

The Consolidation of a Semi-Formal Welfare Regime in Turkey

Nihan Toprakkıran

PhD

University of York

Politics

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Abstract

Welfare reform in middle income countries, where formal institutions conventionally have an exclusionary character and informal institutions are central to social welfare, has been marked by a drastic rise of means-tested social assistance schemes. This dissertation analyses, with an empirical focus on Turkey, the potential of these schemes to expand social rights by creating new formal entitlements for previously excluded groups. The number and the scope of social assistance schemes in Turkey have shown a remarkable increase, especially after the 2001 economic crisis, accompanied by significant institutionalisation. Yet, we argue that whilst social assistance has grown distinctively and become an integral part of the emerging welfare regime, certain characteristics of the previous regime were ultimately reproduced within new institutions due to the content of current schemes and the institutional structure of implementation. These include the association of mainstream welfare institutions with social insurance, the ambiguous role of the state towards the excluded parts of the society, the reliance on family relations and informal employment, and the prevalence of paternalist or clientelist motivations. Consequently, the potential of social assistance to extend formalised rights to the entire population was undermined, and the outcome has been the consolidation of a semi-formal welfare regime.

To substantiate this argument, the dissertation develops a historical institutionalist framework and examines the elements of institutional change and continuity as well as the processes of change. Our three empirical chapters then focus on the development of legal, organisational, ideational and political bases of social assistance; trends in policy outcomes from the perspectives of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation; and the functioning of social assistance through semi-autonomous foundations at the local level. Empirically, we build our argument on a comprehensive evidence base including a wide range of policy documents and qualitative interviews. Theoretically, we discuss the implications of our findings for the literatures on welfare regimes and institutionalism, stressing the importance of implementation structures, the co-existence of institutional change and continuity, and the suggestion of a semi-formal regime type.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work. I am the sole author and all sources have been acknowledged where reference is made to the work of others. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Recent years have seen considerable welfare reforms in Turkey, as in many other parts of the world. While most advanced industrialised countries tried to implement cuts in their social spending and faced resistance from various social groups, the dynamics of reform have been different in middle income countries, such as Turkey, that are still in the process of building up comprehensive welfare institutions. In the latter group, where the contributory systems are limited and exclusionary, universal safety nets are absent and social welfare is heavily reliant on informal institutions, one of the most significant transformations has been the rise of social assistance, which is non-contributory but usually means-tested and targeted at the poor. Starting from the idea that social assistance has a potential to make the existing welfare regimes more inclusive in this context, this thesis seeks to assess the right-expanding capacity of rising social assistance schemes in the Turkish case. In doing so, it also traces the development of the Turkish welfare regime by focusing on the elements of institutional change and continuity embodied by the expansion of social assistance.

The current global environment, where welfare reforms in both advanced industrialised and middle income countries are unfolding, is characterised by growing economic pressures on the states and, concomitantly, a broad trend of liberalisation. Hence, the popularity of selective policies, such as social assistance, and the increasing role of private actors in welfare provision, including the area of assistance, are now common features of welfare policy in countries belonging to both groups. However, the differences in their institutional backgrounds mean that these common features do not necessarily have the same implications for the trajectory of their overall welfare regimes. In the case of middle income countries, prevailing regimes can be broadly categorised under ‘informal security regimes’ based on the centrality of informal relations to social welfare in contrast to the rather formalised ‘welfare state

regimes' of the West (Gough, 2004; Wood and Gough, 2006). We therefore maintain that the transformative potential of social assistance in the sense of furthering social rights in such regimes comes from the possibility of extending formal welfare institutions to the previously excluded groups. Moreover, cooperation with private actors may play an enabling role if the state is not able to expand welfare provisions otherwise.

It is important to note here that we follow a dynamic regime approach, which focuses on the change of welfare institutions as a whole over time. It is a corollary of this approach that, while the ideal of social rights may well be associated with citizenship rights and universalism, policies which are not directly in line with these ideals themselves, such as social assistance, can still move the overall regime towards that direction. The existing literature on welfare policy and regimes, dominated by the study of advanced industrialised countries, does not usually attach to social assistance any quality of social rights. For instance, in the widely accepted classifications of Western welfare regimes based on Esping Andersen's original typology (1990), means-tested schemes are conventionally associated with the liberal type, in which they constitute a residual safety net for the poor who are encouraged to return to market-based provision as soon as possible. However, in middle income countries, the existence of a high degree of labour market informality and the limitation of contributory social security to those in the formal labour market means that social assistance becomes a much more integral part of the welfare regime and plays a central role for social welfare rather being an exception to the norm. Similarly, the increasing reliance on private actors in Western welfare regimes, as characteristic of the liberal type, is considered as a limitation for social rights, but if this leads the state to take on more responsibility towards new groups, their role in middle income countries would be different.

In the comparative regime framework, middle income countries indeed bear more resemblance to the Bismarkian/conservative type marked by the primacy of work-related status differences in the system of social security and the role of family as a welfare provider. Moreover, welfare regimes in middle income countries are based on a fundamental distinction between those who have access to contributory provisions and those who do not, which is increasingly echoed by advanced industrialised countries in general and those from the Bismarkian type in particular.

As the latter have experienced a rise in atypical and informal work due the process of deindustrialisation, the appeal of social assistance as a policy measure has increased; however, there is a key difference which lies in the direction of change. While developments in established welfare states are mostly about the retrenchment of already comprehensive social rights through the use of social assistance as a substitute for more inclusive policies, in middle income countries the expansion of social assistance occurs in a context where a significant part of the society has never been included in formal welfare institutions nor had access to substantive social rights.

In addition to these differences in institutional configurations and trajectories, the historical development of Western welfare states also indicates that drawing a link between social assistance and social rights is not as counterintuitive as it may seem at the first instance. Some significant examples from this historical process aptly illustrate the use of selective policies or the involvement of private actors in ways that ultimately enhance social rights. For instance, the consolidation of universal safety nets in Southern Europe, especially in Spain and Italy, happened thanks to the expansion of selective policies starting with 1980, as these helped to fill the gaps of protection prevalent in the previous regimes through a process of ‘targeting in’ (Ferrera, 2000; 2005). On a different note, in Scandinavian countries such as Sweden and Denmark, historical roots of social insurance were private and its functioning relied on trade unions, with expanding legislation and state enactment as a universal right in the later periods of welfare state development especially after the World War II (Edebalk, 2000; Esping-Andersen and Korpi, 1986). Moreover, welfare policies can always evolve in unexpected directions in the long run, such as the Bismarkian social insurance that was originally intended as a limited measure to contain labour movements but came to lay the foundations of a comprehensive right-based system later. In a similar perspective, the emergence of social assistance as a limited poverty alleviation tool does not necessarily prevent the expansion of their scope throughout the following process.

There are indeed some examples in the literature that discuss social assistance in middle income country contexts as a potentially progressive development. For instance, based on a cross-country study, it has been demonstrated that low-income targeting in developing countries is positively associated with the extent and homogeneity of welfare provisions because existing benefits in these countries tended

to favour high-income groups (Brady and Bostic, 2013). Social assistance has also been discussed in terms of whether it can further social citizenship rights (Davis, 2001; Leisering and Barrientos, 2013) or be a gradual way of adopting basic income (Lo Vuolo, 2013), and whether new policies in emerging economies can constitute good examples for low income countries (UNRISD, 2014). At the same time, the potential contribution of non-state providers to the enhancement of access to social welfare has been examined (Cammett and MacLean, 2014a). What becomes clear in view of this literature is that, alongside opportunities, the progressive use of social assistance and cooperation with private actors in middle income countries is still riddled with challenges, with their impact on the development of welfare regimes and social rights ultimately depending on the specificities of their institutionalisation. Therefore, just as there is now a large consensus about the need to look into the 'content of welfare states' in studies on advanced industrialised countries (Esping Andersen, 1990 p.20), we also need to empirically analyse specific social assistance schemes in different cases.

Research on social assistance in established Western welfare states indicates that social assistance schemes differ from one another along complex and multiple dimensions such as coverage, generosity, programme structure, degree of categorisation and conditionality; and play distinct roles within national social protection packages (Gough et al., 1997; Saraceno, 2002). Similar variation in terms of both the design and implementation of schemes, and their integration with broader objectives than immediate income transfers is also shown to be significant in newly rising social assistance schemes in a range of developing countries from Latin America to Asia (Barrientos, 2013; UNRISD, 2014). With regard to the role of private actors, there are again important differences between different types of providers and their relationships with the state (Cammett and MacLean, 2014b), and even NGOs (non-governmental organisations) as a type of private provider take many different forms according to the context, culture and institutions (Lewis, 2013). This variation would naturally have implications for the right-expanding potential of developments in this area.

This dissertation takes Turkey as a middle income country that has both conventionally displayed the characteristics of informal security regimes and recently experienced a drastic expansion in social assistance schemes, implemented through an

organisational structure including public as well as private actors, and raises the question about the right-expanding potential of social assistance in this particular empirical case. Turkey provides a suitable case for addressing this question because the rise of social assistance has largely occurred in the aftermath of a major economic crisis in 2001, which allows us to specify a clear turning point. The following years have seen the entrenchment of neoliberalism and increasing privatisation in the country together with the continuing expansion of social assistance, and economic and political stability in this period makes it possible to trace developments in welfare policy by isolating some potentially confounding factors. While we are primarily interested in assessing the extent to which social assistance schemes, in the way they are institutionalised in Turkey, transform the existing informal security regime, we also expect to generate relevant insights for similar countries. These include middle income countries, especially in the upper-middle income group, such as Brazil, Mexico, South Africa or Thailand, and also some countries which are currently in the high income group but share a similar history of late development, such as Chile or Korea.

Expanding social assistance schemes in these countries range from conditional cash transfers attached to education and health conditionalities (*Bolsa Familia* in Brazil, *Oportunidades* -now renamed *Prospera*- in Mexico), through public work programmes (Expanded Public Works Programme in South Africa, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India) to non-contributory pensions (*Pensión Básica Solidario* in Chile, Old Age Pension in Botswana) and child allowances (*Asignación Universal por Hijo* in Argentina). The implementation of such schemes predominantly relies on government authorities at different levels and municipalities but sometimes also involves different non-state actors and NGOs (For examples, see Barrientos, 2013; Barrientos and Santibáñez, 2009a). The NGOs are especially active in contexts where overseas development assistance is used (Lewis, 2013). In Turkey, there is a wide range of schemes in place, rather than one flagship programme, which include not only conditional cash transfers, non-contributory pensions and employment-oriented assistance but also regular schemes for other groups such as the disabled, the widow and the orphan. These schemes are publicly funded, and their implementation is carried out through a peculiar organisational structure that comprises of semi-autonomous foundations which have a similar legal status to NGOs

but still work under a specialised state ministry and with the involvement of public officials at the local level.

The use of social assistance to improve access to social rights and to expand the risk coverage is a common challenge for many middle income countries today, just as the institutionalisation of social assistance, which can be defined as the consolidation of the legal and administrative status of relevant schemes, transparent budgetary rules and coordination mechanisms among different agencies and programmes (Barrientos, 2013 p.141). In Turkey, which is going through such a process, the number and scope of social assistance schemes have grown significantly since 2001; however, it is difficult to say that the emerging regime has yet come to embody formally institutionalised rights of an encompassing and integrated nature. Hence, our research question can be formulated as follows: Why did a significant expansion of formal welfare institutions through social assistance in Turkey could not effectively transform the previous informal security regime? More specifically, how do the general challenges which are facing middle income countries play out in Turkey? Does the current organisational structure create additional challenges for the development of social rights? Finally, what are the implications on the trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime?

By empirically analysing the process of development of social assistance, policy outcomes and the on-the-ground functioning of current schemes, we will argue that the association of mainstream welfare institutions with contributory social insurance, the indirectness of the responsibility of the state in enacting rights for those who are excluded from the contributory system, and the reliance of welfare on informal institutions such as informal labour market and the role of family were reproduced through the features of certain schemes and the general institutionalisation of social assistance in Turkey. Consequently, the growth of the system of social assistance as a formal welfare institution did not move the informal security regime in a more formalised direction, but paradoxically came to incorporate aspects of informality within new formal institutions, hence consolidating a semi-formal regime. We will also show that the understanding of rights that underlies the Turkish welfare regime and the logic of social assistance focused on helping the ‘deserving poor’ as well as top-down ways of policy-making were largely sustained despite important changes at the policy level.

Before moving on to an overview of the dissertation, we should note here that while we broadly refer to social assistance in Turkey, the empirical analysis offered in this dissertation is based on a particular group of schemes, namely those which are currently under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, and implemented by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations. As social assistance remains quite diverse and fragmented despite increasing coordination, these schemes are only part of the whole picture. For example, municipalities are among social assistance providers in several places, but there is no legal responsibility for welfare provision on their part; therefore, their role is extremely unsystematic and solely depends on the discretion of each municipality. On the contrary, centrally coordinated schemes are taken as the most likely ones to realise the transformative potential of social assistance in Turkey because they constitute the widest source of assistance for those in need, and more importantly, they embody the most significant attempt of systematising social assistance and investing the state with an enacting role. In this regard, they have been chosen as an accurate case study within Turkey and the detailed empirical work has been carried on in relation to them, while broader provisions in the area of social assistance are still referred to when relevant, especially in the discussion of the historical background of welfare institutions in Turkey.

In this regard, Chapter 2 below reviews the literature on social rights and welfare regimes in advanced industrialised and middle income countries with a view to justifying the potentially transformative role attached to social assistance in the latter as the starting point of this dissertation. To do so, it first conceptualises the aim of social rights as inclusion in mainstream institutions, and then comparatively analyses the development of welfare institutions in these two groups of countries. The focus in terms of the historical processes is on distinct experiences of industrialisation and democratisation while the examination of recent trends indicates the rise of selective policies and private actors within different welfare mixes as commonalities. Yet, as the chapter demonstrates, institutional characteristics of informal security regimes in middle income countries mean that the implications of these trends cannot be assumed to be the same as in the West, where they are usually seen as part of welfare state retrenchment. Based on the reviewed literature, the chapter finally suggests decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation

as the criteria for assessing the right-expanding potential of social assistance in empirical cases.

Chapter 3 explores the theoretical and methodological framework that will be used in the analysis of social assistance in the Turkish case. Relying on historical institutionalism, the suggested theoretical framework uses the concepts of path dependence, critical juncture and layering, and scrutinises different types of institutions in order to explain the institutional trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime in relation to the expansion of social assistance. In these terms, it is argued that despite the differential growth of social assistance schemes over other welfare institutions, which may seem like a good example of institutional change through layering at the first instance, paying attention to the content and functioning of preceding informal institutions and new social assistance policies allows us to discover important elements of continuity in the welfare regime. In terms of methodology, the adopted framework is based on process tracing, and uses multiple data sources including a range of policy documents and semi-structured interviews with policy-makers, implementers at the local level, politicians and civil actors. As the chapter explains, these data sources are examined by employing different types of content analysis in the empirical chapters of the dissertation.

Chapter 4 looks at the historical development of welfare provision in Turkey as a background to the discussion of institutional change and continuities embodied by social assistance in 2000s. This chapter distinguishes three periods according to processes of economic and political development and their implications on welfare provision, namely the early republican years and the transition to multi-party politics from 1923 to 1960, the ISI era between two military coups in 1960 and 1980, and the economic liberalisation after 1980 up until 2001. Each period is examined first with regard to the economic and political context, and then the developments in the area of welfare, paying special attention to informal as well as formal institutions. Overall, the chapter highlights the exclusionary nature of contribution-based provisions, the indirect and ambiguous role of the state towards the excluded parts of the society, and the reliance of the regime on informal institutions as three general traits which were present in all three historical periods albeit in different ways. Informal institutions that are underlined include informal employment, expectations from family and community relations, and the prevalence of paternalist and clientelist motivations

underlying public provisions. Finally, the chapter briefly outlines the post-2001 context as a basis for the empirical analysis to follow.

Chapter 5 traces the developments in the area of social assistance by looking at the history of relevant institutions and organisations as well as the role of different actors in more recent processes. The particularities of these processes are deemed important not only because they are useful for the explanation of the institutional trajectory but also because they are expected to have an impact on the nature of emerging social rights and the welfare regime. This chapter is organised around the analysis of organisational, legal, ideational, and political foundations of social assistance. More specifically, we discuss how the rise of social assistance in the form of short-term emergency relief in a critical juncture then shaped organisational and legal developments, norms and motives of actors and political identifications in the following period in line with the dynamics of institutional path dependence. As the chapter underlines, even though social assistance schemes continued to grow significantly in this period, the fragmentation of the system, the logic of ‘granting help’ to the ‘deserving poor’ and the top-down ways of policy-making remained, which embodied some degree of paternalist and clientelist motivations, and undermined the transformative potential of social assistance to an important extent.

Having scrutinised the process of expansion in Chapter 5, we move on to the content of expanding social assistance schemes in Chapter 6 and assess the extent to which they are able to transform the welfare regime from the angle of their outcomes. Hence, we analyse current schemes with a focus on changes in their coverage, procedures of entitlement, and generosity over time. While the first part of the chapter examines individual schemes one by one, the second part offers a more holistic assessment of the broader system of social assistance, and concomitantly, the direction of welfare regime change. The chapter demonstrates that trends in the coverage and generosity of individual schemes have been generally upwards, albeit less clearly in the generosity than in coverage. Procedures of entitlement show some degree of standardisation, but are still characterised by ambiguities, frequent revisions and technical differences among schemes. Building on these trends, the assessment of the overall system is based on the concepts of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation, as suggested in Chapter 2, and indicates a considerable increase in the decommodification capacity accompanied by persistent

gaps in coverage and, more importantly, a problematic performance from the three other perspectives.

Chapter 7, finally, analyses the on-the-ground functioning of social assistance schemes particularly in terms of the responsibility of the state for enacting social rights within the emerging welfare mix and the political implications of this. The current organisational structure, which constitutes one of the key sources of path dependence in the development of social assistance in Turkey, is based on an ambiguous definition of the boundary between the public and the private through the semi-autonomous SYDV foundations. At the moment, social assistance schemes are almost exclusively financed from public resources and increasingly coordinated by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, and decision-making processes within the foundations are largely dominated by public officials at the local level. Yet, the local foundations have private legal personality, retain the ultimate authority in the distribution of assistance to individual recipients and are not subject to public scrutiny for their decisions in this regard. Consequently, as the chapter shows, the expansion of social rights has been limited by the indirect nature of the responsibility of the state, accompanied by the consolidation of a distinction between the recipients of other mainstream provisions and the poor, and systemic opportunities for political manipulation and blame avoidance.

The last chapter concludes by summarising the development of the argument in the previous chapters of the dissertation. After a brief chapter-by-chapter summary, it highlights the specific aspects of the previous welfare regime in Turkey which have been reproduced, and sometimes reconfigured into new forms, through expanding social assistance policies. These are the exclusionary features of the preceding regime, that are now apparent in the form of a sharp duality between social insurance and social assistance; the indirectness of the responsibility of the state towards a significant part of the population, that previously relied on other channels such as agricultural policy and now broadly characterises social assistance; the role of informal institutions such as informal employment as a source of welfare and expectations from family in welfare provision, that are either recognised or actively promoted by new policies; and finally, the scope for paternalist and clientelist motivations to shape welfare provisions, that is both identified as a sustained systemic possibility and reflected in the views of involved actors. The chapter then closes with

the discussion of some limitations as well as the empirical and theoretical contributions of the dissertation.

Chapter 2

Social Rights and Welfare Regimes in the Advanced Industrialised World and Beyond

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature on the development of social rights, which is, in its majority, focused on advanced industrialised countries. The chapter will therefore both try to derive insights from these debates for the study of social rights in middle income countries, and highlight the differences between the two contexts which are reflected in the ensuing welfare regimes as the embodiment of social rights. Overall, it will be argued that given the highly exclusionary features of existing regimes in middle income countries and the limited amount of formal entitlements they traditionally entail, the recent rise of social assistance is a potentially transformative development. This is mainly because it can make their welfare regimes more inclusive by expanding the rights of some segments of the population that were previously excluded from the formal system. Yet, the extent to which social assistance is able to fulfil this potential is ultimately an empirical question, and depends on the trajectory of reform, specific features of newly adopted schemes as well as the implementation, which need to be assessed case by case.

Before proceeding to the study of the Turkish case in this regard, we will set the frame of the debate by relying on relevant strands of the literature. The first section of the present chapter will conceptualise social rights with a focus on the idea of inclusion and look at how they link to different welfare policies and regimes. In the second section, we will examine the historical development of social rights in terms of processes of industrialisation and democratisation in the West, and discuss the different nature of these processes in middle income countries, with implications on social rights. In the third section, we will discuss recent transformations of welfare

regimes in advanced industrialised and middle income countries with the rise of selective policies and the increasing role of private actors as two common trends. Social assistance has also been on the rise in advanced industrialised countries, making part of different institutional mixes, but as we will suggest, it constitutes one of the most striking developments in middle income countries and carries a distinctive potential for expanding social rights in this particular context. Finally, we will explore ways of assessing the quality of social rights which can be used to analyse the extent to which this potential has been fulfilled in different empirical cases.

2.1 Social Rights, Policy Principles and Welfare Regimes

We use the concept of social rights here to refer to actual entitlements that ensure the inclusion of the members of a society in a mainstream, as different from purely legal or moral rights. This primarily relies on T.H. Marshall's definition of the social element of citizenship as 'the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society' in one of the most influential accounts of the historical development of rights (Marshall, 1950 p.11). In addition, the state has a key positive role to play in that rights as entitlements are only realised 'when the state enacts and enforces the rights to some degree' (Janoski, 1998 p.39). The development of social rights thus depends on a variety of policies adopted by the states, which can be based on different principles. While rights are most directly associated with the universalist principle in welfare policy, as they would ideally apply to all members of the society as a matter of citizenship right, policies based on contributory and selective principles can also contribute to the development of social rights depending on their specific features and combination with other policies as part of different welfare regimes.

The conceptualisation of inclusion as the primary aim of social rights is well grounded in the literature. First of all, the idea of membership, which Marshall refers to when he equates citizenship with the 'full membership of a community' (1950 p.8), illustrates the centrality of the aim of inclusion. In addition, Marshall's unified conception of civil, political and social rights means that these rights are all required

for such membership (Lister, 2005 p.476). The historical development of rights is therefore about the 'progressive incorporation of the working classes into mainstream society through the extension of citizenship rights to them' (Bulmer and Rees, 1996 p.272). Different groups of rights are indivisible and interdependent, with social rights giving 'substance to civil and political rights' especially for the poor and the marginalised (Kabeer, 2005 p.2). It could indeed be argued that people need to be in a certain socio-economic position in order to be able to fully participate in public life (King and Waldron, 1988 p.426). More importantly, social rights also have a constitutive role, since they not only ensure increasing inclusion in the mainstream society but at the same time contribute to building up and sustaining this very mainstream (Haagh, 2002a; Haagh and Helgø, 2002).

An alternative concept here would be equality, which Marshall also highlights as a central attribute of citizenship in the form of equality of status. For some critiques, Marshall's equality of status is limited to horizontal redistribution throughout the life course (Powell, 2002 p.231) or a formal parity of status which hides deeper inequalities (Hay, 1996 p.73). Although these interpretations are too limited, and Marshall's discussion of specific examples such as the NHS (National Health Service)¹ indicates that his understanding goes somewhat beyond those, he explicitly distinguishes equality of status from more substantive understandings, giving it priority over the equality of incomes (1950 p.56). The equality to be achieved through social rights can thus be better described as 'equal opportunity of access by right of citizenship' (Titmuss, 1965 p.357), which fits well into the concept of inclusion because opportunity of accessing some mainstream right-based entitlements would ensure the inclusiveness of the system if not always any substantive equality.

Welfare policy is one of the major ways in which entitlements along these lines are enacted by the states, with specific schemes relying on different principles and achieving the aim of inclusion to different extents. The principle which is ideally associated with social rights is the universalist principle, which refers to both the population and risk coverage of policies, and the procedure of allocation of benefits and services (Rothstein, 1998 p.19). Universalist policies can thus be defined as those

¹ For example, he notes that the establishment of NHS helped to 'free real income, in certain forms, from its dependence on money incomes', broadly approaching this as a positive development (p.53).

which are intended to cover the entire population in diverse risk situations on the basis of rights of citizenship. Categorical benefits, which cover a delimited contingency group, are also identified with the universalist principle because they apply universally within the group that they target, and this group is specified according to some objective criteria of need (Barr, 2004; Marshall, 1981; Rothstein, 1998)². On the other hand, the contributory principle relates entitlement to a previous record of contribution, as in the case of social insurance schemes, and selective principle to the insufficiency of means, as in social assistance.

One of the complexities about making such distinctions is that the extent to which policies further social rights is not directly prescribed by the principles they rely on, but is influenced by supplementary conditions and special dispensations they include (Walker, 2005 p.91). For instance, social insurance in Germany is very inclusive as well as social assistance in Australia; they can thus be seen as approaching universalist provision to a certain extent, at least in functional terms, through contributory and selective schemes respectively. However, social assistance is generally harder to reconcile with the universalist principle since it typically involves a high degree of discretion in implementation (Oorschot, 2002), and relates to residual welfare provision and poor relief tradition in contrast to universalism (Esping Andersen, 1990; Titmuss, 1974). Yet, a certain degree of discretion as a supplement to fully legalised basic rights can be necessary because it is not always possible to codify particular individual needs which may arise (Marshall, 1981; Titmuss, 1971). Positive use of this discretion depends on the precise features of selectivity and its functioning on the ground such as the clarity of existing rights or the existence of mechanisms of accountability.

More importantly, following Esping Andersen's welfare regime approach, which denotes a systematic relationship between legal and organisational features of the state and the economy (1990 p.2), what is important is the 'underlying logic' of a system rather than individual policies that it includes (1999 p.88). As such, Esping Andersen suggests three welfare regimes characterising the systems of advanced industrialised countries as ideal types. Welfare policy in the liberal type is dominated

² Establishing membership in a risk category can sometimes become controversial in specific cases. See Marshall (1981 pp.99-100) for a further discussion of selectivity in the relation to categorical benefits and the drawbacks of putting too much emphasis on means-testing as the distinguishing feature of the selective principle.

by means-tested assistance, accompanied by only modest universalist benefits and insurance schemes, hence the realm of social rights is quite limited (1990 pp.26-27). In the conservative type, considerable social rights are granted, but these are typically in the form of contributory social insurance, hence tied to work performance and preserving work-related status differentials (p.27). As opposed to those two types, the social democratic regime is characterised by the dominance of the universalist principle in policies, and aims at the full access of different groups to social rights (pp. 27-28).

In the regime perspective, the logic of a system is best indicated by the way in which different policies and principles are combined as well as how they interact with market and family as non-state pillars of the welfare mix. For instance, in the cases of Sweden and Norway, the addition of a second earnings-related tier to the flat-rate insurance schemes ensured the incorporation of middle classes and prevented a deepening duality to follow the rise of the private insurance market (Esping Andersen, 1990 pp.25-26). Although this second tier was based on the contributory principle and ended up introducing benefit inequalities, it did not undermine universalist social rights embodied in the social democratic regime; on the contrary, it paradoxically came to allow their sustenance. Similarly, selective policies can be acceptable and ensure some positive discrimination if they are situated in a 'suitable universalist infrastructure' (Titmuss, 1968 p.135). This is also the idea behind what has been called 'targeting within universalism', referring to the delivery of disproportionate benefits to the poor within the framework of otherwise universalist policies, which in some contexts may prove more effective and politically feasible (Skocpol, 1991 p.414). The question then is again how they relate to other elements of the system, and consequently, the direction in which they move the overall regime.

2.2 Development of Social Rights in a Historical Perspective

The development of social rights, as embodied in the welfare regimes as suggested above, indeed took place in specific historical conditions, which were to an important extent shared by the now advanced industrialised countries. While the process of industrialisation shaped the needs in terms of social protection, democratisation

enabled political demands for and compromises in favour of a comprehensive welfare state, and economic growth in the post-war era allowed the consolidation of social rights. Universalism, especially in terms of population and risk coverage, became a relevant ideal for many countries in the advanced industrialised world, if not always a reality. On the other hand, industrialisation in middle income countries occurred later and in a generally slower way, although some welfare policies, possibly inspired by examples in advanced industrialised countries, were introduced quite early on in the process. Moreover, democratisation in the middle income group also followed an uneven pattern, with recurring episodes of authoritarian rules in many countries, and the nature of political mobilisations differed. Consequently, the development of social rights in this context faced different challenges; they tended to be quite fragmented and more limited in scope as compared to advanced industrialised countries, and informal channels played a bigger role in filling the gaps in welfare provision.

2.2.1 Advanced industrialised countries

The first process which impacted on the development of social rights was industrialisation, since they can be seen as ‘partial compensations’ while rapidly changing societies brought about new social costs and insecurities (Titmuss, 1968). The increasing division of labour, the expansion of markets and the loss of security functions by families and other communities created growing needs and demands for socioeconomic security (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981). In this process, the risks that were gradually brought under coverage were shaped by the experience of industrialisation: In what is a broadly common pattern in European countries, social insurance for industrial accidents was usually the first programme to be introduced, followed by sickness and invalidity insurance and old age pensions, with unemployment insurance coming the last (Flora and Alber, 1981 p.50). The expansion of population coverage also followed a common pattern from dangerous industries to all industrial workers, then to agricultural workers and dependents and finally to the self-employed (Pierson, 2006 p.118), which confirms the link between industrialisation and the development of social rights, especially in terms of social insurance.

At the same time, the experience of industrialisation arguably facilitated the extension of social policy to other areas such as health and education, to the extent that

the historical significance of the insurance principle has been to remove the stigma of social services and contribute to the public approval of state expenditures (Briggs, 1961 p.25). Yet, we should note that the consolidation of comprehensive Western welfare states as such took place in quiet a specific historical context. The first factor was continuous economic growth supported through Keynesian macroeconomic policies in the aftermath of the World War II. Coinciding with this, job losses in the rural sector were easily absorbed by buoyant industrial labour markets (Esping Andersen, 1999 p.24). Consequently, unemployment levels were low and employment became generally based on regular industrial jobs, providing workers with broadly stable and reasonable salaries. Social rights in advanced industrialised countries have thus historically developed in tandem with this employment structure, and approached the ideal of universalism through different policies.

While the description so far has focused on the common features of the historical process for advanced industrialised countries, creating similar structures and problems, the ways in which these problems were addressed were certainly not uniform or straightforward. They rather resulted from various political struggles during the transition to an industrial economy as the emerging working classes put pressure for some collective insurance system against new risks, and made coalitions with other classes to further their interests (Boix, 2003; Esping Andersen, 1990). The nature of these struggles and coalitions in turn entailed different trajectories in terms of the development of social rights. Notwithstanding the variation among advanced industrialised countries, however, the key point here is the centrality of class politics to the development of Western welfare states. This indeed constitutes an important common trait for them in the bigger picture, as the dominant mode of political mobilisation in this context was based on a democratic class struggle and coalitions, which has not necessarily been the case in other countries (Wood and Gough, 2006).

Such importance attached to class-based demands fits well into T.H. Marshall's influential account of the development of citizenship, in which he analyses the expansion of civil, political and social rights as a historical sequence. For Marshall, it was the collective use of civil rights by trade unions and especially the use of political rights which entailed the incorporation of social rights into citizenship rights in the 20th century (1950 pp.43-44). Therefore, the granting of political rights to new parts of the society played a key role by allowing demands for social rights to be raised.

Marshall has been criticised for his optimistic evolutionism (Hay, 1996 p.70; Roche, 1992 p.227), and downplaying of social struggles involved in the development of citizenship (Giddens, 1982 pp.171-173); however, the role of democratic politics can certainly be acknowledged within his account which already highlights the role of the working class through trade unions and the use of political rights. This historical narrative on the development of rights in advanced industrialised countries thus remains a powerful point of reference especially with regard to the understanding of rights it embodies, that is, entitlements shaped through bottom-up processes of demand articulation.

One potential issue here is linked to Marshall's exclusive focus on the British case and the generalisability of this historical pattern of development to other countries (Mann, 1987). For instance, Germany is frequently raised as a contrasting example because the introduction of social insurance under an authoritarian rule meant a certain reversal of Marshall's sequence, with social rights preceding political and even some civil³ rights (Janoski, 1998 pp.223-224; Kabeer, 2005 p.16). The early adoption of some social rights under Bismark can indeed be seen as a preemptive move against the threat of a growing labour movement, with no intention of expanding rights in general (Flora and Alber, 1981 p.70). Regardless of this intention, however, the existence of such a motive implicitly attests to the role of political rights as it is at least partly based on the anticipated consequences of their effective use. In addition, comparative work shows that although the introduction of social insurance was more likely in monarchies in the early stage of welfare state development, the extension of suffrage significantly increased the propensity to introduce similar schemes among parliamentary democracies in later stages (ibid, p.72). Therefore, the expansion of political rights seems to have certainly played a role in the consolidation of social rights in the West if not the emergence, hence broadly confirming Marshall's account of sequential development despite specific cases which might not directly fit into the suggested sequence.

³ Janoski uses the term legal rights instead but refers to a very similar group of rights.

2.2.2 Middle income countries

Industrialisation in middle income countries not only occurred later than the now advanced industrialised countries, but also has generally failed to create large-scale employment comparable to stable industrial jobs that characterised the early periods of the latter welfare states. The transformation of surplus labour into formal wage labour was thus extremely slow, which had crucial implications for the development of social rights (Rudra, 2007 p.383). The main problem was that, while social insurance schemes similar to Western examples were introduced quite early on in some middle income countries, they remained fundamentally inadequate because they were based on labour market-related contributions and hence excluded those who were outside formal employment. In the persistence of labour market informality during the process of industrialisation, this corresponded to a substantive part of the population, and the expectations that formal job creation would eventually entail the expansion of social security coverage did not materialise. The reliance of other provisions such as health on formal employment further hampered the development of social rights in a way that includes the wider population. Meanwhile, informal relationships such as family and community have played a central role in providing some welfare and security in many middle income countries (Wood and Gough, 2006 p.1699).

Social rights in middle income countries were sometimes also subdued to other policy areas such as agricultural policy or different development policies. In what has been called agrarian regimes, state sought to provide welfare by promoting broad access to land and supporting small farmers (Seekings, 2008 p.26), which tended to reinforce the role of family and kin networks as sources of welfare dependent on supportive state policies. In the context of developmentalism, particularly in East Asia and Latin America, social protection selectively focused on the segments of the society which were considered to be strategically important for economic development (Kwon, 2009; Riesco, 2009). The impact of developmentalism on social rights was then the consolidation of exclusionary features of existing regimes. This was, for example, the legacy of import substituting industrialisation which systematically favoured formal urban sectors against rural, domestic and informal workers in Latin America (Filgueira and Filgueira, 2002), a region to which Turkey bears significant resemblance in terms of its history of economic development and the characteristics of capitalist economy (Özel, 2013; Schneider, 2013). In such cases, family and

community relationships can be expected to become a disproportionately important source of informal support for those who are excluded from the formal system.

In addition to the differences in their institutional trajectories, the context in which middle income countries are trying to consolidate social rights today is also fundamentally different than the historical context of development of social rights in advanced industrialised countries. Population growth and de-ruralisation, alongside the effects of globalisation and accompanying economic transformations, are increasing the vulnerability of many groups today (Barrientos and Hulme, 2008; Seekings, 2008). While this highlights the need for inclusive social rights, post-war economic growth rates are now long gone and Keynesian policies are replaced by a liberal doctrine of non-intervention, which leaves attracting investment as the primary goal of policy in the global context of austerity (Haagh, 2006 p.388). This goal puts significant limits on the fiscal ability of states to invest in welfare policies. Moreover, the rise of technology and deindustrialisation are aggravating problems of industrialisation and job creation in middle income countries, hence making inclusive regimes an even bigger challenge.

On the other hand, the development of social rights in middle income countries was shaped by distinct political dynamics. Firstly, weak state capacity is a major factor that left ample room for non-state actors, such as NGOs, and external influences to shape developments around social welfare (Surender, 2013 p.17). Policy stances of international organisations such as IMF and World Bank then had considerable impact (Mkandawire, 2001), with the politics of social policy extending beyond the domestic level. Secondly, in contrast to issue-based political settlements and class coalitions in their advanced industrialised counterparts, political mobilisation in middle countries was typically more diffuse and particularistic, with less influence on state policies (Sharkh and Gough, 2010 pp.28-29; Wood and Gough, 2006 pp.1699-1700). Clientelist networks thus generally proved more effective than mobilisation along class lines, which hampered the emergence of rights of a universalist nature.

Additionally, when there was such mobilisation, the better organised sectors of the working class had vested interests in the preservation of exclusionary regimes while potential beneficiaries of more inclusive schemes remained generally unorganised and politically less powerful (Seekings, 2008 pp.38-39). Public safety nets for excluded parts of the society were not always absent in this context, but

tended to consist of a collection of disparate schemes, and were used as vehicles for political patronage (Rawlings, 2005 p.138). Patronage basis of politics, which sometimes facilitated the introduction of social policy schemes, was then likely to become an obstacle against the reform of these schemes in a more universalist direction (Huber, 1996 pp.179-180), hence undermining the development of social rights.

The process of democratisation in middle income countries also unfolded in a much more uneven way than the West, with a generally fragile development of democracy as a political regime. While social policies have usually originated under authoritarian regimes (Mares and Carnes, 2009), transitions to democracy still created incentives for the states to expand or maintain social policies and protect the vulnerable parts of the population (Haggard and Kaufman, 2008 p.10). In line with this, the recent waves of democratisation are also argued to have contributed to the expansion of some pro-poor policies due to the increasing need for democratically elected governments to cater for the needs of the poor (Barrientos, 2013; Seekings, 2008). Yet, even in the presence of electoral democracy, social policies in middle income countries were generally introduced in a top-down way rather than developing through the articulation of political demands from the bottom, which indicates a different, and weaker, link between political and social rights as compared to the historical process in the West. This link was further complicated by the recurrence of authoritarian periods, which was quite common in the context of middle income countries.

With regard to the sequence of development of rights, therefore, we can note that social rights were sometimes introduced in the absence of established political rights, either pre-emptively, similar to the example of Germany under Bismark, or based on different considerations such as economic growth in the East Asian developmental states and more ideological motives in communist regimes. Alternatively, in a different sequence that characterises many middle income countries, there were very little civil and social rights when political democratisation happened, and the enactment of additional rights in these domains did not follow suit once political rights were granted (O'Donnell, 2001). In such altered sequences, the role of civil and, more importantly, political rights in consolidating social rights was easily undermined, and political democratisation even happened at the expense of the

development of social rights in some countries (Haagh, 2002a; 2002b). The ways in which social rights developed in middle income countries are thus very diverse, but overall they can be clearly differentiated from rather smooth and bottom-up patterns prevalent in the historical experience of advanced industrialised countries which culminated in the development of social rights in a broadly inclusive direction.

Against this background, the key challenge for middle income countries today is to sustain the development of social rights in the context of an increasingly competitive global economy and the ideological advance of neoliberalism. This would require them to expand the reach of their welfare policies, to overcome the embedded duality between those who have access to public provisions and those who do not, to effectively institutionalise formal, encompassing and integrated rights for their populations, and to improve the organisational capacities of relevant actors. The extent to which recent developments, which will be discussed in the next section, are able to move welfare regimes in middle income countries in such a direction should be evaluated with due regard to different historical trajectories and institutional features highlighted above.

2.3 Changing Welfare Regimes

Despite historical and institutional differences, two common trends have recently been influencing welfare regimes in advanced industrialised and middle income countries alike. These can be summarised as the growing use of selective policies within the public pillar of welfare regimes, at times in combination with activation purposes, and the increasing role of private pillars, especially referring to the role of market actors and the non-profit sector in the implementation of policies. Yet the problem at hand here is mainly one about the direction of change, rather than outcomes. Therefore, the existence of these common trends does not imply convergence towards a uniform neoliberal model, with which they could have been easily associated if they were solely conceived in terms of adopted practices.

In the advanced industrialised world, where the regimes have been based on quite an inclusive public pillar to begin with, recent reforms indicate at least a certain staggering – if not retrenchment – in terms of the development of social rights, although significant regime differences remained with regard to how they adapted to

new pressures. In middle income countries, the implications of these trends are more complicated: On the one hand, the increasing role of the private pillar can easily exacerbate existing inequalities and selective policies carry a risk of reinforcing the duality within their regimes, which is already striking due to the centrality of employment status to entitlements in problematic labour markets. On the other hand, exclusionary and largely informal features of their prevailing welfare regimes also mean that selective policies targeting the formerly excluded parts of the society may be a sensible step in a more inclusive direction. Similarly, the involvement of private actors does not necessarily retrench social rights, especially if this is an enabling factor for states to engage in welfare provision where their own capacities are inadequate. Therefore, the characteristics and more importantly, the implications of common trends depend on the specificities of each empirical context.

2.3.1 Advanced industrialised countries

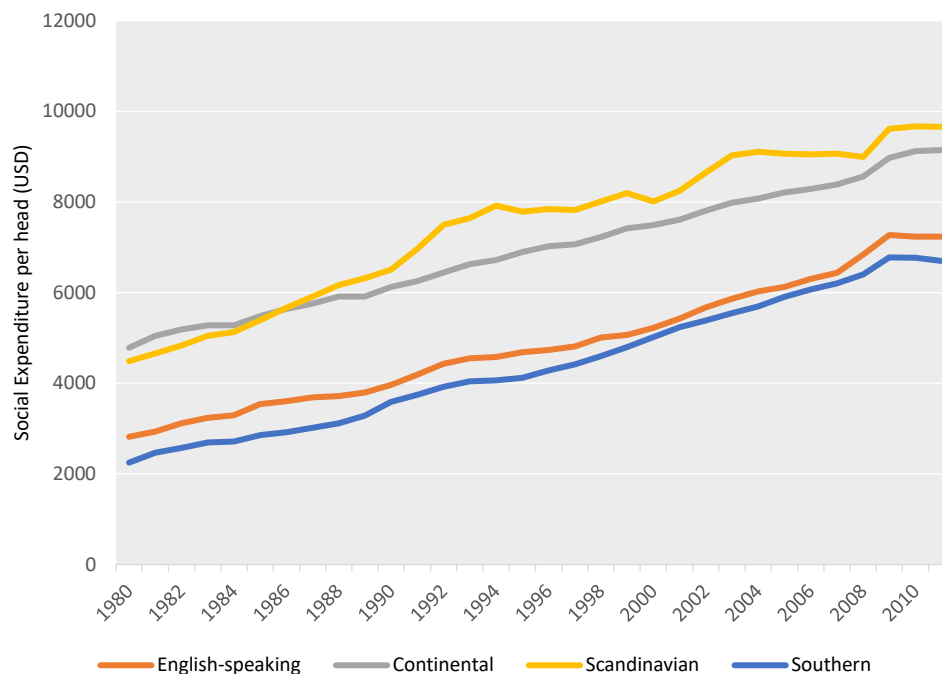
The descriptions of ‘golden age’ suggest a rather idealised picture of the welfare states in the advanced industrialised world; however, the general trend in those years was indeed a largely consistent expansion of social rights in this part of the world. This trend of expansion has started to come to an end in 1970s with changing domestic and global conditions. While early problems were mostly related to the inability of big governments to respond to increasing democratic demands in the context of economic stagnation of the time, starting with 1980s the impact of globalisation through economic competition and capital mobility, the role of population ageing and maturation of policy commitments came to the fore (Castles, 2004; Pierson, 1998). Additionally, the shift from manufacturing to service sector in the process of deindustrialisation caused a more sustained slowdown in economic growth, bringing about rising unemployment, precariousness and fragmentation in the labour market (Standing, 1992 pp.52-53), and family structures that underlay the post-war model have started to transform (Esping Andersen, 1999; Lewis, 2001). These changes have put increasing pressures on the welfare states: While there have been some efforts to improve social rights for newly emerging risk groups, subsequent policy agendas have been dominated with concerns about cost containment and cuts, albeit to different extents in different countries.

First of all, trends in social expenditure⁴ over time indicate that while the expansion phase of the Western welfare state extended into 1970s, 1980s brought the end of continuous expenditure growth and efforts to control costs became more prominent after 1990s (Castles, 2004; Stephens, Huber and Ray, 1999). Comparative figures below illustrate spending patterns throughout the OECD in the post-1980 period. As displayed in Figures 1 and 2, the general trend in average per capita social expenditure⁵ of different groups of countries from 1980 to 2012 was a more or less sustained increase, which is quite smooth in English-speaking, Southern and Continental countries and characterised by more fluctuations in the Scandinavian group that has the highest level of spending overall. However, the pace of increase visibly slowed down in the recent years in all four groups, corresponding to the aftermath of the 2008 crisis. Moreover, cost containment attempts included many modifications to existing welfare programmes, the impact of which cannot always be captured by aggregate social expenditure data. Alternative approaches to retrenchment therefore look at more specific indicators, which generally confirm the finding that the expansion phase of the welfare state was over by 1980s while some areas remained better protected than others and basic institutional features of different regimes were broadly preserved (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Korpi and Palme, 2003; Scruggs, 2007).

⁴ Although this is a problematic measure in terms of the development of social rights, it still gives a broad idea about trends. Some disadvantages of using overall social expenditure data are that it depends on the total number of claimants, which is highly influenced by broader economic conditions, while different areas of provision might face different cuts, and that some changes such as those to pension systems have an impact on expenditure only in the long-run (Kangas and Palme, 2007; Korpi and Palme, 2003; Stephens, Huber and Ray, 1999; Pierson, 1994; Siegel, 2007).

⁵ Theoretically it would be more sensible to include not only public but also mandatory private expenditures in total social expenditure, because the category of mandatory private comprises private arrangements which are legally required and regulated, and as such can still be situated as part of public responsibility. However, data on private expenditures are more frequently missing, and problems with distinguishing between categories of mandatory and voluntary private make cross-country comparisons harder. Therefore, the analysis has been kept limited to public expenditures for a basic comparison. For a detailed discussion of these categorisations and different data sources on aggregate spending see (De Deken and Kittel, 2007).

Figure 1. Average social expenditure per head in different groups of OECD countries, constant prices and constant PPPs (2005), in US dollars, 1980-2011.



