

## **Sports as a Social Policy Tool in Turkey**

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### **Abstract**

The scope of social policy expands in parallel with the increase of inequality between people and groups. Today, sport is a form of social policy regarding to answer to the growing and varying necessities. The aim of this article, to determine to the sport meaning in the social policy field and touch to the differences about handling style of sport during the historical process of Turkey and clarifying the meaning of sport in the field of social policy at the present day. For this purpose, government programs and development plans of Turkey are examined and findings were tabulated. Moreover the applications and projects of the relevant Ministries have made in recent years were examined on the relevant Ministries' websites and publications. Accordingly, it is observed that in health and education subjects, which are the basic tools of social policy, sports is being used significantly. There appears to be as a significant result, in the search of solutions to the current problems of social policy that sports is, used as an effective tool for the prevention of social exclusion.

**Keywords:** Social policy, sport, health, education, disadvantaged groups.

### **Introduction**

Today, extending limits of free market economy and international competition and changing structure of the expectations in respect of social life make it necessary for social policy to be expanded in a way to include new and current issues. In this context, social

policy extends its scope by obtaining new objectives and is in need of new tools in order to fulfil new expectations and problems.

Today, we witness that sports practices emerge as one of those new tools of social policy. Sports policies and practices have become, one of the critical components of health and education issues, which constitute the basic subjects of social policy in broad terms. Also, sports plays an effective role in implementation of policies that are directed towards various disadvantaged groups, such as mainly children, women and handicapped, and particularly those policies that are related with income distribution, poverty and social inclusion.

Today, strong emphasis is laid again on the universal and social aspect of sports, which is industrialized in parallel with capitalist transformation, and its unifying role. Although sports is not often articulated as a social policy tool, it is used frequently by governments as a government policy and program occasionally in the direction of the requirements of disadvantaged groups, as well as entire society at times.

In this article, we shall initially explain the concepts of social policy and sports in brief. Then, we shall indicate the areas where sports is used as a social policy tool. As we explain the relationship between social policy and sports, we shall also mention national and international organizations, agreements and practices. Moreover, this article aims to draw attention to the relationship between social policy and sports in Turkey, and to analyse the aforementioned issue. Turkey's sports policy shall be assessed from past to present for this purpose. It is aimed to present and assess the subject, which shall be examined in detail within the framework of development plans and government programs, with the assistance of summary tables. In addition to development plans and government programs, we shall also give examples from current projects in Turkey. These projects are of capital importance in terms of reflecting how concerned institutions, particularly the Ministries perceive sports as a tool in practice.

## **A. Conceptual Framework**

### **1. Social Policy Concept**

Social policy emerged as a concept that includes the issues of solving the problems between worker-employer/capital-owning class and particularly protection of working class. However, in time, it has become obligatory to assess it in broader terms by steering towards various segments of society, as well as various social problems (Bozkır Serdar, 2012:4). Social policy concept that emerged in this direction includes, in broad terms, a larger segment rather than being limited with the conflicts between worker and employer/capital-owning class. In broad terms, social policy includes measures that are directed towards preventing the injustices and imbalances that economic components may cause between classes and solving available problems in order to maintain the welfare and social peace of all of the segments of the society in general (Talas, 1997:5).

In broad terms, social policy practices mainly include issues, such as provision of minimum life standards to all of the individuals living in the society without showing any favouritism and provision of services to the individuals by the government within the scope of equal opportunity principle and within the framework of usage of fundamental rights etc. In the direction of this main objective, issues, such as education, health and re-distribution of income etc. constitute the basis for social policies in broad terms.

Practices, which take place in the literature as third generation social policies and that are characterized as a new concept compared to social policies in narrow and broad terms, include social exclusion, discrimination, protection of the rights of various groups and individuals, such as women, men, youth, children, ex-convicts and handicapped etc. (Bozkır Serdar, 2012:5). Third generation social policies have become important in terms of providing solutions to the problems of wide masses since in today's conditions, there are also issues that

exceed the scope of social policies in broad terms. These policies are implemented particularly in terms of protection of the rights of individuals and groups that have difficulty in participating to social life and provision of such rights to the same.

## **2. Sports**

Sports is a concept that has various definitions and on which no common consensus is established. Therefore, changes, transformations and/or diversifications that sports was subjected to in time add new meanings to the concept of sports and increase the number of definitions made in respect of sports.

Main aim of sports is to improve human beings and to reveal the spiritual and physical skills of the same. Another aim of sports is to serve as an education tool that ensures national unity (Atasoy and Öztürk Kuter, 2005:14). Sports, which was made involuntarily and unsystematically during the periods when human beings were alone with the nature, has begun to be made consciously and directly, when settled lifestyle replaced migratory lifestyle. Thus, sports has developed as a process, whose social character is dominant, and has transformed into an occupation, which is regarded as a spare time activity or profession by those who deal with sports or which is considered as a form of entertainment by the audience.

