

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF EU SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY IMPLEMENTATIONS IN TURKEY

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Abstract

*Welfare regime is composed of social and economic policies that are adopted to protect and promote the economic and social well-being of its citizens. While neoliberal principles extend through globalization, welfare regimes have been suffering from these spreading principles focusing on individual empowerment and equality of opportunity rather than collective security and shared welfare. This perception has widened the inequalities in the society between empowered and weakened individuals and the urgent need to call back the 'social justice' becomes *sino qua non*. This is the base of how the concept of social inclusion and social risk management policies has emerged. This article analyzes ways of the reflection of this basis from EU to Turkey and its possible benefits/costs and advantages/disadvantages for Turkish social policy development. The policy approach suggested by Graziano that evaluates policies with four key dimensions: "objectives, principles, procedures and instruments is applied to the analysis of EU and Turkish social inclusion policy implementations".¹*

Keywords: *EU Social Policy, Social Inclusion, Poverty, Social Justice, Equality*

AB Sosyal İçerme Politikası Uygulamalarının Türkiye'deki Maliyet-Fayda Tahlili

Özet

Refah rejimleri vatandaşların sosyal ve ekonomik menfaatlerini korumak ve geliştirmek için yürütülen sosyal ve ekonomik politikalarla oluşur. Küreselleşmenin yarattığı ivme ile neoliberal politikalar yaygınlaştıkça refah rejimleri; sosyal durum güvenliği, toplu ve paylaşılan refah kavramları yerine bireysel güçlenme ve fırsat eşitliği kavramlarına odaklanan bu neoliberal prensiplerden olumsuz etkilenmektedir. Algıdaki bu değişiklik toplumda eşitsizliği derinleştirerek güçlendirilen ve zayıflaştırılan bireyler arasında uçurum yaratmış,

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¹ Graziano, P. (2009). Bringing the Actors Back In. Europeanization and Domestic Policy Change: The Case of the European Employment Strategy in Italy and France. *Paper presented at the IPSA International Conference Luxembourg, March 18-20 2010*. Available at: http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_4123.pdf

'sosyal adalet' kavramının geri çağırılma ihtiyacını zorunlu hale getirmiştir. Bu durum sosyal içerme kavramının ve sosyal risk yönetimi politikalarının temelini nasıl oluştuğunu gözler önüne sermektedir. Bu makale, söz konusu temelin AB yoluyla Türkiye'ye yansıma yolları ve Türkiye'de sosyal politikanın gelişiminde olası fayda/maliyeti veya avantaj/dezavantajlarını tartışmaktadır. AB ve Türkiye'nin sosyal içerme politikalarının analizinde Graziano'nun siyasaları: "hedefler, prensipler, prosedürler ve araçlar olmak üzere 4 temel boyutta değerlendiren teorik bakış açısı"² kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: AB Sosyal Politikası, Sosyal İçerme, Yoksulluk, Sosyal Adalet, Eşitlik.

Introduction

Within the severe capitalism, welfare regimes have evolved into a mix of social and economic policies in order to somehow tame pure market capitalism and to decrease or lighten its possible inhuman effects on the 'social citizens'- if still exist any in today's capitalist world. Welfare states 'were'³ usually characterized by their comprehensiveness, inclusiveness, universality and their emphasis on equality and solidarity.⁴ However, starting from 1980s, while neoliberal policies were increasingly been globalized, the social policies in these welfare states have started to lose all these functions and adapted purely individual achievement and empowerment. This situation has widened the inequalities and therefore struggle in the society between empowered and weakened individuals. Thus, the emergent need to call back the 'social justice' becomes *sine qua non*. Even if it never serves to bring social justice, the concept of social inclusion has been emerged in order to avert the increasing social problems, restrain unemployment rates, prevent the increasing immigration and revive the stagnant economies.⁵ It converts social policies to social risk prevention and/or risk management mechanism. These risks can be divided into two groups: first, the risks of unemployment and unequal distribution of income faced by the individuals during the times of financial crisis; and second, the risks faced by the system itself when the amount of individuals that encounter aforementioned challenges increase.⁶ This social risk management mechanism is fed by the fears and accusations of the so called 'losers' of the system, tendency to profit from them (cheap labor) or mercy towards these people (through charity organizations).⁷ However, if the objective is to obtain social justice, there is

² Graziano,P. (2009). Bringing the Actors Back In. Europeanization and Domestic Policy Change: The Case of the European Employment Strategy in Italy and France. *Paper presented at the IPSA International Conference Luxembourg, March 18-20 2010*. Available at: http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_4123.pdf

³ Added by the author

⁴ Lillesto, B. & Sandvin, J.T. (2014). Limits to vocational inclusion?: Disability and the social democratic conception of labour. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 16:1. Doi: 10.1080/15017419.2012.735203

⁵ Özcüre, G. (2010). Avrupa Birliği'nin Sosyal Politikası ve Türkiye. *Derin Yayınları* ISBN: 978-9944-250-93-1

⁶ Yalman, G. (2007). Tarihsel Bir Perspektiften Sosyal Politika ve Yoksulluk. Atılğan, G. & Çakar,B.Y.(Edt). Yoksulluk ve Dışlanma. *Teş-İş Dergisi*, Haziran 2007

⁷ Buğra, A. (2007). Yoksulluk ve Sosyal Haklar. Atılğan, G. & Çakar,B.Y. (Edt). Op.cit

only one way to deal with the problems of poverty and social exclusion: the right-based point of view. Moreover; the institutions should take the obligatory responsibility through making these individuals the subject and listen to them instead of being absorbed in the statistics, numerical information of the weakened individuals.

