



# THE NEEDS AND ISSUES OF HACKNEY'S TURKISH, KURDISH AND TURKISH CYPRIOT YOUNG PEOPLE

## Research Report

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The following people were involved in the development and delivery of this project:

**Shaina Greiff**, 29, was the research consultant and coordinated the production of the report. Shaina works as a freelance researcher and has a diverse background in working with the voluntary sector. She received a BA from Columbia University (United States of America) in Middle Eastern Studies, and an MSc from the School of Oriental and African Studies (London) in the field of Development Studies.

**Taylan Sahbaz**, 32, is the centre coordinator for Day-Mer and oversees all of Day-Mer's work including the Youth Services, which he helped design. Taylan has been working for Day-Mer since 1998 as a volunteer, drugs education worker and advisor and has been managing the organisation's services since 2004.

**Burcu Elibol**, 29, was Day-Mer's Youth Development Worker who helped design the research questionnaire and was employed in Day-Mer until March 2009. Burcu's contribution to the research has been through the dissemination of the research questionnaire and data-analysis of the results of this element of the research as well as attending focus groups organised as part of this research.

**Orhan Dil**, 41, was the co-ordinator for the research focus groups targeting employed and unemployed young people. Orhan has recently been working as the organisation's administrator and has been involved in Day-Mer's work since he came to the UK in 1995. He was involved in previous researches carried out by Day-Mer.

**Asli Demirel**, 39, is Day-Mer's education coordinator and led the research focus groups targeting young people in education. She has been involved in Day-Mer's Youth Work as the manager of Arts and Holiday Activities as well as coordinating the organisation's school based Role Model's service in the last few years.

## Executive Summary

Day-Mer is currently a leading service provider to the Turkish/Kurdish/Turkish-Cypriot community in the fields of advice and education services, especially in the London Borough of Hackney. Young people have been involved in Day-Mer's work since the organisation's inception, including but not limited to young volunteers who are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the centre and in the design and delivery of its youth activity and services.

In an effort to further involve young people and specifically target their needs, Day-Mer embarked on a project designed to strengthen the foundations necessary for long-term youth work and youth led presence in the centre. This project was envisioned as the lead-into longer-term and sustainable efforts to cater to the needs of young people in the TKTC community in London. This project was to develop Day-Mer's capacity as a youth provider by involving and enabling young people, and was designed and delivered around three categories of deliverables: capacity building, raising awareness, and positive activities for young people. The research component of this project (of which this report is the culmination) aimed to address the fact that the data/analysis that statutory services have about TKTC young people in LB of Hackney is fragmented, patchy, and unrepresentative of local needs or is very general census data. This leads statutory services to implement policies and strategies that this community finds difficult to engage with.

Day-Mer's goal was to highlight the stories behind this data, inform suitable and adequate interventions at both a strategic level and in the context of LSP and HYS work, and to confirm and celebrate good practice. The methodology of this research included a 38-question survey (with 100 respondents) and 6 targeted focus groups consisting of students, employed young people, and NEET young people. Both the surveys and focus groups posited questions – in addition to general information – related to education, employment, youth work, opportunities for young people, and alcohol and drugs.

The findings are analysed in-depth throughout the body of this report, however a brief summary will be outlined here. It was found that the majority (55%) of questionnaire respondents were students and that young people in this community, in general, continue to live at home with their parents. It was found that the young people in this community are facing ample financial challenges, as even those who are working continue to live at home, and it was found that there is also a very high rate of unemployment amongst parents. Where they are opportune enough to be employed, this is more than likely to be in the catering industry, which represents a professional dead-end.

It was found that students are reasonably content with their educational establishments, with the majority being educated in a multicultural environment, in mixed institutions, and with decent information services. This points to the emergence of an identity they are in the process of forming in the streets of London. However, students were lacklustre about the facilities at their schools, and complained about issues of bullying, racism, and lack of resources among other

things. Students also pointed out their concerns for the future, which included inability to attend university, lack of opportunities for development, and little to look forward to in general.

Among the employed young people the main sectors of employment were the restaurant and catering industry; almost all were employees not employers. It was imparted that young people take such jobs out of financial need and a lack of other opportunities. It is clear that people in this community, from a very young age, are getting stuck in occupations that won't allow them to advance or move out of cycles of poverty. Furthermore, young workers also complained of experiencing racism and discrimination, low wages, long hours, and no training in their places of employment.

When asked about youth activities, it was clear that young people in this community are interested in a wide-range of activities, including organised youth activities and positive diversionary activities. Young people reported interest in activities that bring young people together and arts/cultural activities. Furthermore, participants pointed out that organised meetings and advice hours at community centres were good ways to provide information to young people, and strongly advocated for young people's involvement in developing information for young people.

The respondents reported strongly that youth organisations need to provide new activities in order to involve more young people and give them the kinds of opportunities they need and want. Furthermore, it was suggested over and over again throughout this research that the provision of trainings, apprenticeships, accreditations, or any other measure which could help young people advance in life is very desirable for this sector. It is clear that young people in this community do value youth work; they feel there are things to gain from their participation. However, they also recognise that more needs to be done in order for youth work to be more effective, for themselves and for those who follow them.

The sections on alcohol and drugs yielded somewhat patchy results. A large minority of respondents stated that they had, at least once, consumed alcohol; however, respondents inconsistent answering of the questions in the alcohol section brings the accuracy of the results and the robustness of the data collected into question. Furthermore, as only 3 respondents (out of 100) admitted to having used drugs, the data from the drugs section is inconclusive. This shows that further research needs to be done into these areas.

Many conclusions and recommendations were gleaned from this research, among them: there has to be a good balance of provision for young people by both statutory and voluntary services; more has to be done to diversity the fields of employment in this community so that young people see opportunities for advancement; create opportunities for young people to come together, exchange experiences and celebrate diversity; statutory services need to make more of an effort to understand the needs of the community and provide services which will help them better integrate into life in the UK.

## **Introduction**

### **A. Background**

Day-Mer is a refugee community organisation and charity based in Hackney that has been providing services to the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot communities living and working in London since its establishment in November 1989. The organisation's mission is to work with and on behalf of Turkish and Kurdish people living and working in London, to enable them to address their problems and promote their cultural, economic, social and democratic rights. For this reason ensuring the integration of the community to the mainstream of life in UK is an important aspect of the organisation's ethos and outlook in service design and delivery.

