



# Do Young People Have Autonomy? Laden Yurttagüler



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## **1. Introduction**

The rights of the citizens are one of the main discussion areas within the citizenship literature. Social scientists who have initiated debates on the development, content and boundaries of citizenship rights, generally, concentrated on the civil and political rights. By stressing on “equality”, civil and political rights have been depicted as an important element for the functioning of existing democratic regimes, as well as for the participation of citizens. While civil rights mostly focus on the right to education, the right to employment, and access to justice for all citizens, political rights have underlined the equal status of electing and elected citizens in voicing their views. However, this emphasis on “equality” requires a re-evaluation of civil and political rights in terms of their historical evaluation and existing practices. As the notion of equality mostly remains “on paper”, nowadays, social scientists and activists bring forward important criticisms on the inequalities between citizens in enjoying their civil and/or political rights based on their gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, cultural and religious identities, age or disabilities (Phillips, 1995).

Concerning the issue of citizens’ full and equal membership to community, the addition of social rights to the ongoing debates has been a stimulating contribution from a rights-based perspective. In his well-known and relatively early paper, T. H. Marshall has pointed out the relation between the development of citizenship and the development of rights. In that paper, Marshall has associated the development of citizenship to the progress of civil, political and social rights, respectively (Marshall, 2006). Though chronological and generic narrative of rights in Marshall’s work has been subject to criticism, his emphasis on the importance of social rights is crucial (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994). Stating that citizens’ full and equal membership to society cannot be established only through civil and political rights, Marshall underlined that the access of the citizens to the social rights is necessary for the equal status among the citizens. The exercise of social rights by citizens means “a general alleviation of risks and insecurities, a decrease in inequalities in each and every level -between the healthy and the sick, unemployed and employed, young and old, bachelor and family man” (Marshall, 2006: 31).

Another important point that Marshall raised in his paper, which has been developed through debates in following years, is the indivisibility of rights (Ben-Ishai, 2008). When one category of rights -civil, political or social- is violated, individual will have problems also in exercising other categories and their participation to community will be at risk. Therefore, all rights must be guaranteed and be accessible by the state. Stating “everyone is equal under the law” in legal texts is not sufficient to ensure the equality among citizens. The rights should also be accessible at the same time. For example, right to fair trial can be guaranteed under law. In other words, all laws can be designed with the intention to be implemented equally for all citizens. “Equality before and under the law” can become a widely used buzzword. Yet, if you cannot access a proper/expert lawyer or have limited resources to access, than your “right to fair trial” will also be at risk. Another example is the recognition of equal educational rights to all citizens irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnic/cultural/religious identity. However, if free education does not exist or, even if it is free, if you still lack resources to meet other expenses of schooling, equality will once again remain on paper.

As those examples illustrate, the availability and accessibility of rights are directly linked to the indivisibility of rights. If only one of your civil, political or social rights is not under any guarantee, then the availability and accessibility of all your rights will be threatened. Typically, when social rights of a citizen are not provided, protected, and/or guaranteed by the social welfare state, than the needs of the individuals have to be met by their families or from the market actors. Inevitably, as a result, individuals accept the conditions posed by their families or the market as “obligatory” when making their decisions. In other words, in case those rights -which in fact are directly related to the needs – are not under the guarantee of a welfare state and those needs are provided by the family or the market, then “independence” of the individuals’ can also be at risk. If, individuals lack the ability to enjoy “independence/freedom” in making their life choices – for example, deciding whom to marry, what kind of education to take, which job to be employed – , this also creates an important obstacle for exercising or accessing all of their civil, political, social rights.

The freedom of individuals to make their own choices is discussed in the literature under the topic of autonomy. The extent of obstacles people face in enjoying or accessing their rights determines the limits of their autonomy. When more closely examined, it is observed that “some” of the citizens with equal rights on paper can experience disadvantages in accessing their rights, participating to communal life and exercising autonomy due to their

gender, sexual orientation, ethnic/cultural/religious identity. The obstacles lying in front of the disadvantaged groups are multi-layered. On the other hand, solutions proposed for those obstacles vary according to the needs and demands of different groups. Recently, both in Turkey and in the rest of the world, various mechanisms have been put into effect in order to guarantee the autonomy of disadvantaged individuals<sup>1</sup> However, important problems concerning the recognition, visibility, and autonomy of disadvantaged groups are still evident.

Young people are one those groups that are faced with problems in achieving recognition and visibility within the society. Yet, among those groups, the autonomy problem of young people is frequently ignored and is handled as a problem that passes when “young people become adults.” This approach, which claims that those problems pass when people get older, is based on a perspective that defines being young as a phase of human life during which people pass from childhood to adulthood and thus, reduces youth to an age category (Yentürk, Kurtaran and Nemutlu, 2012: 4).<sup>2</sup> However, as a result of defining youth as a fixed age range and as a monolithic group, the changing demands and needs of young people and the changing conditions in space and time are usually neglected. (Wyn and White, 1997; Mitterauer, 1992). Besides, the definition of youth as a fixed and monolithic age category justifies the perspective of youth “as a transitional phase.” The so-called transitions phase is received as an incomplete period. When that particular phase is completed, young people will become adults which brings the key to participate to community and to access to “equal rights” (McGrath, 2002). Under those circumstances, it is difficult to expect young people to be recognized as individuals possessing autonomy. After all, not only “incomplete” individuals cannot be expected to make their own decisions, but the legitimacy of their decisions can also become questionable in case they did. Therefore, although once they reach 18 years old, young people become legally responsible of their own acts, they are not recognized as “complete” individuals that possess the ability of making independent and autonomous decisions. In other words, on the one hand in terms of civil, political, and social rights young people are theoretically given the status of equal citizens when they turn 18 years old as lawful age. On the other hand, in practice, structurally and culturally they cannot

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<sup>1</sup> Especially as a result of their struggles, NGOs working on women’s issues have achieved to get important gains regarding the autonomy of women. In order to ensure the autonomy of women, NGOs in Turkey and throughout the world have made important campaigns on relevant issues such as increasing women’s labor force participation rate, recognition of women’s invisible domestic labor, and enhancing women’s political participation.

<sup>2</sup> For a more extensive discussion on the concept of youth, see: Lüküslü, 2009.

act autonomously or their autonomous actions are prevented by the power-holders (primarily by their families). While the autonomy of young people is widely ignored issue, it started to turn as a critically debated issue both in the world and in Turkey.

This paper aims to initiate a debate on the extent of autonomy of young people in Turkey. The paper analyzes how effectively young people can exercise and access their civil, political, and social rights. The study focuses on the relation between the ability of young people to access their rights and to enjoy their autonomy and their (social) participation. Analyzing the close and interactive relation between (social) participation and autonomy, which constitutes the central focus of this paper, can contribute to the discussions on the obstacles blocking social participation of young people in Turkey. The results of a field survey covering a sample that reflects Turkey's demographic conditions is used as the foundation of that discussion.<sup>3</sup> This survey had been conducted in April 2013 in 12 metropolitan and urban regions, with the participation of 2.508 young people of ages between 18 – 24. 63 questions were asked to the participants, including those on demography. The survey questions were designed to understand how young people in Turkey participate to community life, as well as what are the main obstacles preventing their participation.<sup>4</sup> The paper consists of three sections. In the first section, the discussion on autonomy in the existing literature is examined. The second section discusses the results of the survey, while possible solutions for ensuring or encouraging the autonomy of young people are discussed in section three.