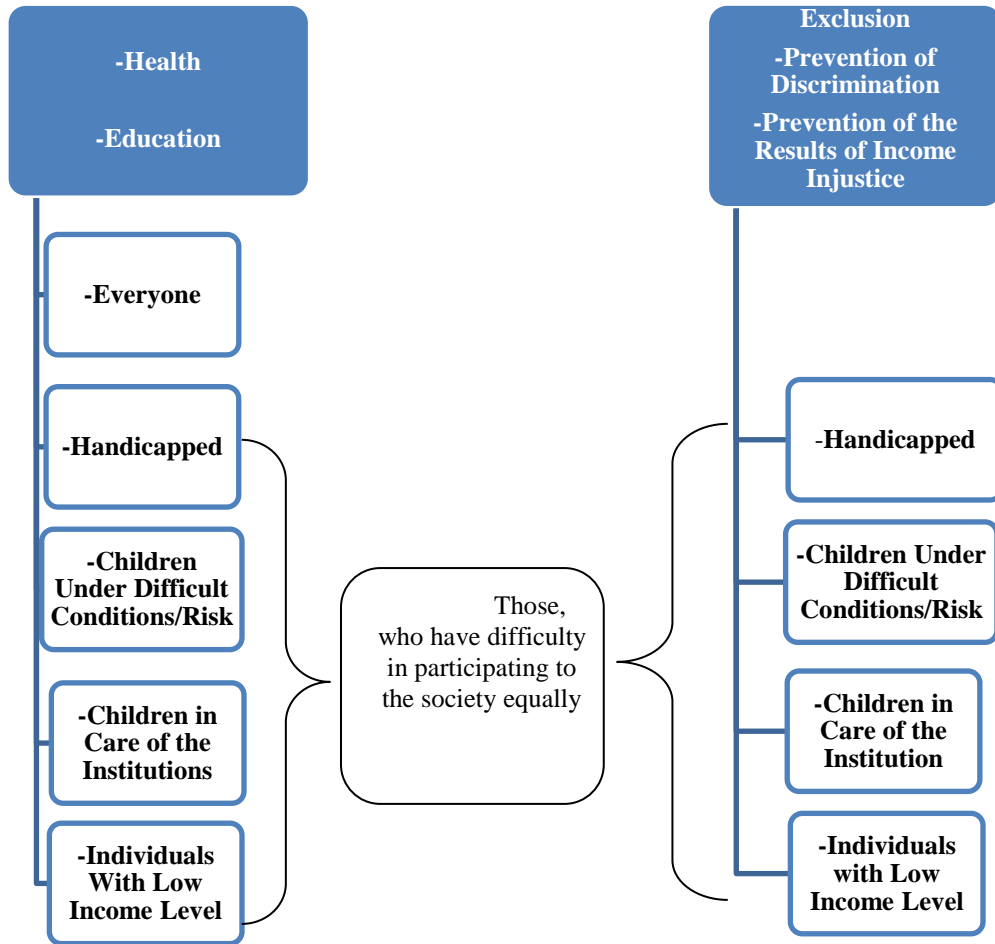
Today's sports environment draws attention with its character, which is included to economic and political structuring increasingly and which begin to include new meanings (Sümer, 1990:192). Assessing sports in professional terms without considering its economic aspect means ignoring main characteristics that must be emphasized in principal.

Sports must be assessed as one of the fundamental rights of an individual together with education and health, and must be discussed as a component that accompanies social policy tools in this direction. In today's conditions where free market economy is dominant, various characteristics of sports that must come to the forefront, such as sports as a tool for education and healthy life and social role that it has undertaken etc., are kept in the background. However, it must not be ruled out that sports may be used as an effective social policy tool in terms of health and education and in the fight against social exclusion, income injustice and discrimination, which constitute the main issues related with third generation social policy.

Since sports is made as a profession or as a spare time activity, sportsmen are referred to as amateur, semi-professional, professional etc. Therefore, within the scope of this study, we shall mainly examine, in terms of sportsmen who differ from the perspective of obtaining revenue, the groups, who do sports as a spare time activity and who are not get paid for dealing with such activity. However, since sports is a very broad concept that includes everyone, it is often very difficult to distinguish between amateur and professional sportsmen. There is a need for provision of common solution suggestions since the problems that are experienced by professional and amateur sportsmen often intersect on a common ground.

## **B. Relationship Between Sports and Social Policy**

### **Figure 1. Relationship Between Sports-Social Policy and Groups within such scope**



The aim of “pure sports”<sup>1</sup> is to ensure social integration in parallel with the fundamental principle of equality without discriminating mankind from one another. Sports gathers everyone under a common platform without making any discrimination in terms of religion, language, race, culture, world view, age, sex, income and education level, physical/mental disability etc. Also, in broad terms and when one considers the groups that are included to third generation social policies, it may be observed that there is a strong bond between sports and social policy.

Groups that must be supported within the scope of social policy are classified in Figure 1. Furthermore, sports that may be correlated with unfair distribution of health, education and income in terms of social policy in broad terms may also be correlated with social exclusion, discrimination, protection of the rights of youth, children, handicapped, elderly etc. in terms of third generation social policies. Sports activities that are laid down as a condition to everyone for health and education become even more critical for those, who have difficulty in participating to the society equally (handicapped, children under difficult conditions/risk, children in care of the institution, individuals with low income level etc.), in terms of prevention of the results of social exclusion, discrimination and income injustice.

In our country, physical training and sports were often included to Development Plans and Government Programs; however, Turkish Constitution of 1961 did not include any provision specific to sports. As a result of a regulation titled “Right to Health”, it was determined that the government is liable to ensure that everybody lives healthily in physical and mental terms (Article No.: 49/I) (Üçışık, 1999:46). On the contrast, a special regulation was made in respect of sports as a result of the Article No.: 59 in the Turkish Institution of

1982. We shall address to this article in detail in the following chapter of this study; however, in brief, according to the aforementioned article, it constitutes a part of health services to protect and sustain physical health by doing sports. Spreading sports among masses was considered as the most effective tool for achieving such goal. It was determined that it is envisaged for the government to embrace not only those, who do sports, but also development of sports, which also trains audiences and encourages the same to live in an environment that is consistent with health rules. In this direction, although it is not emphasized explicitly, we may state that the government addressed sports as a tool for social policy and guaranteed that such right shall be provided to everyone.

The approaches of organizations, such as Sports for Everyone Federations and Paralympic Committees etc. that are established in the world and in Turkey, support this view as well. Also, assessment of sports together with health and education policies makes it necessary for sports to be assessed within the framework of social policy.

### **1.Sports in terms of its aspects that complement Health and Education**

Sports must be laid down as a condition for everyone in principle thanks to its aspects that complement health and education. In societies that participate to sports activities actively, it shall be ensured that general health expenditures are decreased in the society via protection/improvement of individual and social health, and it shall also be ensured that material losses are prevented while causing an increase in the efficiency levels of employees.

In addition to workforce losses and decreases that may be observed in terms of work performance, obesity and similar problems may be observed as a result of sedentary lifestyle. A healthy and active lifestyle shall make positive affects in terms of economic productivity (CCPR, 2002:6). This situation transforms sports into a state policy today. For example, in the Conference titled “Sports, Policy and Social Policy” that was held in Durham University on January 2015, it was emphasized that sports has become a part of social policy via campaigns for social development and development of health ([http://assets.sportanddev.org/downloads/call\\_for\\_papers\\_pdf.pdf](http://assets.sportanddev.org/downloads/call_for_papers_pdf.pdf), [20.04. 2015]).

