



Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

REPORT ON INFLUENCE OF EU ON LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN TURKEY



2021



CONTENTS	
LEGISLATION AND PRACTICES RELATING TO DISABILITY IN TURKEY	1
TURKEY-EU RELATIONS IN GENERAL	11
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN PROGRESS REPORTS	13
FINANCIAL SUPPORT UNDER TURKEY – EU FINANCIAL COOPERATION	20
Pre-Candidacy Financial Assistance (1964-1999)	20
Post-Candidacy Assistance (2000-....)	20
SOME PROJECTS FUNDED BY EU IN RECENT YEARS	26
CONCLUSION	28
REFERENCES	29

This report has been published with the financial support of the European Union. The content is completely under the responsibility of Sinop Spastik Çocuklar Derneđi and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

This report has been prepared within the framework of the EUROPEAN and DISABILITY Project performed within the scope of the “Turkey - EU Civil Society Dialogue” program carried out by the Directorate for EU Affairs within the framework of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Financial Assistance since 2008. The Civil Society Dialogue Grant Program between Turkey and the EU (CSD-VI) has a budget of 4,750,000 Euros, aims to increase the interaction and dialogue between Turkish and EU civil societies at local, regional and national levels, and focuses on the importance and benefits of Turkey's EU membership. It is a program that supports awareness raising initiatives in both communities. The Civil Society Dialogue Project is coordinated by Directorate for EU Affairs.

The Europe and Disability Project is funded by EU. The project aims to increase the awareness of the general public and the disability community about the positive effects of the European Union process for the people with disabilities and to support them to adopt the EU process in Turkey. The coordinating institution of the project is the Sinop Spastic Children's Association (<https://www.sinopscd.org.tr/>). The partners of the project are the NGOs; IPP (<http://cluj.institutphoenix.ro/>) from Romania and CEIPES (<https://ceipes.org/>) from Italy.

The objectives of the project are:

- Analysing the perception of people with Disabilities in Turkey to EU process from the aspect of disability rights,
- To demonstrate the potential positive effects of EU process on disability rights to people with disability,
- To promote collaboration between EU and Turkish Disability CSO's,

You can access the project outputs at this address. <https://en.avrupaveengellilik.org/>





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

ABOUT THE REPORT

This report is prepared to reveal the changes on rights of people with disabilities in Turkey and the influence of European Union on this change. Report includes legislation and mechanisms related to people with disabilities in Turkey and critiques and recommendations of European Union on rights of people with disabilities at the progress reports.

In this context, Turkey-EU relations were discussed at a general level. Criticisms about disability in progress reports are listed and also the European Union's funds are mentioned from the perspective of people with disabilities.

Additionally, some specific projects realized with the support of European Union are also included. The aim of the report is to identify the contribution of the European Union to the developments in rights that people with disabilities in Turkey and make it more visible."





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

LEGISLATION AND PRACTICES RELATING TO DISABILITY IN TURKEY

There are protective provisions in Turkish Constitution regarding fundamental rights, including disability. There is a paragraph as “Measures to be taken for children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of martyrs as well as for the invalid and veterans shall not be considered as violation of the principle of equality” at the Constitution’s 10th Article that has a title as Equality before the law. This statement also constitutes the basis of positive discrimination against the disabled. Article 61 of the Constitution, has a paragraph as “The State shall take measures to protect the people with disabilities and secure their integration into community life.” With this provision, the Constitution encharges State itself is responsible for the social integration of the people with disabilities.

Turkey's disability policy is carried out in harmony with international institutions and global disability policies. The Law on the Approval of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) adopted in 2008 and became a part of Turkish legislation. CRPD was revised with the Law on Approval of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014. The European Union is also a party to the CRPD that constitutes a basis for disability policies at the global level. Turkey's and Europe's disability policies converged as a result of approval of CRPD by Turkey. The Convention contains provisions on many issues related to the rights of persons with disabilities. The purpose of the Convention is to promote and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of people with disabilities from all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to strengthen respect for their human dignity. The Convention defines the concept of disability as persons with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The Convention is in line with the new approach on understanding of disability which is popular for past two decades. This new approach considers people with disability not as passive and helpless individuals, but as people that have equal rights with other individuals in the society and struggle to integrate with the society in line with these rights. The most basic principle of this approach is that the most important answer that can be given to the differences specific to humanity is structuring the social and economic processes in a way that includes all people.

Since disability is a horizontal and intersectional issue, provisions related to disability may be in different laws or decrees. However, there is also a specific disability law in legislation (Disability Act). This Act is approved in 2005 and its purpose is to ensure their full and effective participation of people with disabilities in social life on equal terms with other individuals, by providing them to benefit from their fundamental rights and freedoms and strengthening their respect for their inherent dignity. Law also aims to take necessary measures to prevent disability.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

The general principles of the Disability Act are as follows:

- a) It is essential to respect the individual autonomy of persons with disabilities, including the freedom to make their own choices and independence on the basis of the inviolability of their human dignity and dignity.
- b) Disability-based discrimination is prohibited, the fight against discrimination is the basic principle of policies for people with disabilities.
- c) Ensuring equality of opportunity is essential for disabled people to benefit from all rights and services.
- d) It is essential to ensure accessibility of people with disabilities and providing conditions them to live independently and participate fully and effectively in society.
- e) It is essential to prevent all kinds of abuse of the people with disabilities and disability.
- f) The protection of family integrity is essential in the provision of services for the disabled.
- g) In services for children with disabilities, it is essential to consider the best interests of the child.
- h) It is essential to prevent women and girls with disabilities from being exposed to multidimensional discrimination and to ensure that they benefit from their rights and freedoms.
- i) It is essential to ensure the participation of the people with disabilities, their families and disability non-governmental organizations in policy making, decision making and service delivery processes for the disabled.

Disability Act forms the general frame on issues such as discrimination, social inclusion, support, care, accessibility, rehabilitation, protective services, employment, education and training and educational evaluation of people with disabilities.

There are also provisions related to disability in several different laws, like the Labor Law. Regulations and presidential decisions are also important for clarifying and elaborating the general practices set forth by laws according to Turkish legislation system.

In order to better understand the practice and legislation in Turkey, it would be more accurate to make subject-based classification rather than legislation-based classification. In this context, we have separately evaluated the legislation on disability in Turkey under 4 main headings:





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Education

Special education is provided by specially trained personnel and use special education programs and methods to meet the educational needs of individuals who need of special education. Special education shall be made in in an environment suitable for their disability and characteristics. 1951 was a turning point in the history of special education in Turkey. Special education ceased to be perceived as a health and care service and was included in the Turkish National Education system at 1951. The measures to increase the access of the people with disability to education are becoming widespread day by day. According to data provided by Ministry of National Education; The number of students with disabilities studying in special education schools, special education classes and mainstreaming classes was 425,574 at 2019-2020 academic season. The number of students studying in special education and rehabilitation centers was 438,570 at the same academic year,

Disability Act Article 15 mentions about the education of people with disabilities. According to this Article, accession of people with disabilities to education cannot be prevented. People with disabilities has the right to benefit from the opportunity of lifelong education without discrimination, on the basis of equality, in integrated environments in the environment where they live. Education are provided by taking into account their special situations and differences. Integrative plans are included in the general education system that will enable people with disabilities to receive education at all levels.