From this point of view, this article examines the development of social inclusion policies in EU and the critics of EU to social inclusion policies of a candidate country, Turkey. The aim of the study is to perform cost-benefit analysis for Turkey in the condition that EU perspective is fully internalized. The article goes through three stages. At the outset, development of social inclusion in EU discourse is analyzed briefly. Situation in Turkey is discussed at the second stage in order to assess the level of development in social inclusion policies in Turkey. These two steps that prepare a background for cost-benefit analysis are reviewed with the policy approach that unpacks policies into four key dimensions: objectives, principles, procedures and instruments as suggested by Graziano.⁸ Finally, cost-benefit analysis of the full harmonization of Turkey to the EU mechanism is performed at the third section.

Development of Social Inclusion Policies in the EU

As the concept of social inclusion is assessed with the analysis of poverty, the review on development of social inclusion policies in the EU starts with the evaluation of the concept of poverty. European Union initiated to develop its policies on poverty in 1970s. Geyer points out three main reasons why the EU did not develop the perspective on poverty until 1970s:

“First reason is that in 1950s and 1960s, member countries had growing and stable economies. Poverty existed but it was believed that this problem could be overcome with the full employment policies and welfare state regimes. The second reason is that EU focuses on economic integration in its historical development and put social policies subordinated position at EU level. Third one is the increasing power of right wing parties in the majority of member states that did not pay attention to poverty alleviation policies.”⁹

Therefore, it is seen that poverty did not emerge as a risk until 1970s due to stable economies of Europe. However, it did not last long and the European unemployment miracle came to an end in 1970s¹⁰ due to several crises in the world

⁸ Graziano, P. (2009). Bringing the Actors Back In. Europeanization and Domestic Policy Change: The Case of the European Employment Strategy in Italy and France. *Paper presented at the IPSA International Conference Luxembourg, March 18-20 2010*. Available at: http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_4123.pdf

⁹ Erdoğan, S. (2010). Avrupa Birliği'nde Sosyal Koruma ve Sosyal İçerme. Ataman, B. (Edt). Türkiye'nin Adaylık Sürecinde Avrupa Birliği İstihdam ve Sosyal Politikası. Siyasal Kitapevi. ISBN: 978-6055-782-50-4

¹⁰ Blanchard, J.O. (2004). Explaining European Unemployment. *The National Bureau of Economic Research. Research Summary. Summer 2004*. Available at: <http://www.nber.org/reporter/summer04/blanchard.html>

economy. As a response, first Social Action Programme of EU adopted in 1974 mentions 'to implement, in cooperation with the Member States, specific measures to combat poverty'¹¹ besides other social policy priorities. Moreover, in 1989 a Council Resolution stated for the first time (1) *there is a need to put emphasis on combating social exclusion's being an important part of social dimension of the internal market; (2) the process of exclusion is spreading in a number of fields and (3) the reasons for this process lie in structural changes in the societies and that, of these, difficulty of access to the labor market is a particularly decisive factor.*¹² It shows that EU found the solution of social exclusion in access to labor market and perceived it as an economic insufficiency in 1980s. After the recognition of its importance, social inclusion has gained the legal basis with Amsterdam Treaty through its articles 136 -that includes the combat with social exclusion as an objective of the Union- and 137- that entitles the Council to develop creative measures to combat with social exclusion and evaluate the related experiences in this matter.¹³

Pursuing how the concept of social inclusion has developed in the EU context, the policy approach of Graziano that unpacks policies into four key dimensions: objectives, principles, procedures and instruments is applied to EU social inclusion policy area¹⁴.

Objectives and Indicators

In Lisbon Council 2000, it has been decided that '*The steps must be taken to make a decisive impact on eradication of poverty because the number of people living below the poverty line and in social exclusion in the Union is unacceptable.*'¹⁵ These steps have been concreted by adapting 4 key objectives for social inclusion in Nice Council 2000.

- "facilitating participation in employment and access by all to the resources, rights, goods and services,
- preventing the risks of exclusion,
- helping the most vulnerable,
- mobilising all relevant bodies."¹⁶

¹¹ Council (1974). Council Resolution of 21 January 1974 concerning a social action programme OJ C 13, 12.2.1974.available at:[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31974Y0212\(01\):en:NOT](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31974Y0212(01):en:NOT)

¹² Council (1989). Resolution of the Council and of the Ministries for Social Affairs Meeting within the Council on C 277/01, available at:<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:1989:277:0001:0001:EN:PDF>

¹³ Erdoğan, S. (2010). Op. cit

¹⁴ Graziano, P. (2009). Op. cit.