Likewise, sports, which is often correlated with health policies in Turkey in recent years, is laid down as a condition by the government and concerned government entities for prevention and treatment of several diseases. In this direction, thanks to the collaboration established between the Ministry of Health and GSGM, DPT, RTÜK, TRT, STK, MEB, TSK, YÖK, universities and private sector institutions etc., it is ensured that the strategies with regards to fight against obesity are listed among national health strategies and policies, and a perspective of an active life is developed in this direction. It is observed that the Ministry has published “Turkey Health Nutrition and Active Life Program (2010-2014)” (Ministry of Health, 2010) for this purpose. In this project and in other similar projects, Ministry of Health assesses sports together with health policies in order to prevent obesity and to protect and improve the health of general public. Objectives and goals, as well as organizations and institutions, with which coordination shall be established, are also determined explicitly in the aforementioned program, and accordingly, the size of the goal is revealed. In order to steer public towards sports in the direction of the program of the Ministry of Health, a public spot with the following slogan was broadcasted on the TV; “Walk for 30 minutes every day, take 10 thousand steps and fight against obesity!”, and free pedometers were distributed to the public by family practice centres. Ministry of Health organizes publicity campaigns and other various events and emphasizes the importance of sport in order to prevent and/or treat obesity and similar health problems (cardiovascular diseases, early aging, fatty liver, joint disorders and mental disorders etc.). This practice is also consistent with the physical activity program that requires from adults to be engaged in physical activity program for minimum 30 minutes as suggested by the World Health Organization to the EU member countries in the direction of the fight against obesity (European Commission, 2007:9).

Moreover, Ministry of Health stipulated within the scope of this program “for business offices, which employ more than 500 employees, to establish sports centres/facilities that have capacities consistent with the number of employees and for exercise programs to be implemented by specialists in such facilities”, and all of the public organizations and institutions, regional administrations and private sector are listed among the institutions/organizations with which collaboration may be made (Ministry of Health, 2010:59). This objective is the same with the text that was available in the law and implementation regulation no.: 3289 regarding Organization and Duties of the General Directorate of Youth and Sports, dated 1987, and that was repealed in 2009. At first glance, this article, which was formerly listed among the duties of GSGM and that is added to the agenda of the program introduced by the Ministry of Health, brings to the mind that the Ministry of Health shall play a more active role in terms of extending sports to masses, rather than the Ministry of Youth and Sports. However, although it looks like that, as it may be observed in the following chapters of the study, it may be observed that several Ministries collaborate to extend sports to masses. In addition to these two ministries, Ministry of Family and Social Policies and Ministry of Development, which occupies the most effective position in terms of coordination, are also effective in term of extending sports to masses. Projects that are implemented by the Ministries recently shall be emphasized in the following chapter of the study.

Sports is also one of the main constituents of education as much as health. Accordingly, it is determined in several national and international texts that particularly children may benefit from such activities by education. It is listed among the duties and liabilities of the government to ensure that everybody and particularly children participate to such activities, and there are also special regulations that are directed towards children under difficult conditions/risk and children in care of the institution<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, as a result of the protocol signed between the General Directorate of Youth and Sports and General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection Institution, it is assured that the children in care of the institution participate to sports activities. It is determined explicitly in the protocol that youth and sports activities shall be initiated and developed in all of the branches of sports and that additional personnel and vehicles shall be provided. It is also determined within the scope of the aforementioned protocol that the children and youth, who are in the care of the institution, may make a healthy and disciplined psycho-social and physical progress through such activities and that such children may benefit from the sports complexes in provinces at no cost (SHÇEK, <http://www.shcek.gov.tr/yetistirme-yurtlari.aspx> [19.09.2012]). It is also observed that right to sports, which is stipulated mainly for any child and which is assured by national/international texts and/or practices, is also assured by special regulations issued for children, who have difficulty in participating to the society equally.

Sports is also one of the critical components for development, protection and even improvement of the rehabilitations and physical/mental skills of physically/mentally handicapped individuals as much as children in difficult conditions/risk and children in care of the institution. This issue is indicated in several national and international texts. Special conditions of the handicapped, which distinguish them from other individuals, mean that they are the party, who is in need of doing sports the most. Sports was first began to be used in rehabilitation of the handicapped by MD. Ludwig Guttmann in The Stoke Mandeville Hospital. In 1948, a sports competition was organized for 16 handicapped sportsmen in the hospital in a way to coincide with the opening ceremony of London Olympics (Gold and Gold, 2007:133). Usage area of sports for rehabilitation of the handicapped was extended in time, and sports commenced to be used widely in the field of health. Moreover, when it is considered that sports, together with educational activities, contribute to the mental and physical development of the handicapped and that sports also makes positive impacts on the

education and rehabilitation of the handicapped thanks to the contribution it makes to the basic motoric characteristics, balance and hand-eye-foot etc. coordination of the handicapped, sports correlation with social policy strengthens even more.

## **2. Prevention of the Results of Social Exclusion, Discrimination and Income Injustice and Sports**

It is guaranteed by national and international texts that sports, which is laid down as a condition for basically everyone and those, who have difficulty in participating to the society equally, thanks to its aspects that complement education and health, shall be provided to the individuals, who have difficulty in participating to the society equally, by relative public institutions and organizations in order to prevent the results of social exclusion, discrimination and income injustice. It is necessary in terms of provision of social integration and social peace to ensure that the aforementioned disadvantaged groups benefit from social inclusion policies, positive discrimination measures and sports services.

Sports, which is laid down as a condition initially for the health and education of the handicapped, is important in terms of ensuring integration of such individuals to the society and from the perspective of their social development. The aim to ensure that the handicapped sportsmen compete in their own categories, but in parallel with other sportsmen and on a common platform and to prevent the handicapped sportsmen from being otherised and socially excluded is based on a solid foundation via “International Paralympic Committee (IPC)”. Accordingly, it is formalized that the handicapped individuals are not different than the individuals, whose physical health is not impaired, and that they are entitled to do sports and/or participate to the Olympics/competitions. Following institutions are engaged in such activities in Turkey in the direction of the aforementioned purpose; “National Paralympic Committee”, “Turkey Physically Disabled Sports Federation (TBESF)”, “Turkey Visually Handicapped Sports Association” and “Turkey Hearing Impaired Sports Federation”.

