training for those with disabilities, for example, those that are visually impaired are helped to integrate into society (TSDG, 2019, p. 44). Moreover, 13,000 volunteer Syrian trainers are employed in Temporary Education Centres (TECs) and receive financial support on a monthly basis. This emphasises that parts of the volunteering sectors structure in Turkey aim to protect those more vulnerable in society.

The Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) Volunteering System was formed in 2009 to create emergency management and improve civil protection in the presence of a natural disaster, like the Marmara Earthquake. This in turn gives a space for volunteers to dedicate their time towards. After the 2020 Izmir Earthquake, this structure of volunteering came into play. There were informal actions that came into play as well, such as restaurants providing meals to those affected (Hürriyet, 2020). This further highlights the informal structure of volunteering in Turkey and explains why the statistic is small for volunteering in Turkey.

7. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

There have been many examples of private sectors getting involved in civil society, and in volunteering activities. Companies like Turkcell, Koç, Sabancı, Boyner, and Sutexs Textiles have all supported 'Women Empowering Principles', a narrative that was organised by the UN. They all encourage their employers to participate in volunteering activities. This is important for the volunteering infrastructure in Turkey as often people claim to not have enough time to volunteer. Only 6% of individuals allocate time to volunteering for an organisation (TÜSEV, 2019), which suggests that people do not have this time to give. Turkcell also cooperated with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies on their campaign on the 'Zero tolerance to violence against women, and commenced the Counselling Hotline 83.

There has been an increase in the inclusion of private-sector employees as volunteers in activities that focus on social benefit. This allows employers to use the expertise of private-sector employees and in turn increases their loyalty to those companies. The impact that stakeholders have is demonstrated through their ability to help CSOs. The increase of interest from public institutions and private sectors in volunteering has the ability to mobilise society and increase volunteering opportunities. Turkish NGOs aim to develop their private sector institutions with reference to the UN Global Compact initiatives and public institutions.

The Private Sector Volunteers Foundation (OSGD) links employees from the private sector to NGOs, encouraging them to participate with these NGOs either in their free time or during their working hours (Turkey CRS Report UN, 2008, p. 58); which boosts volunteering participation. Moreover, as mentioned in the UN Report for Turkey (2008, p. 58), this gives CSOs the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of transparency and accountability, something that is lacking within CSOs in Turkey. This scheme has influenced two NGOs to stop working with tobacco and alcohol companies after having reflected their ethical standards.

8. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Sustainable funding is not accessible for NGOs (VTS, 2013). The AKP has come under fire in regards to funding opportunities for organisations. Many have claimed that they offer support and funding for those organisations that support the ideals held by governing officials. For example, large amounts of funding are usually given to religious organisations to run educational projects, for example, how to read the Qur'an and teaching women how to be mothers (Doyle, p. 455, 2017). Moreover, they support women's organisations that promote ideals such as encouraging women to have more children and to dedicate themselves to being housewives. This opens up issues within CSOs' funding, especially if their motives do not fit into the agenda of the government.

CSOs that are based in Istanbul are surviving due to funding by businesses. However, the same opportunities are not available for CSOs in rural areas. Furthermore, where the funding for CSOs comes from is very mixed. They gain 16% of their funding from foreign donors, 6% from the government, 18% from individual donations, 33% from membership fees, 8% from indigenous corporate funding, 5% from service fees/sales, and 11% from other means (TÜSEV, 'Civil Society in Turkey', p. 89, 2011). This prevents the possibility for volunteering institutions to develop themselves as much as they may have hoped to due to the lack of sufficient funding, particularly from the government. The EU does provide funding to CSOs in Turkey, and this process has been transformative to CSOs; however, their capacity is not enough. Moreover, many CSOs are driven towards a partnership with the EU due to the high amount of funding they have to offer, yet due to this focus on funding from many CSOs in Turkey, long-term partnerships were not formed (p. 97). This leaves volunteering institutions fragile as often once they gain funding from the EU, other donors are likely to decrease their funding toward an association or foundation.