The organisation is currently a leading service provider to the community in the fields of advice and education services especially in London Borough of Hackney; its current services include: community-based and quality-assured advice services, school-based education services working around educational attainment, women's services, youth services, a drug and alcohol link service, sports activities, supplementary school classes, arts and cultural activity and classes, including the annual Day-Mer festival which is the longest running festival in LB of Hackney. The organisation has the highest level of engagement with the statutory services and the local strategic partnership, Team Hackney, amongst the Turkish/Kurdish community organisations and has a track record of delivering commissioned services for over ten years.

As a Turkish and Kurdish community centre, most of Day-Mer's members and service users belong to Turkish and Kurdish ethnic origins; however, the centre, its services and facilities are open to anyone on the basis of its equal opportunities policy (regardless of race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic origin, class culture, gender, marital status, disability or age).

Young people have been involved in Day-Mer's work since the organisation's inception; the organisation's sub-committees include a Youth Committee, which is comprised of youth volunteers who are involved in the day-to-day running of the centre and in the design and delivery of its youth activities and services. Day-Mer's current youth provision includes: social and cultural activities and classes, awareness raising activities for students, workers and unemployed young people, a youth leadership programme and a volunteer-run Turkish and Kurdish Football Federation. The vibrant youth provision of the community centre also includes the Day-Mer Youth Magazine and youth website, which is produced by the young people themselves.

## **B. Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot Community in London**

There are an estimated 200,000 Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot immigrants in London. Most of the members of these communities live in and around the boroughs of Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Enfield; well over 20,000 reside in the borough of Hackney. They are a mix of new arrivals, with great need in terms of support; people here up to five years who have settled in some way but still have educational, employment and social needs; and people who are very settled and use the community centre as a focus of social and cultural activities, as well as a means of keeping in contact with their community. The latest influx of immigrants started 15-20 years ago, and there are still a significant number of people migrating to the UK.

There is an estimated 30-40% unemployment amongst this population. The majority of the Turkish and Kurdish community traditionally work in the textile industry, kebab and café shops, off-licenses or supermarkets; these types of employment are characterised by no job security, bad conditions, low wages, overtime, without any legal rights or union rights. The textile industry, which was the main area of employment for the community in the 1990s, has steadily declined. Focus research has shown that Hackney has a much higher rate of long-term unemployed people, a category into which this community could easily fall.

There is a large population of Turkish and Kurdish children in the educational system in London. This community tends to have larger families, and so a service that hits the family unit will have a greater impact. Many of these young people are growing up with the compounded problem of living in inner-city areas that hit all the indicators for social exclusion, as well as being non-English speaking minorities in a climate when immigrants can be targets for discrimination.

This puts the young people, especially those on estates and in high-density housing areas, at risk of becoming involved in crime and drugs. There is a perception that the Turkish and Kurdish community is involved in the drugs trade, which impacts on how this community is seen by the police, by other communities and how they see themselves. It also impacts on where young people see themselves fitting in, and on how their aspirations are addressed.

All these factors condemn the community to work and live in an isolated situation from the host community. These conditions and other issues of integration to life in UK – such as the lack of a feasible and resourced progression route by which integration could be ensured – perhaps explains why a Turkish language ‘ghetto’, which includes various neighbourhoods in the LB of Hackney, exists. This is why community organisations and cafes continue to play a major role in the life of this community; furthermore, members of the community perceive organisations such as Day-Mer as the first port-of-call to resolve work related and social life problems. Language barriers continue to be an issue; such barriers embody the problems of integration the community experiences and continues to be an integral part of their interaction with the society in UK. Most of the community organisations run interpretation and advice services on a volunteer and professional basis. Day-Mer



provides free advice services in health, education, welfare, accommodation, immigration, housing and interpreting as well as providing enterprise development support.

Even though a strong sense of community, a culture of community participation, and a network of community centres provide support mechanisms for the members of the community, the data on their needs and issues remain by and large fragmented, if not completely unidentified. This reflects on the level and quality of services that these communities receive. One of the main issues in addressing the needs of this young migrant community has been/is the lack of specific data about the needs and issues of this community on which service delivery could be based. In addition to this, there is a need to begin implementing the recommendations of small-scale and fragmented research conducted about the needs and issues of these communities in separate areas.

## **Aim of Research**

With a visible emphasis on working to address the needs and issues that the members of the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot migrant communities experience during their lives in the UK, Day-Mer emerged as one of the leading providers of education, advice and youth services to the community in the past ten years. An aspect of this has been Day-Mer's continued engagement with statutory services and the local strategic partnership, Team Hackney. At the beginning of 2008, Hackney Youth Service identified the Turkish and Kurdish youth group as a priority need group and commissioned Day-Mer to run a pilot project around this service group.

A project was designed to strengthen the foundations necessary for long-term youth work and youth led presence in Day-Mer. Its goal was to provide the lead into seeking funding for securing youth provision on a longer term; such longer term initiatives include: recruit and train youth workers, the development of database and accreditation systems, a distinctive and regular program of activity, and the development of the role of young people in Day-Mer as an organisation.

The aim of this short-term project was to develop Day-Mer's capacity as a youth provider by involving and enabling young people through this piece of work. Day-Mer aimed to help T/K/TC young people have greater access to the mainstream life in LB of Hackney. The project was designed and delivered around 3 categories of deliverables including capacity building, raising awareness and positive activities for young people:

- Developing youth leadership in Day-Mer.
- Collecting and building resources for youth work at Day-Mer
- Develop the role of young people in Day-Mer by recruiting and employing a dedicated youth worker to establish a regular programme of activities and support that young people locally are made aware of. Providing a point of access for T/K/TC young people for advice, advocacy and referrals.
- To be constantly vigilant of barriers T/K/TC young people face in becoming a part of the mainstream of life with such as substance abuse, guns/gang/street culture. Work with one hundred young people in establishing a base line of issues faced.
- The employment of a dedicated youth worker helped to develop our capacity to network into borough resources and opportunities.
- Develop and employ systems that manage the usage of the provision by young people, including the refining of Day-Mer database to establish level of youth participation.
- The development of the Day-Mer magazine as a means of young people expressing their issues and developing skills sets that can be accredited.
- Developing the 'senior membership' or youth leadership was a key role in developing capacity for the youth worker.
- Providing a place that is safe, creative and allows young people the opportunity to make positive contributions through involvement as

volunteers, work on the magazine or anyone of the host of services that Day-Mer offers.

