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MEYDAN MEETING REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

As the YADA Foundation, we held our last online meeting within the scope of the “Enhancing Civil Dialogue” project, which is supported by the European Union. In our Meydan Meetings series, which we organize to implement a new dialogue and a negotiation model among CSOs. We came together online on March 12, 2021 to look for an answer to the “Whose issue is the youth issue?” question, this time at the Meydan event. Since 2018, in order to talk, listen and discuss the issues of Turkey we come together in Meydan Meetings, which has been set up for seeing different issues from different perspectives and to allow stakeholders from different backgrounds to explore issues together. We thank everyone for coming together in the Meydan to share the experience and skills of civil society in owning, discovering, defining, bringing to the agenda, generating knowledge and solutions for social and environmental problems.

As YADA, since 2005, we have been producing information on different areas of social life and turning them into practice. We do research on how effective CSOs are on citizens and decision-makers; and try to increase their influence on the decisions and opinions of the public. With the research and studies, we do, we focus on improving the ability of CSOs to influence decisions and strengthen the dialogue between them. We aim to create common grounds where CSOs can discuss, exchange information, and establish new collaborations. We aimed to create a space where these common grounds can be formed by organizing physical and online meetings with Meydan activities. We also aimed to bring together non-governmental actors who are in different fields, views, and approaches to make these actors visible to each other. We wanted differences to be able to meet, encounter, talk and get to know each other. Thank you again for coming to Meydan Meeting with the aim of talking, listening, and discussing on Turkey’s issues.

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AGENDA

- 13.30 - 13.40** **Opening**
- 13.40 - 13.50** **Introduction**
- 13.50 - 14.50** **Panel**
- NEET Youth**
Rümeysa Çamdereli, YADA
- Youth and Covid-19: Access to Decent Jobs During the Pandemic Process**
Gizem Karslı Varol, ILO Turkey Office
- Being a Young Kurd in Turkey**
Reha Ruhavioğlu, Rawest
- 14.50 - 15.15** **Question & Answer**
- 15.15 - 15.30** **Break**
- 15.30 - 16.15** **Group Works**
- 16.15 - 16.30** **Closure**