There is no clear definition or distinction in Turkish legislation between regulation of aid and donations, which people are looking to amend (Active Participation in Civil Society, p. 66, 2015). The Law of Collection of Aid gives the authorities the ability to decide which foundations and associations can collect aid. They must be compatible with the public's interest, to provide assistance to the individuals in Turkey that are in need, as well as to provide support provisions or public services. It is compulsory to attain an individual's permission to collect aid and to collect donations from abroad you must send a notice to the general directorate of civil society relations' online platform, Debris, where every NGO has a place. NGOs also use Debris to send their annual financial reports. Approval is also needed to give a duration time for aid collection (pp. 67-68). If permission for aid collection has not been given to associations and if they insist on doing public fundraising then their property and money may be confiscated and they will be prosecuted. The method of gaining this permission has been criticised as a breach of the freedom of associations and foundations. Foreign foundations and associations must also gain authorisation to collect aid in Turkey, known as "Pursuing activities in Turkey", and they must gain approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; yet due to this stricter procedure, there have been calls to revoke this (pp. 70-71).

Another criticism of this law is of the consent given to the local and district governors to review the importance of work being conducted by associations, their collection activities, and the consistency between their objective and public interest. This has been criticised as leaving an open space for objectivity (Active Participation in Civil Society, 2015, p. 68).

Tax-exempt status has been given to some associations in Turkey. However, of 99,032 active associations (2014), only 404 have this status (Active Participation in Civil Society, 2015, p. 68). The requirements for associations to gain this benefit status are laid out in Article 49 of Association Regulations. It claims that the association must have been functional for at least a year, they must have made sales of 55,000TL over a year, their objectives and activities should address societal problems on a local and international scale. Half their annual income must be spent on doing this. Additionally, they must be in possession of an acceptable amount of assets and annual income to realise their objective (p. 78). Those associations that do not fulfill these objectives cannot apply for the benefit status for another three years.

According to Article 20 of Law 4962, foundations must declare their budgets in order to claim a tax-exempt status. Furthermore, they must have an objective in either health, social aid, education, scientific research and development, culture and environmental protection, or forestation to have their tax-exemption status accepted by the Cabinet. Only 252 foundations have tax-exempt status in Turkey as of 2013 (Active Participation in Civil Society, 2015, p.78). Their operations must be public and must lessen the national, not local or regional, the burden on public services. They must have operated for at least a year, they must keep books on their balances, and their annual income must have a solid annual budget (p. 79). However, more criticisms have aroused around being neglectful of those organisations working for human rights and their inability to claim tax exemption or have a tax benefit. As the President has the final say on whether a foundation can have access to tax exemption, there's room for potential personal influence and conflict of interest (p. 81).

9. REGULAR AND SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH

The Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TÜSEV) is frequently conducting research and is actively advocating to encourage legislation regarding volunteerism for Turkey's civil society (VTS, 2013). They create research projects on Turkey's civil society and link in international cooperation regarding civil activities, such as volunteering. Moreover, SRKAM (NGO Research Centre) also aims to enhance relationships between leading representatives within the NGO sector as well as to supply scientific information that will commit to developing awareness around NGOs in Turkey. By giving information to modern organisations and training administrators boosts a positive narrative around volunteering. There has been an increase in dialogue regarding civil society within Turkish universities and the cooperation between universities and CSOs will have a positive effect on research into the volunteering infrastructure (TÜSEV, 2011, 'Civil Society Monitoring Report', p. 9).

However, there is a problem with the lack of research into volunteering in Turkey, and due to the lack of funding into volunteering; this creates a barrier as to how much research can be done. Case studies into volunteering and volunteering participation in Turkey is very limited (SosyalBen Foundation, 2019).

10. ETHICS AND QUALITY STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERING

Unfortunately, there is no legal ethics and quality of standards framework for volunteering in Turkey. International standards in humanitarian and disaster aid are not known by NGOs in Turkey (UNDP TÜRKIYE, p. 96). However, many NGOs have their own guidelines or follow existing ethical standards. For example, TEGV has its own ethical standards. This ranges from having respect for people to transparency to impartiality from the volunteer (TEGV, 2017). There needs to be public administration reform in which organisations are held accountable for quality checks in their services to citizens and businesses (European Parliament, p. 15, 2020).

In TUSEV's Era of Transition document, they give statistics on ethical codes of conduct within the volunteering infrastructure. Only 56% of individuals knew efforts were being made into improving these codes but knew their impact was limited. Moreover, 16% had no knowledge of these efforts taking place (Era of Transition, TUSEV, p. 51, 2005). TUSEV argues that the limited ethical standards for volunteering in Turkey are due to the lack of organised measures and encouragement as well as an over-regulation from the government into the volunteering sector, and a lack of room for self-regulatory practices. This restrictive measure on ethics prevents the encouragement of better ethical standards.