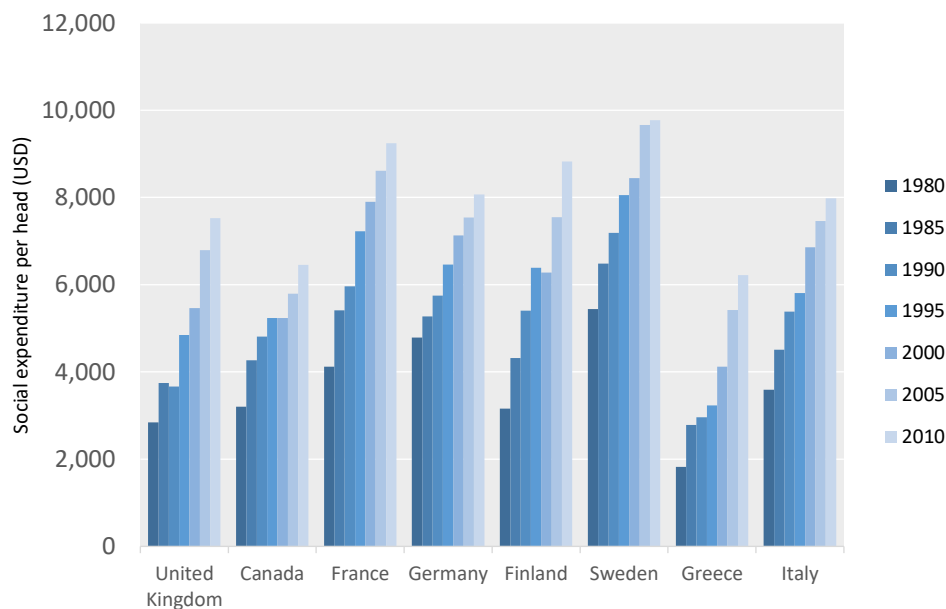
Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database

Notes: * Aggregate figures are unweighted averages of per head expenditure in individual countries.

** The country grouping follows a revised version of Castles' 'families of nations' (2004), which to an important extent overlaps with Esping Andersen's regime types with the addition of a fourth Southern European welfare regime (1990; 1999). The groups are as the following. English-speaking: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States; Continental: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands; Scandinavian: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden; Southern: Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain.

On the other hand, retrenchment is a broader issue of institutional restructuring than cutbacks in costs and entitlements. What needs to be examined is thus the changes in the content and institutional structure of welfare schemes, which bears greater reliance on qualitative assessments (Green-Pedersen, 2004). In this perspective, the restructuring of welfare regimes in advanced industrialised countries also includes a distinct dynamic which has been called 'recalibration', referring to the rationalisation of existing programmes to achieve established goals more effectively or the updating of provisions in response to newly recognised social needs (Pierson, 2001 pp.425-426). One example of recalibration would be policies catering for new social

Figure 2. Social expenditure per head in selected OECD countries, constant prices and constant PPPs (2005), in US dollars, 1980-2010.



Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database

risks arising from the process of deindustrialisation, such as precarious employment, long-term unemployment, in-work poverty, single parenthood or work-family reconciliation, which have been adopted by many countries (Bonoli, 2006; 2007). Although they may take neoliberal and market-oriented forms (Rubery, 2011), such policies can largely be said to be sustaining and even consolidating social rights insofar as they expand the scope of risks covered by the welfare state and prevent ‘risk privatisation’ through the decline in the coverage of apparently stable policies due to changing conditions (Hacker, 2004).

However, two key trends which characterise recent welfare regimes changes in the advanced industrialised world more broadly, namely the rise of policies based on the selective principle and the increasing role of private actors, are rather controversial in this regard. These trends can be argued to be part of the recalibration of welfare states rather than retrenchment, since they mainly aim at achieving the same goals more effectively, but they indeed have problematic implications for social rights. The rise of selective policies is confirmed both by case studies of countries belonging to

different regime types⁶, and figures on expenditure on means-tested benefits as percentage of GDP, which, across European countries, increased from 2,7% in 2000 to 3,2% in 2012⁷. While selectivity has always been present in different regimes, selective policies, which did not conform to the ideal of universalism on their own, usually pushed in the universalist direction during the expansion phase of the Western welfare states by identifying new groups which are eligible for supplementary entitlements (Gilbert, 2002 p.146). However, they are now rather concerned with narrowing down the scope of existing schemes to concentrate the resources on the needy. Moreover, there is a growing consensus that ‘new welfare states’ in the 21st century must be more productivist and prioritise social investment over passive protection measures (Esping Andersen, 2006), which is well reflected in activation policies that are increasingly tied to income support.

As for the second trend, we should consider complex patterns of interaction and cooperation between the state and the private pillars of welfare regimes. One example is the introduction of competition among service providers and the spread of performance indicators as part of new public management practices, aiming to ensure more efficient delivery and enhanced consumer choice, even if the services themselves remain publicly funded (Pierson, 2006). In addition, the OECD noted as early as 1981 the need to devise ‘new relationships between action by the state and private action’ due to increasing economic pressures upon welfare states (OECD, 1981 p.12). A prevalent policy response to this need was the promotion of more private involvement in the financing and implementation of welfare provisions. The role of the market was actively reinforced by governments through policies such as tax benefits for voluntary private activity, regulations that mandate private provisions, public purchase of service contracts, and allocation of public benefits in the form of cash or vouchers to be consumed on the market (Gilbert, 2002 p.102). Alongside market actors, non-profit organisations also became important service providers in various areas including health, education and social services, with their activities being subsidised by the government at times (Anheier, 2004; Moreno Fernández, 2000). The developments

⁶ For example see (Palier, 1997) for France, (Sunesson et al., 1998) for Sweden, (Kuivalainen and Niemelä, 2010) for Finland.

⁷ The data is taken from the Eurostat Social Protection Database and covers EU15.

have indeed made part of a broader agenda of decentralisation of governance which is increasingly influential throughout the world.

As a result of all these transformations summarised above, welfare regimes in advanced industrialised countries are undergoing significant changes, through a process that can be described as ‘gradual liberalisation’ (Streeck and Thelen, 2005). On the one hand, attempts to cut expenditures and limit entitlement conditions, and concomitantly the growing popularity of selective policies indicate a certain reversal in terms of the development of social rights. The increasing reliance of entitlements on needs also means that welfare states are now mostly concerned with guaranteeing a minimum level of support rather than providing the optimal level of assistance to everyone (Cox, 1998), which is again a shift away from post-war universalism. At the same time, selective policies are likely to contribute to the increasing dynamic of dualisation which characterises most of the advanced industrialised world today (Emmenegger et al., 2012), especially if the emphasis is put on means-tested benefits for non-contributors as separate from recipients of contribution-based provisions (Clasen, 1997). This goes against the fundamental logic of social rights which is based on the existence of inclusive mainstream entitlements.

On the other hand, welfare mixes, which refer to the relegation of essential human needs between public and private responsibility⁸ and constitute the ‘structural context of social rights’, are changing (Esping Andersen, 1990 p.80). Even if we cannot say that there is a global withering away of public responsibility, we are certainly witnessing a convergence in terms of the institutional design of policies which increasingly integrate private arrangements (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2008). Rather than enacting social rights, the state now takes a more enabling role which fosters ‘public support for private responsibility’ (Gilbert, 2002 p.4). Moreover, the shift away from universalist policies indirectly promotes the market and other private actors as primary sources of welfare since the scope of public provisions is contracted. This would also

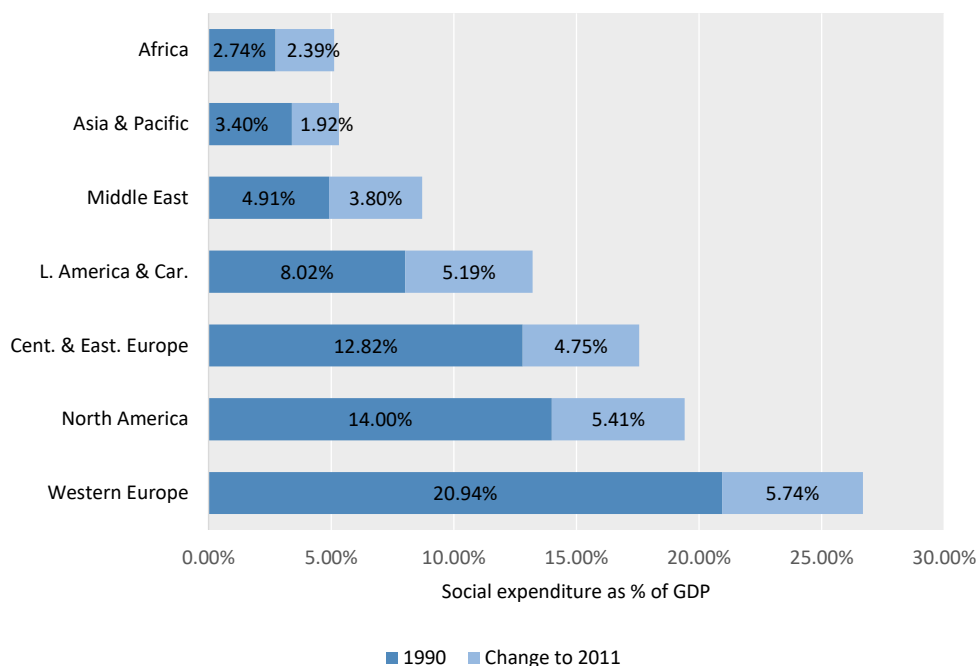
⁸ While in Esping Andersen’s original conceptualisation public-private mix consisted of the state and the market, the concept was later expanded by the addition of family as a new pillar of welfare regimes (Esping Andersen, 1999). Additionally, the role of the non-profit sector was recognised particularly with regard to service delivery (ibid., p.35), and sometimes considered as a separate pillar (Abrahamson, Boje and Greve, 2005; Powell, 2008). Here a dichotomous approach distinguishing between public and private responsibility is maintained, but the private pillar is broadly understood as including not only the market but also other non-state actors such as the family/individuals and the voluntary non-profit sector.

lead to the spread of dual welfare states in cases where well-off middle classes demand exit options from public programmes (Kuhnle, 2000). Overall, therefore, changes in advanced industrialised countries, in terms of not only cuts in welfare expenditure but also the rise of selectivity and privatisation, seem to have a negative impact on the expansion of social rights, which had been the dominant trend in the post-war era, unlike middle income countries that are still in the process of building up inclusive welfare regimes.

2.3.2 Middle income countries

Successive debt and currency crises experienced by developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s exposed the inadequacies of their welfare regimes particularly in view of rising unemployment and poverty, and structural adjustment programmes that were usually put in place as part of conditionalities of international agencies to counter these crises usually aggravated pressures on social welfare. In a comparative perspective, social expenditures outside the advanced industrialised world have historically lagged considerably behind those in the established welfare states and continue to do so. As Figure 3 illustrates, the share of public expenditure on social protection in GDP in 2011 equalled 5,1% in Africa, 5,3% in Asia and the Pacific, 8,7% in the Middle East and 13,7% in Latin America and the Carribean, which stand in contrast to 19,4% in North America and 26,7% in Western Europe. Meanwhile, the level of expenditure is also quite high in Central and Eastern European countries most of which inherited wide social provisions from the communist era with an average of 17,6% in 2011. While these numbers have all increased since 1990, when they ranged from 2,7% in Africa to 20,9% in Western Europe, the general ordering of regions from 1990 to 2011 has remained unchanged, pointing out a certain path dependence in terms of the share of GDP allocated to social protection.

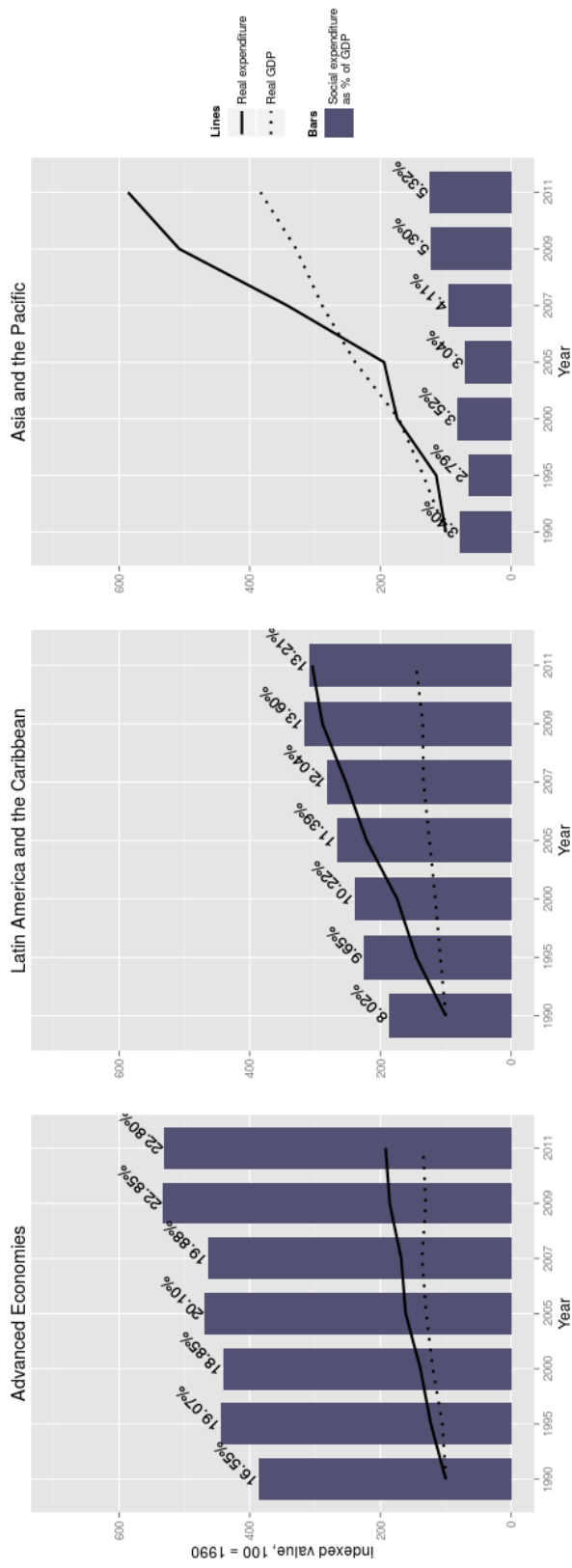
Figure 3. Social expenditure as percentage of GDP across the world, 1990-2011.



Source: OECD, Society at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2014

Nevertheless, the figures as percentage of GDP are likely to conceal important trends because of their sensitivity to the size of and changes in GDP which both substantially differ from region to region. In this regard, Figure 4 displays trends in real social expenditure in Asia and Latin America, two regions where it has achieved considerable expansion during the covered period, and compares them to the advanced industrialised group. As seen in the figure, when social expenditure and GDP values in those regions are indexed according to their 1990 levels, advanced economies seem to have reached a more or less stable stage while there is a significant increase in social expenditures in the other two, especially in Asia and the Pacific. When the previous measure is used, this increase is overshadowed by the significant growth of the GDP itself in the region, but when this is accounted for, the extent and pace of change is striking: an increase of almost six times in Asia and the Pacific, and three times in Latin America and the Caribbean. Various states outside the established welfare regimes of the West therefore seem to be starting to take on an increasing amount of expenditure for welfare provision although they have still not caught up with the levels of the advanced industrialised countries.

Figure 4. Social expenditure and GDP growth compared in Asia, Latin America and advanced economies, real terms (1990), 1990-2011.



Source: OECD, Society at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2014

The conventionally low level of social expenditure outside the advanced industrialised world had also been accompanied by a very skewed distribution of existing provisions for a long time. In this regard, we should note that the increase in state effort indicated by aggregate figures reflects not only the improvement or maturation of policy commitments for a privileged sector, usually found at the core of the formal labour market, but also some expansion of coverage to the formerly excluded sectors. Given the lack of contributions made by the latter, this expansion has been possible through the adoption of non-contributory, and mostly selective, schemes or the relaxation of contributory conditions of existing provisions. Meanwhile, given global economic pressures and the stances of international organisations involved in the economic adjustment processes of many middle income countries, private sources of welfare have been preferred over the expansion of public provisions as long as they could offer some solution to the immediate problems of coverage and inclusiveness. These two trends highlight the similarity of developments in middle income countries to their counterparts in the advanced industrialised world; however, in contrast to them, selective policies in this context are not always a formula for the relegation of existing universalist schemes to weaker safety nets, just as the increasing role of private actors does not necessarily mean a substitution of the public by the private.

The trend of expansion in non-contributory policies in middle income countries has been especially visible in the area of old age pensions, with more than 110 countries providing non-contributory pensions in 2014 as compared to a total of 20 countries, mostly Western, which did so before 1950 (ILO, 2015). There has been a similar trend in the non-contributory provision of unemployment benefits as well, although not as striking so far. In addition, growing experimentation has been made with new family allowances, conditional cash transfers and activation policies for the working poor or the unemployed. While these provisions have usually been means-tested, hence based on the selective principle, they have been instrumental in expanding coverage. Moreover, a universalising momentum has also characterised reforms in the health systems of a number of countries from Brazil and Venezuela to

South Africa, and to China and Thailand despite persistent challenges in implementation⁹.

In particular, East Asian states have been building up a universalist and inclusive public pillar in their welfare regimes whilst being subject to similar global economic pressures as others. This has indeed been facilitated by their growth performance, the expansion of old-age pensions and health care to the population outside the economically active sector being the most prevalent in the cases of Japan, Korea and Taiwan, and to some extent in China and Thailand (Hwang, 2011; Kwon, 2009). The period after the 1997-1998 crisis in these countries has seen not only the levels of benefits and coverage being improved to deal with increased vulnerability, but also the state increasingly taking over former family responsibilities through child and family allowances or insurance arrangements for long-term care in the face of changing family structures and demographics (Kim, 2010). At the same time, however, the goals of activation and employability have been embedded in the safety nets which are being consolidated, and keeping expenditures under control constituted a major concern for the governments (Goishi, 2011) as features which parallel the situation in advanced industrialised countries.

Meanwhile, in Latin America, economic liberalisation after the ‘lost decade’ in 1980s undermined existing social insurance systems and pushed welfare regimes in a liberal direction to begin with (Barrientos, 2009). The recent rise of social assistance programmes in the region indicates yet another shift as they change the existing segmentation based on labour market status by improving public provisions for those in the informal sector of the labour market. In particular, pension coverage in Latin America increased from 60% in 1990 to more than 90% in 2013 as a result of the expansion of non- or semi-contributory pension schemes (ILO, 2015). While most of these schemes are targeted at the poor, there are also examples of provisions based on the universalist principle such as the *Renta Dignidad* in Bolivia and rural pensions in Brazil (Arza, 2013). In addition, conditional cash transfers (hereafter CCTs) which link the provision of benefits to requirements about the use of health and education services have become very popular across the region. The existence of these

⁹ These countries are covered by Melo (2014), Buxton (2014), Surender (2014), Hsiao, Li and Zhang (2014), Tivayanond and Hanvoravongchai (2014) respectively as part of the UNRISD Research Project entitled ‘Towards Universal Social Security in Emerging Economies: Process, Institutions and Actors’.

conditionalities attached to income support gives CCTs a productivist nature, echoing the social investment approach which is increasingly popular in advanced industrialised countries as well.

Non-contributory schemes which have been expanding in middle income countries are indeed diverse in several respects. On the one hand, the legal status of schemes can be different. For example, in Brazil, the BPC (Continuous Cash Benefit), which is an unconditional transfer to the disabled and the elderly whose income is below a certain threshold, has the status of a constitutional right, giving the programme a considerable political and fiscal independence (Medeiros, Britto and Soares, 2008 p.3). This stands in contrast to CCTs, such as *Bolsa Família*, which rather rely on political factors such as public praise or association with the government. On the other hand, the schemes also differ in terms of their technicalities, such as the existence of means-testing and its generosity when it exists, targeting mechanisms which are used, the observance of quotas for numbers of beneficiaries, the level of benefits and attached conditionalities (Arza, 2013; Vuolo, 2013a). It is these technicalities which shape the inclusiveness of adopted schemes. In the case of CCTs, for instance, coverage ranges from around 3% of the population in Trinidad et Tobago and Costa Rica to much higher levels around 40% in Colombia and Ecuador¹⁰ (ILO, 2014).

CCTs have indeed been one of the most widespread, and also the most widely debated, means-tested schemes in middle income countries, with their evaluations remaining diverse. Potentially, they can be a significant step for the expansion of social rights as they provide a momentum towards universal coverage in social policy (Fine, 2014; Vuolo, 2013b). Despite promising evidence in terms of the outcomes of human development-related conditions and household consumption, however, the effectiveness of CCTs in preventing poverty and reducing inequality in the long run remains unclear (Rawlings, 2005; Sánchez-Ancochea and Mattei, 2011). They have been criticised for low levels of poverty thresholds and benefits, funding through general taxation which is likely to be regressive in the prevalence of indirect taxation and reliance on a residual logic without any right basis (Lavinás, 2013a pp.23-24).

¹⁰ The programmes for which coverage data is given are called Targeted Conditional Cash Transfer Programme in Trinidad et Tobago, *Avancemos* in Costa Rica, *Familias en Acción* in Colombia and *Bono de Desarrollo Humano* in Ecuador. The data belong to the year 2011 except for Ecuador in which case it comes from 2012.

There is also need for better mechanisms of accountability, clearer norms and systems of surveillance in the implementation of benefits (Diaz-Cayeros and Magaloni, 2009). Additionally, the expansion of CCTs does not seem to have been accompanied by necessary improvements in available health and education services, which contradicts their human development objectives (Lavinás, 2013b).

As for the second trend, the increasing role of the private pillar was witnessed in different forms. As a rather direct example of privatisation, social insurance schemes in many Latin American countries were wholly or partially replaced by individual retirement saving plans, and the private pillar of health care systems has generally enlarged, with Chile being a pioneer in market-oriented reform (Barrientos, 2009; Mesa-Lago, 2001). In East Asia, this was more visible in the reliance of Korean activation policies, to which income support is tied, on the participation of ‘social partners’ which included private companies, labour unions, and non-profit as well as religious organisations (Goishi, 2011). NGOs have also come to play a role in the implementation of social assistance policies in lower middle income countries of South and Central America such as Nicaragua and El Salvador (Barrientos and Santibáñez, 2009b) and the provision of a broader range of social services in other countries such as Kenya (Brass, 2014). Consequently, the boundaries between the public and the private have become blurred in many cases, as illustrated by private actors receiving significant levels of state subsidies, working from state offices and sometimes even incorporating civil servants in their functioning (Cammett and MacLean, 2014b p.6).

The implications of these developments for social rights are double-edged. On the one hand, selective anti-poverty policies align well with the efficiency criteria that increasingly govern state action under the neoliberal model and ideology (Kurtz, 2002). Means-tested provisions are deemed more efficient than others because they prevent the spending of resources for the non-poor and offer a relatively cheap way of dealing with poverty. For example, in Latin America, the maximum share spent on CCTs is 0,64% of the GDP in Bolivia, and Ecuador’s CCT programme which has the widest population coverage in the region costs only 0,34% of the GDP (ILO, 2014). The low level of burden they create on public budgets and their combination with productivist conditions thus make CCTs ideal neoliberal policy instruments which are also welcomed and promoted by international organisations such as the World Bank.

The same can clearly be said of the increasing involvement of private actors in welfare provision. Indeed, even some developments in public provision, such as the subsidisation of private provisions for the poor, arguably help to sustain the trend of privatisation at a broader level (Fine, 2014). Additionally, employment concerns that used to be embedded in former industrialisation models are relegated to other policy initiatives like safety nets or microcredit (Tendler, 2001). The role of the state is therefore rather strategic and regulatory whilst privatisation remains the priority, echoing the situation in advanced industrialised countries.

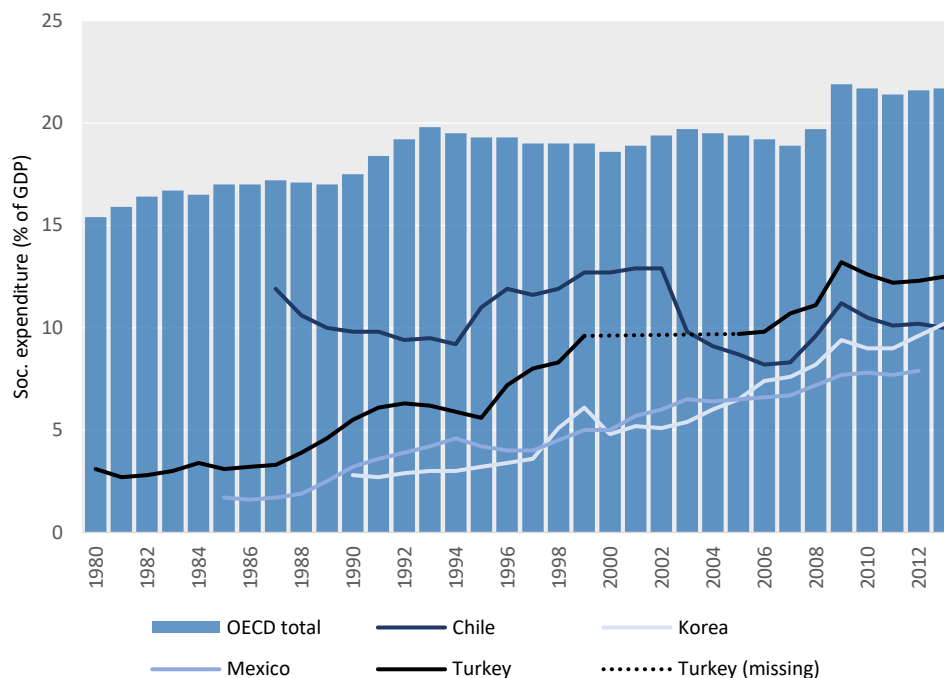
On the other hand, the emergence of schemes addressing the needs of parts of the society which had hardly had access to any public provision previously indicates a certain expansion of social rights. This is more clearly so in the case of universal non-contributory benefits, such as basic old age pensions, which include new groups within the formal welfare regime regardless of their previous contributions or need. The case of means-tested schemes is, however, more complicated. While they also create some public provision for people who were formerly excluded, the placement of need as the basis of entitlement does not sit easily with the concept of right. Moreover, there are challenges about the integration of new policies with broader services such as childcare, information and training which are required to provide a stable cover (Haagh, 2006 p.392) and the avoidance of the 'informality trap' which may arise from the dependence of eligibility on not being formally employed, hence strengthening the formal-informal divide (Vuolo, 2013b). Similarly, the involvement of private actors may extend provisions beyond what would be the case in their absence; however, the inclusiveness of outcomes depends on the form of private actors that are involved as well as their relationship with the state and the monitoring capacity of the latter (Cammatt and MacLean, 2014b). The institutionalisation of specific schemes and their role within the broader welfare regime thus become central to the examination of their impact on the development of social rights.

Therefore, the implications of recent global trends for middle income countries, which have problematic backgrounds in terms of the development of social rights, are different from advanced industrialised countries, but whether they move the previous regimes in a more inclusive direction is ultimately an empirical question that requires a thorough assessment of the emerging policies within their institutional contexts, hence in-depth case studies. This dissertation focuses on Turkey which, as a member

of this group, had quite a late process of industrialisation and uneven process of democratisation. The coverage of contributory social insurance has been limited to the formal sector of the labour market, and informal channels have always been central to social welfare, especially for those who do not have access to the formal system. Social expenditures in Turkey lagged behind the OECD average and are at comparable levels to some East Asian and Latin American countries as displayed in Figure 5. Yet, there has been a largely consistent trend of increase since 1980s, and we can note a certain catch-up with the OECD average. Moreover, non-contributory social assistance in Turkey has shown a dramatic expansion in 2000s, its share within GDP rising from 0.5% in 2002 to 1.3% in 2014¹¹. Thus, the prospect of extending public provisions to the formerly excluded groups has a significant transformative potential, as highlighted as a general feature for middle income countries above. At the same time, new social assistance schemes in Turkey have been implemented through a peculiar structure of cooperation between public and private actors, allowing us to discuss the implications of both global trends, namely the rise of selective policies and the involvement of private actors, for the development of social rights. The next section focuses on how we can actually assess these implications in empirical cases.

¹¹ According to the data provided by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. This should be considered in view of substantive GDP growth over the same period. In constant prices, GDP of Turkey rose from 72.5 million in 2002 to 126.1 million in 2014 (World Bank indicators, GDP in Constant Local Currency Unit).

Figure 5. Social expenditure as percentage of GDP in selected countries compared to OECD average.



Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database

Notes: The data for Turkey are missing between 2000 and 2004; the dotted line in the chart simply links 1999 and 2005 levels in a linear way. The relatively flat trend of this line can be attributed to the economic crisis in 2002. In reality, however, one could expect a sharp decrease followed by an increase, which can explain similar figures in 1999 and 2005.

2.4 Assessing the Quality of Social Rights

Inclusion in the mainstream, which we defined as the aim of social rights in previous sections, is still quite an abstract concept and the assessment of the extent to which social rights are able to achieve this aim needs to rely on more specific criteria of assessment. This is primarily because, in order to capture the quality of social rights, there is a need to examine the content of existing provisions going beyond their mere presence (Esping Andersen, 1990). While the typology debate is inherently static, our presumption is that the literature on welfare regime typologies would still give us useful insights on general logics of assessment, which can then be adopted in examining dynamic trajectories. By looking at Esping Andersen's original work and

ensuing criticisms, we will suggest decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation as the criteria of assessment for social rights, with a particular focus on middle income countries.

Decommodification is the main perspective used by Esping Andersen in his analysis of three welfare regimes among industrialised countries, and refers to ‘the degree to which they [social rights] permit people to make their living standards independent of pure market forces’ (1990 p.3). The immediate aim of social rights in this sense is to diminish the impact of markets on the welfare of individuals (pp.21-22), while this also fits into the broader perspective of inclusion because market outcomes would typically be more inegalitarian and exclude some members of the society from the enjoyment of a certain level of welfare. Empirically, decommodification is measured on the basis of programme characteristics such as eligibility rules, restrictions on entitlement, the level of income replacement and population coverage with respect to old-age pensions, sickness benefits and unemployment insurance (1990 pp. 47-49).

Although Esping Andersen focuses on some specific schemes in his empirical analysis, decommodification scores for these schemes are indeed used as a proxy for the logic of the overall regimes. As such, social rights in the liberal welfare regimes are found to be the least decommodifying, followed by the conservative, and the social democratic regimes tend to show the highest levels of decommodification. The alignment of country groupings according to this measure with other relevant aspects of welfare regimes, such as social stratification effects (p.74), public-private mix in pensions (pp.85-87) or labour market strategies (pp.141-142), is then interpreted as confirming the consistency of different regime types, hence also the accuracy of decommodification as a proxy. On a different note, the comparison of Esping Andersen’s welfare regimes with separate a typology of taxation regimes (Peters, 1991) reveals a considerable fit between the two clusterings (Twine, 1994 pp.149-150), again supporting the accuracy of decommodification in capturing broader systematic features.

However, the perspective of decommodification has also a number of weaknesses, which are exacerbated in view of the characteristics of labour markets in middle income countries. Firstly, the norm of industrial labour underlying welfare policies means that social rights are dependent on the performance of labour or

demonstrated willingness to do so, therefore, decommodification can be considered as fictitious (Standing, 2009 pp.32-33). In a similar vein, it is insufficient as a criterion because of being limited to the consideration of already commodified labour. While this criticism originates from a gender perspective, highlighting that decommodification is a deficient measure for women welfare because women are not commodified in the same way as men (Orloff 1993), it also applies to the middle income countries where access to formal employment cannot be taken for granted. More broadly, the exclusive focus of decommodification on the ability to maintain a certain level of consumption misses the aspect of self-development through work, which is in itself integral to social rights (Room, 2000). This aspect is better captured by ILO's framework of economic security, which also attempts to measure the quality of available jobs, employment protection and skill development opportunities alongside income security (ILO, 2014). It is also reflected on Esping Andersen's later accounts which emphasise social investment strategies (1996; 1999; 2002) going beyond decommodification.

Meanwhile, decommodification ignores not only the emancipatory potential of access to paid work for women, but also welfare implications of gender relations and the central role of family as a welfare provider (Orloff, 1993 p.318). Post-war welfare states in advanced industrialised countries were indeed based on the assumption of stable families in addition to regular full male employment, with women having the primary responsibility to care for the young and the elderly, and being covered by social security largely as dependents (Lewis, 2001). Decommodification, which approaches social rights from a gender-neutral perspective, cannot assess the dependence of the welfare of many women on family, and more specifically their role as caregivers. While Esping Andersen has also acknowledged dependence on family as 'the functional equivalent of market dependency for many women' in the re-evaluation of his initial framework (Esping Andersen, 1999 p.45), this weakness of decommodification is again very relevant for middle income countries where families are expected to take on an even bigger welfare function in the absence of adequate policies.

Decommodification in the context of middle income countries can also be more specifically problematised in terms of the second major informal source of support, that is, community. Community relationships in these countries are highly likely to

include hierarchical and unequal elements and rely on patron-clientelism (Wood and Gough, 2006 p.1699), hence broadly stand in contrast to social rights, which, by their very nature, require that they be equally enjoyed by everyone without any restrictions arising from social status, class or political affiliation. Consequently, welfare policy needs to abolish people's dependence on personalised and discretionary relationships with the more powerful members of the community, and establish more formal rights to welfare and security (p.1708). Its ability to achieve this aim, on the other hand, cannot be evaluated through the perspective of decommodification which rather focuses on the link between state policies and market dependence. Therefore, a shift of focus from the market to the role of informal channels is needed in assessing the quality of social rights, bringing declientelisation to the fore as an alternative to decommodification.

Based on such criticisms, we contend that decommodification should be complemented with three additional criteria which are better equipped to capture the complexities of welfare regimes, especially in the context of middle income countries. Expanding on Rudra's definition which focuses on ensuring dependence on wage labour (2007, p.382), commodification in this dissertation refers to the extent to which welfare policies facilitate people's access to decent opportunities in the formal labour market. Defamilialisation is defined in a parallel way to decommodification, that is, as the extent to which social rights lessen the dependence of people's welfare on family obligations, which also aligns with the functional equivalence between family dependence and market dependence highlighted by Esping Andersen (1999). Finally, inspired by Wood and Gough (2006), declientelisation is more broadly conceptualised to refer to the replacement of hierarchical informal channels of welfare provision relying on loyalty and support with formal rule-based entitlements.

There are studies which examine welfare regimes beyond the advanced industrialised world along some of these criteria and suggest different typologies. For instance, a distinction is made between productive and protective types according to whether they prioritise commodification or focus on decommodification before full-scale commodification is achieved (Rudra, 2007 p.384), with East Asian countries falling into the productivist group while Latin American countries are split between productivist and mixed types. Alternatively, when more emphasis is put on defamilialisation, Latin American countries are classified into non-state familiarist

regimes on the one hand, and two types of state welfare regimes on the other (Franzoni, 2008). These two subtypes of the state welfare regime are again based on a distinction between productivist and protectionist variants. Finally, agrarian regimes as distinct from workerist and pauperist variants are argued to have a very low level of defamilialisation, although this is not taken as the basis of the overall typology (Seekings, 2008).

On the other hand, a ‘meta-regime’ approach is more useful at the global level in that it highlights the similarities among middle income countries that are as important as the differences. In this perspective, middle income countries generally belong to the ‘informal security regime’ type as distinct from ‘welfare state regimes’ that correspond to the established Western welfare states, and ‘insecurity regimes’ that are prevalent in lower income countries which are more dependent on external actors (Gough, 2004; Wood and Gough, 2006). The defining characteristic of informal security regimes is that, despite the inadequacy of state provision, welfare outcomes are largely mediated by family and community relationships which ensure some measure of security. Further empirical work on this typology has indeed categorised Turkey as a ‘successful informal security regime’ together with Korea, Thailand, Mexico, China and Chile, achieving relatively good welfare outcomes with low levels of spending (Sharkh and Gough, 2010). Starting from quantitative and qualitative changes in state provision in Turkey, and taking social assistance as a potential substitute for informal channels, this dissertation examines the extent to which Turkish welfare regime can still be seen as belonging to the informal security type. The main question is therefore whether the newly adopted schemes, in view of their specific features and way of institutionalisation, transform the prevailing informal security regime in a direction to enhance formalised social rights, and why.

At the same time, going beyond typologies, we maintain that the criteria that are used in classifying regimes can also be well appropriated in assessing the right-expanding potential of specific policies. More specifically, the performance of social assistance schemes from the perspectives of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation is considered as a crucial aspect of the broader trajectory of social rights in view of the exclusionary and highly informal nature of welfare regimes in middle income countries. If social assistance policies were to perform well along these dimensions when targeting the previously excluded parts of

the society and concomitantly to indicate a trend of integration with other mainstream policies, this would fundamentally transform the logic of overall regimes. As the level of discretion in the functioning of social assistance schemes is usually higher than policies based on contributory and universalist principles, their on-the-ground functioning also require explicit attention in the assessment of their performance. These will thus constitute main empirical focuses for the analysis of the development of social rights in Turkey from an institutionalist perspective as will be substantiated in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The trajectory of social rights in Turkey, or in any welfare regime, depends on the developments in institutional arrangements, rules and understandings that shape the policy environment and outcomes (Esping Andersen, 1990 p.80). These can indeed be best understood as a set of institutions, including a wide range of policies, organisational structures of implementation, and informal practices, which come together in different ways to constitute the overall regimes. With its focus on different types of institutions and their interlinkages on the one hand, and the complex relationship between institutions and actors on the other, new institutionalist theory is well-equipped to analyse such trajectories. In particular, historical institutionalism is closely associated with the analysis of longer-term development of political institutions, and is able to accommodate insights from other variants in a rather eclectic way (Hall and Taylor, 1996). The theoretical framework of this dissertation will hence build on new institutionalism, with an emphasis on historical institutionalism, both to describe patterns of institutional change and continuity following the rise of social assistance in Turkey and to explain the ensuing trajectory of the Turkey welfare regime in terms of the role of existing institutions, actors and external changes.

The rise of social assistance in Turkey has taken off in the aftermath of a critical period around a major earthquake in 1999 and the economic crisis in 2001. This has been followed by the gradual expansion of social assistance policies, which, through a process of differential growth, put them in a much more central position within the overall regime than before. However, there have also been important continuities through the critical period between 1999-2001, and consequently during the following years as well, illustrated by the reliance of the functioning of social assistance on an

already existing organisational structure and the sustained role of informal institutions in welfare provision. In order to analyse the dynamics and outcomes of this process, the current chapter will substantiate the theoretical and methodological framework to be used. In the first section which follows, we will explore a variety of new institutionalist approaches, and primarily historical institutionalism, with a focus on different patterns of institutional change and continuity, and different types of institutions. The second section will then build on the institutionalist theory to elaborate the adopted methodology in terms of the general research design as well as more specific aspects of data sources and analysis. The last section will summarise the overall framework with regard to welfare regime change in different contexts as well as the empirical strategy to be followed in the remaining chapters of the dissertation.

3.1 Institutional Theory

Institutions can be concisely defined as ‘durable systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interactions’, including ‘norms of behaviour and social conventions as well as legal and formal rules’ (Hodgson, 2005 p.86). This captures key aspects of other definitions in the literature, which emphasise the regular (Verba, 1971 p.300) and enduring (Clemens and Cook, 1999) character of institutions as well as their role in shaping the structural context of choices (North, 1990; Ostrom, 1986). The durability of institutions means that they are generally associated with a certain resilience, but institutionalist theory still provides us with useful conceptual tools to explain both the dynamics behind this resilience and different ways in which institutions change despite resilience. In this regard, this section starts by outlining the concepts of path dependence, critical juncture and layering with an emphasis on the relationship between institutions and actors. It then moves on to discuss different types of institutions, including institutions at the level of policies, organisational structures and welfare regimes as well as the distinction between formal and informal institutions, with a view to better accounting for the Turkish trajectory.

3.1.1 Institutional change and continuity

A broad look at the institutionalist literature points out continuity rather than change as the dominant pattern of development, which is primarily linked to the existence of

increasing returns in a path dependent process. Since there is a 'symbiotic relationship between institutions and the organizations that have evolved as a consequence of the incentive structure provided by those institutions', existing institutions create a lock-in (North, 1990 p.7), and usually change incrementally and 'at the margin' (p.6). This can also be called a 'self-reinforcing' or 'positive feedback' process in which steps in a particular direction are likely to induce further movement in the same direction (Pierson, 2000 p.252). While path dependence is frequently explained from a utilitarian perspective from the eyes of the actors, with the costs of switching to an alternative institution rising over time, there are also other mechanisms in play which are based on the functionality of an institution for the overall system, or its power distribution and legitimation effects (Mahoney, 2000). As such, the effect of institutions is not limited to enabling and constraining certain choices; they also shape, in their reconstituting capacity, the very goals and ideas that actors pursue (Chang, 2002; Hall, 1986; Hodgson, 2005). These mechanisms are all likely to entail the reproduction of existing institutions rather than change.

The concept of 'policy legacies' (Weir and Skocpol, 1985), or 'policy feedbacks' as it is more widely known (Pierson, 1993; Skocpol, 1992), constitutes a good illustration of path dependence by highlighting how policies, once instituted, influence the trajectory of further institutional development. Skocpol (1992) highlights two types of feedback effects, relating to state capacities on the one hand, and social groups and actors on the other. In these two regards, efforts to implement new policies come to transform administrative possibilities for future initiatives, while policies themselves also affect the identities, goals and capabilities of actors that take part in politics (p.58). Broadly agreeing with these suggestions, Pierson (1993) proceeds to discuss when policy feedbacks occur, and argues that they are more likely in certain circumstances, such as when policies rely on the development of specialised administrative skills (p.605), when interest group activity is not well established (p.603), or when policy outcomes are visible to the public and easily traceable to the governmental action (p.622). The adoption of certain policies would therefore engender a path dependent process which then becomes increasingly difficult to reverse.

In view of the emphasis on continuity as the dominant pattern of institutional development, the times of change are largely distinguished from the processes of

reproduction and can be described as critical junctures when a particular institutional arrangement is chosen among alternatives (Mahoney, 2000). Combined with path dependence in other times than such junctures, this comes to constitute a punctuated equilibrium model in which ‘infrequent’ rapid change is ‘followed by long periods of either relative stasis or path dependent change’ (Krasner, 1988 p.74). Similar accounts are widely relied on in the literature, with the conception of radical change as a ‘rupture’ in the path of history (Pempel, 1998 p.3) and the conception of change outside such ruptures as ‘bounded change’ (Pierson, 2000 p.265). Change in critical junctures is explained separately from the dynamics of reproduction, for example on the basis of exogenous shocks, or the distinct role of change agents and political leadership (Hall, 1993; Katznelson, 2003; Mahoney 2000), although the possibility of unintended consequences is also noted in a longer-term historical perspective (Pierson, 2004 pp.14-15). At the same time, the long-lasting effects of critical junctures on the further trajectory of development are highlighted through comparative empirical work (Collier and Collier, 2002).

Meanwhile, path dependence is not only about the reproduction of a specific institution itself, but alternatively can also be linked to the dynamics of the broader institutional structure. Following the logic of institutional complementarity, which is central to the varieties of capitalism literature, two institutions are seen as complementary when the presence of one increases the returns from the other (Hall and Soskice, 2001 p.17). The applications of this logic to welfare regimes in advanced industrialised countries, for example in terms of their interaction with industrial relations, or vocational training and the skill structure of the economy, reveal important linkages between different institutions (Estevez-Abe, Iversen and Soskice, 2001; Mares, 2001). These linkages mean, on the one hand, that specific combinations of institutions are more likely to be reproduced over time. On the other hand, when there is change in one institution, this would have the potential to impact the whole institutional structure through ‘complementarity effects’ (Amable, 2003 p.7). For this reason, periods of relative stability can be expected to be followed by ‘periods of relatively important institutional change affecting several areas of the economy’ (ibid.), in what echoes the punctuated equilibrium model.

Yet there are other accounts which approach the process of institutional development from a more continuous perspective, criticising the emphasis on

punctuated equilibrium-inspired patterns because those come to suggest that ‘institutions explain everything until they explain nothing’ (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992 p.15). While changes in the broader socioeconomic or political context are a potential source of ‘institutional dynamism’, actors may respond to these changes by manoeuvring within existing institutions, hence without an institutional breakdown (ibid., pp. 16-17). Expanding on this perspective, it is also possible to discover elements of institutional continuity through times of historic break (Thelen, 2004). Case studies which focus on processes of democratisation in some Latin American countries, which can be considered as critical junctures, indeed find important continuities despite the overall extent of change. For instance, in Brazil, democratic transitions were accompanied by continuities in terms of not only the influence of the army or notables, but also more structural aspects such as the clientelistic style of doing politics and governing (O’Donnell, 1992). Similarly, in Chile, the democratically elected coalition inherited the liberal economic model of Pinochet years to an important extent, as shown by the labour reform following political democratisation (Haagh, 2002b).

In addition, the expanding theorisation of gradual change, that is, incremental change which is not simply reproductive but culminates in transformative outcomes, aptly challenges the sharp distinction between change and continuity. In this sense, periods of time which appear to be characterised by path dependence and stability can ultimately see institutional trajectories transformed in the absence of any critical juncture or major exogenous changes. Gradual change as such comes from the everyday processes of implementation and enactment because institutions are always open to some degree of interpretation and actors can make use of this openness in their political contestation over the nature of institutions (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010; Streeck and Thelen, 2005). This can occur in different ways, such as the displacement of dominant institutions by dormant ones, drift of institutions away from social reality, the conversion of existing institutions to be used for new purposes, and more importantly for the purposes of the current research, institutional layering and differential growth of the new layer (Streeck and Thelen, 2005 p.33)¹².

¹² The authors also mention exhaustion as another pattern but noting that it indicates institutional breakdown rather than change, which is why it is not included here. Exhaustion is also excluded from analysis by Mahoney and Thelen (2010), who otherwise borrow and substantiate the typology developed by Streeck and Thelen (2005).

Layering as a pattern of gradual change refers to the introduction of new institutions without the removal of existing institutions but in the form of ‘amendments, revisions or additions’ to them (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010 p.16). In time, ‘new layers’ operating on a different logic may create institutional change by growing more quickly than old institutions through a process of differential growth (Streeck and Thelen, 2005 p.23). While new institutions gradually come to challenge the reproduction of old institutions, this usually does not provoke a strong reaction by the defenders of the status quo because they are not directly confronted. One example from the welfare state literature is the development of private pension systems alongside public systems, which can culminate in significant changes over time as they grow rapidly and undermine support for public provisions (ibid.). The examination of recent trends in France also provides a very good illustration of layering that leads to the transformation of the logic of the welfare regime (Palier, 2005). In this case, tax-funded selective benefits, which are typically associated with the liberal regime type, were layered onto the contributory social insurance system. The result was a certain liberalisation of the French welfare regime, which was politically made possible by the adoption of new schemes as initially minor additions rather than alternatives to the firmly established old ones.