Article 4 of the National Education Law that is titled Generality and Equality, states that "Educational institutions are open to everyone, regardless of language, race, gender, disability or religion." This provision regarding the prevention of negative discrimination. Article 8 states that "Special measures are taken to educate children in need of special education and protection." This provision guarantees positive discrimination will be made in education for people with disabilities.

Article 39th article of the Vocational Education Law, states that "The Ministry organizes special vocational courses to prepare people in need of special education to business life. The interests, needs and abilities of these people are taken into account in the organization and implementation of the courses." Vocational education system shall be organized according to needs of people with disabilities according to this Article.

Establishment of special education schools, special education and rehabilitation centers and similar private education institutions for individuals in need of special education has been regulated with the Law on Private Education Institutions. These institutions provide education services to people with disabilities who need special education and who can't be educated with inclusive education.

Special Education Services Regulation has been published to regulate the procedures and principles to ensure that individuals with special education needs





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

benefit from their right to education. Principles regarding educational services for all disability groups have been determined in this Regulation. These principles are:

- a) Special education is provided by taking into account individual differences, developmental characteristics and educational needs.
- b) People with special education needs benefit from special education services in line with their interests, desires, qualifications and abilities.
- c) Special education services starts in the early period.
- d) Special education services are planned and conducted in a way that includes the process of interaction and mutual adaptation with the society, without separating individuals with special education needs from their social and physical environments as much as possible,
- e) People with special education needs are educated together with other individuals by making adaptations in purpose, content and teaching processes in line with their educational performance.
- f) Collaborate with some other institutions and organizations so that individuals with special educational needs can continue their education at all types and levels,
- g) Active participation of families (parents) is ensured at every stage of the special education.
- h) Educational authorities work in cooperation with the relevant departments of universities and non-governmental organizations operating for people with special education needs in the development of special education policy.

The purpose of special education according to the Regulation is people with need of special education to use their capacities at the highest level in line with their educational needs, qualifications, interests and abilities, and to prepare them for higher education, professional life and social life.

The regulation also sentences the qualifications of the Guidance and Research Centers (RAM), which is the authorized department on the educational evaluation and promotion of people with disabilities. Guidance and Research Centers are the main units of the National Education system on disability-related issues and are located within the provincial directorates and some district directorates. Regulation also includes detailed provisions on how to continuously monitor students with disabilities and the types and levels of special education services. Regulation also includes provisions regarding the education of families of people with disabilities.

Inclusive education is the main education method for people with disabilities but non-inclusive education is also provided according to the disability type of the student. (RAM's) are responsible for monitoring the education of the students with disabilities. Special education classes can be opened for people with disabilities who cannot attend inclusive education. The curriculum in these classes is determined according to the level of the students with disability who will receive education. There are also special education schools that only provide education for people with disabilities. In addition, students in inclusive education can receive supportive education in special education and rehabilitation centers. Special Education Boards are established in order to





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

coordinate the planning and implementation of special education services in provinces or districts. The procedures and principles regarding the opening, supervision and operation of vocational institutions determined in the Regulation on Special Vocational Rehabilitation Centers. These centers are established in order to ensure the economic and social welfare of the people with disabilities in a job that they can do in line with their abilities.

The costs of education, administration, supportive training programs, special education supportive education costs at special education schools and special education and rehabilitation centers opened under the Law on Private Education Institutions can be covered by State. The principles regarding this subject are regulated by the Regulation on Private Education Institutions of the Ministry of National Education.

Employment, Social Assistance and Financial Support

According to Disabled and Elderly Statistics that is based on Bulletin issued by the Ministry of Family, the labor participation rate of the population with at least one disability, are 35.4% in men, 12.5% in women, and 22.1% in total. Disabled and Elderly Statistics that is based on Bulletin issued by the Ministry of Family is published according to the Population and Housing Survey conducted in 2011 by the Turkish Statistical Institute in the form of a comprehensive sample survey based on administrative records simultaneously with the European Union member states. Turkish Employment Agency's data shows that the number of public institutions with 50+ employees liable to employ disabled people is 1291, and the number of private sector enterprises is 16251 in July 2021. The number of people with disabilities working in this scope in public institutions is 18,218, and the number of people with disabilities working in the private sector is 92,480. The employment of people with disability gap in institutions that are obliged to employ disabled individuals is 4157 in the public sector and 19862 in the private sector. Employees in public institutions with employee (not civil servant) status are included in the above numbers. Employees with disabilities as civil servant status are not included. The number of people with disabilities working as civil servants is 58250. Turkey had a rapid progress in the employment of people with disabilities in recent years, but still has a way to go. The measures taken by the State regarding the employment of the disabled can be found at legislation.

According to the 14th article of the Disability Act, necessary measures are taken for the sustainable development at employment of people with disabilities in the labor market and working environment. These measures are development of guidance and vocational consultancy services for them to start their own business. These measures are mentioned detailed in different laws.

According to Article 5 of the Labor Law with number 4857, no discrimination based on language, race, color, gender, disability, political thought, philosophical belief, religion, sect and similar reasons can be made in the employment. In addition, in order to encourage the employment of people with disabilities it is obligatory to





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

employ three percent people with disabilities in private sector workplaces that employ 50 or more workers. This proportion is 4% in public workplaces. The workplaces shall pay fines who don't obey this rule. In addition, sheltered workplaces for people with disabilities who have difficulties in working in any workplace are designed. State pays the employer for the employees with disabilities that are employed at sheltered workplaces.

In addition to supports for employees with disabilities there are some other supports in Income Tax Law that makes tax reductions for the self-employed people with disabilities according to the degree of their disability. This helps people with disabilities to establish their own businesses.

With the Regulation on Pension Funding to Needy over 65, Powerless and Orphan Turkish Citizens and to Disabled and Needy Turkish Citizens, the legal infrastructure has been established to provide disability pension for our citizens with disability. According to the figures of 2021, individuals with disability who are determined as in poor financial situation can be provided with a maximum of 854 TL and a minimum of 537 TL according to the degree of their disability. In addition, According to Article 60 of the Municipality Law, social services and aids can be made to the low-income, poor, needy, orphans and the people with disabilities. Local administrations can also provide social assistance to the disabled.

Additionally, financial support is provided for the people with disabilities at different legislation. These supports are using public transportation free of charge or at low cost, having some tax advantages and financial advantages for different services.

Accessibility

Article 7 of Disability Act regulates access of people with disabilities. According to this Article, the planning, design, construction, production, licensing and inspection processes in order to ensure the accessibility of people with disability to the built environment shall be under accessibility standards. With this article, it is envisaged to take the necessary measures to ensure that the people with disabilities have access to different services, especially in the field of transportation.

