

# HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

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# **I. HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY**

## **1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

In the decades preceding the 1981 University reform, the Turkish higher education system consisted of three types of institutions:

- a. the universities;
- b. the "academies", which specialized in engineering and economic studies,
- c. vocational schools, and teacher training institutes.

The academies, vocational schools and teacher training institutes were affiliated with the Ministry of National Education.

Owing to the absence of an efficient and coordinated central planning for all the levels of higher education, and also because of the rapid growth, especially during the sixties and the seventies, in the number and variety of higher education institutions, in the student population, and in many other respects, this tripartite system of higher education soon began to show signs of failure and degeneration. Moreover, political, social and economic problems during the last two decades contributed to the deterioration of higher education. Thus, at the end of the seventies the need for a thorough reform became inevitable. Hence the 1981 reform was put into effect.

With the Higher Education Law(1981), higher education in Turkey underwent a major academic, institutional and administrative re-organization, the most significant of its kind since the great university reform in 1933. According to the provisions made in this Law, and also according to Articles 130 and 131 of the Constitution of the Republic, the supreme authority for higher education in the country is the Higher Education Council, which is a fully autonomous and a national board of trustees without any political or governmental affiliation.

With the reform, a unified system of higher education was introduced and a coherent and interrelated pattern of institutional diversity created. All the academies, teacher training institutes and vocational schools were re-organized; while some of them were, where viable and convenient, amalgamated to form new universities, some were transformed into new faculties and affiliated to the universities in their own regions. Thus, with the establishment of eight more state universities

in 1982 and one foundation university in 1984, the total number of the universities rose from nineteen to twenty eight. In 1992 24 new state universities were established in different regions of the country. At present there are 57 universities all together in the country, four of which have foundation status.

## **2. STRUCTURE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION**

Article 130 of the Constitution, and Article 3/de of the Higher Education Law explicitly stipulate that the universities are autonomous and degree-granting corporate institutions of higher education, with recognized rights and functions.

### **2.1. The Higher Education Council**

The Higher Education Council consists of twenty four members, fourteen of whom come from, and represent, the universities, while the other ten members represent the Government, four of whom are full professors. Once the procedures for the nomination and selection of the members are completed, the final appointment to the Council is made by the President of the Republic for a term of four years, which is renewable. The president of the Council is also elected and appointed by the President of the Republic for a term of four years.

The council has two governing bodies, called the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, both chaired by the president. The General Assembly, whose proceedings are final and need not be ratified by another authority, whether governmental or non-governmental, is the main decision and policy-making body. It consists of all the Council members and meets at least three times within every half-year; at the president's invitation or upon a written proposal of one third of the members. It may also convene extraordinarily. The quorum needed for the transaction is fourteen.

As for the Executive Committee, it is a permanent body which is mainly concerned with the execution of the policies adopted, and with the implementation of the resolutions passed by the General Assembly. It has eight members including president and two vice-presidents. One of the

vice-presidents is appointed by the president and the other is elected by the General Assembly. The quorum is six. For the general structure of the Higher Education system see Figure A-1.

Through its president, the Council reports only to the President of the Republic. Any communication with the Government is maintained through the Minister of National Education, who may, if he/she so wishes, attend, and preside over meetings of the General Assembly but he does not have the right to vote for or against the resolutions adopted by the Assembly. For instance, it is through the Minister of National Education for submission to the Council of Ministers, or to the Parliament, that the Higher Education Council makes its proposals as regards the annual higher education budget, the establishment of new universities or the amalgamation, where necessary, of institutions of higher education. Indeed, according to the Constitution of the Republic, universities are established only by an act of the Parliament.

In all its proceedings and deliberations the Higher Education Council always works in close cooperation with the universities and also with the two other academic bodies which are the Interuniversity Board and the Rectors' Committee of the universities. In fact, such a cooperation is of vital importance for the coordination and planning of higher education policies. In this respect, among the main responsibilities of the Higher education Council are:

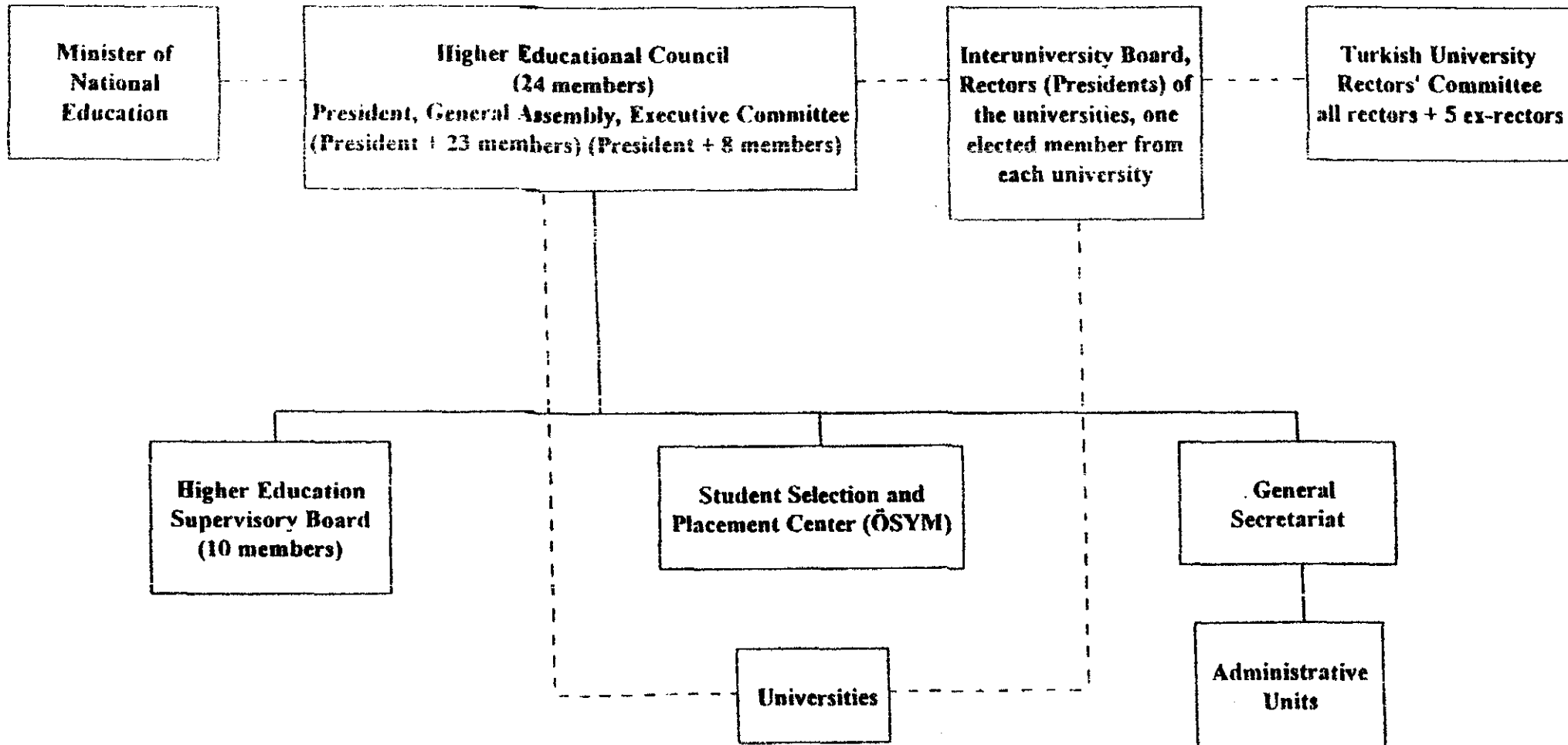
- to prepare short-term and long-term plans for the establishment and improvement of institutions of higher education;

- to make programs and provide facilities for the training of junior academic staff, and to make sure that the resources allocated for higher education are used efficiently;

- to prepare guidelines for the rate of growth in the universities to make it compatible with their capacity at maximum efficiency;

- to convey proposals and plans in terms of the establishment of new universities to the Minister of National Education for proposal to the Council of Ministers, or the Parliament;

Figure A-1  
Structure of the Higher Education System



-to determine the enrollment capacity of the universities and set down general principles related to admissions;

-to convey recommendations for the annual higher education budget, after reviewing and evaluating the budget proposal to the Minister of National Education, for the Council of Ministers and the Parliament, made by the universities;

-to select three candidates from among six who have been elected by faculty members of a university when a vacancy occurs for rectorship, and to propose to the President of the Republic these three candidates one of whom he appoints as the rector;

-to appoint deans of faculties from among three candidates recommended by rectors,

-to specify the principles concerning the minimum requirements of the curricula of higher education institutions, by taking into consideration the recommendations of the Interuniversity Board;

-to make regulations for transfer of students from one university to another.

-to recommend the amount of tuition fees to the Cabinet for different education programs for each academic year,

The Higher Education Council is a planning, coordinating, and policy-making body for higher education in the country. The universities with their own governing bodies have full autonomy to make their own by-laws, academic and curricular. They are also fully free to determine their own academic standards and policies.

## **2.2. Higher Education Supervisory Board**

On behalf on the Higher education Council, the Higher Education Supervisory Board evaluates the performances of the universities, the units attached to them, and the teaching staff and makes recommendations. The Board consists of five professors nominated by the Higher Education Council; three members who are elected and appointed by the Council from among nine candidates proposed in equal numbers by the Court of Cassation, the Council of State, and the Court of Accounts; and two



members, one selected by the General Staff, and the other by the Ministry of National Education.

### **2.3. Student Selection and Placement Center**

The Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM), which was established in 1974 and affiliated to the Higher Education Council in 1981, is primarily concerned with the selection and the placement of student in higher education programs. In addition to this main function, ÖSYM also offers services to higher education institutions to administer examinations which are either interuniversity in nature or are being held on a large scale. Another group of activities of ÖSYM is the collection and the processing of statistical information concerning the teaching staff and the students of higher education institutions. ÖSYM also prepares and conducts examinations for the recruitment and the promotion of personnel in public organizations. The President of ÖSYM is appointed by the President of the Higher Education Council.