- Sought to train two/three qualified youth workers through the scholarships scheme.
- Provide support and services on a variety of substance abuse issues.

The research component of this project aimed to address the fact that the data/analysis that the statutory services have about the T/K/TC young people in LB of Hackney is fragmented, patchy, and unrepresentative of local needs or is very general census data. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the data available to such services alone does not tell the story of the issues faced by TKTC young people; this contributes to strategy and policies that this community finds difficult to employ or recognise. Furthermore, this also causes fragmented/partial understandings of what is on offer to T/K/TC young people and is culturally sensitive for them.

Day-Mer's goal was to:

- Highlight the stories behind this data. How is this data actually 'lived';
- To inform suitable and adequate interventions both on a strategic level as well as in the context of HYS work;
- To confirm and celebrate good practice, and to identify new ideas and challenge 'irrelevant practice'.

## Methodology of Research

The methodology of Day-Mer's Youth Research included a 38-question survey<sup>1</sup> and 6 focus groups<sup>2</sup>. The surveys solicited questions under the categories: general information; education and employment; information about youth work and opportunities for young people; alcohol and drugs. 100 surveys were distributed and answered anonymously. Of the 6 focus groups: 2 addressed issues of students, 2 addressed issues of youth in employment, and 2 addressed issues of youths who fall into the NEET category.

This research was an element of the youth pilot project commissioned by Hackney Youth Service. The Youth Development Worker and researcher, both of which Day-Mer recruited for the project, liaised to develop the research questionnaire and the content of the focus group discussions. Due to Day-Mer's existing work with young people from the community and its existing network of youth work, members of Day-Mer's Youth Committee also liaised with the Youth Development Worker and had input into the design of both the research questionnaire and approach to the focus groups. The organisation's experience of youth work had been largely dependent on informal mechanisms and youth provision was determined largely by what was available to be offered on a voluntary or cost-effective basis rather being based on needs analysis carried out within the youth section of the community. In tandem with the lack of any specific up-to-date research on the issues and needs of young people from these particular migrant communities, the research was conceived as one that would be preliminary and would seek to identify in most general terms some of the sample demographic trends and needs and issues prevalent within this group. For this reason, Day-Mer Youth Committee's approach of understanding the distinct needs of student, employed and unemployed was embedded into the research questionnaire and the composition of focus group discussions. The questionnaires were completed and focus groups took place during the summer and autumn of 2008 and data recording was completed by spring 2009.

Using the network enabled by the users of the pilot project and the existing membership and user group of activities overseen by the Youth Committee, 100 questionnaires were distributed to young people who lived, worked, attended school or had evident contacts with life in the London Borough of Hackney. The 100 questionnaires were distributed in the following way across the following locations: 20 amongst users of Day-Mer's services, 10 amongst users of other community services, 10 random samples completed in front of Dalston Kingsland station, 20 random samples in Milton Gardens and Frampton Park Estates, 20 random samples completed in Hackney Marshes before football matches on Sundays and the remaining 20 samples have been completed by students through the contacts of Day-Mer's school based educational projects. The majority of this questionnaire was multiple-choice, with only 5 questions being exceptions to this rule: 2 were write-in and 3 were answered on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the worst and 5 being the best).

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Annex 1 for the complete survey

<sup>2</sup> Please see Annex 2 for the focus groups format

Even though the idea of interviews with representatives of voluntary and statutory bodies working with young people were considered, both because of the time-limited and introductory nature of the research but also because of the change in project staff and researcher, this did not materialise. Instead, interviews based on the questions provided in the questionnaire were completed with a member of Day-Mer's MC, and 5 parents were conducted. A further interview was also conducted with a Management Committee member of the North London Community House based in Haringey to provide a cross-borough voluntary sector perspective to the needs and issues of young people from these ethnic groups.

The focus groups again targeted young people which had some kind of connection with life in London Borough of Hackney. Six focus group meetings, all of which drew a participation of over 10 young people were organised and delivered. Two focus group discussions were provided for each of the student, employed and unemployed sections of the young people to collect data about the lived experience and data about the needs and issues of each respective group. One focus group for each of the groups took place in Day-Mer whereas one focus group meeting for employed people took place in North London Community House in Haringey, a focus group for unemployed young people took place Frampton Park Estate and the remaining focus group for students took place in Stoke Newington Secondary School.

The focus groups were led by the Youth Development Worker and project volunteers; it strived to find a balance between the individual response of participants as well as small-group discussions where they had to respond collectively to questions posed. Each of the sessions lasted around 2 hours with a break in the middle. However, the sessions taking place in the café could not follow the structure due to the nature of the locations and youth groups involved; it took place semi-formally. As well as the responses of the participants, the observations of the staff running these sessions were incorporated into the report of each focus group session.

## **Key Findings/Data Analysis**

The key findings of this research will be analysed here; however, before outlining the data, it must be noted here that the questionnaires upon which this data is based had a number of flaws in the form of repetition. For example, in Section A (general information) there was a question (Q4): 'Which school do you attend?' All participants who had marked in the previous question that their occupation was 'student' duly answered this question. However, this question requests the same information as question 9 under section B.1. Education. Therefore, such questions have been omitted from this data analysis, as the information they provided was redundant. These flaws did not skew or affect the robustness of the data collected, but their inclusion in the original questionnaire and the finding of their redundancy must be noted. Any further problems with the questions posed will be elaborated upon in their respective sections.