## **2. What is autonomy?**

The ability of citizens to make their own decisions is an important issue of debate within the literature focusing on the sustainability of democracy.<sup>5</sup> That ability of making own decisions on issues such as whom to marry, which type of education to take, whom to make friends with, which political party to vote for, affect many dimensions of social, economic,

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<sup>3</sup> For the details of the field survey, see: KONDA, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> The results of the survey can be found at the end of the book.

<sup>5</sup> Both in academic literature and in daily discussions, various arguments are brought forward on whether citizens are able to make their own decisions or whether they have the competence to do so. We can recall that, very recently, newspapers in Turkey were filled of discussions on whose votes are much more valuable and on who sells votes in exchange of what.

and political structure. Hence, the ability of making one's own decisions plays a crucial role for citizens in participating to community as competent individuals. Moreover, the subject of autonomy is also important for the concept and content of citizenship. Having the capacity of autonomy is a necessary condition for utilizing rights attached to citizenship and for accessing them.

In the literature, autonomy is defined as one's capacity of living life according to his/her plans; one's ability of self-government (Ben-Ishai E., 2008: 3). Another similar definition states that autonomy consists of all types of capacities that makes it possible for an individual to sustain his/her own life (Anderson ve Honneth, 2005: 127). Following those definitions, come the discussions on how the related capacity of individuals can be developed. Autonomy cannot be a characteristic that "naturally" comes to being.<sup>6</sup> The characteristics associated to autonomy develop through various processes with the help of educational (like schooling), social (like relations with the family and the community), and personal (like gaining experience in different areas) resources (Christman, 2005: 87).<sup>7</sup> Therefore, various resources, including both financial and human resources, should be spared for the development of individual autonomy.

Inevitably, "economic independence" is the first condition that comes to mind when we are discussing autonomy. Economic independence defines the inclusion of an individual to the job market. However, it should also be viewed as the ability to access to required services, in case individuals lack the opportunity to participate the labor market. When basic services like education, health, and housing are provided by the welfare state, citizens can make their own decisions by trusting on services provided them on the basis of citizenship status, without feeling a dependence or obligation to other/different types of security nets.<sup>8</sup> Hence, the type of

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<sup>6</sup> The concept of "natural" is also a contested issue. Especially feminists and social scientist have made important contributions on how the concept of natural had been developed historically. For an example, see: Grosz, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> One-to-one quotation from John Christman: "... the capacities associated with autonomy do not merely emerge naturally, but must be developed through various processes involving educational, social and personal resources." (Christman, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> The ongoing debate on the provision of social rights by the state has also been criticised. Mainly the opposing views have concentrated on two arguments. The first one suggests that "social citizenship" may weaken the citizens, instead of empowering them and that they could be subject to higher level of control (Gorham, 1995). The second argument points out that social citizenship encourages "passive citizenship", encouraging citizens to ignore their duties and responsibilities (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994). There are ongoing debates focusing on both of those arguments.

relation between the state and the citizens, as well as the contents and boundaries of that relationship, play a key role in enjoying individual autonomy (Ben-Ishai, 2008: 2).

The literature restricting autonomy to the provision of material needs by the social state has been subject to two important lines of criticism. The first one argues that this approach envisages autonomy as an excessively “individualistic”, “singular” capacity, unattached from everyone and everything. Following the first one, the second criticism points out that individuals do not live by themselves in the society and that they maintain certain relations.<sup>9</sup> In order to develop autonomy, an individual should be encouraged by and benefited from those relationships. Those relations can expand autonomy or damp it down (Benson, 1991). Another point that must be stressed in relation to autonomy is that individuals should have the opportunity to express their demands and needs (Fraser, 1990: 202).

When autonomy is not ensured, protected, and supported and when social rights are provided by other types of security mechanisms instead of a welfare state, autonomy of individuals is endangered. This is not only prevents citizens from exercising their social rights. As mentioned above, when some services are not provided on the basis of citizenship status, but linked to certain conditions, the civil and political rights of the citizens are also being risked. Especially the protecting the autonomy of individuals from vulnerable and disadvantageous groups becomes harder due to legal, structural or cultural reasons. The autonomy of disadvantageous groups in general and young people in particular, depends not only to what extent they exercise their social rights, but also to what extent they are encouraged or discouraged through their social relations. The following section will focus on to what extent young people in Turkey enjoy autonomy in terms of their civil, political, and social rights.

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<sup>9</sup> There are many important studies on that issue, especially those by feminists and social scientists. See: Friedman, 2003; MaCKenzie ve Stoljar, 2000 and Young, 1990.



### **3.Do young people in Turkey have autonomy?**

If we accept that young people need autonomy in order to exercise practically the status provided them equally in theory, than we should start to question to what extent young people are equal in Turkey by analyzing the services that are or should be provided by the state, as well as by examining how the system functions in case those services are not provided.

#### **3.1. Social Rights and Autonomy**

In the case of young people, the transition from school to job market and methods of providing housing are two important points that are frequently brought forward during discussions concerning autonomy and (economic) independence. Autonomy is viewed as a right that should be exercised by adults. “Education, work, and housing” trinity is accepted as an important barrier blocking autonomy and (economic) independence. In other words, adulthood and autonomy is regarded as a phase people enter after completing education, find a “decent” job, and move to a separate house. Therefore, the parameters of being autonomous and being an adult mainly consist of economic values. Consequently, youth is assumed to be a “transitional period” and a phase during which individuals have to show effort to be entitled to above mentioned values and, hence, autonomy. As a matter of fact, young people - described as individuals between ages 18-24 in the field survey mentioned- are entitled to legal competence at the age of 18. Being entitled to legal competence means that young people are legally responsible of their own acts. However, given that, from the perspective of social rights, young people in Turkey do not receive sufficient support and that they are faced with poor conditions in the labor market, young people are incapable of making their own decisions or their capacity of making their own decisions is extensively limited.

According to the 2011 figures of Turkish Statistics Institute (TÜİK), there are 12.542.00 young people between ages 15-24 in Turkey. For the same year, young people constitute 16.8 percent of the country’s population (TÜİK, 2012: 16). In Turkey, young

people between ages 15-18 are obliged to continue compulsory education.<sup>10</sup> Those that are above 18, on the other hand, have the opportunity to continue their university education. TUIK's figures demonstrate that, for the 2012-2013 school year and for different levels of education, the percentage of schooling (covering the age range between 15-24) is 70,06 percent, while for university education it is 38,50 percent. As the field survey conducted by Konda Research & Consultancy as a part of the Network project covered young people between ages 18-24, in terms of schooling, it naturally focused on high school and university students. According to research results based on the above mentioned sample, 21 percent of participants attend upper secondary schools and 37 percent are university students (36 percent of university students are undergraduates and 1 percent are graduates), while 35 percent of young people are not students and %6 percent go to university examination courses as graduates of upper secondary level education.<sup>11</sup> When we examine aggregate results, the research shows that, while 64 percent of young people are in the education system, 36 percent of them are outside of it. The main reason why two thirds of young people between ages 18-24 are still students is related to the fact that the period of schooling period has been lengthened. Longer period of schooling for young people means that their entry to the labor market is delayed. This also implies that they gain their economic independence relatively late. Those young people who lack economic self-dependence are in need of state or family support.