According to Article 2 of the same Law, all the existing official structures that belong to the public institutions, all existing roads, pavements, pedestrian crossings, open and green areas, sports fields and similar social and cultural infrastructure areas and organizations were built by real and legal entities and serving for public services shall be made accessible for people with disabilities. This article is the basis of many regulations and sub-legislation related to the accessibility of people with disabilities.

14th article of the Municipality Law No. 5393 states that "Municipal services are provided to the citizens in the closest places and by the most convenient methods. These services shall be provided with appropriate methods for people with disability, elderly, destitute and low-income people. Since the access of people with disability to





Bu proje Avrupa Birliği tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

urban services, especially road construction, is municipalities' responsibility, it is important to have an article in Municipality Law such like this one.

With the Highway Traffic Law, parking places reserved for people with There are also provisions on positive discrimination for people with disabilities in the regulations regulating railway and road transport.

7th article of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles to be Followed in the Delivery of Public Services states as "The Administration takes the necessary measures to ensure that the public services it provides are easily accessible to people with disabilities." It has been adopted that the access of people with disabilities should be taken into account not only in transportation but also in all public services as a principle with this Article that is added in 2009.

Private and public transportation systems and private and public transportation vehicles with nine or more seats, excluding the driver's seat, must be suitable for the accessibility of people with disabilities. Legislation ensures that information services and information and communication technology shall be accessible for people with disabilities.

Regulation on Making Intercity Passenger Transport Services, Shuttle and Tourism Transport Service Accessible, determines the procedures and principles regarding making intercity passenger transport service, shuttle and tourism transport service accessible. With this regulation, measures have been taken regarding the access of people with disabilities in the highway, seaway and railway. With the Regulation on Free or Discounted Travel Cards, people with disabilities are also counted as one of the groups who will benefit from the right to free travel.

The Regulation on Accessibility of Banking Services was enacted in order to regulate the procedures and principles regarding making banking services accessible for customers with disabilities. In accordance with the regulation that came into force since 2017, banks are obliged to take into account the needs of customers with disabilities when planning their services and products.

In the Consumer Rights Regulation Regarding the Electronic Communication Sector, businesses are responsible for taking into account the special needs of users with disabilities to receive services under similar conditions with other users. Information Technologies and Communications Authority is authorized to impose obligations on businesses regarding services for users with disabilities.

Regulation on the Formation, Duties, Working Procedures and Principles of the Accessible Transportation Services Working Group that is published at 2019 a working group was established to specifically research and examine the problems people with disabilities and passengers with mobility impairments encounter in different modes of transportation, and to prepare a proposal covering all modes of transportation and present it to the Minister of Transport. A working group was formed with the participation of academicians, NGO's, academicians and relevant public institutions.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

This working group will identify the deficiencies related to the access of people with disabilities in the field of transportation and ensure that they are eliminated. By this way, removing the barriers to the access of the disabled has become a living process. In addition, Accessibility Monitoring and Inspection Regulation regulates the principles of establishment of the commissions that will monitor and control the accessibility of all kinds of structures and open spaces serving the public and public transportation. The duties of these commissions are:

- a) To prepare the monitoring and inspection program.
- b) Monitoring according to monitoring and evaluation forms, supervising and reporting existing official structures, roads, pavements, pedestrian crossings, open and green areas, sports fields and similar social and cultural infrastructure areas belonging to public institutions and organizations, as well as buildings built by real and legal persons and providing public service, and metropolitan areas. Additionally, monitoring according to monitoring and evaluation forms, supervising and reporting public transport services provided by the municipalities or under their control.
- c) Establishing a technical evaluation team and assigning it to make a preliminary evaluation when it is necessary.
- d) To issue an accessibility document if there is no deficiency as a result of the monitoring and inspection.
- e) To re-monitor and to re-inspect the places where administrative fines are imposed as a result of the monitoring and inspection.

Accessibility Monitoring and Inspection Commissions inspected 4,797 buildings, open spaces and public transportation vehicles in 2017. 7,225 inspections were carried out in 2018, 6898 inspections in 2019, and 3,165 inspections in 2020. Curfews and other measures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic decreased the inspection number in 2020.

Regulation on the Procedures and Principles for Improving the Access of the Deaf, the Hearing and Visually Impaired to Broadcast Services, specifies the procedures and principles for improving the access of the deaf, hearing and visually impaired individuals to broadcast services. Disabled-friendly programs (programs with sign language and visual descriptions) in broadcast services in determined quantities has been made compulsory for TV and radios within the scope of RTÜK.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Social Inclusion and Care Services

Ministry of Family and Social Policies is responsible for care services for people with disabilities. Article 6 of Disability Act states that "Ministry of Family and Social Affairs is responsible of providing the necessary psycho-social support and care services in accordance with their situation so that people with disabilities can live independently in their environment.

According to the Social Services Law No. 2828, the general principles regarding the execution of services people with disabilities are as follows:

- For equal participation, raising the awareness of individuals, families and the society about the rights and obligations of people with disabilities, providing their medical care and rehabilitation, increasing their capacity to live on their own in their daily lives.
- Making information, services and physical environmental conditions accessible for people with disabilities.
- Ensuring equal opportunities in education for all people with disabilities starting from birth, including pre-school, school age and adults.
- Providing employment opportunities and vocational training and rehabilitation, ensuring that the employment areas are suitable for people with disabilities and taking necessary measures to facilitate the acquisition of technology-appropriate tools and devices by people with disabilities.
- Protecting the social security and income rights of people with disabilities, ensuring their full participation in the fields of culture, entertainment, sports and religion, with their family life and personal integrity.
- Ensuring active participation of persons with disabilities in the making of plans and programs regarding persons with disabilities and all decisions affecting their economic and social status.

Within the scope of these principles, the Ministry carries out different social programs and provides services regarding the care of for people with disabilities. While the number of official residential care and rehabilitation centers serving people with disabilities in Turkey was 21 in 2002, this number has reached 104 as of August 2021. It is aimed to ensure the active participation of individuals with disabilities in social life with the Hope Houses, which is a home-type social service unit that provides a change in perception of transformation to a community-based care service model. As of August 2021, the number of Hope Houses has reached 152.

21,455 people with disabilities are cared in 294 centers within the scope of the Regulation on the Determination of the Disabled Persons in Need of Care and Determination of the Care Service Principles according to August 2021 numbers, Additionally, 18th article of the Metropolitan Municipality Law states that "To use the budget allocated for the poor and the needy, to establish disability centers to support activities related to people with disabilities.". This Article explains the duties of metropolitan mayor. Metropolitan municipalities are obliged to make the necessary infrastructure investments for the social integration of people with disabilities. Following





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Article has been added to Metropolitan Municipality Law in 2005. “Disability service units are established in metropolitan municipalities to provide information, awareness, guidance, counseling, social and vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliği tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

TURKEY-EU RELATIONS IN GENERAL

Since its foundation, the Republic of Turkey has closely followed the developments in the international conjuncture on the way to reach the level of contemporary civilizations and has been an active member of international organizations such as OECD and NATO. In this direction, Turkey applied to the European Community (EEC) on 31 July 1959, shortly after the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1958. The EEC Council of Ministers accepted Turkey's application and suggested signing a partnership agreement that will be valid until the membership conditions are met. This agreement (Agreement Creating an Association Between the Republic of Turkey and the European Economic Community) was signed on 12 September 1963 and entered into force on 1 December 1964.