### **2.4. Interuniversity Board**

Members of the board are the rectors of all the universities and the elected representatives (one full professor from each university); in chronological order of the year of establishment, the rector of one university serves as the board's chairman for one calendar year. The Board coordinates interuniversity academic activities and sets down educational standards. The Board makes general regulations and principles related to research activities, publications, higher degrees, equivalence of titles and degrees earned abroad, academic procedures for the promotion of senior faculty members. The Board also elects seven of the Higher Education Council's twenty-four member.

### **2.5. Rectors' Committee**

The Rectors' Committee of Turkish Universities is an advisory administrative body for the Higher Education Council and the Interuniversity Board, has no executive function. The rectors currently in office, and five former rectors, are the members of the Committee; the

president of the Higher Education Council serves ex officio as chairman of the Committee.

## **2.6. General Secretariat**

Responsible to carry out all the bureaucratic works, related to the Higher Education Council's activities through its eight administrative units. Among them is the Documentation Center.

### **2.6.1. Documentation Center**

The Higher Education Council established its Documentation Center in 1983 to support the research and meet the current publications needs of the teaching staff in universities. The Center acquires 8.000 major scientific and technical journals and other materials annually published in Western and other countries. To keep abreast with recent developments taking place in several fields of research in the world it maintains online connections with well-known information banks such as DIALOG, BRS and DIMDI. All Turkish universities have online access to the Center through a network named TUVAKA. EARN is another channel of communication for researchers.

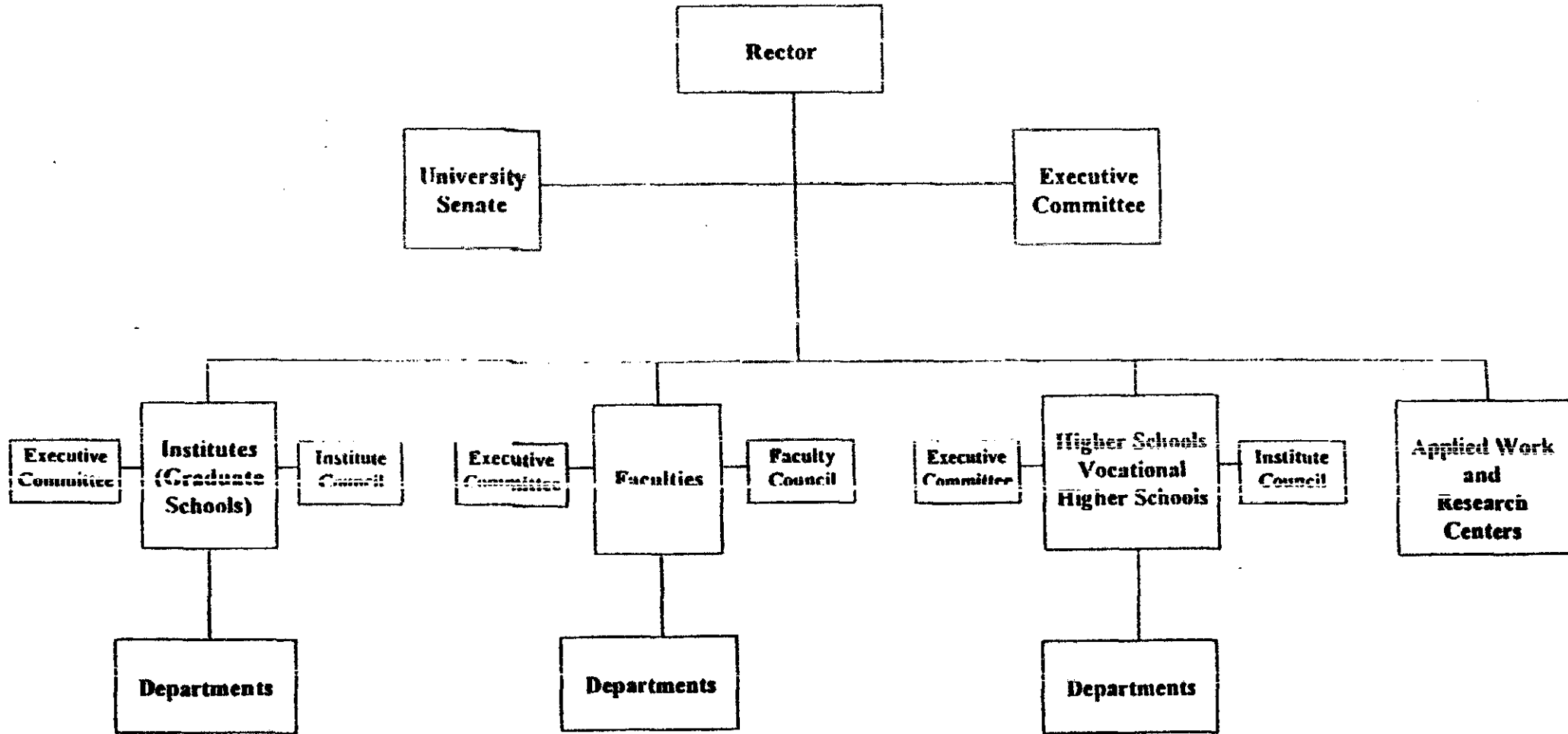
Aside from those services mentioned, the Center has the responsibility for collecting dissertations and theses prepared in Turkish universities. The computerized database contains dissertations dating from 1987.