As the public institution providing support to young people in university education, Higher Education Student Loan and Accommodation Agency (YURTKUR) offers two types of support mechanisms, including scholarships and loans. According to YURTKUR's 2011 report, during the same year the institute provided 320.912 students scholarships conditioned to success in school, 592.582 students loans to be paid back after graduation, and 494.024 students support loans through universities (YURTKUR, 2011). Linking scholarships to success in school is not an effective inlay for equalizing the existing conditions of disadvantageous young people; on the contrary it protects the advantages of those that already have an advantageous position (Yentürk and Kurtaran, 2014). Other alternative loans to be paid back after graduation are also available for young people. Aside YURTKUR's scholarships and loans, young people can also apply to a limited number of private loans,

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<sup>10</sup> Open High School is also considered as an institution inside the educational system.

<sup>11</sup> Since TUIK figures cover the age range between 15-24, there are no significant differences in schooling rates.

usually providing lower levels of support. In the survey conducted by KONDA as a part of the Network project, when participants were asked the source of their monthly income (Table 1), 36,8 percent of young people replied that they earned their monthly income from work, while 69,1 percent replied that their main source of income was allowances received from family/spouse and 1,3 percent stated that they received salary from their dead mother/father/spouse. 9,6 percent of young people receive state scholarship, 1,8 percent are entitled to university scholarship, while 4,7 percent benefit from state loans and 2 percent receive private scholarships. Finally, 1 percent replied the question as other sources of income, while 1,3 percent stated that they have no sources of income.

**Table 1: Which one corresponds to your source of monthly income?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Job/from work	923	36,8
Allowence from family/spouse	1.732	<b>69,1</b>
Salary received from dead mother/father/spouse	32	1,3
State scholarship	240	9,6
University scholarship	46	1,8
State loan	117	4,7
Other private scholarships	49	2,0
Other sources of income	24	1,0
No income	33	1,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.508</b>	<b>100</b>

To the question “if you were not able to benefit from your family’s support, how long would you be able to support yourself?”, 82,4 percent of the students gave the reply “never” or “only for one month”. The percentage of non-students giving the same answers is equal to 78 percent (Table 2). Though this is a lower level compared to the students within the sample,

this percentage is highly problematic and will be discussed later in the paper. When we focus on young people in schooling, we observe that, without their family's financial support, those young people are not only incapable of continuing their education, but also incapable of sustaining their life.

**Table 2: If something happens today and you cannot benefit from your family's support any longer or lose your ties with your family, how long will you be able to support yourself financially? ( % )**

	Never	One month	Six months	One year	Indefinite	Total
Student	<b>61,7</b>	<b>20,7</b>	11,2	4,2	2,2	100
Not student	<b>58,1</b>	<b>19,9</b>	13,4	5,3	3,3	100
Total	60,4	20,5	11,9	4,6	2,6	100

As young people enter the job market at a relatively older age and lack sufficient/necessary financial resources, they need longer and maybe higher level of family support during their periods of education and processes entering the job market, compared to previous age cohorts (Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004: 204).<sup>12</sup> The higher level of dependence to family support demonstrates the insufficiency of financial support that should be provided by the welfare state.

As mentioned above, some of the young people receive educational loans. On the other hand, during their education, some of them work in full-time or part-time jobs (Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004: 219) (Table 3). 23,9 percent of upper secondary school students and 24,5 percent of university students work either in full-time or part-time jobs. Yet, 57,5

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<sup>12</sup> According to a study conducted by Gill Jones, Ann O'Sullivan and Julia Rouse, in addition to their families encouragement, young people in England also need increasingly their financial support in order to get a decent education. That study was carried out in order to demonstrate which families contribute to the formation of social classes. By comparisons among young people from different backgrounds, the study shows that, compared to lower middle income families, middle income family provide a higher level of support to their children during their education.

percent of students working in full-time jobs and 38,1 percent of those working in part-time jobs state that, in case they lose their family support, they cannot support themselves or can make a living for only one month.

<b>Table 3</b>	<b>Which one corresponds to my working situation for the last three months? ( % )</b>					
<b>Are you still a student? If yes, at which level?</b>	I never worked/ I am not working	I worked/am working in a part-time job	I worked/am working in a full-time job	I worked/am working in an irregular job	I am unemployed, looking for a job	Total
High School Student	70,6	14,0	9,9	4,1	1,4	100
University Student	64,9	13,8	10,7	7,2	3,3	100
Masters/PhD student	40,9	9,1	40,9		9,1	100
Not student	30,9	6,2	51,8	4,0	7,1	100
High school graduate, attends university exam courses	89,7	1,9	6,5	1,9		100
Total	55,4	10,3	25,1	5,0	4,1	100

For young people, continuation of education is directly related to the social class their families belong to. In the KONDA survey conducted as a part of the Network project, when young people were asked “In terms of financial income, which income group corresponds to your family’s situation?”, 10,1 percent replied as low income, while the percentages of lower than average income, higher than average income, and high income families are 33,6 percent,

51 percent, and 3,3 percent, respectively. Among those defining their families as lower income, 43,2 percent work in a full-time, part-time or an irregular job, while the same percentage for those from families with lower than average income is 42,2 percent. Whether they are working in a job or looking for one, young people need family support to continue their lives (Table 6). Young people from upper middle income and high income families are much more dependent, as they do not work and continue their education. This also demonstrates that while middle income families are able to provide relatively well financial support to their children, lower income and lower middle income families can manage that limitedly (Bell, 1968; Harris, 1983; Leonard, 1980). Since the families are the main source of income for young people, they also enjoy a great deal of impact on young people's decisions concerning educational and professional choices (Bynner, Elias, McKnight, Pan and Pierre, 2002; Forsyth and Furlong, 2001).

Families support their children financially and through their (social) relations not only during their education, but also during their job seeking periods. The level of support provided by the family is the most important factor determining the quality of young people's education and jobs. As demonstrated in Table 3, 35,1 percent of university students, as well as 69,1 percent of those who are not students, either work in a part-time or a full-time job or are looking for one. When those who have been employed at least for the last three months were asked "the 3 ways they use most during their job search"<sup>13</sup>, among multiple choice answers "family, friends, acquaintances" had the first rank with 21,7 percent, followed by job search web-sites with 12 percent. (Table 4).

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<sup>13</sup> For that question, the participants were allowed to choose three among alternatives listed.

**Table 4: Which 3 ways you use most during job search?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Job search web-sites	301	12,0
Newspaper ad, poster and leaflets on the streets, etc.	222	8,9
Turkish Employment Agency, vocational courses	109	4,3
Private employment agencies	16	,6
Career centers in schools	85	3,4
Family, friends, acquaintances	544	21,7
Via social network / religious community / political group	177	7,1
Total	2.508	100

While 10,7 percent of young people at the age of 18 use job search web-sites, this percentage raises to 24,7 percent among those aged 24. Similarly, the percentage of those using newspaper ads among 18 year olds and 24 year olds are 14 percent and 21,6 percent respectively; while, for the same age groups, the shares of those using Turkish Employment Agency and vocational courses are 10,1 percent and 30,3 percent and of those using private employment agencies are 18,1 percent and 37,5 percent. It is observed that, as they get older, young people tend to use relatively anonymous ways for their job search. Young people begin to use those mediums more extensively, since they have completed their education. On the other hand, the levels of using contacts of family, friends and acquaintances do not vary across different age groups. While, among 18 year olds, the percentage of those using that method is equal to 18 percent, the same percentage is 18,4 percent among 24 year olds. Moreover, among 18 year and 24 year olds, the shares of those using social contacts for job search are 17,5 percent and 18,1 percent.