Ankara Agreement constitutes the legal basis of the relations between Turkey and the European Union. Article 28 of the Ankara Treaty regulates Turkey's membership as following: " As soon as the operation of this Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community. "The Ankara Agreement envisaged three phases for Turkey's integration into the EEC: the preparatory period, the transitional period and the final period. The first period started as of 1 December 1964, when the Agreement entered into force. In this period, which was determined as the 'Preparation Period' to reduce the economic differences between the parties, Turkey did not undertake any obligations. Some institutions have been established between the two parties for the functioning of the established partnership relationship. Among these, the highest decision making body is the Association Council.

With the Additional Protocol signed on 13 November 1970 and entered into force in 1973, the preparatory period envisaged in the Ankara Agreement ended and the conditions for the "Transition Period" were determined. Turkey-EU relations, was unstable from the early 1970s to the second half of the 1980s, due to political and economic reasons. After the military coup of 12 September 1980, relations were officially suspended.

Turkey applied for EU membership on 14 April 1987, without waiting for the completion of the periods stipulated in the Ankara Agreement. EU Commission declared its opinion on this application on 18 December 1989 and stated that the Community could not accept a new member until it had completed its internal integration. Community also stated that Turkey, while qualified to join the Community, should develop in the economic, social and political fields. For this reason, it was suggested not to set a date for the opening of membership negotiations and to develop relations within the framework of the Association Agreement. This proposal was also positively evaluated by Turkey and Turkey started the necessary preparations for the completion of the Customs Union in 1995 as stipulated in the Additional Protocol. After two years of negotiations, the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU entered into force on 1 January 1996, pursuant to the decision taken at the Association Council meeting held on 5 March 1995. Thus, the "Final Period" of the Turkey-EU Association





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Relationship has passed. The Customs Union is one of the most important stages of the partnership relationship for Turkey's goal of integration with the European Union, and it has brought a different dimension to Turkey-European Union relations.

The milestone point of Turkey-EU relations is the EU Heads of State and Government Summit held in Helsinki on 10-11 December 1999., Turkey's candidacy was officially approved at the Helsinki Summit and it was clearly and unequivocally stated that it would be on an equal footing with other candidate countries. It was decided to prepare an Accession Partnership Document for Turkey as well as for other candidate countries at Helsinki summit. The first Accession Partnership Document prepared for Turkey was approved by the European Council on 8 March 2001. The National Program, which includes Turkey's program and calendar for the implementation of the priorities in the Accession Partnership Document, was approved by Turkish Government on 19 March 2001 and delivered to the European Commission on 26 March 2001. Progress reports for Turkey began to be published after this date.

Turkey, which showed its pertinacity on the path of membership to the European Union at every opportunity, also accelerated its reform efforts in 2000's. Thus, Turkish Parliament adopted several harmonization law packages aimed at meeting the political criteria, which are the prerequisites for the opening of negotiations. Turkey made several reforms that expanded the scope of fundamental rights and freedoms, strengthened and secured existing regulations in areas such as democracy, rule of law, freedom of thought and expression and human rights. In this framework, 8 harmonization packages between 2002-2004 and 2 constitutional Packages in 2001 and 2004 were adopted by the Parliament. In the Brussels Summit dated 17 December 2004 was another milestone for Turkey-EU relations. it was decided to start negotiations on 3 October 2005 at the Summit, stating that Turkey satisfies the political criteria sufficiently.

Turkey officially started the EU accession negotiations with the Intergovernmental Conference held in Luxembourg on 3 October 2005. On the same day, a press conference was held and the Negotiation Framework Document for Turkey was published. Thus, the volatile relationship between Turkey and the EU has passed a very important point and entered a brand new process. In the current situation, 16 chapters have been opened to negotiations, one of which has been temporarily closed. The political obstacles of some member states and the Cyprus problem were the main problem for negotiation process. While 13 chapters were opened for negotiation between 2006-2010, only 1 chapter could be opened at negotiation in the 2010-2013 period, since most of the unopened chapters were blocked by the political obstacles of the member states.

On 17 May 2012, Positive Agenda started between Turkey and the European Commission. Positive Agenda is a working method that aims to strengthen cooperation mechanisms on some important issues in terms of Turkey-EU relations and to fulfill technical opening/closing criteria as soon as possible with the working groups created, including chapters with political blocks. Positive Agenda ended in 2014.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN PROGRESS REPORTS

Since the Helsinki Summit held in 1999, regular progress reports have been prepared for Turkey. Turkey started negotiations with the EU for full candidacy in 2005. Progress reports on Turkey's preparation for EU membership have continued to be published every year since 2005.

EU has started to define disability in a different way for past two decades. People with disabilities started to be seen not as passive and needy individuals, but as people with equal rights to other individuals in the society. This is a definition change not only on a European basis, but also globally. This change was also reflected in the progress reports of the EU and its negotiations with Turkey.

The first expression about people with disabilities is at 2000 Turkey Regular Progress Report. In this report, " No National Programme for disabled people exists yet in Turkey." statement is included. This situation is related to the declaration of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2000. In 2000, the most important personal freedoms and rights of European Union citizens (including citizens with disabilities) were collected in a single legally binding document (the European Charter of Fundamental Rights).

2005 Progress Report is the first Progress Report of the full candidacy process. Disability Act that entered into force in 2005 was positively mentioned in 2005 progress report. . However, Turkey has been criticized for not accepting the 15th article of the European Social Charter regarding the right of persons with physical or mental disabilities to vocational training, rehabilitation and social placement. The paragraph on social inclusion of the 2005 Progress Report, states that "the adoption of a Disability Act in July 2005 is important but significant work still needs to be carried out to improve the situation of particularly vulnerable groups." It was also emphasized that more attention should be given to the development of central and decentralized structures and facilities (social services and institutions) for persons with disabilities, as well as improving the access of children with disabilities to education.

Turkey approved Revised European Social Charter on 27 September 2006 with some reservations., Turkey lifted its previous reservations to the provisions of the European Social Charter on the right of children and young people to protection and the rights of persons with disabilities in 2006. 2006 Progress Report includes following paragraph: "As regards the rights of disabled people, several implementing legislations were issued following the entry into force of Disability Act in 2005. These cover areas such as workplaces and educational services for disabled people. More needs to be done to establish decentralised structures and services for disabled people and also to facilitate access to education of children with disabilities. "EU finds Turkey's efforts positive but insufficient. 2006 Progress report mentions about the lack of Law on regarding the mentally handicapped people. Report mentions the lack of infrastructure and human resources of the rehabilitation centers for the mentally handicapped people. Report also says the assistance received from the State for the mentally





Bu proje Avrupa Birliği tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

handicapped people living with their families is very inadequate. Report mentions positively on preparation of an action plan for the employment of the people with disabilities and the regulations enacted within the scope of the Disability Act. In the conclusion part of the 2006 progress report mentions positively about some progress has been made in the implementation of social protection and the newly introduced Disability Act.