Existence of such institutions in Turkey, which undertake the duty to represent handicapped individuals and to ensure that they participate to sports activities, is encouraging. Also, as a result of the successes that are obtained recently, the importance of providing education to the handicapped and ensuring that the same participates to sports activities is understood even more. For example, Turkish Paralympic sportsmen became successful and won medals in the branches of shooting, weight lifting, judo, table tennis, archery and goalball in 2012 London Paralympic Games (first time that our country became successful in team sports in Paralympic Games) (TMPK, 2013:20-26).

Accordingly, we may prevent exclusion of handicapped individuals from social life by provision of right to health and education, as well as right to sports. Sports provide to the handicapped the opportunity to participate to physical activities, and it also provides benefits in terms of personal development and self-confidence, and therefore, it provides great conveniences in terms of adaptation of the handicapped to social life. Sports and physical activities are used as physical, mental, emotional and social development tools, for the benefit of the handicapped because of their rehabilitative and therapeutic effects. By means of sports, the handicapped learn the rules of collaboration, sharing and personal relations in the society. Activities performed increase the life quality of handicapped individuals, and they create a social environment where they may realize themselves with the assistance of the identity of sportsman. Sports plays an important role in terms of providing support to the handicapped to overcome the stress that an he/she experiences because of his/her disability, as well as the social problems that emerge consequently. Sports prevents the handicapped from isolating themselves from the society and helps them to hold on to life. Handicapped individual would relax after dealing with sports activities, would have good time and would be entertained. The performance that the handicapped individual shows in such activities would support personal development and ensure that such individual to be considered as a sportsman by the public,

rather than a person with disability. Intellectual capacity of the handicapped person and his/her capacity to solve problems would increase (Ministry of Development, 2012: 123). Sports ensures that the handicapped environment becomes aware of the skills of the relative handicapped person (even the family of the handicapped individual is not generally aware of the skills of the handicapped individual, and handicapped individual is excluded and/or otherised by his/her family) and such situation ensures the handicapped individual to be recognized. Sports, which creates all of the aforementioned positive results to be obtained in terms of the handicapped, is not only recommended by the specialists, but it is also laid down as a condition. When it is considered that the handicapped individual is damaged psychologically as a result of his/her characteristics that is different than the characteristics of other people and accordingly, that the handicapped individual often uses sports as a social tool to hold on to life (Ministry of Development; 2012:164), that the handicapped individual often acquires sports as a profession and transforms sports as his/her main goal and that doing sports is a fundamental right that an individual would wish to exercise without any reason, it is obvious that sports must be assessed as a social policy tool.

Discrimination against handicapped individuals is prohibited as a result of the “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, which was approved by the United Nations in 1993 in order to prevent the handicapped from being discriminated from other individuals in the society while exercising their right to play sports and which was also approved by Turkey in 2007 as a contract party. Within the scope of the titles of Protecting the Integrity of the Person (Article No.: 17), Living independently and being included in the community (Article No.: 19), Education (Article No.: 24), Health (Article No.: 25) and Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (Article No.: 30) (UN, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, <http://www.engelsizbilisim.org> [24.09.2012]), it is determined explicitly that the states parties are liable to ensure that the handicapped participate to sports activities within the framework of the principle of equal opportunity. In addition to this convention, there are several other documents and activities that are established to prevent the handicapped from being excluded socially and to prevent the same from being faced with discrimination<sup>3</sup> (Özgökçeler, 2012:270-271). Common goal of all of such documents is to ensure that the handicapped individuals are included to social life and accordingly, to ensure that the same are provided with the right to do sports.

It is determined in national and international texts that it shall be ensured that the children in difficult conditions/risk and in the care of the institution shall also be provided the opportunity to participate to sports activities by the government and government institutions and organizations. In this study, since the issue of children’s right to do sports and play is examined in detail by providing articles from relative agreements under the heading of “Sports with its Aspects that Complement Health and Education”, it shall be sufficient to determine that such right must be provided to every child, but that such rights has different meanings for children with special conditions.

Also, there are individuals with low-income levels among the persons, who have difficulty in participating to the society equally. These individuals may only meet their basic needs because of their income, which is under a certain level, and therefore, they are not able to participate to social life and sports activities.

### **C. Programs that are in the direction of Sports Policy in Turkey**

Since the investments that are related with sports are made mostly by the private sector as a result of sports growing into an industry, the number of government investments must be increased in order to prevent the results of income injustice. We may understand from the Turkish Constitution of 1982, Development Plans and Government Programs that the right to do sports, which is one of the fundamental rights of the handicapped, shall be provided to the handicapped by the government and concerned institutions affiliated to the



government in accordance with the principle of equality in broad terms and within the context of third generation social policies. It is emphasized frequently in all of the aforementioned texts that the right to do sports shall be provided to all of the citizens by the government and that a facility policy, which shall enable such goal to be established, shall be implemented, and therefore, it is guaranteed that nobody shall be left out of such scope.

When we particularly consider that income distribution is not equal in Turkey, it would be fair to indicate that government investments are critical in order to enable such individuals to exercise their right to do sports. It is against the equal opportunity principle of social government and sports when individuals with high level of income may participate to paid sports activities that are provided by the private sector while individuals with low-income level may not participate to such activities.

**Figure 2: Basis of Turkish Sports Policy**



Today, several countries attach great importance to sports and they fight to rank at the top in the international sports organizations. Successful results that shall be obtained from such organization are considered as a sign of national reputation. Sports, which is in interaction with the society, maintains its development process in parallel with all of the aforementioned issues (Kuter ve Öztürk Kuter, 2012, <http://www.sporbilim.com> [05.05.2012]). It would not be a fair approach to expect from sports, which develops and changes after both being affected by the society and getting affected by the society simultaneously, to maintain its existence on its own and without any interference. Accordingly, sports must be affected in positive direction where and when it is necessary, particularly as a result of interferences made by the government and state, in parallel with certain plans, programs and policies that are being implemented in the national and international arena.

### **1. Status and Importance of Sports in the Constitution**

We may divide Turkish sports policy in two parts, i.e. government policy and state policy. Sports policies are considered as state policy and its basic foundation is the Article No.: 59 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982; “*Government shall take measures that shall develop the physical and mental health of the Turkish citizens from any age and shall encourage that the sports reaches to masses. Government shall protect the successful sportsmen.*” Government determines the national and international sports policy accordingly, and endeavours to fulfil all of the components that are stated in the aforementioned article.

