

Education is the backbone of any nation, shaping its future. Turkey's education system, with its rich history and unique approach, reflects the nation's cultural and historical evolution. Over time, it has undergone significant changes to enhance learning, making it more comprehensive and accessible for students.

This article explores how Turkey education system stands out from others, highlighting its distinctive features and structure.

## **Understanding Turkey Education System**

In 1981, Turkey completely changed how it ran its universities. A new law, called the Higher Education Law (Law No. 2547), created a single system for all universities. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) now controlled everything.

Every Turkish school offering higher education became a university. Students had to take one main exam to get into university, and the government decided where they would go. Besides regular government universities, Turkey also saw its first private university open in 1986.

## **Schooling is Compulsory for 12 Years**

Since 2012, Turkish law says that all children must go to school for twelve years. Schooling happens in three steps: primary, elementary, and secondary.

### **Pre-Primary School**

Children between the ages of three and five can go to pre-school, but it's not required.

### **Primary School**

Primary school is for kids aged six to ten. It's compulsory and free in government schools. Children spend four years learning the basics.

### **Elementary School**

From ages ten to fourteen, students are in elementary school. Like primary school, it's

compulsory and free in government schools. This is where children learn more about subjects they started in primary school. At the end of elementary school, students get information about different types of high schools and the kinds of jobs they can get later.

### **Secondary School**

Secondary school is for teenagers aged fourteen to seventeen. It also lasts four years. Students can choose between regular high schools or schools that teach specific skills for certain jobs. Like the earlier levels, it's compulsory and free in government schools.

### **Higher Education**

After finishing secondary school, students can go to university. Turkish university system follows the Bologna system, which is used in many European countries.

## **Types of Higher Education Institutions and Academic Units**

### **1. Faculty (College)**

Basically, a college is the advanced education facility where one proceeds with his education after completing high school. It's like a big school, with so many different areas to explore or 'courses' to attend. Universities are broken into many colleges, and each college has a variety of departments, where only different programs are provided.

If you want to go to college, you usually study for four years. After finishing your studies, you get a special paper called a bachelor's degree. This paper shows that you've learned a lot about a certain subject.

For instance, if you read a lot about computers, you will acquire a bachelors tellers in computer science. Having this degree, one can obtain a job as a computer programmer, or a software engineer.

## 2. Graduate School

Graduate schools are specialized substructures of universities properly intended for the higher learning. Students who wish to advance in a given field and do research attend graduate school. It is also possible to obtain master's (MA or MSc) or doctoral (PhD) degrees in their teaching specializations.

These programs require more research and specialized study compared to undergraduate programs. For instance, a teacher with an undergraduate degree in *Turkey English* could pursue a master's degree with a focus on literature.

## 3. Four-Year School

A four-year school is a type of higher education institution primarily dedicated to providing instruction for a specific profession. These schools offer programs that typically take eight semesters to complete.

Unlike universities that offer a broad range of subjects, four-year schools focus on specific fields like engineering, business, or nursing. These institutions equip students with the practical skills and knowledge needed for a particular career.

## 4. Conservatory

They are also known as music schools since they educate students for music performer profession. Pupils in these institutions undertake rigorous practice in the special area of art that they wish to master. As in many four-year schools, the programs at most conservatories are organized into eight semesters.

Conservatories are known to place lots of focus on matters to do with skills performance. As such they can offered with courses in music theory, history, and performance as well as lessons in their own instruments. For instance, a conservatory may admit students in the following courses; classical piano, opera or jazz

## 5. Post-Secondary Vocational School

Post-secondary vocational schools prepare students for specific jobs through focused training. These schools offer programs that typically last four semesters.

Unlike universities that offer broader academic programs, vocational schools provide practical skills and knowledge for immediate employment. For example, a vocational school might offer programs in welding, automotive repair, or culinary arts.

## **6. Research and Application Center**

Research and application centers are parts of universities or independent institutions that focus on conducting research and finding practical uses for the discoveries. These centers support education by providing information and resources to other educational institutions.

Research centers often collaborate with industries and government agencies to address specific challenges. For example, a research center might develop new agricultural techniques or create innovative medical treatments.

## **Degrees in Turkey**

### **Associate's Degree**

An associate's degree is the first step towards higher education in Turkey. Students earn this degree by completing a two-year program. You can study for an associate's degree at a university or a vocational school. Some programs even let you learn from home. After finishing your studies, you might need to work for a while to gain practical experience.

### **Bachelor's Degree**

To get a bachelor's degree, Turkish students typically study for four years. However, if you want to become a dentist, veterinarian, pharmacist, or doctor, you'll need to spend five or even six years at university. These degrees are considered very important and have the same level as a master's degree in other countries.

### **Master's Degree**

A master's degree usually takes around two years to complete, depending on the university or college. There are two types of master's programs: those with a thesis and those without. If you choose a program with a thesis, you'll spend about two years attending classes and

then writing a big research paper called a thesis. In programs without a thesis, you'll focus on coursework and finish with a large project instead.

### **Doctoral Degree**

A doctoral degree, also known as a PhD, is the highest level of education. It typically takes about four years of full-time study. To earn this degree, you'll attend classes, pass a tough test, and complete a major research project called a dissertation. Finally, you'll need to present and defend your dissertation in front of students and professors.

### **Specialization in Medicine**

Doctors in Turkey need extra training to become specialists. This training is similar to a doctoral program and happens in hospitals and medical research centers. To become a specialist, doctors must pass a competitive exam and then write and defend a research paper.

### **Proficiency in Art**

If you want to be a professional artist, you can study for a special degree called Proficiency in Art. This program lasts at least three years after you finish your master's degree. To graduate, you must create an amazing piece of art or perform exceptionally well in music or theater.

### **Final Thoughts**

Turkey Education System improves daily and turkey literacy rate has reached an impressive **96.74%**, meaning that most adults can read and write. This achievement has contributed to Turkey's economic growth and development.