The concepts of path dependence, critical juncture and layering are all relevant to the analysis of the welfare regime development in Turkey. Firstly, the dramatic rise of social assistance can be traced back to the period between 1999 and 2001, which was characterised by a major earthquake and economic crisis, in what appears as a critical juncture for the future trajectory of the welfare regime. Concomitantly, path dependence explains the expansion of social assistance policies once they were instituted in this juncture. However, on the one hand, limiting our focus to this part of the trajectory would make us miss important elements of continuity from the previous period, hence the need for a broader historical perspective. On the other hand, inspired by theories of gradual change, there is a need to scrutinise the more recent, apparently path dependent, development of social assistance with regard to its potential for transforming the regime through layering. As discussed in Chapter 2, this may indeed mean an expansion of social rights in view of the specificities of the middle income country context. The Turkish trajectory therefore depends on the extent to which the new institutional layer, that is, the system of non-contributory social assistance, can

transform the logic of the existing regime, that is, the logic of contributory social insurance, in such a way to expand social rights that are embodied within the broader regime.

3.1.2 Types of institutions

Alongside the concepts of path dependence, critical juncture and layering, the analysis of institutional change and continuity also needs to rely on a clear understanding of what is meant by an institution and different types of institution. The definitions of the concept of institutions in the literature, summarised as durable systems of rules above, are rather broad and the content of what is taken as an institution in specific studies differs to some extent. There may actually be no need to predefine this content in a standard way, as institutionalist research is focused on ‘institutional effects wherever, or however they occur’ (Immergut, 1998 p.25). These effects arise from institutions as varied as formal rules and procedures, voluntary associations, firms or even cognitive frameworks, and the choice of specific institutions to be scrutinised depends on the context and focus of each study. Yet, for this very reason, we need to look at definitional issues around institutions more closely with a view to assessing the relevance of different types that are referred to in the literature for the Turkish case and developing a more accurate account of patterns of change and continuity in this regard.

One definitional issue is about the width of the scope of institutions, as different studies put the emphasis on institutions of varying scope. For instance, organisations, such as political parties, trade unions, firms or social associations, can be seen both as collective actors within a broad institutional structure, and a specific type of institution themselves insofar as they have internal actors and rules (Hodgson, 2005 p.86; North, 1990 p.5). Therefore, the consideration of organisations as actors or institutions should be decided according to the analytical interest of the research. Additionally, there is a question as to whether and when policies constitute institutions. Policies can be certainly considered as institutions since they impose key rules which shape the interactions of individuals and organisations in the society (Pierson, 2004 p.165), in accordance with the adopted definition. Nevertheless, it is also useful to take the character of the policy into account: While policy decisions which are concerned with rather singular actions of policy-makers are not necessarily institutions, policies which

create a system of normatively supported rights and responsibilities for actors do embody the characteristics of an institution (Streeck and Thelen, 2005 p.12).

This variation in approaches to the scope of institutions is not a problem in itself, but highlights the importance of being precise about what is taken as an institution. In this dissertation, political parties and interest groups that are part of the process of welfare policy-making will be considered as actors rather than institutions, therefore no attention will be paid to their internal institutional characteristics. On the other hand, the account of institutional development will be based on institutions understood at three different levels: policy, organisational structure and welfare regime. In this sense, social assistance policies, which have recently been rising in Turkey will be considered as an institution because they indeed constitute a system of rights and responsibilities. In addition, the internal characteristics of some organisations, such as the implementers of social assistance at the local level and their corresponding unit at the centre, have direct implications for broader institutional development and will therefore be included in the analysis as institutions. Finally, the overall system of welfare provision, understood as a welfare regime, will be the main focus of research in terms of theorising about institutional development, which will be done on the basis of an explicit account of how it relates to institutions at other levels.

Some examples from the literature confirm that making a clear analytical distinction between institutions of varying scope, such as policies and the regimes which they make part of, is likely to contribute to the explanation of institutional change and continuity. One example that explicitly addresses the link between different levels is Hall's analysis of three 'orders' of change, corresponding to overarching goals that guide policy, the choice of policy instruments and the settings of specific instruments (1993 p.278). For Hall, changes in instruments and their settings are associated with 'normal policy-making' whereas changes in overarching goals indicate radical 'paradigm shifts', and the former do not automatically lead to the latter (p.279). Hence Hall's analysis seems to fit the punctuated equilibrium model, but there are other examples which combine the distinction between institutions at different levels with the perspective of gradual change as well. Palier's examination of the role of targeted policies in transforming the overall welfare state through layering (2005), or Hacker's work on policy drift, which looks at how the

failure to adapt policies to new risks has come to constitute a significant retrenchment of the welfare state (2005), attest to the usefulness of this combination.

The second definitional issue around institutions, which also has contributions to make to the understanding of patterns of change and continuity, is concerned with the distinction between formal and informal institutions. As opposed to legal and formal rules, that is formal institutions, informal institutions in the literature are broadly understood as social norms and conventions (Hodgson, 2005 p.86). In addition, they can also include 'extensions, elaborations and modifications of formal rules' which evolve from those rules to deal with specific problems (North, 1990 p.40). Yet, they need to be distinguished from behavioural regularities that do not rely on social sanctions as well as from simply weak formal institutions (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004). As such, informal institutions can be more specifically defined as 'socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels' (p.727), a definition which highlights the centrality of well-established rules and their enforcement, even though this takes place in different ways from formal institutions.

The distinction between formal and informal institutions may not make an important difference in terms of their capacity to shape the behaviour of actors; however, it is crucial to the theorisation of welfare regimes because whether a role is assumed formally or informally changes the nature of social rights. In the literature on advanced industrialised countries, this distinction is generally taken for granted and seen as a dichotomous one, with the conception of informal institutions as 'cultural filters' (North, 1990 p.37), or their association with 'anthropological' institutions, such as mores and customs, as opposed to the 'political' (Streeck and Thelen, 2005 p.10). Streeck and Thelen explain this as a conscious choice on their part because advanced political economies in which they are interested are mainly controlled by formalised norms and sanctions. Yet, the distinction between formal and informal institutions becomes much more blurred in cases where the former are less effective or comprehensive. In other words, informal institutions, such as those characterising the welfare regimes of middle income countries, may indeed make up a significant part of their political economies. They may also be formalised to different extents and in different ways, at times subject to some degree of state intervention. Therefore, the discussion of patterns of change and continuity in welfare regimes in this context

requires us to go beyond the view of informal institutions as purely socio-cultural and consider the role of formal as well as informal institutions.

As informal institutions have received growing attention in relation to a variety of topics from economic development to political democratisation and the enforcement of civil rights (for example Brinks, 2003; Hodgson, 2005; North, 1990; O'Donnell, 1996), one key debate has been about their interaction with formal institutions. These two types of institutions are widely assumed to be either complementary or competing, with informal institutions facilitating the functioning of formal institutions or entering into conflict with them, but there are also more nuanced accounts of this relationship (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004; Lauth, 2000). For instance, informal institutions may play a substitutive role when existing formal institutions are ineffective and they are functionally equivalent to these ineffective formal institutions (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004 p.729). More interestingly, informal institutions which exist alongside effective formal institutions may also work towards a divergent outcome without directly violating them, in what is called an accommodating relationship (*ibid.*).

Another debate has been focused on the dynamics of institutional development with regard to informal institutions. For North, informal institutions are highly embedded in the society, hence resistant to change through political or judicial decisions, which creates a certain element of continuity in institutional development (North, 1990 p.6). Meanwhile, Helmke and Levitsky (2004) discuss the possibility of both incremental and rapid change in informal institutions depending on whether this happens in response to changes in formal institutions or developments in the external environment, or through cultural evolution (p.732). While they primarily focus on the development of informal institutions themselves rather than their role in broader institutional development, Helmke and Levitsky also attach a stabilising role to accommodating informal institutions because those are likely to reconcile the interests of actors with existing formal institutions and thus dampen demands for change (p.279). However, longer-term dynamics may be different if informal institutions become powerful enough to alter the logic of formal institutions, through a process which displays similarities to layering. An excellent example of this is provided by Tsai's analysis of private sector development in China (Tsai, 2006), where informal

coping strategies devised by some actors to evade the restrictions of formal institutions in turn motivated and enabled the reform of the formal system (pp. 117-118).

This literature that pays particular attention to informal institutions gives us important insights for the study of welfare regimes in middle income countries, which, in the previous chapter, have been categorised as informal security regimes. Informal sources of welfare, which play a key role in these regimes, can indeed be aptly conceptualised as different types of informal institutions. On the one hand, there is a well-established expectation from the family to play a complementary role because formal welfare institutions generally rely on family in terms of the sharing of the resources and the undertaking of many social functions such as care. On the other hand, informal labour markets and patron-client networks in the community seem to belong to the accommodating type because they constitute alternative ways of providing some security to those who are excluded from regular formal provisions. Those informal institutions function outside formal institutions and towards a different purpose, but without any open confrontation or tension. Recent changes through the rise of social assistance as a formal institution then constitute important realignments in these relationships between formal and different types of informal institutions that characterised previous regimes.

Restated in the terms of the institutionalist theory as summarised above, the argument of this dissertation will be that the overall *welfare regime* in Turkey has sustained a significant degree of exclusion and informality despite the rise of social assistance *policies* as formal institutions and the establishment or strengthening of certain *organisational structures* in line with this. When the focus of analysis is on formal policies, the rise of social assistance resembles a very good example of institutional layering that originated in a critical juncture and then followed a process of differential growth. However, the system of social assistance did not have to be created from scratch since existing institutions provided useful precedents when devising and implementing the ‘new’ layer, which carried the risk of curtailing the transformative potential of social assistance. On the one hand, attention to informal as well as formal institutions which constitute welfare regimes in a long-term historical perspective allows us to discover important continuities. On the other hand, the recent trajectory in Turkey has not been about a direct incorporation of informal institutions into the formal. It has rather corresponded the reproduction of some features of the

previous informal security regime in new forms within formal institutions, hence indicating a distinct path dependent trajectory, as will be substantiated through empirical work in this dissertation.

3.2 Methods

Institutionalist theory, with a focus on historical institutionalism as suggested in the previous section, makes some fundamental assumptions about the structure of the social and political world that it analyses, which should ideally be aligned with the adopted methodology (Hall, 2003). For historical institutionalists, causality is contextual and depends on a constellation of factors, hence complex, rather than parsimonious, explanations are favoured (Immergut, 1998 p.19). In addition, they rely on a rather inductive logic, as distinct from grand theories or global assumptions about human behaviour (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992 p.12), and put temporality at the centre of the analysis by focusing on the tracing of transformations over time and the specification of sequences (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002). In this regard, this section firstly elaborates the case study design of this dissertation and the process tracing approach that guides the research in line with the assumptions of institutionalist theory. It then explains the details about the processes of data collection and analysis.

3.2.1 Research design

As a general frame, case study, which has the depth of analysis as one of its primary virtues (Gerring, 2004 p.348), is well-suited to address the kind of complex relations that are considered as structuring the world in an institutionalist perspective. Although case study has a methodological affinity with descriptive inference in this sense, it is also capable of furthering explanatory arguments through the discovery of proximate causal relationships, mechanisms and pathways (Gerring, 2004; 2007). Case studies can be particularly useful in developing hypotheses and theoretical insights in areas where no theory exists yet (Lijphart, 1971), or in identifying new variables which contribute to the development of new theories (George and Bennett, 2005). The aim of the case study design suggested here is thus to contribute to the understanding of different institutional trajectories in middle income countries since the theories of welfare regime development in these contexts are relatively limited and mostly rely on

frameworks that are based on the experiences of advanced industrialised countries, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The actual strength of case study is in fact internal validity, but we should note that there is usually also an implicit aim of generalisation in case studies which try, at least partially, ‘to shed light on a larger class of cases’ (Gerring, 2007 p.20). A comparative perspective, albeit much less strict than the comparative method, is embedded in case studies because single cases under investigation are generally viewed in the theoretical context of a larger number of cases (Lijphart, 1975 p.160). A key issue here is the specification of scope conditions that put limits on the generality of theories (Mahoney, 2007 p.128). While the larger group of countries for which the study of Turkey is relevant is defined as middle income countries in this regard, the Turkish case is not claimed to be representative of these countries nor more ‘typical’ than others (Gerring, 2007 pp.91-93) not least because they constitute a particularly diverse group. Hence, we expect the conclusions drawn from this case study not to be representative of transformations in other middle income countries, but only to generate insights for them given the similarities in their history of economic and political development, background of exclusionary and highly informal welfare regimes and recent trajectory of reform characterised by the rise of social assistance.

Turkey is rather taken, therefore, as an appropriate ‘exemplifying’ case which provides ‘a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered’ (Bryman, 2012 p.70). The 2001 economic crisis in the country was followed by a strong macroeconomic performance coexisting with a politically powerful government, for a period of more than 10 years when key developments in welfare policy, including the dramatic rise of social assistance, took place. As such, not only the economic crisis indicates a clear juncture for our study, but also economic and political stability in the following period allows us to control for certain potentially confounding factors. This period has seen, on the one hand, the extension of public welfare provision to groups that were previously excluded, indicating a significant impetus for institutional transformation. On the other hand, the institutionalisation of the system of social assistance as a new ‘layer’ of welfare institutions has been riddled with challenges. Given our research question concerned with the link between change in formal institutions at different levels and the broader welfare regime, including informal institutions, these two dynamics indeed provide a suitable context.

The case study of Turkey in this dissertation will rely on a process tracing approach which, with an emphasis on theory development, refers to the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences or conjunctures of events within a case for the purpose of discovering causal mechanisms that explain the outcome (Bennett and Checkel, 2015 p.7). This involves, on the one hand, a careful description of the observed phenomena which is a crucial ‘building bloc’ in process tracing (Collier, 2011 p.823). As discussed in the previous section, the developments under scrutiny in our case cannot be described by using the concepts of critical juncture, path dependence or gradual change in a straightforward way; they, therefore, need to be carefully delineated. On the other hand, the mechanisms that underlie the emergence of these phenomena also need to be analysed through process tracing, which, in line with institutionalist theory, will be done here with reference to the impact of external changes, existing institutions and the role of different actors.

In terms of time frame, the current research design takes the years between 1999 and 2001 as a critical period, with the economic crisis in 2001 constituting a particularly important turning point. The developments in the aftermath of this period are then subjected to an in-depth analysis with a view to assessing the elements of change and continuity that characterise the institutional trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime. The empirical analysis is brought up until the June 2015 general elections, when the ruling JDP, that had been in power since the 2002 elections just after the crisis, was unable to form a single party government for the first time. While the JDP gained the required majority for a single party government again as a result of the repeat elections in November 2015, the political and economic environment have been much less stable since then. This constitutes a suitable cut-off point for the period under scrutiny, because changing priorities and preoccupations thereafter would be difficult to accurately account for given the shortness of the corresponding timespan, limited amount of data and the ever-evolving nature of events.

In terms of empirical focus, the case study of Turkey traces the evolution of social assistance schemes that are currently under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy because those are expected to reflect the trajectory of the overall welfare regime the most accurately in view of our research question. Social assistance in Turkey is still very diverse and fragmented, and these schemes are only part of the whole picture. However, they are taken as indicative for two reasons: First

of all, they seem to constitute the most frequent source of support for households after informal networks of kinship and neighbourhood, ahead of municipalities and voluntary associations¹³. More importantly, they lie at the core of the efforts to systematise and integrate social assistance measures within the public pillar of the welfare regime, and consequently are more likely than other channels of provisions to contribute to the development of social rights¹⁴. Therefore, we maintain that the most pertinent potential of social assistance to transform the prevailing welfare regime lies with these specific schemes, which are analysed based on different data sources as will be explained below.

3.2.2 Data sources and analysis

Process tracing typically relies on a specific kind of observation, called ‘causal process observations’, which provide information about the context, processes and mechanisms (Brady, Collier and Seawright, 2010; Mahoney, 2010). These can be seen as ‘diagnostic pieces of evidence within a case’ (Bennett, 2010 p.208), which contribute to the understanding of relationships between variables. Process tracing is sometimes compared to detective work because it employs multiple types of evidence to verify one inference, and the pieces of evidence which are used may well embody different units of analysis (Gerring, 2007 p.173; Mahoney, 2007 p.132). This indeed can be argued to increase its methodological rigor as an approach by allowing ‘the triangulation of diverse data sources trained on the same problem’ (King, Keohane and Verba, 2010 p.122). Rather than trying to diversify methods directly, therefore, the data sources are diversified and the best technique is decided for the analysis of each data source.

The process tracing in this dissertation is based on texts and interviews, as two of the main data types frequently used in qualitative research (Silverman, 2004). There is also diversity in terms of sources belonging to these types, and the same sources are

¹³ According to TÜİK Life Satisfaction Surveys, almost 30% of the households state they have received support from the SYDTF in 2008, which compares to 59% from the kin and neighbours, and 21% from municipalities (TÜİK, 2009). In a temporal perspective, support from SYDTF and municipalities has been rising while the kin and neighbours have declined as a source of support in the period 2003-2008 for which this data is available.

¹⁴ It has been widely recognised that the distribution of aid by municipalities and voluntary associations, which are among other rising sources of support, leaves more room for patronage relations and clientelist manipulation (Eder, 2010; Erder and İncioğlu, 2008; Urhan and Urhan, 2015); which certainly goes against the expansion of social rights.

sometimes used with multiple purposes. To start with texts, the analysed sources consist of government programmes, a range of policy documents such as activity reports of relevant organisations, laws and regulations, official statistics¹⁵ and additional publications by different actors. While most of these are publicly available, a few documents dating from previous years and some additional statistics have been obtained through the correspondences during the fieldwork. Hence, the programmes of all governments from 2002 to 2015, the annual activity reports of first the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity and then the Ministry of Family and Social Policy from 2006 to 2015¹⁶, legal documents regulating various social assistance measures and statistical trends in number of recipients or levels of benefits have been included in the analyses. In addition, other documents that are analysed have covered a wide range from reports prepared by the World Bank through an official survey with social assistance recipients to bulletins of business associations.

As for the second type of data, elite interviews are used to gather primary data from actors. While there is no straightforward definition of the ‘elite’, it is usually understood as individuals who hold a privileged position in the society and are more likely to have an influence over political outcomes than the members of the general public (Richards, 1996 p.199). This definition is interpreted quite broadly in this dissertation, and the interviewed ‘elite’ included actors who are involved in political and policy processes at a variety of positions from politicians in the parliament to policy implementers at the local level. As a result, a total of 36 interviews were conducted, the majority of which are with the civil servants at the Ministry of Family and Social Policy or local SYDV foundations which are the implementers of social assistance schemes, but which also include a number of politicians and experts from outside the government. Appendix A.1 provides a full list of interviews¹⁷.

The aim of the interviews was to gain additional insights on the functioning of the institutional structure as well as the roles and perceptions of the actors. The sample

¹⁵ These are included as text here, because the only type of statistics which is available is very macro level data on the number of beneficiaries or total expenditure on different schemes, which are used for descriptive purposes.

¹⁶ Excluding the year 2008, the report for which was unfortunately not available nor possible to access through contacts in the Ministry.

¹⁷ In addition to those given in this list, conversations with two more academic experts were also an important part of the fieldwork, but these were in the form of consultations rather than interviews, therefore have not been included in the total number nor the list of interviews.

of interviewees has been constituted by relying on a mixed strategy: An attempt to maximise the number of respondents and diversify their positions has been combined with snowballing, which facilitated the access to key interviewees once initial contacts are made within a certain organization or group of actors. As such, a more comprehensive picture was attained and the risk of overlooking any critical respondents was decreased (Beamer, 2002). The interviews have then been based on semi-structured, open-ended questions, which are more suitable for projects in which depth and context are central to the data collection (Berry, 2002 p.682). This has provided a common base and frame to the interviews, while also ensuring the flexibility to adjust to different positions of the interviewees or responses during the interview. Appendix A.2 gives a broad list of questions used in the interviews. Finally, for recording as the last aspect of data collection, a choice was made between note-taking and audio-recording each time, according to the consent of the interviewees and the features of the interview environment. When note-taking was preferred, the notes were transcribed as soon as possible after the interview in order not to miss any details later.

Once the sources and features of data become clear, the next step in the research is the determination of appropriate techniques of data analysis. In this dissertation, the data obtained through texts and interviews are analysed in two broad ways, corresponding to different purposes. First, some pieces of data, especially legal documents and statistics, most of which are provided in official activity reports, are taken as sources of factual information. Since using such data as direct evidence may be problematic (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004)¹⁸, particular attention is paid to inconsistencies and unusual shifts over years, and an attempt is made to compare trends in different indicators or to consider potential links between changes in the legal framework and numerical trends where possible. This way, empirical trends in social assistance are traced as accurately as possible. Similarly, interviews are sometimes used to document the functioning of organisations and institutions, especially with regard to the implementation of policies by local SYDV foundations, which would otherwise be difficult to get a grasp of. To avoid problems resulting from

¹⁸ The examples which Atkinson and Coffey refer to in their chapter come from different areas such as crime, health and education outcomes, but the reporting on social assistance measures can also be problematised in the same way as it is not possible to verify the officially provided figures independently.

the subjectivities of the interviewees, this is also done with utmost attention, trying to get multiple interviewees from one organisation if possible and always checking the consistency of findings with other sources such as administrative documents or newspaper articles (Beamer, 2002; Berry, 2002).

The second way in which data is used is very different than the first one, as the text or interview material is this time taken as data in its own right rather than a source of information. Thus, texts are analysed as ‘documentary realities’ with an emphasis on the self-presentation of their authors and respective organisations (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004). Similarly, the subjectivities of the interviewees are not seen as a potential problem but become the object of analysis themselves, with a view to discovering their understandings, perceptions and motivations. The most suitable analytical technique here is content analysis, which is basically defined as a set of procedures aiming to make inferences from texts about the messages, the senders and the audience of these texts (Weber, 1990 p.10) or the ‘contexts of their use’ (Krippendorff, 2004 p.18). In addition, content analysis is a good technique not only for the analysis of texts but is also frequently used when analysing data from interviews (Beamer, 2002 p.94).

One key methodological consideration in content analysis is reliance on a systematic approach to data and transparency about the specific procedures that are used (Drisko and Maschi, 2015). In terms of approach to data, this dissertation combines ‘basic content analysis’ which involves some quantification through the use of word counts with more ‘interpretive’ approaches which focus on narrative accounts of data (ibid.). Basic content analysis is applied to annual administrative reports in order to assess temporal trends in the frequency of certain themes, the details of which are given in Appendix B.1. A list of these reports is also given in Appendix B.2. Meanwhile, other political and policy documents, which are listed in Appendix B.3, as well as the data from elite interviews are analysed in a more interpretive way. In both cases, categories that are used in coding are allowed to ‘emerge out of data’ to more accurately capture the specificities of the context (Bryman, 2012 p.291). In order to ensure consistency in each analysis, coding has been done in two rounds, by starting from the beginning for a second time, once a detailed grasp of the data is acquired and the initial codes are refined in the first round. When reporting the findings, the interviews are used in an anonymous way because this study is concerned with the

general features of groups of actors and the functioning of the system, hence the organisational or political position of the interviewees rather than specific persons.

At the same time, there is a need to clearly explicate particular research problems that guide the inferences to be made from content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). In this sense, it is worth reiterating that the analytical approach adopted here is aimed at explaining the trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime through an empirical study of the system of social assistance as the new ‘layer’ of welfare institutions. Therefore, inferences from undertaken content analyses will generally be about the change or continuity of certain institutional characteristics of the overall welfare regime. The next section will outline the ways in which different parts of the empirical work, as suggested above, will contribute to the analysis of the Turkish welfare regime after giving a brief overview of the theoretical framework and the argument.

3.3 Welfare Regime Change in an Institutional Perspective

Our theoretical framework, elaborated in this chapter, relies on new institutionalism which provides appropriate conceptual tools for analysing the dynamics of institutional change and continuity as well as capturing different types of institutions that make part of the broader institutional trajectory. In terms of dynamics of institutional development, it focuses on the concepts of path dependence, critical junctures and gradual change, which, in the context of advanced industrialised countries, have generally been used in the discussion of welfare state retrenchment or resilience. The central questions have therefore revolved around the extent to which existing institutions limited the possibilities for retrenchment in times of austerity, possible windows of opportunity created by external events such as crises in critical junctures, and the prevalence of a gradual trend of liberalisation in different welfare regimes (for example Farnsworth and Irving, 2011; Kersbergen, Vis and Hemerijck, 2014; Pierson, 2001; Streeck and Thelen, 2005). In this dissertation, we appropriate these concepts from the institutionalist theory to explain the trajectory of middle income countries that are largely still in the process of expanding the public pillar of their welfare regimes.

In terms of different types of institutions, our framework focuses on the distinction between policies, organisational structures and welfare regimes, which all constitute institutions of varying scope, on the one hand, and the distinction between formal and informal institutions on the other hand. The first distinction is important given the two trends generally characterising recent welfare regime changes that we highlighted in Chapter 2: We consider both the system of social assistance, constituted by rising selective policies, and the organisational structure of social assistance, reflecting the growing role of private actors especially in the implementation of provisions among other areas, as institutions. We then discuss how these changes relate to the development of the welfare regime at a broader level. The second distinction is particularly important in the context of middle income countries where the boundaries between formal and informal institutions are typically more blurred. One key point that needs to be clarified here is that there is no direct overlap between policies and formal institutions nor between the private pillar of welfare regimes and informal institutions. The private pillar is indeed more likely to rely on informal institutions; however, just as policies can reproduce elements of informality, the role of private actors can be formally institutionalised.

Using this framework, our aim is to explain the transformations embodied by rising social assistance policies in Turkey against the background of the previous informal security regime, looking at both the content of these policies and the organisational structure of implementation. First of all, we maintain that a long-term look at the historical evolution of welfare institutions is necessary to explain the trajectory of institutional development because regime characteristics may prove difficult to change through changes in policy despite the considerable transformative potential that we attribute to social assistance. Second, the more recent trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime is marked by the rise of social assistance at a critical juncture and its distinctive growth as a new layer of formal institutions which followed. Yet, there were also important continuities, with the most visible element of path dependence being the reliance on a pre-existing structure in the implementation of new policies. It is the dynamics and implications of this process of institutional development that the empirical case study undertaken in this dissertation aspires to analyse.

In this regard, the next chapter on the historical development of welfare institutions identifies the main characteristics of the informal security regime in the Turkish case. The gaps in the coverage of formal welfare institutions and the informal institutions which fill these gaps are discussed on the basis of secondary sources. The following chapters then go into the details of the transformations after the economic crisis in 2001 on the basis of analysed documents and interview data. The first one of these chapters is focused on the process of emergence of new social assistance policies, with regard to institutional developments themselves as well as the roles and perceptions of relevant actors. Later, we move on to scrutinising the nature of emerging institutions from the perspectives of policy outcomes and the on-the-ground functioning of policies in two separate chapters. While policy outcomes are assessed according to their capacity of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation, as suggested in Chapter 2, the analysis of the functioning of policies focuses on the organisational structure of social assistance. Based on these, we will ultimately argue that the transformative potential of social assistance in Turkey has been undermined to an important extent due to the reproduction or reconfiguration of some characteristics of the previous informal security regime through new policies, indicating an institutional trajectory where elements of change and continuity co-exist.

Chapter 4

Historical Development of Welfare Institutions in Turkey

The consideration of recent policies in Turkey as a potentially transformative realignment of welfare institutions relies on the specificities of its historical background, as discussed in Chapter 2 with regard to different trajectories of advanced industrialised and middle income countries. The current chapter will explore the historical development of the Turkish welfare regime, as a member of the latter group, in order to substantiate its main characteristics as a background to the more recent discussion of institutional change and continuity. Since free public education was provided from the early years of the Republic onwards, the focus will be put on income maintenance and access to healthcare which have both been linked to employment status and contributions¹⁹. As such, we will show that formal welfare institutions in Turkey have been highly exclusionary, due to their contributory basis and the prevalence of informal employment as characteristic of middle income countries. In addition, informal institutions have been central to the Turkish welfare regime, as typical of informal security regimes, and come to play a disproportionately important role for those who are largely excluded from access to formal institutions.

The chapter documents the historical development of welfare institutions throughout three main periods from the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 to the 2001 economic crisis. These periods, distinguished according to the country's broader trajectory of economic and political development, correspond to early years and the transition to multi-party politics, the ISI era between two military coups in 1960 and 1980, and the economic liberalisation after 1980 up until 2001. Notwithstanding varying dynamics within each of them, this periodisation is chosen

¹⁹ A recent reform has brought about some change in the situation with regard to healthcare, which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

because these periods are considered to have distinctive implications for welfare provision. The section on each period below will start with an overview of the economic and political context, followed by the discussion of welfare institutions, including formal and informal. Formal institutions here refer to specific welfare policies as well as some other redistributive channels or labour market regulations which are relevant to welfare provision while informal institutions are those ways of provision which are not officially defined. Once the discussion of the three main historical periods is concluded with a summary of key institutional characteristics of the prevailing Turkish welfare regime, the last section will briefly outline the post-2001 context as a basis for the empirical research in the next chapters.

4.1 Early Years and Transition to Multi Party Politics: 1923 – 1960

4.1.1 Economic and political context

After more than 10 years of warfare, the first years of the Republic were fraught with financial difficulties for the new government. A major part of the Ottoman public debt was inherited, there was a massive lack of capital and the land was under-cultivated (Sugar, 1964 pp.164-165). Moreover, the population had significantly declined during the wars, which created a shortage of labour, and particularly the dramatic decline in non-Muslim population due to deportations and population exchanges meant that the commercial class which had mostly consisted of Greeks and Armenians was lost (Keyder, 1987 p.104; Pamuk, 2008 pp.275-276). Therefore, the bureaucracy found itself in a position to build up a national economy from the beginning, which also included the creation of a new Turkish bourgeoisie. While initially there was strong economic recovery, mostly related to recovery from war conditions, when the Great Depression hit in 1929 the Turkish economy was still overwhelmingly agricultural and was substantively hit by the sharp decline in the prices of agricultural products (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 pp.13-14). Finally, although Turkey did not actively take part, the World War II brought about new economic difficulties such as increased defence spending, and disruption in imports and production.

During the period from 1923 to 1960, diverse strategies were followed in terms of economic policy. First of all, preceding trade arrangements such as low tariffs were agreed to remain in place until 1929 as part of the Treaty of Lausanne²⁰, which limited the margins of the government action. 1930s were then marked by increased protectionism and the strategy of *étatisme* which promoted the state as a leading producer and investor in the industry (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.19). This strategy was revised in 1947, with the new definition of *étatisme* maintaining the role of the state for sectors such as heavy industry and energy but envisioning the transfer of all other enterprises to private capital, and putting more emphasis on agricultural development (ibid., p.106). This new strategy was enthusiastically followed after the change of government in 1950, leading to significant agriculture-led growth in early 1950s, but the decline in agricultural exports and the increasingly inflationary responses of the government worsened the economic situation towards the end of the period.

As for the political context, this period consists of two significantly different sub-periods based on the transition to a multi-party system in 1946²¹. The first sub-period that corresponded to the single-party rule of the Republican People's Party (RPP) was generally characterised by the dominance of authoritarian political leadership and bureaucracy. The bureaucracy was unchallenged because an aristocracy did not exist, remaining segments of the Ottoman bourgeoisie were too weak, landed notables were included in the political alliance of the regime as subordinate partners and there was no mobilisation of the masses (Keyder, 1987; Sunar and Sayarı, 1986). However, post-World War II era brought about both domestic and international pressures for change. Regarding the international conjuncture, Turkey sided with the Western bloc and needed to conform to democratic ideals more closely to get full political and financial support (Yılmaz, 1997). Domestically, many social groups were dissatisfied with the RPP government, including not only the masses but also former supporters of the regime such as the bureaucracy and the emerging bourgeoisie (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 pp.104-105). In this context, rising tension within the RPP rooted in

²⁰ This is the treaty which set the foundations and international recognition of the new Republic, and determined the terms of the peace between the new Turkish national government and the Allied forces following the Turkish War of Independence.

²¹ In an alternative periodisation this would be the cut-off point rather than 1960, but we considered the ISI years after 1960 as having more distinctive features in terms of the development of welfare institutions.

different views on economic policy culminated in the foundation of the Democratic Party (DP) by former RPP politicians in 1946²².

The DP was not able to secure many seats in their first election, but they successfully mobilised social discontent and came to power by gaining a majority in 1950²³. The DP governments in 1950s can be seen as first examples of populist government in Turkey which formed a broad coalition based on distributive concessions to loosely connected groups. What they did was basically to mobilise ‘the people’ against the bureaucratic state, appealing to market-oriented farmers, commercial interests, small peasantry as well as religious protest groups (Sunar and Sayarı, 1986 p.173). Yet, the holding together of this coalition relied on the continuation of economic growth, and the worsening of economic conditions in mid-1950s initiated distributional conflicts (Boratav and Özügürü, 2005 p.173). Meanwhile, the DP developed an increasingly authoritarian stance throughout the ten years when they stayed in power, and their rule ended with a military coup in 1960.

4.1.2 Welfare provision and social rights

To build up a national economy, the early republican regime generally prioritised the urban sector despite its rhetoric that favoured the rural population (Pamuk, 2008 p.276). In this sense, it made significant concessions to the newly emerging bourgeoisie. For instance, the 1927 Law on the Encouragement of Industry offered tax exemptions as well as land grants and guaranteed public purchases to manufacturers above a certain scale and level of technology (Keyder, 1987 p.205). Once limitations coming from the Treaty of Lausanne expired, import tariffs were significantly raised to protect the domestic industry (Zürcher, 1998 p.204). The transfer of agricultural surplus to the urban sector through the price mechanism also created very favourable conditions for the urban economy in interwar years (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.24). Among exceptional wartime measures, there was the Wealth Levy of 1942 which brought unusually high rates of taxation for the business, but this was a one-off tax

²² The DP is actually not the first opposition party that was established in the history of Turkish politics but few attempts which preceded were very short-lived and ineffective.

²³ It should also be noted that the first elections in 1946 were not fair and were held under the strict control of the incumbent government. Therefore, the beginning of an effective multi-party system rather took place in 1950.

and was in fact implemented with deliberate discretion against non-Muslim groups²⁴ (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.169).

Meanwhile, there were also some measures which were aimed at the rural sector. Most importantly, the tithe, a traditional agricultural tax which was collected at 10% of the gross produce was abolished in 1924, entailing a significant decrease in the tax burden falling on the rural population (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.15). With the collapse of agricultural prices following the Great Depression, the government also started to purchase and market grains through the Agricultural Bank and the newly established Office of Soil Products to prevent extreme price fluctuations (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.164). These measures can indeed be seen as part of a deliberate policy to contain poverty in the countryside by ensuring the survival of peasant agriculture, as illustrated by other examples such as the ties between state economic enterprises (SEEs) and small farmers for agricultural input provisioning as well (Buğra, 2007 pp.39-40). As a result, government policies in this period seem to have effectively prevented the dislocation of the rural population to avoid the emergence of extreme poverty in urban areas, while industrial development largely remained a priority for economic policy.

The prioritisation of industrialisation over agricultural development was reversed with the DP's coming into power in 1950. DP governments supported the rural sector through a wide range of measures such as the distribution of state-owned land, favourable credit terms for farmers to be used in the import of agricultural machinery and the development of a road network to facilitate the marketisation of agricultural products (Keyder, 1987; Owen and Pamuk, 1998). In addition, price support programme for wheat, financed through Central Bank credits to the Office of Soil Products, became the most important government programme affecting agricultural incomes (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.108), and agricultural support policies were then expanded to cover most marketed crops (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.174). Finally, rural sector benefited from a very low tax burden even when indirect taxes are taken into consideration²⁵. These policies made bigger concessions to the

²⁴ As such, it resulted in a transfer of property to newly emerging groups who were able to buy from non-Muslim businessmen, even though this still damaged the general confidence of the bourgeoisie towards the state bureaucracy (Keyder, 1987 pp.113-114).

²⁵ A report prepared on the Turkish taxation system in early 1960s shows that the agricultural sector paid only 0.8 percent of direct taxes. When indirect taxes were included, the

rural sector as compared to the single-party years, but they also constituted an important continuity in that they promoted agricultural development based on the prevailing structure of small production, hence ruling out conditions for a capitalist transition in agriculture (Keyder, 1987).

Generally, state intervention in the economy in this period did not extend to welfare policy specifically nor included a major concern with increasing the demand in a Keynesian sense because the stage of industrialisation had not yet required a broad internal market (Keyder, 1987 p.107). Formal welfare institutions thus remained very limited, and where they existed their coverage was very low. For instance, social security arrangements inherited from the Ottoman Empire provided some pension and health coverage for government officials only (Boratav and Özuğurlu, 2005 p.164; Yakut-Çakar, 2007 p.104). Similarly, after the Great Depression, one major measure was payments to state functionaries in the form of cheap housing or other subsidies to ensure a respectable standard of living for them (Buğra, 2007 p.38; Keyder, 1987 p.205). For workers, a number of progressive measures such as minimum wages, maximum working hours and contributory sickness and accident funds were in place in large foreign-owned firms; however, provisions in national establishments did not go beyond the aim of creating an attractive environment around SEEs established under the strategy of *étatisme*²⁶ (Boratav and Özuğurlu, 2005 pp.166-167). This also included the legislation of some retirement funds for employees in the SEEs (Aybars and Tsarouhas, 2010 p.751), but the share of SEEs in total employment, or even in manufacturing sector employment, remained very small (Pamuk, 2008 pp.277-278), hence the extremely low coverage of these funds.

Broader institutions similar to social insurance schemes in advanced industrialised countries were indeed formed after mid-1940s. These included the Workers' Insurance Institution (*İşçi Sigortaları Kurumu*), later renamed Social Insurance Institution (*Sosyal Sigortalar Kurumu*), which covered private sector employees and blue-collar public workers, and the Retirement Chest (*Emekli Sandığı*) for civil servants, established in 1945 and 1949 respectively (Yakut-Çakar, 2007 p.104). Funded by employer and employee contributions, these institutions provided

contribution of the sector rose to one eighth of the public revenue at most, while agricultural production accounted for 42.5 percent of the domestic product (Buğra, 2007 p.43).

²⁶ SEEs became important actors in the urban economy in 1930s, especially in industries where the private sector could not accumulate the necessary capital (Zürcher, 1998 p.205).

protection against various risks such as old-age, disability and health. However, there was again a key problem of coverage because an overwhelming majority of the Turkish population was still outside formal market relations: In 1950, 80% of the population was living in the countryside, where small production dominated; self-employment, which is more akin to informal employment, was the rule in urban retail and services; and even in manufacturing self-employment and family employment had a considerable share (Keyder, 1987 p.118). As such, most people were unable to contribute to insurance schemes, and the combined population coverage of these two institutions remained around %20 (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.176).

In this context, self-help systems inherited from the Ottoman Empire, as examples of informal institutions, constituted alternative sources of welfare. These were based on artisanal traditions in the urban sector, and on extended families and sectarian elements for the rural population, which proved inadequate in dealing with social challenges of the republican era (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 pp.165-166). Another additional source was voluntary associations such as the Red Crescent (*Kızılay*) and the Society for the Protection of Children (*Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*), already established before the Republic, and the Association of Philanthropists (*Yardım Sevenler Derneği*) that was opened in 1928 (Buğra, 2007 p.38)²⁷. The voluntary character of these associations is indeed debatable given that the government played a key role in their establishment, they were expected to support the state in the policy process, and their budget included earmarked revenues from the government budget and more irregular transfers alongside private donations (ibid.). While this does not mean that those were informal institutions, the ambiguous and indirect role of state points out some degree of informality in the functioning of these associations. Overall, their resources also remained very limited, which prevented them from providing for a significant part of the society.

At the same time, the paternalistic approach underlying the policies of the early republican regime also embodied some informality. The approach of the state in this period was generally characterised by a sense of benevolent paternalism, as it attempted to ensure the wellbeing of the vulnerable in the society mostly as an act of

²⁷ As Buğra notes, the main difference in the republican era was the downplaying of religious references in the official discourse, for which secularism was a strict priority, but religious sentiments probably remained quite central to the mobilisation of private benevolence in the society.

benevolence on the part of those who were in the government at the time (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.158). The expression of 'father-state' (*devlet baba*) which is widespread in popular parlance illustrates such a sense of paternalism very well in that it both refers to a benevolent figure of welfare provider and highlights the centrality of family to the regime through the metaphor of a father taking care of his children. The paternalism of early years was then largely replaced by patronage and clientelism under the DP, with the widespread use of populist measures appealing to everyday demands and values of the people in a short-term perspective, and the exchange of goods and services for political loyalty and support (Sunar, 1990). For example, the peasantry was favoured through not only public goods such as high agricultural prices, but also private goods to particular villages such as roads, schools and factories (Waldner, 1999 p.62). Similarly, businessmen were given some favourable tariffs and exchange rates as well as selective access to import licences or foreign exchange (p.66).

Such practices went hand in hand with the absence of effective structures of interest representation, hence undermining the development of more formalised welfare institutions based on certain social compromises. In early years, the high degree of bureaucratisation in the absence of political democratisation and widespread industrialisation created a substantive gap between the state and the society (Sunar, 1994). The republican elite had a general suspicion towards interest group organisations (Sunar and Sayarı, 1986 p.170) and the policies were adopted in a top-down way. While the state tried to take some, albeit limited and indirect, responsibility for social welfare, the class basis of provisions was carefully avoided as illustrated by the official rhetoric of the time which emphasised the idea of a 'unified people without conflicting interests' (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.158). The fear of class politics also led to the adoption of harsh measures against the formation of labour unions such as the 1936 Labour Law which strictly banned class-based associations, strikes and collective bargaining or the 1947 Labour Law which recognised the right to organise in unions but continued to forbid any political activity and strikes (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.167 and 173).

Despite the centrality of popular incorporation for the party, the DP sustained the low institutional penetration of the society which it inherited from the early Republican period by relying on a diffuse clientelist network (Sunar and Sayarı, 1986

p.173). This meant that institutional structures of interest representation did not develop much with the transition to multi-party politics. Although the DP promised workers the right to strike before the elections, once they were in power they adopted repressive policies against trade unions (Zürcher, 1998). In addition to these policies, the position of emerging unions was also weakened by the small number of industrial workers, low level of education and extreme poverty which made it very difficult to collect union dues (p.226-227). Therefore, the DP was able to deny union intermediation and instead provided material benefits to individual workers directly (Waldner, 1999 p.65). The Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions TÜRK-İŞ (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*) was actually established in 1950s, but was not very effective due to major legal constraints in place. As such, trade union movement essentially organised within SEEs, and depended on non-confrontational relations with the government (Boratav and Özuğurlu, 2005 p.173).

4.2 The Experience of Import Substituting Industrialisation: 1960 – 1980

4.2.1 Economic and political context

Populist policies of the DP meant both increased spending and reduced revenue extraction, with budget deficits being mostly financed from external sources such as capital inflows and loose monetary policies (Waldner, 1999 pp.103-104). Growing balance of payments problems after the mid-1950s thus required a de facto shift to protected economy and severe restrictions were imposed on imports, but without a long-term perspective (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.109). When the rule of the DP ended with the military coup in 1960, a new phase of industrialisation built on the already developing de facto protection and returned to the strategy of planned economic development through import substituting industrialisation (ISI). While some national industries developed under protected economy, manufacturing remained dependent on the import of foreign parts and it was not possible to proceed to the export of domestic manufactures. The ISI then itself went into a major crisis in late 1970s due deteriorating balance of payments in the context of foreign currency shortage,

sustenance of existing policies by very costly borrowing schemes and the further compounding of economic problems with global oil crises (Pamuk, 2008 p.285).

Politically, the ending of the rule of the DP constituted a radical interruption in the democratic process. Paradoxically, however, the content of the new constitution adopted in 1961 was quite in line with liberal democratic values, and included some key social and associational rights. With the resuming of the political democracy soon after the coup, 1960s were characterised by the dominance of two parties, the Justice Party (JP) following the DP line and the RPP trying to redefine its political position, and 1970s witnessed growing party fragmentation and ideological polarisation. In contrast to the previous period, the cleavage of right and left became an increasingly important axis for Turkish politics after 1960. While the RPP gradually switched to the 'left-of-centre' and appealed to workers, small peasants and urban marginals especially in 1970s, the JP extended its identification with business and landed interests to the popular sector through clientelist ties (Sunar and Sayarı, 1986). These two interclass parties hence competed for a largely similar social base, and tried to maintain ideological distinctiveness less through specific policies than rhetorical manipulation, symbolism and sharp refusal to cooperate with each other, contributing to the deep political polarisation in the society together with minor parties on the extreme right and left.

4.2.2 Welfare provision and social rights

Economic policy under the ISI primarily favoured the industrialising urban sector. Specific measures adopted in these years consisted of a protected trade regime through tariffs and restrictions, manipulation of the exchange rate to sustain an artificially high value of Turkish lira, investment by SEEs and the availability of subsidised credits for industrialists (Owen and Pamuk, 1998; Zürcher, 1998). The planning process was managed by the newly established State Planning Office, and the rural sector was largely left out. Big family companies, large conglomerates and banks also emerged as important actors for industrialisation in this era, and the ISI strategy was successful in promoting industrial development and economic growth during the initial golden phase (Pamuk, 2008). Balance of payments issues were exacerbated by external borrowing towards the end of 1970s, but even then, the private sector was encouraged to borrow on favourable terms. For example, the convertible Turkish lira deposit

scheme launched in 1975 gave the firms exchange rate guarantees under inflationary conditions, which socialised the risk of borrowing to the detriment of popular classes (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.114).

