



Diversity policy in employment and service provision

Case study: İzmir, Turkey



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Background

Migration trends in Turkey

For many Europeans, Turkey is seen as the country of origin of a considerable number of migrants. However, the Turkish Republic is not only a country of emigration: within the country itself, a significant level of internal migration also occurs among the rural population from the eastern areas to cities; at the same time, the immigration of different population groups into the country is also substantial. These three components of Turkish migration movements – that is, emigration, internal migration, immigration – as well as the composition of today's migrant populations are outlined in greater detail in this section.

At the beginning of the last century, Turkey's history of migration was strongly influenced by the downfall of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman Empire, along with the Balkan War in 1912–1913 and the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. During the first 30 years of the 20th century, a large number of Muslims immigrated to the Ottoman Empire and later to the Turkish Republic. At the same time, many non-Muslims migrated to the Balkan countries. These mainly consisted of Greek Orthodox and Jewish population groups. This population exchange mainly occurred due to political pressure and expulsion. As a result of the Treaty of Lausanne, a peace treaty which recognised the new Turkish Republic internationally, approximately 1.3 million ethnic Greeks resettled in Greece and about 500,000 ethnic Turks resettled in Turkey in 1923 alone.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Turkish population grew strongly and pressure mounted on the employment market. Meanwhile, western Europe's economy was booming and the demand for additional workers increased. Therefore, Turkey agreed to several bilateral conventions with west European countries and many Turkish people migrated to these countries. Some 80% of the migrants went to Germany. However, this workforce migration came to a halt with a recruitment ban in 1973, which was imposed due to the international oil crisis and its economic aftermath. Until that time, more than 780,000 people had emigrated from Turkey. Many of the labour migrants stayed and brought their wives and children, which led to a demographic change in the migrant structure. To this day, many Turkish citizens still live in western Europe – mainly in Germany, which counted 1.74 million Turkish migrants in 2006.

The 1980s and 1990s were marked by periods of intensified outward refugee movements in Turkey. Due to the military coup and the Turkish security forces' intensified operations, particularly in the country's east and southeast regions, to counter increasing terror incidents, migration movements were experienced, which were dominated by Turkish nationals with Kurdish ethnicity. The most important receiving countries in this instance were Germany, France and the United Kingdom (UK).

The second important component of the Turkish migration movements is the occurrence of interior migration. The rise in migration to cities since the 1950s is attributed, on the one hand, to a rapid growth in the country's population and the level of economic underdevelopment and poverty in rural areas; at the same time, it is linked to the state's one-dimensional economic policy, which aids the development of cities. The primary destinations for the rural population were Istanbul in northwestern Turkey and its surrounding areas, the Greater İzmir area to the west of the country, the capital city of Ankara in north-central Turkey and the Greater Adana-Mersin region to the south. Due to a significant housing shortage in the cities, socially marginalised, irregular or 'squatter' residential settlements – so-called *gecekondu*s – were formed. Over time, the *gecekondu*s were joined through urban infrastructure; from the 1980s onwards, some of these residential settlements evolved into modern suburbs.

Between 1995 and 2000, nearly 4.8 million people – or 8% of the population – migrated between Turkish provinces. In terms of the characteristics of this group, the migrant male population is approximately 20% higher than the female population. Almost half of the internal migrants are younger than 24 years of age. As part of Turkey's 2000 population census, these migrants were asked to outline the main motives for their migration. Family reasons were most frequently

cited (26%) and were proportionally greater for women, although employment opportunities (20%) and designation/appointment reasons (13%) were also significant. Since the population census in 2000, about one year after the 1999 earthquakes in the northern regions of Marmara and Düzce, around 147,000 people migrated because of the devastation caused by the earthquake.

Towards the end of the 1970s, Turkey also became a destination for migrants, especially for transit migrants on their way to the west, as well as for refugees and labour migrants. The annual immigration figures for the early 2000s estimate that Turkey received about 100,000 illegal migrant workers and around 150,000 legal immigrants. Between 1995 and 2000, the largest group of immigrants came from Germany, accounting for one third of the approximately 234,000 immigrants; most of these migrants are Turkish citizens or German citizens with a Turkish background. They were followed by migrants from Bulgaria (12%) and from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (6%). The majority of migrants are between 20 and 39 years of age; immigrant women tend to be younger than their male counterparts.

Turkey has a total population of about 70 million inhabitants. Between 1995 and 2000, the proportion of immigrants from abroad, according to the population census of 2000, accounted for 0.38% of the total population. Other sources estimate that the proportion of the population born abroad is between 0.2% and 1.9%, the largest group being Bulgarians who account for 481,000 people in Turkey's population, followed by German-born Turks who make up 274,000 people in the population.

National policy context

Due to the universalistic concept of Turkish citizenship and the comparably low number of foreign immigrants in Turkish cities, it is difficult to apply the European concept of diversity policies to the Turkish situation. In order to understand the specific situation in the public sector of Turkey's municipalities, the national and historical background regarding employment in the public sector in general has to be considered.

The number of public employees in the civil service sector in Turkey was estimated to be at 2.7 million employees in 2003 – constituting 4% of the population and 7% of the workforce (Güler, 2003a). The Turkish Law on Civil Servants (*Devlet Memuru Kanunu*) No. 657 lists four different employment categories for the staff of public institutions being regulated by this law: namely, civil servants, employees with a fixed-term contract, temporary staff with a fixed-term contract of up to one year and blue-collar workers. The employment conditions for the last group of workers are not regulated by the Civil Servants Law. In some Turkish statistics, public sector employees are further differentiated according to the budgetary allocation: for instance, on the basis of the general federal budget, including specific and supplementary budgets; or according to provincial and municipal budgets, and those of public enterprises.

Historical background

Equal access to employment in the public sector for Turkish citizens has been guaranteed in principle as early as 1924 under Article 92 of the Turkish constitution, according to which: 'Every Turk possessing full political rights is entitled to an employment in the public sector according to his qualification and educational attainment.' Although the constitution of 1924 did not yet define the term 'Turk' explicitly, thereby defining Turkish citizenship, it guaranteed implicitly the equality of all citizens under Article 69 of the constitution, which abolished all privileges by rank, class, family or for individuals. Thus, the basic principle that employment in the public sector has to be assigned on the basis of the employee's qualification and occupational aptitude had already been put in place by the 1924 constitution.

However, up until around 1950, the actual practice is likely to have been quite different. Due to the difficult political situation regarding the reforms implemented by the ruling Kemalist Republican Peoples' Party (CHP), loyalty to the CHP has probably been a more relevant factor than qualification levels. Although this might have contributed to a certain

formation of patronage systems, qualification has nevertheless been a relevant selection criterion among various candidates affiliated to the CHP. With the change to a multi-party system in 1950, public employment policy may have become subject of an inter-party competition. İlder Turan describes the struggle regarding the distribution of public resources – which could include the assignment to employment in the public sector – during the 1950s as follows (Turan, 1988, p. 74):

The RPP [Republican People's Party] as a single party had developed a system of patronage from which those identifying with the party, and its modernisation policies, had benefited. The supporters of the DP [Democratic Party] thought that a new system of patronage would now be developed, of which they would be the exclusive beneficiaries. These expectations proved problematical not only because all resources available to the government could not be distributed on a patronage basis, but also because the bureaucracy resisted the tendency to develop a new system of patronage. In the eyes of the centralist bureaucracy, the old patronage system was legitimate because it had been used to consolidate the political power of the centralist elites, and to register support for the implementation of cultural modernization policies, two goals which they had also shared. Therefore, they felt that 'public interest' had been served. But now the demands placed on public resources were for 'private' purposes, and they were advanced by those whom the bureaucracy had come to dominate during the single party era. This conflict between the bureauc[ra]cy and the cadres of the DP, having its origins in the Ottoman Empire but carried into the republic, constituted one of the main factors in the demise of the democratic experiment.