¹⁵ Council (2000). Presidency Conclusions of Lisbon Council. Available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm

¹⁶ Council (2001). Objectives in the Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion. C 82/02. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2001:082:0004:0007:EN:PDF>

The programme of action to encourage cooperation between Member States on combating social exclusion that was adapted in 2001 for the years between 2002 and 2006 determines the objectives as follows:

- “improving the understanding of social exclusion and poverty with the help in particular of comparable indicators;
- organising exchanges on policies which are implemented and promoting mutual learning inter alia in the context of national action plans, with the help in particular of comparable indicators;
- developing the capacity of actors to address social exclusion and poverty effectively, and to promote innovative approaches, in particular through networking at European level, and by promoting dialogue with all those involved including at national and regional level.”¹⁷

These comparable indicators have been defined in 2001 in Social Protection Committee as primary and secondary indicators. Table 1 compiles them in detail. As observed frankly, the reason behind the exclusion was related to economic reasons and the majority of the indicators try to measure economic sufficiency.

Table 1: Indicators of poverty and social inclusion, 2001

Primary Indicators	Secondary Indicators
Low income rate after transfers with low-income threshold set at 60% of median income (with breakdowns by gender, age, most frequent activity status, household type and tenure status; as illustrative examples, the values for typical households)	Dispersion around the 60% median low income threshold
Distribution of income (income quintile ratio)	Low income rate anchored at a point in time
Persistence of low income	Low income rate before transfers
Median low income gap	Distribution of income (Gini coefficient)
Regional cohesion	Persistence of low income (based on 50% of median income)
Long term unemployment rate	Long term unemployment share
People living in jobless households	Very long term unemployment rate.
Early school leavers not in further education or training	Persons with low educational attainment
Life expectancy at birth	
Self-perceived health status	

Source: Report on Indicators in the field of poverty and social exclusion, Social Protection Committee

¹⁷Council and Parliament (2001). Decision No 50/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 December 2001 establishing a programme of Community action to encourage cooperation between Member States to combat social exclusion. L 010 , 12/01/2002 available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002D0050:EN:HTML>

Table 2: Latest version of indicators of poverty and social inclusion, 2008

Indicators
At-risk-of poverty rate + illustrative threshold values
Persistent at-risk of poverty rate
Relative median poverty risk gap
Long term unemployment rate
Population living in jobless households
Early school leavers not in education or training
Poverty risk by household type
Poverty risk by the work intensity of households
Poverty risk by most frequent activity status
Poverty risk by accommodation tenure status
Dispersion around the at-risk-of-poverty threshold
Persons with low educational attainment
Low reading literacy performance of pupils

Source: *Web-site of EU Commission- Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion*

These indicators have changed overtime and the latest version updated in 2008 can be observed in Table 2. Even if social exclusion should be analyzed by taking into account economic, political, cultural and also spatial constraints, EU measures it mostly with economic terms.

Principles

The main guideline to combat with social exclusion in the EU is to incorporate the individuals in the labor market. It was highlighted in the Lisbon Council in 2000 that ‘*the best safeguard against social exclusion is a job*’¹⁸. Moreover, Commission Recommendation has defined in 2008 following common principles and guidelines on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market:

- “Adequate income support

Recognize the individual’s basic right to resources and social assistance sufficient to lead a life that is compatible with human dignity as part of a comprehensive, consistent drive to combat social exclusion.

¹⁸ Council (2000). Presidency Conclusions of Lisbon Council. Available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm

- Inclusive labour markets

Adopt arrangements covering persons whose condition renders them fit for work to ensure they receive effective help to enter or re-enter and stay in employment that corresponds to their work capacity.

- Access to quality services

*Take every measure to enable those concerned, in accordance with the relevant national provisions, to receive appropriate social support through access to quality services.*¹⁹

Procedures

The member states are invited to prepare NAPs (National Action Plan) on social inclusion in line with the indicators mentioned above in every two years. The Council and Commission work on the joint report to direct the member states in a right position on common policies. Moreover, candidate countries are asked to prepare JIM (Joint Inclusion Memorandum) which is a road map for the candidate countries on their harmonization to social inclusion policies of the EU.

Instruments

The Commission works together with EU countries through the Social Protection Committee using the Open Method of Co-ordination in the areas of social inclusion.²⁰ The social OMC is a voluntary process for political cooperation based on agreeing common objectives and measuring progress towards these goals using common indicators.²¹

In addition, IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) is an important financial instrument used by candidate countries. The component of 'Human Resources of Development' can be benefited for the development of social inclusion policies.