While the rural population did not make part of the political coalition of the ISI, which included rising industrialists, bureaucratic elite and organised workers (Öniş and Şenses, 2007 pp.16-17), electoral competition meant that their interests could not be ignored. Thus, governments in this period kept refraining from imposing any direct property or income taxes on agriculture, and price support mechanisms initiated by the DP were continued, hence providing a high degree of support to the rural sector relative to the total output (Keyder, 1987 pp.156-158). Moreover, shift to more intensive techniques in agriculture was supported by policies subsidising inputs such as fertilisers or improved seeds through favourable exchange and interest rates (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.116). Such indirect measures facilitated the incorporation of the rural population to the domestic market and constituted a desirable development for emerging domestic industries in need of enlarged markets.

With a similar motivation, the protection of the domestic industry was also accompanied by a Keynesian-type demand management strategy, particularly during the pre-crisis stage of the ISI (Keyder, 1987). First of all, economic protection created a suitable environment for rising wages as they could be translated into higher prices for industrial goods. Workers' incomes were generally on rise from 1960 onwards, but since small manufacturers could not afford similar wage rises to the modern industrial sector, workers of big industries became a 'labour aristocracy' (Zürcher, 1998 pp.285-286). Workers in SEEs, which were still key actors in industrial production, also made part of this privileged segment, with the overstaffing of public enterprises and wage increases without increased productivity being major means of their incorporation (Waldner, 1999 p.110). These policies changed with the worsening macroeconomic situation in 1970s, however, and wages showed a sharp decline not only in the public sector but also in the large industrial sector that became reluctant to sustain real wage increases in the new inflationary environment (Keyder, 1987 p.156).

At the same time, the ISI period also witnessed the expansion of welfare policies and associational rights. 1961 constitution indeed defined the Turkish state as a 'social state' for the first time and explicitly mentioned rights to education, health,

employment and social security²⁸, although their realisation proved to be rather challenging. As compared to other middle income countries, Turkey performed generally well in health and education, which contributed to the social wage (Keyder, 1987 p.161). In addition, the establishment of a new social insurance scheme for the self-employed in 1971 (*BAĞKUR*) expanded the potential population coverage of social security. However, in 1970s, the actual coverage of the rural population was still largely absent, and only about 70% of the industrial workforce and 60% of the self-employed in urban areas was covered by social insurance (Zürcher, 1998 p.287), pointing out the existence of a considerable level of informal employment in the cities as well. Therefore, the reach of contributory institutions remained limited.

As for interest representation, the 1961 constitution empowered trade unions by granting rights to collective bargaining and strikes. While TÜRK-İŞ remained prudent about political activity and confrontation with the government, a stance which was reinforced by financial subsidies it received (Sakallıoğlu, 1991 p.58), a number of trade unions rejected cooperating with the rightist JP government and broke away from TÜRK-İŞ to form the new Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions DİSK (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*) in 1967 (Zürcher, 1998 p.286). 1970s also witnessed the emergence of other groups such as the Confederation of Nationalist Trade Unions MİSK (*Türkiye Milliyetçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*) and more religiously-oriented HAK-İŞ (*Hak İşçi Sendikalar Konfederasyonu*). However, organised workers remained a minority within the overall labour force in this period, and there was a striking duality between them and unorganised workers, who, mostly in small industries, did not have the rights gained through union organisation (Keyder, 1987 p.161).

At the same time, business representation also diversified in this period. The Turkish Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry TOBB (*Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği*) was already established in 1950 but had an organisational structure that privileged commercial interests, creating tensions within the bourgeoisie, particularly between importers and industrialists (Waldner, 1999 p.68). The Turkish Industry and Business Association TÜSİAD (*Türkiye Sanayiciler ve İşadamları*

²⁸ A comparative table of different constitutions is given in the Ministry of Justice website (in Turkish): <http://www.adalet.gov.tr/duyurular/2011/eylul/anayasalar/1982.pdf> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

Derneği) was founded in 1971 as a distinct association representing the interests of big industrialists because they did not have the weight they desired within TOBB. They were actually in favour of more liberal measures, they sought a higher share of foreign exchange and credits, and they could afford higher wages to increase demand in the market (Arat, 1991). In addition, the Turkish Confederation of Employers' Associations TİSK (*Türkiye İşveren Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*) was established following the 1961 constitution with a role in collective bargaining and came to have a more militant stance against the demands of the trade unions.

One key development in terms of formal welfare institutions in the period was the introduction of the first non-contributory social assistance scheme with the 1976 legislation on social disability and old age pensions. This scheme targeted the elderly and the disabled who lacked social security coverage, was financed from the general state budget, and was managed by the Retirement Chest which is otherwise concerned with social insurance provisions for civil servants (Yakut-Çakar, 2007 p.106). However, one eligibility requirement for this scheme was not having anyone from the family or close relatives legally responsible for caring for the potential recipient, which provides a very good illustration of the central position of the family and kinship ties to the welfare regime. As such, the scheme assumed that the family should be the first resort for those who do not have access to formal social security and the state should play a residual role only when it failed, hence remaining far from marking the beginnings of an alternative safety net independent from previous contributions.

Meanwhile, the role of the family within the welfare regime was also being reshaped in the context of rural-urban migration that took off from 1950s onwards. Migration to cities grew despite direct and indirect measures of support to the rural sector, but it was not always possible for the new migrants to find regular industrial jobs and they were overrepresented in the unprotected informal part of the urban labour markets (Zürcher, 1998 p.284). The typical migrant was the lone young male, whose family continued to cultivate the land in the countryside, he usually travelled to the village to help with the harvest and received regular supplies in kind, often as a compensation for his sustained claim to land (Keyder, 1987; Owen and Pamuk, 1998). Assistance from extended family or neighbourhood in the city also functioned as an effective source of welfare for the migrants. As new migrants settled in shantytowns already inhabited by people who had migrated from their province or village, the

population of neighbourhoods usually consisted of people from the same area of the country and the social fabric of the migrant communities remained very strong (Rustow, 1965 p.283). Networks of mutual support in these communities also played a significant role in determining the economic opportunities available to the newcomers (Buğra and Keyder, 2006 pp.220-221).

The possibility of informal housing in the shantytowns constituted another source of welfare during this period. The emergence of shantytowns in the peripheries of the cities initially became possible thanks to the availability of abundant public land (Buğra and Keyder, 2006 p.221). Migrating peasants usually had some initial capital to start building a house, found a plot with the help of their kin or co-locals and undertook the construction of the house principally based on family labour (Buğra and Keyder, 2006; Keyder, 1987). The initial houses could then be easily enhanced while the economic situation of the owners improved. Moreover, not only the occupation of public land for the building of shantytowns was tolerated by governments, but also the houses were eventually legalised through the distribution of titles to land (Keyder, 1987). The latter usually happened with populist concerns before the elections, accompanied by the delivery of municipal services and amenities to these peripheral neighbourhoods, meaning that informal house owners came to possess valuable urban property in time and shantytowns turned into permanent housing areas. This points out an indirect involvement by the state in the functioning of an informal institution, an involvement which itself takes place outside the formally defined channels.

Populism and patronage-based practices also seem to have continued to characterise the link between the state and the society more broadly in this period. Although the post-1960 coalition tried to substitute planning for patronage and social democracy for populism, its success in doing so was controversial (Sunar, 1994). As bureaucratic cohesion was gradually lost in 1970s, especially under coalition governments in which each party controlled different ministries, a lot of new posts were created with patronage motives to ensure political support regardless of meritocratic achievement (Waldner, 1999 p.72). A similar logic of partisan loyalty was also visible in the case of the trade unions: TÜRK-İŞ was compelled to political weakness in return for official recognition, monopoly in representation and financial contributions (p.65). In addition, barriers against the effective organisation of class-based interests were accompanied by top-down concessions made to different groups,

mostly according to electoral cycles. In time, this political style became a more permanent feature of the Turkish model of representation, in which welfare policy was based on a sense of ‘giving’ on the part of the state rather than rights as entitlements (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 pp.171-172).

4.3 Move towards a Liberal Economy: 1980 – 2001

4.3.1 Economic and political context

Despite the growing crisis of the ISI, resistance from different groups with vested interests in its continuation and the political atmosphere of 1970s characterised by a polarised party system, unstable coalition governments and the absence of any cooperation between different camps (Sunar and Sayarı, 1986 p.182) made a fundamental change of vision in economy difficult. A comprehensive reform package for the stabilisation and liberalisation of economy, including radical measures such as a major currency devaluation, government expenditure cuts and abolishment of foreign trade restrictions, was announced in early 1980 in the context of economic stalemate and escalating civil unrest. However, the package, known as ‘24th January Decisions’, that was prepared under a minority government, was met with widespread popular resistance. The new programme was then actively endorsed by the military regime which took over the power with a coup in the same year and the initial transition to an export-oriented economy occurred under conditions of non-democratic government.

In terms of economic policy, the short-term aims were to improve the balance of payments and to reduce the inflation rate. In this sense, Turkish lira was continually depreciated, trade and payment regimes were liberalised, price controls were removed, many government subsidies were eliminated, interest rates were freed and foreign capital inflow was encouraged (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.118). In addition, pressures for competitiveness coming from the export orientation made the lowering of wage costs a strategic policy objective, with the military regime playing a crucial role in ‘disciplining’ the labour force (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.183). New policies created some export growth, but this was mainly based on the reorientation of the

capacity of existing ISI industries towards external markets (Pamuk, 2008 p.287). As they failed to generate new private investment, the overall growth performance remained rather modest.

Moreover, capital accounts were fully liberalised in 1989, in what is seen as a premature exposure to financial globalisation (Öniş, 2003 p.8). Consequently, over-reliance on fragile short-term capital inflows became the main weakness of the economy in 1990s. This was at the origin of the balance of payments crisis in 1994 and the decade was generally characterised by the succession of capital inflow-induced booms, increased financial and fiscal fragility, and capital outflow-induced crises. Finally, high inflation again came to constitute a central problem as public deficits were financed by increased levels of borrowing and the printing of money (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.121). International financial institutions played an active role in the policy-making process in Turkey, especially in the aftermath of the 1994 crisis with a view to imposing fiscal discipline (Boratav and Özuğurlu, 2005 p.181).

As for political dynamics, the 1980 coup took place with the active support of the big industrial bourgeoisie because the increasing scarcity of imported goods, which were required for sustained production, had led them to seek an alternative in late 1970s (Keyder, 1987 p.191). At the same time, this can also be seen as a counter-attack against the parliamentary populism of the preceding period (Boratav and Özuğurlu, 2005 p.178). Meanwhile, the return to parliamentary democracy took longer than it did after the 1960 coup this time. All political parties of the pre-1980 era and their leaders were banned from politics and a restricted election, in which only three parties approved by the military could participate, was held in 1983. This resulted in the victory of the Motherland Party (MP) under Turgut Özal, who was already in charge for the implementation of the economic reform package before the coup.

The governing MP in this period was supported by quite a peculiar coalition ranging from the conventional constituency of the JP to more Islamist and nationalist elements, and the personality of Özal played a key role in sustaining this coalition (Zürcher, 1998). Restriction of the political scene by the military regime also meant that possibilities were limited, which arguably contributed to his power as a civilian leader. With political democratisation towards the end of 1980s, numerous political parties emerged, including the inheritors of pre-1980 parties and representatives of alternative lines such as Islamism. The MP maintained its parliamentary majority in

1987 elections but gradually lost power with increasing political competition. High degree of fragmentation in the party system and fragile coalition governments that could not escape old-style populist policies in 1990s then contributed to economic fluctuations in the second part of this period.

4.3.2 Welfare provision and social rights

The promotion of export-oriented industries in the 1980s came together with the repression of labour. Real wages declined by 34% from 1977 until 1987 (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 pp.119-120). The fiscal system under MP governments also favoured business groups by shifting the tax burden significantly to wage owners and consumers, and decreasing social spending in relative terms. This situation was somewhat changed with increasing political competition and the possibility of expressing social discontent towards the end of the decade, and governments in 1990 showed substantive examples of populist generosity such as the Islamist Welfare Party leader Erbakan announcing a 50% pay raise for state employees and rises up to 130% for the pensioners once in power (Zürcher, 1998 p.324). Similarly, early retirement was introduced by a coalition government in 1992, allowing women and men to retire with 20 and 25 years of full contributions respectively regardless of age (Yakut-Çakar, 2007 p.119). This accelerated the deficits of the pension system together with the misuse of collected contributions for financing domestic debt, and the rise of informal employment and unemployment (p.120). The first substantive reform in the system then occurred in 1999, with the involvement of the World Bank, when a minimum retirement age was introduced.

The developments that concerned the rural sector in this period were quite similar to the organised labour. The immediate aftermath of the coup was characterised by a substantial decline in the scope and magnitude of agricultural support policies. Combined with the impact of international markets, this caused a 47% decline in agricultural terms of trade from 1977 to 1988, which constituted a deep price shock for the farmers (Boratav and Özügurlu, 2005 p.180). As a result, there was a shift towards more intensive techniques and more labour-intensive crops in order to compensate for declining prices (Owen and Pamuk, 1998 p.121). The return of conventional populism towards the end of 1980s again benefited the rural population, with rising public spending on support purchases and subsidies especially

until the 1994 crisis (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005 p.180). A final development for this sector in the post-1980 period was the extension of social security to the agricultural labour force in 1983, although the actual coverage remained persistently low²⁹.

Meanwhile, with regard to interest representation, the new constitution of 1982 banned political activities of all interest groups; however, it is important to note that this was not very strictly applied against business. In fact, the labour regime devised by the military was completely based on the demands of TİSK which acquired the power to set ceilings for wage demands of the organised labour in private and public sectors (Sakallıoğlu, 1991). As competition gradually emerged between industrialists and exporters, TÜSİAD was initially content with economic policies endorsed by the military and the MP governments but showed escalating criticism of the government over time because politically expedient policies preferred by the government counteracted the interests of the big industrialists (Arat, 1991). On the other hand, a separate business association named MÜSİAD (Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, *Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği*) was formed in 1990. In the latter, religion played a central role as a communal bond between members, and the majority of the represented enterprises were newly founded, smaller and distributed around the country in opposition to older big businesses mostly located in Istanbul (Buğra, 2002).

In this period, not only economic objectives of the military junta included establishing discipline in the labour market and suppressing populist deviations, but also this was complemented with institutional reforms to shape the balance of powers in the longer term (Boratav and Özüğurlu, 2005). All trade unions were closed down after the coup, except for TÜRK-İŞ which openly supported the military intervention and accepted political passivity (Sakallıoğlu, 1991). The measures taken against the more radical confederation DİSK were exceptionally harsh, indicating the complete disappearance of tolerance for class-based organisational activity (Adaman, Buğra and Insel, 2009). More broadly, the 1982 constitution covered extensive restrictions for trade unions in terms of membership, governance, collective bargaining rights and strikes. The ensuing legislation made the registration of new members more difficult and costly, introduced threshold requirements for collective bargaining, and

²⁹ According to the 2012 bulletin of the Turkish Statistical Institute, informal employment in the agricultural sector is still 84% (TÜİK, 2012).

significantly restricted the conditions under which strikes are acceptable. These conditions were so narrow that strikes became practically impossible (Sakallıoğlu, 1991).

At the same time, economic liberalisation after 1980 had important implications for the labour market. Whereas informality prevailed in the rural sector, economic developments increased the scope for informal employment in urban labour markets as well. In particular, the privatisation of public enterprises and the spread of outsourcing and subcontracting as management strategies caused a decline in regular employment opportunities (Adaman, Buğra and Insel, 2009). Moreover, newly rising regional industrial centres, the so-called ‘Anatolian Tigers’ that came to account for a significant share of exports in labour-intensive industries, constituted a suitable environment for informal employment as they mostly relied on small and medium family enterprises³⁰, craft traditions and a non-unionised labour force (Pamuk, 2008 p.291). Consequently, the parts of the society that fell outside the coverage of formal welfare institutions seem to have diversified and become more prevalent in the urban areas.

The development of welfare provision outside the conventional formal institutions in this context can be examined with a focus on two distinct aspects. On the one hand, economic liberalisation transformed informal institutions, such as the ties of migrants with their village, informal housing and family provision in the city, in line with the new economic model and accompanying socioeconomic change. First, the sustainability of support from the countryside became problematic with the difficulties that the rural sector itself faced due to liberalising economic policies³¹. As for informal housing, the main reason for decline was the gradual increase in the value of the urban land, making it increasingly unavailable for irregular settlements. In particular, the integration of Istanbul to the global economy promoted the development of a modern service economy with office buildings and shopping malls in the periphery of the city, and suburban residential areas also became popular among

³⁰ A recent study indeed shows that labour market informality in Turkey is higher in the rural sector, but within the urban sector it is significantly concentrated in small-scale firms (Gürsel and Durmaz, 2014).

³¹ In a survey carried out with urban households in 2004, 10% of respondents said that they received goods and food supply from their province of origin (Eder, 2014 p.201). Although no comparable research is available for the preceding periods, the role of this sort of support is likely to have significantly decreased starting with 1980s.

middle and upper-middle classes (Buğra and Keyder, 2006). Changes in housing arrangements then created a spatial distance between new migrants and their relatives in the city, usually damaging family-based channels of support. Finally, as nuclear family became the norm in urban areas and women needed to take up more irregular work to supplement family income, the pressures on the traditional care provider function of the family grew (ibid.).

On the other hand, as the capacity of these informal institutions eroded, the state came to assume somewhat increasing and more direct responsibility for the welfare of those who are not covered by existing formal institutions. The Fund for the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity (*Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışmayı Teşvik Fonu*, hereafter SYDTF) was established in 1986 to assist the needy among those who did not have access to the contributory system. This was one of many similar extra-budgetary funds created in Özal era, which relied on levies imposed on different items and activities with a very specific purpose³² (Zürcher, 1998 p.321). Various means-tested schemes therefore started to be implemented by Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (*Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Vakıfları*, hereafter SYDVs) to provide cash and in-kind support for food, accommodation, health or education-related needs and expenses. Additionally, the means-tested Green Card (*Yeşil Kart*) scheme was introduced in 1992 allowing free access to health services for the poor who were not covered by social insurance.

Adding to the non-contributory pensions for the disabled and the elderly that were already introduced in 1976, these developments in the post-1980 period indicated the emergence of some formal provisions for those outside the contributory system. However, these were still far from constituting a formally institutionalised system of social assistance. Schemes managed by SYDVs were generally marked by a lack of clarity about entitlement criteria as well as the duration, extent, amount and form of benefit (Yakut-Çakar, 2007 p.107). Procedures of aid distribution and means-testing lacked transparency and left too much room for arbitrariness and political patronage (Buğra, 2007; Eder, 2010). In addition, the nature of SYDTF as an extra-budgetary fund left social assistance outside the realm of parliamentary control, contributing to the lack of transparency (Zürcher, 1998 p.321). The resources of the fund were

³² Another example was the Housing Fund (*Konut Fonu*) which was fed from import duties on luxury items and a special charge levied on Turkish citizens travelling abroad.

sometimes even used for other purposes (Buğra, 2008 p.212). Overall, therefore, emerging provisions in this period remained patchy and limited in scope, and failed to provide assistance on the basis of clear formal rules and procedures.

At the same time, the role of the state in enacting assistance was quite unclear. The SYDTF and SYDVs were established by law, but their founding law declared their purpose as ‘to help the poor and the destitute, to ensure a fair distribution of income by taking measures to promote social justice, and to encourage social assistance and cooperation³³’. The role of the state was considered as *encouraging* social assistance and solidarity rather than taking a direct responsibility for guaranteeing social assistance as an entitlement. SYDTF was set as an umbrella organisation covering more than 900 SYDV foundations co-managed by the representatives of the central government at the district level and prominent members of the local population (Buğra, 2007 p.46). The initial expectation was that this structure would alleviate the burden on state budget by mobilising some private donations, although the public fund became the major financial resource used for assistance. This indeed reminds the voluntary associations of the early republican years to an important extent in that the role of the state is quite indirect, prioritises charity-based donations where possible and ultimately relies on unclear boundaries between public and private responsibility.

Overall, the review of the development of welfare provision in Turkey as examined so far sheds light on important institutional characteristics of the prevailing regime, which are broadly in line with informal security regimes in similar middle income countries but also shaped by its own historical experience and contextual factors. Firstly, the exclusionary nature of formal welfare institutions in Turkey was illustrated by the defective coverage of contributory schemes given widespread labour market informality that existed not only in the rural sector but also increasingly in the urban economy. While these institutions came to target new employment categories such as private sector employees or the self-employed in time, many people in agriculture, services or small manufacture continued to work without registering with them, hence lacking access to contributory provisions. In the meantime, the role of the state towards those who do not have the necessary record of contribution was

³³ As stated in the 1986 Law for the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity: <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.3294.pdf> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

limited, and at best very indirect, which reinforced the exclusionary character of the formal regime.

The indirectness of the role of the state in this regard was exemplified by the use of agricultural support policies to prevent extreme poverty in rural areas for a long time, or the ambiguous cooperation with ‘voluntary’ organisations that relied on the state in many ways without the responsibility of the latter being clearly defined. In addition, the legalisation of informal settlements also became an indirect channel for the state to provide a certain measure of welfare to new migrants in the cities. Although the post-1980 period finally witnessed the development of some schemes which more directly targeted the poor outside the contributory system, those remained very much fragmented, inadequate and non-transparent. Hence it is not possible to say that they were incorporated into mainstream formal institutions, which continued to be linked to labour market-based contributions.

An additional institutional characteristic, which went hand in hand with the exclusionary nature of formal institutions, was the centrality of informal institutions. On the one hand, informal labour market provided a key source of income for those who lacked access to regular job opportunities in the context of uneven industrial development and problems of job creation. On the other hand, family and community relations were always central to social welfare although their role was reshaped according to changing socioeconomic conditions. Moreover, public provisions were generally marked by paternalist, populist or clientelist motivations, embodying a sense of help granted from above rather than rights gained by the articulation of demands from below. This can indeed be seen as another informally institutionalised characteristic of the Turkish welfare regime which fits well with the largely top-down pattern of development of welfare provision and limited opportunities for formal interest representation. The next section briefly discusses the developments after 2001 against this background.

4.4 Looking Ahead to 2000s

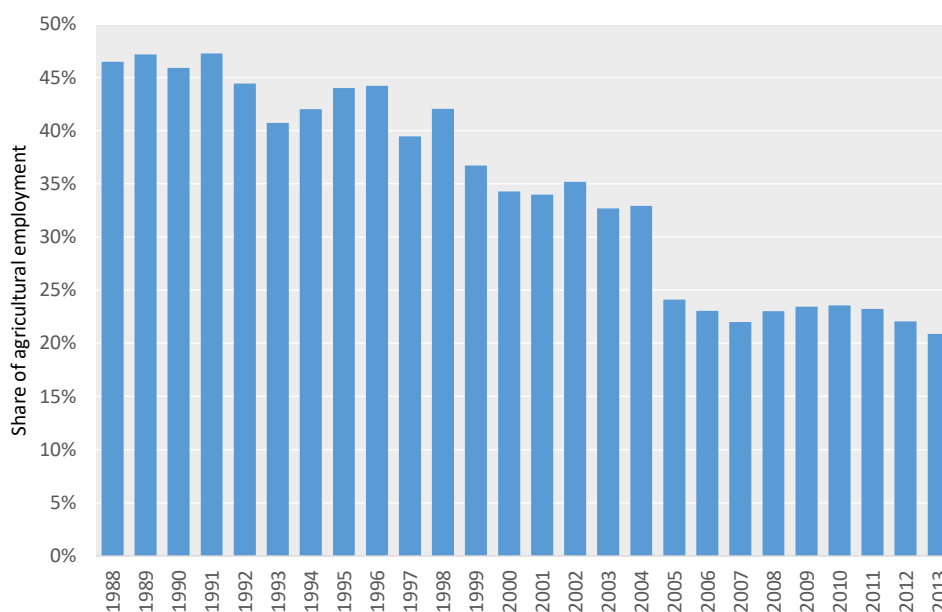
The Turkish economy went through two successive crises first in 2000 and more importantly in 2001, which were essentially banking crises originating from the failures of financial regulation, but also related to underlying fiscal imbalances such as

widening public deficits and debt inherited from the previous ‘lost decade’, very high inflation rates and vulnerability to external shocks (Öniş, 2003; Pamuk, 2008). Fiscal discipline has consequently been one of the main tenets of the following neoliberal strategy under the guidance of international financial institutions, together with anti-inflationary monetary policies, substantive privatisations and the commercialisation of agriculture. The fundamental neoliberal restructuring of the Turkish economy has thus really taken off in this period although the initial push occurred in 1980s (Eder, 2014). As to politics, former parties almost disappeared due to the severity of the 2001 crisis, and the newly established Justice and Development Party (JDP), which came to power in the first elections after the crisis, remained a single party government so far. JDP's success in ensuring economic stability, one of its main promises, also played a role in the consolidation of the political power of the party.

Economic transformations in the post-2001 period had significant socioeconomic consequences that put increasing pressures on the welfare regime. To begin with, the share of agricultural employment showed a sharp decline (see Figure 6). Whereas there was a certain decline in labour market informality, the proportion of non-agricultural informality within overall informal employment rose significantly from 25% in 1988 to 46% in 2013³⁴ (see Figure 7), meaning that informal employment was now not only a rural but also an urban phenomenon. The elimination of agricultural subsidies, which traditionally played a key welfare role for the rural sector, and the erosion of informal channels in cities due to changing socioeconomic and demographic conditions made those not covered by formal contributory institutions particularly vulnerable. Although absolute poverty showed a certain decline in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, it was then stabilised around 18%, relative poverty did not decline (see Figure 8), and the rate of unemployment remained persistently high around 10%. Labour markets also became generally more flexible and insecure, in line with global trends. Thus, there was an imminent need for more inclusive welfare institutions which were to be independent from labour market based contributions.

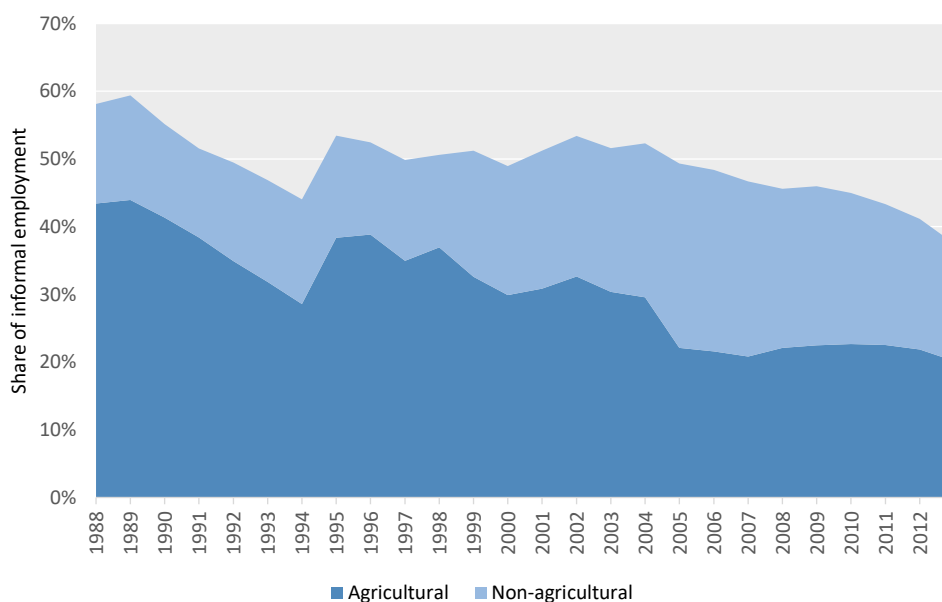
³⁴ The figures are based on Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) data unless otherwise stated.

Figure 6. Share of agricultural employment in total employment, 1988-2013.



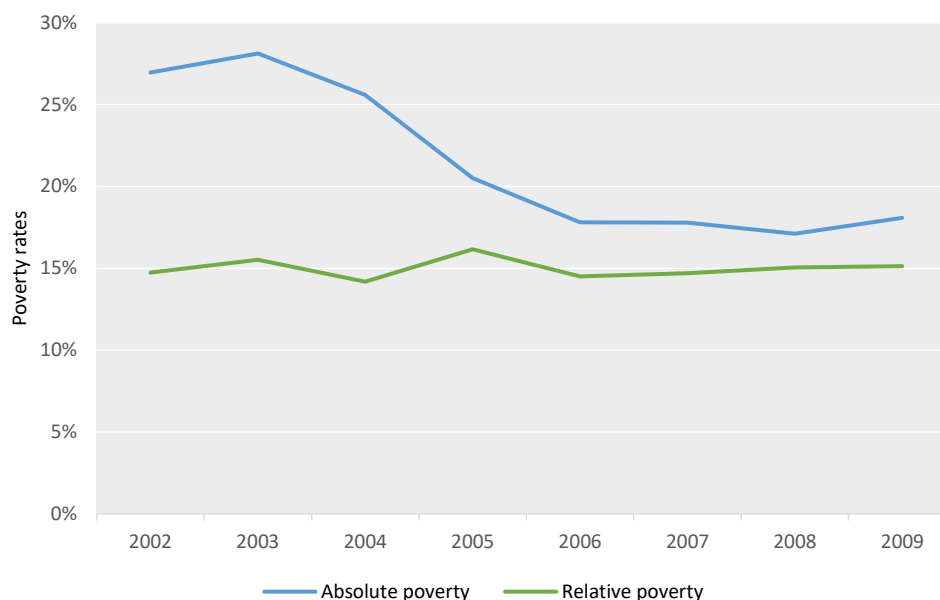
Source: Turkish Statistical Institute Household Labour Force Survey

Figure 7. Share of informal employment in total employment and its composition, 1988-2013.



Source: Turkish Statistical Institute Household Labour Force Survey

Figure 8. Ratio of individuals below absolute and relative poverty thresholds, 2002-2009.



Source: Turkish Statistical Institute Household Poverty Study

Meanwhile, macroeconomic outcomes were largely positive. Government deficit was reduced from more than 10% of the GDP in 2002 to levels below 2% after 2005, except for in 2009 and 2010 when it climbed again due to the global financial crisis³⁵. Yet, the post-2008 recovery in emerging markets was relatively quick, hence the environment of austerity which deeply marked welfare policy development in the West did not exist to a comparable extent in Turkey. The strengthened financial capacity of the state in 2000s therefore made increased public provision possible: This period has generally been characterised by an upwards trend in social expenditures similarly to other countries which are in the process of expanding their welfare regimes, and there has been a certain catch-up with the OECD average, as already shown in Figure 5 in Chapter 2.

The qualitative transformation of the Turkish welfare regime in this period has consisted of two aspects, broadly corresponding to the conventional system of social insurance on the one hand and newly emerging non-contributory institutions on the

³⁵ Based on data provided by the General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control, Ministry of Finance. Available under 'Main Economic Figures' at: <http://www.bumko.gov.tr/EN,2678/economic-indicators.html> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

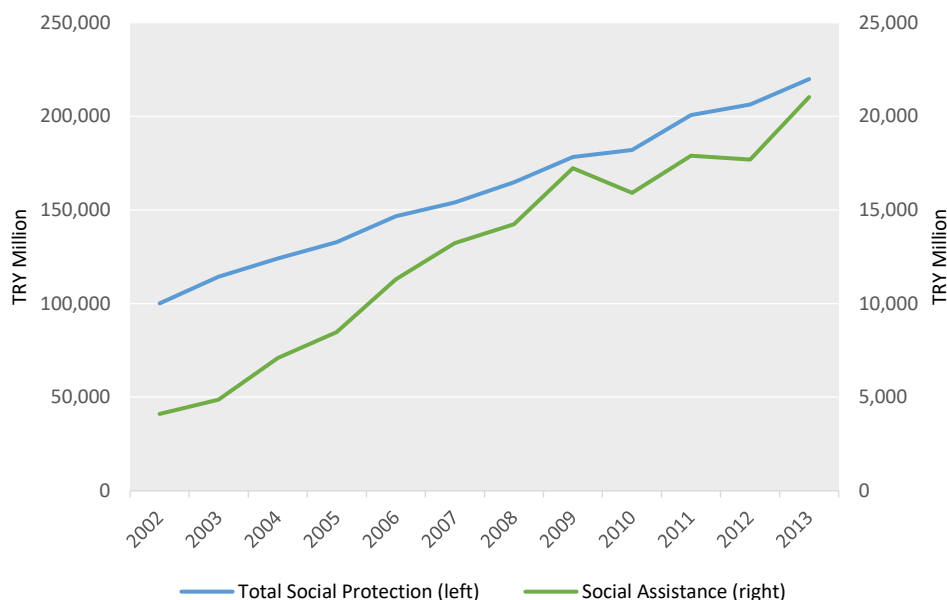
other. The main reform of social insurance, which took place in 2006, included the unification of three different institutions with different provisions for civil servants, private sector employees and the self-employed; the specification of the level of state contribution; and the separation of health premiums from social insurance. Thereby, institutional harmonisation, which improved the previously fragmented structure, and the assumption of a well-defined responsibility by the state within the social insurance system instead of the financing of deficits through irregular budgetary transfers, have been considered as positive developments (Adar, 2007; Yakut-Çakar, 2007). Meanwhile, the same reform brought about increases in the minimum retirement age and contribution periods to address actuarial balance problems of the existing system, which indicated a certain retrenchment in social insurance.

Another dominant trend in existing formal institutions was the privatisation of provision, which was the most visible in health care. In particular, the 2006 social security reform encouraged the spread of supplementary private insurance schemes and made arrangements for opening up private hospitals to the use of the general public (Eder, 2014). Health expenses in private hospitals are now partially covered by the General Health Insurance, to be topped up by user co-payments or private insurance, which means that access to health services becomes increasingly unequal (Adar, 2007). Public expenditure on health showed a huge increase in this period but this is problematic insofar as there is a tendency to over-provide on the part of private hospitals and the state does not have much control over the services they provide. The share of public expenditures within overall health expenditure has risen from 71% in 2002 to 79% in 2012, but the number of admissions to public hospitals roughly doubled in this period as compared to a 10 time increase in the number of admissions to private hospitals³⁶, indicating that a significant share of public expenditure went to private providers. Finally, a similar move towards privatisation occurred in pensions with a new law in 2012, which engaged the state to pay a contribution towards individual retirement schemes.

As for new formal institutions, targeting the previously uncovered parts of the society, the most important change has been the dramatic rise of social assistance. Expenditure on means-tested schemes showed a five time increase in real terms from

³⁶ The figures on spending are calculated based on TÜİK Health Expenditure Statistics and the number of admissions is provided by the Ministry of Health (Sağlık Bakanlığı, 2013).

Figure 9. Trends in total social protection expenditure and expenditure on social assistance in Turkey, real terms (2013 prices), 2002-2013.



Source: Turkish Statistical Institute for total expenditure on social protection, Ministry of Family and Social Policy for expenditure on social assistance.

2002 to 2014³⁷, as compared to the total social expenditure which also more than doubled between 2000 and 2013, which confirms the distinctiveness of the rise of social assistance (see Figure 9). The rising trend has also been broadly consistent over the years despite some staggering after 2010. This trend is illustrated by the soaring activity of SYDVs in providing cash or in-kind assistance, or the General Health Insurance put in place in 2008, in which the premiums for those under the age of 18 and those whose income is under a threshold are paid by the state. At the same time, increasing expenditure also went hand in hand with a certain systematisation and institutionalisation of social assistance, relevant schemes coordinated first by a General Directorate of Social Assistance under the Prime Ministry and later the newly established Ministry of Family and Social Policy.

Interpretations of these developments are mixed. On the one hand, current assistance schemes are still quite diverse and fragmented, targeting different groups separately, with highly likely gaps in coverage. Their adequacy in ensuring social protection to their recipients is debatable, as well as the clarity and reliability of

³⁷ Comparable information for earlier years is unfortunately not available.

procedures of implementation. Moreover, the rising trend in social assistance can be problematic if it reinforces the dual approach which relies on social insurance and complementing private provisions for those who are part of the formal economy and discretionary poor relief for others. There is thus a possibility that the Turkish welfare regime evolve in a more individualised, charity-based and privatised direction (Eder, 2014). Nevertheless, the momentum towards the formation of a more coordinated and better institutionalised system of social assistance, and the right-expanding potential of the extension of formal welfare institutions to formerly excluded groups cannot be disregarded. This is all the more so because social assistance seems to be quite an integral part of the Turkish welfare regime 15 years after the initial proliferation of means-tested schemes in response to urgent needs following the economic crisis.

Therefore, the aim of the following chapters is to examine the evolution of social assistance schemes in Turkey with a view to assessing their implications for the transformation of the overall welfare regime in an empirically informed way. The continuity of some institutional characteristics of the regime throughout the three historical periods, that were otherwise marked by different economic policies and politics as discussed in this chapter, suggests a long-term path dependence in the evolution of welfare institutions. We therefore look at whether the emergence of social assistance as a new formal institution has entailed any changes with regard to these characteristics or the long-term path dependence has been sustained. The schemes under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, which are implemented by the SYDVs at the local level, offer a particularly good opportunity for capturing the potential transformation of different institutional characteristics at the same time. On the one hand, there is a question about the extent to which they make away with the exclusionary nature of the previous regime. On the other hand, given that these schemes are expected to at least partly replace informal institutions, their nature would be informative about the formal delineation of public responsibility. In this regard, next chapters will focus on the process of development of social assistance in the post-2001 period, trends in policy outcomes and the institutional functioning of social assistance schemes respectively.

Chapter 5

Process of Development of Social Assistance Schemes in Turkey

The rise of social assistance in Turkey has taken off in 2000s, in the context of broader economic transformations summarised at the end of previous chapter. While there were some precedents from earlier years, which then became part of the emerging system of assistance in different ways, social assistance schemes in the post-2001 have been considerably more expansive and institutionalised as compared to before. This chapter will trace the developments in this area by looking at the history of the institutional structure of social assistance and the role of different actors that were involved in more recent processes of development. The particularities of these processes are deemed important as they are expected not only to explain the dynamics of the rise of social assistance but also to have an impact on the nature of social rights and the welfare regime. Hence, this chapter asks both how new institutions around social assistance developed in Turkey and why they developed in these specific ways at the same time.

In this regard, the first section below examines the legal and organisational developments around social assistance, with an emphasis on the growing institutionalisation of assistance schemes around the SYDTF and the SYDV foundations, as well as the sustained fragmentation in the legal basis and regulations. The second section then focuses on the ideas and norms that shape social assistance by scrutinising the rhetorical emphasis on rights in the recent years and the broader views of Turkish policy-makers on social assistance. The third section looks at the political foundations of social assistance in terms of how it became identified with the JDP in the Turkish case, and what role the main opposition parties and trade unions played. The last section finally summarises organisational, legal, ideational and political

foundations of social assistance discussed in the chapter. Overall, it is argued that the reliance on existing institutions for the implementation of emergency relief in a critical juncture then created a certain path dependence by transforming organisational capacities and political motives for further reform. Even though social assistance grew significantly in the following period, the understanding of rights and the logic of assistance remained focused on the ‘deserving poor’, and the top-down ways of policy-making, which reinforce the underlying sense of ‘granting help’, were largely sustained.

5.1 Organisational and Legal Foundations of Social Assistance

5.1.1 Overview of recent developments

The SYDTF Fund and the SYDV foundations were established by a central law in 1986³⁸, as an extra-budgetary fund for social assistance and the implementing agencies at the local level. The law number 3294 thereby broadly defined the target population of social assistance as ‘the needy who are not registered with formal social security institutions and do not receive an income from them, and those who can become productive with small amounts of temporary support or the provision of educational opportunities’. The management of the Fund was to be carried out by the Fund Board, which consisted of the State Minister in charge, undersecretaries of relevant Ministries and the Director General of Foundations, supported by a Secretariat under the Prime Ministry. While the decisions of the Fund Board entered into force only after the approval of the prime minister, previous research shows that they usually were not returned (Yılmaz and Yakut-Çakar, 2008 pp.4-5). Together with the financial independence of SYDTF from the general budget, this made the Fund Board a key actor in the distribution of centrally coordinated social assistance. Meanwhile, the SYDVs involved both state officials and members of the local community, but were established as semi-autonomous foundations outside the regular state bureaucracy, which created a very flexible structure.

³⁸ The law number 3294 (Law on the Promotion of Social Assistance and Solidarity)

Although the Fund and the associated foundations existed since 1986, their effective functioning as poverty alleviation instruments can be generally traced back to the second half of 1990s, a period that saw the efforts of the state minister Hasan Gemici in charge of social assistance and services in three different governments between 1997 and 2001 (Buğra and Keyder, 2003 p.37). The number of people who received assistance from the Fund had already started showing some increase from 2.3 million to 2.8 in 1998, but by the end of 2001 this number surpassed 9.2 million (pp. 54-55). At this point, it should be noted that the growth of social assistance started a couple of years before the economic crises of 2000 and 2001, and this timing can be attributed to a major earthquake which hit the densely populated areas around the province of Kocaeli, also affecting Istanbul. Therefore, the severe need for emergency assistance due to two shocks, one natural and one economic, can be said to have played an important part in such a rapid expansion. The assistance provided in these years covered a wide range including health- and education-related assistance, scholarships, food, fuel and clothing assistance and disaster relief, which was either in cash or in kind, and tended to be temporary.

In the following period, more resources were allocated to the SYDTF and were more effectively used for social assistance in line with their purpose of allocation. In addition, the character of social assistance has started to change with growing use of regular schemes different from one-off support. The expansion in this period was also accompanied by growing institutionalisation and systematisation of social assistance with the establishment of a General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity to replace the Secretariat of the Fund. While the Secretariat consisted of temporary personnel and its role was mostly limited to daily administration and accounting, the new General Directorate acquired a separate institutional identity which allowed more specialisation (Demirhan and Kartal, 2013 p.142). It also possessed more direct supervisory powers over the SYDVs as the law on its establishment included among its responsibilities the monitoring of expenses and undertakings of the foundations and the setting of relevant criteria for social assistance schemes in line with the principles determined by the Fund Board³⁹. At the same time, the scope of the decisions of the Fund Board was expanded to give it some control over the qualifications and

³⁹ The law number 5263 (Law on the Organisation and Responsibilities of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity)

employment conditions of the personnel in SYDVs. Finally, the Director General became a member of the Fund Board whereby he/she could contribute to decision-making processes. The establishment of this General Directorate was followed by substantive enhancements in institutional capacity, especially with the recruitment of highly qualified expert staff and the adoption of integrated information systems which are used for data collection and storage. The criteria for different support programmes have started to become more precise in these years.

Two occasions of cooperation with the World Bank seem to have played a particular role in this trajectory of institutionalisation of social assistance. First, a grant after the 1999 earthquake was distributed through the SYDTF, which was found satisfactory by the World Bank representatives and set a precedent for the Social Risk Mitigation Project (SRMP) to come after the economic crisis (Buğra and Candaş, 2011 p.521). The latter project involved the components of rapid assistance, conditional cash transfers (CCTs), local initiatives and institutional development. CCTs and some employment-related projects along the lines of local initiatives component were later continued with the resources of the SYDTF. Particularly the CCTs set important precedents in terms of the technicalities of means-testing procedures, and were supplemented by other regular schemes targeting different groups such as the widow or families of soldiers, meaning that the project had an influence on social assistance schemes in the longer term as well. Meanwhile, full definition of the legal status of the SYDTF was a condition for the disbursement of the loan except for the rapid assistance component. Although the World Bank later regretted this precondition on the grounds that the Fund functioned adequately even before the passage of the law and the precondition unnecessarily delayed disbursement (The World Bank, 2008 p.5), the adoption of the law has been of key importance to the transformation of the system through the establishment of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity.

The institutional development component of the project also shaped the organisational developments around social assistance more broadly. This component was aimed at improving the institutional capacities of the then newly established General Directorate and the SYDV foundations in terms of information systems and technologies, policy research and monitoring, staff development, and public information mechanisms (The World Bank, 2008 p.20). Therefore, their software

systems were extended and in-service training was provided to the staff, with the overall assessment of the component being quite positive especially based on the ability of the involved institutions to successfully deliver the CCTs (p.8). The SRMP thus seems to have reaffirmed trust in the existing structure, just as the appraisal of World Bank officials earlier had ensured the sustenance of the SYDTF unlike other off-budget funds which were all dissolved in conformity with IMF guidelines during the second half of 1990s (Buğra and Keyder, 2003 p.37). The comments of an interviewee who worked as an adviser to the project indeed pointed out a significant path dependence in this regard, as she said that the project was implemented through the SYDVs because the SYDTF was organised through them at the local level and back then there were no alternative organisational structures. Therefore, no specific assessment was made of the foundations as an institutional form but the aim was to improve their implementation capacity as much and quickly as possible. The investments made in the SYDVs, substantive expansion in their workload and the increased publicity about them consolidated their role in return.

In 2011, a separate Ministry of Family and Social Policy was formed and the General Directorate of Social Assistance was made part of it. The status of the SYDTF and the SYDVs did not change with this development as they were not made part of the regular state bureaucracy but only started to work within the framework of the newly established Ministry. The Ministry also took over the General Directorate of Non-Contributory Benefits formerly under the Social Security Institution, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and the Social Services and Child Protection Institution (*Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*, hereafter SHÇEK) formerly under the Prime Ministry. It thereby came to incorporate almost all non-contributory schemes which are centrally coordinated, with the addition of non-contributory pensions for the elderly and the disabled, and some provisions targeted at the children to the range of schemes which were already implemented through the SYDTF. The trend of systematisation which had started under the former General Directorate has also been sustained as exemplified by the increasing use of regular support programmes, standardisation of benefits and better information sharing between different agencies involved in the process thanks to the use of new information systems.

The establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in a way to incorporate the former SHÇEK brought the transfer of the local administration of

SHÇEK to the Ministry, which thus came to possess a regular local organisational structure separate from the SYDVs. This local administration was mostly limited to the province level⁴⁰ as opposed to the SYDVs which existed in all districts, and the SYDVs were already managing many schemes in place, therefore they have remained the main implementing agencies of social assistance under the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. Currently, the role of the local administration of the Ministry is rather limited to social services, as was the case under SHÇEK, with the exception of a few schemes which have a cash assistance component and continue to be managed by this local administration and the corresponding General Directorate in the new Ministry. Other than those, the SYDVs are implementing an ever growing number of social assistance schemes coordinated by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. With the full implementation of the General Health Insurance in 2012, replacing the previous Green Card scheme, the means-testing to determine those who would have their premiums paid by the state also started to be carried out by the SYDVs, expanding their role as providers of social assistance and a first point of contact for access to means-tested schemes.