Researchers have access to the services provided by the Center via telephone, mail, fax, E-mail, and online.

## **3. STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSITIES**

Academically each university is made up of faculties, institutes, vocational schools for higher learning and research centers. For the organizational structure of the universities see Figure A-2.

Figure A-2  
Structure of the Universities



### **3.1. Faculties**

Faculties consist of departments and sub-departments. The head of the faculty is the dean. Each department has a chairman appointed by the rector upon the proposal of the dean of the faculty.

### **3.2. Institutes**

The institutes are concerned only with research and graduate studies. All the institutes whether primarily concerned with the coordination and organization of graduate courses or only research work are directly affiliated with the office of the rector, and the directors of these institutes are appointed by the rector. The institutes for graduate studies are of three kinds, social sciences, health sciences, and basic sciences, each of which is responsible for one group of courses. For instance, the institute of social sciences coordinates all the graduate studies in the humanities, social sciences, economic and administrative sciences; including law, education, political sciences, and divinity. Likewise, the institute of medical sciences is in charge of the graduate studies concerning medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and veterinary sciences. In addition to these three major institutes, there are also other research institutes in the universities, which specialize in a certain field of study and may, in cooperation with the principal institutes, offer graduate courses.

### **3.3. Higher Schools and Vocational Higher Schools**

Higher Schools and vocational Higher Schools offer educational opportunity in various professions. Vocational higher schools and higher schools are of two kinds; in addition to those schools with a four-year course of study, there are also those with a two-year course of study for the training of ancillary manpower.

The annual enrollment of students into institutions of higher education is planned and ultimately determined by the Council; in doing so, the Council takes into consideration the manpower needs of the country in careers, the physical and staff capacity of higher education institutions, budgetary resources, and similar other criteria. Moreover, it consults the

universities themselves, and reviews the admission numbers proposed by them.

#### **4. UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION**

##### **4.1. Rector**

The academic and executive head of the university is the rector. He is appointed for a term of four years by the President of the Republic from among the three candidates nominated by the Higher Education Council, depending upon the elections carried out in each university. Upon the expiration of his term of office, he may be re-appointed through the same procedures. Among his responsibilities are to represent the university on all occasions, preside over the senate and the university executive committee implement and fulfill the resolutions of the governing bodies; ratify the decisions and proposals made by the governing bodies of the University, ensure full cooperation among the affiliated institutions of the university, ratify the by-laws and statutes passed by the senate; report to the Higher Education Council on the university's performance as regards teaching, research, publications, and other academic matter; prepare, and propose to, the Higher Education Council the capital investment plans, budget and personnel needs of the university; make proposals to the Higher Education Council for the appointment of the university's faculty deans, and finally carry out any other duties stated in the Higher Education Law. In fulfilling his duties, the rector is assisted by three vice-rectors, chosen and appointed by him from among the full professors of the university.

##### **4.2. Senate of the University**

With the exception of foundation universities, which are governed by a board of trustees, all the state universities have the same administrative structure. At the university level, there are two central governing bodies, which are the senate and the university executive committee. The senate, presided over by the rector, consists of vice-rectors, faculty deans, directors of schools and institutes, and a senior member (usually a full professor) from each faculty, who is elected by his faculty board for a term of three years. The senate deals with academic matters and procedures concerning the curricula, research activities,

publications, the academic calendar, the conferring of honorary degrees, and the appointment of the members of the university administrative committee. The senate also has the power to prepare draft laws and by-laws concerning the university as a whole.

#### **4.3. Executive Committee of the University**

The Executive Committee of the University is mainly an executive body concerned with general administration. The implementation of the senate's decisions, the enforcement of the statutes and by-law, the management of the budget, and various other administrative matters are among its major concerns. The rector presides over the committee and its members are faculty deans and three full professors elected by the senate.

#### **4.4. General Secretary**

Each university has a general secretary who is appointed by the rector. The secretary serves as the head of the administrative services.

### **5. FACULTY ADMINISTRATION**

#### **5.1. Dean**

The academic and executive head of the faculty is the dean. In fulfilling his duties, the dean is assisted by two vice-deans elected and appointed by him.