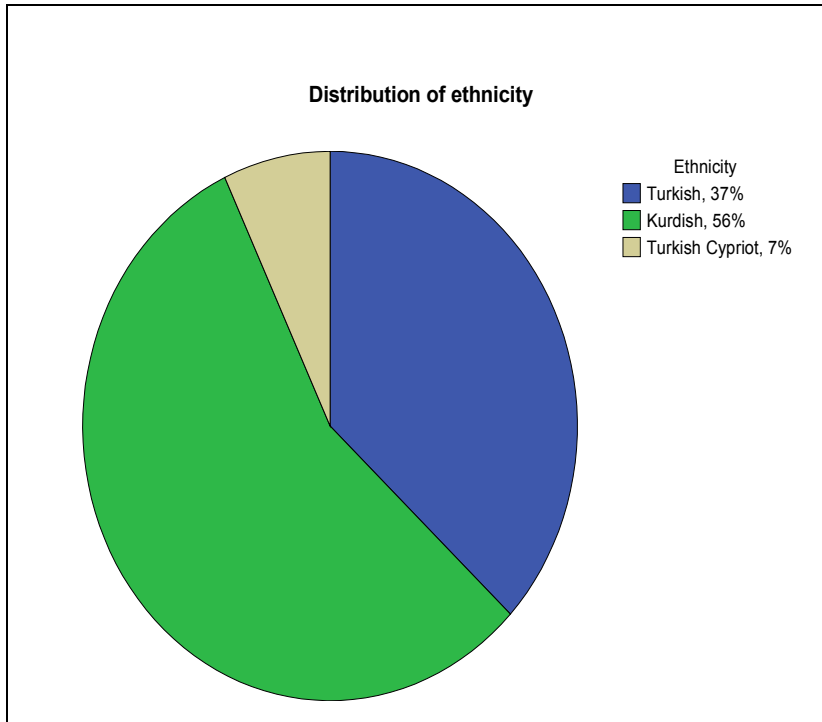
The focus groups covered much, but not all of the same areas as the research questionnaire; this has to do with the fact that for the focus groups, specific youths were sought out according to their employment status – i.e. students, employed youths, or NEET youths. Therefore, the focus group information will be integrated into their respective sections – i.e. the information gleaned at student focus groups will, for the most part, be applicable in the education section. However, this is not an exclusive rule.

### **A. General Information**

The general information requested by the questionnaire included: gender, ethnicity, occupation, residential status in the United Kingdom, those living with their parents or on their own, father's occupation, and mother's occupation. 6 were multiple-choice questions and 2 were write-in questions.

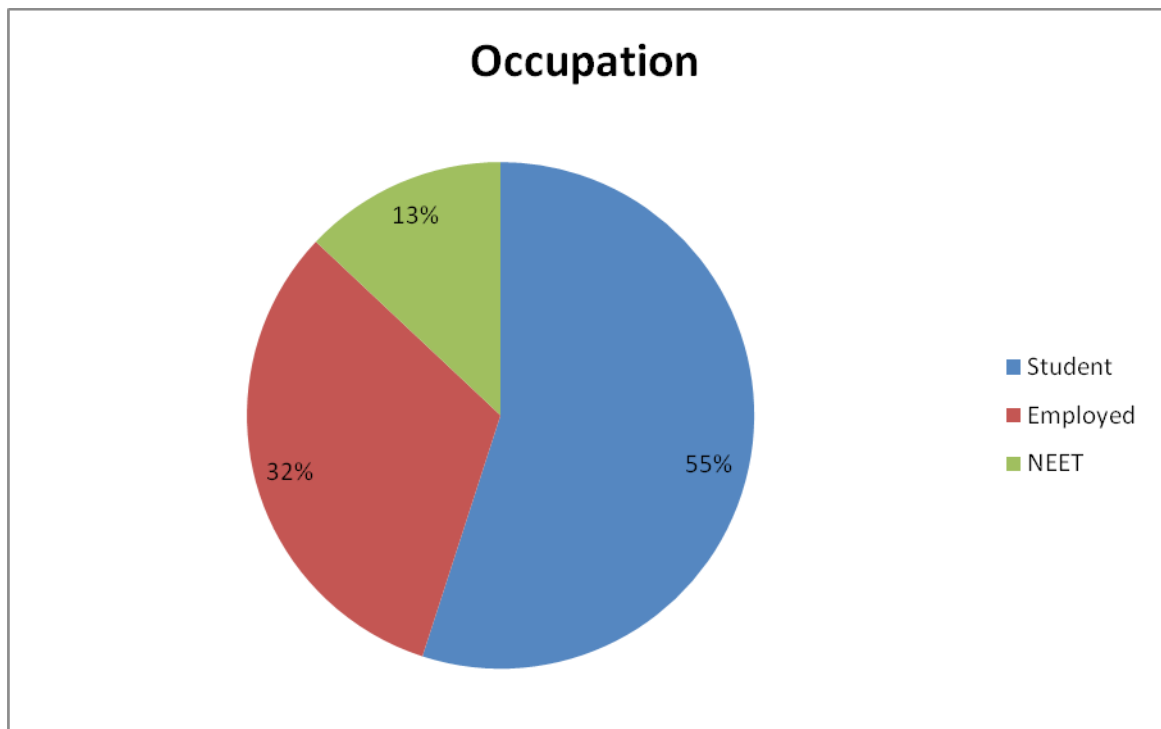
Of the 100 respondents, 59 were female and 41 were male. The researchers report that no particular gender was targeted and that, despite the relative ease with which female participants agreed to complete the questionnaire, this might even be a reflection of the gender divide amongst Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot (TKTC) young people in LB of Hackney. Furthermore, in the future, Day-Mer recognises the necessity to look more at and elaborate on the gendered nature of its work.

The ethnicity breakdown leaned strongly towards Turkish and Kurdish ethnicities, with only 7% reporting themselves outside these two categories.



**Figure A1 – Ethnicity distribution of the research participants**

Over half of the participants (55%) were students, while 32 reported being employed and 13 fall into the NEET category.



**Figure A2 – Occupational distribution of participants**

The group reported a fairly even distribution in the representation of time spent in the United Kingdom: 37% of the respondents were born in the UK; 24% had residence here for less than 5 years; 17% between 5 and 10 years, and 11% for 11

years or more. This shows that, the needs and issues of this group, whatever they may be, are not due to being recent arrivals to UK and are more likely to be down to socio-economic factors applicable to all in the borough.

Unsurprisingly, due to the numbers reported as students, the majority of participants lived at home with their parents; however, the 89% who reported this far exceeds the percentage of students, meaning many of those who work are not earning enough to be independent. Furthermore, parents' employment also showed the financial challenges facing young people: only 59% reported having working fathers, and only 9% working mothers.