It should be noted here that the SYDVs have a very peculiar status. SYDVs are designated as foundations, subject to private law, and their registration through a deed of trust, management through a Board of Trustees and personnel employment procedures partly conform to this legal status (Demirhan and Kartal, 2013 pp.142-143). Nevertheless, they resemble public entities in many ways: Not only are they established by a central law, but also they are subject to some central control in terms of their provisions and personnel. Although the decision-making power lies with the Board of Trustees of each foundation, the inclusion of many centrally appointed officials in this Board also strengthens the influence of public authorities in the process of implementation of social assistance. Overall, therefore, SYDVs can be considered as semi-autonomous institutions from one another and the centre, and conceptually, they are more aptly classified as government-operated non-governmental organisations (GONGOs) rather than NGOs as regular foundations would be (Yılmaz and Yakut-Çakar, 2008 p.3). While the de facto coordination and regulation of SYDV foundations by the centre seems to have increased over time, with

⁴⁰ The law number 2828 also says 'in the districts where need arises', but such SHÇEK organisations existed only in a minority of districts.

the strengthening of relevant organisations especially after the establishment of the Ministry, their legal status remains the same and they retain the ultimate authority for some local schemes as well as the determination of recipients for the wide range of centrally controlled schemes⁴¹.

5.1.2 Current legal framework

The recent unification of different assistance schemes under the coordination of a Ministry and the SYDVs in terms of implementation, however, did not necessarily bring their integration into a coherent whole. The impact of diverse institutional trajectories of different schemes is still visible on the legal framework of social assistance. While the schemes financed from the SYDTF Fund are provided within the framework of law number 3294, and thereby share some main characteristics, those that were previously managed by other institutions, such as the non-contributory pensions, schemes of assistance in return for care at home and premium assistance for General Health Insurance are all based on different legal provisions⁴². This is primarily a consequence of the cumulative growth of social assistance schemes, some of which originated under different organisations, but it should be emphasised that it is not only a superficial fragmentation at the level of law. It rather entails key procedural differences in terms of target groups, the methods of means-testing and the determination of benefits levels in different schemes, which makes the overall system of social assistance very complicated and eclectic.

Moreover, the laws which regulate social assistance themselves are very broad, especially the law number 3294 which is only an umbrella law, and the details about the procedural aspects are determined by a variety of other legal documents, adding to the high degree of fragmentation of the system. These documents consist of not only regulations and circulars, but also the decisions of the Fund Board in the case of the law number 3294, which are much easier to change as compared to laws and have

⁴¹ This status actually has crucial implications for the transformation of the welfare regime, as will be discussed with regard to the on-the-ground functioning of SYDV foundations in more detail in Chapter 7.

⁴² These rely on the law number 2022 for non-contributory pensions, the law number 2828 for social services, and parts of the law number 5510 for social security that are concerned with health insurance.

indeed seen fairly frequent and sporadic changes in Turkey⁴³. The fact that even the regulation of single schemes such as CCTs relies on different pieces of decision by the Fund Board is striking from the perspective of fragmentation. More generally, the fragmentation of the system of social assistance was a commonly highlighted issue in interviews with civil servants in the Ministry as well as implementers in SYDVs. While some interviewees referred to the broader domain of assistance extending to that provided by municipalities or charitable organisations, most of them focused on the fragmented structure of schemes which are currently coordinated by the Ministry as an aspect which needs to be improved.

The main problem with this fragmented, at times ambiguous and variable framework is not only the gaps it is likely to cause in provision, but also the confusion and the uncertainty which is entailed. This unavoidably undermines the consolidation of the right-basis of social assistance because existing provisions need to be clearly defined and largely stable to be guaranteed as entitlements. Although most interviewees did not problematise this implication of the fragmentation, the confusing nature of the current system was actually recognised by one of the interviewed civil servants who said: “It is becoming increasingly complicated at the moment, quite hard to figure out. It should be even harder for those who seek for assistance from the SYDVs”. This is also indirectly confirmed by a survey of social assistance recipients⁴⁴ in 2008, which found that approximately 65% of the respondents felt themselves ‘less knowledgeable than others’ about social assistance providers (ASAGM, 2010 p.99). As the question was asked in a relative scale, the high value of this percentage clearly points out key issues with the accessibility of information about available provisions, which can at least partially be linked to the confusion created by the regulations in place. In addition, the most frequently cited sources of information in the survey were the neighbours, acquaintances and relatives rather than any formal channels.

There were indeed some attempts to adopt a fundamental law on social assistance which would set the principles of social assistance in a more holistic way by integrating different legal provisions and schemes which rely on them; however, this has not happened so far. In particular, a major social security reform undertaken in

⁴³ Important changes which exemplify this are covered in Chapter 6 of the thesis, displaying the implications on the stability of access to assistance.

⁴⁴ The surveyed sample is not limited to recipients of assistance from SYDVs but covers recipients of all types of social assistance including those provided by municipalities.

2006 initially included a social assistance component in the draft form, which was then dropped before the parliamentary vote. Among the main aims of this component was to define objective entitlement criteria for social assistance and the types of schemes (Pusatlı, 2006), and if it was made into the law as the two other components of the draft were, this would have been a significant step in terms of the consolidation of right-based assistance. Efforts were made for the preparation of similar drafts in the following years, as indicated by an interviewee in the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, and comprehensive work involving experts who examined the current situation in other countries and suggested a model for Turkey was undertaken in 2008. However, no law has been adopted yet and the overall framework remains very much fragmented.

5.2 Ideational Foundations of Social Assistance

5.2.1 Social assistance and the use of language of rights

Alongside the organisational and legal aspects, the transformation of norms, understandings and goals of relevant actors is also part of the broader institutional development. In this regard, official programmes of successive JDP governments, and the opening statements of activity reports of, first, the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity, and then, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy constitute good sources of information about the perspectives of policy-makers. While government programmes summarise general political priorities, each activity report has two opening statements, which more specifically focus on social assistance and services. In what follows, these two sources will be analysed with a view to seeing how the understanding of social assistance and the use of key concepts related to the development of social rights have changed over time.

Government programmes

The examination of government programmes firstly shows that the perceived role of social assistance has been transformed from emergency relief to a rather integral part of public welfare provision. In earlier programmes, references to social assistance were mostly associated with the crisis, as seen in the 58th government programme in

2002 which noted: “Following social responsibilities it has taken over, our government will take a close interest in the groups negatively affected by the crisis and implement social assistance projects” (p.19). The same programme also highlighted the disproportionate impact of the crisis on the poor and clearly portrayed social assistance as a way of dealing with potential social unrest which, unless addressed as such, could reach ‘unforeseeable dimensions’ (p.28). Moreover, the 58th and 59th government programmes portrayed agricultural policies as part of social policies, which indicates a striking continuity from earlier patterns which were characterised by the use of agricultural subsidies as indirect tools for supporting the largely informal rural sector.

This view of social assistance as a short-term instrument accompanied by an indirect reliance on agricultural policies was later replaced with a longer-term approach which directly committed to social assistance as one of the key areas of welfare policy. In particular, the 60th government programme in 2007 praised the substantive increase in spending on social assistance achieved by previous governments after 2002 and expressed commitment to sustain these policies in a stronger way. It also referred to social assistance as part of an ‘an umbrella of social security-social assistance-social service which will cover everyone through a central organisation’ (p.25). While the 61st government programme in 2011 was the document in which social assistance was the most widely discussed, including information about different schemes, quite technical details about the implementation and features of the employment link, the following programmes in 2014 and 2015 also affirmed the government’s commitment to the direct provision of social assistance at a more general level.

Despite its rising importance over time, however, social assistance has always been and still is clearly distinguished from the formal system of social security by the governments. The examined programmes indeed point out the centrality of this distinction in their understanding. For instance, the aforementioned reference to the ‘umbrella of social security-social assistance-social service’, as well as the promise to ‘implement social security and health policies in alignment with economic, employment and social assistance policies’ in the 61st and 62nd programmes (p.60 and p.71) illustrate the taken-for-granted separation of the two areas. More recently, the 64th government programme in 2015 partially reframed social assistance as part of the

broader concept of social protection⁴⁵. However, relevant sections were entitled ‘social protection and the fight against poverty’, and covered social assistance and social services, while social security was addressed under a separate heading which only related to insurance-based provisions. A similar vision was indeed already indicated by the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy to incorporate family services and social assistance, rather than through combining non-contributory assistance with the contributory system of social security in some way. The formal system has thus remained separately managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, which resulted from a clear choice by the government to limit the definition of ‘social policy’ to the predominantly means-tested assistance and social services as distinct from contributory social security.

The government programmes also refer to the concepts of social state⁴⁶ and rights, albeit not very frequently. First of all, ‘social state’, which is cited among fundamental characteristics of the Turkish state in the current constitution⁴⁷, also existed in most of the examined government programmes as a general reference. When there was a specific area in relation to which it was used, however, this tended to be special needs rather than the broader system of social security. For instance, the 59th programme in 2003 stated: “Our government will put forward an understanding of social state which will protect the unemployed, the poor, the decayed, the sick, the disabled, and enable them to live in accordance with human dignity” (p.24). Similarly, the 61st and 62nd programmes, in 2011 and 2014 respectively, referred to the poor and the needy in direct relation to the social state. Yet, interestingly, these references did not necessarily entail any conception of ‘right to social assistance’ but rather reflected a vision of benevolent state. This was most visible in the last two programmes mentioned above, which both used the following wording in the relevant passages: “We reached out to the poor, those with special requirements and the needy through

⁴⁵ In fact, the same approach is taken in the programme of the current government (the 65th government) which has been established after the prime minister was changed due to the internal dynamics of the party and a new cabinet has been created without elections in 2016. Although this is not within the time frame covered in the present dissertation, this means that the conceptual reframing mentioned here indicates a trend which has been sustained by the following government.

⁴⁶ In Turkish, *sosyal devlet* (social state) is a more frequently used term than *refah devleti* (welfare state), although they are broadly used to refer to the same concept.

⁴⁷ The second article defines it as a ‘democratic, secular and social state of law’ (in Turkish: *demokratik, laik ve sosyal bir hukuk devleti*). Again the term that is used here is social state rather than welfare state.

the *compassionate hand* of the social state” (p.49 and p.57, emphasis added). The idea of the state showing compassion towards those in need clearly stands different from that of the welfare state as a guarantor of individual rights.

Meanwhile, social rights have never been referred to as such, in an encompassing way, but the concept of rights was also used in relation to different areas of welfare provision at times. In particular, the 58th government programme which was prepared in the immediate aftermath of the economic crisis described the fact that 15% of the population was below the hunger threshold as ‘against human rights’ (p.20). More generally, education and health were the areas in which a language of rights was used in several programmes. In addition, there was a mention of ‘social security rights’ in the 61st and 62nd programmes; however, this was in the specific context of improving the rights of women rather than being a broad reference to a right to social security (p.66 and p.77). Finally, the 64th government programme in 2015 talked about a ‘right-based’ system of social support, referring to social assistance and services (p.52) and ‘a right to health assistance’ (p.67)⁴⁸. This emphasis on the concept of right in relation to social assistance is new and indicates a potentially significant change in the understandings and norms of policy-makers, since rights are now mentioned as a systematic feature of assistance. Once we look at some additional policy documents in the next part, this will indeed require a more detailed analysis of what is actually meant by ‘right-based’ in section 5.2.2.

Activity reports of the General Directorate and the Ministry

Initially the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity from 2006 to 2010, and then the Ministry of Family and Social Policy since 2011 have reported their annual activities in the area of social assistance regularly. Therefore, the opening statements of these activity reports, one written by the Minister in charge and the other by a top-level bureaucrat in the institution each year, lend themselves well to a more systematic content analysis, which provides a good supplement to the perspective of the government as discussed before. In this regard, the table below displays the key concepts which are set out as relevant to the understandings of social assistance and

⁴⁸ The remark on the parallel between this programme and the programme of the current government made in footnote 45 above equally holds here. These terms are actually used in the 65th government programme in the same way, and therefore point out a continuing emphasis on the language of rights in these areas.

the development of rights as well as their changing frequency of use in the reports. With some concepts measured through multiple terms in an additive way, the frequencies are not comparable among themselves but aim to capture trends in the importance attached to the concepts over time. The methodological details on the selection of concepts and the specific terms which are included under each concept are given in Appendix B.1 together with the discussion of some linguistic issues which emerged in the process.

Table 1. Frequency of Key Concepts in the Annual Activity Reports on Social Assistance, 2006 – 2015.

Concept	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Effectiveness	24	32	71	61	55	46	58	67	57
Employment	156	138	81	79	78	124	23	40	0
Expansiveness	24	53	43	37	50	46	46	27	91
Family	12	53	33	33	46	186	93	187	285
Individual	72	85	76	93	105	108	46	67	114
Poverty	204	159	166	163	128	62	35	107	46
Implementation	24	11	95	89	92	46	23	27	11
Right	0	11	14	14	14	31	46	94	68
Social State	24	11	14	5	5	15	23	13	23

Notes: * Concepts are given in alphabetical order and frequencies indicate the frequency of reference to each concept in 10000 words.

** Except for 2008, as it has not been possible to access the report for this year.

One of the most striking trends here is the declining frequency of references to the poor and the needy over time. This can indeed be linked to the broadening of the area of responsibility of the examined institution with the establishment of the Ministry in 2011, which seems to be an important turning point given the scale of change from 2010 to 2012, because direct assistance to the poor then became only one area managed by the Ministry among others. However, there still seems to be a change of focus implicated in this trend: While the opening statement of the 2006 activity report highlighted the aim of supporting ‘the groups which experience economic or social deprivation’, in line with the aim of the General Directorate, the most recent activity report of the Ministry in 2015 referred to ‘targeting the whole society with the

disadvantaged groups as a priority'. The shift away from the logic of post-crisis emergency relief to assistance as part of a more permanent system, which was seen in the examined government programmes, is thus confirmed. Yet, interestingly, the frequency of references to employment also declined in time, with no mention of the link between assistance and employment in the last report under scrutiny. This means that despite several attempts to promote the employment of social assistance recipients who are fit for work in recent years, the link with employment is not one of the priorities for policy-makers, at least within the whole system of assistance and services that is being consolidated.

The second visible feature following the establishment of the Ministry is the multiplication of references to the concept of family. Given that the Ministry incorporated many areas of social services aimed at families, children and the elderly, increasing use of family-related terms in the activity reports could be expected. Yet, a closer examination shows that the emphasis on family did not necessarily remain limited to these areas and was also related to assistance schemes at times. For example, while the statements in 2009 and 2010 talked about addressing the needs of 'the *citizens* who experience socio-economic deprivation and remain outside the coverage of social security', the one in 2012 included the following sentence, which marks an interesting contrast: "The aim is to ensure the enhancement of economic and social situations of *all families* through an objective targeting mechanism and an integrated vision of family-centred social service and assistance" (emphasis added). Although this did not entail a significant decline in the number of references to the concept of individual itself, as can be seen in the summary table above, its relative importance against the concept of family certainly decreased over time. The growing centrality of family has also been sustained in more recent reports, which referred to a 'household-focused system' in relation to social assistance (2014), or directly affirmed this in a broader sense by saying: "In the centre of our social policies stands the family, the integrity of the family and family values" (2014 and 2015).

On the other hand, references to concepts which relate to the features of policies such as effectiveness, expansiveness and the quality of implementation, were present in all reports. In particular, effectiveness was a recurring concept, especially after an initial rise from 2007 to 2009. The frequency of references to expansive policies was largely stable, except for a considerable increase in 2015, while the quality of

implementation was especially highlighted in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Given the correspondence of this latter highlight in the statements with the increasing emphasis on effective policies, the quality of implementation can indeed be interpreted as one of the components of effectiveness in the eyes of policy-makers. This would mean that references to ‘effective’ policies were at least partially linked to ideal of high-quality provision, which, as explained in more detail in the appendix, was measured through specific aspects of the process of implementation such as the existence of objective criteria, reliance on expertise and data, and the speed of delivery. The way in which these terms are used in the reports also confirms this interpretation, as, for example, the 2014 report which underlined the provision of social assistance in an ‘effective’ way and on the basis of ‘objective criteria’.

Finally, in a similar way to the government programmes, social state as a general reference existed in all activity reports which were examined and its frequency did not show any major changes over time. A more interesting trend in this regard is manifested by the frequencies of use of the concept of right itself. This concept has a peculiar feature in the Turkish language as the term ‘right’ is used in two different ways to denote both ‘to deserve’ and ‘to have the right’⁴⁹. The early uses of the term in the activity reports were more clearly associated with the first sense of deserving: In the 2007 report there was a reference to the belief that everyone ‘*deserves* an honourable, peaceful and high-standard life’ and the reports from 2009 to 2011 mentioned the aim of determining the beneficiaries of social assistance and project support objectively so as to prevent ‘the *non-deserved* use of benefits’⁵⁰ (emphasis added). However, starting with 2012, the term ‘non-deserved use’ was omitted and the references to the concept of right were mostly made in the form of ‘right-based’ policy or approach. In this case, the meaning attached to the concept of right is not as straightforward because this form can refer to a system of assistance limited to those who ‘deserve’ as well as to a system which is based on a more encompassing understanding of ‘rights’ as entitlements. Given that a right-based system comes to the forth as an increasingly common highlight of recent policy documents, the next part

⁴⁹ In Turkish, right is translated as *hak*, which is used when saying both *hak etmek* (to deserve) and *hakkı olmak* (to have the right).

⁵⁰ Turkish originals of the relevant passages are as follows: ‘*onurlu, huzurlu ve standardı yüksek bir hayatı hak ettiği inancı*’ (2007) and ‘*haksız yararlanmaların önüne geçilmesi hedeflenmektedir*’ (2009, 2010 and 2011).

will examine what is meant by ‘right-based’ in the Turkish context on the basis of interviews findings.

5.2.2 Conception of rights

The interviews conducted in the Ministry of Family and Social Policy indicate that right-based approach is understood as distributing assistance to those who deserve it according to certain rules rather than devising social assistance as part of broader social rights. This was concisely expressed by one interviewee who said that it was basically about ‘determining the poor according to some criteria and providing assistance accordingly’. While the rules highlighted by several interviewees were primarily related to the definition of target groups and relevant eligibility criteria for social assistance schemes, there was also some mention of rules about benefit levels or payment periods. In addition, the legal basis of provisions was highlighted as another characteristic of right-based policy by a few interviewees, since the rules in question needed to be clearly established. The fragmented character of the current legal framework or the absence of a comprehensive law on social assistance was not problematised in this regard, however, and the existence of some official documents defining different schemes was considered as a sufficient condition. This is clearly seen in the words of an interviewee who noted: “There is already a legal basis in place, just in different places. With a fundamental law on minimum income support, the fragmented right-basis would be transformed into a total global right, this is the only difference.”

With regard to rules on eligibility, interviewees tended to explain the right-based character of policy by contrasting it to the former patterns of arbitrary distribution of assistance. For example, one interviewee said: “People used to go to the foundations and say that they were in need, the assistance was then given according to their attire or so. It is not like this anymore, so it is as if it is right-based, as they now deserve that assistance.” Yet another interviewee considered right-based policy as a vision which the government put forward in response to the previous criticisms that the distribution of social assistance was politically motivated. Additionally, the right-basis of policies was sometimes linked to the increasing specificity of schemes, with one interviewee saying: “In the past there were more scattered, more arbitrary forms of assistance, it was difficult to say what they consisted of. Now the target groups are

more clearly defined and the assistance schemes are aimed at those target groups, which makes it easier to become eligible or ineligible, and to prove deservingness.” These comments not only indicate the centrality of clear eligibility criteria and well-defined target groups to the current conceptions of right-based policy, but also illustrate the use of the term right in the sense of ‘to deserve’.

In line with this approach, the effective implementation of policies also became an important goal for strengthening the right-basis of policies. For once the criteria are set, then the question becomes how to determine who is eligible according to these criteria in the most accurate way and how to deliver the most efficiently. In this sense, the use of advanced information systems was seen as of particular importance because they significantly facilitated the collection and storage of data about the applicants. While the majority of interviewees referred to the integrated information system currently in use as a major development in the recent years, the comments of an interviewee directly highlighted the link to the conception of right-based policy as he said: “When you can access substantive information by using the ID number of the applicant, before all you have the chance to see whether he/she deserves assistance”. Moreover, the observations of social workers during home visits and other steps of decision-making in the SYDVs started to be recorded in the integrated system, which brought about some standardisation in the procedures of determination of recipients. Finally, the improvements in the logistics of the process from the reception of applications to the delivery of payments were pointed out by a few interviewees. The frequent mentioning of such technicalities in the interviews confirm the importance attached the effective provision of assistance to those who deserve, sometimes called the ‘right-holders’, as a policy goal.

Consequently, it is possible to say that right-based approach, which is increasingly highlighted in policy documents in the last years, consists of the depiction of the poor as an objectively defined category, consolidated by the effective functioning of the technicalities of distribution. As such, social assistance is being framed as a type of categorical benefit, which is not necessarily in conflict with the universalist principle, while there is no conception of universalising rights in ways which go beyond a poverty alleviation policy. This was clearly shown by the choice of examples raised in response to the question on the meaning of ‘right-based’ in the interviews. While one interviewee underlined the CCTs as key to the transition to a

right-based system, referring to objective criteria and point-based targeting, the universal free textbooks or birth assistance schemes⁵¹ were never mentioned in this context. This indicates that a right-based approach is not associated with the provision of a certain type of assistance regardless of financial means, but instead takes means-testing for granted. The goal of effective implementation therefore becomes a way of giving to the ‘deserving’ poor rather than the ‘non-deserving’. In addition, an aspiration cited by many interviewees is minimum income support, devised as a general programme integrating all the fragmented schemes in place, which is again about targeting the poor as a general category, hence perfectly in line with the dominant conception of rights as outlined above. This shows that declining references to poverty in the activity reports did not necessarily mean that poverty became less central to policies but rather corresponded to a change of language.

5.2.3 Approach to social assistance recipients

Another aspect of the understandings which shape welfare policy is the approach of policy-makers to the recipients of social assistance. In this sense, the corollary of the development of a right-based perspective would be the perception of recipients as individuals entitled to the provided benefits by the virtue of being members of the community, be it the citizenry or the residents of the country. However, the dominant approach in the Turkish case has rather remained based on the reproduction of an image of benevolent state which assists the weak members of the society, constituting an important continuity from the earlier years. This is visible in the two aforementioned government programmes which referred to the ‘compassionate hand of the social state’ as well as the 2015 activity report of the Ministry which, very similarly, talked about expanding the scope of ‘compassionate governance’. The association of compassion with the welfare state or the policies of the government indeed provides an excellent illustration of the idea of benevolent state. Moreover, there is also an underlying paternalism in this approach, which was more clearly exemplified by a report prepared by the Ministry to summarise the social policy achievements of successive JDP governments (ASPB, 2013a). The concluding motto of the document noted: “We would not let anyone get lost, because we are a big

⁵¹ These two schemes cover all students at a certain stage of education and all woman who give birth without any means-testing, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

family”, which strikingly echoes the saying ‘father state’ from the first years of the Republic and at the same time shows the continuing lack of a sense of individual entitlement.

Growing emphasis on family-focused policy, especially after the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in a way to incorporate social services and social assistance, highlights a similar issue from the perspective of individual entitlements. While an institutionalised provision of social services aimed at families does not constitute a problem in itself, the increasing penetration of a family-focused approach into the area of social assistance has complex implications. In particular, the centrality of household income to means-testing for social assistance schemes and the expansion of assistance for home care schemes point out the definition of the role of the state as helping families to undertake their primary welfare role rather than providing individuals with their entitlements. The statement of the Minister in the opening of the 2015 activity report indeed hints at this as she noted, after emphasising the centrality of family to their social policies, the following: “The protection and the strengthening of the family, and the enhancement of the problem-solving capacity of the family would, without doubt, also alleviate social risks”.

Additionally, expectations from social assistance recipients are an indicator of the extent to which they are seen as entitled to what they receive. A survey commissioned in 2008 by the General Directorate of Family and Social Research, which later became part of the newly established Ministry, is very informative in this sense. Interestingly, the survey included a question that tried to measure whether the recipients of assistance considered this as a favour or as a duty of the welfare state, which was asked in the following format: “Whom do you think social assistance recipients should first thank for the assistance they receive?” (ASAGM, 2010 p.287). This question is basically aimed at assessing whether recipients associate assistance with the state and public authorities because there are also civil actors included among the options⁵². However, the peculiar wording of the question clearly points out an implicit assumption that the recipients should ultimately be ‘thankful’ for the

⁵² This is the same survey which was referred to above in terms of the self-reported level of knowledge of social assistance recipients about the current system. As footnote 44 indicates, the surveyed sample is not limited to recipients of assistance from SYDVs but covers recipients of all types of social assistance including those provided by municipalities.

assistance that they receive, which stands in contrast to the understanding of social rights as entitlements.

At the same time, the survey also included an unusual question on whether the recipients felt obliged to vote for the party or the mayor of the municipality which distributed the assistance (ibid., p.129). This should indeed be considered in relation to the general criticism in the public and by the opposition that social assistance schemes are being manipulated by the central or local governments for political purposes, which is a frequent claim in the Turkish context. Yet, the comments of the survey report on responses to this question are particularly striking, as they show how the political influence of social assistance is normalised. While more than 20% of the respondents said that they felt obliged to vote for a specific party or candidate in return for the assistance they received, the report takes this finding as a refutation of the link between assistance receipt and voting preferences because the majority did not feel so (p.129). The portrayal of a percentage as high as 20% as almost negligible means that a significant degree of pressure on political preferences of social assistance recipients is normalised, hence indicating a very much politicised understanding of rights rather than entitlement-based.

5.3 Political Foundations of Social Assistance

5.3.1 Role of political choices

Social assistance schemes were already in a process of expansion during the late 1990s, and especially after the 2001 economic crisis. However, the coming to power of the newly formed Justice and Development Party (hereafter JDP) as a single party government in 2002 elections, shortly after the crisis, allowed them to politically identify themselves with social assistance. This fit well not only with their neoliberal economic agenda but also broader anti-establishment rhetoric because social assistance was easily portrayed as an inclusive development against the features of the prevailing system. Such a portrayal facilitated the dismissal of criticisms against the developing system of social assistance and the following years were generally characterised by the strengthening grip of the JDP on welfare policy among other

areas, which broadly sustained the top-down ways of policy-making highlighted in Chapter 4. Expenditures on social assistance schemes indeed saw a more or less continuous increase under successive JDP governments in 2000s and also some important qualitative changes. Yet, social assistance did not necessarily fulfil its potential to expand social rights, which was largely due to institutional factors, also consolidated by critical political choices at times.

Two such instances when political choices of the government could possibly change the institutional path but did not were the 2006 social security reform and the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in 2011. As mentioned earlier, in 2006, the social assistance component of the new law, which accompanied two other components on social insurance and health in the draft version, was removed before the vote in the parliament. The recognition of social assistance as an integral component of social security as part of this law, which would also unify fragmented legal provisions, would be an important turning point in terms of the consolidation of existing schemes as rights. Moreover, according to the draft law, the responsibility for conducting social assistance policies would be given to the Social Security Institution and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (Buğra and Adar, 2008 p.14), which would likely mean more institutional integration between social assistance and the contributory system as the core of mainstream welfare institutions.

Hence, the decision to remove the social assistance component from the law is a missed opportunity, and this is a clear political choice on the part of the government because they had the majority in the parliament and would not have any issues with passing the law in the form that they desired. Yet, the flexibility of the prevailing system was preferred over a more solid commitment to social assistance as part of a more integrated right to social security. The fact that no comparable law on social assistance was passed during more than 10 years since the 2006 reform, again under strong JDP governments, also confirms the lack of political will in this regard. Although this has recently entered the government programme in 2015, there has been no initiative in place as of now. Thus, the striking emphasis on 'right-based' policy in the recent years, that is framed in a particular way embodying benevolence towards the deserving poor rather than entitlements, has itself become part of a populist rhetoric instead of leading to effective changes in the system of assistance.

Second important choice of the government was about the organisational structure of social assistance at the time of the establishment of the new Ministry of Family and Social Policy in 2011. Despite social assistance becoming the responsibility of a specialised state ministry, the structure of the SYDTF Fund and the SYDV foundations was kept intact in what could have otherwise been a very good opportunity for reform. The current structure was creating a flexible but also uncertain system and there were indeed recommendations for reform, for example in an inspection report prepared for the Presidency in 2009. This report suggested the formation of a Ministry of Social Assistance and Services, alongside a regular public administration at the local level, and the transition from the extra-budgetary Fund structure to the allocation of its resources through general budget (DDK, 2009 pp.23-25). However, these recommendations were not taken into account by the government during the formation of the Ministry in 2011: The local administration that was taken over was kept separate from the SYDV foundations, focused on social services and assistance respectively, without any attempt to integrate the two and the SYDTF Fund was brought under the Ministry without any changes to its functioning. This also points out a certain role for political choice because some alternative institutional structures had become available at that specific juncture.

5.3.2 Voices from the opposition

There were other political and social actors that showed significant interest in social assistance in the period under scrutiny and put forward some critical perspectives which have the potential to contribute to the development of social rights. These include two major opposition parties, the RPP and the NMP, which have been in the parliament throughout 2000s⁵³ as well as three major trade union confederations, TÜRK-İŞ, HAK-İŞ and DİSK which have quite distinct political and ideological positions⁵⁴. Interviewees from both opposition parties underlined the fact that the

⁵³ These are the Republican People's Party (RPP, Turkish acronym: *CHP*), which is secularist, centre-left wing, and the Nationalist Movement Party (NMP, Turkish acronym: *MHP*), which is nationalist, right wing. In 2000s, these two parties have always been in the parliament with the exceptions of 1999-2002 and 2002-2007 periods in which respectively the RPP and the NMP remained under the electoral threshold.

⁵⁴ In the order stated, these are the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, which has historically been in a close relationship with the state, the Hak-İş Trade Union Confederation, which is generally sympathetic to Islamic politics, and the Confederation of Revolutionary

foundations of the current system were laid not by the JDP but the coalition government which was in power at the time of the 2001 crisis⁵⁵ and showed a largely positive attitude towards social assistance as an area of welfare policy. Similarly, the views of trade union confederations went beyond typical insider-outsider politics. Although their members consist of the organised parts of the labour force, already covered by the contributory system, they did endorse non-contributory assistance which generally targets those who are not part of the contributory system. Meanwhile, social assistance did not seem to constitute an equally important agenda item for business. The endorsement of two major business associations, TÜSİAD and MÜSİAD⁵⁶, could only be confirmed at a very broad level, based on positive references to the broadening of the scope of social policies in publications commissioned by these associations (Alper, Değer and Sayan, 2012 p.51; Vardan, 2009 p.5)⁵⁷ and there was a more direct appraisal of the establishment of a Ministry of Family and Social Policy by its General Secretary in the case of TİSK⁵⁸ (Pirler, 2014 p.7).

The first point of criticism about the current system of social assistance which was commonly raised in interviews with different actors was about the high degree of fragmentation. This criticism sometimes went beyond the fragmentation among schemes coordinated by the Ministry, and was also concerned with the assistance distributed by municipalities or private charitable organisations, such as in the interviews from the NMP and TÜRK-İŞ. In addition, interviewees from the two

Trade Unions, which has a strong leftist stance. See (Adaman, Buğra and Insel, 2009) for more detailed information on their history and politics.

⁵⁵ The NMP was itself part of this coalition government, but the RPP was not. There was another centre-left party in the coalition (Democratic Left Party), which has not been able to enter the parliament again since then.

⁵⁶ These stand for the Turkish Industry and Business Association, which represents the interests of the big business and politically has a secularist orientation, and the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, which covers members of different sizes, including small and medium enterprises, and puts an explicit focus on Islamic values. See (Buğra, 1998) for more details on their history and relations with the state.

⁵⁷ There was also no response to requests for an interview from these associations. The discussion in the rest of this section is therefore based on politicians from opposition parties and interviewees from trade union confederations, as no comparable interview data is available with representatives from business. This does not constitute a major limitation for this research, however, as we can expect the business not to be very critical of the current system which remains within the confines of targeted poverty alleviation, hence in line with liberal economic policies.

⁵⁸ TİSK is the Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations, which has a specific representative role in social dialogue, for example during the process of wage bargaining.

opposition parties and TÜRK-İŞ strongly emphasised that social assistance schemes would not be enough in themselves to eradicate poverty and prioritised other policy areas such as general education, vocational education and employment. The concerns which were expressed in this sense ranged from the possibility of encouraging idleness in TÜRK-İŞ to the risk of making poverty more permanent or creating a dependent population through social assistance in RPP and NMP. The related criticism from DİSK was more radical and systemic, with the interviewee stating that people were condemned to social assistance because of the conditions of the labour market, and improving the employment structure should be a strict priority while social assistance is kept limited to those who are unable to work. Meanwhile, HAK-İŞ approached the relation with employment from the opposite perspective, as the interviewee noted the importance of regular social assistance for labour market participation and trade unionism. The expectation in this perspective was that the existence of a guaranteed income would make workers less scared of losing their jobs and hence more interested in being organised, which is in turn likely to improve labour market conditions.

There were also many references to an ‘objective definition of poverty’, ‘objective criteria’ for entitlement to assistance schemes or ‘standards’ in means-testing in interviews with actors from the opposition. Interestingly, these echo the concerns among civil servants in terms of the importance that they attached to targeting the poor as effectively and objectively as possible. This indeed suggests that the conception of rights among political and social actors outside the government is not fundamentally different from the dominant understanding focused on the deserving poor. However, not only did these actors think that the government failed to realise its vision of right-based policy, but also they put significantly more emphasis on other aspects which might contribute to the broader development of social rights such as the integration of social assistance with other policy areas as highlighted in the above paragraph. Moreover, the idea of individual entitlement was raised a few times in relation to rights, which stands in contrast to the dominant understanding. For example, the interviewee from HAK-İŞ referred to income support as ‘something entailed by being an individual’ and the NMP deputy talked about access to health services ‘on the basis of the rights of the individual’ while TÜRK-İŞ suggested an individual income threshold.

Another striking commonality in the interviews was the depiction of the social assistance system in place as serving the political interests of the government. This was in some way acknowledged by almost all interviewees despite their different political and ideological positions. In particular, the deputies from the RPP and the interviewee from DİSK used the very same term of ‘managing’ poverty in line with their own interests rather than addressing the causes of poverty. As an example of that, one RPP deputy claimed that JDP members were involved in the distribution of in-kind assistance on the ground and that some informal pressure was put on the applicants to become affiliated with the party. In a more moderate criticism, the NMP deputy described the assistance scheme for the widow as an ‘electoral campaign’ by the JDP. Meanwhile, the interviewee from TÜRK-İŞ did not directly refer to the JDP, but made a general statement that ‘politicians usually prefer a structure which allows them to influence broad segments of the society and to create the impression that assistance is coming from them rather than the state in order to get votes’. Finally, the interviewee from HAK-İŞ talked about a resistance against the idea of general regular assistance in the government, which prefers to intervene where and when specific needs arise, although he avoided linking this to political expectations explicitly.

Finally, there was a shared emphasis on the lack of a solid legal framework which regulates social assistance, especially in interviews with politicians from the opposition parties. Consequently, the government’s way of making welfare policy became a major issue that was brought to the fore. In this sense, the RPP deputy underlined the importance of making welfare provisions into law as follows: “This means that you voted for us and we legislated [on this scheme]. After this you can again vote for us, we would be thankful for this, but you can also choose not to vote for us. We cannot take this right back [for this reason]. But if this is done through a decision of the Board of Ministers before each election, then it should better be called bribery.” At the same time, the NMP deputy criticised the arbitrariness of the formation of social assistance schemes by referring to the example of one-off birth assistance which set differential amounts according to the number of children in the family, without any justification. Similarly, with regard to the assistance scheme targeted at the widow, she recalled that she gave a parliamentary question on how the level of benefit was decided, which did not return a satisfactory answer. She therefore problematised the setting of this amount by underlining that this was neither based on

minimum wage nor a poverty threshold, and by noting: “[This is like saying] this was what our government stipulated, so we set it like this. When you say I gave this because I wanted to give this, then it becomes a favour. However, when you create a legal basis, you also have to plan the equitability and sustainability.”

Although these criticisms indicate potentially important contributions to the relevant policy-making processes by different political and social actors, one key problem that became visible in the interviews was the lack of effective channels of participation, which in turn facilitated the monopolisation of the policy agenda by the governments. In this sense, there was a feeling of powerlessness which characterised the comments of many interviewees. The impact of the policy proposals from opposition parties under successive JDP governments after 2002 had been very limited and indirect at best. Similarly, trade union confederations did not find their inputs in the policy process to be reflected on the outcomes. Consequently, the prospects for a consensual development of rights remained weak and social assistance continued to be shaped by the ruling governments in a top-down way, as was typical of the historical process of development of welfare provision in Turkey as well.

One concrete example of the indirect influence of political parties was the ‘Family Insurance’ proposal first put forward by the RPP in 2011. This consisted of an income support scheme which promised to pay each household a certain amount of income support according to a number of criteria such as their income, locality, the number and education status of the children in the family or the number of elderly and disabled (CHP Bilim, Yönetim ve Kültür Platformu, 2011 p.27). When the details of the scheme were publicised, the government of the time reacted strongly by focusing on the lack of financial resources for such a scheme. However, only the following year, a key policy document outlining JDP’s vision for 2023 made reference to quite a similar scheme of minimum income support which would ensure a minimum living standard for each family according to their means and the number of elderly, disabled and children in the household (AK Parti, 2012 p.41). This scheme was also brought forward as an example by an interviewed RPP deputy who said: “Many of our proposals are immediately evaluated by the JDP and appropriated in a way to suit them. This is also what happened with the family insurance.”

Another such example, albeit not implemented at the central level, can be found in a social assistance card proposal by the NMP. Named the ‘Crescent Card’ after the

symbol of the party, this was basically a debit card which the recipients of assistance could use in local shops for a variety of needs and was part of the NMP's electoral campaign in 2011 (MHP, 2011 p.133). Many schemes along these lines have actually been adopted by various municipalities including those from other parties, as mentioned by the NMP deputy during the interview. There was also a card introduced by the JDP, only applying to the distribution of centrally managed schemes, which the government programme in 2014 praised as good practice in previous terms. However, the general inability of such proposals which have a certain practicability, be it the RPP's family insurance or the NMP's social assistance card, to initiate an effective political debate constitutes an important limitation in the current policy-making environment. Since the ruling JDP owned the majority in the parliament throughout almost all the period under scrutiny, they had the power to shape policies in their own way without any consensus with other parties. Even when they found some aspects of proposed alternatives appealing, they were able to incorporate those specific aspects selectively and in indirect ways without recognising the original proposal.

Finally, the views of different actors on key issues such as the fundamental law on social assistance also reflected their sense of ineffectiveness in the policy-making processes. For instance, interviewees from the RPP underlined that their party made substantive work on the legal framework of social assistance, but despite all their attempts to bring this issue to the fore, their proposals were never discussed in the parliament. The deputy from the NMP also noted that a stronger legal framework would not be 'desirable' for the government as this would limit the scope for arbitrariness in the formation of assistance schemes. Similarly, the interviewee from the trade union confederation TÜRK-İŞ emphasised the necessity of a unified legal structure in which right-holders would directly know their entitlements but said that 'they faced difficulties in explaining and convincing [the policy-makers] about such a structure because then they would not be able to get political benefits anymore.' The comments of the interviewee from DİSK aligned with this viewpoint as he was very critical of the overall system of dialogue which he found 'completely superficial' and did not think their views were reflected on the outcomes. Only the interviewee from HAK-İŞ took a less critical stance by underlining the importance of 'rhetorical contributions' which basically consisted of advocating an idea insistently, although he

also acknowledged the problems with institutional channels of participation and the more determining role of personal relations.

5.4 Conclusion

The analysis of the legal, organisational, ideational and political foundations of social assistance in 2000s in this chapter highlights different factors which undermine the potential of social assistance in Turkey to expand social rights. Firstly, the organisational and legal structure of social assistance developed in an eclectic way, in what is largely a path dependent process. On the one hand, the SYDTF and SYDV structure has been a prominent element of continuity through a critical juncture around the crisis and their central role in the implementation of social assistance has been gradually consolidated. On the other hand, the expansion of legal provisions defining the contours of assistance schemes indicated a certain progression in terms of the development of social rights; however, the legal framework has remained quite fragmented despite the recent unification of different schemes under a central Ministry, which creates considerable uncertainty and ambiguity in the system of assistance.

Policy-makers find some aspects of the current organisational and legal structure problematic, but the examination of their norms and understandings points out that the vision of social assistance has not gone beyond a focus on the ‘deserving poor’ and relevant schemes are still clearly distinguished from social insurance that constitutes the mainstream of welfare provision. While policies have increasingly been framed as ‘right-based’, the dominant understanding of right in this context is a limited one which primarily relates to the effective implementation of social assistance in order to define the poor as an objective category. Finally, politics of social assistance are characterised by the strong control of ruling JDP over welfare policy and the lack of opportunities for other actors, which potentially have useful contributions to make, to take part in policy-making. While the JDP politically benefits from its identification with social assistance, the incentives created by the existing institutional structure seem to undermine political motives for leading social assistance in a more inclusive and entitlement-based direction, and effectively integrating it within the overall welfare regime.

Chapter 6

Trends in the Outcomes of Social Assistance

Despite certain limitations arising from the process of development of social assistance, as highlighted in the previous chapter, we could still expect the expansion of assistance schemes to bring some improvements to welfare outcomes for their recipients. Given the previous lack of public provisions for the current target group of social assistance, the assessment of these outcomes is an important aspect of the development of social rights. The focal question in this chapter is therefore whether social assistance in Turkey displays a trend of improving welfare outcomes for the formerly excluded parts of the society, hence contributing to the expansion of social rights. More specifically, this would mean increasingly inclusive, transparent, stable and generous provisions, also capable of enhancing broader opportunities available to their recipients.

It is important to note here that although most social assistance schemes have recently been brought together under the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, frequent changes in legal and organisational structures in previous years and the sustained fragmentation of the system pose challenges for longitudinal analysis. Some schemes or schemes with similar functions were sometimes implemented by different institutions over time, which also had an impact on data reporting practices, and the separate reporting of data for each scheme is especially problematic with regard to coverage because of overlaps among different schemes. In addition, rules that regulate the distribution of benefits showed many differences according to scheme and over time. While there is a pilot point-based system in place, aiming to assess the need situation of applicants in a more integrated and automatic way, the prospect of seeing

it adopted in a near future seems low⁵⁹. Therefore, the approach followed in this chapter consists of examining individual schemes as an indicator of the broader trajectory and is based on current practices of distribution as a suitable ground for analysis.

In this regard, the chapter starts with tracing the evolution of current social assistance schemes with a focus on changes in their coverage, procedures of entitlement, and generosity. Coverage is assessed through the number of recipients or the total resources dedicated to the scheme, depending on which one is judged to be more reliable given the characteristics and the trajectory of each scheme⁶⁰. Procedures of entitlement are about the characteristics of means-testing and entitlement criteria, including accompanying conditions in return for assistance. Generosity is based on the duration and level of benefits in each scheme. Once individual schemes are examined in the first part, the second part of the chapter builds on this and offers a more holistic discussion of the system of social assistance from the perspectives of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation. Hence the aim is to assess the extent to which social assistance schemes are able to transform the welfare regime in terms of their outcomes. Finally, the last part concludes that while social assistance schemes ensured the decommodification of recipients to a considerable extent, persistent gaps in coverage, instability of access and a problematic performance in integrating these schemes with broader opportunities hampered the expansion of social rights overall.

⁵⁹ Some formulas were previously developed through a large-scale collaborative project with experts and academics, and have been integrated into the general information system used by the SYDV foundations since 2013. In this pilot phase the points-based system assesses all the applications at the background but does not affect the outcome of the applications which are still decided by SYDVs according to existing procedures. Although the initial aim was to make necessary revisions to the formulas based on the matches/mismatches during the pilot phase, recent reports of the Ministry does not mention the actual adoption of this system as a short-term target anymore and our consultations indicate that the evaluation of pilot results has not yet started.

⁶⁰ These may not be perfect indicators for tracking changes in coverage because they are both highly dependent on demand, therefore their expansion can simply reflect increasing need rather than an expansion in the scheme itself. Nevertheless, they are a good proxy here as poverty in Turkey has not been rising by any measure in the period under scrutiny, and the range of change in the number of poor has been very limited according to TÜİK Poverty Statistics based on the 60% of the median income.

6.1 Features of Current Social Assistance Schemes

6.1.1 Overview

The coverage of social assistance evolved in relation to both the inclusion of new groups within the system, and the changes in the coverage of existing schemes. Within the broad definition of the target group of social assistance based on non-coverage by social insurance, a growing number of schemes addressed the needs of specific groups. The schemes implemented under the umbrella law number 3294 include assistance with health- and education-related expenses, conditional cash transfers, family assistance in terms of food, fuel and shelter needs or broader cash assistance, and finally employment-oriented projects and assistance. At the same time, non-contributory pensions, premium assistance for General Health Insurance and Home Care Assistance target similar groups outside the coverage of social insurance based on different legal provisions. As a key shared feature, the criteria of not being covered by social insurance has started to be eased recently, with access to the Home Care Assistance becoming based on per person household income regardless of the social insurance situation of household members in 2007, and the law 3294 being extended to the socially insured with a per person household income threshold in 2012. Non-contributory pensions have also come to rely on per person household income in 2013 although they naturally exclude the socially insured who are supposed to have access to contributory pensions when required.

Specific criteria for entitlement vary according to the groups that are targeted and might involve certain additional conditions such as in the case of CCTs or the promotion of employment. In terms of mean-testing, an income threshold indeed existed, since its inception in 1992, for the Green Card scheme which preceded General Health Insurance, but the introduction of precise income levels which determine entitlement to assistance is relatively recent in other schemes. When the only main criterion was to be outside the social insurance system, the needs of households were directly assessed by the implementers on the ground. For instance, in schemes implemented under law 3294, the binding decision-making power lied with the Board of Trustees of SYDVs without the imposition of any definite income

criteria. Such ways of more discretionary means assessment still prevail for applicants outside the social insurance system because the recently incorporated income threshold in this law remains limited to the socially insured. However, the general rise in the importance of household income in determining entitlement to social assistance has meant that means-testing is now more dependent on precise thresholds. Meanwhile, both the thresholds⁶¹ and the technicalities of means-testing, such as the types of income and expenditure which are taken into consideration, differ from scheme to scheme, as will be highlighted in the following discussion.