After the military coup of 27 May 1960, the constitution of 9 July 1961 declared occupational aptitude as the only criterion for the assignment of public employment: 'Every Turk has access to employment in the public sector. For assignment, no other criterion than the capacities required by the function shall be applied.' The same stipulation has been included in Article 58 of the Turkish constitution of 18 October 1982, following the 1980 coup.

Both constitutions assigned Turkish citizenship to all persons with at least one parent with Turkish citizenship, or on the basis of naturalisation. Ethnic, religious or other similar criteria play no role for Turkish citizenship, thus continuing the accommodation of the ethnic and religious plurality which had already been present during the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the Turkish concept of citizenship includes both the ethnic groups enumerated in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, such as the Roma and the Kurds, as well as those not listed, including the Jews, Armenians and Greeks, as Turks entitled to the full citizenship rights.

Access to employment in public sector

Turkey's Law on Civil Servants No. 657 of 14 July 1965 regulates the employment policies for civil servants and clerks in the public sector, excluding the army, police forces, coast guard and secret service. Article 50 of the law states that:

A person applying for a vacant position in the public service has to pass successfully a test for civil servant applicants ... Methods and concepts of this test, as well as exemptions from this test for positions with specific tasks and duties are subject to administrative provisions issued by the directorate for governmental human resources' issues ... Tests for disabled applicants are conducted separately.

Under this law, access to public service positions became regulated by an official test for applicants (*Kamu Personel Seçme Sınavı*, KPSS). This test is conducted once a year by the same institution that implements the entry tests for university students – namely, the Student Selection and Placement Centre (*Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi, ÖSYM*¹). The latter institution is affiliated to the universities' general administration, and the results achieved by the applicants in terms of the number of points are a critical criterion for applicants' selection for a vacant position in the public service.

¹ <http://www.osym.gov.tr/>

The other requirements for applicants are listed in Article 48 of the Law on Civil Servants. These requirements include the following: Turkish citizenship, with a provision for ethnic Turks who were expelled from Bulgaria during the late 1980s; a minimum age requirement of 18 years; a secondary school (*Ortaokul*) education – applicants with a primary school education can only be considered if no applicants with a secondary school education are available; for positions with higher educational requirements, university qualifications may be requested; no criminal record exceeding a six-month conviction; no imminent army duty; no physical or psychological disability, except for positions that are open to persons with a disability under the regulation jointly issued by the ministries of finance, health and labour/social affairs, and the directorate for governmental human resources (HR) issues.

According to related regulations², calls for applicants should be made gender-neutral and not specify any maximum age. Only in relation to calls for positions with specific requirements based on justifiable reasons, such as positions for midwives, can the authorities diverge from the basic principle of gender and age neutrality in recruitment. Thus, any provisions for positive discrimination – even where preference is given to women or older persons in the case of several applicants with the same qualifications – are not possible within the current legal framework. There is only one exception to this rule, as regulated by Article 53, which provides for a separate entry test for applicants with disabilities in combination with an amendment to this article, which came into force in 1997. This amendment requires public institutions falling under the provisions of Law No. 657 to appoint applicants with disabilities to 3% of their total positions. Statistics provided by the directorate for governmental HR issues indicate that the current percentage of employees with disabilities in the public service is still far below this requirement³.

Conclusion

The reform of Turkey's public sector administration has emerged as a prominent topic in political discussions for a number of decades. Since the mid 1980s, international organisations such as the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are increasingly featured in these discussions. The debate for a leaner and more efficient public administration – also advocated by Turkish organisations such as the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (*Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği*, TÜSIAD) – has resulted in the reduction of public expenditure on personnel, privatisation of state-owned enterprises and staff reductions. A marginal issue in this debate has been the topic of corruption and political influence on hiring practices in the public sector (Güler, 2003b).

The issue of positive discrimination and diversity issues have not played any role in this discussion thus far. While vague reference is made to discriminatory practices related to national minority groups in a recent EU report (European Parliament, 2004), the same document states that there is no systematic discrimination of specific ethnic or religious groups evident in contemporary Turkey.

² See http://www.basbakanlik-dpb.gov.tr/NITELIK_SON.xls (in Turkish, 557Kb MS Excel)

³ For 2008 figures, see <http://www.dpb.gov.tr/ali/Istatistik/is3.xls> (in Turkish, 25Kb MS Excel)

Profile of İzmir

Brief overview

Located on the western coast of Turkey, İzmir is the third largest city in the country. The total population, comprising the city centre, urban municipalities and surrounding rural areas, is over three million persons. The governmental status of the central city – including the sub-provinces of Balçova, Bornova, Buca, Çigli, Gaziemir, Guzelbahçe, Karşıyaka, Konak and Narlıdere – has changed with the inclusion of 19 sub-provinces and 38 first-tier municipalities located within a radius of 50 kilometres, as stated in the Metropolitan Municipality Law No. 5216 enacted in 2004.

The population of the District of İzmir, which is Turkey's third largest city also in terms of population density, steadily increased during the period 1927–2000. While the population of Turkey increased five-fold over the last 73 years, İzmir's population increased 6.3 times.

Table 1: *Population of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality districts*

District	Urban population (no. of people)	Rural population (no. of people)	Total population (no. of people)
Aliğa	38,225	18,967	57,192
Balçova	66,877	-	66,877
Bayındır	18,705	28,509	47,214
Bergama	52,173	54,363	106,536
Beydağ	5,521	8,626	14,147
Bornova	391,418	5,352	396,770
Buca	308,661	6,752	315,413
Çeşme	25,257	12,115	37,372
Çigli	109,979	3,564	113,543
Dikili	12,552	17,563	30,115
Foça	14,604	21,503	36,107
Gaziemir	70,035	17,657	87,692
Güzelbahçe	14,924	3,132	18,056
Karşıyaka	438,430	334	438,764
K. Burun	2,932	10,514	13,446
Kinik	13,136	18,973	32,109
Kiraz	10,001	34,909	44,910
Konak	781,363	946	782,309
K. Paşa	32,065	41,049	73,114
Menderes	21,885	49,336	71,221
Menemen	60,124	54,333	114,457
Narlıdere	54,107	-	54,107
Ödemiş	61,896	66,363	128,259
Selçuk	25,414	8,180	33,594
S. Hisar	19,543	15,352	34,895
Tire	42,988	34,545	76,900
Torbali	54,848	40,997	95,845
Urla	41,184	8,085	49,269
Total	2,788,847	582,019	3,370,866

Sectoral breakdown

From a sectoral perspective, the proportion of İzmir's working population operating in the agriculture sector has declined over time, while it has increased in industry and particularly in the services sector (Table 2). In 1980, the agriculture sector accounted for the highest proportion of İzmir's overall working population, at 37.4%; however, this ratio dropped significantly to 18.1% by 2005. The services sector, which accounted for 35.5% of İzmir's working population in 1980, ranked first in terms of its share of the working population in 2000, at 45.5%. The industry sector's share of the working population witnessed a significantly lower increase, rising from 20.1% of the population in 1980 to just 20.6% in 2000.