#### **5.2. Faculty Board**

The faculties also have their own governing bodies, which are the faculty board and the faculty executive committee. The faculty board is presided over by the dean, and it is mainly concerned with the academic matters of the faculty. The chairmen of the departments, the directors of schools affiliated, three full professors elected for a term of three years by the professors of the Faculty from among themselves; two associate professors and one assistant professor, all of whom are elected in the same manner and for the same term.

### **5.3. Executive Committee**

The executive committee, also presided over by the dean, consists of three full professors, two associate professors, and one assistant professor, all of whom are elected by the Faculty Board for a period of three years. Among its responsibilities are the implementation of the resolutions passed by the faculty board, budget proposals and capital investment plans, matters concerning the students and the staff, the implementation of academic plans and programs, and any other administrative matter concerning the faculty. Similarly, schools and institutes have their own governing bodies which take care of internal administrative and academic matters.

### **5.4. Secretary**

The Faculty secretary serves as the head of the administrative services.

## **6. TEACHING STAFF**

According to the provisions of the Higher Education Law, full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, and the ancillary staff (research assistants, translators, educational planners) are all designated as teaching staff.

The senior teaching staff (full, associate, and assistant professors) are mainly concerned with teaching and applied work at undergraduate and graduate levels and for project preparation and seminars, in addition to undertaking scientific research and original publication. It is also their duty to set aside certain hours for the advising and the guidance of students. They may also have administrative duties within their own higher education units.

The title, **assistant professor**, may be granted to those who have acquired a doctoral degree, or specialist status in medicine, or proficiency in the fine arts, and who have passed the required foreign language examination.

Those who have gained a doctoral degree or specialist status in medicine or proficiency in the fine arts, who have undertaken original scientific research and publication, and who have passed a foreign language examination. Successful candidates then become associate professors. Evaluation of the works of the candidates and the subject-matter examinations are conducted by academic juries established by the Interuniversity Board. Those who have worked in their own field for at least five years after receiving the title of associate professor, who have done work of practical application, and have published research which is judged as being of an international standard, may be promoted to full professorship.

In the event of there being no appointed senior teaching staff for a particular course program or in cases in which special knowledge and expertise are needed for certain parts of course program, instructors are appointed to give lectures and to supervise practical studies.

**Lecturers** are those staff members who teach the common compulsory courses (Turkish language, a foreign language, and the history of Turkish reform, physical education and fine arts)

**Research assistants** are ancillary staff members who work in specific areas of research and experimental studies.

**Specialists** are ancillary staff members who carry out duties related to instruction such as assisting in laboratory work or in libraries where special skills and specialized knowledge are required.

**Educational planners** are ancillary staff members who are responsible for the planning of educational activities at institutions of higher education.

**Translators** are ancillary staff members employed to undertake written translation and oral interpreting.

Teaching staff members are employed either on a full time, or a Part-time basis. The teaching load for full-time professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, is at least ten hours a week. The teaching load for instructors and lecturers working full-time is at least twelve hours a week. Rectors, deans, and directors of institutes and schools of higher education are exempt from the requirement of the weekly teaching load.



## **6.1. Appointment and Assignment of Teaching Staff**

The appointment procedures for senior staff (full, associate, and assistant professors) are as follows. Assistant professors are appointed by the rectors of universities from among the candidates applying for vacant positions, taking into consideration the recommendations of academic juries who evaluate the academic work of the applicants.

Assistant professors can be employed in the same university for a maximum of 12 years on two- or three-year contracts. Thus, assistant professors can never be tenured at that status and may be dismissed at the end of each and any contract period. Associate professors are appointed in the same way; however, they have tenured status.

Full professors are appointed by the Executive Committee of the University to vacant positions in various departments. In making these appointments the Executive Committee takes primarily into consideration for the applicants the reports of the academic juries which consist of 5 full professors. It also takes into consideration the preferences of the applicants. The procedures of the appointment of the selected participant is made by the Rector. Full professors have tenured status.

## **6.2. Staff Training and Development**

The training of teaching staff has a vital importance. According to the Higher Education Law (art.35) higher education institutions themselves are responsible for the training of their academic staff, both at home and abroad, in order to meet their own needs and those of other higher education institutions, either newly established or yet to be established. In recent years, the H.E.C. and Universities have focused their attention on graduate study programs, since these are the first step in the training of staff. Thus the need for more qualified academic staff members has paved the way for the re-organization of graduate study programs.

Other forms of training which provide the members of teaching staff with up-to-date knowledge in their respective fields are the seminars, meetings, workshops, conferences, and congresses which are held at national and/or international level. This form of training helps to refresh already acquired knowledge and experience.

### **6.3. Research Requirement for Teaching Staff Members**

The criteria for the promotion of teaching staff members (particularly to professorial and associate professorial level) constitute a further measure of the encouragement given to research activities. For instance, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Law, only those who have undertaken original research and have had work published can be granted the title of associate professor, and only those whose practical work and published research is accounted original by international standards can be promoted to full professorial title.