Finally, with regard to the duration and level of benefits, two main distinctions to be highlighted are between regular and one-off assistance on the one hand, and cash and in-kind assistance on the other. Regular assistance is typically in the form of cash, and in the form of free access to health services in the case of Green Card or premium assistance for General Health Insurance. While regular non-contributory pensions date as back as 1976, and the Green Card scheme started in 1992, conditional cash transfers were the first regular assistance scheme adopted as such under the law number 3294. The latter remained the only one until quite recently; however, they are now supplemented with regular family assistance schemes such as those for the widow and families of soldiers. Also, the Home Care Assistance in return for the care of the disabled at home now constitutes a regular scheme. While the level of benefits is set by the Fund Board for provisions under law 3294, others are indexed to salary indicators in some way. Meanwhile, one-off assistance can be provided either as cash or in kind, which is most of the time under the discretion of implementing SYDVs. This covers areas such as health- and education-related expenses, food, fuel or shelter needs, and more recently also cash assistance for entering paid employment, which is coordinated by the centre. The next part will examine the coverage, entitlement procedures and generosity of different schemes over time one by one⁶².

⁶¹ At the moment, the threshold for schemes based on law 3294 and non-contributory pensions is one third of the net minimum wage while it is one third of gross minimum wage for assistance with health premiums and two thirds of the net minimum wage for Home Care Assistance.

⁶² Unless otherwise specified, this examination is based on the information provided in official reports which include one inspection report on the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity prepared in 2006 (DDK, 2006) and covering some period of time before that, and the annual activity reports of first the same General Directorate (SYDGM, 2007; 2008; 2010; 2011) and then the Ministry of Family and Social Policy (ASPB, 2012;

6.1.2 Analysis of Individual Schemes

Assistance with Health- and Education-related Expenses

The existence of a means-tested Green Card scheme⁶³ allowing the poor access to health services as early as 1992 generally limited the need for additional assistance in the area of health. The SYDTF conventionally supported Green Card holders for their medicine and medical material expenses which are not covered by the Green Card scheme, and non-Green Card holders for the health expenses which they cannot afford, yet the number of beneficiaries of these types of assistance has been low. The scope for health-related assistance under the law 3294 further declined with the introduction of General Health Insurance in 2008 and the expiration of the Green Card scheme in 2012, although the foundations are still able to support this kind of expenses in case of unforeseen needs on the ground. In addition, the disabled who are not covered by social insurance are supported for their equipment expenses, as well as the disabled who are insured but cannot afford specific equipment not provided by their insurance. However, the Fund has only had a supplementary role to play in assistance with health-related expenses and the coverage in this regard has not been expanding.

In the area of education, there is assistance with education material such as school cloths and stationary, transportation of poor students who live at a distance to their schools and the provision of lunch at school, free transportation of disabled students to their schools and free provision of textbooks to all students in primary education⁶⁴. When the allocation of earmarked budget from the centre for education material support came to an end in 2013, a considerable decrease has been witnessed in the amount of resources used for this purpose which, in current prices, came down from 117.54 million TL in 2012 to 15.34 million TL in 2015. On the other hand, expenditure on the combined transportation and lunch scheme, which has generally

2013b; 2014; 2015; 2016), covering the period after 2006 except for the year 2008, the report on which was not possible to access.

⁶³ This will be discussed separately under the section on Premium Assistance for General Health Insurance below.

⁶⁴ There is also a need-based scholarship programme for higher education students, mainly targeting the children of the martyrs, the disabled and the needy more generally. Although this constituted a key scheme for the Fund before 2000s, it is not examined here because it has been transferred to the Institution for Student Loans and Lodging (known as YURTKUR by its Turkish acronym) in 2004 and the Fund gradually ceased to be involved in its finance as well as implementation.

been increasing in line with inflation from 2009 to 2013, has nearly doubled in 2014 by coming up to 462.28 million TL from 288.88 million TL in 2013, again in fixed prices, and remained around this high level in 2015. Assuming the cost of this programme per student would not change radically, this indicates a significant expansion in coverage. With regard to the transportation of disabled students, the scope of disabilities which are covered has widened in 2005 to include not only mental but also physical disabilities, and the resources spent on this programme has been rising since then, again pointing out an expansion. Finally, the free textbooks scheme is virtually universal and covers all students at a certain stage of education since its inception in 2003.

The means-testing for assistance with the aforementioned health- and education-related needs is undertaken within the framework of the law number 3294. Therefore, the inclusion of the socially insured whose income is below the one third of the minimum wage threshold has meant that potentially more people could benefit from these types of assistance. The free primary school books scheme is again an exception because the textbooks are provided to all students regardless of income. In terms of the level of benefits, the amount spent on health-related expenses are very much dependant on idiosyncratic needs of the beneficiaries and most of the education-related assistance is in kind, except for education material assistance which is sometimes provided as cash. The level of benefits for these specific types of assistance is therefore not a very useful indicator in terms of assessing trends over time, and neither is the duration because they tend to be one-off rather than regular.

Conditional Cash Transfers

CCTs target poor families with children, or about to have children, who have inadequate access to health services or are unable to send their children to school due to financial difficulties. While the scheme has started as part of the Social Risk Mitigation Project funded by a World Bank loan, after this project ended in March 2007, CCTs were maintained with general resources of the Fund and have more recently been restructured as Conditional Health Assistance and Conditional Education Assistance. The former covers children under the age of 6 as well as women during their pregnancy and a short post-natal period, and is conditional upon attending regular health checks. There is also an additional one-off assistance to

women who give birth in the hospital. The latter covers children in primary and secondary education, and is conditional upon regular school attendance. Table 2 below gives a summary of the number of recipients and the total amount of resources spent on each scheme in the years for which data is available.

Table 2. Conditional Health and Education Assistance, Number of Recipients and Total Expenditure in 2015 Prices, 2006-2015.

Year	Health		Education	
	Number of Recipients	Expenditure (million TL)	Number of Recipients	Expenditure (million TL)
2006	969,241*	207.12	1,659,713	479.74
2007	1,029,703*	178.12	1,757,187	413.84
2008	1,065,203*	202.57	N/A	495.38
2009	836,506	216.02	2,066,869	537.11
2010	829,464	106.08	2,172,750	384.31
2011	757,757	196.55	1,863,099	545.19
2012	913,591	237.12	2,017,810	621.83
2013	1,009,361**	281.95	2,048,885**	592.57
2014	1,046,919**	306.41	1,993,341**	613.6
2015	1,172,461**	363.08	2,018,870	664.13

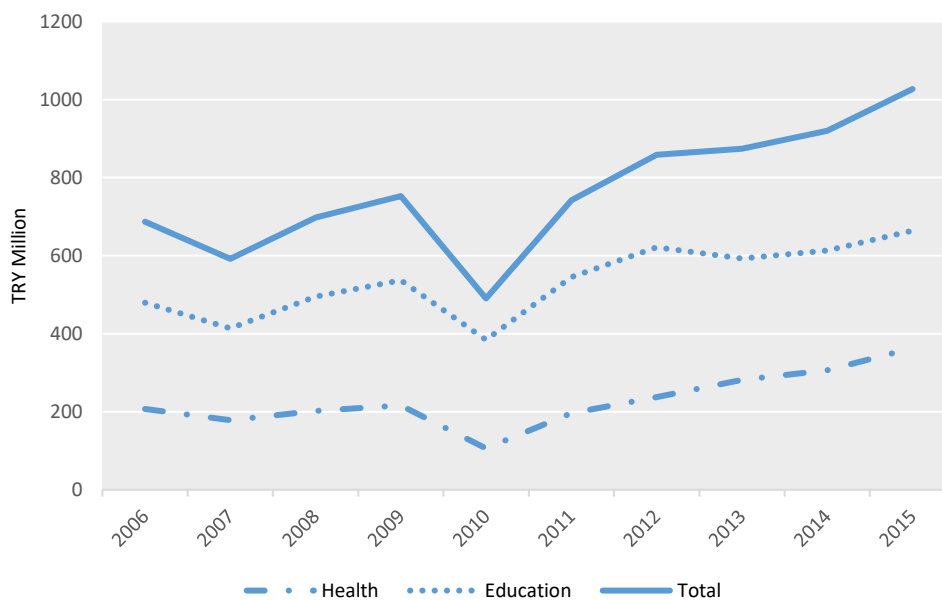
Notes: * From 2006 to 2008, data on recipients is separately reported for women who give birth and children, therefore total numbers given in the table are likely to include some duplication as some people might receive support for both reasons during the same calendar year. Data after 2009 is based on the highest number of recipients during the year to avoid duplicates.

** For 2013 and 2014 (and also 2015 for health), these numbers are estimated on the basis of data reported according to various subgroups because the total number of recipients as such is not available. In health, numbers given in the table include only the children and pregnant women who give birth, and exclude pre- and post-natal support because those who receive the latter are assumed to also receive at least one of the others during the same calendar year. In education, official numbers are reported according to three stages of education which last four years each. Therefore, to avoid double-counting the students who are in the last year of first and second stages at the beginning of the calendar year, the numbers for second and third stages of education are reduced by one fourth. The comparison of a similar estimation to the actual total number provided for 2015 indicates only a marginal error of 1%, which strengthens the reliability of 2013 and 2014 estimates in the table.

As shown in the table, there has not been an even trend of coverage expansion, but the CCTs seem to be well-established as an assistance scheme both in health and

education. In health, there was a considerable decline in the number of recipients in 2009, which is partly explained by the changing data reporting style as highlighted in the notes to the above table. Yet, out of 1,065,203 people who received Conditional Health Assistance in 2008, 1,026,725 did so on the basis of children’s health controls, which is still higher than the total number in 2009 and thereby confirms the decline. On the other hand, the numbers given for years after 2013 are very much comparable to 2007 and 2008 both in size and in terms of method of calculation, indicating a recovery in coverage. In education, the number of recipients made a peak in 2010 and then went down again to some extent, but in 2015 it remains well above the 2007 level. The trends in the total expenditure on these schemes displayed in Figure 10 also support the view of CCT as a consolidated element of the social assistance net in Turkey because the general direction of change has been upwards except for the decline in 2010. This is indeed a good indicator of coverage because the change in the level of benefits per person has been limited throughout the same period, as will be shown below.

Figure 10. Total Expenditure on Conditional Cash Transfers, Million TL in 2015 Prices, 2006-2015.



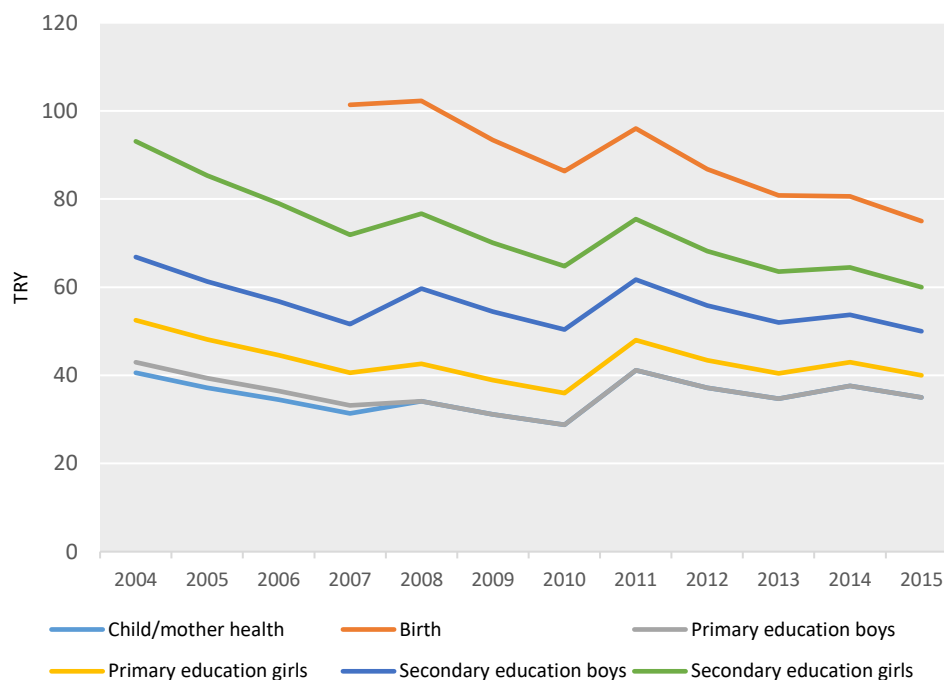
In terms of means-testing, the target group of the scheme was initially set as the poorest 6% of the population, a level which was taken over from the preceding World

Bank funded project. However, this specific target seems to be released in the recent years as the CCTs are now provided according to the general procedures of law 3294. The changes to this law in 2012 have brought about the potential extension of provision to the socially insured in case their per person household income is below the one third of net minimum wage threshold. Moreover, a Fund Board decision in 2014 maintained that assistance will not be cut when members of a family in receipt of CCT enter paid employment and hence under the coverage of social insurance during the year 2015. Although the aim is to reduce potential disincentives for beneficiary families to undertake formal work, this is also likely to increase the total number of recipients throughout the year, yet its continuation beyond 2015 has not been confirmed.

As for generosity, the benefits continue as long as the circumstances of the recipient families do not change and the conditionalities are observed, while the level of benefit depends on specific types of CCT. In health, monthly amounts provided per children and women in return for health checks is the same, namely 35 TL in 2015⁶⁵, as compared to the one-off assistance for hospital birth which is set at 75 TL. In education, provided amounts change according to the level of education and gender of the pupil. The highest benefit, 60 TL, is received for girls in secondary education, followed by 50 TL, 40 TL and 35 TL for boys in secondary education, girls in primary education and boys in primary education respectively. Finally, very recently an extra one-off assistance of 60 EUR per year (equivalent to 226 TL in 2015) has been introduced for students in secondary education to increase continuation rates as part of an EU supported project. Meanwhile, adjustments in the level of benefits over time have been sporadically decided by the SYDTF Fund Board, and the general trend in this regard has been a slight decline in the real term value of CCTs for health and education alike as displayed in Figure 11.

⁶⁵ The figures on the generosity of benefits are given in Turkish Liras here and in the rest of the chapter. For a comparison, we should note that the average of net minimum wage for the two halves of 2015 was 975 TL according to the numbers provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security at: <https://www.csgb.gov.tr/home/Contents/Istatistikler/AsgariUcret> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

Figure 11. Level of Conditional Cash Transfers per Child/Person, TRY in 2015 prices, 2004-2015.



Notes: 2004 and 2008 levels are not directly known based on the available documentation. The former is assumed to be the same as the ones which are given with reference to March 2005 in the 2006 inspection report. 2008 levels, on the other hand, are assumed to be equal to the increased 2009 levels relying on the World Bank project evaluation report which mentions an increase in CCT levels in 2008 (The World Bank, 2008 p.17).

Family Assistance

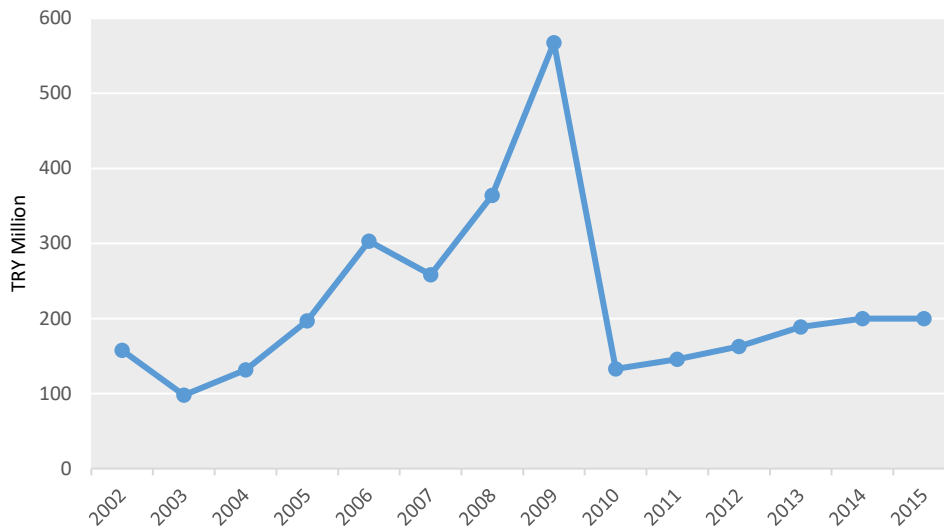
Another scheme has been family assistance which, as two main items, consisted of food and fuel assistance. Food assistance is provided by the allocation of some extra budget to the SYDV foundations usually in the wake of two religious holidays each year. It is then to the local SYDVs to decide whether to provide cash or in-kind support. Foundations are also able to assist the poor with their food expenses at other times of the year using their monthly allotments; however, food assistance overall is overwhelmingly based on the earmarked budget sent from the centre. Figure 12 thus displays the trend in annual earmarked expenditure on this scheme to assess changes in its coverage, assuming that expenditure per household does not change dramatically

from year to year. While food assistance has been significantly expanding until 2009, when it peaked, there has been a sharp decline in 2010 and the increase in expenditure in the following years has been much slower. Yet it remains an important scheme of family assistance with a total budget of 250.72 million TL in 2015, including the earmarked budget and extra provisions by the foundations, which compares to 363.08 million TL spent on Conditional Health Assistance during the same year.

In addition, the fuel assistance scheme, which started in 2013, provides in-kind assistance to the needy in the form of coal. The number of households which received fuel assistance and the amount of coal distributed since the inception of the scheme are shown in Figure 13. While there has been a certain decline in both regards in 2010, similarly to the case of food assistance, the recovery of fuel assistance in the following years is much more visible, and it seems to have become quite stable and well established recently. Looking at the two measures comparatively, the number of households and tons of coal, another main trend has been the increase in the average amount of coal per household, indicating a rise in benefit generosity.

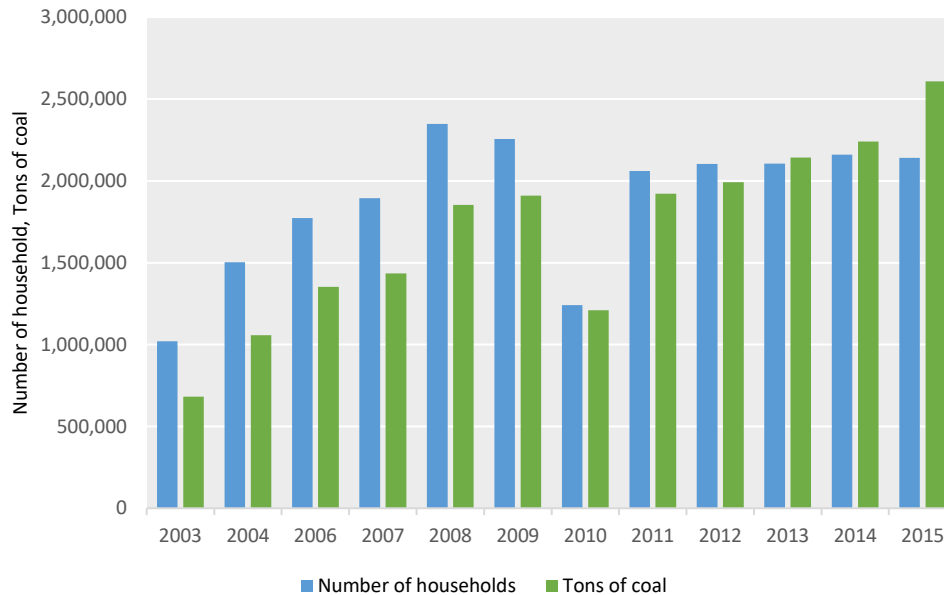
At the same time, other specific needs such as shelter are targeted through family assistance. While shelter-related needs have always been addressed by the foundations, the number of recipients peaking in 2009 with 20,183, there is also a large-scale social housing project which has started in 2009 and is still running. Between 2010 and 2015, 29,271 houses were built with the resources of the Fund and allocated to the poor with favourable repayment conditions. Finally, groups such as those affected by natural disasters or refugees are covered by the schemes implemented by SYDV foundations according to emerging needs at the local level. Although the diversification of existing schemes certainly point out an expansion, especially with regard to housing, more idiosyncratic provisions do not constitute a suitable indicator for general trends over time.

Figure 13. Food Assistance, Expenditure in 2015 Prices (Million TRY), 2002-2015.



Notes: To make data more comparable across years, for 2008 and 2009 expenditure on some additional food support which was part of specific projects is excluded and figures are limited to regular earmarked allotments to the foundations. For the same reason, expenditure in 2013, 2014 and 2015 does not include extra provisions the foundations have made from outside their earmarked budgets although those are now reported by the Ministry.

Figure 12. Fuel Assistance, Number of Households and Tons of Coal, 2003-2015.



Notes: Data for 2005 is not available.

Recently, the scope of family assistance has been expanding with the introduction of new cash assistance schemes. Two such schemes which have been introduced in 2012 and 2013 target the needy women who have lost their husbands and the families of the soldiers who are away for military service and who do not have any social insurance. The coverage of these schemes has increased since their inception, their number of recipients respectively exceeding 300 thousand and 100 thousand in 2015. In the same year, the children of soldiers in military service and the orphans under the age of 18 have also been brought under the coverage of assistance. While there is no limitation on the duration of assistance to the widows and the orphans, assistance to the families and children of soldiers is by definition limited to the military service period. The level of benefit is 250 TL per month for widows and families of soldiers, and 100 TL per month for the other two schemes targeting children. Finally, a one-off birth assistance has again been introduced very recently, and is paid to every woman who give birth regardless of their income. The level of benefit is 300, 400, and 600 TL for the first, second and third child respectively, and 658,663 people benefited from this scheme in 2015.

Employment-oriented Projects and Assistance

Another target group for social assistance has been the poor who are ‘employable’, in line with the provisions of the law number 3294 which points at ‘those who can become productive with small amounts of temporary support.’ The schemes which addressed this group conventionally consisted of employment-oriented projects such as KASDEP, as known by its Turkish acronym⁶⁶, and other income-generating projects. KASDEP aimed at supporting people in rural areas via the provision of interest-free loans in cases where they wanted to be involved in agricultural activities, mainly in the livestock sector, but could not do so due to lack of resources. The scheme worked on the basis of cooperatives and the loans were to be repaid after an initial period of time. KASDEP started off in 2003 with 1,150 beneficiaries and peaked in 2009 when 15,201 people became part of the supported cooperatives. Although KASDEP has been by far the biggest item of expenditure among employment-oriented projects, project applications for this scheme were ended by a

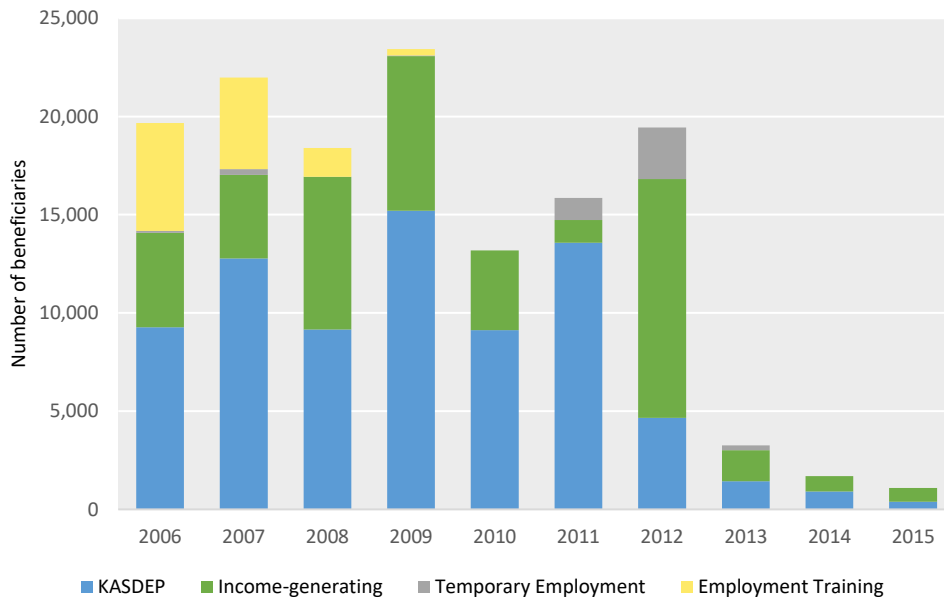
⁶⁶ Full name of the scheme is *Kırsal Alanda Sosyal Destek Projesi*, which translates as ‘Social Support Project in Rural Areas’.

Fund Board decision in 2010. The projects which were approved before continue to receive support today, with the number of beneficiaries in decline since 2011 and hitting a low of 383 in 2015.

Other income-generating projects in place promote self-employment in a variety of occupations such as hairdressing, tailoring, plumbing, agricultural product processing and restaurant operation. These are oriented towards both urban and rural areas, and mostly provide support to individuals but also include group projects in the livestock sector. Since the latter type of projects gained scope after 2011, they can be considered as a substitute for the previous KASDEP scheme, but as shown in Figure 14, they have not become as popular because even the total number of beneficiaries in income-generating projects has generally been quite small with the exception of 2012. Since 2014, new projects are not financed from the central Fund anymore but it is still possible to get a similar support from the foundations which are supposed to use either the repayments of former project loans or their own resources. Additionally, in a minor scale, there have been employment training projects, and temporary employment projects which usually involved public institutions or NGOs as coordinator and consisted of the employment of the poor in a variety of projects serving public interest. In terms of coverage, the most striking trend displayed in the figure is the sharp decline in the number of beneficiaries of all types of projects starting with 2013.

The approach to the link between social assistance and employment has been changing more recently, as there are now increasing attempts to integrate social assistance with the promotion of formal employment among recipients. In this sense, one member of the SYDV staff is specifically appointed for employment purposes and those who apply for assistance are directly registered with the system of the employment agency İŞKUR if they are deemed 'employable'. The latter is defined as those between the ages of 18 and 45, not in receipt of a non-contributory pension on the basis of disability, who live in households which do not include an employed member and belong to the lowest income group according to the General Health Insurance means-testing. In 2011, 2,601 people entered employment as such, a number which rose to 19,154 in 2012 and 21,299 in 2013. Employment through İŞKUR covers both regular stable jobs in the formal sector, and a specific scheme called the Programmes for Public Interest, in placements for which social assistance

Figure 14. Number of Beneficiaries in Employment-oriented Projects, 2006-2015.



Notes: Social development projects which integrate the components of training, social work and income-generation are not included in this figure because detailed information about their content is not available.

recipients are to be prioritised⁶⁷. The latter consists of the temporary employment of the unemployed through occupations and services in areas considered as of public interest such as the cleaning of public spaces, maintenance of schools and landscape gardening⁶⁸. The length of employment cannot be longer than 9 months within a year, and participants are paid the official minimum wage including social insurance and health premiums.

Since 2014, the promotion of employment has been complemented with cash assistance in the process of employment, and sanctions in cases when recipients refuse to engage in paid employment or other employment-related activities without good reason. Two newly introduced cash schemes which target people referred by the SYDV foundations for employment are called the Assistance for Employment Orientation and the Assistance for Employment Initiation. The former provides

⁶⁷ According to the instructions of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy available at: http://sosyalyardimlar.aile.gov.tr/data/543d13ba369dc30b101047e1/typ_yonlendirme_genel_yazi.pdf [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁶⁸ These areas are set in the İŞKUR regulatory code on active employment services available at: <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2013/03/20130312-7.htm> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

support for initial expenses associated with employment, such as travel expenses for the interview, changes between 40-100 TL and is given a maximum of three times in a year. The latter consists of one-off cash support to those who are actually offered employment and take up their offer, and equals one third of the gross minimum wage, which was approximately 292 TL in 2015. Those for whom a sanction is implemented are no more able to receive cash assistance from the SYDV foundations but this excludes regular assistance schemes and in-kind assistance, meaning that sanctions are not very strong at the moment. Though very recent, this new approach seems to have the potential to consolidate employment among social assistance recipients.

Non-contributory pensions

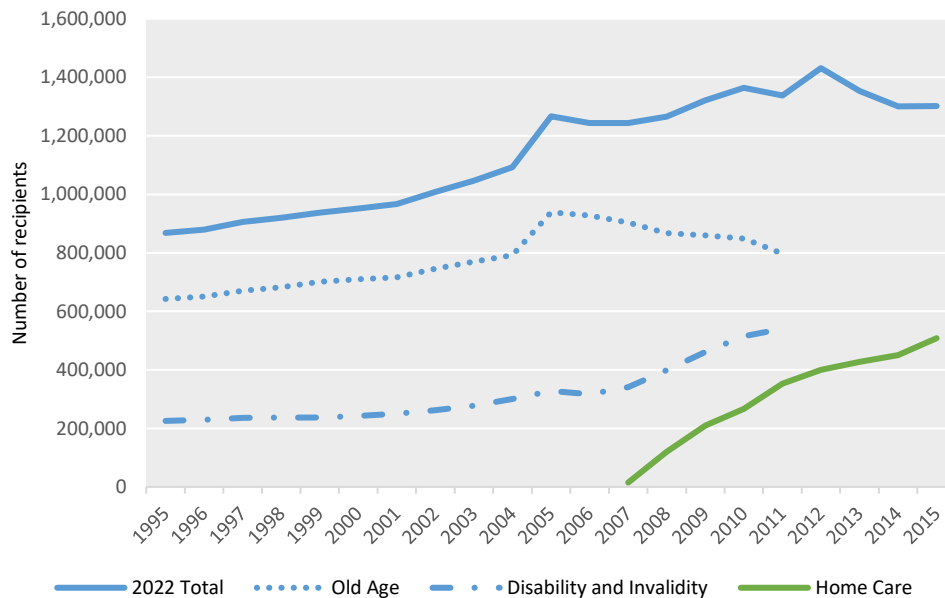
Yet another target group for social assistance has been the elderly and the disabled, who have indeed been offered some coverage since a longer time than any other group. A non-contributory pension was introduced in 1976 for the elderly and the disabled who do not have any regular income, including stipends from a social security institution, who are unable to work and do not have anyone legally liable for looking after them. These pensions are usually called 2022 Pensions after the initial law they are based on⁶⁹. In 2005, a new law⁷⁰ specified groups eligible for a disability pension according to two different degrees of disability and also allowed the families of the disabled under 18 years old to benefit from this scheme. In 2011, silicosis patients with decreased work capacity were involved within the scheme as a temporary provision, which is now discontinued in terms of the acceptance of new patients. Finally, in 2013, the condition for the applicants not to have anyone legally liable for looking after themselves was removed from the definition of target groups. However, the impact of this revision on the coverage of the scheme has been limited because it was accompanied by fundamental changes in means-testing procedures explained below, which effectively countervailed its expansionary potential.

⁶⁹ The law number 2022 (Law on the Initiation of a Pension for the Needy, Frail and Unattended over the age of 65)

⁷⁰ The law number 5378 (Law on the Disabled and the Changes in Some Legal Provisions)

General coverage trends displayed in Figure 15 indicate a smooth trend of increase in the total number of non-contributory pension recipients between 1995 and 2004 followed by some fluctuations. As for the sub-groups, the number of old age recipients seems to be in sustained decline after 2004, which, in terms of total coverage, has been mostly compensated by the later increase in the number of disabled recipients. Although the expansion of coverage to the relatives of the disabled under 18 has arguably played a part in this, the shift observed in the balance between the two

Figure 15. Number of Recipients of Non-Contributory Pensions and Home Care Assistance, 1995-2015.



Notes: Data on the number of recipients of 2022 pensions is available in the Annual Statistics of The Social Security Institution (1995-2011), and in the Social Assistance Statistics of Institutions Supplying Social Assistance (2002-2014) provided by the General Directorate of Social Assistance, Ministry of Family and Social Policy. As the two sources give consistent information about the time interval they share, these numbers are assumed to be comparable and used in a continuous manner. The numbers given in the recent activity reports of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy differ from those used in the figure, especially in 2012 and 2013, but these are not taken into account for the purposes of this figure because their methods of reporting do not seem to be consistent among themselves either: The 2012 report gives the number of active recipients in the month of December while the 2014 report includes everyone who received at least one pension throughout the year in the count, which indeed comes very close to the Social Assistance Statistics data used in this figure. The 2015 report does the same as the 2014 report, and is therefore used to extend the figure to 2015.

main target groups of the scheme is also related to the changing recording of benefits. In fact, following the differentiation of benefits for the elderly and the disabled in 2005, those who are in receipt of disability pensions before the age of 65 have continued to be considered in this group after they reach the old age limit, hence making part of disabled recipients rather than elderly.

2022 pension scheme has undergone many changes with regard to its entitlement criteria and means-testing after being taken over by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. Initially, the means-testing threshold was equal to the amount of the basic stipend for the elderly, which in turn was indexed to civil servant salaries. The assessment was generally based on the individual income of the applicant, with additional consideration of potential contributions from the spouse to household expenses in cases where the applicant is married⁷¹. In 2013, a major revision has been made to the law, changing the income threshold from being the same as the basic stipend level (130 TL) to the one third of the net minimum wage (243 TL), which is a substantive increase. However, this came together with a transition to per person household income as the basis of assessment, meaning that the incomes of those who the applicant lives with would now have a direct influence on the entitlement. Since then, there have also been frequent changes in the technicalities of the scheme in terms of the types of incomes/expenditures which are to be included in means-testing. For example, two subsequent regulations in 2013 and 2014 have foreseen completely opposite procedures about the deduction of fixed costs such as the rent of the primary dwelling from the household income, and the consideration of Home Care Assistance⁷² as a source of income in the assessment.

The level of pensions in this scheme is related to civil servant salaries with specific coefficients for different groups covered by the law. While the pensions for the elderly and the disabled were the same when they were first put in place in 1976, in 2005 the levels have been differentiated according to groups. Thus, the basic pension is for the elderly; those with a low degree of disability (40-69%) and the families of the disabled persons under 18 are paid more; and those with a high degree of disability (over 70%) receive benefits at a still higher level. The pensions for

⁷¹ As stated in the regulatory code passed in 2010 available at: http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/27751_0.html [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁷² This is quite a high-level benefit which will be discussed in the following part.

silicosis patients are the highest and again depend on the level of disease. In terms of the general level of benefits, being indexed to civil servant salaries means that they keep up their value over time. This is confirmed by the comparison of the level of high degree disability pension in 2006⁷³, which is approximately 409 TL per month in 2015 prices, to the current level of 458 TL. Meanwhile, the coefficients which make part of the indexation of pensions to civil servant salaries are annually decided within the Budget Law, therefore the rises are not always proportional. For example, there has been a major rise in the basic pension in 2015, which was not reflected on the higher level pensions for the disabled.

Assistance for care

There are two schemes which are not directly defined as cash assistance but address care needs of their target groups in such a way to constitute a social assistance scheme. First, since 2007, the relatives of the needy disabled are offered a monthly stipend in return for their care services at home, which has also been officially recognised as an assistance scheme in 2014 under the name Home Care Assistance. The coverage of the scheme has been rapidly expanding since its inception, as displayed in Figure 15 above together with 2022 pensions, with the number of people who benefit from the scheme going over 500 thousand in 2015. This compares to 6,204 people in public care and rehabilitation centres, and 10,823 people in private care centres, the costs of which are also covered by the state, and shows that home care combined with assistance to the family is much more widespread than institutional care models.

The link between care and social assistance has been established through a series of legislative changes from 2005 to 2007. The main entitlement criteria for access to care were initially defined as being disabled to such a degree that requires care by someone else, not being covered by social insurance and not having a family or having a destitute family⁷⁴. By 2007, the condition of not being covered by social insurance was released, and like 2022 pensions, replaced by a household-based income threshold which is set at the higher level of two thirds of the net minimum

⁷³ This value is based on a news article available at: <http://www.memurlar.net/haber/53440/> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁷⁴ As stated in the law number 5378 (Law on the Disabled and the Changes in Some Legal Provisions)

wage per person for this scheme⁷⁵. As a general rule, this assistance requires the care taker to ideally reside with the disabled person, or spend at least eight hours a day with him/her in cases where separate residence is approved⁷⁶. The level of assistance to the care taker, which was initially based on the net minimum wage, has later been indexed to civil servant salaries similarly to 2022 pensions but again at a higher level. The monthly amount of Home Care Assistance was 830.84 TL in 2015, remaining very close to the net minimum wage, while the amount paid by the state to the care centre can be twice as much when care is provided by private centres.

Second, there is a scheme of Social and Economic Support targeted at the children in need of protection⁷⁷ and similar to Home Care Assistance in terms of the combination of care and assistance. The need for protection is defined on the basis of absence of one or both parents, and negligence and abuse which endanger the physical, mental and emotional development of the child⁷⁸. The purpose of the Social and Economic Support scheme is to ensure that children are taken care of by their families in cases when the reason for an existing or potential protection order is financial deprivation. Thus, financial support is provided to families to enable them to cover the expenses of their children and prevent children from being taken under institutional care. At the moment, the programme covers not only the children under an existing order of institutional protection who are then returned to their families, but also children for whom a protection order is demanded but not yet issued. The level of benefits is indexed to civil servant salaries and varies according to the age and the education status of the children. In 2015, payments for pre-school children and secondary education age children who do not continue their education were 395 TL/month, a level which rose to 592 and 631 TL/month for children in primary and secondary education respectively. Those who move on to high education were given 710 TL/month.

⁷⁵ As stated in the law number 5579 (Law on Changes to the Law on Social Services and Children Protection Institution)

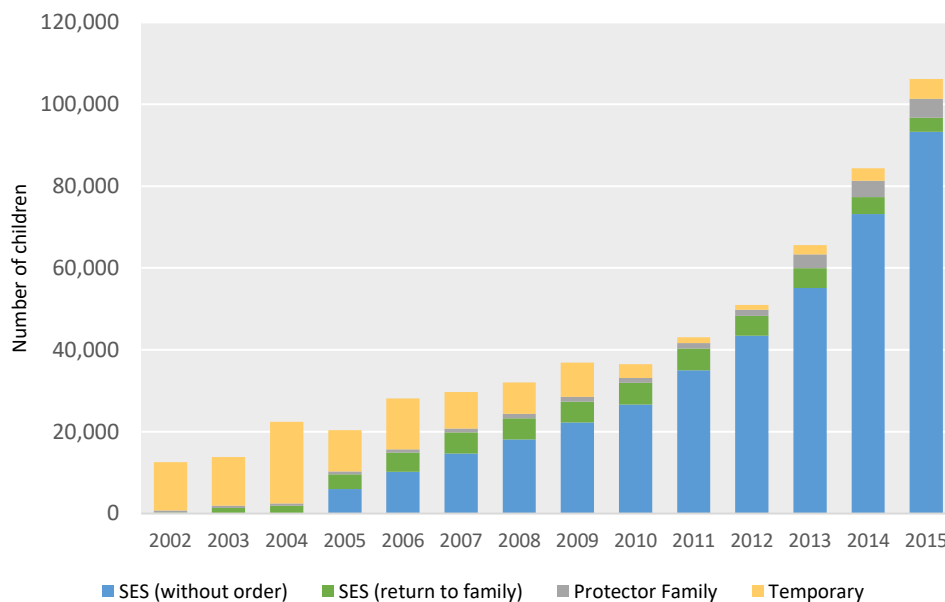
⁷⁶ As stated in the regulatory code on the Detection of the Disabled in Need of Care and the Principles of Care available at: http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/26244_0.html [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁷⁷ The programme also covers the elderly between the ages of 60-65 who are unable to benefit from 2022 pensions, but as the recipients are overwhelmingly children, the following discussion will be based on that.

⁷⁸ As stated in the law number 2828 (Law on Social Services and Children Protection Institute) and the law number 5395 (Law on the Protection of the Children)

At the same time, temporary forms of assistance are provided to the same target group for the resolution of a specific social and economic issue, or as one-off assistance for specific expenses such as marriage. Finally, cash assistance is also given to the protector families which are usually found among the relatives or acquaintances of the children in need of protection. Figure 16 displays the number of children in receipt of different types of Social and Economic Support over time. These schemes seem to have followed a consistent trend of expansion in recent years, accompanied by an increasing number of children who are supported before the protection order is issued and a significant decline in the overall share of temporary forms of assistance.

Figure 16. Number of Children in Receipt of Different Types of Social and Economic Support, 2002-2015.



Premium Assistance for General Health Insurance

With the introduction of General Health Insurance (*Genel Sağlık Sigortası*, hereafter GSS) in 2008, health premiums for those under an income threshold were foreseen to be paid by the state. As this system has practically taken over the previous Green Card scheme, it is possible to follow coverage trends on this basis. According to the Ministry of Health, which was responsible for the Green Card scheme, there were 7,199,184 card holders by the end of 2004 when a central information system was put

in use⁷⁹. Since then, the highest number of card holders was reached in 2009 with 9,647,131⁸⁰ and when the scheme has been transferred to the Social Security Institution in 2011, there were 8,814,969 active users on the system⁸¹. The comparison of these numbers to the number of people whose premiums are paid by the state under GSS, which has been 9,099,059 in 2012 and then only showed minor changes (9,111,923 in 2013, 9,368,920 in 2014 and 8,933,853 in 2015), confirms a certain continuity between the two schemes. This also indicates extensive population coverage in means-tested access to health services as compared to other types of assistance. Finally, with a revision made to the introductory GSS law in 2013, health premiums of the children under 18 who are not insured through their parents have also started to be paid by the state⁸². Although this is not a major quantitative change, as by the end of 2015 the number of such recipients were only 3,037, the removal of means-tested criteria is striking from a more qualitative perspective.

In terms of general means-testing procedures, the threshold for the Green Card scheme was set as the one third of the net minimum wage per person since the establishment of the scheme in 1992⁸³. Following the introduction of GSS and the transfer of means-testing to the SYDV foundations, the income threshold for the coverage of health premiums by the state has been revised and brought up to the one third of the gross minimum wage rather than net. Although this is a higher threshold than before, now the means-testing has also started to take expenditures into account, thereby becoming stricter in this sense. On the other hand, as different from the previous Green Card scheme, the GSS means-testing determines not only the lowest income group for which premiums are covered by the state, but also other groups which are to pay gradual premiums according their income. Therefore, it has become possible for those outside the formal social security system to access health services by paying income-based premiums.

⁷⁹ The information is provided in response to a parliamentary question, available at: <http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d23/7/7-6977c.pdf> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁸⁰ According to the Annual Statistics of The Social Security Institution (SGK, 2009)

⁸¹ According to the data retrieved from the Ministry of Health, Green Card Information System, available at: <http://sbu.saglik.gov.tr/sbyesil/> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

⁸² The law number 5510 (Law on Social Insurances and General Health Insurance)

⁸³ As stated in the law number 3816 (Law on the State Coverage of Health Expenses of Citizens Unable to Pay for Themselves)

6.2 Policy Outcomes

6.2.1 Decommodification

As discussed in Chapter 2, decommodification is understood here as the extent to which people can sustain a certain level of welfare independently of market participation, thereby mainly referring to income security, which would need to be independent from employment status or any contributory record in the case of social assistance. Although social assistance does not have a particularly high capacity for decommodification in a conventional sense, it may still ensure some income security for those who do not have access to other provisions. Coverage of existing schemes is a key indicator in this regard. While the previous section focused on individual schemes due to data limitations, aggregate information about the number of people who benefit from a social assistance scheme⁸⁴ is available for the last three years in a way that avoids duplications. The proportion of this number to the total number of the poor indeed gives a good idea about the general coverage of social assistance which, in 2014, has been 63% in total and %47 excluding those who only benefit from one-off support through the SYDV foundations⁸⁵. This indicates significant coverage, but also significant gaps in coverage, which makes the overall performance of current schemes questionable. However, the main interest of this dissertation is about trends over time and aggregate data does not allow longitudinal assessment, which is why the rest of the discussion rather focuses on whether social assistance in Turkey has been becoming more decommodifying given the changes in individual schemes.

In this sense, despite the decline of a few specific schemes, the general coverage of social assistance seems to have considerably expanded in 2000s, through both the consolidation and some expansion of existing schemes themselves, and the addition of

⁸⁴ Excluding employment-related project support, some types of support which go through transfers to other public institutions such as the free provision of textbooks, and the health premiums paid by the state.

⁸⁵ Total number of social assistance beneficiaries is given in the 2000-2014 Social Assistance Statistics of Institutions Supplying Social Assistance, provided by the General Directorate of Social Assistance, Ministry of Family and Social Policy. In order to calculate the percentage of recipients excluding one-off assistance recipients only, this number has been proportionally reduced according to the number of households which benefit from regular and one-off assistance given in the 2014 Activity Report of the Ministry. The poverty threshold which is used is 60% of the median income, and the number of poor people according to this threshold is retrieved from TÜİK Poverty Statistics.

new target groups to the range of implemented schemes. The schemes which showed declines were usually those of one-off assistance such as assistance with additional treatment expenses uncovered by any health insurance or education material. Also, in-kind food assistance remained low since its peak level in 2009. However, the coverage of other schemes such as fuel assistance or the transportation of poor and disabled children to school, which are likewise implemented under the law 3294, expanded. The CCTs became a consolidated assistance scheme with all their different types, and Conditional Education Assistance was recently supplemented by an extra one-off allowance for secondary education. In addition, both schemes of assistance for care, namely Home Care Assistance and Social and Economic Support, saw an expansion of coverage since their inception. Premium assistance for General Health Insurance covered approximately 9 million people each year starting with 2012, which, in a comparative perspective equals the total number of recipients for other types of assistance in 2014. Meanwhile, 2022 pensions expanded to new target groups such as the relatives of the disabled under 18. There were also recent additions to social assistance schemes such as the provision of social housing, family assistance schemes targeting the widow, the orphans and families of soldiers, and the two types of employment-oriented assistance.

The expansion of coverage indicates a stronger potential for decommodification as more people get access to non-contributory assistance and some form of income security. At the same time, three of the current schemes deserve particular attention from the perspective of decommodification. These are the provision of free textbooks to all students in primary education, the coverage of health premiums by the state for all children under 18 who are not insured through their parents and the recently introduced one-off birth assistance. The significance of these schemes lies in the absence of means-tested criteria for entitlement, which gives them a universalist quality. Thus, the membership of quite an objective category, such as being in primary education or under the age of 18, or giving birth in the case of birth assistance ensures access for everyone without any additional criteria or conditions. This effectively makes the decommodifying capacity of these schemes much stronger because it is independent from the procedures of means-testing which can otherwise be a compromising factor.