## **B. Education and Employment**

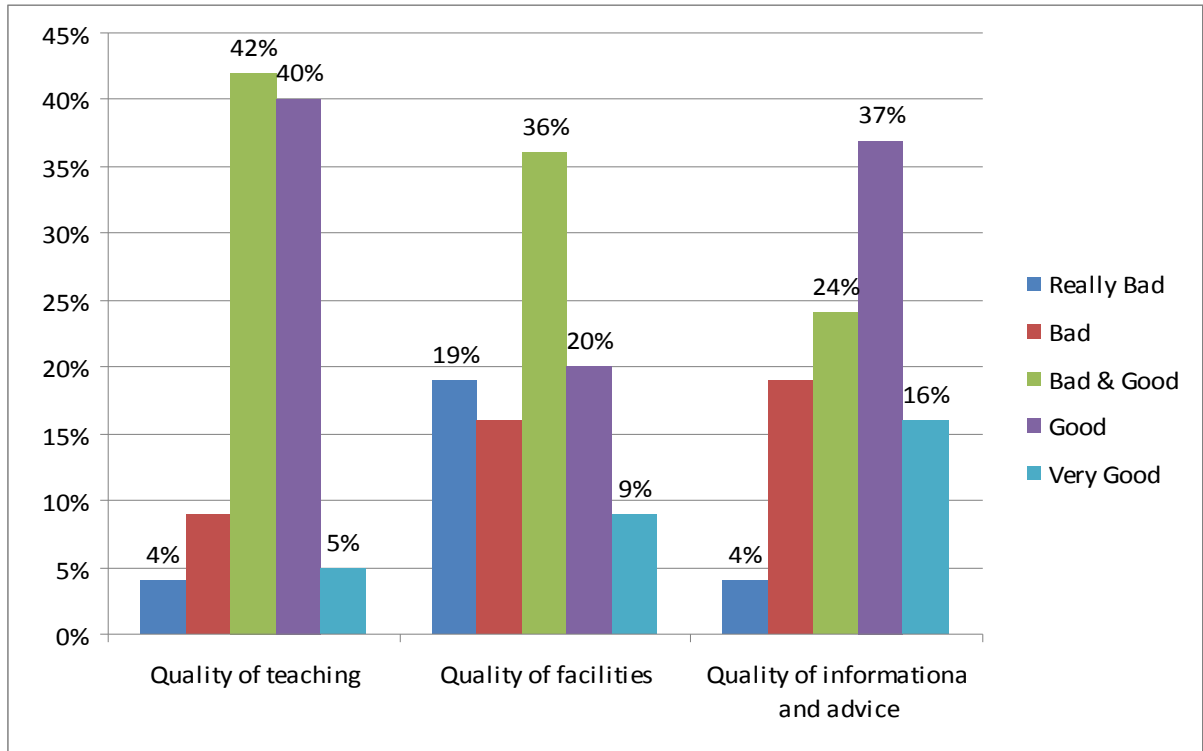
With regards to the questionnaire, section B corresponds to Q3 (occupation) in section A. B.1. Education corresponds with those who responded to Q3 with the answer of student: 55 total respondents. B.2. Employment corresponds with those who responded to Q3 with the answer of employed: 32 total respondents. Therefore, the total number of respondents for these sections is not out of 100, but instead is dependent of the respondents' answers in the previous section.

### **Education**

Section B.1. enquired about the nature, quality, and composition of the respondents' education. The information requested was: educational status, average number of students in class, ethnic composition of school, quality of teaching, quality of facilities, and quality of information and advice. 3 were multiple-choice questions and 3 were answered on a scale of 1-5.

Of the 55 young people who reported being students, 35 were attending secondary education, 15 to further education and 5 to higher education institutes in the borough. This shows that, whatever their issue and needs are, the youth service provision in the borough for TKTC and Day-Mer as a community centre has to take into account that it is the younger section of this group attending secondary education that needs most of the attention, simply in virtue of the fact that they number considerably more.

The students, based on the on their answers in the questionnaires, seem reasonably content with their educational establishment, the majority report being educated in a multicultural environment and most seem to attend mixed institutions. 48 young people (87%) report the quality of the education they receive to be mediocre and above, with 45% rating the teaching quality as good to very good. The opinion about facilities showed mixed results: 35% gave negative opinions; 29% gave positive opinions; and 36% reported their facilities to be mediocre. The advice and information present in their schools garnered higher results, with the majority (53%) reportedly happy with these services.



**Figure B1 – The views of young people on their education, school facilities and the services they receive in educational contexts.**

In the student focus groups, the questions posed by the moderators followed similar lines as that in the questionnaire, but, due to the nature of discussion as opposed to survey, more details were gleaned. The make-up of one such group was 6-6 male-female, and 5-9 male-female in the other, with varying amounts of time spent in the UK – from people born here to recent immigrants. The issues outlined by these groups when asked ‘what issues do you experience as a young person in your field of activity?’ were:

- Bullying;
- Racism and discrimination;
- No future, TKTC students don’t do well in their exams, I don’t expect to either – lack of positive role models;
- The school building;
- Some teachers do not understand our needs and get angry if we can’t speak English;
- Lack of resources;
- Boring lessons;
- Gang fights between TKTC and youths from other groups.

These youths further indicated that, outside the educational arena, they and others around them are experiencing the following problems:

- Immigration problems;

- Problems with housing and over crowdedness;
- Lack of opportunities to socialise with others;
- Missing family in Turkey and dependence on family;
- Not enough support from parents and/or schools to improve education.

Student further identified their concerns for the future as:

- Not being able to attend university due to the family business;
- Lack of opportunities of professional or personal development;
- Nothing to look forward to.

## Employment

Section B.2 enquired about employment amongst the respondents. It asked: field of employment, whether the respondents were employers or employees, and if they had ever received any training associated with their jobs.

32 young people reported being employed. Unsurprisingly, most of the young people who are employed seem to be working in the restaurant and catering industry (45%), and small percentages (6% for both) reportedly working in education or the private sector. The remainder (45%) work in 'other' employment.

