

Accessibility in Sports

REPORT



Erasmus+



Purpose Scope &

Disabled individuals are at the forefront of the disadvantaged groups in society. Approximately 12% of the world's population consists of people with mental or physical disabilities. It is the common goal of all countries to improve the living quality of disabled citizens and to make them a full part of community life. As various public policies have been developed in this regard, civil society also plays an important role in solving the problems of people with disabilities.

Disabled individuals face a wide variety of problems in their daily lives. They face many problems such as walking on the sidewalk or crossing the road, using public transportation and social areas such as parks and gardens. On the other hand, individuals' being dependent on others or being socially excluded negatively affects both their psychological and physical health.

Among the disabled individuals, young individuals in the 15–24 age group have more difficulties than other age groups. It is an important issue to reintegrate this young population, who have problems in participating in social life and realizing themselves in society, through various tools and methods.

The most important physical activity and socialization tool for all disabled or healthy young people is undoubtedly sportive activities. Playing an important role in the physical and mental development of young people, sports have the potential to play a much more active role in the individual development of young people with disabilities. With sports activities, disabled individuals can be healthier both physically and psychologically by being involved in social life. The fact that disabled individuals are partially deprived of other socialization tools makes the role of sports more important in their lives.

This project is based on the idea that sports activities should be used to increase the social inclusion of people with disabilities. With sports activities, disabled individuals will be physically healthier, and their social relations skills will improve. On the other hand, the time they will spend with their families will become easier. With this process, it will be easier for people with disabilities to mix and adapt to society.



There are various factors that may cause disabled citizens to stay away from sports activities. The first of these is the lack of physical infrastructure. This problem is an issue that can be solved to a large extent by the more meticulous work of the public and civil society on the subject. The second important point is that disabled people might have limited demands for such services in places where their sports and social activity infrastructures are sufficient. Our project proposes a method that can solve these two issues simultaneously.

In the first stage, the project brings a comprehensive standardization for social and sports activity areas/facilities for people with disabilities. Thus, the disabled accessibility of all public institutions and private sector gyms, parks are measured at world standards. Later in the project, the accessibility map of sports halls, parks and recreation areas according to different types of disabilities are revealed. Thus, first time in the world, the necessary ground has been provided for the preparation of an inventory of social and sports areas that people with different types of disabilities can use according to their needs.

The primary aim of the project is to reveal the opportunities for disabled citizens in Turkey to participate in sports activities and how much they benefit from the existing accessible facilities. In this context, the situation of the existing sports facilities in the country is analyzed in the first stage. It is obvious that the situation of disabled citizens will be more difficult in a situation where sports facilities are insufficient even for healthy individuals.

Twelve
of every
hundred
person

%12

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The current situation analysis, which is shared in detail in the third section, examines the current sports services under four main headings. First, the distribution of the existing facilities in terms of type and their quantity and sufficiency throughout the country are examined. In the second stage, the distribution of sports in the existing facilities is examined, especially sporttypes for the disabled are analyzed. Qualified human capital is needed in order to carry out sport activities in a healthy way. In this context, an analysis is made on the types and numbers of trainers working in the facilities in the third stage. After the existing sports facility infrastructure has been revealed, the fourth phase of the project, which is the aim of the project, has been started. At this stage, the suitability of the facilities for the use of disabled people is investigated, and moreover the use of these facilities by disabled people was analyzed.

Within the scope of the analysis in the project, the method of obtaining information from two main sources is preferred. As the details are shared in the sub-title of Data Coverage, sports facilities services in Turkey are generally provided by two public institutions. While municipalities provide these services locally, Youth and Sports Provincial/District directorates try to meet sports activity services under the coordination of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Within the scope of the study, provincial municipalities and Youth and Sports Directorates are contacted by phone and e-mail, and their websites are examined. The collected data is analyzed in the current situation analysis section in where a comprehensive evaluation is executed.