Situation in Turkey on Social Inclusion Policy Area

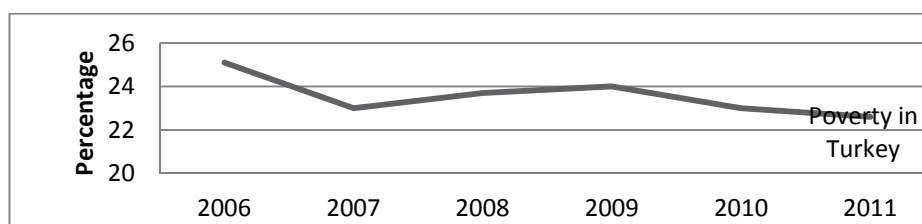
Turkish economy has experienced a severe structural transformation in 1970s when economic liberalization programmes were put into the agenda of Turkish politics. Adapting to this transformation, Turkey has suffered from several crises that were followed by structural adjustment programmes of the IMF. The results of these programmes were highly serious for Turkey because they have worsened the

¹⁹ Commission (2008). Commission Recommendation of 3 October 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market. L 307 , 18/11/2008. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:307:0011:01:EN:HTML>

²⁰ Web site of Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=750>

²¹ Web site of Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=750>

income distribution, decreased employment and deepened poverty problem.²² Even though the problem of poverty, therefore social exclusion, has started to be a risk (under capitalist terms) for Turkey starting from early 1970s, there is still no policy objective, strategy or an action plan to combat with poverty today in 2014. As an indication of poverty becoming a concern, TURKSTAT initiated to measure the rate of poverty starting from 2002. Table 3 shows that poverty is measured in terms of food and non-food poverty and the rate of both of them is almost 27% in 2002. The method of measurement of poverty and the available data clearly indicate how much importance is given even to measure the poverty level in the society. In addition, as observed in Graphic 1, when the poverty is measured according to the criteria of 60% of the median income, the rate increases by almost 5 % more for each year. Two statistics are contradictory even if the publisher is the same. Therefore, one can easily claim that in addition to no existence of decent study on poverty and social inclusion, even the measurement is not able to draw a real picture of the poverty level in Turkey.



Graphic 1: The level of poverty (according to the criteria of 60% of usable median income)

Source: Results of Poverty Study, TURKSTAT

Table 3: Percentage of poor individuals (%)

Methods	Percentage of poor individuals (%)											
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 ⁽³⁾	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
TURKEY												
Food poverty	1,35	1,29	1,29	0,87	0,74	0,48	0,54	0,48	.	.	.	
Complete poverty (food+nonfood)	26,36	28,12	25,60	20,50	17,81	17,79	17,11	18,08	.	.	.	
Below 1 \$ per capita per day	0,20	0,01	0,02	0,01	
Below 2,15 \$ per capita per day	3,04	2,39	2,49	1,55	1,41	0,52	0,47	0,22	0,21	0,14	0,06	
Below 4,3 \$ per capita per day	30,30	23,75	20,89	16,36	13,33	8,41	6,83	4,35	3,66	2,79	2,27	
Relative poverty based on expenditure	14,74	15,51	14,18	16,16	14,50	14,70	15,06	15,12	.	.	.	

Source: Results of Poverty Study, TURKSTAT

²²Saner, F. (2011). Op.cit.

Moreover, the picture of Turkey's distribution of income in 2012 can be observed in Table 4 bearing in mind that it doesn't reflect the high rate of informal workers in Turkey. The most important point in the table is that 21, 5% of individuals in lowest level depend on the casual income that can be lost in any time. Besides informal workers, these people can also be named as unemployed workers and as observed clearly the amount of them is very high. Furthermore, as indicated in Table 5, when compared distribution of annual income by income levels in 2011 and 2012, almost no change is observed possibly due to lack of any efficient strategy on fair distribution of income and on combat with poverty.

Table 4: Quintiles ordered by equivalised household disposable income and distribution of annual incomes by types of income (Vertical %) (Turkey)

2012		Total	Lowest income First 20%	Second 20%	Third 20%	Fourth 20%	Highest income Last 20%
		Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
	Wage and salary	46,5	31,3	42,7	44,8	47,1	48,9
	Casual	3,4	21,5	9,7	4,6	2,5	0,6
	Entrepreneurial	20,4	20,1	20,8	17,6	17,4	22,5
	Agricultural	6,8	12,5	10,8	8,0	6,6	5,2
	Non-agricultural	13,6	7,5	9,9	9,6	10,7	17,2
	Rental income	3,5	1,1	1,2	1,7	2,6	5,1
	Property income	3,3	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,3	4,4
	Social transfers	20,0	16,7	19,3	25,4	25,0	16,7
	Pensions and survivors' benefits	18,4	9,3	16,4	23,4	23,7	16,0
	Other social transfers	1,6	7,5	2,9	2,0	1,4	0,7
	Inter-household transfers (Received)	2,7	6,0	3,7	3,5	2,9	1,8
	Other incomes	0,2	1,2	0,5	0,3	0,2	0,0

Source: Results of Income and Living Conditions Survey, TURKSTAT

Table 5: Quintiles Ordered By Equivalised Household Disposable Income, 2011-2012

Quintiles	Turkey		Urban		Rural	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
First 20% ^(*)	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.1
Second 20%	10.6	10.6	10.8	10.9	10.9	11.2
Third 20%	15.2	15.3	15.2	15.3	15.7	15.9
Fourth 20%	21.7	21.7	21.5	21.3	22.5	22.8
Fifth 20% ^(*)	46.7	46.6	46.2	46.1	44.8	44.0
Gini coefficient	0.404	0.402	0.394	0.391	0.385	0.377
Share ratio (S80/S20)	8.0	8.0	7.4	7.2	7.4	7.2