Table 2: *Employment distribution in İzmir, by sector, 1980–2005 (%)*

	1980	2000	2005
Agriculture	37.4	28.5	18.1
Services	35.5	45.5	47.8
Industry	20.1	20.6	34.1

Source: *Turkstat, 1980–2005*

Literacy

Literacy levels have increased steadily in the Province of İzmir, in line with the overall rise in the national average. While the literacy rate stood at about 35% in 1935, this ratio exceeded 50% in 1950, and reached 91.8% in 2000. Nevertheless, the gap between the literate male population and female population in İzmir still persists, as also reflected in the national average, with 96% of the male population being literate compared with 87% of women.

Immigration

According to data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu*, Turkstat), the number of immigrants in İzmir stood at 18,025 persons in 2000. In terms of internal migration, Turkstat reveals that the city received some 120,375 internal migrants between 1995 and 2000.

The Law on Settlement No. 5543 defines immigrants as 'those who are of Turkish descent and pertain to Turkish culture, and came to Turkey, single or collectively, with intention to settle and approved in accordance with this law'.

City's migrant population

İzmir is one of Turkey's most important export ports. At the same time, the city has a status of being the most significant focal point due to its functions of trade, industry, education, culture, health, finance and tourism on the one hand, and the institutions and organisations serving the large hinterland, on the other.

Initially a small coastal town, İzmir grew rapidly since the beginning of the 17th century to become the most important settlement of the Ottoman Empire after Istanbul in the 19th century. A significant factor in its growth has been the city's strategic importance as a terminal port for trade routes from Anatolia. These developments have made the city into one of the most significant centres for trade and industry. Moreover, as a gateway to the west, it has become a multi-national setting, where different communities in terms of their social, cultural and religious traditions have emerged. Related references reveal that population of İzmir has continuously risen over this period – that is, from 180,000 persons in 1857, to 207,547 people in 1891 and to 250,000 persons in 1910.

According to contemporary reports (Lindau, 1900), at the turn of the last century there were 89,000 Muslims, 52,000 Orthodox Greeks (Turkish nationals), 5,600 Armenians, 1,100 Latins (Turkish nationals) and 16,000 Jews living in İzmir. Also residing in İzmir at this time were some 25,000 Greeks, 6,400 Italians, 1,800 Austrians and 512 German foreign nationals. Overall, the total population of İzmir in 1900 amounted to about 200,000 persons.

In accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne signed in 1923, three historical non-Muslim groups – namely, Armenians, Jews, and Greeks – were defined as national minority groups. Although the Muslim population shows strong internal diversity, no specific group among this population is considered as being a minority. Until the beginning of the 20th century, statistics for İzmir differentiated between ethnic communities and religious identity. In the early years of the Republican era, the data made a distinction between the Muslim and non-Muslim population; however, this practice was later abandoned.

According to statistics for the Province of İzmir, in 1930 there were a total of 97,630 Muslims living in İzmir and its dependent villages, of whom 53,294 were men and 44,336 were women. Moreover, İzmir's provincial centre had a total of 25,385 non-Muslims, some 12,834 of whom were men and 12,551 of whom were women.

İzmir has witnessed a considerable influx of skilled foreign workers, which has contributed to an economical gap between the foreign minorities and poorer local inhabitants. The most important phase of migration to İzmir occurred during the war of independence. Following the out-migration of minorities who held local economic power, the efforts to overcome the critical conditions arising due to losses resulting from war have entailed a period of restructuring. This period resulted in İzmir becoming the second largest city after Istanbul with regard to industrialisation on the one hand, and in terms of the city being subject to intense flows of migration towards western Turkey on the other.

A significant degree of immigration to İzmir also took place from the Balkans, Bulgaria and Greece in several waves since the late 19th century. The last large wave of immigration occurred during the late 1980s from Bulgaria and during the mid 1990s from former Yugoslavia. These immigrants were usually of Muslim faith, but not necessarily of Turkish ethnicity; however, since they were rooted in the history of the former Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, they were accepted as Turkish citizens and consider themselves as European Turks. Representatives of an ethnic association of Balkan Turks in İzmir, the Kosovo-Rumelian Association, claim that approximately 50% of the city's population today stemmed from the Balkans; exact statistics, however, are not available in this respect.

İzmir has also emerged as a preferred destination for internal migration. At the end of the 1990s, only one third of the people living in İzmir were actually born in the city. The remaining residents stemmed from the Aegean, central, eastern, southeastern Anatolia and Marmara regions. A proportion of those who originated from the eastern and southeastern Anatolia regions are Turkish nationals of Arab and Kurdish ethnicity.

Table 3 gives a breakdown of the number of internal migrants according to region who came to live in İzmir. The figures are based on data from Turkstat's Census of Population Migration Statistics (2000), which is based on the population of İzmir by permanent place of residence and place of birth.

Table 3: *Number of internal migrants in İzmir, by region of origin*

Region	Number of internal migrants
Manisa (Aegean Region)	116,000
Erzurum (East Anatolia Region)	79,000
Konya (Central Anatolia Region)	73,478
Mardin (Southeast Anatolia Region)	68,899
Aydın (Aegean Region)	56,470
Afyon (Aegean Region)	51,079
Kars (East Anatolia Region)	48,505

Source: *Turkstat, Census of Population Migration Statistics, 2000*

Among the main reasons for migration cited by those who came to İzmir are education (reported by 30,537 persons), marriage (24,008) and earthquakes (5,980).

People who migrate from İzmir to other provinces also cited a variety of reasons for the move, including: migration related to members of the household (42,958), other reasons (40,106), job-seeking purposes (29,717), education (29,568), job designation/appointment (28,336) and marriage (11,558).

According to the abovementioned migration statistics, the number of immigrants in İzmir – in other words, those who were born abroad and who were permanent residents in İzmir – amounted to 130,866 persons.

City authorities

Elections for local administrations are held every five years in Turkey. In local elections, a proportional representation system, based on a 10% threshold, is implemented for membership of provincial assemblies and town councils. For mayoral posts, the simple majority system is used. In electing members of the provincial assemblies, each administrative district is considered an electoral region. In elections for mayoral posts and city council members, each city is treated as an electoral region. Voters elect a metropolitan mayor in cities comprising an electoral region of more than one administrative district, as is the case in İzmir. Votes are also cast in metropolitan areas for mayoral and city council posts in each administrative district.

Large cities with several electoral districts, such as İzmir, have a municipal mayor who has overall responsibility for the whole city or town; they also have mayors responsible for smaller sub-areas. Villages fall under the jurisdiction of the nearest municipality.