71,1 percent of those who have been employed for the last three months replied as “through family, friends, acquaintances”, when they were asked “among the options I read to you, with which way did you find your last job” (Table 5). Though young people use different

ways and mediums when they are looking for a job, the most useful method tends to be the connections of family, friends, and acquaintances with a very high percentage of 71,1. Social relations emerge as an important channel for both job seeking and job finding.

**Table 5: Among the options I read to you, with which way did you find your last job?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Job search web-sites	76	7,0
Newspaper ad, poster and leaflets on the streets, etc.	51	4,7
Turkish Employment Agency, vocational courses	37	3,4
Private employment agencies	7	0,6
Career centers in schools	73	6,8
Family, friends, acquaintances	768	71,1
Via social network / religious community / political group	68	6,3
Total	1.080	100

Even when young people are able to get employed, they work in low income and insecure jobs due to Turkey's existing labor market conditions (Yentürk and Başlevent, 2012). As a result of that, they need their families' support. To the question "If something happens today and you cannot benefit from your family's support any longer or lose your ties with your family, how long will you be able to support yourself financially?", 68,2 percent of those who state that they didn't worked/aren't working gave the reply "never", while 17,5 replied as for one month. Among those who are unemployed and looking for a job, the shares of "never" and "one month" answers to the same question were 69,8 percent and 15,6 percent respectively. 85,7 percent of those who don't work and 85,4 percent of those who are employed stated that if they lose their ties with their family, they can only survive for one month. Under the conditions of a limited welfare state, it is natural for those who don't work or unemployed to need family support. However, as it can be observed from Table 6, the need for family support among those that are employed is also strikingly high. 66 percent of young



people working in full-time jobs are not able to afford their living without their families' support or can only survive for one month. For those in part-time and irregular jobs, the same figures are 77,2 percent and 78,6 percent respectively (Table 6).

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>If something happens today and you cannot benefit from your family's support any longer or lose your ties with your family, how long will you be able to support yourself financially ( %)</b>					
	<b>Never</b>	<b>One month</b>	<b>Six months</b>	<b>One year</b>	<b>Indefinite</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Which one corresponds to your employment situation in the last three months?</b>						
I never worked/ I am not working	68,2	17,5	8,8	3,5	1,9	100
I worked/am working in a part-time job	49,7	27,5	13,8	6,9	2,1	100
I worked/am working in a full-time job	39,5	26,5	21,9	7	5,1	100
I worked/am working in an irregular job	56,1	22,5	12,4	5,1	4	100
Unemployed, looking for a job	69,8	15,6	7,3	5,2	2	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,4</b>	<b>20,5</b>	<b>11,9</b>	<b>4,6</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>100</b>

Hence, being employed does not lead to a significant decrease in the need for family support. Contrary to that, living together with their families decrease the costs of young people (Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004: 220). Thus, 79,3 percent of those with jobs live together with their families (Table 7). Furthermore, 59,81 percent of those living with their families state that they cannot survive or survive for only one month without family support (Table 8).

<b>Table 7: According to employment status, who do you live with? ( % )</b>						
	I never worked/ I am not working	I worked/am working in a part-time job	I worked/am working in a full-time job	I worked/am working in an irregular job	Unemployed, looking for a job	Total
With my family	66,9	67,2	79,3	59,8	74,0	70,1
With my spouse / partner	8,7	4,3	8,6	6,6	8,7	8,1
With a relative / acquaintance	1,0	1,2	1,1	1,6	1,9	1,1
With friends	12,3	12,6	4,1	11,5	7,7	10,0
Alone	1,7	2,4	5,8	2,5	2,9	2,9
With my spouse's family	,8	,4	,2			,5
In a dormitory	8,5	11,9	,9	18,0	4,8	7,2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

<b>Table 8</b>	<b>If something happens today and you cannot benefit from your family's support any longer or lose your ties with your family, how long will you be able to support yourself financially ( %)</b>					
<b>Whom do you live with?</b>	Never	One month	Six months	One year	Indefinite	Total
With my family	45,86	13,95	7,91	3,29	1,57	72,60
With my spouse / partner	4,31	1,06	0,86	0,30	0,40	6,95
With a relative / acquaintance	0,45	0,25	0,20	,0	0,10	1,06
With friends	4,81	2,48	1,47	0,30	0,20	9,28
Alone	0,96	0,55	0,35	0,20	0,15	2,23
With my spouse's family	0,35	0,20	0	,0	,0	,60
In a dormitory	3,6	1,97	1,06	0,40	0,20	7,25
Total	60,37	20,49	11,87	4,61	2,63	100

Most of the time, young people's accommodation conditions are directly related to their ties with their families. With whom young people live with and whether they have private space (like a room) or not, determine whether they are able to act independently/autonomously. If a young person lives with his/her family, generally he/she to obey the rules of the family. Especially for young women, this creates important problems of autonomy. 66,4 percent of female and 73,8 percent of male participants gave the answer "with my family", when they were asked "whom do you live with?". Though the percentage of male respondents living with their families appear to be relatively high, it must be noted that 13,6 percent of female participants stated that they live with their spouse/partner, while this percentage is only 3,1 for males. Moreover, while 1.3 percent of female respondents state that they live together with their spouse's family, no male respondent gave such an answer (Table 9).

<b>Table 9. Whom do you live with? ( % )</b>			
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
With my family	66,4	73,8	70,3
With my spouse / partner	13,6	3,1	8,1
With a relative / acquaintance	1,3	,9	1,1
With friends	8,7	10,8	9,8
Alone	1,1	4,5	2,9
With my spouse's family	1,3		,6
In a dormitory	7,6	6,8	7,2
Total	100	100	100

The percentage of young people living alone appears to be 2,9 percent. Among women, the percentage of participants living alone is 1,1, while the same percentage for male respondents is 4,5. There is a widespread consensus that “fathers” as the heads of households make the decisions on rules to be obeyed at home. As a matter of fact, until 1 January 2002, Turkish Civil Code also defined the father as the head of the family. When an 18 years old young person has to obey rules imposed by his/her father, it is impossible to talk about his/her autonomy. As can be observed from figures demonstrated above, for young people, especially for young women, the pre-condition for living in a separate house is to get married. Therefore, generally, young women move from one guardian (father) to another (husband).

The extent of family support is not only limited to the ones described above. When we examine the conditions of health services, we see that 55 percent of young people between ages 18-24 benefit from health insurance through their families (Table 10). 70 percent of university students access to health insurance via their families.