Turkey signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2006, in March 2007. This was mentioned in the 2007 Progress Report. 2007 Progress Report also emphasized that there is no progress at access of people with disabilities to education, health, social and public services and public buildings. The resources allocated to raise the employability of people with disability have increased according to 2007 Progress Report. Turkey needs strong mechanisms to monitor the implementation of social inclusion policies to measure progress. The report stated that there is a lack of data and research on disability.

2008 Progress Report mentions that Turkey has adopted an employment package that includes incentives for the employment of young people, women and people with disabilities. Report also praises government to increase the support for social security payments of people with disabilities and to increase the resources for the care services of people with disabilities by the purpose of encouraging the employment of people with disabilities, However, 2008 Progress Report criticizes Turkey for the fact that people with disabilities cannot benefit from public services sufficiently. The criticism of the lack of data and research in the 2007 Progress Report and the inadequate rehabilitation opportunities for the mentally handicapped were repeated in the 2008 report. The lack of data and research has been the subject of other progress reports since then.

In the 2009 Progress Report, it was emphasized that Turkey approved the UN Convention on the Disabled in December 2008, regarding the principle of treatment of socially vulnerable and people with disabilities and combating against discrimination. In the field of public administration part of the Report, it is mentioned that the Council of Ministers published a Regulation in July 2009 that sets out the principles and procedures for the administration to provide better public services to citizens with disabilities. It has been stated that the people with physical disabilities face problems in accessing existing services due to their physical disabilities and insufficient awareness.

There is a comment in 2010 progress report on the Constitutional amendment in 2010 paved the way for positive discrimination for the people with disabilities. As regards socially vulnerable persons and/or persons with disabilities, an amendment to the Constitution cleared the way for positive discrimination in favor of persons with disabilities by stating that special measures for them cannot be regarded as against the equality principle. Report criticizes as a national mechanism for monitoring implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of disabled persons and its optional protocol still has not been established. Report also criticizes that although the 2005





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Turkish Disability Act states that all existing public buildings and roads, pavements, pedestrian crossings, open and green areas, sports areas and similar social and cultural infrastructure serving the public must be made suitably accessible for disabled people by 2012 but there is not any progress except for pilot access projects in 4 municipalities. Report look positively that employment of persons with disabilities in public institutions has been exempted from the recruitment limitations in the general budget. Nevertheless, it was requested that Turkey's efforts to raise awareness to combat prejudices about people with disabilities should be raised, thus employment opportunities of these people will be easier.

In the 2011 Progress Report, it was stated that people with disabilities is gained insufficient representative faculty in the 2011 elections. Report refers positively about the provision of advantages to temporary and contracted civil servants with disability, pregnant or having newborn child with the amendments made in the Civil Servants Law, the adoption of the Accessibility Strategy Document and the National Action Plan, and the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies to eliminate institutional disorganization with disability policies and persons with disabilities. Care Services Strategy and Action Plan covering the period of 2011-2013, which envisages the improvement of home care services for children, was mentioned positively too. Report emphasizes the positive effects of removing budget restrictions on staff for the employment of people with disabilities in public institutions but advise to improve the measures taken. Report criticizes that the amendment in the 2010 Constitutional amendments that paves the way for positive discrimination for persons with disabilities has not been translated into specific measures and that a national mechanism has not been established to monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. Report criticizes there are physical barriers to accessing public buildings for people with disabilities, despite the related legislation in force. The criticism about the lack of data and research in the 2007 Progress Report was also included in this report. Report emphasizes that there is a need for more awareness raising activities to combat prejudices against people with disabilities.

2012 Progress Report criticizes that the implementation of the Accessibility Strategy Document and the National Action Plan, which had been adopted previously, was insufficient and that a national monitoring mechanism was not established in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. The principle of positive discrimination towards people with disabilities is still not adequately reflected in concrete policy measures. The efforts made to expand home care services for people with disabilities, the protocol to encourage the entrepreneurship of the people with disabilities and the efforts to increase the employment of the people with disability in the public were appreciated in 2012 Progress Report. The extension and postponement of the mandatory compliance period for public institutions to provide access services for people with disabilities is stated as a deficiency. Report advices awareness campaigns to combat prejudices against people with disabilities. Employment efforts were positive but insufficient according to the Report.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

In the 2013 Progress Report, limited increase in the employment of the people with disabilities in the public sector was evaluated positively but Report emphasizes that serious problems continued to be experienced regarding their employment in the private sector. The initiation of monthly social assistance payments for citizens with disability who are not covered by the social security system and the continuation of the provision of non-institutional care services for people with disability are the positive developments in the field of social protection mentioned in 2013 Progress Report. According to the 2013 Progress Report, a government-supported pilot activity was carried out to raise awareness about people in need of social protection and/or people with disabilities, and a Monitoring and Evaluation Board on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established in order to comply with the relevant UN Convention signed by Turkey. However, under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a national monitoring mechanism has yet to be established and further efforts are needed to combat stereotypes against people with disabilities. Implementation of the Implementation of Accessibility Strategy Document and the National Action Plan were insufficient. Another point that has been criticized is that there are difficulties in accessing education of people with disabilities.

The difficulties in accessing education were emphasized again in 2014 Progress Report, but Report also mentions about the progress on situation of people in need of social protection and/or people with disabilities had improved. Report states that new financial incentives for the creation of sheltered workplaces in the private sector in 2014 will contribute to the employment of people with disabilities in the private sector. In the field of combating discrimination, it was appreciated that the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of disability was included in the National Education Basic Law and the Labor Law. This inclusion which was the subject of criticism in previous progress reports, was welcomed in the 2014 report. Report advises that the concept of accessibility and the provisions on direct or indirect discrimination due to disability should be harmonized in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, The EU mentions positively about Turkey to allocate quota at employment of people with disabilities in every progress report, in 2014 Report EU criticized that there are legal provisions that limit the entry of people with disabilities to be judge and prosecutor.

The EU stated in its 2015 Turkey Report that the access of the people with disabilities to public services is insufficient. Report states that “the national employment strategy envisages penalties for institutions that fail to recruit persons with disabilities, but this group continued to account for fewer than 2 % of public employees. The share was even lower in the private sector.” These rates are insufficient. In the field of social protection, it is mentioned that The social assistance scheme for persons with disabilities expanded, with an increase in the number of beneficiaries covered and in the capacity of institutional and semi-institutional care centers and services. In terms of legislation, the TGNA approved the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which constitutes an individual complaint mechanism regarding the integration of persons with disabilities. Report finds this development positive. Regarding education, it has been stated that the number of students with disabilities in primary and secondary education has increased, but





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

access to higher education continues to be a problem for people with disabilities. The extension of the transitional period for adapting public buildings for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities has been criticized.