The difficulties experienced in the information gathering process have shown once again that the project has pointed out a crucial point, considering that more of the same difficulties are experienced by the disabled. It is very difficult to expect disabled people to reach information that a healthy individual can hardly reach by using all communication channels. Within the scope of our project, this information becomes instantly accessible with an application.

Following the current situation analysis, the main outputs of our project were revealed. The first output is to provide access to the facility suitable for the individual's disability through the application mentioned above. The second main output is the certification method of all facilities throughout the country, ensuring disability compatibility. For this, the certification process, details of which are shared in our final report, has been implemented.

Current Situation Analysis

Before revealing the situation regarding the disabled, it is necessary to examine the existing sports activity services in Turkey. In this context, within the scope of our Project, firstly, the current situation analysis of sports activity opportunities at the provincial level in Turkey was made.



Data Coverage

In Turkey, in addition to the private sector, the public sector offers sports activities. These services are generally provided by Municipalities and Provincial/District Directorates of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS). The data set created in this study is collected separately for these two groups of institutions. In this context, the city and metropolitan municipalities of 81 provinces are reached and information about their sportive activities are obtained. In addition, district municipalities' services are collected for the provinces of Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa and Diyarbakir. Youth and Sports Directorates are reached at the level of 973 districts and information about their sports activities is obtained.

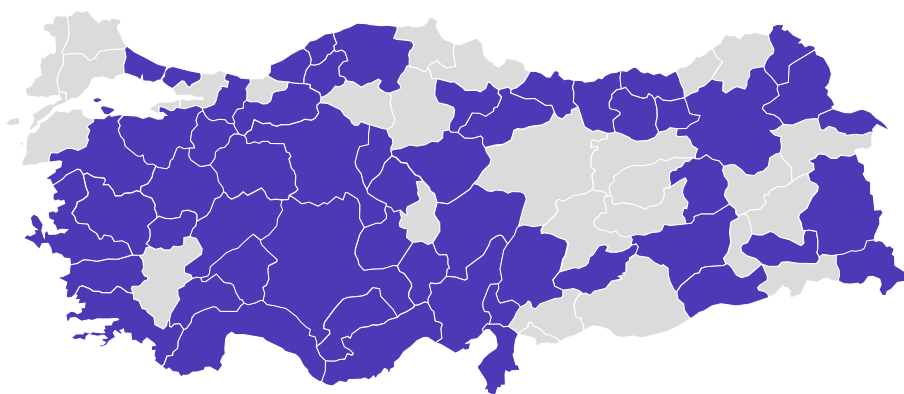
	Municipal Facilities	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Population Covered	66 milyon	59 milyon
Proportion of Population Covered	78%	70%
Number of Provincial Centers Covered	53	80
Proportion of City Center Covered	65%	99%
Number of Districts Covered	-	558
Proportion of Districts Covered	-	57%
Proportion of Districts Covered	80	
Proportion of Provinces Covered in Total	99%	

Table 1: Scope of Data Collected under the Project

The data of the Municipality and MYS directorates that share information are aggregated and a detailed due diligence analysis is conducted. As indicated in Table 1, 65% of the Provincial Municipalities shared information with us within the scope of our project.

Data accessed through municipalities

The municipality data used in the analysis includes 78% of the total population.



66

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Population Covered
by Data Set

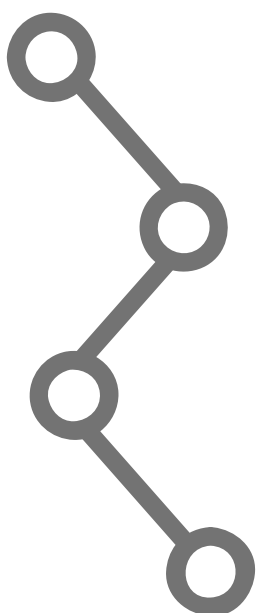
78%

Proportion of
Population Covered

53

Number of
Cities Covered

Figure 1: Provincial Municipalities and Provincial Directorates of Youth and Sports Sharing Information



The second column of Table 1 shows the scope of data collected from Provincial Directorates of Youth and Sports. The MYS data covers 80 provinces in total and includes 70% of the total population. As shown in the right panel of Figure 1, MYS data covers almost all provinces

These two data types cover different provinces/districts. Therefore, when the two types of data sets are combined, 99% of the country is covered at the provincial and population level. At the district level, 57% of all districts are evaluated within the scope of our study. Since the population sizes of some districts are insufficient in terms of providing effective sports activities, it is not possible to obtain data from these districts.