<b>Table 10: Do you have health insurance? If yes, which one? (%)</b>	
Social Security (due to employment)	20,7
Private Security (due to employment)	1,7
Social Security (due to family/spouse)	55,3
Private Security (due to family/spouse)	1,3
Social Security (paying contribution from outside paid by himself/herself or by another person)	1,4
Private Security (paying from outside paid by himself/herself or by another person)	0,4
Green Card (contribution paid by state)	5,5
No health insurance	13,6
Total	100

As can be seen from the table, provision of health services is also left to the health insurances of the families. This creates an important problem for young people in total, and for young women in particular. Since the labor participation level of women is considerably low, their health services provided through the insurance of a “father” or “spouse”. Even so, if a young person does not have any income, the family, namely the father, is expected to pay a contribution fee. This system not only violates social rights, dependence to family for health services also violates doctor-patient confidentiality, which is one of the basic rights of the individual. As a matter of fact, in a recent case, a father was informed of the pregnancy of his daughter’s pregnancy via a SMS message.<sup>14</sup>

### **.3.2. Civil Rights and Autonomy**

Young people, who either lack or benefit limitedly from social rights that should be provided by a welfare state, are dependent to family support. The lives of those young people,

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/20837705.asp>

forced to be dependent to their families, require family support in many areas, including education, job search, and even accommodation and health. As mentioned above, during their education, young people benefit from resources provided by the family such as school fees, accommodation, health services, and allowances. Family support is not only limited to the provision of basic services needed by young people, it continues during job seeking period as well. In the survey, young people have pointed out that they benefit from their families' relations when they are looking for a job. Therefore, young people are not only economically dependent to their families; their dependence also continues when they enter to the labor market.<sup>15</sup> In cases where the social security net is provided through a family or close relatives / acquaintances, the demand to obey to family "conditions" emerges as a requisite for benefiting from family's "opportunities". As a result of that, instead of being individuals that make their own decisions, young people become individuals that have to comply with the rules imposed by their families. How and by whom above mentioned services are provided determine whether young people have autonomy or not, and even if they do, the "limits" of this autonomy decided by the family (Friedman, 2003).

Leaving the duty of providing social rights to family facilitates and even strengthens paternalistic perceptions. Services/support provided by the family under certain "conditions" are perceived as a favor, instead of a right. This perception is not only the case for young people; as a result of that perception citizens also regard their rights as favors provided by the "father" state. When services provided by the father or the "father" state, transitivity between subjects is frequently observed and obeying both to the father and "father" state in return of those favors is regarded as natural or ordinary. Consequently, paternalistic norms diffuse in both to the welfare state practices and services provided for young people (Buğra, 2013).

The importance of personal/social relationships for protecting and developing autonomy was discussed before. In the context of relationships, it is observed that young people need relationships, in other words social networks, in many areas from education to health services, and even job seeking. However the same relations in their entirety can impose on young people preconditions when providing those services. Therefore, "making one's own decisions", which constitutes the basis for autonomy, can be limited or totally destroyed by

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<sup>15</sup> Nowadays, since the opportunities for stable jobs are very rare, even when young people find jobs, they will continue to be dependent to their families until they gain enough experience in their profession.

conditions imposed by other people. When, instead of facilitating, these relationships prevent an individual from making his/her own decisions, they are no more an element that encourages or nurtures autonomy. How conditions imposed by social relationships affect the autonomy of young people is an issue to be discussed in the following section.

The autonomy of the young people is not the only problem that emerges when families provide services. Within a system in which families are expected to support young people economically and through social relations, the economic and social conditions become decisive for young people's lives. Whether families encourage young people to continue their education and to what extent they do so and the duration of family's financial support depends on the economic conditions of the family. Moreover, if we take into account that, in order to find a job, young people need their families' social relationships, the types of relations a family is engaged also determine the type of job a young person is able to find. In that case, the social class of the family plays a critical role for the biographies of young people, through generational inheritance of beliefs, cultural norms, and family "wealth" (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991). In case the family belongs to the middle class, for a young person, the probability of both continuing education and finding a permanent job with social security is considerably low.

When the existing welfare state practices in Turkey are being examined, it becomes evident that, since the services provided are not sufficient to ensure young people's autonomy, families play a critical role in the development of autonomy. Families already are responsible of providing economic conditions for young people to continue their education and to find a job according to their own choices, because the existing support mechanisms neither allow the young people to have an education according to their preferences, nor let them to be independent during job seeking. Therefore, ensuring young people's autonomy is also one of the types of support expected to be provided by families. In other words, the autonomy of young people is ensured if and only if, instead of imposing preconditions, families support young persons by respecting their choices. Unfortunately, the discourse of the existing literature calls for families to be sensitive; even provides some to-do lists for families (Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004: 224).<sup>16</sup> Yet, one should remember that, once a young person turns 18, neither supporting him/her during his/her education and entrance to

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<sup>16</sup> The cited paper makes a call for duty to families.

the labor market, nor ensuring his/her autonomy is not a natural responsibility of the family. Contrary to that, this is deliberately a chosen model of welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1993).

Giving the responsibility of providing social rights for the young people to the family not only prevents young people from becoming “full citizens”, but creates an environment of uncertainty for them as well. Since the welfare state does not also guarantee the rights of the family, when the economic conditions of a family worsen, the future of the young person also becomes uncertain. In addition to the fact that being at the beginning of an independent life brings together many uncertainties, if social rights of young people are not also under any guarantee, they become much more dependent to their families, as well as to their social environment. As a result of those dependencies, young people lose their autonomy in many areas from with whom to make acquaintances to which clothes to wear.

When in the survey young people were asked the frequency of getting together with their friends, 73 percent stated that they could meet whenever they want to. While 25 percent replied that they rarely found the chance to meet, 2 percent revealed that they could never have the chance.<sup>17</sup> When the responses are examined according to sex, it is observed that compared to men, women have lower chances to be meet with their friends (Table 11). Moreover, 85,4 percent of those that state they can never meet their friends and 56,4 percent of those that can rarely meet their friends are women.

<b>Table 11: How frequently do you meet with your friends? ( % )</b>			
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Never	3,5	,5	2,0
Rarely	29,6	21,0	25,1
Whenever I want	66,9	78,5	73,0
Total	100	100	100

<sup>17</sup> If we examine numbers instead of percentages, among 2.508 participants, 618 of them gave the reply “rarely and 48 of them said “never”.



Unemployed young people (and those seeking for a job) are the most unfortunate group according to the frequency of meeting with friends (Table 12). Unemployed young people cannot afford the costs of meeting friends. Moreover, as discussed above, they need family support to maintain their life. Therefore, they are obliged to obey their families' rules. 27 percent of the young people, in other words nearly one out of every four young persons, rarely meets with friends or never has the chance to see them.

**Table 12: According to your unemployment status, how frequently do you meet with your friends? ( % )**

	I never/ I am not working	I worked/am working in a part-time job	I worked/am working in a full-time job	I have worked/am working in an irregular job	Unemplo yed, looking for a job
Never	2,1	0,8	1,6	0,8	4,8
Rarely	22,2	18,3	33,4	20,2	35,2
Whenever I want	75,6	81,0	65,0	79,0	60,0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

When the interviewees were asked whether they can go to well-known places to meet other people like cafes and patisseries or whether they can wander around by themselves or not, 82,7 gave the reply “yes”, while 17,3 percent replied as “no”. Hence, one out of every five young persons does not have the opportunity to meet friends by himself/herself whenever she/he wants to. Among those who replied negatively, 23,9 percent linked the situation to financial reasons, while 37,6 percent stated that they could not get permission from their families / spouses / partners and 3,8 percent stated that “those types of occasions were not available in their environment”. 22 percent of women and 12,8 percent of men are not able to go to cafes with their friends or by themselves whenever they want to. Moreover, when the figures are examined according to answers of different sexes, it is observed that 61,1 percent

of those who do not have the chance to go to cafes are women, while 38,9 percent are men. The huge difference between those figures can be attributed to the norms associated to different gender roles. In addition to that, 91,2 percent of those, who state that they cannot go because they do not have get permission, are women (Table 13).