Accordingly, when we assess sports from the perspective of the right to protect the health and labour power of all of the citizens, just as the protection of health and labour force is the responsibility of an individual before the society, it is the duty and responsibility of the government to improve “life-working” conditions within the framework of a plan, to develop an extensive social policy to protect the health of the public and to encourage everyone to do sports during implementation of such plan at schools etc. under the title of physical education (Fişek, 1998:144). As it is determined above, this duty is secured as a result of the Article No.: 59 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982.

## **2. Status and Importance of Sports in Development Plans**

Our country has entered a development period since 1963 and 10 Development Plans have been implemented until today. The issue of sports was not mentioned at all in our Development Plans at certain times, and it was assessed as a critical issue at certain times and therefore, solutions for current problems and defects were generated. However, it may be observed that alternative solution suggestions that are directed towards such problems are not put into practice adequately.

As seen at table 1, it shall be beneficial to examine the regulations that have been implemented since 1962 in relation with physical education and sports within the framework of Development Plans in order to observe the general framework of the opinions and practices of the state and therefore the governments.

## **3. Status and Importance of Sports in Government Programs**

62 governments are established in total since the establishment of Republic of Turkey until today. We examined in the below table how much value was attributed to the subject of sports within the framework of former government programs.

As it may be seen on table 2, few of the 62 Governments that are established until today have enacted laws and regulations on sports. Although the subject of provision of sports facilities particularly to the public is addressed, it is determined that the goals related with the subject are not determined sufficiently in the government programs. Therefore, it is observed that governments did not make any systematic study on sports in general and unless obligatory (Tanyeri et al, 2001:90). However, it is observed that the increase in the level of awareness that is observed in world opinion particularly in recent years in terms of preventing exclusion of disadvantaged groups socially is also reflected on the government programs in Turkey.

The fact that Turkish sports policy became a government policy is as important as its becoming a state policy. Governments began to attach importance on sports and to make investment in sports facilities and organizations in order to prevent social disintegration and to prevent people from being directed towards anarchy and terror (Öztürk, 1998:9). Accordingly, projects and activities that are implemented in parallel with Government Programs and that particularly aim to ensure that the disadvantaged groups participate to sports activities are critical dynamics to ensure that sports reaches to masses.

## **4. Examples Regarding Status and Importance of Sports in the Practices of Ministries, Committees and Local Governments**

Certain projects and activities that are implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Turkish Olympics Committee and governorates are aimed at various groups since sports is very critical for everyone and particularly for disadvantaged groups, and therefore, sports is brought to the forefront from several perspectives. Some of these projects are as follows; Fight Against Obesity and Control Program implemented by the Ministry of Health, Social Support Program implemented by the Ministry of Development, Youth Projects Support

Program (Social Inclusion Program) and “Our Trainers Get Over Barriers Project” (regarding establishment of sports centres for the handicapped in 81 provinces) implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, activities performed by the Family and Social Policies Youth and Sports Club Association affiliated to the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Groups that are assessed within the scope of projects and activities are everyone, particularly children in terms of health and education, and persons with disabilities, children and women in terms of social inclusion and poverty. Olympic Mothers Project that is implemented by Turkish Olympics Committee is also one of the leading projects since it includes all of the children across the country. In addition to the large scaled and relatively more extensive projects and activities that are organized by the Ministries and Committees and that spread into several years, there are also organizations, which are implemented on province basis and which extend to several days. Project partners of such organizations are governors, mayors and rectors. As a recent example of such organizations, we may indicate I. Balkan Disadvantaged Children Sports Games Project implemented by the Governorship of Edirne.

Fight Against Obesity and Control Program, which is implemented by the Ministry of Health, is a project that concerns the entire society. Ministry has assessed sports within the framework of its own activity area and emphasized that everyone may remain healthy by leading an active life. In this context, women, children, elderly, handicapped and pregnant etc., which are assessed as employees, housewives and risk groups, are supported for doing sports both in materials terms and by raising awareness (Ministry of Health, 2010).

Social Support Program of the Ministry of Development is a project that is directed towards implementing social inclusion policies in the direction of individuals and groups, who are under the risk of poverty and social exclusion in the regions of GAP and DAP. Following goals are adopted as the main objectives of the aforementioned project; to ensure that social consultation and integration are achieved by increasing the life quality of disadvantaged groups and by ensuring that the same participate to social life, to ensure that the children, youth and women in such regions express themselves better by being engaged in sports activities and to improve their physical and mental status. This project includes a variety of comprehensive activities that are directed particularly towards children among disadvantaged groups. Children are also classified according to their statuses and types of risks they experience. Various types of risks were determined extensively, such as handicapped children, children living in difficult conditions in villages/suburban areas, children with harmful habits or children that may have harmful habits/substance user children, children working in streets and children under risk, children with broken homes (children, whose mother and/or father died or divorced or children, who must receive education), terror-stricken children and/or children, who had to immigrate from village to city etc., and thus, projects that aim to eliminate such negative issues were developed. Furthermore, there are also several practices, which are directed towards women as a disadvantaged group. This project includes practices related with culture, arts, social inclusion and employment in addition to sports. Ministry of Development has also undertaken an active role in order to extend sports to masses within the framework of its duty area (Ministry of Development, 2012).

Social Inclusion Program of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is a program that selected as its target group the youth between the ages of 14-29, who are considered as disadvantaged because of their social, economic and physical disabilities, health problems, geographical factors and education requirements. Main goals and objectives of the program is to strengthen social belonging sense of disadvantaged young persons, to ensure that the same express themselves, to support their social harmonization and to ensure that the same exercise their right to do sports just like everyone (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2014). Target group of the “Our Trainers Get over Barriers Project”, which is implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, is the handicapped, who are among disadvantaged groups. The goal of the

project is to ensure that persons with disabilities access to social life independently, to support them to lead a quality life and to organize special training courses for trainers in the body of Youth Services and Sports Provincial Directorates of 81 provinces in order to increase the physical capacity of persons with disabilities (Ministry of Youth and Sports, <http://www.gsb.gov.tr> [29.05.2015]).