58

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Population Covered
by Data Set

70%

Proportion of
Population Covered

80

Number of
Cities Covered

Data accessed through the Ministry

The ministry data used in the analysis
includes 70% of the total population.

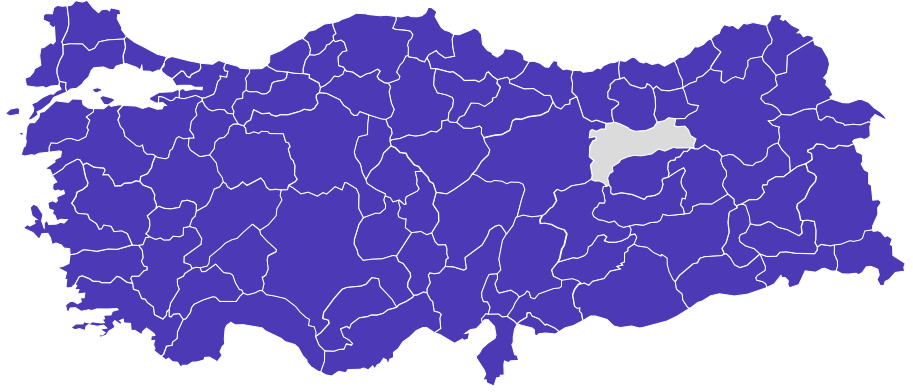


Figure 1: Provincial Municipalities and Provincial Directorates of Youth and Sports Sharing Information

Our study covers all provinces except Erzincan province. Therefore, the results in the current situation analysis have the potential to give a general idea for the entire country.

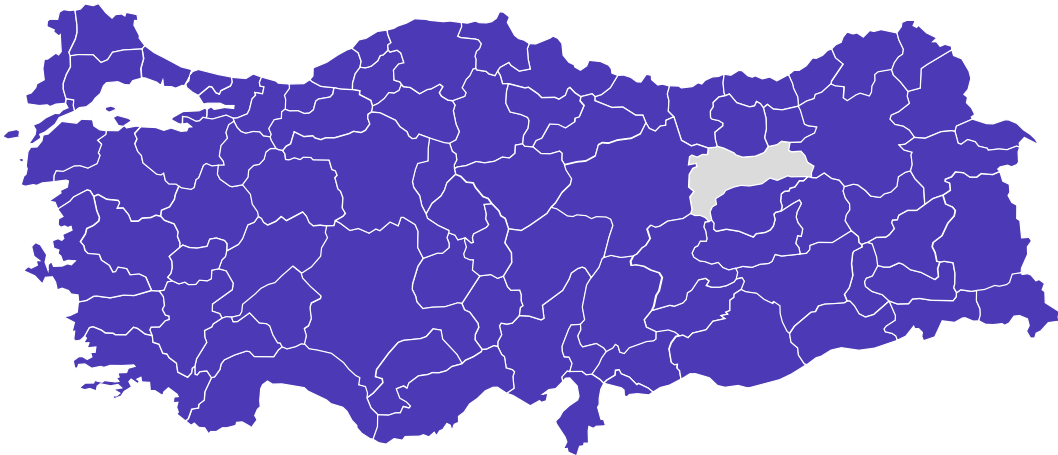


Figure 2: Scope of Data Used in the Project

Analysis of Existing Sports Facility Infrastructure

Within the scope of the study, all Municipalities and Provincial/District Directorates of Youth and Sports are asked about the existence of sports facilities in settlements within the scope of their jurisdiction. In this context, in the areas of their authority and responsibility; It was asked whether there are Sports Hall, Football Field, Swimming Pool, Youth Center, Parks and Recreation Areas. Table 2 provides a brief overview of the available facilities.