The employment of people with disabilities in the public sector was also mentioned in the 2016 Turkey Report. That was mentioned at previous reports. Employment of people with disabilities in the public sector increased to 43,151 in 2016. Report states that the 3% limit has been exceeded, but criticizes the access of citizens with disability to services, including public buildings, remains as well. Until 2016, amendments were made in some laws regarding the prohibition of direct or indirect discrimination based on disability regarding the rights of persons with disabilities. On the other hand, some laws are still in force contrary to the principles of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Turkey is a party. The low level of participation of people with disabilities especially in higher education and lifelong learning, which was also mentioned in previous reports, was also criticized in this report. The criticism regarding accessibility issues was preserved in 2016 as well. The problem of early diagnosis of disability was also highlighted in the 2016 Turkey Report.

EU didn't publish report for Turkey in 2017. 2018 Turkey Report states that there is legislation on promoting equal opportunities for students with special education needs in Turkey regarding the rights of persons with disabilities, and the number of students benefiting from inclusive education has increased. It was also emphasized that a comprehensive financial support plan was implemented for home care for people with disabilities

The following criticisms are also included in the 2018 Turkey Report:

- People with disabilities do not have access to most public services and buildings.
- Public awareness campaigns need to be stepped up.
- There is a lack of data on the participation of people with disabilities in economic and social life in Turkey.
- There is no independent body responsible for monitoring mental health legislation and mental health institutions in Turkey.
- People with disabilities face difficulties in accessing the labor market.
- Access to health services for children and adults with disabilities needs to be improved.

The considerations regarding the people with disability in the 2019 Turkey Report are as follows: “

On the rights of persons with disabilities, Turkey continued capacity-building efforts to promote inclusive education services. However, the lack of qualified teaching staff for inclusive education is a major obstacle. There is a particularly low rate of participation in early childhood education. Affordable occupational therapy and vocational rehabilitation services need to be expanded to promote the employability of persons





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

with disabilities. Government continued its financial support scheme for home-based care provision for people with disabilities in need. However, people with disabilities have limited access to the personal and social support needed for independent living. Awareness on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CPRD) among public service providers is reportedly low, and no systematic efforts are made to promote or implement the principles of the Convention. The National Monitoring and Evaluation Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities needs to be activated, and its work should be conducted in line with the CRPD. According to the Criminal Code, the exclusion of a disabled person from public service is not considered a crime, unless it is a hate crime. Legal sanctions against discrimination in education and employment remain unidentified in Turkish Disability Act. Turkey suffers from the lack of reliable and up-to-date data on the situation of people with disabilities. People with disabilities face difficulties getting a foothold on the labor market. Participation of persons with disabilities in Turkey's economy and society remains a challenge, the main issues being limited enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation, inadequate physical infrastructure at workplaces, and lack of affordable occupational therapy services. Home-based care subsidies for vulnerable children and persons with disabilities are expanding. Access to health services for children and adults with disabilities needs to be improved.”

In 2020 Turkey Report, it was mentioned for the first time that the disability NGOs should be included in the decision making processes related to the rights of people with disabilities. Report mentions about necessity of a national action plan on the rights of people with disabilities needs to be adopted involving organizations of persons with disabilities. Report also states that that the framework for monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol is not independent. in 2019, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expressed concern about the prevalence of the medical, charitable and paternalistic approaches to disability, exemplified by disability assessments based on medical reports, which reduce those with disabilities to their impairments and health condition. This issue is repeated in 2020 Turkey Report. The following issues are also mentioned in the 2020 Turkey Report:

- Discriminatory provisions, which are not compatible with EU acquis provisions, remain in legislation, such as restricting access to certain public professions (i.e. diplomat, judge, governor and prosecutor) and the penal code requiring proof of hatred motivation for disability-based discrimination.
- There are still obstacles problems in accessing buildings and public services.
- Accessibility to buildings and public services, as well as the data collection system need to be improved and accessibility standards need to be enforced.
- Children with disabilities benefit from public health care, aids and rehabilitation and physiotherapy services, regular allowances, carer benefits and free school transport. H
- The Ministry of National Education is conducting programmes to promote inclusive education and in-service trainings for school teachers of children with





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

special needs. However, school participation of children with disabilities remains low.

- Public awareness on accessibility of urban transport and other services is increasing thanks to public and private initiatives.
- Further efforts are needed to increase employability and access to the labor market for people with disabilities.
- Financial assistance continued to be provided for home care targeted at people with severe disabilities.

Positive developments were mentioned in the 2020 Turkey Report on the voting rights of the people with disabilities, which had been criticized in previous reports. Report states that with the activation of mobile ballot boxes that are directly delivered to people with disability, 78% of all voters with disability could be able to vote in the 2018 June general elections.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT UNDER TURKEY – EU FINANCIAL COOPERATION

The European Union allocates significant amounts of resources in various forms with different financial instruments as grants or loans in order to support the domestic economic and social developments of the member countries and to balance the level of international development. Special financial support is also given to countries that have applied to become a member of the European Union and are officially recognized as candidate country such as Turkey. Along with Turkey, which gained candidacy status at the 1999 Helsinki Summit, current candidates benefit from an increased financial assistance called as pre-accession assistance. These aids provide financial resources to the countries for the political, economic, legal and administrative measures to be taken by the country for harmonization and implementation with the EU acquis in the EU membership process.

The financial cooperation relationship between Turkey and the EU can be evaluated in two separate processes, before and after candidacy.

Pre-Candidacy Financial Assistance (1964-1999)

1964-1995: The period between 1963 Turkey-EC Association Agreement and 1996 Customs Union signed was a period in which Turkey benefited from financial aid through financial protocols. In this period, Turkey received 1 billion Euros financial aid, mostly as loans.

1996-1999: It includes financial assistance to meet the new needs of the Customs Union between 1996 establishment of a Customs Union and 1999 when Turkey gained candidacy status. Total aid, mostly in the form of loans, amounted to €755.3 million during this period. The aids in this period are mostly as loan and are not used for disability related issues.

Post-Candidacy Assistance (2000-....)

Post-Candidacy Period (2000-2006)

Turkey, which became a candidate country in 1999, started to benefit from grant funds under a single framework as of the end of 2001. Accordingly, it is envisaged that 177 million Euros will be given annually to Turkey through projects in order to make the legal and institutional arrangements in the candidacy process. In the 2002-2006 period, Turkey used approximately 1.3 billion Euros for a total of 164 projects. These funds were used for institutional restructuring (30%), harmonization with the EU acquis (35%) and economic and social cohesion (35%). The funds also aimed to prepare Turkey for participation in Community programs.