Mayors, who are selected in local elections, are responsible for the provision of basic services or utilities such as water, sewage disposal, electricity and transport. However, these responsibilities are limited, and mayors are subordinate to, and can be overruled by, the local governor, who has far wider powers. Important local services and policies are administered by centralised national institutions such as health services, schools, the police and through the realisation of local development projects, including housing.

Parallel to the local administrations, a structure of neighbourhood ‘elderpersons’ (*mukhtars*) exists in the city. *Mukhtars* are elected representatives of a local neighbourhood and form a parallel representation structure based on national regulations and acting independently of the municipal administration and the administrations of the municipality’s districts. The *mukhtars* are directly elected in their neighbourhoods, which usually comprise about 500–800 households, and act as local contact person for legal and administrative matters, as well as mediators and representatives of the local neighbourhood. They report to the regional governor, but act also as mediator to municipal authorities on neighbourhood issues.

The central administration has power of administrative tutelage over municipalities through and under the control of Turkey’s Ministry of Interior (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İçişleri Bakanlığı*). The ministry, within the scope of the administrative jurisdiction of the Council of State (*Danıştay*) and the Court of Accounts (*Sayıstay*), has power of financial and legal tutelage over municipalities in relation to certain issues. Decisions of the Council of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality are subject to the governorship’s approval.

The municipalities have various responsibilities which encompass the following services: basic infrastructure services such as roads, sewage and telephone; basic urban services such as waste collection, cleaning and the fire brigade; city planning and the congruent development of economic services, including marketplace and slaughterhouse inspections;

financial and legal services such as imposing and collecting local taxes; and social and cultural services, including the provision of social relief for vulnerable groups and the organisation of professional courses. Under Law No. 5393, new obligations have been assigned to municipalities: these include the protection of cultural and natural heritage, tourism promotion, pre-school education, ambulance and emergency aid, local traffic duties and the authorities, along with the development of the economy and trade.

Turkish cities are increasingly outsourcing such services to private companies that are fully or partially owned by the municipality. This trend has been also caused by the very limited resources of municipalities, which apart from national subsidies only receive local fees and licences. In order to meet the increasing demand for municipal services, such outsourcing has been undertaken to create new resources, to offer services in a more efficient and economical way, and to meet the economic and employment needs of the local population. Accordingly, Law No. 5393 and Law No. 5216 have added to the municipality income and expenditure accounts the shares and partnership interests of the companies in which the municipality holds shares. However, a decision to be taken by the Municipal Council on the establishment of a municipally-owned company is not sufficient; this is subject to permission by the Council of Ministers, confirming the decision of the Municipal Council.

The activities of such municipality-owned companies are limited by law to the duty and service areas of the municipality. Both the companies established in accordance with Article 70 of Law No. 5393 and the municipal budget enterprises established in the framework of Article 71 are generally named as Municipal Economic Enterprises (MEE). General legal arrangements regulating the establishment, duties, mandates and responsibilities, working principles and procedures of such MEEs do not exist. However, municipal companies are falling under standard rules of audit by the Ministry of Interior Civil Auditing Council since they are legal entities using public resources within the scope of local administrations. Nevertheless, the auditing carried out by civil auditors does not constitute a direct audit of these companies, but rather an indirect audit through the municipality.

Approaches to diversity

Historical background

The approach of the municipality must be in line with the national policy. As a state policy, there is no information collected on ethnicity or religion for employment in the public sector.

In principle, all Turkish citizens enjoy equal access to positions in the public sector. Access to such positions is regulated by qualification criteria in a strict process and excludes any positive discrimination – with the exception of positively discriminating in favour of people with disabilities. This national law is binding for the staff policy of the municipality; thus, any official diversity policy or enquiries into the ethnic background of applicants is legally not possible.

The mayors have limited power to recruit civil servants. For instance, the Mayor of İzmir used his power in this matter in the employment of young people from the Social Services and Child Protection Institution. Furthermore, according to Paragraph 1 Article 59 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657, the mayor can appoint a town clerk.

Legally, it is not possible to employ civil servants in the companies that are considered corporate bodies belonging to the municipality. Other personnel in the workforce employed within the municipality are again recruited by the relevant personnel department on the basis of their skills in their field of work and relevant job descriptions. Gender, age, ethnicity and religion are not admissible criteria for the selection process.

Thus, diversity policy in staff management does not apply in İzmir or in Turkey as a whole. Instead, staff policies focus on the equal treatment of all Turkish citizens, regardless of their ethnicity or religious persuasion.

Policy objectives

Direct discrimination in employment and service provision policy on the basis of race, ethnic identity, or religion is not evident in the municipality or in the institutions under its administration.

Goods and services procurement by the municipality, as well as construction works, are conducted in accordance with the Public Procurement Law (PPL) and the Public Procurement Contracts Law. Services being outsourced to municipal companies may be controlled to a certain degree by the mayor, who may appoint the chair of a municipal company's board of directors. However, neither diversity in staff management nor diversity in service provision is a relevant category for the policy approach of the İzmir municipality.

Responsibility for diversity policy

The municipal policy is executed according to the equal treatment principle. Since the public sector's personnel policy is implemented according to qualification and education levels, there is no unit in the municipality responsible for any diversity policy.

Collaboration with social partners and non-governmental organisations

The municipality supports vulnerable groups of migrants. More specifically, the Cultural and Social Works Department of the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality supports the Social Services and Child Protection Institution, along with the Association for Protecting İzmir Street Children – Children Are Our Future initiative for children at risk in areas with migrant populations. Children referred to the Treatment and Social Rehabilitation Centre by mobile teams receive a medical and psychosocial evaluation, and those in need of treatment are directed to the Aegean University Child and

Adolescent Addiction Research and Practice Centre (Egebam). The Association for Protecting İzmir Street Children – Children Are Our Future initiative provides services to working children through the guidance and consultation centre assigned by the municipality. The centre encourages the children to go to school and also to engage in sporting activities.

Trade unions

The municipality cooperates with the social partners. Negotiations are held between trade unions and the municipality, as well as the institutions controlled by the municipality. Collective bargaining constitutes the most important form of relations between the trade unions, the municipality and the companies under its control. Such negotiations result in the signing of collective agreements. Besides their rights arising from the labour law, employees also benefit from rights determined by the parties within the framework of a collective agreement.

The various trade unions cover specific sectors of the labour market. Some of the unions date back to 1941, but were banned during military dictatorships and were newly established after 1992. The level of organisation in the trade unions varies considerably: a significant proportion of civil servants (with no right to strike) and public sector workers (white and blue-collar workers) employed by the municipality or municipality-owned companies are members of a trade union, while the degree of organisation in the private sector is very low. One factor affecting this is the country's labour legislation – more specifically, Law No. 4857 (civil servants law), Law No. 2821 (law of trade unions) and Law No. 2822 (law of collective agreement, strike and lock-out) – which had been adopted during the military administration. An employee wishing to join a trade union or change to another union has to register with a legal representative, subject to a fee of TRY 30 (about €14 as at 13 May 2009), or TRY 147 (€69) for changing union membership. Only trade unions that represent 50% or more of employees in an institution or company have the right to negotiate collective agreements with the employer. The trade unions report that, in the private sector, it is common practice to fire employees who join a union in order to keep the number of organised employees below this threshold. This is particularly evident for low-skill jobs at small local companies with a high degree of internal migrants among their employees; a significant proportion of internal migrants are also working in precarious jobs in the informal economy and are therefore not unionised. In contrast, the municipal institutions and companies cooperate with the trade unions and negotiate collective agreements with them.