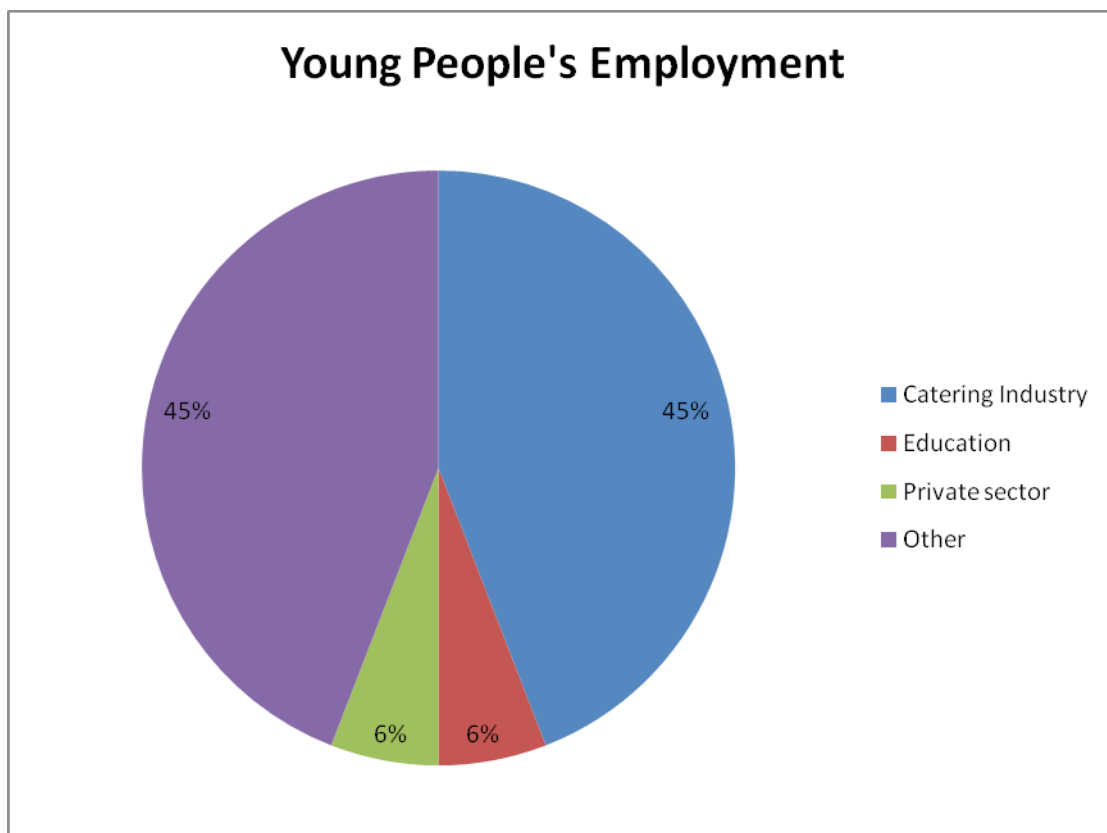


Figure B2 – Distribution of fields of employment for participants

Except 3 individuals, most of the young people were employees (91%). 81% reported they had received no training, which falls into line with the above conclusion of low-income generation and non-independence from parents, and seems to show significant issues with professional development amongst those who are employed (5 young people – 32%).

The focus groups of young workers yielded similar results, albeit with more detail. In one of the groups, out of 12 young workers: 4 are working in fast-food sector, 2 working for butchers, 3 work in the family business (market/off-license), 1 is working as a decorator, 1 is a small business owner, and the last is a waitress. There were 8 males and 4 females, and only 2 had attended higher education. This corresponds to information provided by questionnaires outlined above.

The young workers stated that such jobs were taken out of financial need, lack of other opportunities, familial responsibility, and the lack of need for experience in these fields. They pointed to experiencing issues of racism and discrimination, lack of job security, no opportunities for advancement, and cycles of low wages, long hours, and no training. It is clear that people, from a very young age, are getting stuck in occupations that won't allow them to advance or move out of cycles of poverty. Furthermore, none of these people are members of trade unions or even aware of what a trade union is or could provide for them.

When asked what their concerns were for the future, young people pointed to just this problem: job security and lack of opportunities for development. They further pointed to more training programmes, apprenticeship opportunities, regulation of decent pay, English-language provision, and support for small business as ways that would help them resolve the above mentioned issues.

## **NEET**

As previously outlined, out of the 100 respondents to the questionnaire, 55 reported themselves as students and 32 reported being employed. This means that, of 100 youths polled here, 13% fell in the NEET category. As is clear from the young workers section, even when people are employed, they are still struggling to be financially independent or 'make ends meet'. This leads to understanding why there would be a high percentage of youths who are neither in schooling nor employed, as they feel – and see their peers doing – that even if they are working hard, there is little to be gained from this; therefore, there could be a lack of motivation. This leads back to the recommendations of young people put forward in the focus groups, that pointed towards the need for trainings and apprenticeships which would give them opportunities outside the catering or off-license sectors.

### C. Youth Activities

This section in the questionnaire probes both the organised and leisure activities of the participant youths, information about youth work, and opportunities for young people. A majority of the respondents (69%) reported that there was not enough for young people to do in the area – i.e. LB of Hackney; while interest and participation in these activities seem to be evenly matched, if not positively represented, with 59% reportedly taking part at least once in organised youth activities. As it pertains to leisure activities, the most popular amongst this group of participants are:

- Meeting with friends (58%);
- Listening to Music (48%);
- Swimming (44%);
- Football (35%);
- Dance (33%);
- Other (31%)