## **7. UNIVERSITY BUDGET AND REVOLVING FUNDS**

### **7.1. University Budget**

Although the Higher Education Council was established at the end of 1981 and became fully operative thereafter, it was only in 1983 that the higher education budget was separated from the general budget of the Ministry of National Education and that the Higher Education Council as the autonomous authority on higher education began to coordinate university budgets.

For the universities and their affiliated institutions, the main source of income is the State subsidy allocated for each fiscal year by the Parliament, based on the budget proposals which the Higher Education Council submits through the Council of Ministers for a lump sum, by taking into consideration the individual budget proposals of the universities themselves. The budget thus allocated for each university mainly consists of two parts, which are infrastructure investments and recurrent expenditures. Infrastructure investments are coordinated by the State Planning Organization, and it is upon the initial approval of this agency that allocations are made for infrastructure investments.

## **7.2. Revolving Funds**

Besides the annual State subsidy, which makes up the total of major infrastructure investments and recurrent expenditures, the universities have the opportunity to create for themselves extra-budgetary sources of income, which in general are contracts, research projects, consulting and health services, and semi-industrial operations such as, for example, dairy farms, fisheries, agricultural produce, printing, and computer services.

All the income from these sources is channeled into the revolving funds which are set up by the universities or their affiliated institutions individually. The management and utilization of these funds are regulated and controlled by the universities themselves within the framework of special revolving-fund by-laws made by the universities or their affiliated institutions and ratified by the Higher Education Council. Since each revolving fund is independent of other revolving funds in a university, the data concerning balance sheets are kept by the office of the revolving fund concerned, for inspection by the State Court of Accounting.

These funds which are not part of the budget allocations made to the universities, are controlled by the universities themselves; they are used to finance various university services, research projects, study trips and expeditions, purchase of laboratory and teaching equipment, and improvement and maintenance of university facilities.

## **8. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **8.1. Administrative Autonomy**

Thus, within the framework of the Higher Education Law and also of the general statutes of each university, a certain degree of administrative autonomy is enjoyed by all the sections of the universities. Of course, above all of this is the full and ever unrestricted enjoyment of academic autonomy. Yet, to safeguard autonomy against its abuse as a means of apathy and irresponsibility, the system is based on the principle of hierarchical accountability; accordingly, every administrator is answerable to his immediate superior, and each year every faculty member

submits to his/her faculty board a detailed report on his/her academic work.

## **8.2. Requirements for Admission**

All the Universities, state and foundation alike, make their admissions through the student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM), which is an interuniversity organization directly affiliated with the Higher Education Council, so that the Faculties admit high-school graduates who are qualified by this general entrance examination. The selection and placement examinations are administered at two stages for all Turkish high-school graduates. The first stage, held in the first half of April, seeks to measure the candidates' abilities in verbal and quantitative reasoning. Those selected are admitted to take the placement examination which aims to measure basic knowledge gained in social and basic science courses; such as Turkish language, history, geography, physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology and foreign language (English, German or French).

The main objective of the examination is to measure the candidates' learning ability, as well as basic knowledge in social and basic science courses, using Turkish and/or English as the test medium.

The selection and placement of foreign students in institutions of higher education in Turkey is carried out through the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) on the basis of the results of the Examination for Foreign Students (YÖS).

The general selection examination for foreign students is usually held in June at various centers both in Turkey and abroad.

## **8.3. Documents Required For Registration**

For a student to enter as an undergraduate, he or she must be qualified by scoring in the University Entrance Examination at least the number of marks required by the relevant department, and must hold the following documents:

1. High-school (lycee) or equivalent school diploma (Diplomas issued by foreign schools must be approved for equivalence by the Board of Education-Ministry of National Education ).

2. birth certificate (passport or residence permit for foreign students).

3. health report (from a university or other state hospital).

4. student visa (for foreign students).

5. receipt for fees paid (all students are required to pay tuition fees. The amounts are determined by the Higher Education Council at the beginning of each year. The tuitions fees are minimum and symbolic and cannot be compared with tuition and fees charged by American or other Western universities).

6. twelve passport-size recent photographs.

7. admission and registration are performed by the University Registrar's Office.

#### **8.4. Transfer From Other Universities**

Students wishing to transfer from one institution to the others are accepted on the following basis:

1. There must be a vacancy in the appropriate class.

2. The student must have fulfilled the prerequisites of that class.

3. The students' academic performance must be satisfactory as judged by the faculty.

4. The student must have a satisfactory command of Turkish (for foreign students)

5. The Executive Committee must approve the transfer.

#### **8.5. Degrees and Diplomas**

##### **8.5.1. Degrees**

a) **Bachelor's Degree:** Awarded to faculty graduates, upon the completion of a minimum four-year prescribed course of study. In medical

faculties the prescribed course of study is six years. In faculties of dentistry and veterinary are five years.

**b) Master's Degree:** The applicant for admission to a graduate course of study for the Master's Degree must hold a valid Bachelor's Degree and pass a qualification examination. The normal length of course is two years, followed by a thesis and a viva voce examination before a jury of three. For admission and/or a part of the course of study, the universities may require additional qualifications and prescribe extra work and examinations.