For the Provinces in the Data	Municipal Facilities	Ministry Facilities
Rate of Provinces with at least 1 type of facility	87%	100%
Rate of Provinces with at least 2 types of facilities	68%	96%
Rate of Districts with at least 1 type of facility	-	81%
Rate of Districts with at least 2 types of facilities	-	13%
Total: Rate of Provinces with at least 1 type of facility	100%	
Total: Rate of Provinces with at least 2 types of facilities	98%	

Table 2: Existing Sports Facilities

At the provincial level, the existence of at least one facility in each province seems quite normal. On the other hand, the rate of provinces with at least 2 types of facilities is 98%. The distribution of facility types differs according to the type of institution. Figure 3 shows the distribution of services provided by municipalities for sports activities by facility type. Parks and Recreation areas constitute the biggest share of sports activities of municipalities. This is followed by the Gym and other types of facilities.

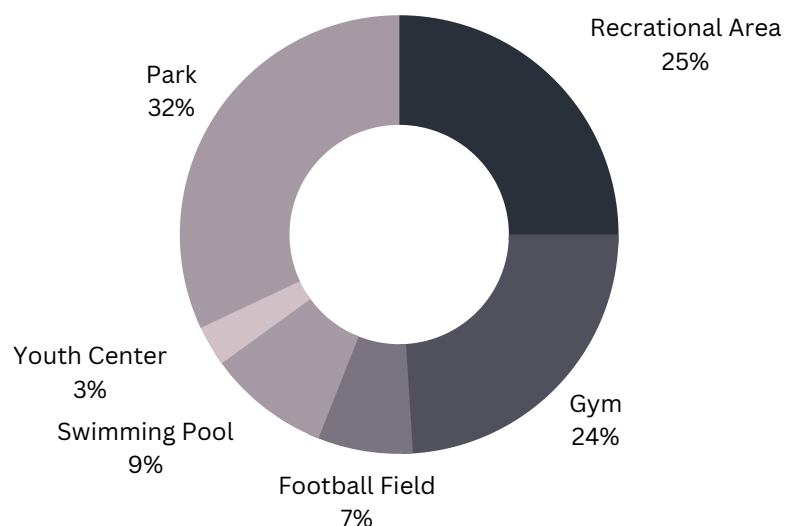
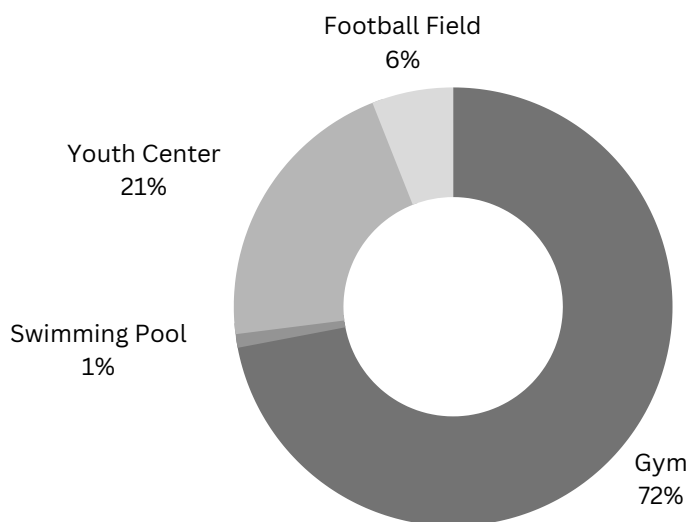


Figure 3: Distribution of Municipal Sports Facilities

Provincial Directorates of Youth and Sports, on the other hand, have turned to Sports Hall and Youth Centers. As Figure 4 indicates, these two types of facilities constitute 93% of the total facilities.