European Union asked the establishment of a Decentralized Implementation System from Turkey for the effective and effective use and supervision of financial aids within the country. System has been established with the Prime Ministry Circular No. 2001/41. The main actors of this system are:





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

- National Financial Assistance Coordinator,
- Financial Cooperation Committee,
- National Fund and National Authorizing Officer,
- Joint Monitoring Committee
- The Central Finance and Contracts Unit.

Turkey started accession negotiations with the European Union in October 2005 with the momentum created by the reform process. The beginning of the negotiations changed both the quality and quantity of the reforms and the financial assistance provided to support these reforms. Changes that affect many actors of the society have increasingly continued with the negotiation process aiming at harmonization with the EU in many different and comprehensive fields including energy, transportation, public health, agriculture, legal and administrative in this period. For this reason, there has been a significant increase in the amount of financial aid provided to prepare the society for these changes compared to the previous period. As of this date, funds related to the disability have also come to Turkey's agenda.

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance - IPA

European Union has changed the financial assistance mechanism it provides to the candidate countries with the budget period of 2007 – 2013. Accordingly, financial aids to candidate and potential candidate countries were gathered under the name of Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

IPA, is structured under five headings. IPA provides pre-accession financial support in fields like environment, transportation, regional competition, human resources development and rural development, in addition to transition period and institutional restructuring support. In addition, candidate countries continue to participate in Union Programs whose contributions are partially financed under IPA.

IPA Components:

- I. Transition Support and Institutional Structuring
- II. Cross-Border Cooperation
- III. Regional Development
- IV. Development of Human Resources
- V. Rural Development (IPARD)

The fund allocated to different countries as of 2007-2013 within the scope of IPA is approximately 9.9 billion Euros. 4.8 billion Euros, that is approximately half of total amount is reserved for Turkey by taking into account its population and surface area.

Although there are no chapters directly related to people with disability among these funds, many projects have been carried out for people with disabilities, especially under the human resources chapter. Many projects have been carried out by both the public and civil society with EU funding related to disability especially on employment of the people with disabilities.,





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

First paragraph of Article 4 (g) of the IPA1 period (2007-2013) Framework Agreement states that “Any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prevented during the various stages of the implementation of assistance.””

Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) is the main document indicating in which sectors EU financial assistance can be used in programming IPA components and determining priorities. The document has been prepared in 3-years periods and has been revised annually by the European Commission with the contributions of Turkey.

Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document determines EU priorities for financial assistance to be provided to Turkey in the 2011-2013 programming period. According to this document, the Commission has declared that it will focus its assistance mainly on the following sectors in order to achieve the selected priorities for the 2011-2013 programming period:

- Justice, Home Affairs and Fundamental Rights
- Private Sector Development
- Environment and Climate Change
- Transportation
- Energy
- Social Development
- Agriculture and Rural Development

Providing support to disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities, falls within the scope of the Justice, Home Affairs and Fundamental Rights sector. One of the objectives of the Justice, Home Affairs and Fundamental Rights sector for three years of EU support is: “Ensuring the security, respecting their rights and promoting integration of vulnerable groups and minorities, including IDPs and Roma; effective protection and promotion of children's and women's rights, and reduction of violence against children and women; implementing and promoting gender equality and anti-discrimination policies; The existence of support mechanisms for people with mental and physical disabilities and the elderly, and the full enjoyment of union rights by public employees and workers.”

Social development sector, -another sector of the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document-, targets regarding the disabled: “Strengthening social integration policies by providing more training and employment opportunities to women, youth, the people with disabilities and other people in need.

The component that is most closely related to the field of disability is the Human Resources Development component, -fourth component- among the IPA Components. EU supported Turkey like other candidate countries, in preparations for the implementation and administration of Union harmonization policies, especially in preparations for harmonization with the European Social Fund within the framework of the European Employment Strategy. Employment of people with disabilities is an





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

important shortcoming that is constantly emphasized in the progress reports. Therefore, the projects that increase the employment of people with disabilities have been supported by different vertical and horizontal projects and programmes under this component.

The Human Resources Development Operational Program (HRDOP) has been coordinated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and HRDOP aims to increase employment capacity and strengthen human resources in regions with per capita income below 75% of Turkey's average. Many projects were carried out with the aim of facilitating the access of disadvantaged people including people with disabilities, to the labor market and social protection, and removing the barriers to their access to the labor market within the framework of the priority of social inclusion of the program.

The IPA-IV Human resources development component was carried out in two ways:

Operations (Umbrella Projects): Central organizations such as Ministry of National Education, Turkish Employment Agency, Social Security Institution carried out activities at the national level, to develop institutional capacity and to determine national policies. These “umbrella projects are called “operations”. through public institutions and organizations located in the center, such as the Social Security Institution.

Grant Programs: The most important pillar of the operations (umbrella projects) was the grant programs to be used by the relevant parties at the local level. With the grant programs, local institutions, social partners, non-governmental organizations, universities, municipalities, governorships had the opportunity to identify their current problems, develop and implement common solutions for these problems. Especially in the projects under the title of grant programs, several projects and activities carried out related to disability issues because disability has been determined as a horizontal issue in call for proposals.

IPA II Session

Second Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), covers the years 2014 – 2020. The period was carried out as a continuation of IPA I, within the framework of the objectives of developing Turkey's capacity for harmonization and implementation with the EU acquis and building capacities of several stakeholders for economic and social harmonization.

Commission adopted sectoral approach for more efficient use of funds in this period. The component-based structure in the IPA's first period has been removed within the scope of this approach. Certain sectors to be financed in this period and sector responsible institutions that will carry out the works within these sectors have been determined at the beginning.

The Indicative Strategy Paper for Turkey (2014-2020), includes the information showing the basic financing priorities of IPA financial assistance, was accepted by the Commission on 26 August 2014. According to the Strategy Document, 7-year total





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

allocation for Turkey is 4,453.9 billion Euros. The following 9 priority sectors and sector responsible organizations have been determined for this period:

- Democracy and Governance (Ministry of EU) (Alignment with EU Acquis, Union Programs and Civil Society)
- Justice, Internal Affairs and Fundamental Rights, (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of EU)
- Transportation, (Ministry of Transport, Communication and Maritime Affairs)
- Environment and Climate, (Ministry of Environment and Urbanization)
- Energy, (Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources)
- Competitiveness and Innovation (Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology)
- Employment, Development of Human Resources and Social Policies, (Ministry of Labor and Social Security)
- Agriculture and Rural Development, (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock)
- Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation (Ministry for EU)

IPA II framework agreement states, “All kinds of discrimination on the basis of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prevented during the application of assistance.” , like IPA I. In addition, framework agreement Annex I includes thematic priorities. Article (g) is as “Promoting social inclusion and fighting poverty. The aim of interventions in this field is to integrate marginalized communities such as Romani citizens, combat discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and affordability, such as health and general purpose social services, through the modernization of social protection systems and increasing access to sustainable and high-quality services for these groups.”

IPA II Indicative Strategy Document for Turkey 2014-2020 has çivil society sub sector which is the sub-sector of the Democracy and Governance sector This sub sectors mentions about what the projects shall aim. According to the aims mentioned in this part, projects that support the protection of fundamental rights and prevent all kinds of discrimination, including targeting people with disabilities will be supported.