<b>Table 13</b>	<b>Are you able to go to a cafe or restaurant or wander around by yourself whenever you want to? ( %)</b>		
<b>Why?</b>	Female	Male	Total
Financial conditions	36,2	63,8	100
No permission from family / spouse / partner	91,2	8,8	100
Such types of facilities do not exist here	56,3	43,8	100
No time	34,5	65,5	100
I don't want to	73,7	26,3	100
Total	60,5	39,5	100

However, it should be also noted that working schedules and financial conditions of young people also affect young people's frequency to meet their friends. Among categories with different employment statutes, the percentage of "not being able to go to a cafe" is highest for unemployed ones with 32,08 percent (Table 14). Furthermore, as it is demonstrated in table 13, the percentage of those that cannot go to a cafe because of financial impossibilities is equal to 63,8 percent.

**Table 14: According to employment status, are you able to go to a cafe or restaurant or wander around by yourself whenever you want to? ( % )**

	I never/ I am not working	I worked/am working in a part-time job	I worked/am working in a full-time job	I worked/am working in an irregular job	Unemplo yed, looking for a job	Total
I can	83,62	84,58	83,60	76,23	67,92	82,67
I can't	16,38	15,42	16,40	23,77	32,08	17,33
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

75 percent of the respondents gave the answer “yes” and 25 percent replied “no” to the question “Are you able to go to a movie, theatre play or a concert whenever you want to?” When explaining the reason why they are not able to go such activities, 31,5 percent linked it to financial conditions, while 22,7 percent stated that they could not get permission from their families / spouses / partners and 12,3 percent claimed that such type of activities were not available in their environment. Among those who cannot get permission, 88,6 percent are women and 11,4 percent are men. When the answers related to “financial conditions” and “time constraints” are examined, it is seen that mostly those who cannot attend those activities because they work are men, while for women the main reason is the restrictions related to permissions (Table 15).

<b>Table 15</b>	<b>Are you able to go to a movie, theatre play or a concert whenever you want to?" ( % )</b>		
<b>What is the main reason why you are not able to?</b>	Female	Male	Total
Financial conditions	37,3	62,7	100
No permission from family / spouse / partner	88,6	11,4	100
Such types of facilities do not exist here	54,7	45,3	100
No time	35,4	64,6	100
I don't want to	53,1	46,9	100
Total	51,7	48,3	100

To the question “Are you able to go to the market and shopping by yourself or with friends”, 32 percent gave the reply “I can go only if it is necessary”, while 65 percent stated that they could and 4 percent stated that they could not. Although, parallel to the analysis above, one would expect that the among those who cannot, the ratio of women to be higher than man: however in fact the shares for women and men are 33,3 percent and 30,3 percent respectively. Hence, going to the market and shopping are activities that women can relatively get permission easily (Table 16).

<b>Table 16: Are you able to go to the market and shopping by yourself or with friends?</b>			
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Only if necessary	33,3	30,3	31,7
Whenever I want to	62,5	66,5	64,6
I can not	4,2	3,3	3,7
Total	100	100	100

On average one out of every four young persons are restricted in going to cafes or to the market because of financial reasons or because they cannot get a permission. The restrictions young people are faced with in going to different places, on the one hand determine the nature of their friendships and, on the other hand, demonstrate the problems they come across in enjoying their independence. By giving the young person a chance to get out of his/her social circle, social mobility plays an important role in gaining independence for young people (Düzen, 2010: 15). If we go one step forward and explore whether young people are able to travel to other cities, we observe that restrictions on social mobility become tighter. In the survey, 64 percent of the respondents gave the answer “yes”, while 36 percent gave the answer “no” to the question “Within the last year, were you able to travel to another place?”. Thinking that financial conditions and the requirements for school attendance may be factors that prevent people from travelling, additionally the interviewees were asked whether they could attend to a short course or meeting in another city if they were invited during their summer break. 20 percent of the young people responded that they would not be able to get permission. Accordingly, among those that stated they would not get a permission, 18,5 percent also stated that they had not gone to another city during last year. Yet, more importantly, 30 percent of those who stated that they would be able to go to another city also revealed that in practice they had not (Table 17).

<b>Table 17</b>		<b>If you are invited, can you attend to a short course or meeting in another city during summer break? ( % )</b>				
<b>Have you visited another city during last year?</b>	Yes, I can	No, because of financial conditions	No, I cannot get the permission	No, as I am working, I won't have time	Other	Total
Yes	19,0	2,0	1,8	2,0	1,1	26,0
No	30,0	12,2	18,5	9,9	3,5	74,0
Total	49	14,2	20,3	11,9	4,7	100

When young people were asked whether they had ever travelled abroad, 91 percent stated that they had not. 65 percent of those that had found the chance to travel abroad had benefited from their families' financial resources. 8,1 percent of young people that had travelled abroad stated that they benefited from available public resources (Table 18).

**Table 18: Among those stated, with which way were you able to travel abroad?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
By using my family's or own resources	161	65,4
Via the opportunity provided by my job	15	6,1
Via university exchange program	20	8,1
Via the support of associations / foundations	6	2,4
Other	44	17,9
Total	246	100

However, the share of those that have benefited from public resources for travelling abroad within the whole sample is only 0,8 percent. Although statistically the confidence level can be argued to be low, this strikingly lower number of young persons that have travelled abroad by benefiting from public funds still appears to be problematic. Besides, as can be observed from Table 19, the share of young people that state they will be able to travel abroad if such an opportunity were given is as high as 40 percent.

**Table 19: If you are invited, can you attend to a short course or meeting in another country during summer break?**

<b>Have you ever gone abroad?</b>	Yes, I can	No, because of financial conditions	No, I cannot get the permission	No, as I am working, I won't have time	Other	Total
Yes	7	,7	,5	,5	,4	9
No	40,2	19	18,6	8,6	4,6	91
Total	47,2	19,7	19	9,1	5	100

When both the conditions for travelling to other cities or other countries are taken into account, it is striking that one in every five young persons will not be able to use this chance, because their families will not allow them to do. Not only young people's friendships and social mobility are subject to intervention, their bodies which may claim to be their basic "personal space" is also under control. Assuming that the most visible form of interventions to body is restrictions concerning clothing, the participants of the survey were asked whether they were faced with interventions to their clothes at home or outside. 7 percent replied that question as "frequently", while 22,9 gave the answer "yes, sometimes". Therefore, one out of every three young persons is subject to interventions concerning clothing. Among those who gave the answer "yes, frequently", 73,1 percent are women, while women constitute 66,7 percent of those that reply "yes, sometimes".<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, when the age of the young people increase from 18 to 24, the share of those that give the answer "yes, sometimes" decreases from 28,3 percent to 19,3 percent. Young women and younger persons face with interventions regarding clothing more frequently. In addition to clothing, mobile phones are another possible source of control. When the participants were asked whether there were any restrictions concerning their use of mobile phones, 22,8 percent replied "yes". When we