In accordance with Law No. 4688, the parties to the collective negotiations for civil servants comprise the Public Employer Council, along with authorised civil servant trade union confederations and their affiliated unions. If the collective negotiations result in agreement, a memorandum is signed. The memorandum is then submitted to the Council of Ministers, which must implement consistent administrative, executive and legal arrangements regarding the memorandum within three months; the council then submits a bill to the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Collective agreements with private employers are not subject to this approval procedure.

The collective agreements also provide the basis for training measures provided by the trade unions to workers – such as first aid training, or specific security training, for example, for workers dealing with gas installations. Based on the collective agreement provisions, trade union representatives may also be members of commissions dealing with promotions and disciplinary issues; with respect to the dismissal of an employee, the collective agreement requires a decision of the disciplinary committee being supported by the committee's trade union representatives.

The trade unions also negotiate specific regulations for female employees in the collective agreement. In several unions, women's issues constitute a specific branch of the organisation, and the union may negotiate regulations for pregnant women, along with working time provisions for women who are breastfeeding, exemption from night shifts for women with small children, and the establishment of kindergarten facilities for the children of female employees. The collective agreements even allow for changes to the workplaces of female employees if the current setup is not appropriate due to health or family reasons. Overall, the level of trade union organisation among female employees in the municipality is comparably high.

However, there are no specific activities within the trade unions or provisions in the collective agreements for migrant workers – either internal or international migrants – since they are usually working in sectors with a very low or non-existent level of unionisation.

Private law companies under municipal control

Since 1990, a general trend has been emerging among Turkish municipalities to outsource public services to private companies either fully or partly owned by the municipality. These companies are restricted by law to the sectors of services that are under the responsibility of the local municipalities. In İzmir, the 100% municipality-owned company IZELMAN, for example, is in charge of services such as water supply, health, social and cultural services, kindergarten facilities, services for elderly persons, burials, parks and gardens, fire brigades, solid waste collection and processing, traffic and car parking management, ticketing in public transport, and cafeteria services for municipal institutions. Of the company's 5,006 employees, 13% are women, while 3% have a disability, meeting the quota defined by law; a further 1% of positions are reserved for the rehabilitation of former criminal offenders, while 2% are reserved for wounded or disabled veterans and victims of terrorist attacks, as well as for immediate family members affected by fatalities arising from military service or terrorist attacks. The company staff policy is agreed on with the municipality, which is the only shareholder. Internal assessment procedures have also been put in place to determine wage increases, while internal training programmes have also been introduced for the staff. Disciplinary committees, which also deal with discrimination or harassment at the workplace, are formed by two employer representatives, two trade unions and the president of the company. Before a disciplinary measure is implemented, the individual in question is entitled to a personal hearing defending their case, and the committee makes its decision based on a majority of its five votes. These regulations are defined by the collective agreement between the company and the trade union.

The internal security service is outsourced to a subcontractor company; some regulations within the company are also part of the subcontract, for example provisions for female employees. However, with the exception of regulations for female employees and staff members with disabilities, there are no diversity provisions present since the law does not allow for any differentiation in staff management based on other criteria.

Non-governmental organisations

The municipality cooperates with several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that provide services for specific target groups. For instance, in 2004, the British Council initiated the 'Street League' project and implemented a pilot programme under this model in Turkey. It still supports the international networking of the programme and offers consultancy support. The 'Street League' institution was originally established in 2001 in the UK and performs activities seeking to integrate children and young people into the community by appealing to their interest in football. İzmir Metropolitan Municipality is one of the participants of the Street League programme and hosted the interprovincial tournament in 2006; since 2007, the municipality has been the project supporter for the hosting of the Turkish Street League Tournament for three years. The coordination of the İzmir Street League was transferred to the municipality in 2007.

Elsewhere, the Social Responsibility Association is a leading NGO that promotes social responsibility for supporting children, young people and disadvantaged groups; it also initiates and supports related activities. For example, it offers training to young people on health issues (personal care, first aid, information on exploitive behaviour, adolescence and sexual health), nutrition, communications, rights, beliefs and civil rights, along with environmental, historical and cultural issues. It also offers training to trainers on adolescence, communicating with children, leadership, communications, anger management and ethics.

Another important initiative is the İzmir Balkan Immigrants Culture and Solidarity Association (Bal-Göç). Established in 1987, the association operates in the Provinces of İzmir and Manisa in western Turkey, with 9,500 members (only those registered at the headquarters, branch members not included), along with six branch offices and six clubhouses. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality supports the association's cultural activities: since citizens stemming from the Balkans are usually educated and more easily able to adapt to the labour market, the focus of municipal support is on cultural activities.

In contrast, internal migrants from the southeast of Turkey tend to be less well educated, with lower incomes and larger families. As a result, people in this group primarily receive services free of charge from Esrefpasa Hospital, which is affiliated to the municipality.

Meanwhile, associations established by citizens from Turkic Republics are offered support from İzmir's municipality, enabling them to benefit from municipal and sporting facilities. Turkish citizenship is not a requirement for membership of or a board position in an association; individuals only need to be residents of Turkey. Several associations are supported by the municipality. They may also be contracted by public institutions to provide services; up to 50% of an association's project costs may be funded by public sources.

Policy and practice on monitoring progress

Detailed provisions are in place for financial audits for public institutions and also for municipality-owned private companies. Moreover, internal statistics are maintained regarding the gender of employees, as well as the employment rate of persons with disabilities. Nonetheless, due to the legal situation, no differentiation in the statistics or any monitoring are permitted along ethnic or religious grounds.

Key challenges faced in implementation and broad lessons learnt

Since *gecekondu* areas (irregular settlements) still exist and are still subject to substantial levels of internal migration, harsh circumstances have emerged due to missing or inadequate planning in these areas. As city planning has not been properly applied to these settlement areas, parts of the cities have not been able to develop in a healthy way. Moreover, the *gecekondu* areas have been legalised within the framework of the 'Amnesty of Development and Squatters Law' No. 2805 of 1983 and the 'Laws on Proceedings to be Applied to Buildings in Violation of Squatter Housing Laws' No. 2981 of 1984. These provisions enabled some residents to improve their living conditions by obtaining rental value from the market of immovable properties, while a significant number of residents were excluded and not given the opportunity to participate and benefit in any way from living in the city. This situation has always generated political opposition against the municipality.

Potential future policy development

Although the general policy framework does not allow for any differentiation according to ethnic or migration related criteria – thus excluding any diversity policy in the European sense – pragmatic solutions have been introduced for specific groups through the provision of targeted services. These services are not explicitly related to specific groups – with a few exceptions, such as a Roma theatre project aimed at improving the image of the resident Roma population; instead, the services are conceptualised and implemented as general services. In practice, nevertheless, they may be more relevant for specific groups. One example is the free health services provided by Esrefpasa Hospital on the basis of clients' general socioeconomic situation; in reality, many of these clients come from disadvantaged groups within the internal migrant population.