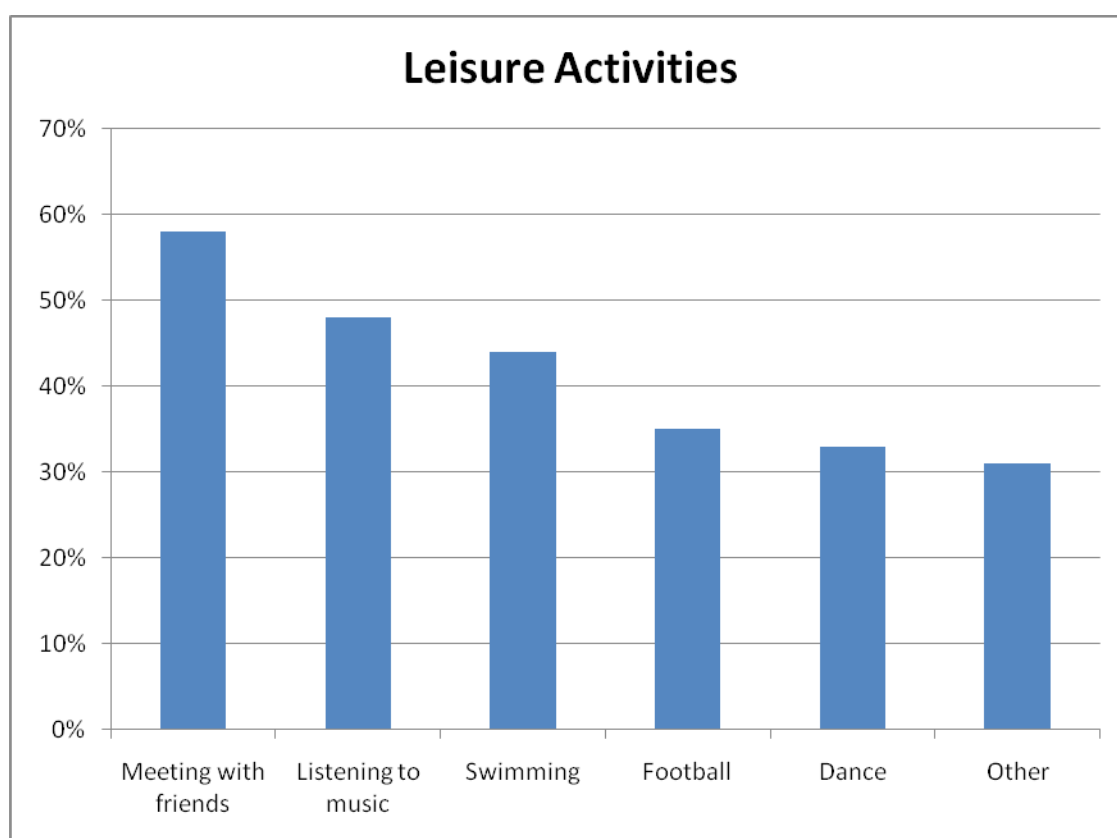


Figure C1 – Extra-curricular activities young people would like to or are already involved in

It should be noted that in the leisure activities section, participants were allowed to tick as many activities as they enjoyed; so all of these options were out of the full 100 respondents. There seems to be interest in a diverse range of activities amongst

young people, with young people reporting interest in activities that bring young people together and arts/cultural activities.

### Information about Youth Work

When asked about information about youth work (C.1.), participants to the questionnaire responded that organising meetings (39%) and advice hours at Day-Mer (40%) were the best ways to better provide information to young people. 54% responded that involving them in activities was a good way for young people to be involved in developing information for other young people; 33% responded that training young people was a good way for young people to be involved in this manner.

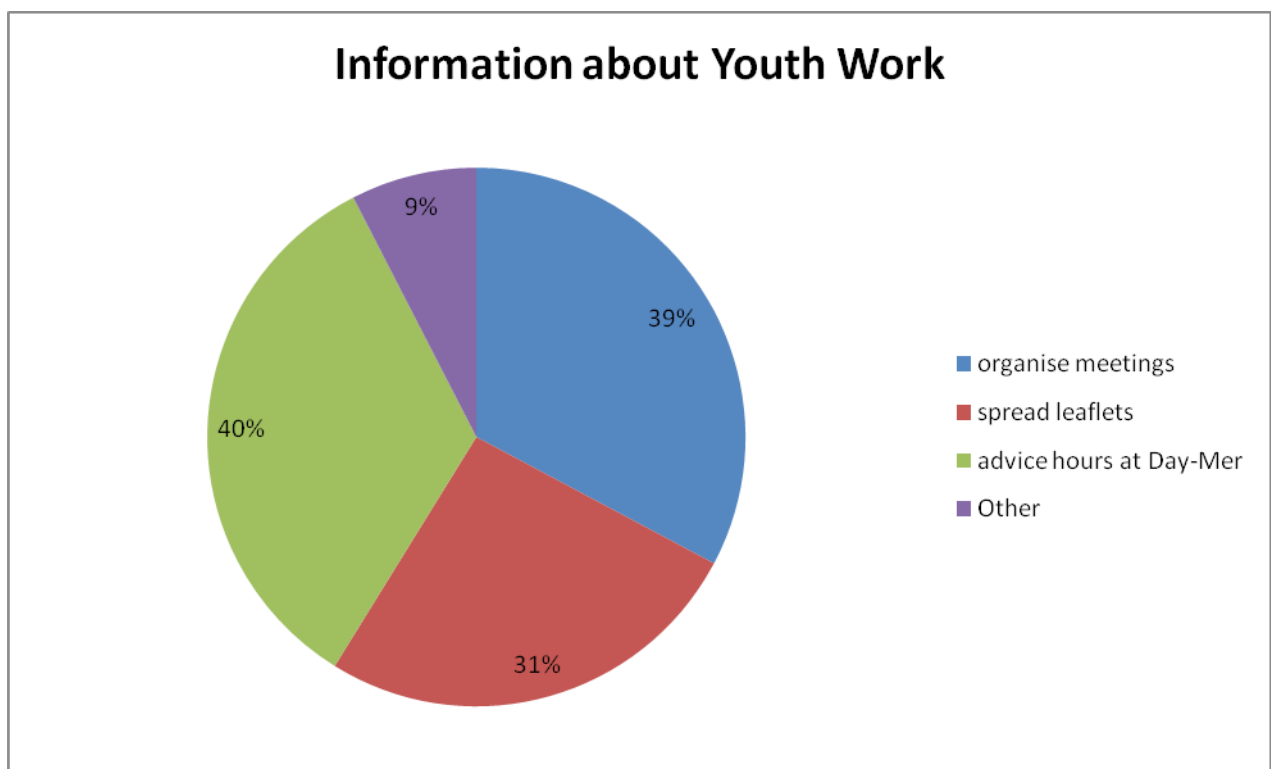


Figure C2 – How young people would like to be informed about youth activities

### Opportunities for Young People

All of the questions related to opportunities for young people (C.2.) allowed multiple answers, so all possibilities were out of the full 100 participants. 45% of respondents answered that the main benefit that young people get out of youth work is someone to talk to; 39% said that youth work helps them to do new things; and 36% reported that youth work helps them meet new people. In terms of young people's involvement, 51% responded that have a place only for youth would help get more people involved, and 47% said there should be no limiting factors – such as age or sex. It is pretty clear from their responses, that young people in this community want space that feels it is just theirs, and doesn't have restricted access. They want to

speak to people, meet new people, and discover new things in a safe and non-judgemental environment.