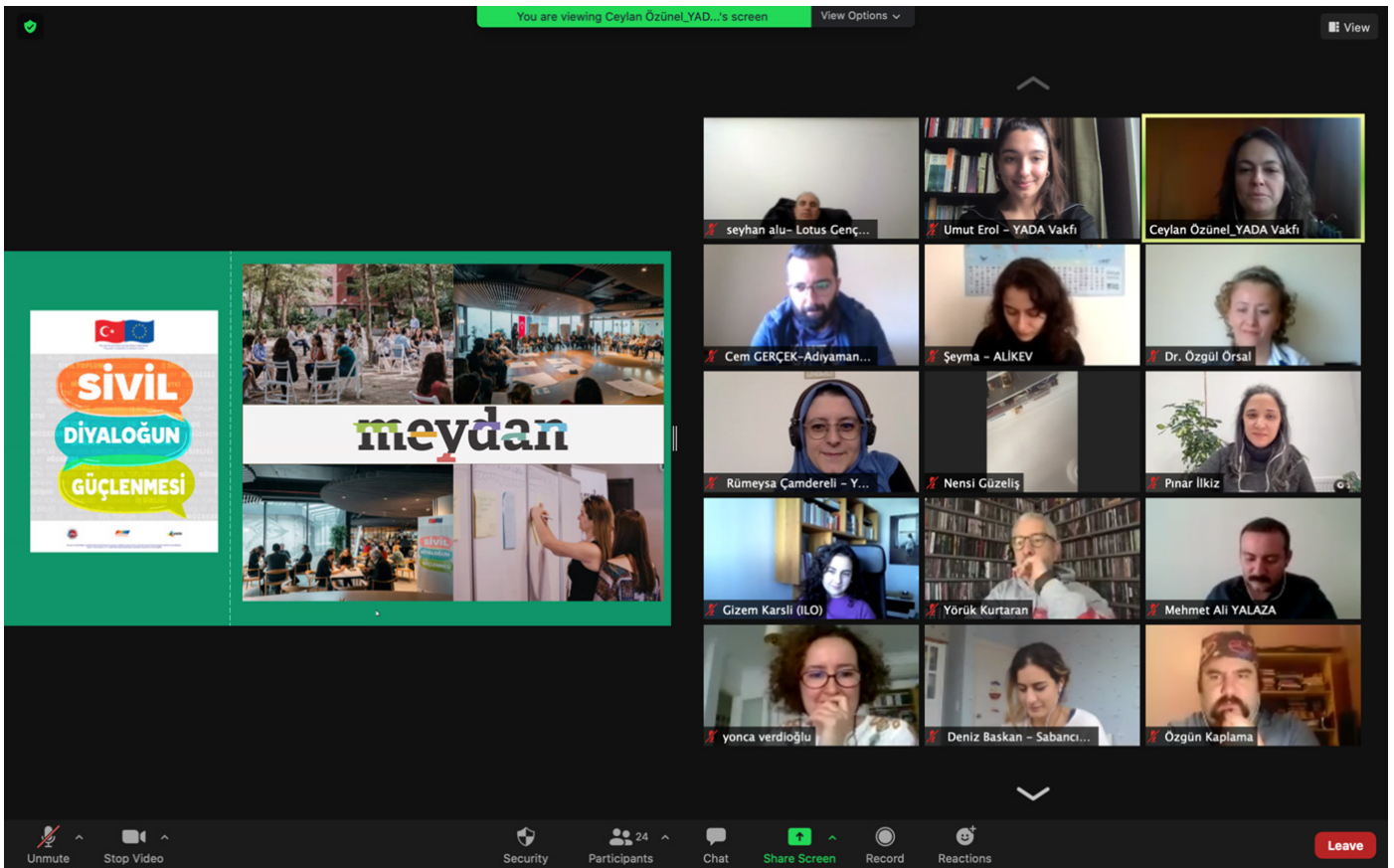
OPENING



On March 12, 2021, at the Meydan meeting, which was held online to discuss the situation of young people who are neither in education nor in employment, the youth theme was discussed with the representatives of civil society and experts

working in local administrations from many provinces of Turkey; working in the fields of youth, unemployment, civil society, dialogue, gender and education on the zoom platform.

Meydan, started with a brief introduction session after the participants indicated their names and institutions. After the introduction session, the panel continued with the current data and the findings of the research on young people in Turkey. Participants who split into groups after the panel held discussions around the question “Whose issue is the youth issue?”.



PANEL

In the panel session that started after the opening; Rümeyşa Çamdereli from YADA Foundation her presentation on NEET and non-NEET youth, Gizem Karslı Varol from ILO Turkey Office made her presentation with the title of Youth and Covid-19: Access to Decent Jobs in the Pandemic Process and lastly Reha Ruhavioğlu from Rawest Research made his presentation with the title of Being a Young Kurd in Turkey. After the panel, the discussion continued with the questions of the participants and the answers of the panelists.

As the problems experienced by young people increased, the voice of youth unemployment increased in direct proportion.

It was emphasized that young people who are not in employment and education gradually began to sit on the agenda of political parties and the visibility of NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth increased. During the Covid-19 period, the number of NEET youth increased; it was stated that one out of every 6 young people lost their job, and one out of every 8 young people could not continue their education. It was mentioned that it is now very possible for people to be unemployed.

There is a decrease in the working hours and income of young people.

It was stated that the implementation of dismissal bans was not in favor of NEET youth, and it was added that young people were among the groups most affected by Covid-19. In particular, it was mentioned that the employment of young women decreased further after Covid-19. Intergenerational outrage and discrimination were also said to raise a concern over employment.

Young people who cannot continue their education are on the increase in Turkey.

It was emphasized that the number of young people who cannot continue their education and are desperate to continue is on the rise and at the same time, they see their education as a bad investment. It was stated that due to layoffs and loss of income in families, young people started working and left their education without returning to their education. It was said that poverty and digital inequality played an important role as the reason for not being able to access education through the Covid-19 period.

Young people are aware that decent work is a fundamental human right.

It was emphasized that it is needed to end division between regions and genders, ensure equality, support employment incentives for young people and entrepreneurship.