Considering the fields of activity of the two institutions, the differentiation of sports activity facilities should be considered quite natural. Figure 5 shows the distribution of all sports activities within the country. When looked at in total, the distribution of the facilities seems quite balanced.

Figure 4: Distribution of Youth and Sports Provincial Directorates Facilities

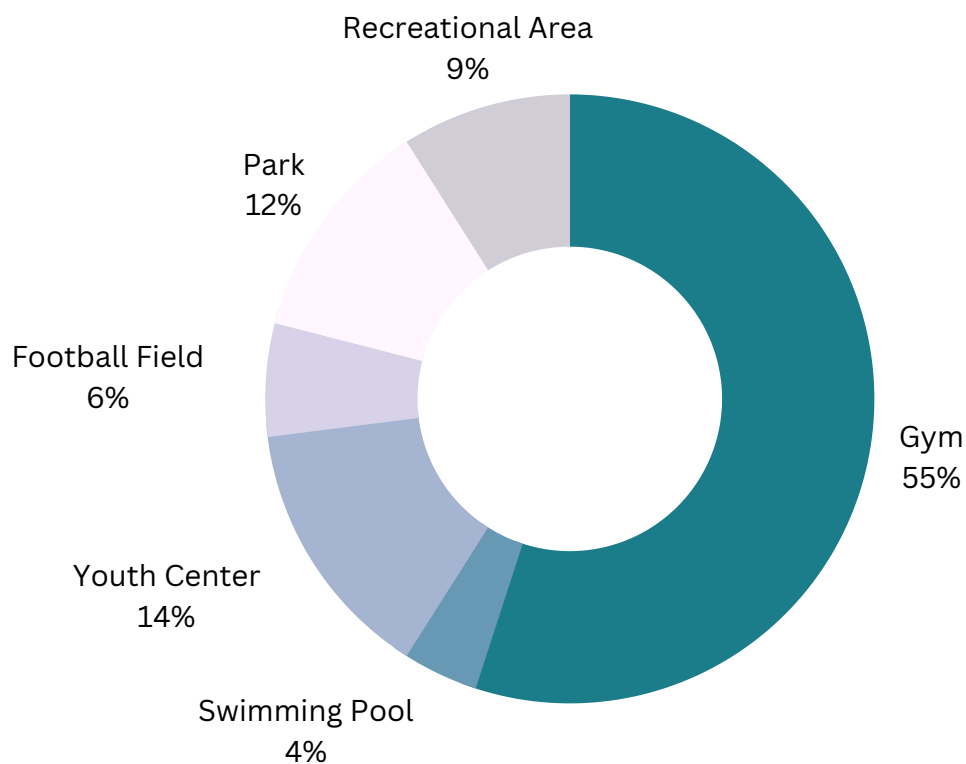


Figure 5: Distribution of All Facilities in the Country

Analysis for Current Sports Branches

After examining the current facility situation, the situation of sports branches in these facilities is analyzed. In total, data is collected from the Municipality and Youth and Sports Directorates for 49 different branches. Within the scope of this analysis, it is investigated whether the sports for the disabled such as Boccia, Goalball, Handicapped Basketball and Handball are available in the facilities.