TEDMER (Turkey's Ethical Values Centre) has made it their mission to evolve various projects in institutions and to enhance the relationship between different institutions. By doing so, they aim to offer support as well as to define corporate ethical codes and standards within the volunteering infrastructure (Turkey CSR Report UN, 2008).

11. AWARENESS OF VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Social media has a huge potential to raise awareness around volunteering in Turkey. In 2019, TESEV asked individuals whether and where they share the activities of CSOs. Most individuals had never shared activities of CSOs on their social media; this was 69%-76% of individuals, depending on which social media platform it was. 9% of people claimed that they share activities of CSOs every day on Whatsapp, and 8% said they do the same on Facebook and Instagram. It's clear that sharing activities of CSOs is not common in Turkey. Only 2.1% of the individuals that took part in SosyalBen Foundations' survey claimed they were influenced by social media posts, emphasising the little importance social media has on encouraging volunteering. However, more general media support for NGOs, like increasing the amount of news on NGOs, is critical for an increase in support and donations for NGOs (Turkey CSR Report UN, p. 58, 2008).

There are websites and Twitter pages, like Ötekilerin Postası that mobilise people to volunteer or participate in civil society through communications like Whatsapp (UNDP TÜRKIYE, 2013). Websites like Change.org have proven to be useful in raising awareness of issues and has encouraged individuals to take part in what is known as "micro-volunteering", like signing a petition on Change.org. As of 2013, Change.org has one million users in Turkey, and a professional team to help manage the website (UNDP TÜRKIYE, 2013). An example of a popular petition on Change.org more recently is one regarding the treatment of Turkey women which is named, 'Justice for Turkish women both in Turkey and the USA'. It has close to 30,000 signatures as of March 2021.

Applying to be a volunteer for an NGO is often done through an organisation's website and is usually a simple process. An example is Global Giving's website in which they promote various NGOs in Turkey, like Darussafaka Society, one of the oldest NGOs formed in Turkey, and makes joining very easy. Other websites like Genç Gönüller advertise different volunteering opportunities in Turkey and are aimed towards younger people. These websites raise awareness around the many opportunities for volunteering in Turkey. Due to the easy application process, it encourages individuals to get involved.

12. ADDITIONAL COUNTRY SPECIFICS

It is evident historical events, like the Marmara Earthquake, have altered government policies and have influenced the volunteering infrastructure in Turkey. Informal volunteering plays a more significant role than formal volunteering and this is mostly due to the lack of infrastructure and encouragement of volunteering in Turkey.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE VOLUNTEERING IN TURKEY

There needs to be a clear definition of volunteering within Turkish legislation. Currently, there are just definitions produced by CSOs which limit the influence and positive impact that volunteering has to offer the population in Turkey. This links into the need to recognise the importance of volunteering on development. Although more recently there has been a focus on this by the government.

One significant problem that CSOs are facing is a lack of trust by the general public, which discourages them to engage in volunteering within an organisation. This lack of trust can be observed in the increase of individuals not volunteering because of this. From 2015-2019, the lack of trust for organisations increased from 6% to 14%. In order to create more trust, CSOs and stakeholders should openly document how much they spend and on what; making it available to the general public (UNDP TÜRKIYE, 2013). In order to maintain this, donors should be more involved and updated on where their money is being spent in CSOs to further the transparency between the organisation and the public; in which there is an international call for CSOs to do (CIVICUS, pp. 8-9, 2014).

Moreover, if CSOs present clearer objectives and are more encouraging of membership from all, the hierarchical structure that is often present in CSOs will fall and participation may be boosted. In order to promote volunteering and to protect volunteers, there should be a formal institution that focuses on volunteering policies. There is limited encouragement on volunteering in Turkey and the benefits of contributing in civil society are more or less unknown. By improving this, it will in turn encourage the number of volunteers.

There should also be more communication and coordination between NGOs, particularly as there has historically been a lack of involvement from the government in volunteering. This would allow for an exchange in developments like ethics and values standards as well as being able to produce more relevant and current data on volunteering in Turkey, which is not produced enough (SFVRR, 2019).

Development suggestions given by the volunteers that were surveyed by SosyalBen Foundation varied. With 56.8% claiming there needs to be more institutionalisation of volunteering in Turkey and 52.9% claiming that there are not enough volunteers nor is there enough awareness around volunteering. These suggestions can easily become a reality, and hopefully the 2019 11th Sustainable Development Plan will ensure that they do.

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