There are many things that fall on the social partners.

After the social partners were defined as trade unions, non-governmental organizations, employers and the state; the duties of each were focused on. It was mentioned that more advocacy is expected from CSOs and trade unions. It was said that decent working conditions, learning opportunities and finally social security and security from the state were expected from the employer.

There are young people among NEETs who are difficult to access.

It was mentioned that NEET groups are very difficult to reach among young people. Within this group, it has been shown with the data that access to women is more difficult on the basis of gender. It was

determined that there are young people who cannot leave their houses and are “forced to settle” in education was more likely for women.

The most important obstacle in finding a job is work experience and foreign language.

Data were shared that it was difficult to find a job due to lack of education and experience. It was emphasized that not being able to find a suitable job and salary factors are one of the biggest obstacles in working. It was added that there are also those who are not interested in working and who are in the passive (not job seeker) category.

The reasons why women and men do not work differ in terms of childcare and family support.

It was emphasized that women said as an obstacle in finding a job that their families had no support and the rate of women giving excuses on not working by saying “to take care of my children” and “my husband does not allow” is high. It was stated that these two factors, which were not effective in men at all, were determinants at the point of work for women.

Little information, no focused policy, limited and scattered support for needs.

It was stated that NEET research on young people is not old and studies on this subject have just started. It was stated that the trend of public policies and funding sources has increased on this issue but is still dispersed.

The most critical break occurs between the ages of 18-24.

It was said that “young people either attend university and become unemployed or participate in neither education nor

employment”. It was stated that the break from employment is mostly in the 18-24 age group and the most permanent break occurs in this group.

Kurdish youth are more educated than their parents.

It was mentioned that the new generation of Kurdish youth are more educated compared to the previous generations. It was stated that 34% of the young people in the family work because the household is larger, but only 10% of them are skilled workers. It was stated that those who cannot work may have to return to their homeland.

Migration significantly affects the lives of Kurdish youth.

It was shared that more than half of the Kurdish youth had migration experience in their lives, and half of them stated that they migrated alone. It has been stated that these migrations cover several generations, and that second-generation immigrants have been on the rise over the next generations. It was mentioned that these migrations were made for work or education. It was emphasized that the Kurdish population is constantly increasing, but the young population is decreasing in cities where the Kurdish population is concentrated because of the immigration.

Discrimination is common.

It was mentioned that the situation of discrimination among young people is experienced. It was also emphasized that young people suffer from discrimination in the Kurdish issue, although they agree on common problems of young people in Turkey - unemployment, economy, justice, etc. It was stated that mother tongue and discrimination are the two biggest problems of Kurdish youth.

SECOND SESSION: GROUP WORKS

The second session started with the participants being divided into groups to discuss the solution proposals and the following questions were sought.

- What should be done in the short term to solve the employment and exclusion of education and other problems faced by young people?
- What should be done in the long run to solve the problems faced by young people in employment, being out of education and other?
- Whose role is what?

The biggest problem is not being autonomous.

It was stated that young people cannot reach fundamental rights and freedoms. It was discussed not to be citizen and autonomous. After emphasizing that youth policies are made in this direction and the public has a great role; it was mentioned that when establishing youth coalitions, whether the institutions address young people is a criterion. It has been said that giving young people equal opportunities and rights in education and employment is the first route to a solution. It was also stated that “CSOs should fill the places where the state is not enough”.

“The private sector and the state have many resources, but their statements are very wrong.”

It was emphasized that the style used by the private sector and the public to talk about youth should be changed and also the discourses towards young people are wrong. It was said that the distinction in language should be lifted, and the discourse of “us” and “them” should be completely removed from

languages. It was said, “It should be referred as ‘young’ without an adjective in front of it that creates an exclusion”. It was concluded that the hierarchy in the style should be abolished.

It is important to be in the same dynamic with young people.

It was stated that most people were unaware of what has been happening about the youth and it was claimed that non-governmental organizations should take action. It was said that each group should be brought to the agenda and cooperate. The importance of partnership, cooperation and being in the same dynamic with young people was mentioned.

It is an important variable with which motivation young people go abroad while immigrating.