**c. Doctoral Degree:** The applicant for admission to a graduate course of study for the Doctoral Degree must hold a valid Master's Degree, and pass a qualification examination. The normal length of course is two years, during which the candidate takes the graduate courses required for his/her field of study; thus, the qualification completes the required credits. Upon the completion of this preliminary course of study, the candidate is required to pass a Doctoral proficiency examination held before a jury of five senior faculty members. The successful candidate is then required to write a thesis based on research and making an important and original contribution to science. He/she carries out the research and the thesis under the supervision of a senior faculty member; the thesis is ultimately followed by a viva voce examination before a jury of five, including the supervisor of the candidate.

### **8.5.2. Diplomas**

**a) Pre-Baccalaureate Diploma:** Awarded to those students who, though enrolled in a four-year course of study, do not wish to pursue their studies after the second year in the university. Yet they must have completed all the requirements of the first two years in order to receive this diploma.

**b. Vocational Higher School Diploma:** Awarded to vocational Higher School graduates, upon the completion of a two-year prescribed course of study.

## **8.6. Language of Instruction**

In a great majority of the universities, Turkish is the language of instruction. However, in Middle East Technical University, Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University and Koç University, teach in English while Galatasaray University teaches in French. In some of the faculties and departments of other universities, instruction may be given fully in English, German or French.

## **8.7. Grading System**

Results of students' work are recorded in the Registrar's Office.

A minimum of one mid-term examination is obligatory for each course. The examination can be oral or written.

The lower limit of passing grades varies in each institution. Some institutions accept 50/100 as the lower limit some others count 60/100 as a lower limit for passing. The grading system in universities is:

Score	Rating
90-100	Excellent
80-89	Very good
70-79	Good
60-69	Fair
59-0	Fail

## **8.8. Attendance**

Course attendance is obligatory for every student. Those having more than 30% absences from lectures and more than 20% absences from laboratories are not permitted to take the final examination of that course. Absence due to unfortunate reasons and/or illnesses are excused by the Exucutive Council only if they are verified by a valid credential or medical report.

### **8.9. Tuition and Fees**

In Turkey; every native university student is required to pay a tuition fee which varies as regards the disciplines. Tuition fees, proposed by the Higher Education Council, are determined by the Council of Ministers. Foreign students pay in convertible currency five times more the amount required from Turkish students.

### **8.10. Academic Policy**

The academic policy of the universities is outlined in Higher Education Act 2547, published in the national official gazette on 6.11.1981. Universities must assist in the spiritual, intellectual and social development of the students.

Students are expected:

- to develop free and scientific thinking
- to respect human rights
- to possess love for their country and nation
- to acquire knowledge needed for the development of the country.

## **9. STUDENT SERVICES**

### **9.1. Student Representation and Counselling**

Students and administrative employees are not represented on any committee and play no active role in the decision-making process of the university. However, by petition they can always bring to the attention of the administrator or governing body concerned any matter or problem related to them. Enrollment and other student affairs are the responsibility of the Registrar's Office, and every department appoints from among its own faculty members an adviser for each class to counsel the students on academic and statutory matters.



## **9.2. Scholarships, Awards and Loans**

To help university students meet the costs of their education, the government, and private organizations provide financial aid in the form of loans, scholarships, grants, and awards.

Many students benefit from student loans given by the Ministry of National Education, on a monthly basis. The amount is increased every year depending on the inflation rate. Those students who get loans are urged to pay back the loan as soon as they start working after graduation.

Some scholarships are offered by the Ministries private foundations and individuals. The requirements for these scholarships are:

- outstanding academic performance,
- need,
- good character.

The constitution states that "the State shall provide scholarships and other means of assistance to enable students of merit lacking financial means to continue their education".

The State organization which provides most of the loans for those who are in need of financial assistance is the General Directorate of the Higher Education Credit and Hostels Organization (YURTKUR) which was established in 1961. In recent years, YURTKUR, which is under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education, provided loans, to 240.000 students. These loans, which are interest free, do not burden students with any compulsory service after graduation. Students may also receive money in the form of scholarship loans from various public organizations and state owned enterprises on the condition that it will be paid back either in cash or in services. Some organizations, such as the Scientific and Technical Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK), offer free scholarships to outstanding students enrolled in programs in the basic and applied sciences.

### **9.3. Student Housing and Meals**

YURTKUR, the student credit organization mentioned above, is the main provider of student housing. This organization manages student residence halls in most of the provinces and sub-provinces. The monthly rent charge is approximately 10 US dollars for students which includes free breakfast and the use of such facilities in the larger residence halls as restaurants, libraries, gymnasias, etc. In YURTKUR residence halls, five percent of the available residence is reserved for foreign students. Students staying in these residence halls may also take their meals in the residence hall restaurants for a nominal cost, less than one dollar per meal.

Those students who have the financial means and the desire to do so may rent apartments in the cities, but rents are generally high.