Additionally document states that, projects in the transportation sector that solve the urban transportation problems of people with disabilities facilitate their access will be supported

IPA III Session

27% increase at funds is targeted in IPA III for funds compared to IPA II. 5 priority areas have been identified for IPA III period that covers the years 2021-2027, These priority areas are:

- Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

- Good governance, Acquis Alignment, Strategic Communication and Good Neighborhood relations
- Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity
- Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth
- Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation

DİHAA (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights)

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) provides direct financial support to non-governmental organizations to promote the development and strengthening of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. EIDHR is a tool that focuses on sensitive human rights issues such as freedom of expression, better access to justice, the fight against torture and impunity, the protection and respect of cultural diversity, and the rights of vulnerable groups and minorities. CSOs are directly supported through the EU Delegation.

Turkey is one of the most important beneficiary countries of EIDHR. EIDHR has financed more than 150 projects with a total amount of approximately 30 million Euros in Turkey. EIDHR prioritize supporting disadvantaged groups.

EIDHR provides funding to civil society projects or international/intergovernmental organizations and small grants to human rights defenders. EU uses EIDHR for funding foreign countries. EU Human Rights Guidelines on Non-discrimination in External Action is the basic document is the main document of EIDHR. This document states that EU is a party to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). On the basis of this Convention, all kinds of discrimination against people with disabilities in the use of these funds is prohibited.

The EU makes positive discrimination in all aspects of its support within the scope of programs IPA, EIDHR and some other programs open to member states (eg Erasmus+, Cosmo) and gives special importance to people with disabilities in these programs. Some programs directly target the people with disability.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

SOME PROJECTS FUNDED BY EU IN RECENT YEARS

Enhancing services for people with disabilities

The project aimed to support the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ministry of Labour, Social Services and Family (MoLSSF) in their efforts to provide effective, appropriate and efficient community-based support services for persons with mental disabilities, including both chronic mental disorders and intellectual disabilities. A major component of the project consisted of assessing institutional and individual needs, including patients' capabilities, activities and wishes, at 35 mental disability institutions: all eight mental health hospitals plus 27 public and private social care institutions. A total of 583 patients were interviewed. This survey contributed to a revision of the MoH's national mental health action plan as well as the development of the MoLSSF's action plan for community-based social care services in Ankara.

Service staff in relevant units received training and retraining to prepare for the transfer of residents and staff to new community-based "houses of hope", which were established under the project as the agreed model of community-based social care for people with mental disabilities. Training will continue to be provided to staff serving the existing 73 community mental health centers.

Improved Integration of Disabled Persons into Society Grant Scheme

The overall objective of this Call for Proposals is to ensure equal access to goods, services and all aspects of life, to people with disabilities. The specific objective of the Call for Proposals is to strengthen capacities of CSOs of persons with disabilities and of CSOs defending the rights of persons with disabilities and to enhance the dialogue between the General Directorate on Services to Disabled Persons and Seniors and the CSOs in the realm of disability.

Program improved CSOs' networks and also the General Directorate on Services to Disabled Persons and Seniors-CSOs dialogue in the disability field in order to ensure active participation of persons with disabilities in every realm of societal life. In this context, the program will contribute to raise awareness on participation of CSOs in decision-making processes.

The program strengthened the capacity of civil society organizations of people with disabilities and of civil society organizations defending the rights of persons with disabilities and enhance the public authorities-civil society dialogue in the disability field.

Program created a great synergy for the improvement of capacities of CSOs and their empowerment in decision-making processes by advising policies and projects in the realm of disability in terms of ensuring social integration, equal access to goods, services, and full participation.

The program has been implemented as a grant and approximately 2,000,000 EUR of grant was distributed to NGOs with disabilities.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

Increasing Employability of Persons with Disabilities Project

The Operation for Increasing the Employability of Persons with Disabilities aimed to increase the employability and accessibility of persons with disabilities to the working life by improving their working capacity, motivation, productivity, job search and social skills. Project has been implemented between 2015-2017. The budget for the project was around 3.8 million Euros. Project carries out the activities to establish a vocational improvement center that will allow simulation training, to increase professional, social and self-management skills and the capacity of trainer. Also; Training needs analysis and surveys were conducted for people with disabilities, their families, employers and relevant non-governmental organizations, and the training modules were transferred to the online environment.

EU – Turkey Joint Project Aiming to Facilitate Access to Transport Services for Passengers with Disability

Project's budget is approximately 1.8 million Euros. Project developed accessible transportation strategy. This strategy also increased public awareness of accessibility problems in public transportation. Five cities were assisted in the implementation of pilot projects on accessibility in transport, taking into account best practices in the field and evaluating the most appropriate options for their respective situations. 160 staff from different municipalities benefited from the trainings that were provided in order to conduct dialogue studies with transportation service providers in order to better respond to the needs of elderly and disabled passengers. In addition, an awareness campaign consisting of a series of events to highlight the value of accessible public transport services were organized.

Rehabilitation Center of Adana for Disabled Persons" Grant Project

This Project has been funded under "Improving Social Integration and the Employment of Disadvantaged Individuals Grant Scheme" The project aimed to increase employability of persons with disabilities and women subjected to violence. The project mainly provided trainings in basic computer skills, housekeeping, cookery, servicing, swimming and massaging in order to support the social and professional integration of the target group and helping them enter the labor market. In addition, the EU supports some conferences, carries out dissemination activities, publishes reports on disability and organizes cultural trips for people with disabilities.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

CONCLUSION

While Turkey is developing the European Union membership process, on the other hand, it shows continuous improvement in services for people with disabilities and follows international development<ts in disability field. International agreements that Turkey signed, especially the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the criticism and recommendations in the European Union progress reports, influence the developments related to the rights of persons with disabilities in Turkey's legislation. In this respect, the European Union has had a catalytic effect on of people with disabilities to reach their rights in Turkey.

There are criticisms about disability rights in Turkey in almost each EU progress report. There is a continuous monitoring of EU and this monitoring contributes to the lives of people with disabilities. EU also provides pre-accession financial assistance to Turkey on different subjects including persons with disabilities. There are some programs and projects funded by EU directly for people with disabilities. Additionally, there is a positive discrimination for some other projects and programs supported by EU. This is a good example of positive discrimination towards people with disabilities.

EU has positive contributions at accession process. After the membership this support will increase. In this respect, we can say that progress in Turkey's EU membership process progress have positive effects for people with disabilities in Turkey.





Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmektedir.
This project is funded by the European Union.

REFERENCES

- <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/tr/ilerleme-raporlari-744>
- <https://www.aile.gov.tr/eyhgm/mevzuat/ulusal-mevzuat/>
- <https://www.cfcu.gov.tr>
- <https://www.avrupa.info.tr>
- https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/Duyurular/IPA_cerceve_antlasmasi_TR.pdf
- https://www.ab.gov.tr/_50283.html