For other schemes, the characteristics of means-testing involved in the distribution of assistance has also implications for decommodification outcomes. In schemes implemented under the law 3294, means-testing for those outside the formal social security system is based on a proxy-means testing, which is not very transparent and for which the SYDV foundations have significant discretion. As there is no encompassing definition of need, this is rather assessed on a case by case basis, taking account of different types of assets and income retrieved from the central information system and reports of the house visits by social workers. Discretionary means-testing as such is problematic for decommodification because it might undermine access to assistance. However, these procedures have been very similar throughout the period under scrutiny, therefore they do not indicate a deteriorating capacity either. On the other hand, the incorporation of the socially insured who have per person household income under the specified threshold into the scope of the law in 2012 is a positive step. This has indeed meant the removal of an important obstacle for access to assistance because the existence of one member covered by social insurance does not necessarily ensure income security for the household.

Means-testing procedures for provisions outside the law 3294 have been more specifically regulated, thus more transparent and easier to follow. One key issue in this regard was the occurrence of frequent revisions to income thresholds and assessment methods, likely to create a high degree of instability for the recipients. For instance, two successive changes to the calculation of means for the 2022 pensions in 2013 and 2014 have meant that the recipient status of many people has been very fragile during this period. Moreover, differences among the schemes were sustained despite these revisions, meaning that those who are considered needy for the purposes of one scheme might not be able to access other types of assistance, although they are all supposed to target those in need of assistance. The fragmentation of the system and the gaps in coverage were thereby reinforced due to people's differential access to different schemes, which undermined the possibility of increased decommodification through a more consistent expansion across the board.

As a second issue, should be added the fact that potentially progressive changes were always accompanied by other changes to an inverse effect. When the income threshold for 2022 pensions was almost doubled for example, the simultaneous transition from assessment based on personal conditions to household income caused

many recipients to lose their pensions in cases where they lived with family members or relatives with a certain income. Similarly, in Home Care Assistance, the renunciation of the condition of not being covered by social insurance happened at the same time as the adoption of a household-based income threshold. Although this threshold is relatively higher than its counterparts, giving the scheme a higher decommodifying potential, the inclusion of all household members in means-testing unavoidably limits the access of some disabled people to the benefit. Finally, in the introduction of GSS, the rise in income threshold was offset by the transition to expenditure-based assessment which is usually tighter than its income-based version.

Finally, the aspect of generosity, which is also central to decommodification, showed mixed trends in terms of benefit levels, with stability and rise being more dominant than decline. The levels of assistance rise rather automatically in schemes that index them to some salary indicators, such as 2022 pensions and the two schemes of assistance for care, which are thus more predictable and safer. On the other hand, in CCTs, for which the increases depend on sporadic decisions, there was a somewhat downward trend, especially when recent figures were compared to the 2004 levels. However, benefits for most types of CCTs have kept up with their 2005 levels by 2015 with the exception of payments for girls in secondary education which saw a bigger decline than the others. In comparative terms, schemes under the law 3294 generally had a lower decommodifying capacity than others but the levels of the recently introduced family assistance schemes are very much comparable to 2022 pensions. Also, the CCTs can be paid for multiple children at the same time, increasing their decommodifying potential for large households.

One striking trend here was the increasing importance of regular types of assistance against one-off assistance, which is again an improvement from the perspective of decommodification. The addition of new regular schemes such as assistance to the widow and families of soldiers, rapid expansion of Home Care Assistance and the dramatic rise of regular types of Social and Economic Support against temporary ones all exemplify this trend. In regular schemes, assistance continues as long as the entitlement criteria continue to hold, with home visits to recipient households being periodically repeated to keep the means assessment up-to-date. Thus, the duration of benefit is not limited unless it is constrained by the definition of the scheme itself, such as the assistance to the families of soldiers during

their military service, or the CCTs for children during primary and secondary education. On the other hand, newly imposed sanctions for the promotion of employment are still weak, with the refusal to undertake work preventing the access to cash assistance by SYDVs but not the access to cash assistance as part of regular schemes or in-kind SYDV assistance. Therefore, they do not significantly compromise the decommodifying capacity of the assistance schemes under scrutiny for the time being.

6.2.2 Commodification

Commodification refers to the extent to which the availability of decent formal employment opportunities is improved, thereby extending the scope of social rights beyond income security and incorporating the dimension of employment security as well. Employment security is indeed concerned with a much wider area than welfare policy; however, it is key to assess the latter from the perspective of commodification because it is very much interlinked with the features of the labour market. Firstly, the existence of widespread informal employment makes the link between welfare policies and labour market problematic, especially in the case of targeted social assistance. When the main targeting mechanism relies on means-testing, as it currently is in Turkey, one immediate issue is the difficulty of establishing the income level of informally employed applicants. More importantly, the techniques that are used in doing so amount to a certain recognition and institutionalisation of informal employment, as formal policies come to depend on establishing the income earned from the informal labour market and are shaped accordingly.

In addition, social assistance in Turkey primarily targeted those who were not part of the contributory social insurance system because of being outside formal employment for a variety of reasons. This clear delineation between assistance and insurance indeed constitutes a key drawback from the perspective of commodification when recipients or potential recipients are part of the labour force but have the option of working informally. The configuration of social assistance as such creates incentives to choose informal over formal employment given the possibility of combining assistance with income from the informal labour market. The recent extension of provisions under the law 3294 to those who are socially insured but still have a low per person income within the household remedied the problem to some

extent, as stated by many interviewees in the Ministry and the SYDV foundations. Yet, the positive impact of this development seems to remain limited because the distinction between the socially insured and the not socially insured is still there and the income threshold is much stricter for those who are formally employed and covered by insurance.

On the other hand, there are several ways in which social assistance schemes themselves were policy tools for the promotion of employment among recipients. Initially, this urge for commodification was not very systematic and rather relied on a project-based approach. While KASDEP projects encouraged the organisation of the rural poor around agricultural cooperatives to provide sustainable income rather than assistance, other income-generating projects focused on small scale self-employment in a variety of crafts and occupations. Although limited, this approach had some potential for commodification; however, the KASDEP programme was suddenly discontinued by the Fund Board, and the number of approved income-generating projects declined significantly over the recent period, indicating a loss in the commodifying capacity of the system. Recently, this has been partially compensated by the orientation of social assistance recipients to regular formal jobs or the temporary Programmes for Public Interest through extra allowances and sanctions. Yet, the suitability of this approach to the profile of the recipients or the conditions in the labour market is dubious, as also underlined in an overwhelming majority of interviews with policy implementers. One key common point here was that the possibility of informal employment was a major deterrent for the recipients to undertake formal work, so commodification through the promotion of employment was not very functional in its current form.

Finally, improved performance in terms of commodification is also related to the nature of employment which is promoted because commodification is not about the obligation to undertake any last resort employment but the availability of decent options. For example, the Programme for Public Interest could have good commodifying potential as it provides social assistance recipients with medium-term jobs in the public sector, paying the minimum wage including social and health insurance contributions. Yet, a wider look at the jobs offered under the umbrella of the programme indicates that, rather than the creation of new formal employment opportunities for the unemployed or the informally employed, those indeed amount to

the substitution of temporary and less secure forms of employment for former regular positions. This is also one of the key points of criticism raised against this programme in public debate, as emphasised by some trade unionists in the undertaken interviews. In this perspective, temporary employment in the Programmes for Public Interest is better understood as part of the overall flexibilisation of the labour market than the improvement of the labour market access for social assistance recipients, thereby having an opposite impact in terms of commodification.

Similarly, the Home Care Assistance scheme is very problematic especially for the commodification of women. While this scheme is configured as an assistance scheme, it indeed requires a full-time carer from within the household, who is most of the time a woman. On the one hand, this means that the possibility for this person to look for paid employment outside the house is undermined, which indicates a negative feature from the perspective of commodification. On the other hand, as voiced by politicians from the opposition, the full-time care role itself is not recognised as employment under this scheme because the carer is not paid a wage but only assistance in return for care, and does not have access to any social security as a result. Moreover, even if the amount of assistance is high as compared to other schemes and almost equals the net minimum wage, it is still much lower than what the state pays the private centres for the same service. Therefore, the problem of commodification is further aggravated with this scheme which functionally constitutes another type of unsecure and low-paid informal employment.

6.2.3 Defamilialisation

The perspective of defamilialisation captures the extent to which family is relieved from its welfare provision role through welfare policy. While in a broad sense this is concerned with family services and care arrangements, the particular focus here is the defamilialising impact of social assistance schemes under scrutiny. In familialistic welfare regimes, improvements in terms of decommodification might also mean some degree of defamilialisation especially for recipients not covered by the contributory system. This is mainly because in cases where people cannot ensure a sufficient level of welfare through the market or access to formal schemes, it is mostly the family which compensates for it by sharing resources and responsibilities. Help is also sought from the extended family and the kin when necessary. In this context, increased

availability of social assistance schemes has the potential to enhance defamilialisation by constituting an alternative source of welfare. In the Turkish case, both the general consolidation of social assistance and the initiation of some universal schemes targeted at children point out such enhancements. In particular, the coverage of health premiums of those under 18 by the state when they are not insured through their families highlights a radical change in mentality because family dependence is otherwise key to the system, including access to formal provisions. The state's assumption of responsibility for providing health services to all children regardless of the insurance situation and the income of their families is therefore a defamilialising change which has recently taken place.

Nevertheless, specific features of current schemes have far-reaching implications for the defamilialising capacity of the system beyond the link with decommodification. Examination of entitlement criteria indicate that current social assistance schemes move the system in a less rather than more defamilialising direction in several ways. For example, from their inception in 1976 until quite recently, entitlement to the 2022 pensions depended on not having anyone legally liable for looking after oneself, which aligns well with the strongly familialistic character of the overall welfare regime through the envisaged role of family as a primary welfare provider. The renunciation of this condition in 2013 could have thus been a significant step in the sense of defamilialisation, with the state acknowledging its role in welfare provision at the expense of the family. However, the condition was renounced only to be replaced by a household-based income threshold, which has prevented any effective defamilialisation because the responsibility of the state towards the elderly or the disabled still depends on the resources available to their families.

Similarly, the renunciation of the condition of not having any social insurance for Home Care Assistance could have been an improvement in the system's defamilialising capacity because coverage by social insurance income does not always guarantee a certain level of welfare for the disabled, who might then have to rely on familialistic arrangements, especially for care. However, a household income-based threshold has been introduced also for this scheme, which again reflects the assumption that the primary responsibility for care and other needs of the elderly and the disabled lies with the family and only when it fails should the state intervene.

Moreover, the existence of a highly generous assistance scheme for the care taker actively encourages the family-based care model for the needy families, thereby reinforcing the familialistic character of the regime. This is not necessarily true for the Social and Economic Support scheme, however, because in that case assistance enables families to take care of their children by removing existing financial obstacles rather than bringing additional care duties.

The last question to consider from this perspective is about the definition of family and household which underlies different schemes. The most limited definition of family is found in GSS which is arguably due to its functioning through dependence because once one member of the family comes under the coverage of insurance, other members can also benefit as dependents. For other schemes, household is more broadly defined on the basis of residence at the same address and also include children who are away for the purpose of education. This is therefore the scope of family within which resources are supposed to be shared. While the household which is the basis of the means-testing for entitlement to Home Care Assistance is similar, the definition of relatives who can become a care taker under this scheme is kept particularly wide in scope, including even the cousins and their spouses⁸⁶. This indeed highlights a sometimes very much extended conception of family being actively encouraged by existing policies, and shows that social assistance is far from becoming a defamilialising force as it currently stands.

6.2.4 Declientelisation

Last but not least, declientelisation refers to the extent to which hierarchical and loyalty-based community relations are replaced by more equal formalised rights. Although the study of clientelism as a broader feature of social relations is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the impact of social assistance on prevailing ways of accessing welfare provisions should be discussed as part of policy outcomes. On the one hand, similar to the case with defamilialisation, the expansion of direct assistance schemes to the poor decreases the reliance on community relations to a certain extent given the increasing availability of an alternative. Moreover, the emergence of specific rules and definitions about social assistance schemes, albeit fragmented, is bringing

⁸⁶As stated in the regulatory code available at: http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/26244_0.html [Last access: 26 May 2017]

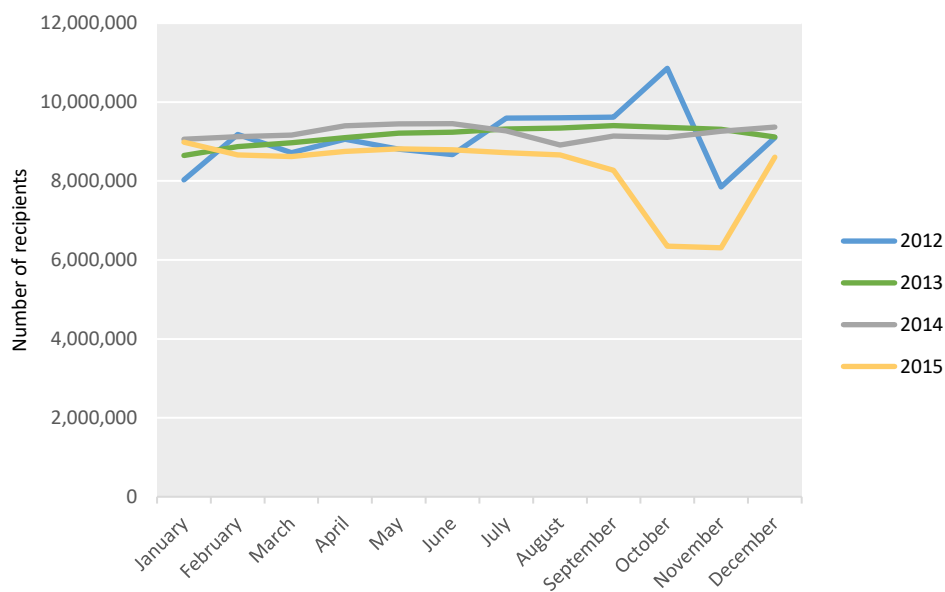
some measure of formality to the system. On the other hand, the instability of provisions over time and the non-transparent aspects of means-testing indicate significant problems in terms of the development of formal rights that are expected to replace community relations. There is thus still a risk that the procedures of entitlement for social assistance have hierarchical and loyalty-based characteristics themselves, hence undermining the potential for declientelisation through social assistance.

As data on individual recipients and the experiences of individual applicants in accessing social assistance schemes is not available⁸⁷, we need to analyse the potential for declientelisation from a rather systemic perspective. Although clientelist practices typically rely on informal relations between individuals, recent forms of clientelism also include the distribution of benefits to target groups which are considered more likely to vote for a party or candidate (Stokes, 2007). In this sense, the focus from a systemic perspective would be on whether there exist political motivations that underlie social assistance and go together with short-term expectations of political return and loyalty. A good indicator for this is the consistency of provisions over time, which could be discussed on the basis of trends in provision according to election cycles. However, one problem here is that, when both general and local elections are taken into account, the prospect of an election becomes fairly constant throughout the covered time period: General elections took place in 2002, 2007, 2011 and 2015, while local elections were held in 2004, 2009 and 2014. Therefore, the analysis of annual trends is not very likely to show distinct patterns and yield relevant results on declientelisation because there is usually an election on the horizon. As changes within years can usually not be tracked through available data, a systematic analysis of all schemes is not possible, but there are some instances where this sort of data is available, constituting the focus of analysis below.

⁸⁷ The Ministry is unwilling to provide statistical data on social assistance recipients even in an anonymised way. For privacy reasons, it is also impossible to reach individual recipients or applicants who are not granted assistance, which would both need to be covered for an in-depth study of the potentially clientelist features of the system.

One such instance is found in premium assistance with GSS health insurance and the preceding Green Card scheme. With regard to the Green Card scheme, regular figures on beneficiaries are not available on a monthly basis, but there are secondary sources which report that the number of card holders in 2007 reached as high as 14.5 million while there were numerous cancellations in the aftermath of general elections and this number was down to 9.4 million later in 2008 (Üçer, 2009 p.16)⁸⁸. On the other hand, data is more regularly provided for the period after 2012 when means-testing for the GSS has started to be done by the SYDVs. Figure 17 below shows monthly trends in the number of people for whom the health premiums are paid by the

Figure 17. Number of People Benefiting from GSS Premium Assistance Each Month, 2012-2015.



Notes: Total numbers used in the figure are not limited to means-tested provisions but also include various categories such as war veterans or the under 18s. The figure is based on these numbers because 1) there are some differences in the reporting of sub-categories from year to year, the effect of which is better insulated this way and 2) the premiums paid as a result of means-testing still constitute an overwhelming part of the total number.

⁸⁸ Üçer cites a lot of figures with regard to the scheme by making a general reference to the Ministry of Health Green Card data, however it is not possible to confirm these figures as the Ministry of Health has now transferred the scheme to other institutions and the relevant data archives are unfortunately not available anymore.

state throughout each year from 2012 to 2015. These trends do not strongly correlate with election times: While there was a visible up and down in 2012, this does not correspond to any elections or the prospect thereof. Moreover, the numbers were very stable throughout 2013 and 2014, despite local elections which were held in early 2014. The only striking change which does correspond to an election is the sharp decline in 2015, which saw the number come down by almost 2 million from September to October, just after the general elections in the 1st of October; however, this alone does not confirm the role of political motivations for increased provision before the elections.

Another scheme which allows the examination of temporal trends beyond annual changes is food assistance, for which the expenditure data is provided in a disaggregated way for some years. First of all, as shown in Figure 12 before, the resources spent on food assistance made a clear peak in 2009, immediately followed by a sharp decline in 2010. While the correspondence of this peak to the local elections is interesting, it is not possible to directly interpret this as a sign of an attempt by the government to consolidate its political support, especially in view of the probable impact of the global financial crisis on the level of need for assistance in the society. However, the disaggregated figures for 2009 point out a link between assistance and the elections in a stronger way. The table below summarises the amount of earmarked budgets transferred to the SYDVs for the purpose of food assistance in different distribution periods between 2008 and 2011.

While food assistance is usually provided twice a year, in the wake of two religious holidays, the 2009 report notes that due to the inadequacy of food assistance, which is established through an impact assessment, food assistance is to be provided four times a year starting from June 2008. Following this, the budget spent on food assistance in the first quarter of 2009 was exceptionally high, exceeding not only all other instalments in the previous and the same year but also the total amount of resources allocated for this purpose in 2010. Given that 2009 local elections were held in March, and the level of need is unlikely to show fundamental changes within months, the timing of this exceptionally high amount of spending supports the idea that clientelist expectations of political return and loyalty seem to be present in the provision of social assistance. Moreover, the practice of distributing food assistance four times a year was just abandoned in the next year. At the moment, two transfers to

Table 3. Food Assistance Budget Transferred to the SYDVs according to Distribution Periods, 2008-2012.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Eid 1	94,985	86,489	40,755	43,563	49,424
Eid 2	118,725	86,602	40,735	41,395	49,424
Period 1	-	126,272	-	-	-
Period 2	-	42,869	-	-	-
Total	213,710	342,232	81,490	84,958	98,848

Notes: * The given budgets are limited to earmarked budgets and exclude additional food assistance which the SYDVs provide from their regular allotments. The figures are approximations given in thousand TLs and fixed 2008 prices.

** As the time of the Eid varies throughout years, the periods in this table do not exactly correspond to half years or quarters. However, in 2009, Eid were celebrated in September and November, therefore could be considered as the last two periods of distribution within the year.

the SYDVs again correspond to the religious holidays and equal their regular monthly allotments, and this system is arguably less open to political influence from the central level.

The examples raised by a few interviewees during the fieldwork also constitute some evidence, albeit anecdotal, for the presence of clientelist expectations associated with the provided assistance. For instance, one politician from the opposition criticised the timing of the introduction of income criteria for Home Care Assistance, which meant the loss of access to the scheme for many people, and was made effective only after elections. Checking the development of the scheme as discussed above, we see that the relevant change in regulation dates from 2007, and was indeed legislated in February in the wake of the March election in 2007. Therefore, the criticism that the losses were imposed just after the election seems realistic. The same interviewee also claimed an informal political intervention in the distribution of medical reports around election times, without referring to a specific election. According to him, hospitals were asked to apply the disability criteria loosely before the elections, but the reports were made subject to a re-evaluation after the elections, with many of them being cancelled as a result. While this is a strong accusation with regard to political motivations of the government and the manipulation of social assistance, it is not possible to confirm such claims in a more objective way due to the aforementioned lack of disaggregated data.

Finally, from a relatively more objective perspective, two social workers in a visited SYDV foundation strongly criticised the current system because they thought that its political dimension became too dominant, especially after the foundation of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. In this sense, they gave various examples from the period preceding the general elections in June 2015 such as the postponing of due updates in the schemes for the disabled and the widow to the aftermath of the elections. While this decision to postpone was based on excuses about the high workload, there was a new scheme communicated to the SYDV foundations as an issue requiring urgent attention within the same time period. In addition, the first payments for the new scheme targeting the orphan and the children of soldiers were to be made on the 1st of June, which is only days before the election date, as the interviewees underlined. The relevant circular is not publicly available; however, some news articles also confirm that the scheme was initiated in May 2015 and the first payments were planned for the 1st of June⁸⁹, in what constitutes a good example of the use of central control over the SYDVs in line with political motives and expectations of electoral return.

6.3 Conclusion

The examination of trends in the coverage, entitlement criteria and generosity of social assistance in the last fifteen years indicates a complex picture of change in Turkey. On the one hand, the expansion of coverage has been visible, and included some particularly decommodifying schemes which target children as a universal category. The generosity of benefits has largely been improved, with rises in schemes which index benefit levels to other salary indicators and only a slight decline in some benefits which are updated more sporadically. Also, the newly introduced family assistance schemes contributed to improvements in overall generosity as their level is quite high as compared to other schemes under the law 3294. These confirm the gradual establishment of social assistance as a new layer of formal institutions in Turkey, which fills an important gap in the previous welfare regime where public provisions were typically based on contributions and those who did not have the

⁸⁹ See, for example, <http://www.aksam.com.tr/yazarlar/yetim-veya-asker-cocuguna-18-yasina-kadar-ayda-100-tl/haber-406582> and <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yetim-oksuz-ve-asker-cocuklarina-maas-baglaniyor-28931955> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

necessary contributory record did not have access to any income security through the state.

On the other hand, as we could expect on the basis of the eclectic growth of social assistance highlighted in Chapter 5, the analysis of individual schemes shows that different thresholds and methods of assessment prevail despite some standardisation in entitlement procedures over the recent years. This has ultimately prevented social assistance schemes in Turkey from coming to constitute a better integrated safety net. In addition, the sustained fragmentation of the system, the lack of clarity which still marks the entitlement criteria for some schemes, and frequent and contradictory revisions in others have created some instability in benefits, which is problematic from the perspective of decommodification. This is also likely to have impaired a more significant expansion in coverage, as illustrated by current gaps in provision.

Moreover, the performance of existing schemes is poorer from the perspectives of commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation, whereby there is even some evidence in the contrary direction. Commodification primarily fails due to the consolidation of informal employment and the nature of alternative employment options that are promoted through social assistance schemes. This is exemplified by the promotion of temporary unsecure jobs as well as the non-recognition of full time care work as paid employment in the case of Home Care Assistance. Meanwhile, increasing decommodification relieves the pressures on the family to some extent, but the welfare provision role of family is being actively reproduced by transitions to household-based income thresholds, especially in schemes targeting the elderly and the disabled, and the encouragement of a family-based care model in Home Care Assistance. The problems from these two perspectives point out important continuities from the earlier periods in terms of the centrality of informal employment and expectations from the family as sources of welfare respectively.

Finally, the declientelisation performance of social assistance schemes is problematic because of the sustained lack of transparency in some procedures and the instability of provisions, which are sometimes also patterned according to expectations of political return and loyalty. These are also familiar institutional characteristics of the previous welfare regime in Turkey, and are in line with dominant logic of social assistance which is about the state helping the deserving poor, as discussed in Chapter

5. Social assistance seems to have changed the ways in which this help is provided rather than replacing them with more stable and formalised entitlements. In conclusion, therefore, we can note that social rights for the formerly excluded groups have partially improved from the perspective of decommodification but the transformative potential of social assistance is undermined by the features of existing schemes which, in several ways, contradict the purposes of commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation, and thereby limit broader opportunities available to current or potential social assistance recipients.

Chapter 7

Functioning of Social Assistance through the SYDV structure

Having examined the recent process of development of social assistance schemes and the trends in welfare outcomes for recipients in previous chapters, the present chapter will finally approach social assistance from the angle of on-the-ground functioning. It will therefore ask how the institutional structure of SYDV foundations, which are the key implementing agencies at the local level⁹⁰, influences the transformation of the welfare regime. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 5, the current structure embodies quite a peculiar relationship between the public and the private, and the boundaries between these two are increasingly blurred with regard to the SYDVs. This chapter will unpack the peculiarities of this structure based on fieldwork conducted at the central level as well as the SYDV personnel in nine different local foundations⁹¹. It will argue that despite the growth of social assistance schemes that are almost exclusively financed from public resources and subject to some coordination by the centre, the trajectory of social rights was marked by an ambiguous definition of the

⁹⁰ At the moment there are 81 provinces and 919 districts in Turkey, with a SYDV established in each of them. In general, central areas of the provinces, which are not assigned to a separate district, are covered by province foundations, and districts, which are also sub-units of a province, are covered by district foundations. However, in provinces with the status of metropolitan area there is no separate central area, therefore no separate population is covered by metropolitan province foundations. Those SYDVs focus on different activities outside the implementation of regular assistance schemes.

⁹¹ There was also a 10th SYDV which was visited, but it was situated in a metropolitan province as mentioned in the previous footnote, and due to the current local administration structure it did not cover any separate population in terms of the implementation of regular schemes. This foundation is excluded from the general analysis of the functioning of social assistance in the first section below because its work only depends on idiosyncratic emergency assistance to different groups such as the homeless, visitors from other cities and foreigners, and extra projects in the area of social services, about which not enough information was shared during the interview.

responsibility of the state, the consolidation of a distinction between the recipients of other mainstream provisions and the poor, and systemic opportunities for political manipulation of assistance as well as blame avoidance.

In this regard, the first section below analyses the functioning of current social assistance schemes in detail by focusing on the role of SYDV foundations in the provision, the financing of social assistance schemes, decision-making within the SYDVs, their relations with the central authority and their relations with other public agencies. The second section then discusses the implications of the SYDV structure first for the welfare mix in terms of the division of responsibility between public and private pillars, and the institutional differentiation within the welfare regime, and then for the politics of social assistance. The last section concludes by linking important characteristics of the SYDV structure and the implications highlighted in the second section to the development of social rights through expanding social assistance.

7.1 Functioning of the SYDVs

7.1.1 Role in the provision of social assistance

The main responsibility of SYDVs in the implementation of social assistance is the determination of recipients, which they do in two different ways. For regular schemes coordinated by the Ministry, their role is deciding the recipients through means-testing according to the criteria of need, which are set by Fund Board based on the law number 3294 or other laws and regulations. The payments to the recipients for these schemes are then directly made by the Ministry. These include the CCTs, some types of family assistance such as assistance to the widow, families/children of soldiers and the orphan, and birth assistance, employment-oriented assistance and non-contributory old age and disability pensions. More recently, Home Care Assistance, one of the two major assistance schemes for care which were managed by the local administration of the Ministry, has also been transferred to the SYDVs⁹² while the other, Social and Economic Support, is still managed by this local administration which is otherwise focused on the provision of social services. These centrally coordinated schemes

⁹² A change to the law number 2828 stipulated its transfer to the SYDVs in 2014 but the transfer process has not been finalised yet. The implementation is expected to be made fully by the SYDVs and the General Directorate of Social Assistance soon (ASPB, 2016 p.136).

generally provide regular cash assistance, except for the birth assistance which is one-off, and some schemes which are automatically limited by the definition of their target groups such as assistance to the families of soldiers who are away for their military service.

Secondly, the foundations are expected to provide supplementary assistance by using the monthly allotments they receive from the SYDTF. While the distribution of assistance across areas was shaped by the centre via the transfer of earmarked budgets before, the trend over time has been a decline in earmarked transfers accompanied by the increase of general monthly allotments of the foundations. At the moment, fuel assistance is sent to the SYDVs as in-kind coal packages directly and there are still earmarked allocations for food assistance, but other provisions are determined by the foundations themselves which can also use their resources for additional assistance in those areas if they deem necessary. SYDVs thus try to address urgent essential needs in a flexible way according to local and individual circumstances and usually through one-off assistance. Yet, they sometimes also implement family assistance schemes in a more sustained way with the decision of their Board of Trustees, which determines the entitlement criteria for such schemes within the borders of the broad definition of need put forward in the law 3294 as well as the type and amount of assistance to be provided.

As a result, the provisions which remain outside the centrally coordinated schemes show some variance among the local foundations. In the SYDVs that were visited as part of the field research, food assistance was occasionally provided as food packages or vouchers, but the most widespread practice was to give direct cash assistance. Food packages in particular were not considered as a good way usually because they imposed the consumption of certain things on the recipients. One interviewee also highlighted the fact that people already received food packages from various organisations such as municipalities or charities as one of the reasons why they chose cash over in-kind assistance while another one mentioned the advantage of contributing to the local economy by encouraging shopping from local shopkeepers. Other types of assistance provided by the SYDVs from their monthly allotments are concerned with a variety of needs which cannot always be determined in advance or standardised. The examples raised during the interviews included assistance with clothing, household goods, shelter renovation especially in the aftermath of natural

disasters or fires, education-related expenses or health expenses which were not covered by insurance. These were again in the form of one-off cash assistance most of the time. In a district, which received a particularly high number of immigrants from Syria due to the conflict in the country, some specific provisions for the Syrians were emphasised by the SYDV personnel, indicating that the flexibility of the system was indeed used to adapt to the current conditions of the locality. As for more regular family assistance schemes, those existed in four SYDVs out of nine with their target groups defined as women in poverty, those who are unable to work such as the elderly and those in absolute poverty.

In recent years, the scope of activity of the SYDVs was expanded by the allocation of means-testing for the General Health Insurance (GSS) to them and the establishment of a link between assistance and employment. Especially the GSS has created extensive additional workload for the SYDVs because everyone outside the formal social security system is now required to go through means-testing in order to not to be expected to pay the highest level of premium automatically. On the other hand, they have come to assume responsibility for determining the 'employable' among social assistance recipients, registering them with to the employment agency İŞKUR and following up their progress. While the allocation of the GSS means-testing to the SYDVs was generally justified on the basis of their competence in means-testing and the purpose of determining people for whom health premiums will be paid by the state as part of this broader procedure, in the case of the employment link, the main strength of the SYDVs was seen to be their knowledge about social assistance recipients. As a result, not only the number of cases which are dealt with by the SYDVs substantively increased but also the types of provisions for which they are part of the process of implementation were diversified.

Finally, the SYDVs are able to implement additional projects in the area of social services and organise social or educational activities aimed at their recipients if they deem necessary. While they are entitled to a separate budget for such undertakings, the fieldwork shows that this is not very common practice among the SYDVs. Only in one of the visited SYDVs there was a social service project which was about to start. The project basically consisted of the employment of a number of recipients for the daily care of the elderly including house cleaning, cooking and medication follow up. In the same foundation, which had a much more comprehensive

approach as compared to the others, there were also other activities organised for the recipients such as literacy courses or craft workshops as well as for their children such as computer courses or school curriculum support sessions. Additionally, in two SYDVs, previous summer school or childcare activities and some vocational training organised together with public education centres were mentioned, but those were not going on anymore by the time of the interview.

7.1.2 Financing of social assistance schemes

According to the founding law in 1986, financial resources of the SYDVs consisted of allocations from the SYDTF, transfers from local municipality budgets, donations and their own income such as from business or shareholding. The main change in this regard has been the removal of the transfer requirement from municipalities in 2004⁹³. Meanwhile, the resources of the central SYDTF Fund initially included transfers from other funds through the decisions of the Board of Ministers, allocations from the general budget, half of the collected traffic fines, 30% of advertisement incomes as well as an additional share of 1% taken from income and corporate tax payers. Later, the percentage of advertisement incomes to be transferred to the Fund was decreased, and in 2003 the additional share taken from tax payers was replaced by the transfer of 2,8% of the total collected income and corporate taxes, which currently constitutes the biggest source of revenue for the Fund. As such, the Fund sends monthly allotments to the foundations, which they are supposed to use for administrative expenses and the provision of supplementary assistance for unforeseen needs at the local level. They can also engage in additional activities in line with the purposes specified in the law number 3294 and invest in the facilities of the foundation. They can make demands for extra allotments to the Fund Board when exceptional needs arise, and have access to an extra allowance equal to their monthly allotment for social services-oriented projects, which again need to be approved by the Fund Board.

The amount of regular monthly allotments of the local SYDVs is determined according to a formula. The formula before 2010 was based on the population of the local administrative unit and the share of gross income of the province within the overall GDP of Turkey, with the provinces in Eastern regions receiving 50% extra

⁹³ According to the law number 5272 (Law on Municipalities)

transfers. However, the revision in 2010 brought about a more sophisticated formula which captures differences in rural and urban population, socioeconomic development and the current demand for assistance from SYDVs in a more comprehensive way (SYDGM, 2011 pp.116-117). As such, SYDVs in localities where the number of poor is higher have started to receive higher monthly allotments, with 546 local foundations seeing an increase in the amounts they receive. The SYDVs are able to transfer their unspent resources to the following months except for the earmarked transfers for food assistance which need to be spent in the eve of two major religious holidays. Yet, those who hold more than three months' allotment in their current accounts stop receiving further payments⁹⁴, which is aimed as an incentive for them to make regular use of their resources in relevant ways rather than save. In addition, their project budget is only an allowance for approved projects and cannot be demanded or spent for any other purposes.

While the SYDTF was the main source of revenue for the foundations, and still is with regard to the schemes managed under the law number 3294, in recent years the transfer of the implementation of other schemes to the SYDVs made the patterns of financing of social assistance more diverse. At the moment, the monthly allotments of the SYDVs are transferred from the Fund and the payments to the recipients are made from the Fund for the centrally coordinated schemes such as the CCTs, cash family assistance for the widow, families/children of soldiers and the orphan, and employment-oriented assistance. Employment-oriented projects are financed either from the Fund directly or from the return of loans collected by the SYDVs. For some schemes, resources from the Fund are sent to other institutions such as the Ministry of National Education for the combined transportation and lunch scheme at school and the free textbooks schemes, and the Housing Development Administration TOKI for the social housing project. On the other hand, some large-scale schemes for which recipients are now determined by the SYDVs are financed from the general budget. Those include the non-contributory pensions for the elderly and the disabled, premium assistance for General Health Insurance and the Home Care Assistance, with the implementation of the latter still in process of being transferred to the SYDV

⁹⁴ As stated in the a memorandum from the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity in 2009 available at: <http://sosyalyardimlar.aile.gov.tr/mevzuat/genelgeler/kaynak-yonetimi-daire-baskanligi-genel-yazilari/632009-tarihli-ve-4012-nolu-genel-yazi> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

foundations. Table 4 gives a summary of current schemes according to their source of finance and various features of implementation.

Meanwhile, the SYDVs are also entitled to collect private donations as additional sources of funding for their provisions thanks to their status as foundations. When the donation is made by a company it is exempt from taxation, which is thereby expected to incentivise the companies to donate. However, fieldwork in the SYDVs shows that in reality private donations remain a marginal item in their budget. Only in one of the visited foundations donations constituted a decent part of the overall budget used for social assistance, with a share of one sixth. The donations in this SYDV were collected through a variety of channels. For instance, there were deals they made with a supermarket chain for the use of vouchers they give out as food assistance and a fuel provider for the purchase of fuel for vehicles of the foundation. In return, the foundation took commissions from these companies, which were registered as donations and used in the financing of further social assistance schemes. Additionally, a textile company donated a significant amount of clothes to be distributed as in-kind clothing assistance and made regular cash donations to be used in providing scholarships to university students. The same SYDV also assumed a role in collecting religiously motivated donations in the month of Ramadan and distributing them to the needy according to the preferences of the donor, which an interviewee highlighted as a way of making people more willing to donate through them. Finally, small cash or in-kind donations were collected from the shopkeepers in the locality with the active encouragement of the foundation manager.

Table 4. Summary of Social Assistance Schemes in Place according to the Patterns of Financing and Implementation, 2016.

SYDTF Fund		General Budget	
Centrally Coordinated Schemes	Monthly SYDV Allotments	Transfer to Other Institutions	Through SYDVs Through Local Administration
Conditional Cash Transfers (health and education)	<i>Food and Fuel Assistance</i>	Free Textbooks	Premium Assistance for GSS Social and Economic Support
Assistance for the Widow, Families/ Children of Soldiers and the Orphan	<i>Assistance with Health- and Education-related Expenses</i>	Transportation and Lunch Scheme	Non-contributory Pensions for the Elderly and the Disabled
<i>Birth Assistance</i>	<i>Other (family, clothing, shelter etc.)</i>	Social Housing	Home Care Assistance
<i>Employment-oriented Assistance</i>			

Notes: * Italics indicate one-off assistance schemes, although the category other under those implemented by the monthly allotments of the SYDVs may at times include more regular family assistance as explained in the previous part.

** Home Care Assistance is marked under the SYDVs here but officially it is still in the process of being transferred from the local ministerial administration to the SYDVs.

In contrast, other SYDVs predominantly relied on transfers from the central Fund, with interviewees defining their budget as ‘based on transfers from the state’ or ‘almost exclusively public’. Some of them actually received in-kind or education-oriented cash donations from the aforementioned textile company which was reported to be a donor to many SYDVs. Similarly, in one of them, local businessmen make occasional contributions to religious festivities in the month of Ramadan in the form of small cash donations. However, even in these foundations which receive some private donations, their share within the overall budget was negligible. Therefore, the difference of the particular SYDV discussed above seems to stem from the mobilisation of resources through additional initiatives such as commissions from specific providers or links with local shopkeepers and businessmen. In others, there is no active effort to collect donations and the role of the SYDV is usually considered as limited to the distribution of public resources transferred from the centre. These resources are generally deemed to be adequate, and when there is need for additional resources, the claims are again made to the centre rather than resorting to potential private donors.

7.1.3 Decision-making Processes in the SYDVs

In carrying out their main function in the distribution of social assistance, decisions within the SYDVs are taken in the Board of Trustees which is the main authorised body of each local foundation and holds full responsibility for its activities. The Board meets regularly to examine applications and decide the recipients of social assistance, and the decisions of the Board are effective straight away. According to the founding law in 1986, centrally appointed province or district governors, who were required to register the deed of trust to begin with, are the natural president of the Board of Trustees as the highest administrative authority at the local level. Other members of the Board consist of a combination of public officials and civil actors. As defined in the original law, members from the public side initially included the highest health, education, security, finance and religious officials of the province or district, who are all centrally appointed, as well as the locally elected mayor of the administrative unit. In addition to that, the province governor was to select three ‘philanthropist citizens’, as the law stipulated, to sit in the Board annually.

A major change was made to the composition of the Board of Trustees in 2004 by removing the security official from the Board and involving officials of social services in provinces, and agriculture in provinces and districts where a relevant local organisation exists. In addition, two representatives which the elected village and neighbourhood headmen⁹⁵ select among themselves were added to the Board. In fact, these village or neighbourhood headmen were already playing an important role in the determination of families and individuals in need because applicants to the SYDVs needed to provide a poverty certificate from them. However, previous fieldwork conducted with the headmen in charge indicates some problems with the functioning of the system, such as many of them saying that as elected officials they feel obliged to give poverty certificates to everyone while others are overzealous about protecting state resources (Buğra and Keyder, 2003 p.40). With their addition to the Board of Trustees, the position of the headmen as a first point of contact was eliminated, which changed the way in which they are involved in the decision-making process. At the same time, a representative from relevant NGOs in the locality (two in the provinces) was added to the Board and the number of philanthropist citizens was brought down to two. While those citizens started to be determined by the elected provincial assembly rather than the governor in 2004, a further change recently reverted back to the procedure of selection by the governor in metropolitan areas⁹⁶.

In this regard, the influence of locally elected officials and civil initiative in the Board of Trustees seems to have increased over time. However, as decisions in the Board are taken by a majority of votes, with the vote of the president equalling two votes in case of a tie, the most influential party is still the centrally appointed public officials most of the time. Although their positions in the Board are equal, the governor is superior to all other appointed officials within the state hierarchy, who would generally not vote against his/her opinion, therefore this structure arguably gives the decisive power to the governor. In addition, the selection of the philanthropist members by the governor in metropolitan areas increases his/her influence over the civil members of the Board as well. Back in 2004, these two aspects

⁹⁵ *Muhtar* in Turkish. This is a particular administrative level in Turkey which is responsible for quite small localities, therefore muhtars usually have closer knowledge about people in need in their locality.

⁹⁶ Currently 30 provinces out of 81 and 519 provinces out of 919 in Turkey fall within metropolitan areas. The numbers are available at: <https://www.e-icisleri.gov.tr/Anasayfa/MulkiIdariBolumleri.aspx> [Last access: 26 May 2017]

of the determinant role of the governor were indeed highlighted by a parliamentary research commission (TBMM, 2004 p.180). Similarly, the current distribution of members means that the only setting in which the decisions can possibly be taken against the opinions of the governor and other centrally appointed officials is the districts in non-metropolitan areas which do not have an agricultural local organisation in place, because only then their number is exceeded by the total number of elected officials and civil members who are not selected by the governor. Given that more than 75% of the overall population in Turkey lives in metropolitan areas⁹⁷ and some districts would have an agricultural officer in the Board anyways, the general pattern is the dominance of the centrally appointed public bloc.

Interviews with personnel at different local foundations generally confirm the overwhelming influence of the governor in shaping the decisions of the Board of Trustees. First of all, there were a few interviewees who directly acknowledged that the outcome of the Board meetings depended on the governor, with some of them also underlining the fact that this changed from foundation to foundation. One interviewee's description of the decision process as 'first everyone's views and then the approval of Mr. Governor' implied that the governor had the ultimate say. Another interviewee summarised the process by saying that usually the governor suggests something and asks whether there are any opposing opinions. At the same time, most respondents reported that decisions in their foundation were taken unanimously even though the requirement was only a majority, which can be seen as a sign of the general lack of active opposition. One interviewee also noted that the governor had too much initiative in the selection of the philanthropists and neighbourhood headmen, pointing out the political character of this process. Finally, in one SYDV, criticisms were voiced about the fact that foundation managers are not members of the Board of Trustees emphasising that this creates a gap between the monitoring of the daily activities, which depend on the manager, and the decision-making process which completely excludes the manager who therefore is exempt from any responsibility.

When determining the recipients of social assistance, The Board of Trustees takes into consideration the reports prepared by the social workers who carry out home visits as part of the means-testing. Field research in different SYDVs indicated that the content of these reports as well as the extent of their influence on the

⁹⁷ Based on TÜİK Population Statistics for the year 2015

outcomes varied from foundation to foundation. While the general rule about the reports is that they should give a detailed description of the economic and living conditions of the applicant family, in some SYDVs social workers are also expected to express an overall opinion about the application. In one SYDV which was visited, the content of the report changed according to the scheme which the application was for, with social workers having more say about food and fuel assistance or assistance for which entitlement criteria are very specific such as the non-contributory disability pension. On the other hand, in a SYDV where social workers are not supposed to give an opinion in their reports, they indicated that the Board would not like this because it is up to them to decide. In addition, the personnel who work as social workers in the foundations also differed: While at least half of the personnel in each foundation consisted of those professionally qualified in relevant areas such as social work, sociology or psychology, in most of them the other half included employees from other areas such as management or chemistry graduates, which can be expected to create certain differences in their approach or judgement in the reports.

Regardless of whether social workers give an overall judgement or not, home visit reports generally seem to play a key role in shaping the decisions of the Board. In one particular SYDV, the social worker who was interviewed described the process by saying that board members look at the reports and the application is discussed in the Board only if that member has an opposing view to the opinion of the social worker who carried out the home visit. He also added that the governor in their local foundation took their views very seriously and the procedure in other foundations would be different, which shows that this was considered as an exception. This was indeed the most direct influence which social workers were reported to have on the outcome of applications among all the visited SYDVs. Meanwhile, in almost half of them, it was reported that even if the home visit reports were important, there were also cases when the Board's final decision was not in line with the description/opinions given in the report. Once the decision is taken, the applicants have the right to appeal to the foundation; however, the interviews showed that this usually did not change the outcome unless there was a change in the circumstances of the applicant or supplementary information and evidence was provided. Only in one of the visited foundations it was reported that the outcome could actually change, with

the interviewed social worker giving the example of an application which has recently been accepted in the third time when it was discussed in the Board.

7.1.4 Relations of SYDVs with the central authority

The status of the SYDVs as foundations, established by public law yet subject to private law, creates a complex pattern of cooperation between them and the central authority. On the one hand, by their founding law they are required to function according to the provisions of this law and relevant regulations to follow. This naturally gives the centre considerable control over the operations of the SYDVs through the Fund Board, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity, and more recently the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. However, the nature of this control is quite different from regular public processes. First of all, part of the schemes implemented by SYDVs are regulated by the decisions of the Fund Board which are, as an interviewee from the Ministry put, ‘in some way equivalent to statutory law’ because they are signed by the Prime minister before coming into force. There are also other laws and regulations which are concerned with major schemes which do not rely on the law number 3294, but the Fund Board generally plays an important role in setting basic procedures and principles of implementation. Its position in this sense can actually be likened to that of the Board of Trustees in each SYDV, as it was by one interviewed SYDV personnel. The Fund Board is not a permanent body and does not have a legal personality of its own, therefore its decisions are communicated and followed up by the relevant general directorate of the Ministry, which constitutes another peculiarity in terms of the institutional structure.

Second, central control over the target groups and entitlement criteria of social assistance schemes has grown with the significant increase in the number of centrally coordinated schemes in place. This is a relatively recent feature which can be traced back to the CCTs which, as a large-scale assistance scheme, were implemented by the SYDVs throughout the country according to specific criteria communicated to them by the centre. More broadly, the beginnings of the trend of increasing standardisation and systematisation corresponds to the period after the establishment of a General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity in 2004. The General Directorate increased the control of the centre on the SYDVs by setting substantive standards for them. For example, the procedures and principles that they published in 2006 included

not only requirements in terms of bureaucratic procedures to follow in applications, house visits or distribution of assistance but also statements about priority groups in need of urgent help. More recently, the initiation of the use of an integrated information system has been a significant step for standardisation and coordination. Finally, the adoption of the point-based formula which is at the pilot stage would be another such step furthering the role of the centre, even though it seems unlikely in the near future as mentioned in Chapter 6 before.