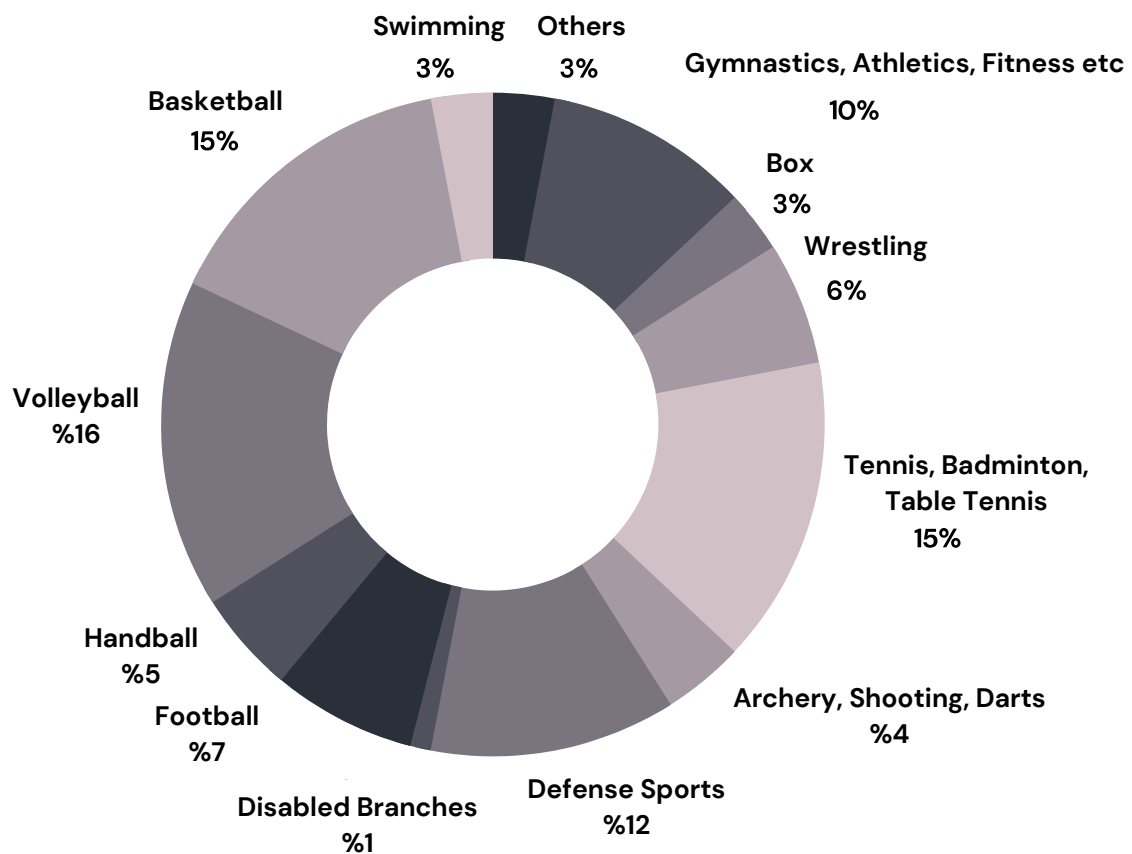


Figure 6: Distribution of Sports Branches

Figure 6 shows the distribution of sports branches in existing facilities throughout the country. The weights of popular sports are higher than other branches, as expected. But unfortunately, the share of disabled sports branches is only around 1%. Considering the size of the disabled population, this rate remains quite low. It is necessary to increase the prevalence of these sports branches, which will especially benefit young people with disabilities.

Current Instructor Analysis

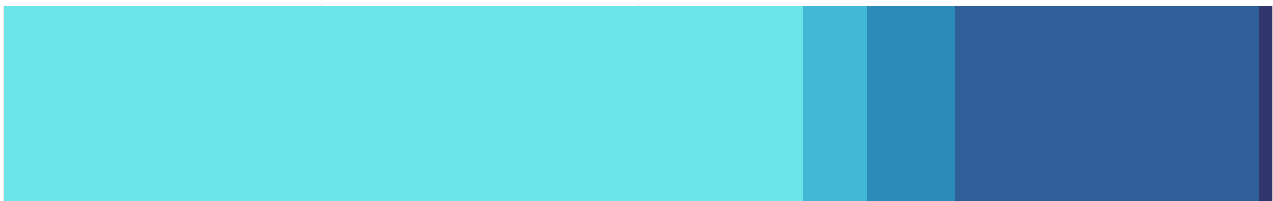
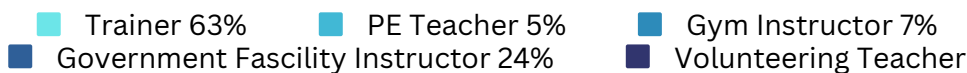
There is a need for qualified personnel in order to carry out sports activities in a suitable and healthier way. In our study, different types of sports trainers are analyzed in sports facilities in the provinces. Considering all facilities, the rate of facilities with trainers is 66%. Since the park and recreation areas are also evaluated within the facilities, this rate is quite good.

