

preventing CHILD POVERTY



SWISSÔTEL, ANKARA, 12–13 JUNE 2006

INFORMATION NOTE

Widespread poverty is evident at every level of society, yet the issue continues to be very much a 'blind spot' in public awareness. Even as the detrimental effects of a low standard of living on children, their families and communities remains the most difficult obstacle to development all over the world.

The growth and development of children is threatened daily when crippling financial insecurity continues to obstruct health, education and social security outcomes. As the most socially excluded and vulnerable families negotiate the tightrope of poverty on a daily basis, it is their children, the most vulnerable of the vulnerable, who frequently go without an education, suffer preventable diseases, malnutrition, abuse, exploitation and endure homelessness — the inevitable consequences of such deprivation.

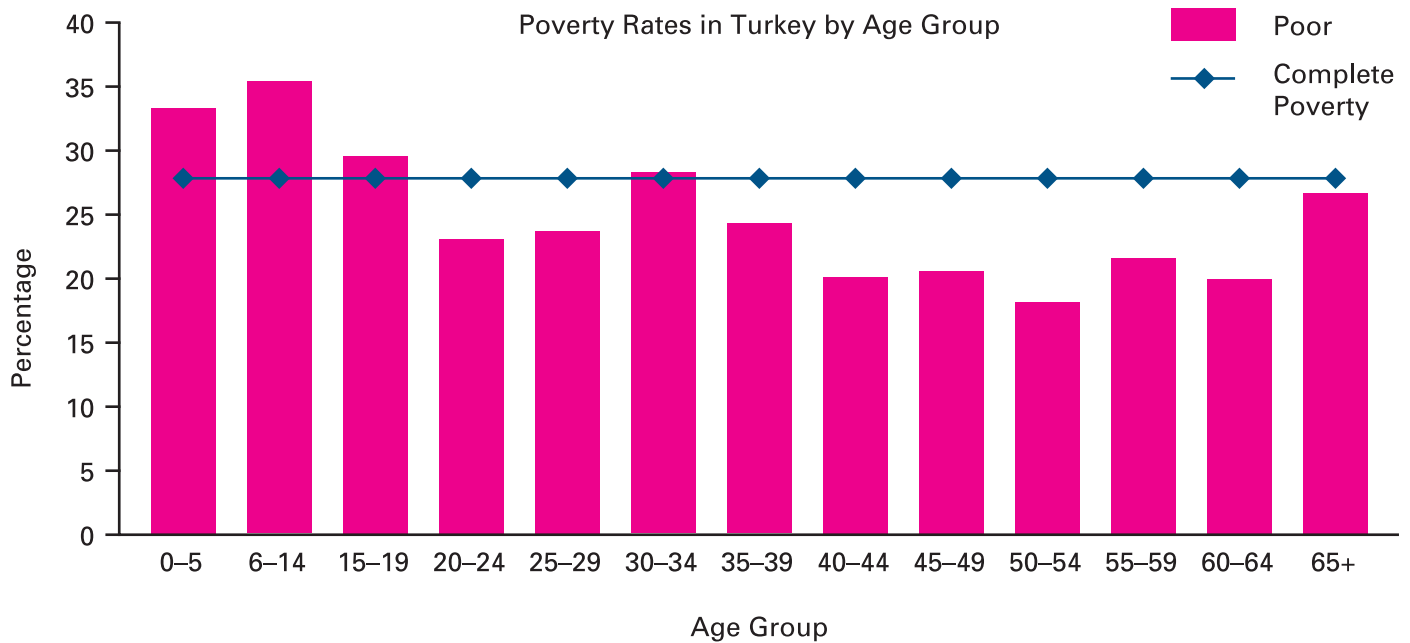
In Turkey, 32% of the population under 15 years of age¹, are living with the risk of poverty:

- 23.7% of the population are living on less than \$4.30 per day²;
- as of 2000, the poorest 20% of the population had less than a 6% share in consumption — almost 8 times less than the richest 20%.³

The goal of poverty elimination extends beyond fiscal matters to encompass a range of issues which are crucial to the well-being and development of every child.

In consideration of this complex and urgent issue, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Prime Ministry, Social Services and Child Protection Agency with the cooperation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Union have arranged a conference on Preventing Child Poverty in Ankara between the 12th and 13th of June 2006. The Conference will examine the effects of poverty on children from the global, regional and Turkish perspectives and also look into the issue of social expenditure from the point of view of the child.





The figure above shows that children have the highest poverty rate of any other age group in Turkey⁴

A series of panel discussions and presentations during the course of the two-day sitting will review the status quo, assess current statistical data, identify key challenges and examine the policy implications of the following issues:

1. Budgets for Children;
2. Child Labour;
3. Early Childhood;
4. Education;
5. Access to Basic Services;
6. Child Protection;
7. Empowerment and Participation of Children and Their Families;
8. The NGO and Academic Perspective on Child Poverty.

The primary goals of the conference are to:

- raise public awareness of child poverty in Turkey and re-orientate attitudes to establish child poverty elimination as an issue of social responsibility rather than an object of charity;
- understand the views of children and their mechanisms for coping with poverty;
- obtain a better understanding of poverty and the nature of its effects on the rights of the child to development, protection, equality and participation;
- improve understanding of poverty from the perspective of children themselves.

Conference participants will include representatives of Government Ministries, the European Union, UN agencies, academics, non-governmental agencies, the media, the private sector, families and children.

Contact Details

Participating Ministries and Agencies:

Ministry:
Ministry of Labour and Social Services

Institution:
Social Services and Child Protection Agency

Financial and Technical Assistance:
UNICEF Turkey;
Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey

Logistical Assistance:
Yankı Travel Agency

References

- ¹ *Poverty Study 2002*, Turkstat, Ankara, 2004.
- ² *Ibidem*.
- ³ *Household Budget Survey 2003*, Turkstat, Ankara, 2004 .
- ⁴ *Ibidem*.

For more information on the conference, visit the following web sites:

www.cocukyoksullugu.net
www.childpoverty.net
www.unicef.org/turkey