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<sup>18</sup> We should also note that young men also cannot escape from being controlled. Especially in cases they have preferences contradicting to general norms (such as wearing an eating or having long hair), young men can even be threatened in public space. However, we should also note that the survey questions do not provide enough information to question the contexts of such interventions. In order to understand the characteristics of such controls, focus groups should be organized to extract the relevant knowledge.

examine the differences between sexes among those that replied positively to the question “during last month, has anyone controlled your phone book or read your messages without your permission?”, interestingly the share of women who were faced with such acts is lower, while it is the contrary for other types of interventions. Among those who gave the answer “yes”, 46,4 percent are women and 53,6 percent are men. However, it should be kept in mind that, 65,5 percent of those that stated they did not have a mobile phone are also women. Consequently, the women are able to use their mobile phones more freely if and only if they have one. Taking into account that young people use mobile phones also to access to internet, as well as calling other people, than we can assume that mobile phones are important for their contacts with the outside world. Besides, when participants were asked for what purpose they used the internet, one in every three answers was “to keep in touch with friends”. Hence, to have a mobile phone and/or whether mobile phones are subject to intervention or not can also be argued to be acts towards regulating young people’s relations with their friends. Moreover, as young people are subject to “tight” regulations within the public space, their access to social media (internet) as an alternative way of socializing is also restricted through controls on mobile phones.

### **3.3. Political Rights and Autonomy**

Being able to decide for them is an important element of individuals’ independence and autonomy. Those decisions can be on what to wear and how frequently to meet with friends, as well as on voicing their needs and demands from the state. Furthermore, those decisions can also be related to take part in a government institution and play a decisive role in shaping relevant policies. Young people in Turkey rarely play decisive roles in central and local government bodies due to both structural and social reasons. Nevertheless, analyzing how effectively young people can voice their demands in public space and decision-making processes and the extent of their impact on relevant players can help us to assess the limits of their independence. If political participation can be defined as an area and/or opportunity for ensuring that demands of the individuals are taken into account, than the results obtained from KONDA survey appears to be highly problematic.

When young people were asked whether they have any type of relations with political parties as instruments of representative democracies, 9 percent stated that he/she was a member of a political party, while the share of those that were not members to any political



party was 91 percent. When those answers are examined according to participants' gender, it was observed that 70,7 percent of those who were members to political parties and 71,2 percent of those who had been members before but quitted were men. However, among those who stated that they would want to be members of a political party, 49,1 percent were women, while the share of men was equal to 50,9 percent (Table 20).

<b>Table 20</b>	<b>Are you a member of a political party or its youth branch and do you take part actively? ( % )</b>		
<b>Are you a member of a political party or its youth branch and do you take part actively?</b>	Female	Male	Total
Yes	29,3	70,7	100
No, I am not and I do not want to	50,3	49,7	100
No, but I would like to	49,1	50,9	100
No, I was a member, I quitted	28,8	71,2	100
Total	47,7	52,3	100

Political participation of young people through representative democracy is in fact mirrors the situation in Turkey (we can even argue that, compared to the general situation, it is even better). In Turkey young people that are 18 years old and above are able to vote, while they can be elected only after they turn 25. Currently, there is only one representative in the Turkish Parliament who is below 30 (Muhammet Bilal Macit, born in 1984). The survey results also demonstrated that the participation of young people to political parties is highly limited. Moreover, from a gender-based perspective, compared to the general level of female participation, the participation of young women to political life is also lower. On the other hand, as half of the women stated during the survey that they would like to be members of a political party, we can conclude that obstacles preventing women from political participation (like getting permission from family, structural obstacles) are also higher.

Another way of participating to decision making and policy making processes is to take part in civil society organizations. When the relations between those types of organizations and young people were explored, it was observed that 26,2 percent of young people take part in a civil organization (Table 21). Therefore, one of every four young person takes part in a civil society organization. Compared to the figures concerning participation to political parties, since nearly only one in every ten young persons are members to political parties, the percentage of those taking part in civil society organizations is in fact quite high.

**Table 21: Are you a member or a volunteer of any civil society organization in the list?**

	Number	Percentage
Association	143	5,7
Foundation	55	2,2
Student club / association	300	12
Platform / Initiative	18	,7
Co-op	3	,1
Professional chamber	59	2,4
Labor union	42	1,7
Other	36	1,4
None of the above	1.828	72,9
Total	2.508	100

Due to both structural reasons and the level of political culture in Turkey, young people are rarely able of find a place for themselves in decision making mechanisms, while

they prefer to be organized via civil initiatives which allow them to make their own decisions.<sup>19</sup>

#### **4. Conclusion - What can be done?**

As mentioned in the beginning of this study and as also underlined by Marshall, the exercise of rights is linked to each other. In other words, if one of the rights' groups (civil, political and/or social) cannot be exercised, than other types of rights are also violated. Allowing individuals to exercise their rights is the precondition for ensuring their independence and autonomy. Especially disadvantaged groups are faced with structural (and social) obstacles that prevent them to exercise their rights as a whole. As discussed in previous sections, young people that are the main focus of this paper live with important restrictions and even violations concerning their social rights. Both during their education and after, young people are faced with problems in finding a job. As a result, young people limitedly or insufficiently afford to meet their basic needs and services such as education, health, and accommodation from the market. The services, in other words support mechanisms, that are expected to be provided by the public as a part of citizenship rights on the other hand, are limited both in quantity and quality. Therefore, for young people who cannot afford to buy their needs from the market and to whom basic services linked to citizenship rights are never or rarely provided, the only option for a security net is the family.<sup>20</sup>

In cases where the basic needs of (or basic services needed by) young people are provided by their families, young citizens become dependent to their provider, namely their families (Esping-Andersen, 1993).<sup>21</sup> This is because, if the families do not provide those needs, young people become needy. Hence, the attitude the families prefer in providing those needs also determines the extent of young people's autonomy.

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<sup>19</sup> Young people are also faced with limitations in participating decision making processes in civil society organizations. However, one should also note that, compared to political parties, young people are able to find more space for themselves in those organization.

<sup>20</sup> Another type of service providers is civil society organizations. However this survey has not focused on services provided by those organizations. Therefore this subject will be handled in following studies.

<sup>21</sup> Gosta Esping Andersen notes that families play an important role in the distribution of resources through the public and private sectors. Moreover, in analyzing different welfare state models, he defines the model in which families assume an extensive role in service provision as "South European Model".

If we make a closer analysis on the grounds of survey results, we can see more clearly how not having the ability to access their rights affects the autonomy of young people. Assuming that young people mainly provide their needs from the market, it can be useful to examine labor market participation rates. In September 2013, the unemployment rate young people in Turkey was recorded as 9,9 percent, while the unemployment rate of 19,4 percent among 15-24 olds was two times higher than the unemployment rate of adults.<sup>22</sup> Those figures indicate that, in September 2013, one out of every young person was unemployed and they were two times more disadvantages compared to the situation of adults. Because they cannot find a job or work in flexible/part-time jobs without social security, provision of their needs become an uncertain process for young people. Moreover, as mentioned before, even though young people use different methods when they are seeking for a job, they mainly find one through their families or through social relations offered to them by their families. Therefore, their dependence to their families continues even at the stage of providing their needs from the market. This situation of dependence is also reflected in the organizational practices of young people. On the one hand, young people, who are regarded as not “adult” and “competent” enough, cannot find a place for themselves in the Parliament, which is the primary institution for decision and policy making. On the other hand, when young people want to organize and make use of participatory democracy mechanisms, they are also prevented from doing so. Furthermore, in Turkey we can come across cases where public officials make complaints to families whose children are organized in some way. As young people continue to be dependent, are excluded from decision making processes, and lack the opportunities to voice their demands to impact decision making, it is not surprising to observe that their civil rights are also violated. The fact that the clothing, friendship, and social life of young people are mainly under control and subject to permission (mostly of their families, but generally of the whole society) is considered as “normal” by many. We even hear that some universities send to families “behavioral reports” concerning their children.<sup>23</sup> Under those circumstances, we can conclude that violation of young people’s rights is in essence a structural problem.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13651>

<sup>23</sup> We also want to draw attention to the relation between the word custodian and custody. According to Turkish Linguistic Society, the word custodian means “someone that protects a child, that takes care of a child’s daily life, and responsible of a child’s acts”.