Given the legal provisions for employment in the public sector, no diversity policy or positive discrimination is permitted in employment and staff development policy. However, informal practices may be possible through networks of ethnic associations, such as the Balkan Turks. In a pragmatic approach, diversity issues in service provision may also be introduced due to specific requirements of the position in question arising from needs of clients – for instance, by employing a community member for specific services in a neighbourhood area dominated by internal migrants.

Employment policy, practice and outcomes

Profile of city employees

The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality employs a total of 1,693 civil servants, 496 workers and 112 temporary workers. The municipality-owned private companies employ the following numbers of employees: IZELMAN AŞ, 1,529 employees; IZSU, 1,004 employees; ESHOT, 1,114 employees; İZFAŞ, 120 employees.

No data were available for a detailed breakdown of employees according to gender or disability. Moreover, since the municipality is not permitted to differentiate according to ethnic or religious affiliation, no respective data were available in this respect either.

Employment diversity policy

Due to the legal situation, no diversity policy with regard to employment exists in the public sector. The only exception in this respect concerns the national quota for employees with disabilities.

Challenges in developing and implementing policy

There are no reports about tensions related to ethnic or religious backgrounds within the municipal workforce or the municipal-owned companies' staff. Tensions may nonetheless arise among personnel who are employed as workers, civil servants and by means of service procurement: civil servants are permanent staff, while workers are not, and the personnel employed through service procurement often feel that they are in a precarious situation due to their temporary contract. Moreover, while the quotas for employees with disabilities are not disputed, there were no data available regarding the extent to which these quotas are actually met.

Recruitment, training and promotion

The municipality employs personnel regardless of their religious, language or ethnic background. Moreover, ethnic background is not a criterion in traineeship and vocational training. Any differentiation according to criteria other than qualification during the recruitment process is legally forbidden, with the sole exception of jobs with specifically justified gender-related requirements or with provisions for the employment of disabled persons.

The municipality performs personnel training in several fields. For instance, a Research and Development (R&D) Department developed a 10-year strategic plan for staff training and development. The R&D Department is also in charge of some 560 projects of the municipality with respect to performance management and project auditing. In addition, the municipality's Human Resources (HR) Department has a training section, while a Training Department provides the budget for in-service training.

The following training initiatives were provided by means of service procurement in 2007:

- ISO 9001 2000 Quality Management;
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management;
- OHSAS 18001 Occupational Safety;
- the 'empowerment and delegation in administration' programme;
- the 'training of trainers' initiative.

In addition, continuous in-service training courses are run in relation to:

- public procurement law and related legislation;
- computer programmes;
- new legislation and legal changes.

Since 2007, the R&D Department has started to provide training on ‘efficiency analysis techniques’. The department’s staff training programme focuses on quality management, workplace health issues and project management skills. In relation to the latter, a pool of 40 selected staff members from various departments are trained for presentations and their functions as trainers for their branches; the strategy applies a top-down approach by first securing the support and required competencies at the directors’ level and then implementing training programmes for the workers in the municipal institutions and municipally-owned companies. A three-year training plan has been developed based on collecting training demands from the various departments and institutions, and the R&D Department is building up a pool of qualified trainers for these courses, which are supported by external experts of the specific issues.

In terms of staff promotion, no differentiation is made according to the migration status of personnel.

Equal pay and working conditions

Equal pay is regulated by the conditions of the post occupied in the municipality. Promotion depends on the post occupied and the educational level of the employee in question. Since these regulations, as well as working conditions, are subject to the particular collective agreement and apply to all staff members, there is no differentiation related to other criteria.

Harassment

Harassment and the treatment of harassment cases is regulated by criminal law, and harassment at the workplace is defined as an offence. In cases that do not lead to a criminal prosecution – that is, behaviour and actions that constitute a disciplinary offence – disciplinary rules as well as the relevant collective agreement stipulate the actions to be taken by the disciplinary committee. There was no information available on harassment based on ethnic, religions or migration grounds in the İzmir municipality.

Accommodation of cultural and religious needs

The dress code in Turkey’s public institutions is free, as long as employees do not display any religious symbols. There is a general rule that every staff member should comply with a modern dress style, instead of dressing according to the traditions of a particular religious, cultural or ethnic background.

Since a common culture is shared with regard to food and religious holidays, specific regulations are not considered to be necessary in this respect. Small mosques (*mescit*) are present at the municipality, and no regulations exist in relation to shrines. As the municipality’s workforce reflects quite a homogenous society – notwithstanding some internal differences with regard to holidays, religious preferences, language or race – it is believed that no specific regulations are necessary.

Induction and language tuition

Since Turkey has not experienced any major international immigration, the country has no specific regulations or practices for migrants, nor is it considered necessary to introduce provisions for languages other than Turkish. However, every qualified person working at the municipality is expected to have knowledge of a foreign language. Professional qualifications are the only criterion for personnel policy, and any consideration of the employee's ethnic background is forbidden by law. Turkish citizenship is a precondition for being employed as a civil servant at the municipality.

İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Vocational Training and Skills Courses (IZMEB)

The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Vocational Training and Skills Courses (IZMEB) is an EU-led initiative. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality supports the project in order to ensure its sustainability and expansion. IZMEB courses were launched in 2006 to support the vocational and social development of citizens who have been deprived of formal education or who left school early. The initiative specifically targets low-income groups, particularly women and young people.

Vocational training and skills courses have been expanded in the new term. In addition to six training centres, new centres have been opened in Gazimir in the south of the İzmir province and in Evka-4 to the east. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality provided professional training leading to qualifications to some 4,350 persons in 81 different courses in the last term. The municipality has a target of providing vocational training to 6,000 citizens at eight training centres, and aims to increase the number of courses to 91 this year.

The municipality has added technical topics, such as lift maintenance and air-conditioning, to the courses provided. It has also added training in natural gas installation, maintenance and repair, in light of the expansion in the use of natural gas in İzmir.

Trainees attending the IZMEB project are trained for an average of three months at one of the eight training centres. The centres comprise 25 square metre classrooms and equipment is supplied according to the types of courses; an attendance of at least 15 trainees is usually required. After the successful trainees complete their chosen course and receive their approved certificates in the framework of a protocol signed between the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality and the Provincial Directorate of National Education, they get a chance to work in an organisation or a workshop of their own. In 2007, registrations took place between 15 August and 15 September, and the new training term commenced on 1 October 2007.

The aim of expanding the number of vocational training courses is to increase people's educational level and the number of qualified workers. In 2006, some 11,630 persons pre-registered and 4,350 received training and acquired professions at eight training centres providing 81 different courses as part of the IZMEB project.

Although these training courses are provided as general services, a large proportion of the participants come from internal migrant communities; many of them come from rural areas and usually lack a formal education, thus being excluded from acquiring professional qualifications which require a completed school education.

Recognition of qualifications

The recognition of qualifications from abroad is administered by the national administration. People can apply to the Higher Education Board and receive a certificate of equivalence for a university degree or higher qualification, making it valid in Turkey. This recognition in turn enables them to apply for positions requiring Turkish degrees.