Ministry of Family and Social Policies shed a light on the need to assess sports as one of the tools of social policy by establishing Family and Social Policies Youth and Sports Club Association. The aim of the club is to manage and conduct all types of youth and sports activities in parallel with modern life, to raise amateur and professional sportsmen in various branches of sports, to make youth as individuals beneficial to the society and to participate to professional and amateur sports competitions inland and in abroad (Bylaw of the Family and Social Policies Youth and Sports Club Association, 2012).

General objective of the Olympic Mothers Project, which is implemented with the collaboration established between Turkish Olympics Committee (TMOK) and Procter & Gamble (P&G) Turkey, is to ensure that the citizens interact with sports more across the country. Emphasis is laid on mothers, who are indicated as the head of household, in terms of achieving the goals that are based on awareness and consciousness in order to ensure that the children are encouraged to do sports throughout the country. It is emphasized in this project, where it is aimed to ensure that children gain the habit of doing sports regularly and to ensure that the same join life as more confident, social, successful and healthier persons, that it is necessary to do sports in order to be healthy both in physical and mental terms (TMOK, [http://www.olimpiyat.org.tr/haber\\_detay.aspx?id=595](http://www.olimpiyat.org.tr/haber_detay.aspx?id=595) [(29.05.2015)]).

Target group of the I. Balkan Disadvantaged Children Sports Games Project, which is organized in Edirne on province basis, is handicapped children. If the handicapped do not have the opportunity to benefit sufficiently from the services and facilities provided by the society because of their disabilities, such individuals shall be devoid of social integration. The main goal of the project is to eliminate such deprivation (Governorship of Edirne, 2013).

Consequently, regarding sports in relation with which the state has drawn relative framework and endeavours to do its part, governments must also be active and show efforts effectively. The subject of sports shall protect its characteristic as a critical subject that must be assessed and it shall be easier and more effective to extend sports to masses as long as the subject of sports is included to government programs, as well as projects that are implemented in parallel with such programs.

## **5. 5. Assessment of Current Plans and Programs**

As it may be seen from the Development Plans and Government Programs that are included to the Programs directed towards Sports Policy in Turkey, the subject of sports was not included to the texts from certain periods, and it was addressed briefly in certain periods, and it was addressed extensively in certain periods and goals and objectives were explained in detail.

Although this subject has been addressed in Government Programs since 1937, although planned development programs began to be implemented since 1963 and although 10 Development Plans were published within this scope and although there is an explicit article in relation with this subject in our Constitution, which is our main text, it is observed that such problems continue to exist today at a considerable extent. It is certain that inclusion of the subject only in aforementioned texts is not sufficient in terms of solving problems related with sports, spreading sports to masses as a social policy and gaining successes in sports competitions. In other words, although sports is an issue that is emphasized frequently in several texts, continuance of same problems for years and not being solved is not related with how frequently this subject is emphasized, but is related with how much of the adopted measures, determined goals and objectives are implemented. However, projects that are

implemented recently do not constitute the steps taken for overcoming such problems. Furthermore, lack of coordination between Ministries and local governments causes project efficiency to decrease.

Each country determines/must determine its sports policy in consideration of its cultural values and sports structure. For example, it is aimed for French society to do mass sports and to make sports a part of daily life. It may be observed that they achieved serious successes within the scope of this objective, i.e. they managed to spread sports culture to the society. Likewise, in Germany, state has adopted it as a principal to provide any type of support to its citizens since individuals show great interest in sports (Kılıç, 2006:78). Consequently, it is obvious that, in countries that achieved success in extending sports to masses, the most effective factors are the government programs, state support and similar methods. Current problems are determined in the aforementioned countries and similar countries, and these problems are solved at first and then, current aims and objectives are implemented. The issue that lacks the most in Turkey is that government support is not provided in full and/or even if such support is provided, sources are not used efficiently, healthily and effectively. Therefore, fundamental problems remain unsolved and consequently, other goals and objectives may be not put into practice.

In sufficiency of sports facilities and sources within the scope of current programs had been the fundamental and most import problem from day one. Solving this problem and constructing facilities from which everyone may benefit easily and equally are listed among primary purposes. However, the most critical barrier in terms of extending sports to masses remains as lack of facilities, areas and sites and/or not being able to ensure that everyone accesses to the same equally and easily. Therefore, although it is determined for many years in the texts that this problem shall be solved primarily, insufficiencies in terms of practice create a contradictory situation between objectives and practices. The idea of sports for everyone may become effective after eliminating this problem by adopting an accurate facility policy, by adopting resolutions that may be implemented and by generating rational solutions. Improved objectives and goals may not be achieved without overcoming such fundamental problems.

Sports facilities policy aims to obtain a balanced distribution across the entire country in terms of development of sports and to ensure that masses do sports, to ensure that individuals participate to sports activities rather than watching it and to provide to any citizen from any age group the opportunity to be engaged in multi-purpose sports activities. Furthermore, sports fields and facilities must be built as a result of researches-planning activities that are made in parallel with the social, economic and cultural structure of the society. Developed countries considered these factors in terms of efficiency of the facility and its maximum availability, and achieved success in sports by constructing the right facility in the right place (Kılıç, 2006:78). In Turkey, it is observed that the number of facilities is not sufficient, facilities are not distributed across the country in a balanced way, the number of areas that are built for doing sports actively is less than the areas that are built for the purpose of participating to sports passively and currently available facilities may not be used for all purposes and effectively because of defects available in the plans-projects of facilities and because of similar reasons (Yerlikaya, 2012:163).

Problems that are observed in the sports facilities are emphasized broadly in the report of the Tenth Development Plan Sports Specialization Commission. Most critical problem of all is the deficiencies observed in sports facilities in terms of distribution and quality. Construction of certain facilities is prioritized and construction of certain facilities is delayed since the preferences of political authorities are taken as basis, not the requirements of regions. This situation increases construction costs. Various issues cause facilities to remain idle, such as facilities not complying with national and international standards and transportation problems etc. Lack of coordination between various public institutions and

organizations causes similar facilities to be built in the same region. Also, not being able to cover facility repair-maintenance costs and insufficient number of qualified personnel make it difficult to manage such facilities (Ministry of Development, 2014:23-24). After assessing the report of the commission, we observed that the programs that are directed towards sports are not implemented at a sufficient level in Turkey. However, it must be listed among the fundamental objectives of a state to make sports, which is considered as a social policy tool, parallel and/or equivalent with education and health policy. Hence, components that make it possible to create the environment and conditions necessary for implementation of this fundamental objective must be provided rapidly and effectively.