On the other hand, as private institutions, the SYDVs should have the autonomy to determine their operations and indeed have the ultimate say in many regards. For instance, the choice of recipients within some centrally defined boundaries remains under the full competence and responsibility of the Board of Trustees of local SYDVs. More importantly, the decisions of the Board of Trustees are final and the only authority which is entitled to change these decisions is the Board itself. Therefore, rejected applicants can only make a petition to the SYDV asking a second evaluation of their applications and if possible providing additional information/documents when they want to appeal. Interviews with the SYDV personnel indicated that, in addition to this, rejected applicants also had recourse to different places such as the office of local government and the complaint line of the Prime Ministry. However, there is no formal process of appeal which is external to the SYDVs and even when the applicants use these alternative channels, their complaint is passed to the SYDV and ultimately to the Board of Trustees. This confirms the absence of a formal hierarchical relationship between the SYDVs and the central authority, at the same time also raising questions about the accountability of their decisions.

As opposed to the centrally coordinated schemes, the assistance that the SYDVs give out by using their monthly allotments from the SYDTF is under the competence of Board of Trustees which autonomously sets the entitlement criteria just by observing the very broad definition of need put forward in the founding law. While the number of centrally coordinated schemes has increased over time, this has not been at the expense of the monthly allotments of the SYDVs. In fact, the share of earmarked transfers has declined and their general monthly allotments have increased, which gave the SYDVs more flexibility in terms of how they allocate assistance among different areas such as shelter, health or education-related expenses. At the moment, it is only when the foundation needs additional resources on top of their monthly

allotments that the centre has more say because demands are then assessed by the Fund Board on a case-by-case basis, but this does not appear to be a frequent practice according to the conducted interviews. Therefore, in the areas which remain outside the centrally coordinated schemes, the Board of Trustees has the full authority and the functioning of SYDVs is more in line with their status of foundation. Yet, the composition of their Board of Trustees which is dominated by centrally appointed public officials still indicates a peculiar situation as it entails the possibility of indirect central control over the foundations.

Another key aspect of the relationship between the SYDVs and the central authority is the channels of audit and feedback. Currently the auditing of SYDVs takes place through three different channels. They are firstly audited by the General Directorate of Foundations under the Prime Ministry as all foundations in Turkey must be⁹⁸. In addition, auditors from the Ministry of Internal Affairs are entitled to check their records when they inspect the office of the local government since the SYDVs are headed by province or district governors. Finally, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy monitors the operations of the SYDVs to make sure that they abide by the procedural and principal requirements determined by the Fund Board or other relevant regulations. In general, the integrated information system which is currently in use seems to have significantly facilitated the audit process because all operations of the SYDVs are spontaneously registered within this system, which is then also used for accounting. In particular, the monitoring capacity of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy has grown apace thanks to their access to the accounts of all SYDVs through the integrated system. However, interviewed SYDV personnel in the majority of the SYDVs underlined that this three-legged auditing structure created some difficulties for them as the demands and expectations of auditors from different institutions could be different and sometimes even contradictory. In return, the channels for them to reach out to the centre seem to be of limited effectiveness and regularity as they communicate their views through the Association of SYDV Personnel, personal contact and occasionally written opinions when they are asked to.

The peculiarities of the relationship between the SYDVs and the central authority are reflected in the conception of the status of SYDVs by actors involved in the functioning of social assistance at different levels. Although the SYDVs are

⁹⁸ It should be noted that, apart from SYDVs, these are predominantly private foundations.

officially not linked to the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, they are listed among affiliate institutions on the ministry website⁹⁹, but the fact that they do not constitute the local administrative organisation of the Ministry was underlined by a number of interviewees in the centre. The complexity of this relationship is well captured by the words of an interviewed civil servant who said that SYDVs could ‘theoretically’ make all their expenses without consulting the Ministry but ‘had to’ take the centrally determined rules and proxies into account. The lack of clarity in the definition of the legal authority of the Ministry to set rules for and supervise SYDVs as well as the tasks of the SYDVs themselves was also expressed as a problem by some interviewees. Especially the growing control of the centre brings the risk that the rules set by the Ministry can be seen as an imposition upon the SYDVs and excessive intervention given their sustained private legal personality.

Interviews among the SYDV personnel indeed indicate that they attached importance to the status of foundation as there was recurrent emphasis on the private legal personality of their organisations and the absence of organic ties with the Ministry. However, the coexistence of this status with the transfer of resources from a public fund, the monitoring powers of centre and the power of the local governor creates significant ambiguity in their eyes as well. The interviewees described their relationship with the Ministry as ‘confusing’, ‘complex’ and even ‘incomprehensible’. Interestingly, two interviewed SYDV managers responded in a very similar way by saying they were ‘both like an affiliate and not like an affiliate of the Ministry’ and another interviewee from the SYDVs said: “We are a public agency but we are not. We are a foundation but the whole decision-making body is under the supervision of the highest level public official.” Meanwhile, a few interviewees more clearly stated that policies were set by the centre and they only implemented publicly made policies. For some, this basically meant that a change may be needed in the legal status of SYDVs, but others were more critical of the Ministry, considering it as completely disconnected from the realities on the field, such as in the case of employment link, and noting that some centrally controlled schemes created unnecessary paper work by defining increasingly specific new target groups. Moreover, interviewed social workers in one of the SYDVs criticised the communications that they received from

⁹⁹ This is provided for each province separately. As an example the list of affiliate institutions in Ankara is available at: www.aile.gov.tr/iletisim/bagli-kuruluslar/ankara

the Ministry by saying that usually there were circulars published on an online portal and they were expected to function accordingly, but legally speaking those had no validity.

7.1.5 Relations of SYDVs with other public agencies

Finally, in view of the fragmented policy structures in place, the relations of the SYDVs with other agencies which are active in relevant areas are important for understanding their role within the broader process. In general, there are no systematic channels for the SYDVs to cooperate with these agencies and the existing cooperation mostly depends on the initiative of the two sides. First of all, there is a major distinction between the local administration of the Ministry and the SYDVs based on a division of responsibilities in terms of the provision of social services and social assistance. This division has indeed become more problematic with the increasing integration of cash assistance into services such as care for the children, elderly and disabled but this has not brought about more advanced coordination between the two agencies. At the moment, the SYDVs are only able to see the recipients of the schemes provided by the ministerial administration on their information systems and occasionally orient their recipients to them. Otherwise, the two conduct separate home visits focused on different characteristics of households and needs, and have their own assessment procedures even though they are likely to be targeting many people in common. The issues such as disabilities of household members or domestic violence are taken into consideration only for the purposes of means-testing by the SYDVs and social services which need to determine and address these issues are seen as the responsibility of the local administration of the Ministry.

On the other hand, the responsibilities which the SYDVs are given in the GSS and the employment link turned them into the primary contact point of the poor for a variety of purposes. They thus started to function as an intermediary between the poor and different public agencies in charge of implementation in other policies areas. However, this did not necessarily mean a systematic coordination with these agencies. Particularly in the case of GSS, the role of SYDVs is a very instrumental one, limited to the determination and communication of the premium category of applicant households to the Social Security Institution which is responsible for the overall scheme. Even the requirements and procedures of means-testing for the GSS show

differences as compared to other schemes implemented by the SYDVs, as pointed out as an important inconsistency by an interviewed social worker. A number of interviewees in the Ministry of Family and Social Policy indeed made a clear distinction between the GSS and other schemes stating that the former was not really part of the area of social assistance, which confirms that means-testing was only commissioned to SYDVs for practical reasons. While the cooperation with İŞKUR for employment-related activities could potentially work better, interviewees indicated a number of problems in implementation due to difficulties in determining the employable and finding suitable jobs. As the employment link has been established very recently, many details about the system of cooperation between the SYDVs and İŞKUR agencies are yet quite uncertain.

Interviews in the SYDVs generally showed that they embraced their current position which is focused on and mostly limited to the distribution of means-tested assistance to the poor. There were some positive attitudes towards the transfer of Home Care Assistance from the local administration of the Ministry to the SYDVs among the interviewees which considered this as a positive development in terms of the unification of social assistance schemes and the effective use of resources in means-testing. However, this perspective seemed rather related to the existence of a cash assistance component in the scheme and did not indicate disappointment with the lack of further integration between social assistance and services. On the other hand, the willingness to take over this scheme went in contrast to their perspectives on the workload associated with the GSS and to a lesser extent the employment link. With regard to GSS, interviewees from two different foundations said they should not have been part of the implementation because it was not ‘assistance business’ and complained that the additional burden that it brought hampered the effective distribution of assistance. In one of them, the orientation to employment services was also subject to a similar criticism. In yet another foundation, the opinion of the interviewed social workers was that these schemes should have been managed by agencies linked to the Social Security Institution and İŞKUR all throughout but these agencies did not want to deal with them, especially with means-testing in the case of GSS.

Finally, the practices of cooperation between the SYDVs and locally elected municipal governments show a significant variation from locality to locality.

Municipalities in Turkey are actually very active in the area of social assistance, but this activity takes place in a decentralised way and their relations with the SYDVs are normally limited to the membership of the mayor of the local unit in the Board of Trustees of the respective SYDV. While this limited cooperation was endorsed by some interviewees in the SYDVs on the basis of the political character of the municipalities, two SYDVs out of nine worked together with the municipality in their locality in some way. There was quite close cooperation in one of them where the processes of application and evaluation for the assistance provided by the municipality were commonly undertaken by the SYDV, but the interviewee specifically underlined the exceptionality of this as compared to other SYDVs. In the second one, it was rather about a division of responsibilities in terms of cash vs. in-kind assistance, and assisting those not covered by social insurance vs. those who are. Besides, in some places, in-kind clothing assistance donated to the SYDVs was distributed through the charity shops of the municipalities.

7.2 Implications of the Institutional Structure of SYDVs

7.2.1 The welfare mix

One key fact about the SYDVs with regard to the welfare mix is that they are based on an institutional form which can be traced long back to the Ottoman past, which is transliterated as waqf¹⁰⁰. Waqfs, defined as ‘Islamic trusts’ or ‘pious foundations’, were the main provider of social services in the Ottoman Empire (Kuran, 2001 p.842). To found a waqf, a revenue-yielding property, or cash as allowed at a later time, was endowed to a particular purpose such as the running of a mosque or school, the upkeep of a bridge or fountain, or stipends for scholars, students and orphans. The founders in the Ottoman Empire ranged from the members of the imperial household to viziers, governors, officers, religious figures and merchants (Singer, 2003). The ensuing system was essentially decentralised although rulers did influence the choice of provided services indirectly by encouraging their close relatives and highest officials,

¹⁰⁰ The original name of these foundations in Turkish refers to them as *vakıf*, which comes from the word waqf.

the most important groups founding waqfs, to act in line with the state's strategic objectives (Kuran, 2004 p.75). However, modernisation reforms in the later periods of the Ottoman Empire brought about a fundamental step towards centralisation since all waqfs in the country were attached to an imperial ministry empowered to regulate their activities and to pool their revenues together (Kuran, 2001 p.888).

The Ottoman tradition of waqfs is indeed used as a reference by people who currently are, or previously have been, involved in the implementation of social assistance at different levels. For instance, in 2009, the Deputy Manager of the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Solidarity wrote in one of their publications: "Waqfs are one of the key instruments used by the state to build up a social state", also reminding that 'in the Ottoman Empire many cultural and economic rights which are considered among the responsibilities of the social state today were realised through the institution of waqf' (Emiroğlu, 2009 p.57). He then referred to SYDVs as a current application of a specific type of waqf which consisted of 'the allocation of certain public resources to certain public services by public authorities' (pp.57-58). The same comparison is also made by those who work in SYDVs today. The foundations are described as 'a new and effective example of Turkey's tradition of waqf in modern conditions' by the Association of SYDV Personnel in a presentation on their website¹⁰¹, a perspective which was also endorsed by an interviewed SYDV manager who emphasised the voluntary character of this job by referring to themes like helping other people, religious sentiments and being passionate about what they do as opposed to the logic of public bureaucracy and routine.

In terms of historical legacy, the most crucial influence of the institution of waqf arises from the way in which public and private responsibilities were amalgamated within this institutional form. In a context where individual actions of sultans or viziers could hardly be distinguished from those of the state, which was especially the case in the pre-modern Ottoman Empire (Singer, 2003 p.308), the centrality of waqf to the delivery of public services represents the intertwining of public and private sources of revenue and motivations. Hence, the acts of giving by the rulers appeared both as public assistance and private benevolence (Buğra, 2007 p.37). A similar ambiguity in terms of the delineation of the domains of public and

¹⁰¹ The presentation can be accessed on <http://www.vakcalder.org.tr/>

private was indeed characteristic of the voluntary associations of the early republican period, as discussed in Chapter 4, and is also visible in the status and functioning of SYDV foundations today. Moreover, the relationship of SYDVs with the central authority echoes the growing central coordination of allegedly autonomous waqfs in the late periods of the Ottoman Empire and indicates an indirect, and at times controversial, way of controlling social assistance schemes in the current system.

One major consideration behind the establishment of SYDVs as 'waqfs' in 1986 was the long-term vision of cooperating with private actors and mobilising additional private resources through public support, as clearly revealed by the naming of the founding law as the 'Law on the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity'. Waqfs or foundations as an institutional form fitted very well into such an approach thanks to the presumption of autonomous governance at the local level and the entitlement of the SYDVs to raise donations with advantageous terms for the donors. Yet, the decision-making processes in SYDVs remained under the influence of public officials despite some increase in the involvement of civil actors over time, and the number of schemes under the control of the central authority rose substantially. Moreover, the insignificance of private contributions to resources of the SYDVs and the transfer of ever growing public resources indicates that this original vision has not been really fulfilled so far. While there was one exceptional SYDV among the nine visited, where private donations made a significant contribution to the overall budget, the personnel there also admitted that the mobilisation of private resources envisaged at the time of the establishment of SYDVs was not realised and they generally came to function as public administrative agencies using public resources.

The second major consideration was about the practical advantages of the foundation structure. The most widely stated advantage during the interviews in the Ministry and the SYDVs was the high degree of flexibility and effectiveness that it brought into the process of implementation. Especially in cases which required urgent attention, the SYDVs were able to rapidly intervene without being stuck with regular bureaucratic procedures. One example here was the comparison of SYDV assistance to the Social and Economic Support provided by the local administrative organisation of the Ministry. The interviewee who raised this example emphasised that while they, as a SYDV, could even give on-the-spot assistance when necessary, access to Social and Economic Support took a minimum of one month for the applicants. According to

him, this was due to the fact that the latter was managed by a public agency. Interestingly, the aspect of flexibility was also highlighted as an advantage with regard to the Fund Board by an interviewee in the Ministry who said that thanks to the structure of the Fund Board, the bureaucratic procedure was generally much shorter as compared to the Board of Ministers gathering and taking decisions. In addition, the current organisation of the waqfs was considered as advantageous in terms of the better detection of needs and closer knowledge about people at the local level by interviewees from both the centre and the SYDVs.

As such, the current structure can be well-equipped to address the need for both some central control and some discretion in on-the-ground examination; however, in the absence of a clear legal basis, the generally praised flexibility of the system comes at the expense of ambiguity in terms of the responsibility of the state for enacting social assistance and hence the expansion social rights to new groups. Moreover, the institutional differentiation embodied in the flexible structure of SYDV foundations hampers the incorporation of the poor within mainstream formal institutions. This has two aspects: On the one hand, there is a functional differentiation between the SYDVs and the local administration of the Ministry in terms of their roles in social assistance and social services respectively. This overlaps with a differentiation in terms of their public-private status as the foundations hold a rather unclear position as compared to the local ministerial organisation, the public character of which is strong. On the other hand, SYDVs serve as an intermediary for the poor to access other welfare provisions such as health insurance or employment services, with their role being limited to dealing with the technical part of means-testing or directing people to the employment agency in return for assistance. In other words, SYDVs only register the poor with schemes that are otherwise implemented by different public agencies, which creates a different institutional process for them. The outcome is thus the consolidation of an institutional boundary between the recipients of similar services, with the poor having to interact with SYDVs every time as opposed to the non-poor, and social assistance relying on a distinct welfare mix from other areas of welfare policy.

7.2.2 Politics of social assistance

The first key implication of the ambiguous line between public and private within the current welfare mix for politics is that this allows central control over social assistance

schemes in place and makes it possible for the state to avoid any direct responsibility at the same time. On the one hand, the central control is realised through the financial reliance of the SYDVs on the SYDTE, the role of the local governor and other public officials in the Board of Trustees of local SYDVs and increasing standardisation currently led by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, as discussed in this chapter. On the other hand, the private personality and presumed autonomy of the SYDVs constitute a mechanism for blame avoidance. The definition of the Board of Trustees as the final authority in terms of the determination of recipients of existing schemes or the formulation of additional initiatives according to local needs, and the lack of any public appeal mechanism mean that the ultimate responsibility lies with the individual SYDVs especially when things go wrong. The words of an interviewed civil servant acknowledges this aspect of blame avoidance engrained in the current structure, albeit indirectly, as he said: “One of the features of the organisation of waqfs is this - a wrong decision which is taken there [in one SYDV] does not concern us here [in the Ministry], it is completely the concern of the SYDV, the concern of the Board of Trustees because it is them who know about the circumstances of the people and the district”.

Secondly, the flexibility of the structure creates scope for the manipulation of social assistance schemes for political purposes, which further undermines the declientelisation capacity of the system adding to the examples raised in Chapter 6. Such manipulation would potentially be reflected on patterns of distribution both across and within localities. In this regard, it should first be noted that the amount of the monthly allotments transferred to the SYDVs is based on a specific formula. This means that clientelist motivations cannot play a role in the distribution of public resources among localities because the allotments of all local foundations are set according to some pre-determined rules. Moreover, the revision of the formula in 2010 brought about detailed criteria to capture different levels of need in a more objective and encompassing way than the previous one and removed the 50% extra allowance for the SYDVs in Eastern provinces, which could have been seen as an arbitrary rule influenced by the political character of these regions where the population is predominantly Kurdish. As the existing number of recipients in the locality is part of the new formula, previous patterns create some degree of path dependence, but the

system of distribution of monthly allotments from the central Fund is not open to political manipulation at the moment.

Yet, the flexibility of the structure allows differences among local SYDVs in terms of how they distribute their monthly allotments and determine the recipients of centrally coordinated schemes. The role of politics in these processes was previously highlighted by a parliamentary inquiry commission which noted that governors, as the heads of the decision-making body of local foundations, sometimes remained under the influence of the political authority since the establishment of SYDVs and reflected this onto the activities of the foundations (TBMM, 2004 p.181). If this is still the case, the first possibility is that decision-makers at the local level behave in a politically motivated way when they distribute assistance from their monthly allotments because local SYDVs have the authority to decide how and when to use these allotments. Centrally appointed public officials would thus be expected to use their discretion in line with the interests of the incumbent government, which is quite likely in the increasingly polarised political context of Turkey. Such a situation was actually confirmed by interviewees in one of the visited SYDVs, who reported that the district governor asked the Board to spend the savings in their account as much as possible during the month of May, which was just the month leading to the elections in June 2015. The lack of similar statements in other SYDVs, meanwhile, does not show that this is an exception because interviewees would be understandably reluctant to acknowledge such political motivations.

The other possibility is the use of discretion in the determination of recipients for centrally coordinated schemes with similar political motivations. One claim which is frequently made by the opposition in Turkey, and was also expressed by an interviewed politician during the fieldwork, is that the priority is given to applicants who are in favour, or even a member of the local organisation, of the governing JDP. Although not explicitly referring to any political factor, the comment of one interviewed social worker on the existence of a group of 'favoured' recipients indicates the plausibility of such biased allocation in terms of the choice of individual recipients. More importantly, political preferences of local constituencies might influence the tendency to allocate generously or not because there is no specific limit on the number of recipients from one district in centrally coordinated schemes. A statistical analysis of the distribution of CCT recipients according to districts from

2005 to 2008 indeed demonstrates that disproportionately more resources were spent in districts where the JDP had an ideologically close challenger (Aytaç, 2014). Similar data is not available for other schemes nor other time periods, therefore, this finding cannot be established as an encompassing feature of social assistance more broadly. However, the proven existence of such a relationship between political constituencies and the distribution across localities in the case of CCTs, together with the general flexibility given to the Board of Trustees of SYDVs with regard to the outcomes of applications, confirms the scope for political motivations to shape social assistance in this system.

Finally, the flexibility in the functioning of local SYDVs creates different clientelistic possibilities at the local level. Presumably, the incentives of local actors to expand the activities of their foundation beyond standard procedures might be influenced by the characteristics of the constituency, which would create significant differences among SYDVs in different districts. Fieldwork visits to 10 SYDV foundations indeed confirmed both the importance of personal initiatives and relations for the development of local foundations and the actual differences among them in terms of the quality of provisions as well as their physical facilities. Yet, it is not possible to systematically associate those with political constituencies on the basis of data collected for this research. Therefore, we can only assert that the current system leaves room for this kind of differences to be at least influenced by politics. Moreover, there are several examples of specific projects reported in the media, which amounted to the distribution of additional one-off assistance by the SYDVs before election times. In particular, the large-scale distribution of household goods in the province of Tunceli and the delivery of a letter promising further cash and in-kind assistance by the governor of Diyarbakır to poor households just before local elections in 2009 gathered considerable media attention and public criticism¹⁰². The fact that these are both provinces where the incumbent JDP faces strong opposition and the special role played by appointed governors in these projects again hints at the role of politics.

¹⁰² On these two cases reported in different newspapers see:
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/tunceli-de-secim-oncesi-beyaz-esya-dagitimi-10925822>,
<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/devlet--font-color-red-bedava-esya--font--dagitiyor/siyaset/siyasetdetay/05.02.2009/1055735/default.htm>,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/politika/ak-esya-dagitiminda-sira-diyarbakira-geldi-926422/>
[Last access: 26 May 2017]

The cooperation between some SYDVs and locally elected municipal governments also constitutes a specific issue in terms of differential practices of local foundations. The most interesting feature here is that all examples of cooperation discussed above belong to the districts where the local municipalities are from the JDP, which is also in the central government. Although this finding cannot be generalised on the basis of existing data, this suggests the higher likelihood of the Board of Trustees, and particularly the centrally appointed governors, in these localities to work with the JDP municipal governments than the others. Some degree of coordination between the SYDVs and the municipalities is indeed necessary for effective provision, considering that the two target very similar groups and distribute similar types of assistance; however, current forms of idiosyncratic cooperation that emerge within the flexible SYDV structure are far from systematic coordination and seem to be blended with political factors. As such, they also have negative implications from the perspective of declientelisation since they come to undermine the supposedly non-political character of the SYDVs by blurring the boundary between them and municipalities, and by making the SYDV assistance part of the ways in which municipalities might appeal to their political clientele.

7.3 Conclusion

The institutional structure of the SYDV foundations that are the main local implementers of social assistance in Turkey is far from being straightforward, with key implications on the trajectory of the welfare regime. At the moment, social assistance schemes are almost exclusively funded from public resources and increasingly coordinated by the centre while the ultimate authority in the process of distribution to individual recipients lies with the local foundations. The main advantage of this structure is seen as the flexibility of the functioning of SYDVs; however, the discussion in this chapter shows that this comes with a major downside which is the complexity of ensuing relationships. The role of the state in enacting social rights is thus vague with regard to social assistance, and the ambiguous line between public assistance and private benevolence, which also characterised some provisions in earlier years, is largely reproduced by the functioning of current assistance schemes. This creates a contrast to the development of clear formal rules

around social assistance. Moreover, the responsibility of the state towards the previously excluded parts of the society remains indirect: There is significant scope for the government to capitalise on the political benefits of social assistance because these schemes are ultimately funded and coordinated by the state, but it can easily resort to blame avoidance if necessary because the decisions of the SYDVs are closed to public scrutiny for the purposes of the determination of individual recipients.

At the same time, the differentiation of SYDVs from some other public agencies which they cooperate with, and the differentiation of the poor from the non-poor through the SYDV structure constitute important barriers to the integration of social assistance into mainstream welfare institutions. This indicates the existence of a new type of duality within the emerging regime, echoing the exclusionary features of previous institutions. Finally, features of the implementation structure of social assistance also relate to the role of some informal institutions: While the ambiguity between public assistance and private benevolence fits well with the paternalistic approach typical of the Turkish welfare regime, the scope for clientelism is reproduced to the extent that different mechanisms at the local level allow political motivations and expectations of loyalty to shape the distribution of assistance. Overall, therefore, the potential of social assistance to create a more inclusive and formalised welfare regime seems to be limited in certain ways through the functioning of social assistance.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This dissertation offered an in-depth analysis of social assistance in Turkey, which has shown a significant expansion in 2000s, by asking whether this has effectively moved the existing regime in a more inclusive direction and why, or more appropriately, why not. To answer this question, Chapter 2 comparatively discussed the literature on the development of social rights and welfare regimes in advanced industrialised and middle income countries, underlined the distinct potential of social assistance in the latter group, and at the same time derived some insights for assessing the quality of emerging rights in different empirical cases. Chapter 3 substantiated the theoretical and methodological framework of the research, which relies on historical institutionalism and suitable methods, with a view to identifying and explaining elements of change and continuity that characterise different types of welfare institutions in Turkey. Chapter 4 then outlined the relevant historical background in the Turkish case and suggested that the exclusivity of formal institutions, the indirectness of state responsibility towards excluded groups, and the centrality of informal institutions to social welfare were key defining characteristics of the prevailing informal security regime.

Against this background, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 presented the core of the empirical research which is specifically focused on social assistance schemes that are currently under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. The general aim in these chapters was to examine whether social assistance in the case of Turkey fulfilled its transformative potential. In Chapter 5, we analysed recent organisational and legal developments around these schemes, as well as the ideational and political factors which shaped these processes of development, emphasising the respective roles of institutions and actors. In Chapter 6, we approached the same social assistance schemes from the perspective of policy outcomes by looking at their coverage,

entitlement procedures and generosity over time, and using the concepts of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation. In Chapter 7, finally, we highlighted the implications of the organisational structure of social assistance based on semi-autonomous SYDV foundations for the development of social rights through social assistance and, concomitantly, for the trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime.

The rise of social assistance in Turkey, which was a potentially transformative development for its welfare regime, has taken off in the form of emergency relief and poverty alleviation after a major earthquake in 1999 and the 2001 economic crisis. This juncture was followed by the gradual expansion of social assistance policies, which brought them in a much more central position within the overall regime through a process of differential growth. On the one hand, this can be seen as an example of gradual change through layering. On the other hand, there were important continuities through the critical period between 1999 and 2001 as well as in the later years. The most visible path dependence in this sense was linked to the reliance of the functioning of social assistance policies on an already existing organisational structure, which went hand in hand with the reproduction of some characteristics of the preceding informal security regime due to the content of new policies. It is argued here that these continuities have come to undermine the transformative potential of social assistance, which otherwise brought about a considerable expansion in public provision, and to consolidate a semi-formal welfare regime in Turkey, which incorporates social assistance as a formal policy, but also bears many resemblances to the former informal security regime.

Our findings also point out the key characteristics of the previous regime that have been reproduced, or sometimes reconfigured, through the expansion of social assistance. First is the historically exclusionary nature of the regime in which formal welfare institutions were almost entirely contribution-based. This is now visible in the form of a sharp duality between contributory social insurance and non-contributory social assistance, with the former having a much clearer status of social right and still constituting the core of mainstream welfare institutions. This duality is indeed reflected in both current institutional arrangements around social assistance, which keep it separate from other public provisions and create a boundary between the poor and the non-poor, and in the understandings of dominant actors, who are primarily

concerned with targeting the category of 'deserving poor' as effectively as possible. The problems that are faced in the integration of social assistance schemes with improved employment opportunities in the formal sector also become a factor which reinforces the insurance-assistance divide and undermines the incorporation of social assistance within the mainstream.

Secondly, the responsibility of the state towards the parts of the society that were otherwise excluded from formal welfare institutions mostly relied on indirect ways of provision both before and after the rise of social assistance. Historical examples of this indirect responsibility include extensive subsidies to the agricultural sector, where there is generally a severe lack of social insurance coverage but welfare provisions can easily diffuse through family and community networks. Another example is informal housing in the context of rural-urban migration through the enabling of access to public land and services, hence intervening without taking a direct responsibility for welfare provision. While these indirect channels increasingly eroded with economic liberalisation, global integration and the saturation of urbanisation, the role of the state in newly adopted social assistance schemes also turns out to be strikingly ambiguous. This is primarily due to the functioning of social assistance through semi-autonomous foundations, in a peculiar organisational structure which gives the state a significant degree of control over the implemented schemes in practice without full formal authority over the implementers and accountability for the outcomes. Consequently, the indirectness of state responsibility is reconfigured within expanding social assistance schemes, which allow the government to both take political credit for positive aspects and avoid blame if necessary.

The third characteristic that was reproduced through social assistance is the role of informal institutions in welfare provision. In general, gaps and instabilities that are present in social assistance schemes still leave room for family and community relations to compensate for the lack of formal provisions. More interestingly, however, the schemes themselves incorporate the reliance of welfare provision on informal institutions such as family and informal labour market in certain ways. For instance, the use of household-based thresholds in means-testing and the existence of eligibility criteria which require family members to undertake certain duties indicate that the role of family is now formally institutionalised, especially with regard to the provision of

care. In addition, social assistance is still predominantly focused on those who do not have access to contributory social insurance, which is tied to formal employment, and the capacity of the current system to enhance formal employment opportunities remains low. In this context, the emphasis on effective means-testing indicates the recognition of the institutional reality of informal employment within formal policies because the aim of means-testing becomes to establish the means of applicants which are acquired outside the formal labour market and informal employment is a very likely source of income for the target group of social assistance.

Lastly, the scope for paternalist and clientelist motivations to shape welfare provisions was maintained alongside the expansion of social assistance schemes. This is clearly visible in the norms and motivations of the actors involved in the functioning of social assistance at different levels, as they embody an underlying sense of benevolence and a certain normalisation of political expectations from the provision of social assistance. For instance, it was very striking that, despite the existence of some universalist schemes which do not rely on means-testing, those were not necessarily associated with the expansion of social rights, which is indicative of the dominant understanding of rights that is rather about the state helping the poor in the case of social assistance. This stands in contrast to a more universalist understanding of rights as entitlements ensuring inclusion in the mainstream. Moreover, the absence of a clear and unified legal base for existing provisions and the ambiguity of the responsibility of the state within the functioning of the current system entail a high degree of politicisation of social assistance schemes. The continuation of these schemes can thus be easily perceived as dependent on the political will of the government in a top-down manner, reinforcing a paternalistic approach or expectations of loyalty from the recipients.

These findings provide substantive support to the argument that the development of social rights through social assistance has been limited in the Turkish case and the trajectory of the welfare regime was marked by important continuities despite the change in formal institutions brought by the new system of social assistance. Yet, there are certain ways in which this argument could be extended and further strengthened. First of all, it would be useful to include perspectives about the recipients of social assistance, which was not possible in the current study due to data limitations. If longitudinal statistical data on recipients were available, this would

allow a more extensive analysis of policy outcomes with regard to individual recipients alongside the overall system, and if it were possible to reach individual applicants, this would be informative about the procedures of entitlement and the exercise of discretion in the implementation of policies. Moreover, it was not possible to arrange interviews with politicians from the ruling JDP despite several attempts during the fieldwork. This is partially compensated by the analysis of a wide range of readily available policy documents prepared under JDP governments and numerous interviews with civil servants that can be expected to reflect dominant political perspectives to an important extent. Nevertheless, having interviewees from current or previous governments would still strengthen the argument especially in terms of understandings, norms and motivations underlying social assistance in the prevalence of top-down ways of policy-making.

In addition, as noted in the introduction, social assistance schemes under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy were chosen as a focal case for this study basically because our research question was concerned with the transformation of the welfare regime in a right-expanding direction and those schemes were deemed as having the highest potential in this regard. Yet, through empirical work, we found that they were not able to integrate formalised rights for social assistance recipients within the overall regime and there were significant continuities such as the indirect responsibility of the state or the role of informal institutions sustained by these particular schemes. In this case, further research on assistance provided by other organisations such as municipalities, which are very active in Turkey, or various NGOs could also be useful. Such assistance was left outside the scope of this dissertation because it is less likely to expand social rights; however, a detailed analysis thereupon would probably reveal more elements of continuity from the previous welfare regime given the inability of centrally coordinated social assistance to change some institutional characteristics.

Another potential focus for further research would be the variation among SYDV foundations at different localities. The present study has shown that the system is indeed quite flexible and the practices of the SYDVs differ from one another in several ways. This is not necessarily a problem in terms of the development of rights because it may allow adaptation to local needs. However, we highlighted the scope which this system leaves for the reproduction of paternalist and clientelist

characteristics of the Turkish welfare regime. Building on this, it would be interesting to see whether there is any systematic relationship between the provisions and practices of local SYDVs, and the features of their corresponding units such as dominant political constituencies or social characteristics. The examination of a representative sample of SYDVs in a more standardised way would hence make it possible to evaluate the outcomes of social assistance from the perspective of declientelisation in more detail.

As for the contributions of the study, we should first highlight the empirical knowledge that it generates about social assistance in Turkey and the trajectory of the Turkish welfare regime. Turkish welfare regime is broadly compared to the Southern European type (Grütjen, 2008), but specific studies on whether recent developments in social assistance point out a similar trajectory to Spain or Italy, where targeted policies have indeed brought increasing inclusiveness, are missing. In this sense, this dissertation suggests some contrast to the Southern European trajectory. However, it should be admitted that a negative view of social assistance is not a novelty in itself. Some scholars of Turkey are fundamentally critical of social assistance because they consider it as a very limited alleviatory policy by definition, and have rather structural objections against it such as those from a Marxist perspective. Social assistance is thus argued to be simply an instrument for furthering the anti-labour agenda in a neoliberal economy or strengthening the hegemony of the ruling JDP (Özden, 2014; Yücesan-Özdemir, 2012). There is also an argument that the social assistance regime helps to create a controlling force over the recipients by defining them as needy poor rather than problematising the labour market which should be the primary source of income and livelihood (Kutlu, 2015). While our study does not deny such criticisms against the role of social assistance schemes within the current system, it primarily contends that more attention should be paid to their empirical content and trends over time in order to capture potential unintended consequences.

On the other hand, there are studies which put special emphasis on social assistance in an institutionalist perspective (Buğra and Keyder 2003; 2006), but as they date from earlier years they cannot fully account for the growth and increasing systematisation of social assistance. More recently, some scholars also look at the outcomes and implications of social assistance with a focus on individual schemes, particularly the CCTs (Aytaç, 2014; Şener, 2016; Yıldırım, Özdemir and Sezgin,

2014). The present dissertation therefore makes a significant empirical contribution by giving a comprehensive overview of the centrally coordinated system of assistance as a whole, and by relating this to the nature of the emerging welfare regime on the basis of the analysis of processes of development, policy outcomes and the functioning of current schemes. This was motivated by the understanding that social assistance can be seen neither as an inherently regressive tool nor a directly progressive development in the middle income country context, and we have concluded that its right-expanding potential has been undermined by several institutional factors in the case of Turkey.

Finally, as social assistance in Turkey is quite a controversial topic in terms of its politics and political implications, the building up of an empirical knowledge base is also valuable in this regard. We have shown that there has indeed been a significant expansion of social assistance schemes in 2000s, with the increasing use of regular types of assistance, and the generosity of benefits has been largely sustained in most cases. These developments are indeed likely to make a contribution to social welfare especially because the recipients lack alternative sources of support most of the time. It should also be recognised that there have been some improvements in the definition of rules around different schemes, albeit in a fragmented way. This means that social assistance should not be dismissed at once, but rather criticised in terms of its specific features, ways of institutionalisation and integration within broader policies. On the other hand, our finding about the ineffectiveness of interest representation and political participation point out significant issues for Turkish politics that go beyond the making of welfare policies.

Other contributions of the study are more theoretical and relate to the literature on welfare regimes and social rights on the one hand, and historical institutionalism on the other. As for the former, the key contribution is the definition of a new, semi-formal, regime type which incorporates social assistance as an important formal policy, but also sustains some characteristics of the informal security regime that was originally suggested as a general type encompassing many middle income countries. It should be noted here that Turkey aptly illustrates the problems arising from the legacies of late industrialisation and uneven democratisation which are common in the middle income country context. There are also common challenges that face rising social assistance schemes in different countries in terms of their coverage, generosity, right-basis or institutionalisation and implementation. As far as such commonalities

are concerned, the findings presented here will be informative about the study of welfare regimes in other middle income countries as well.

Yet, as this dissertation indicates, features of certain schemes, and more importantly, the peculiarities of the institutional structure in Turkey have created some additional challenges for the realisation of the transformative potential of social assistance. There are indeed other middle income countries where universalist schemes are more developed, such as South Africa (Seekings, 2002), or the institutionalisation of means-tested schemes has been able to bypass previous clientelist networks, such as Brazil (Melo, 2008), in what can be seen as more successful examples of a move towards the formalisation of their welfare regimes. In this sense, the transformative role of social assistance seems to display variation across middle income countries as well, and a more substantial understanding of the processes in each country sheds light on the dynamics that lead to this variation. In the Turkish case, we highlighted organisational capacities and the stickiness of norms and motivations which underlie policies as especially strong sources of long-term path dependence.

In addition, this study illustrates the usefulness of combining the perspectives of decommodification, commodification, defamilialisation and declientelisation to assess the quality of social rights, rather than considering them as alternatives to one another, as well as their applicability to the analysis of social assistance as a specific policy area. At the same time, we highlight the centrality of the functioning of relevant schemes on the ground to the nature of welfare regimes by presenting an interesting example of the involvement of private actors in the implementation of social assistance. On the one hand, this is relevant not only for middle income but also advanced industrialised countries because social assistance becomes increasingly difficult to dismiss as a marginal policy in this context as well and the degree of discretion involved in the implementation of social assistance schemes makes the organisational structure of implementation all the more important. On the other hand, this is interesting because the involvement of private actors is much more frequent in service provision and the discussion in the relevant literature also focuses on the contracting out of services rather than benefit distribution, while the latter entails quite different institutional and political dynamics.

With regard to the literature on new institutionalism, the empirical analysis of social assistance schemes in Turkey in this study confirms the complexity of patterns of institutional change and continuity. First, we provide good empirical illustrations of the ways in which informal institutions are embedded in the political economies of middle income countries beyond definitions that focus on social norms and cultural practices. In addition, by distinguishing between institutions as policies, organisational structures and welfare regimes, we reveal co-existing elements of change and continuity at different institutional levels. The differential growth of social assistance schemes over other welfare institutions in Turkey was marked by significant path dependence in terms of the structure of implementation, which had an unavoidable impact on organisational capacities, norms and motivations in the following period. As a result, the layering of social assistance to the contributory system of social insurance failed to effectively transform the nature of the welfare regime despite a significant change in institutions at the level of policy. Hence, as different from the original definition of the concept, what seems like an example of layering has come to generate not gradual change but continuity.

Finally, we highlight the usefulness of a historical perspective on recent trajectories of development, which, in the Turkish case, allowed us to find out that change and continuity co-existed not only at different institutional levels but also within the regime level itself. This is because key characteristics of the previous informal security regime did not significantly change but sometimes acquired new forms through the expansion of the new layer of the system. Therefore, the emerging regime might not embody more encompassing and integrated social rights, but it is still different from the old regime in certain ways: Formal welfare institutions are now dual rather than exclusionary, the indirectness of the responsibility of the state is expressed within welfare policy, and informal institutions are enabled by the very design and implementation of expanding formal policies. It is in view of this co-existence that we highlight the consolidation of a semi-formal welfare regime in Turkey in this dissertation, as a distinct category from both the informal security regimes prevalent in middle income countries and the more formalised welfare state regimes of the advanced industrialised world.

Appendix A

Interviews

A.1 List of Interviews

Civil Servants

- 17 March 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 24 March 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Family and Social Services*
- 26 March 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Family and Social Services*
- 26 March 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 26 March 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 8 April 2015 – *Ministry of Development, General Directorate of Social Sectors and Coordination*
- 10 April 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, Department of European Union and Foreign Relations*
- 10 April 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 17 April 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 7 May 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, Department of Strategy Development*
- 11 May 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 12 May 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*
- 12 May 2015 – *Ministry of Family and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Assistance*

Personnel in SYDV Foundations

- 5 May 2015 – SYDV 1, Ankara
- 6 May 2015 – SYDV 2, Ankara
- 13 May 2015 – SYDV 1, Ankara
- 14 May 2015 – SYDV 3, Ankara
- 14 May 2015 – SYDV 3, Ankara
- 22 May 2015 – SYDV 4, Kirklareli
- 22 May 2015 – SYDV 4, Kirklareli
- 29 May 2015 – SYDV 5, Istanbul
- 29 May 2015 – SYDV 6, Istanbul
- 29 May 2015 – SYDV 6, Istanbul
- 1 June 2015 – SYDV 7, Istanbul
- 4 June 2015 – SYDV 8, Kirklareli
- 16 June 2015 – SYDV 9, Istanbul
- 16 June 2015 – SYDV 10, Istanbul

Politicians and Civil Society

- 31 March 2015 – Republican People’s Party
- 3 April 2015 – Republican People’s Party
- 3 April 2015 – Nationalist Movement Party
- 14 April 2015 – Republican People’s Party
- 6 May 2015 – Hak-İş Trade Union Confederation
- 11 May 2015 – Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
- 2 June 2015 – Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions

Experts

- 9 April 2015 – Middle East Technical University, Department of Sociology
- 12 June 2015 – Hacettepe University, Department of Sociology

A.2 Interview Guide

Introductions:

- brief presentation of the thesis topic
- information about the interview
- consent of the interviewee

Views on the expansion of social assistance:

- the most important improvements in recent years
- current challenges and problems
- interpretations of the recent emphasis on right-based policy
- if not already raised under improvements or challenges, views on the development of the legal framework, the link with employment, the functioning of the current system through the SYDV structure

The role/position of the organisation/institution of the interviewee:

- for civil servants, specific aspects of contribution to policy development
- if not directly working in the area of social assistance, their mechanisms of coordination with other organisations/institutions in this area
- for the SYDV personnel, details of their daily functioning: financial resources, internal decision-making processes, means-testing processes, types of assistance, relations with the Ministry, mechanisms of supervision, mechanisms of coordination with other local actors.
- for politicians and civil society representatives, their policy agendas and mechanisms of influence over political decisions
- for experts, information on their collaboration in projects with government institutions in the area of social assistance.

Wrapping up:

- views on the future of social assistance: sustainability, integration within established welfare provisions
- additional points that the interviewees want to raise

Appendix B

Document Analysis

B.1 Basic Content Analysis: Selection of Concepts and Application

The selection of themes for the content analysis has been primarily based on an inductive approach. The process of identifying these themes consisted of the following steps:

- The statements were carefully read with a view to developing a sense of recurring keywords.
- Frequently used keywords were listed and grouped under preliminary themes.
- The statements were read again by paying particular attention to the synonyms of the keywords established in the first round, other words which are less frequent but highly likely refer to the same concept, and words which have the same linguistic root as them.
- The list of keywords and the concepts that they are attached to was finalised on the basis of the preliminary themes.

The content analysis has then been carried out through an in-depth reading of the documents in a final round. As the amount of data was limited, it was possible to apply the categories to the text with a qualitative judgement¹⁰³.

¹⁰³ For instance, generic words which were chosen as keywords because they have a specific meaning for social assistance were counted in when they were used in reference to social assistance and disregarded otherwise. A good example is the word comprehensive in Turkish (*kapsamlı*), which specifically refers to the breadth of coverage of social assistance, but also frequently used in a generic sense in Turkish. In this case, the wordcounts given in Table 1 in Chapter 5 reflect only the first usage.

List of keywords that refer to each concept is given below, together with their equivalents in Turkish:

- Effectiveness: effective, efficient, fruitful (*etkin, etkili, verim-li*)
- Employment: income generating, work, unemployed, employment, active, productive/production/produce (*gelir getirici, iş, işsiz, istihdam, aktif, üret-ken/im/mek*)
- Expansiveness: comprehensive, widespread, extensive, continuous, regular (*kapsam-lı/yıcı, yaygın, geniş, sürekli, düzenli*)
- Family: family (*aile*)
- Individual: individual, citizen (*birey, vatandaş*)
- Poverty: poor, destitute, needy, in need, deprived, victim (*yoksul, fakir, muhtaç, ihtiyaç sahibi, yoksun, mağdur*)
- Implementation: objective, criteria, data, expert, prompt (*objektif, kriter, veri, uzman, hızlı*)
- Right: right, unjustified, equity, righteous (*hak, haksız, hakkaniyet, hakşinas*)
- Social state: social state (*sosyal devlet*)

B.2 Basic Content Analysis: List of Documents

- 2006 Activity Report of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity: *TC. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü, 2006 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2007 Activity Report of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity: *TC. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü, 2007 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2009 Activity Report of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity: *TC. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2010 Activity Report of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity: *TC. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü, 2010 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2011 Activity Report of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity: *TC. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü, 2011 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2012 Activity Report of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy: *TC. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, 2012 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2013 Activity Report of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy: *TC. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, 2013 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2014 Activity Report of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy: *TC. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, 2014 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu*
- 2015 Activity Report of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy: *TC. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, 2015 Yılı İdare Faaliyet Raporu*

B.3 Interpretive Content Analysis: List of Documents

- 58th Government Programme, JDP majority government (2002): *58. Hükümet Programı*
- 59th Government Programme, JDP majority government (2003): *59. Hükümet Programı*
- 60th Government Programme, JDP majority government (2007): *60. Hükümet Programı*
- 61st Government Programme, JDP majority government (2011): *61. Hükümet Programı*
- 62nd Government Programme, JDP majority government (2014): *62. Hükümet Programı*
- 64th Government Programme, JDP majority government (2015): *64. Hükümet Programı*
- 2010 Survey Report: Survey on the Perception of Social Assistance and the Culture of Poverty commissioned by the General Directorate of Family and Social Research, *TC. Başbakanlık ASAGM, Türkiye’de Kamusal Sosyal Yardım Alanların Yardım Algısı ve Yoksulluk Kültürü Araştırması*
- 2013 Ministry of Family and Social Policy Report on the achievements of the period 2002-2013: *TC. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, Son 11 Yılın Sosyal Politika Kazanımları*

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