In the context of existing social policy practices, we observe a model that supports families instead of individual in resource allocation. Moreover, not only in official discourses the values related to family are encouraged, they also emerge as widespread “norms”. Though this may seem as a shallow comment, we can state that even the title of “Ministry of Family and Social Policies” has a symbolic importance. A model that regards the family as the primary focus of social policies is quite problematic and restrictive for all citizens in general and for young people in particular. Such a model is an important obstacle for young people, preventing them from making their own and independent decisions. Consequently, only a model in which welfare state provides support at the level of individual instead of families can fully succeed in guaranteeing the independence of their citizens and protect their rights. However, in case the welfare state only takes care of needs quantitatively, this will not also fully ensure citizens’ autonomy, since disadvantageous groups in the society may or does have different needs. Because they are faced with restrictions in accessing resources and are regarded as “not competent citizens”, young people can also be recognized as one of those disadvantageous groups. Moreover, the discussions in the previous section also demonstrate that, even among young people themselves, there are disadvantageous subgroups such as young women and the disabled.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, the fact that as a disadvantaged group young people may have different needs is a point that should be kept in mind.

At that point, “presuming” special and appropriate needs of young people in accordance with their disadvantages can seem to be one of the solutions, while allowing young people to voice their own demands appears to be an alternative (and much more confident) way. The primary way of understanding young people’s needs is to let them make their voices heard. In other words, the first step is to construct a space where young people are free to make their own decisions. The concept of “empowerment” widely used in the relevant literature can be defined as a situation in which the subject can talk of himself/herself, raise his/her demands, and presents his/her preferences by exercising power (Rappaport, 1981). The most important way for allowing young people to voice their demand by accessing decision and policy making mechanisms is to ensure their participation in representative democracy. Providing a place for young people as effective players in both central and local governments will offer them valuable opportunities to raise their demands. An additional way

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<sup>24</sup> Through the survey, though relevant information on young women was extracted up to a certain extend, for the disabled young people, this was unfortunately not the case. Detailed studies on disadvantageous groups such as young women and the disabled are needed to make proper evaluations of their situations.

of ensuring participation of young people to central government is to entitle them the right to be elected at age 18, which is already the legal age limit for voting.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, in local governments, city councils appear to be important bodies for ensuring participation. However, as it is the case in the rest of the world, the fact that the representative powers of representative democracies are also being questioned in Turkey points out the importance of participatory democracies, in other words of civil initiatives. Practices and laws that constitute barriers for effective civil initiatives such as associations, university clubs that can serve as critical mediums for young people to organize and deliver their demands to decision making bodies (as well as restrictions on freedom of expression) must be removed.<sup>26</sup>

Besides providing a space for young people to voice their demands in the public realm, instead of leaving the responsibility to families, their needs should also be provided on the basis of equal citizenship. Therefore, we can claim that as a part of its role as the welfare state, the public sector is responsible of meeting the needs of the young people. In terms of social rights, the most outstanding problem of young people appears to be their dependency to their families in providing their needs until they find a job and even after they find one. In case young people continue their education, in other words in case they attend university, they can benefit from available scholarships and loans. Yet, both of those options are quite limited. In 2008, only 32.338 students out of 181.490 were entitled to unrequited scholarships (Yentürk, Kurtaran and Yılmaz, 2014). Scholarships are in general tied to certain conditions. One of those conditions is the success in university education; yet, as Yentürk et. al. points out, a student from a low-income family that passes the university entrance examination and is entitled to continue university education should be accepted successful. Those who are not entitled to get scholarships can benefit from loans which have to pay back after graduation. However, providing sufficient support to each and every student is a must critical for those students to continue their education. The amount of monthly scholarship (and loan) provided to students is estimated to as YTL 180 (Yentürk, Kurtaran and Yılmaz, 2014). This implies that, students are expected to afford their daily needs by YTL 6 per day on average and this level is obviously insufficient. Nevertheless, if we take into account that not all of the young people can attend university, it is impossible to argue that there are appropriate and sufficient

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<sup>25</sup> Law on Political Parties should also be modifies at the same time. However, since discussion goes beyond the boundaries of this paper, this is also mentioned as a note.

<sup>26</sup> A study by Burcu Oy on the limitations concerning freedom of association in universities can be found in Chapter 3 of this book.

mechanisms for those who are outside the education system and need support. Providing young people unconditioned and appropriate support is a precondition for ensuring their autonomy.<sup>27</sup>

Coaching young people during their entry to the labor market - a phase that they are still dependent to their families- for both providing intermediary services and allowing them to continue their education appears to be another step that should be taken for ensuring their autonomy (Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004: 222). Providing basic needs such as accommodation and health services will also break the dependency of young people to their families. However, we should also note that, providing those needs is not enough; the way those services are provided should also be discussed. First and foremost those services should be designed in a young people friendly way, meaning that those services should not be provided in a hierarchical structure, should be made available to young people as equal citizens, and should be determined according to young people's needs (Rappaport, 1985). Furthermore, when making available those services to young people, it should be remembered that the beneficiaries are young adults over 18. For example in Turkey, different time limitations are implemented for young women and men for their latest entry to dormitories.<sup>28</sup> In exchange for allowing young people voice their demand and providing them their social rights, their civil rights can also be guaranteed.

This study is based on the findings of an extensive field survey. One should keep in mind that those finding are extracted from quantitative data. Therefore, the survey only provides snapshots of young people's autonomy; those findings are not sufficient for an analysis on what problems in effect restrict young people's autonomy or on young people's demands for autonomy. For enriching that discussion and for ensuring young people friendly services, in-depth studies based on one-to-one interviews (or focus groups) must be carried out. Before concluding, it should be once more underlined that the more we allow people in general, and young people in particular, to enjoy independence and autonomy, the more likely that we will be living in a society in which citizens are capable of making their own decisions. Therefore, public services that ensure the autonomy of all citizens in general and young

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<sup>27</sup> For the model, see: Buğra ve Keyder, 2012.

<sup>28</sup> For example, while young women are expected to enter to the dormitory at 8 p.m. the latest, for young men this restriction may extend to 11 p.m.

people in particular should be made available. The more they have the opportunity to raise their own demands by themselves and participate to decision and policy making mechanisms, the more it becomes more likely for young people to present their “real” needs to the public. To the extent that the public sector provided those needs, young people will have the chance to take their part in society as independent and autonomous individuals.

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