It was stated that immigration should not be perceived as bad if the aim is to see different places and different cultures abroad, but it is a bad situation if the motivation for young people to go is the despair about their country and their future.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports gives priority to work in the field of sports.

It was mentioned that the activities in the field of sports continue actively in the Ministry, but there are deficiencies in the activities that will reach young people and youth policies. It was said that the projects cannot turn into social policies.

“We cannot talk about the things we have problems with.”

It was said that subjects such as personal development, communication, career development are getting discussed. It was emphasized that the issue of young people who took the exams of public institutions, getting eliminated from dozens of interviews,

who make a lot of effort but were not rewarded and felt inadequate at the end is not getting much attention. When they spoke, it was mentioned that it seemed like they were talking in vain, that people chose not to hear, and that there was a dialogue that proceeded with the aim of political interests.

“You have no good for yourself, what good will you have for the outside!”

The discourses used by families on NEET youth were mentioned. It was suggested that these problems should be accepted as citizenship problems and different youth organizations should come together and discuss this problem. It was emphasized that in an environment where there is a desired norm and pattern from young people, they are afraid to express their problems even within the family.

The process works through first othering, then making them dependent and finally utilizing them.

It was mentioned that while focusing on the education problem, criticism is always focused on the result. It has been said that the problem starts in pre-school and family education. It was mentioned that young people were not prepared for life before school, and it was determined that people needed a special education model for themselves, their potential and their needs.

CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

As the YADA team organizing the Meydan meetings, we would like to thank all our participants who came together with us at the Meydan meeting, where we talked about young people not involved in education and employment.

Confronting the difficulties encountered, the data presented and the facts in the reports; we agreed that it is necessary to strengthen the dialogue between civil society, public and private sectors in practice, and to make studies on NEET youth and to make this issue widespread. We talked about the necessary policies and formations besides the mission of civil society; we focused on the questions of ‘Whose role is what?’ and ‘What should be done?’. We saw that one of the most prominent issues when discussing the youth and NEET youth issue in Turkey is gender discrimination and the discrimination of vulnerable groups. We agreed that strategies should be developed taking into account the NEET categories and the characteristics of the categories.

Along with these outputs, we continue to design different activities that will support the coexistence of civil society and the environment of dialogue and negotiation. In the upcoming days, we will continue to communicate with the institutions we met at the Meydan meetings whom we would like to see in our upcoming events we will talk around different topics and try different methods to encourage active participation.

*APPENDIX: PARTICIPANT LIST

INSTITUTION	NAME
RPP	Alpay Güllübudak
Individual	Aysel Şairoğlu
DIERG	Aziz Yağan
Turkey European Foundation	Büşra Karakuş
Adıyaman GKD	Cem Gerçek
Civil Society+ Association	Ceylan İnceoğlu
Go-For	Çağlar Yenilmez
TOG	Defne Yalman
Sabancı Foundation	Deniz Başkan
TOG	Didem Ünsür
TOG	Fatma Şakul
Tülay Aktaş Volunteer Organizations Power Union	Fatoş Dayıoğlu
ILO Turkey Office	Gizem Karslı Varol
Van Tuşba Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School	Hacer Kuşan
Dokuz Eylül University	Hakan Özalkan
Kızılay	Mehmet Ali Yalaza
Volunteer Services Association	Meryem Aydın
Learn by Living Center	Nensi Güzeliş
Share the Future	Oya Demir
Pikan Agency	Pınar İlkiz
Ministry of Youth and Sports	Selen Yıldız
Lotus Young Field Association	Seyhan Alu
Barem Research	Sinan Egemen
Go-For	Sinem Demirel
Directorate for EU	Sinem Bölükbaşı
Quality in Social Responsibility Association	Yağmur Bayındır
Individual	Yonca Verdioğlu
Support Foundation for Civil Society	Yörük Kurtaran
Civil Pages	Zeynep Karakurt
AGU	Zeynep Tuğçe Çiftçibaşı Güç
YouthART	Özgün Kaplama
ALIKEV	Şeyma
Individual	Tulun Altinkaya
YADA Foundation	Ceylan Özünel
YADA Foundation	Oğuzhan
YADA Foundation	Rümeysa Çamdereli
YADA Foundation	Umut Erol