The authority to assess documents lies with the relevant directorates defined by governorships carrying out apprenticeship training. Such documents could include diplomas, certificates of course completion, warrants, service certificates, other certificates, and similar documents issued by the relevant ministry, or through the cooperation of institutions and the relevant ministry, or received from foreign countries. The relevant directorate then has the certificate of equivalence authenticated by the Provincial Directorate of National Education. There is no related authority delegated to local authorities on this matter.

All citizens of the Turkish Republic are subject to the same rules of employment. Specific legal arrangements at the national level apply when acquiring work permits and employing foreign nationals. Since the migrants coming from Bulgaria (between 1989 and 1992) had a similar religion and language to the Turkish host society, they were included through specific temporary regulations and had no difficulties in accessing employment.

Complaints

The rules set by the central administration are valid for making complaints and implementing disciplinary procedures. These rules apply equally to all employees of the municipality and of the municipally-owned companies.

Monitoring

Apart from regular auditing procedures for financial issues, there are no monitoring provisions related to diversity issues in İzmir at present. The regular monitoring provisions concerning the performance of staff members and services do not apply any differentiation according to ethnicity, religion or migration grounds.

Impact of policy and lessons learnt

An important activity of the municipality is its internal training courses, namely for project management and quality assurance. As with the general personnel policy, there is no provision related to people's ethnic or religious background with regard to internal training.

However, since a large proportion of internal migrants without a completed school education are excluded from positions requiring a professional qualification in public services, as well as in the private sector, the municipality's substantial efforts to provide training courses for this population can be understood as an initiative seeking to open the labour market for qualified positions to these groups. These IZMEB training courses represent an innovative initiative in this regard, aiming to enhance the potential of its participants by giving them access to professional training that had hitherto not been open to those lacking or with an incomplete school education. A relevant subgroup of this population are women from internal migrant families.

Diversity in service provision

Services provided and contracted out

Health services in *gecekondü* areas

The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality funds a central hospital, which is independent of the regular public medical service. The hospital serves as a medical centre for residents who have no health insurance; these include unemployed people, those who have not yet been insured by their employer during the first four months of employment, and people without public medical aid, in other words residents who do not hold a 'green card' for publicly funded health services. These residents may register and receive a full health service funded by the municipality. The hospital is the only health institution in İzmir offering treatment for uninsured patients free of charge. Currently, the municipality funds some 5,000 families who are registered at the hospital to receive services free of charge.

The hospital also offers local services in the neighbourhoods by performing health checks and screenings for hepatitis B and other diseases in local schools, especially in *gecekondü* neighbourhoods. These health checks take place during certain days. As a part of this local programme, medical services are provided to parents, who receive instructions on hygiene and are screened. These health services are operated as general services for people in need; however, this criterion is met to a certain degree by internal migrants, who make up a large proportion of several *gecekondü* populations.

Projects run by the Cultural and Social Works Department

A number of the municipality's projects are aimed at people and families in need. Due to the socioeconomic situation of many of the families with an internal migration background, these groups are in practice major beneficiaries of such services.

Among these projects is the 'Milk Aid Project' – an initiative set up to distribute milk to schools. In 2007, the project delivered some 2,501,750 litres of milk to 111 İzmir schools.

Another initiative is the 'Food Aid Project'. Under this project, the Cultural and Social Works Department provides food aid to poor and needy families, as well as associations, centres and charities within the provincial borders.

Meanwhile, as part of the 'School Aid' initiative, the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality provides book, equipment and repair support to schools selected within the provincial borders each year.

The municipality also operates a 'Mobile Art Bus', along with open-air cinemas and theatre performances. The Mobile Art Bus aims to bring students and people into contact with fine arts at primary and secondary schools, training centres, the Konak Metro Station and district squares, therefore increasing their exposure to and interest in the arts. At the same time, the open-air cinema initiative seeks to organise around 150 events and reach a total of 100,000 people. In 2006, some 123 performances were held in summer cinema meetings, and 100,000 people attended these performances. In addition, the İzmir State Theatre stages performances at the Kültürpark Youth Theatre. The target is to stage 200 performances with an attendance of about 42,000 students.

Youth and Sports Branch

The Youth and Sports Club conducts its activities in coordination with the İzmir Youth and Sports Directorate and is active in 20 areas. In addition, sports schools are run during the summer and winter terms. The Cultural and Social Works Department also promotes activities for women within the scope of the 'City and Bay Trips for Women' project. Associations recognised as working for the public good that are active in this field receive financial support, along with stationery, sports and consumable equipment from the municipality. Contribution in kind is given to the Association for Protecting İzmir Street Children – Children are Our Future project.

Diversity policy in services

A few of the services are, in practice, offered on the basis of clients' diversity. Nevertheless, the measures are conceptualised as general services and apply a pragmatic approach to the diversity of clients in order to adapt to their different needs.

Karsiyaka Children's Training Centre

The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality supports several training centres that offer mentoring and leisure activities to children during out-of-school hours. The initiative aims to prevent children from hanging out on the streets, thus also reducing their risk of joining gangs and becoming involved in petty crime.

One of the centres – the Aegean Foundation for Contemporary Education (*Ege Cagdas Egitim Vakfi*, EÇEV) – is financed and supported by the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. The centre is attended each day by 200 children of all ages, who are supported by 10 teaching students recruited from Ege University in İzmir. Most of the children are socioeconomically disadvantaged, living in a nearby *gecekondu*. Some of the children attend on their own accord, while others are sent by their schools. To make their attendance possible, the centre provides bus transport to pick the children up from their homes and bring them back after classes have finished.

Teachers at the EÇEV offer computer and English language classes, as well as homework assistance. In addition, the children can participate at a variety of activities like music, poetry, handicrafts and theatre events. The project aims, on the one hand, to provide children with specific skills; on the other hand, it seeks to increase their self-confidence and sense of responsibility, enhancing their life skills and ability to organise themselves.

Although the centres also offer general services, these are mainly targeted at *gecekondu* residents, thus catering to a considerable extent for children from families with an internal migration background.

'Brother and sister – Elders for youngsters' project

The 'Brother and sister – Elders for youngsters' project is an ambitious initiative comprising several hundred volunteer university students. As part of the project, 500 students – so-called 'sisters' and 'brothers' – regularly meet 300 young children from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, among them Turkish children of Roma or Kurdish ethnicity. The meetings take place in the children's neighbourhood. Several 'leader families', with or without own children, offer their private house as a meeting point for the sisters, brothers and young children. The children in need of support, as well as the 'leader families', are identified through the recommendation and mediation of 95 mukhtars (elected neighbourhood representatives) who are involved in the project, as well as through the activities of local associations and clubs such as women's associations or Roma organisations.

The basic idea behind this initiative is that the students act as role models to the children in language, behaviour, hygiene, education, formation and literacy. The aim of the project is twofold: on the one hand, it aims to improve the situation of socioeconomically disadvantaged children. On the other hand, it seeks to sensitise students to the living conditions and problems of certain groups in the city of İzmir, thus raising their awareness of the city and its population as a whole.

Cultural and social centres

To improve levels of social cohesion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and to promote cultural, social, arts and sporting activities, the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality also supports cultural and social neighbourhood centres, mainly located in *gecekondu* areas. Most of these centres are managed jointly by the NGOs, the EÇEV and the Education Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV), with the support of the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality.