As we examine the programs that are implemented from past to present, we observed that the adopted measures, goals and objectives were similar and/or same in every program and it was agreed actually in every Development Plan that the resolutions that were adopted in the former Plan were not implemented and that the former Plan had become unsuccessful consequently. In this context, the probability of implementing fully the goals and objectives indicated in the programs in the near future is very low.

### **Conclusion**

Today, the requirements of social policy enlarged in parallel with the increase in the number of social and economic problems, and therefore, tools that are required to meet such requirements are also being developed. Sports, which mainly aims to develop human beings, may be listed among such tools. Although sports is articulated as a social policy tool recently, sports is actually used in various areas of social policy for a long time.

In Turkey, sports is included to government policies after being affected from the approaches shown in international platform. However, certain fundamental problems continue to exist. Sports had become ineffective and inefficient in terms of being provided to masses since sports is often forgotten in government policies, problems experienced in terms of building facilities, lack of coordination between Ministries and political conflicts experienced between local governments and inability to use sources optimally etc.

However, such situation does not mean that governments do not aim to use sports as a social policy tool. In Development Plans, Government Programs and particularly in the projects that are implemented recently, it may be observed that sports, which is desired to be extended to masses for many years, includes particularly disadvantaged groups. Although aforementioned problems continue to exist, we may not ignore that several Ministries implement various projects within this scope and that the Committees and local governments show various efforts within this scope.

Great amount of attention is drawn to the role that sports play in the field of social policy in terms of complementing health and education. Also, we may observe practices where sports is addressed directly as a social policy tool for preventing results of social exclusion, discrimination and income injustice.

Ensuring stability within the scope of implemented policies, increasing the number of sources and most importantly, establishing coordination shall ensure that adaptation of sports culture by being extended in the society. Extension of sports culture in society shall mean settlement of a catalyser in society, which accommodates health, education, unity and solidarity in its nature. In conclusion, effective usage of sports by the state as a social policy tool shall contribute dramatically in solving social problems.

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- 1<sup>st</sup> Five Year Development Plan (1963-1967)

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

**Table 1: Sports in Development Plans**

1st Five Year Development Plan (1963-1967)	The subject of physical education and sports was not addressed explicitly.
2nd Five Year Development Plan (1968-1972)	Regulations on physical education and sports were addressed for the first time. As we examine plan; we may state that the relative regulations were leaned to support use of particularly sports as one of the main educational tools, to bring active participation to the forefront and to stress the importance of the duties that the state has undertaken in terms of spreading amateur activities rather than professional activities and consequently, to spread the idea of sports for everyone.
3rd Five Year Development Plan (1973-1977)	It was in the form of an analysis of the 2nd Five Year Development Plan, and therefore, it was addressed whether the goals that were available in the plan were achieved or not (it was agreed that the plan was partially unsuccessful in terms of spreading sports to masses). Goals for the new period were determined almost in parallel with the 2nd Five Year Development Plan. The ideas of sports for everyone and sports as a part of education were stressed.
4th Five Year Development Plan (1979-1983)	3rd Five Year Development Plan was criticized and it was addressed whether the goals and principles were achieved or not. As in the case of former plans, it was also agreed in this plan that the goals were not achieved. Although the ideas of sports for everyone and sports as a part of education were stressed, such idea remained unimplemented. We may observe that the most explicit issue that was addressed in this Plan was to stop sports being a form of entertainment for audiences and to spread sports to masses and all of the segments of the society, as well as the necessity to ensure that everybody benefits from sports facilities easily and to ensure that sports is assessed seriously in terms of education.



5th Five Year Development Plan (1985-1989)	In the 5th Five Year Development Plan, we may observe in several articles that necessary works shall be performed in order to ensure that the opportunity to do sports is provided to any segment of the society, i.e. to show every effort to spread sports to masses. Accordingly, it was determined that public authorities and private sector shall make investments to build sports facilities.
6th Five Year Development Plan (1990-1994)	The subject of making use of spare time has gained importance in this Plan. Following critical issues were addressed in this Plan; educations studies shall be made in order to enable individuals to make use of their spare time, which is left from business hours, and awareness level of such individuals shall be raised, complexes and facilities where spare time activities shall be performed shall be built in areas where everybody may easily travel-benefit and such facilities shall be distributed without any regional inequality, public and private institutions that are engaged in such activities shall be supported, in addition to the complexes and facilities that are already available for being engaged in spare time activities, new complexes and facilities shall be constructed for meeting the requirements of the society, "recreation" departments shall be opened in the physical education and sports departments of universities in order to ensure that spare times are used and complexes and facilities that shall be used in terms of making of use of spare times shall be developed in a way to be used by the children, youth, elderly, handicapped and similar groups at various times continuously etc.
7th Five Year Development Plan (1996-2000)	The subject of physical education and sports was addressed less compared to the other Plans for the first time. The most important issue that draws attention in the 7th Five Year Development Plan is that privatisations and promotion of private sector were stressed explicitly throughout the plan in general. Accordingly, while public sector investments and public sector investments were assessed jointly in the former Plans, it was determined in this Plan for the first time that the state shall influence less the investments that shall be made in terms of physical education and sports and that the influence of private sector shall be increased.
8th Five Year Development Plan (2001-2005)	It was desired in this Plan to ensure that physical education and sports become the lifestyle of everyone. Therefore, everybody should obtain such services easily. The subject of sports and education is stressed. Necessary regulations shall be made in order to ensure that the children and youth participate to intramural and extramural activities actively. It was stated that the state could not ensure the following to participate sports activities actively and that the necessary infrastructure could not be provided; persons with disabilities and street children, who are among the persons who have difficulty in participating to the society equally, and individuals living in slum areas. We may reach to the conclusion that it was decided to bring a solution to the issue in order provide opportunity equality and to prevent the results of social exclusion, income injustice and discrimination.
9th Five Year Development Plan (2007-2013)	No special regulation was made in relation with sports.
10th Five Year Development Plan (2014-2018)	It was determined as main objective to nestle the culture of doing sports in the society as a requirement of a healthy and active lifestyle, to increase the quality and diversity of sports services and to ensure that sports is spared to large masses. Accordingly, programs that shall encourage doing sports shall be implemented, and areas where everybody may participate to sports activities shall be provided. Sports education shall be improved at any level of education, particularly in early childhood.
<b>Reference:</b> The authors issued the present text after examination of Development Plans and reports of DPT.	