Source: Income and Living Conditions Survey, TURSTAT

Objectives and Indicators

Yalman states that it is difficult to say that there has been an acknowledgement of the phenomena of poverty as a major policy concern in Turkey.²³ Moreover, he adds that there has been a tradition to develop policies to decrease the poverty level but is seen as an instrument to decrease social risks rather than aiming of social justice and he thinks that this spirit comes from the international agencies, World Bank in particular.²⁴

The best way to test this argument and present Turkey's objectives- if exist- on combating with poverty is to analyze National Development Plans.

In the part of spreading welfare policies, the seventh plan (1996-2000) mentions for the first time the concept of poverty as follows: *'The priority is given to the issues of poverty alleviation, imbalance in income distribution and increase in welfare by taking into account criteria of economic effectiveness. The policies of increasing active labor and individual's constructing their own businesses will be fostered...Social Solidarity Fund is restructured in order to increase the welfare level of poor people.'*²⁵ The ninth plan (2007-2013) includes for the first time the concept of 'social exclusion'. The statement is as follows: *the life of the individuals that face the risk of poverty and social exclusion will be improved through inclusion policies and increasing their living standards.'*²⁶ In the tenth plan (2014-2018), it is clearly remarked that Turkey aims to solve the poverty problem but the instruments to reach this objective is still ambiguous.²⁷ Moreover, when the whole report is evaluated, the perception of Turkey towards social exclusion is obvious: economic insufficiency. Poverty and social exclusion are only stated as a risk rather than evaluated from rights based point of view same as the poverty assessment reports of World Bank.

There is no clearly defined objective or indicator for neither poverty alleviation nor social exclusion in Turkish policy dimension. However, there is an evidence of international organizations' influence in mentioning these concepts in Turkish documents.

Principles

In a similar way, Turkey doesn't have a strategy and therefore principles to improve poverty alleviation and social inclusion. However, there are some laws and

²³ Yalman, G. (2007). Tarihsel Bir Perspektiften Sosyal Politika ve Yoksulluk. Atılğan, G. & Çakar, B.Y. (Edt). Op.cit

²⁴ Saner, F. (2011). Op.cit.

²⁵ State Planning Organization (1996). Yedinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1996-2000. Ankara. Available at: <http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/plan/plan7.pdf>

²⁶ State Planning Organization (2007). Dokuzuncu Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 2007-2013. Ankara. Available at: <http://ekutup.dpt.gov.tr/plan/plan9.pdf>

²⁷ State Planning Organization (2014). Dokuzuncu Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 2014-2018. Ankara. Available at: http://pbk.tbmm.gov.tr/dokumanlar/10-kalkinma_plani.pdf

acts that can be considered to be followed in line with some invisible objectives. All has been done disorderly. Therefore, for the purpose of this article these acts will be analyzed according to the recent criticism of the Progress Report 2013 of EU Commission:

- *In the area of social inclusion, an overall policy framework is still lacking.*
- *Income inequality remains considerable as compared with the EU and social transfers have a limited impact in alleviating poverty.*
- *Social expenditures have increased further but are still low.*
- *The administrative capacity to design, implement and evaluate policies tailored to the needs of the most vulnerable groups is increasing but still insufficient.*
- *People with disabilities continue to face serious difficulties in accessing employment in the private sector, though there is a limited upward trend in the public sector.*²⁸

The policy area of social inclusion requires to analyze social policy in Turkey in several perspectives such as low rate of labor force participation of females, early age of retirement, informality in Turkish labor force, activation policies of İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency), recent social security reform, involving all relevant actors, building a strong social dialogue...etc. However, analyzing all these factors exceed the aim of this article. That's why the social inclusion part of the progress report 2013 is taken as a reference point.

Turkey is very far away from the direction that EU tries to pull over Turkey. The situation of Turkey regarding poverty alleviation and unequal distribution of income is drawn in the initial part of 'Situation in Turkey on Social Inclusion Policy Area'. Continuing with the remaining ones, in 2004 Progress Report of EU Commission, it is stated that *'Existing structures to promote social inclusion are highly dispersed and there is insufficient coordination of activities. It is important to promote an integrated approach mobilizing various governmental bodies and all relevant stakeholders in the process'*²⁹ As a response to this criticism, it was decided in 2011 to establish General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity (DGSAS) under Ministry of Family and Social Policies in order to gather under a single roof all institutions that provides social assistance. This Directorate General carries out its activities by using the Fund for the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity through 973 social assistance and solidarity foundations established in several provinces and sub-provinces. However, as observed in

²⁸CEC (2013). 2013 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession, Brussels. Available at:

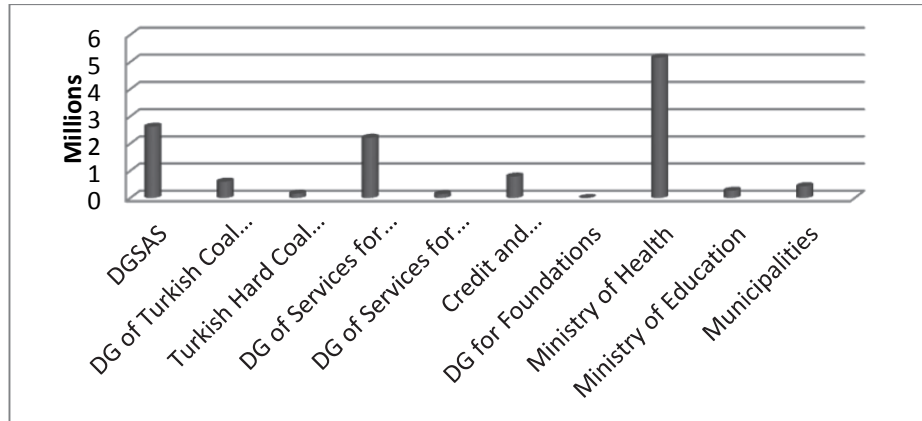
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf

²⁹CEC (2004). 2004 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession, Brussels. Available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2004/tr_tr_2004_en.pdf

Graphic 2, there are plenty of organizations that provide social assistance under several institutions such as Directorate General of Services for Disabled and Old People, Credit and Dormitories Institution, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, General Directorate for Foundations, Municipalities...etc. The DGSAS coordination role is highly limited and the share of other institutions on distribution of social assistance is quite high compared with DGSAS.

The whole picture of the social expenditure in Turkey can be analyzed in Annex I.



Graphic 2: The resources provided by some of social assistance institutions 1.000.000/TL, 2001

Source: Bulletin of DGSAS in social assistance statistics, 2012

The Incentive Law for Social Assistance and Solidarity (Law no: 3294) define the target group of the DGSAS in its article 2 as *'those who are poor, those who are not covered by public social security schemes and not having pensions from those institutions, and those who can become productive and beneficial for the society by means of a little monetary support, or education and training'*.³⁰ This article is highly general and there is no standard mechanism to decide who fulfil these requirements. This uncertainty creates discrimination and bad usage of the resources. Similarly, municipalities in Turkey are a great supplier of social assistance but there are several misfits with this assistance. For instance, the sources of the municipalities are not transparent; and they could be and probably is carried out in conformity with political interests in a way to maximize the chances of re-election of the party in power.³¹

³⁰Saner, F. (2011). Op.cit.

³¹Buğra, A. & Keyder, Ç. (2005) Poverty and Social Policy in Contemporary Turkey. Report of Bogazici University, Social Policy Forum. Available at: <http://www.spf.boun.edu.tr/docs/WP-Bugra-Keyder.pdf>

Regarding the provision of social assistance to the most vulnerable part of the society, Directorate General of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Genel Müdürlüğü - SHÇEK) affiliated to the Turkish Prime Ministry tries to promote the care at home model for children and disabled people. Monitoring Platform of Social Expenditures, composed of 30 several NGOs, believes that SHÇEK has a risk to be converted into an institution that distribute aid rather than protect the vulnerable children.³² Regarding the disabled people, the law nr. 5378 passed in 2005 regulates health, education, rehabilitation, employment and care services for disabled people.³³ However, the implementation level is not satisfactory.

Procedures

Turkey initiated the preparation process of Joint Inclusion Memorandum in 2004 and the drafting period is estimated to be finished at the beginning of 2009. However, due to the disagreements occurred between Turkey and the Commission on the way how to insert Romany people in the document, the process has been locked up. JIM is supposed to outline the principal challenges in relation to tackling poverty and social exclusion, present the major policy measures taken by Turkey in the light of the agreement to start translating the EU's common objectives into national policies and identify the key policy issues for future monitoring and policy review. Therefore, this process could benefit Turkey to define its own strategy on combating poverty and to bring all related parties together. It seems that this opportunity is missed due to a comparatively slight disagreement.

Instruments

In Turkey, there is no instrument in particular to tackle with social inclusion. However, there are several public and private institutions (from Municipalities to Union of Turkish Bar Associations) that provide social assistance in highly fragmented mechanism. Even if there are plenty of organizations, they cannot reach their aim due to lack of a strategy to direct them. Therefore, it is not surprising that Yalman thinks that this incoordination problem resembles to rag bag (yamalıbohça).³⁴

Cost Benefit Analysis for Turkey

Given this background, it is obvious that Turkey should pay attention within the shortest time on definition of its strategy on poverty alleviation by identifying an objective; indicators; worthwhile principles; procedures; and instruments in order to measure the fulfillment of the defined objectives and attain these targets. The basic question is whether Turkey should follow the direction that EU pulls over Turkey.