Although most of the facilities are for sports activities, there are facilities that provide services other than sports activities such as Youth Centers. The distribution of trainers serving at the facilities by type is shown in Figure 8. Except for Public Education Teachers, all of the trainers are experts in the field of sports activities. Considering the share of sports activities in total social activities, these rates are quite reasonable.

There is a lack of information about the human resource specialized in sports activities of disabled citizens. Therefore, a special inventory study should be carried out on this subject, and the deficiency in this matter should be eliminated through Municipalities and Provincial Directorates of MYS. Participation of disabled people in active life requires a separate specialization. This is only possible with an expert training staff. Especially for some types of disabilities, programs should be developed for communication.

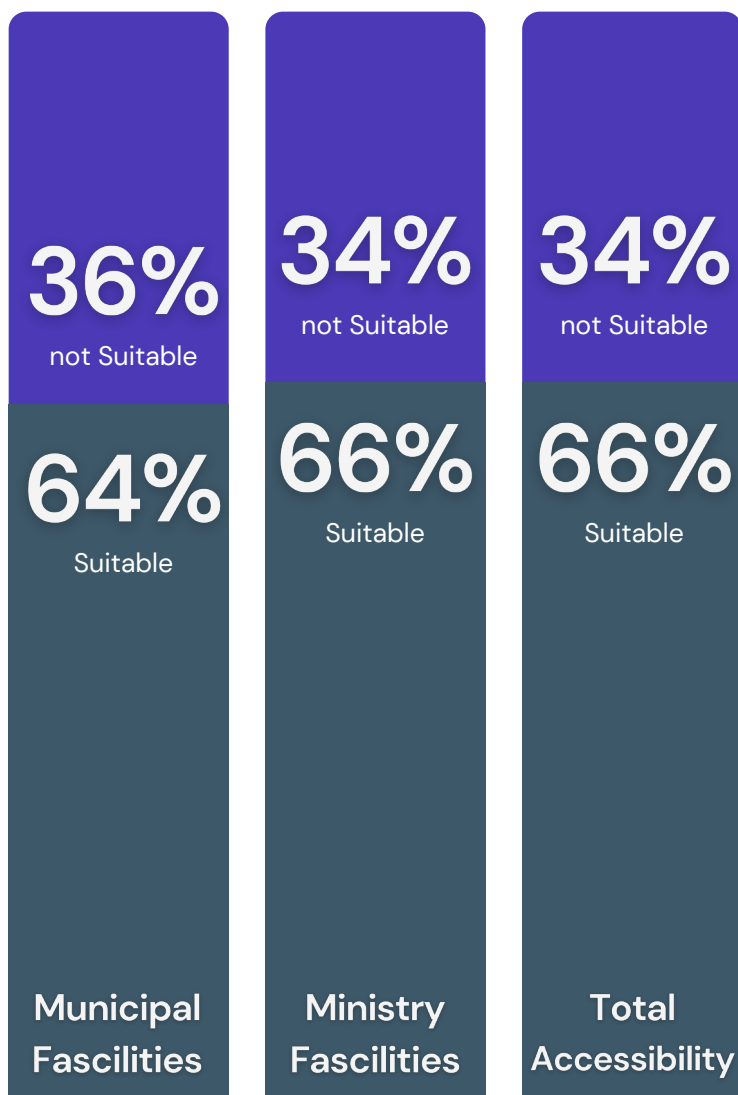


Figure 7: Facility Ratio with Instructors



Şekil 8: Eğitmen Dağılımı

Disabled Accessibility Analysis of Existing Facilities



Our project has set out from the idea that the participation of disabled people in social life can be increased with sports activities. After the current situation analysis, it is investigated whether the facilities are suitable for the use of disabled citizens. Disability suitability analysis is conducted via surveys directed to municipalities and MYS Directorates. As can be seen from Figure 9, disability eligibility is similar for two types of institutions. In total, 66% of the existing facilities can be used by disabled citizens.