The low-threshold neighbourhood centres are equipped with meeting rooms for children, adults and young people, and have classrooms for a variety of courses such as promoting literacy and handicrafts. The larger centres are equipped with a library, a multi-purpose gym and cafeterias; some of them also feature painting and sculpture workshops as well as exhibition halls. A series of neighbourhood centres is already active, while some larger centres are under construction or being planned.

From Migrant to European Citizen project

The project 'From Migrant to European Citizen' is carried out within the framework of the EU-led Socrates and Grundtvig educational programmes. It aims to offer assistance to Turks who are emigrating to Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands to adapt more easily to the host culture and to improve their language proficiency. Under the coordination of Albeda College in Rotterdam, the project is realised in partnership with Denmark, the Netherlands and Turkey. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality is a participant of this programme.

Access to services

Citizen Communication Centre

The Citizen Communication Centre provides information to the public on the services and activities of the municipality. At the same time, it channels the requests, recommendations and complaints of citizens to the responsible units, as well as seeking to establish a bridge between the municipality and İzmir's citizens by informing people of every step of the work being undertaken.

Mukhtars' Desk

The Mukhtars' Desk is a unit provided for the 737 *mukhtars* (elected neighbourhood representatives) affiliated to the Office of the Mayor in accordance with Law No.5216. The unit is responsible for immediately directing written and verbal applications regarding problems in the neighbourhood to the relevant units in the municipal administration and for serving the requests of İzmir's citizens.

The demands of the *mukhtars* are met – on the basis of their level of priority – by the relevant units of the municipality. The *mukhtars* are visited onsite and their problems are listened to; subsequent efforts are made to adopt a solution to resolve the problem in question.

Press and Public Relations Directorate

The Press and Public Relations Directorate is responsible for maintaining an appropriate flow of information between the press, members of the public and the municipality. The information relates to the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality's plans, programmes and projects. The directorate is affiliated to the Office of the Mayor.

Monitoring of access and outcomes identified

The outcomes of access to services are monitored as part of the performance assessment implemented by the directorate of the responsible units. Since the 'principle of equality' applies to access to services – and no differentiation is made with regard to ethnicity, migration status or religion – no information was available on diversity issues in the west European sense.

Impact of policy on access to and quality of services

One potential problem in İzmir is the gradual exclusion of segments of the population, resulting from the large irregular movement and settlement of groups in the municipal area. These groups are primarily defined by the area of settlement and specific neighbourhoods (gecekondu). Although this spatial attribution often overlaps with the internal migration background and sometimes with ethnic criteria – for instance, Turkish citizens with a Roma background or stemming from Kurdish or Arabic ethnic backgrounds in Turkey – ethnicity is not an official criterion for measures and policies. Instead, services are provided under the paradigm of equality of access to general services for all Turkish citizens, even if these services may in fact be more relevant for these groups. As with general services in west European cities, however, the nature of demand for services creates in practice a need to adapt these services to the specific needs of clients. Such adaptations, thus, generate an unofficial and pragmatic diversity policy practice in the field.

In İzmir, there are no signs of the systematic exclusion of specific groups from the provision of services. On the contrary, the official provision of services under the equality paradigm, which excludes formal diversity provisions, is aimed explicitly at those groups who were hitherto excluded from full participation due to their socioeconomic situation, which was often related to their migration background. This approach therefore promotes the social cohesion and realisation of equal opportunities for all citizens of İzmir.

Key challenges and lessons for CLIP

The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality faces major challenges in ensuring and enhancing the social cohesion of its population. Several factors contribute to these challenges.

Firstly, the Turkish municipalities have limited leeway with regard to local policies compared with most European cities. Highly relevant issues in the area of housing and infrastructure development are the responsibility of the national or provincial authorities; important policy decisions taken by the municipality are thus subject to approval by the governor or central administrations. Moreover, the city of İzmir has quite limited financial resources and depends to a large extent on resources assigned from the national tax revenue.

Secondly, the dominant discourse of Turkish nationality is based on its history of inclusiveness, which places less of an emphasis on people's ethnic or religious background. Against this background, there is a resistance to apply in policy practice the west European diversity discourse; such resistance is related to internal issues concerning national minority groups and external problems, including demands by European and international institutions to apply specific, often problematic reforms.

A third problem is the large-scale internal immigration being faced by the city, which is contributing to the extensive growth of the resident population and of those settling in *gecekondu* or 'squatter' areas. As a result, the municipality is facing major problems in providing sufficient services and infrastructure, as well as in ensuring the inclusion of marginalised groups and maintaining social cohesion within the city. The latter challenge has been further increased by the expansion of the municipality's responsibility to rural areas and districts within a 50 kilometre radius under the new law. This has significantly raised the municipality's level of responsibility with regard to infrastructure and service provision.

Despite these challenges, the case of İzmir may provide an interesting example for other European cities of how a municipality deals with such challenges in its efforts to increase social cohesion at local level. In the Turkish context, the city of İzmir is considered highly innovative in introducing new approaches and measures into local policies. One particularly interesting observation made during the field visit regarding the potential developments and trends in diversity issues is that, although not being under the authority of the municipality but under the regional governor, registered associations and recent changes in this field may be of high relevance for developing a diverse and at the same time coherent civil society at the local level.

For several decades, a broad spectrum of local associations have existed, arising from the former Ottoman territories in Europe, which can be compared to the *Landsmannschaften* federations established by ethnic Germans in Germany. These associations act, on the one hand, as platforms for continuing the local cultural traditions of the poly-ethnic Ottoman empire, which embraces Kosovars, Rumelians, Macedonians, Bulgarians and Thrakians; at the same time, they operate as social networks for representing the interests of these groups at the local, regional and national level. These groups consider themselves as 'European Turks', being related to the Macedonian offspring of Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, and are usually well educated and represented in the institutions of Turkey; as a result, their specific Turkish identity has not posed a problem for Turkish society.

As part of a general process of strengthening civil society institutions in Turkey, the legal provision for registering an association was opened on 14 June 2004. Up until then, associations were subject to a registration process at the local police directorates under direct control of the Ministry of the Interior. This development seeks to encourage the formation of NGOs and their voluntary work, motivating such activities within civil society by providing advice and counselling, as well as easing the amount of legal provisions. As part of this process, the governor's administration in İzmir established an association branch in charge of public relations seeking to promote NGOs; the association also provides advice on the foundation and registration of such organisations. The related changes in the law on associations

– namely, Law No. 5253 and Law No. 5272 after 2003 – limit the control by the authorities and promote organisations in the civil society sector. These legal and organisational changes have yielded positive results. In 2007, some 1,200 associations were already registered in the district of Konak within the city of İzmir. This new opportunity has also been maximised by the Roma community, leading to the formation of about 30 Roma associations; regional associations has also been established, for instance by İzmir residents stemming from Mardin in southeast Turkey.

Several new associations have been founded that, on the one hand, are related to certain ethnic backgrounds but which, at the same time, are deeply rooted in local civil society. The majority of these newly founded associations focus on citizens' interests, such as sports, swimming, dancing and other leisure activities. Nevertheless, this developing segment of civil society NGOs provides new opportunities for a diversity policy at local level and may have the potential to contribute to the inclusion of İzmir's diverse population groups in the city's civil society.

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