³² Bianet (21.04.2010). SHÇEK Çocuğu değil Aileyi Koruyor. Available at: <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/121471-shcek-cocugu-degil-aileyi-koruyor>

³³ Turkish Official Gazette. Law nr. 5378. Available at: <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.5378.pdf>

³⁴Yalman, G. (2007). Tarihsel Bir Perspektiften Sosyal Politika ve Yoksulluk. Atılğan, G. & Çakar,B.Y.(Edt). Op.cit

First of all, it has to be underlined that EU focuses on market confirming rather than market correcting policies in its historical development and put social policies in the subordinated position.³⁵ The main driving force of European integration is to design European single market without interventions and not to protect but to empower individuals through its judicial power: European Court of Justice (ECJ).³⁶ Richard Münch explains the deficiency of satisfactory European social policy as follows:

*“The European law constructs a society from market citizen point of view and, therefore, European Court of Justice takes into account empowered, knowledgeable individuals and disregards the others that do not fill the minimum standards for the competitive economy. This social order is appropriate for market citizen of liberalism rather than political citizen of republicanism or social citizen of social democratic welfare state. In addition, the principle of non-discrimination is designed to bring economic self-sufficiency for individuals. It is applied frankly to remove trade barriers but it is fostered as basic principles of justice. Therefore, it is perceived as legitimate principle by competitive companies and individuals that promote competition on European level and provide legitimate framework for them.”*³⁷

Therefore, the welfare regime that tame pure market capitalism and decrease or lighten its possible inhuman effects on the ‘social citizens’ tries to be converted into activation policies of the individuals, which creates a minority of empowered individuals and a majority of weakened counterparts. This endangers the smooth continuity of the capitalist system. With the aim of sustaining the wellbeing of the system and decreasing the risks that are created by the system itself, social inclusion policies in the EU follows the same logic and raises the ideas of flexicurity, activation, partnership in order to convert social policy into an instrument for optimizing the adjustment of effective social protection systems in member states to international market forces.³⁸ The concept of social inclusion is seen as a key to developing ‘neoliberalism with a heart’, in which globally competitive free market capitalism is not seriously challenged, but instead mitigated through social policies heavily focused on education and the acquisition of skills for ‘employability’ in a

³⁵ Bailey, D.J (2008). Explaining the underdevelopment of ‘Social Europe’: a critical realization. *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol.18(3): 232-245 doi: 10.1177/0958928708091057

³⁶ Münch, R. (2008). Constructing a European Society by Jurisdiction. *European Law Journal*, vol.14, no.5: 519-541

³⁷ Münch, R. (2008). Op. Cit.

³⁸ Jepsen, M. & Pascual, S.A. (2005). The European Social Model: an exercise in deconstruction. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 15:231 doi: 10.1177/0958928705054087

fast-changing knowledge economy.³⁹ Moreover, Pichierri states in his article where he analyzes European social model that European social model is – or at least has become – a mere façade masking the steady rise of the neoliberal ‘penseé unique’ and he continues that it is simply maintained that the EU re-proposes and promotes a ‘stateless market’ where welfare is a cost to be cut in order to survive in a globalized world.⁴⁰

This logic can be observed clearly in the design of recent social inclusion and poverty alleviation policies in the objectives, principles, procedures and instruments of EU institutions- as indicated above. Therefore, it can be concluded that EU, from the beginning of its integration process, has removed itself from following a welfare regime in which the political and economic organization takes an active role to protect and promote the economic and social well-being of its citizens. That’s why Özdemir believes that the concept of social inclusion creates an inhuman social policy area and as it guarantees the continuity of this unequal system, she calls social inclusion as a nocent concept.⁴¹ Therefore, it is obvious that the direction that EU pulls over Turkey does not tend to benefit Turkey in order to define appropriate strategy on poverty alleviation.

On the other hand, in the EU social platform, there are many powerful and also highly effective civil society organizations on fighting with this logic. As an example, EAPN (European Anti- Poverty Network) and FEANSTSA (European Federation of National Organizations working with Homeless) can be given. EAPN established officially in 1990 perceives the poverty problem as a challenge of not being able to actualize the social rights. It presents itself as follows:

*“EAPN is one of the main partners of the European institutions on the European strategy to combat social exclusion and has a great power to affect the policies of the Commission. It lobbies for the integration of the fight against poverty and social exclusion into all Community policies, ranging from Structural Funds and employment policies through to economic and monetary policies. EAPN builds alliances with relevant actors to create a stronger voice in favour of social inclusion”.*⁴²

Moreover, it struggles for changing the idea that employment is the only solution for poverty problem and suggests that every individual should have a right

³⁹ Mulderrig, J. (2012). The hegemony of inclusion: A corpus- based critical discourse analysis of deixis in education policy. *Discourse Society*, 23:701 doi:10.1177/0957926512455377

⁴⁰ Pichierri, A. (2012). Social cohesion and economic competitiveness: Tools for analyzing the European model. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 16:85 doi:10.1177/1368431012449234

⁴¹ Yücesan, Ö.G. (2007). ‘Sosyal Dışlanma’ Kavramı Masum Değildir: İnsandılaşmanın Reddi ve İnsanlaşmaya Dair. Atılğan, G. & Çakar, B.Y. Op.cit.