Figure 9: Availability of Facilities for the Disabled

Although 100% of this rate is the ideal situation, the current rate of 66% is quite good. However, when we direct attention to the use and awareness of disabled facilities, another dimension of the problem is emerged. The results in Figure 10 appears when we asked whether there exist disabled members in the facilities those are eligible for disabled.

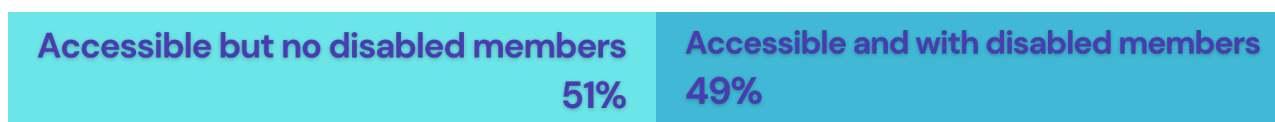


Figure 10: Percentage of Disabled Members in Accessible Facilities

Half of the facilities suitable for the use of disabled citizens do not have registered disabled members. This may be the result of more than one situation. First, the issue of disability-appropriateness of facilities may not be sufficiently known by the relevant layers of society. Promotions should be made to raise awareness and enlighten the public on this issue. The second reason is that there may not be sufficient demand for sportive activity services by disabled individuals or their families. The fact that the low rate of regular sports habits in Turkey may prevent the formation of the necessary awareness about the importance of the issue for families with disabled agents. In this regard, especially families should be informed, and attention should be drawn to the existence of facilities where disabled people can do sports. It should be conveyed that for people with disabilities, beyond living a healthier life, it has an important role in increasing their social participation and harmony by putting them in the same environment with other layers of society.

5. The Importance of Certification and Knowledge Sharing

In the third and fourth sections, a country-wide current situation analysis is made with the data collected, and the disability compatibility of the facilities is examined. The current sports infrastructure of Turkey covers a significant majority of the country's population. It is possible to say that the facilities are not below than world average in terms of disabled accessibility. However, there is no internationally accepted standardization that sets out the disability accessibility status. Therefore, the situation of "The Facility is Suitable for Disableds, but there is no Disabled Members" discussed above raises the question of whether the sufficiency assessment meets the needs of the disabled in general. Disability accessibility is generally regulated by the building-inspection regulation, and the target audience generally includes people with lack of mobility. However, different types of disability bring with them situation-specific needs. This project is the first study in its field, and it proposes a standardization and certification procedure for different types of disabilities in terms of building design, equipment, accessibility and staff capacity.



It is very important for all relevant stakeholders to cooperate and contribute to finding solutions to social problems. In order to enable these types of projects, it is essential that the parties share the information they have. Literature reviews in the field show that there is no centralized information record in the world. This situation is clearly stated in the European Disability Strategy document for the years 2021–2030 prepared by the European Union. The issues of raising the quality of life of the disabled, ensuring their social inclusion and benefiting from the opportunities offered equally is discussed in this strategy document. In the roadmap section of mentioned document, the target of increasing standardization and data collection studies has been determined. The platform, which is one of the outputs of our project, completely serves to achieve these goals.

The fact that the disabled individuals and their families are not aware of the existence of facilities may also be effective in the result of “The Facility is Suitable for Disables, but there is no Disabled Members”. With the application developed in this project, a practical solution has been produced for all the problems of information sharing, conformity, and cooperation of actors.

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