## Appendix 2

**Table 2: Sports in Government Programs**

9 <sup>th</sup> Government Program(1937-1938)	Sports began to be addressed.
10-15th Government Programs (1938-1946)	In the period of these governments, which are named as war years governments, governments contented with addressing sports mainly in laws and regulative texts.
15th Government Program(1946-1947)	Following statement was made; "We shall endeavour to open Superior Physical Education Institute that shall raise teaching staff for any type of sports activities, schools and clubs. We shall be engaged in construction of indoors and outdoors physical educations sports complexes."
27 and 28th Government Programs (1962-1965)	TMOK (Turkish Olympic Committee) gained legal status for the first time. It was stated that sports complexes and facilities, from which the youth may benefit, shall be endeavoured to be completed rapidly in all of the provinces and districts of the country.

29th Government Program(1965)	Amendments made in the sports legislation were emphasized, and it was determined shall be spread to masses.
30th Government Program(1965-1969)	The subject of physical education and sports was assessed more explicitly. It was emphasized that the state and local governments must show effort to ensure that the citizens actually do sports and that it was necessary to extend and spread sports facilities to ensure that the public actually does sports.
37th Government Program(1974)	19 Mayıs Youth and Sports Academy was established in Ankara, and this event is considered as a critical development for the Turkish sports science. However, this institution was affiliated to the education faculties of universities after establishment of YÖK (Council of Higher Education) in 1983. It was stated that emphasis shall be placed on mass sports rather than sports as a form of entertainment.
38th Government Program (1974-1975)	The subject of physical education and sport was covered widely. However, the subject of sports facilities was not addressed.
39th and 41st Government Programs(1975-1977 and 1977-1978)	It was stated that the youth shall be provided with dorms and facilities that include all types of social facilities where they mat do sports and relax. It was stated that infrastructure facilities shall be established rapidly in order to ensure that sports is done across the country and that it becomes a form of mass sports.
44th Government Program(1980-1983)	Securing sports within the scope of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey for the first time within the framework of the Article No.: 59 is an important development. It was stated that sports facilities that may be used by large masses shall be endeavoured to be constructed.
45th Government Program(1983-1987)	It included various subjects such as the following; emphasis shall be laid on mass sports, special measures shall be taken to improve Turkish sports environment, green areas shall be provided during preparation of the zoning plans of cities and production of sports materials shall be promoted etc. Law No.: 3289 regarding Organization and Duties of the General Directorate of Youth and Sports became effective and GSGM (General Directorate of Youth and Sports) was affiliated to the Ministry of National Education Youth and Sports as a requirement of the aforementioned law.
49th Government Program(1991-1993)	Olympics Organization Law was enacted and football federation was secluded from GSGM and obtained an autonomous structure.
56th Government Program(1999)	Various goals, such as the following, were determined; it shall not be allowed for the public sports areas to be transformed into commercial enterprises, the number of areas and venues where the youth may participate to sports events shall be increased with the support of local governments, local sports and playing fields shall be established with the assistance of special zoning regulations and amateur sportsmanship and facilities that are established for such purposes shall be extended etc.
58th Government Program(2002-2003)	Following issues were determined; special attention shall be given to the following issues within the scope of the services that are provided to the youth; opportunity equality and healthy development of the youth in terms of personality and opinions and in physical terms, local governments and private sector shall be encouraged to make investment in cultural, arts, sports, folkloric, reading and research activities that are directed towards the youth and various measures shall be taken to ensure that the youth make of their spare times healthily and effectively etc.
59-60th and 61st Government Programs (2003-2014)	Following issues were stated; Ministry of Youth and Sports, which is established to provide more comprehensive services to the youth and to include sports to our social life more extensively, shall work with great energy, school buildings shall be designed as areas that are easily accessible, that have sufficient areas for play and sports activities, the ratio of obesity, which is observed in every 32 adults out of 100 adults, shall be decreased to the ratio of 30 in 2015 by promoting healthy nutrition and regular physical activities, sports is not only considered as a tool for making use of spare times, but as a critical tool for socialization and healthy society, investments are made in order to ensure that all of the segments of the society becomes acquainted with sports and participates to sports activities actively and large, widespread and various sports facilities are opened in order to ensure that all of the citizens, including children, youth, elderly and women-men, have the opportunity to do sports.
62nd Government Program (2014- 2015)	Following issues were determined; investments on youth and sports were increased 15 times, sports is not only a tool for making use of sports, but is a tool for socialization and being healthy, society must adopt the culture to do sports for a health and active life, necessary efforts are shown to ensure that sports facilities are provided to the entire society equally and several facilities are constructed for this purpose.
<b>Reference:</b> The authors issued the present text after examination of Government Programs.	

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> In order to bring to the forefront the fact that sports ensure mental and physical development and socialization, and to lay emphasis on its entertaining and educational characteristics and to show that it complements health, this term is used in terms of doing

sports for recreational purposes/for making use of spare time rather than selection of the same as a profession in parallel with the program of fair-play.

<sup>2</sup> In the “Declaration of the Rights of the Child” that was declared by the General Assembly of United Nations in 1959, it is stated that “... The child shall be given an education which will promote his general culture and enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society...” and “... The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavor to promote the enjoyment of this right.” Therefore, basis of children right to do sports and play” is formed. “Convention on the Rights of the Child” that the General Assembly of the United Nations approved and signed and opened for approval and participation had also become effective after being approved by the TBMM (Grand National Assembly of Turkey) in 1994. This convention and Article No.: 90 of our Constitution, which is organized under the title of “Approval of International Agreements”, is in the form of a legal clause that must be followed and implemented. Following are stipulated in the aforementioned convention; “... States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”

<sup>3</sup> See UN-Declaration on the Rights of the Disabled Persons (1975), UN-International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), UN- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1983), European Disability Forum, European Year of Persons with Disabilities (2003) and Prime Ministry Department of the Administration of the Disabled-Turkey without Barriers Project (April 2007).

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