⁴² Web-site of EAPN. Available at: <http://www.eapn.eu/en/who-we-are/what-is-eapn>

to have minimum income and reach qualified services. Beside all, it takes its power from working **with** the people who live in poverty.⁴³ FEANTSA, on the other hand, brings more than 130 NGOs from EU member states under a single roof. It also works closely with the EU institutions, and has consultative status at the Council of Europe and the United Nations. It engages in constant dialogue with the European institutions, national and regional governments to promote the development and implementation of effective measures to fight homelessness.⁴⁴ **Most importantly**, both of these organizations try to remind the responsibilities of public institutions; insist on and monitor the realization of these responsibilities rather than acting as a charity organization and assuming full social responsibilities of the political organizations.⁴⁵

Therefore, Turkish civil society should take these institutions as an example in order to remind the government that the solution for poverty alleviation or social inclusion stems from the lack of right-based approach in this policy area.⁴⁶ Turkish NGOs have been acting as a charity organization in order to diminish the burden of social expenditures on state budget. As they do not have any obligatory responsibility, they create further problems. The challenges of poverty and social exclusion that society -not the system- face today can be lightened with the responsibility and right-based point of view.

Conclusion

Social exclusion and poverty cannot be solved purely by activation of the individuals in labor force. As Freire states, one cannot become an active person after the process that s/he involves as an object.⁴⁷ The inhuman effects of the current system can be overcome through accepting that sufferers of the system have a right to live in a decent way and therefore regulations should be directed into definition of individual social rights and of institutional responsibilities to implement them rather than following unsustainable ways of activation policies. The capability to avoid bad conditions (such as hunger, malnutrition, unsoundness, ignorance...etc.) should be assured by authorized state organization for social justice in the society.⁴⁸

Therefore, it can be concluded that social inclusion policies at the EU level are not able to help Turkey to realize this objective. However, the struggle of many European NGOs in combating poverty and social exclusion can contribute in a great extent to tackle with these problems in Turkey.

⁴³ Ekim, B. (2007). Sosyal Dışlanma ile Mücadelede Hak Temelli Yaklaşım: Avrupa Yoksulluk ile Mücadele Ağı. Atılğan, G. & Çakar, B.Y. Op.cit.

⁴⁴ Web-site of FEANTSA. Available at: <http://www.feantsa.org>

⁴⁵ Buğra, A. (2007). Yoksulluk ve Sosyal Haklar. Atılğan, G. & Çakar, B.Y. (Edt). Op.cit

⁴⁶ Buğra, A. (2007). Op. Cit.

⁴⁷ Freire (2002) in Yücesan, Ö.G. (2007). 'Sosyal Dışlanma' Kavramı Masum Değildir: İnsandılaşmanın Reddi ve İnsanlaşmaya Dair... Atılğan, G. & Çakar, B.Y. Op.cit

⁴⁸ Sen, A. (2004). Özgürlükle Kalkınma. (Alogan, Y. Trans.) İstanbul. Ayrıntı Yayınları. ISBN: 975-539-414-1

Annex I. Social expenditures in Turkey

The total amount of social assistance and service expenditures	19.595.000.000
The rate of social expenditures in GDP	%1,43
The number of households benefited from social assistance	2.101.611
The number of individuals benefited from social assistance	6.370.100
The number of right holders benefited from regular aids (such as conditional cash transfer, widow allowance)	1.657.144
The number of right holders benefited from temporary aids	1.994.470
The amount transferred to the resources of the Fund of Encouraging Social Help and Solidarity	3.099.582.115 TL
The rate of females benefited from social assistance	%70
The rate of males in the period of active working (age of 18-55) in all right holders	%28
The number of right holders of old age pension and pension of disabled	1.228.355
The total amount transferred to the resources of old age pension and pension of disabled	2.911.191.180 TL
The number of individuals whose general health insurance is paid by the state	9.099.059
The amount of health insurance paid by state	4.072.863.815 TL
The number of individuals undergone income test	14.493.157
The number of individuals employed through social assistance and employment programs (Turkish Employment Agency)	21.755
The number of individuals directed to vocational training through social assistance and employment programs (Turkish Employment Agency)	61.045
The rate of the individuals that live on below 2,15\$ per day according to purchasing power parity (2011)	%0,14
The rate of the individuals that live on below 4,30\$ per day according to purchasing power parity (2011)	%2,79
The number of households registered in the information system of integrated social assistance services	6.768.126
The number of individuals registered in the information system of integrated social assistance services	23.668.942
The number of associations of social assistance and solidarity	973
The number of personnel in the associations of social assistance and solidarity	8.607
The number of social assistance inspecting personnel in the associations of social assistance and solidarity	3.301

Source: *The Bulletin of Statistics of Social Expenditures- Directorate General of Social Assistance and Solidarity (translated by Bilge FİLİZ)*

http://www.sosyalyardimlar.gov.tr/upload/Node/11873/files/SYGM_2012.pdf

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Table 3 / Graphic 1: TURKSTAT, Results of Poverty Study. Available at: http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1013

Table 4: TURKSTAT (2013), Results of Income and Living Conditions Study. Available at: http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=1011

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