### **9.4. Other Subsidized Student Services**

Students may use the urban public transport systems (bus, ferry) for reduced fares by showing their student identification cards. During the academic terms, they may also have reduced fares on national public transport systems (i.e., the railways, 30 percent) and on the Turkish Airlines (50 percent on international flights); however, graduate students (master's degree and doctoral students) cannot benefit from the reduced airline fares. These discounts are also available to foreign students. In addition to the reduced fares on public transport systems; students, both Turkish and foreign, receive discounts for theatre, movie, museum, and concert tickets.

Students are provided with medical care facilities, medico-social centers having been set up in most of the universities. The Medical Centers which have been established in some of the universities also offer health services to students.

### **9.5. Sports and Cultural Facilities**

The higher education institutions themselves are responsible for the mental and physical health of their students. Sport facilities designed

to serve the purposes of a variety of sports, have either been or are about to be constructed in all the higher education institutions.

Facilities for music, cinema, theatre, folklore, photography, chess and other extra-curricular activities are also available in the higher education institutions for the recreation of students. Amateur clubs in these areas give students an opportunity to satisfy their cultural interests and to manifest their creative capacities.

## **BRIEF FACTS ON TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **Number of Institutions of Higher Learning:**

Universities	: 57
Faculties	: 422
Schools for Higher Learning	: 371
Institutes	: 110

### **Students (1994-1995 Academic year)**

Undergraduate : 1, 336, 952 (711, 271 of them are Open University students)

Graduate : 56, 912

### **Percentage of Schooling:**

When the 18-24 years of age group is taken into consideration the total rate of schooling is 23.2 as of 1994.

### **Teaching Staff**

Today there is a total 49,052 teaching staff in the country. Of these 16,035 are full professors, associate professors, and assistant professors. Student ratio to teaching staff is 37.9 in the universities.

### **Faculty Development**

The basic aim of the new system of governance of higher education in Turkey has been to expand the system throughout the country with increased access to the institutions of higher education in a rapidly developing country whose population is increasing at a high rate.

It is expected that student age population (ages between 18-24) will be more than 5 million by 2000. If the student number is increased by about 30 percent student population will reach nearly one and a half million.

This means that Turkey must provide around 33.000 faculty members by then, doubling the current figure of 16.035. To meet this evergrowing need, especially of the new universities, the Government of Turkey has expanded its graudate scholarship program in order to send approximately 7500 graduate students abroad over a period of five years.

For administrative purposes this program is divided into three categories, two of which are administered by the Higher Education Council and the other by the Ministry of Education. The actual number of scholarships allotted to each of the three categories is determined annually by the Government based on budgetary considerations.

Between 1987-1992 a total of 1410 graduate students were sent abroad. This represents an average of 200 students per year. During the last two years (1992-1994) there has been six times increase in this number, namely 1200 per year.

Parallel to this development it was necessary to increase the quality of graduate students many of whom would be trained to become faculty members. For this purpose graduate programs were revised and their standards were raised. Credit requirement were increased from 12 to 24 credits for the master degree and another 24 credit hours for Ph.D. degree before starting thesis work.

### **Research in Turkey**

According to the statistics by the Institute for Scientific Information in Philadelphia, Turkey was rated 44 in scientific research between 1981-1986 in the world. This figure rose to 37 in 1994. The role of Turkish universities was significant in this achievement. Indeed, Turkey was among the third of the ten countries in the world which increased her scientific and technical publications by more than 62 percent annually. The number of publications increased three times in 1993 compared with that of 1986. The figure was only 520 in 1986 but rose to 1950 in 1993.

## **Higher Education Development Projects**

The development in technology has been influencing the higher education in Turkey. In order to meet the need for teaching and training equipment and to raise the quality of education in universities the Higher Education Council obtained foreign loan credits for three projects. These are:

1. The project for Science and Engineering Faculties: To re-equip undergraduate laboratories of faculties of science and engineering, a project of 66.7 million pound sterlings is undertaken. This loan from British sources is being used to standardize all the laboratories of 33 universities and it will be completed in 1995.

2. World Bank Industrial Training Project : One of the main objectives of this project is to reduce the shortage of skilled technicians in industry, strengthen the institutional capacity, and further develop technical vocational training. The cost of the project is 160 million US dollars. Within the scope of this project completely new curricula have been developed, all laboratories have been equipped with high technology equipment and 750 teaching staff member have been trained in U.S.A and U.K.

3. National Education Development Project: This project involves curriculum development in the faculties of education, staff training, fellowships and procurement of educational materials, teaching aids and equipment. Fellowships offered to Turkish personnel are for masters, Ph.D. and postdoctoral studies. A fellowship program is seen as an excellent way of cooperation between Turkish and overseas institutions in terms of joint projects and long term relations. Through this program 375 scholars will be sent to U.S.A. and U.K. 23.1 million U.S. dollars of World Bank credit has been obtained for this purpose. 8.3 million dollars of this amount will be allotted for equipment and the rest for training. This project will continue for three more years.