The respondents reported strongly (50%) that youth organisations, in order to provide the kind of opportunities that young people want as well as attract more young people, should provide new activities. 47% responded that youth magazines will help young people affect decisions made about them; and 32% responded that having their own website would help affect these decisions. 37% responded that receiving training with a certificate would help them to have their achievements in youth work recognised by others, such as employers; while 23% responded that it would be helpful if applicants (them) were introduced. The questionnaire participants responded that important skills for a youth worker to have are: good attitude (40%); good with young people (39%); and creativity (36%).

The information outlined by the questionnaires was further explained by the students who participated in the focus group. While the problems students outlined do paint a rather grim picture of the experiences of TKTC students, these students were also open to look at their own responsibilities for their futures as well as that of the state and community. When in discussion on the ways forward, students pointed to actions they can take at an individual level: being more friendly and challenging racism and discrimination; make more effort at school; get involved in afterschool activities; make more effort to interact with members of other communities; and challenging and helping their parents with understanding life in the UK. Furthermore, students also pointed to what they hoped community organisations could help them with:

- Provide more activities and training opportunities for young people;
- Inform the community about their rights, the services available, and lobbying for those rights;
- Provide services and activities in the schools.

The students also pointed to what, in their opinion, statutory services could do to help improve their current situation and opportunities for the future:

- Become more sensitive to the existence, needs and issues of the TKTC community;
- Provide more provisions, such as language, to ensure people become active/productive members of society in the UK
- Create opportunities for people to come together, exchange experiences and celebrate diversity.

As for the young workers' focus groups, their main recommendations for actions that should be taken in the future in order to help them, and those that follow, are:

- As individuals, they must put more effort into learning English and interacting with members of other communities and the host community;

- For community organisations to provide language and advice services, activities and trainings for young people, and to help educate the community about their rights
- For statutory services to make more of an effort to understand the needs of the community and young workers, create trainings and apprenticeships in more wide ranging areas, and provide more language provisions to help people better integrate into life in the UK.

It is clear that young people in this community do value youth work; they feel there are things to gain from their participation. However, they also recognise that more needs to be done in order for youth work to be more effective, for themselves and for those who follow them. Community organisations, such as Day-Mer, need to provide new activities, run accredited training programs, and (ideally) create a space that feels like it could be 'owned' by young people. These are the steps that will help them to feel empowered in their environment, and help them to grow into productive members of society. These recommendations, and others, will be further discussed in the recommendations section of this report.

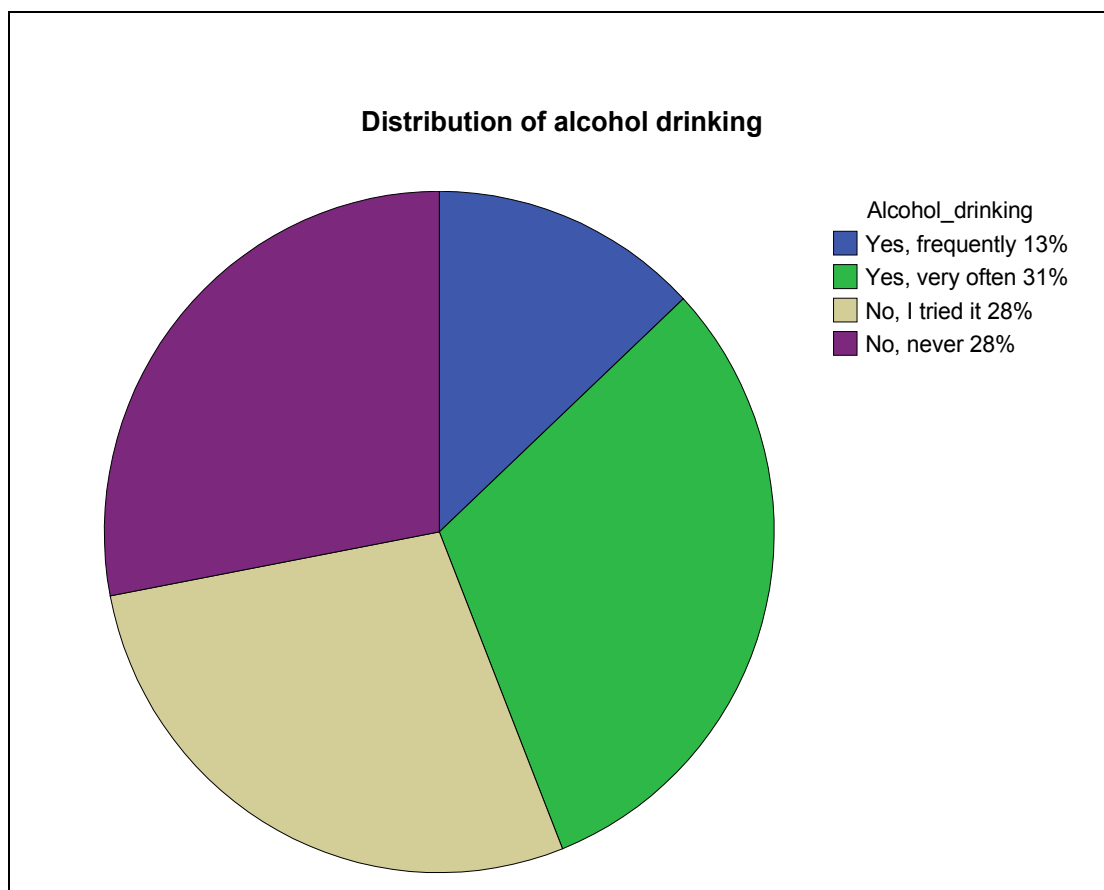


## D. Street Culture

The questions related to street culture were broken down into alcohol (D.1.) and drugs (D.2.) related questions. Although the full 100 people answered the original questions in these sections, which asked if they had ever used alcohol/drugs, only those who answered 'yes' to this question should have continued on with the remainder of the section. However, as it pertains to section D.1., there are 'missing values' in the answers – i.e. not everyone who should have answered these questions. Therefore, throughout section D.1., the number of respondents will be highlighted for each question, because the totals for each varied.

### Alcohol Use

When asked about alcohol usage, 44 young people responded that they were consumers of alcohol (either frequent or occasional users). 28 people responded that they have tried alcohol, but are not users, and 28 people stated they had never tried.



**Figure D1 – Distribution of alcohol drinking amongst the participants**

As stated above, this means that 72 people should have continued on to answer the remainder of this section, but this did not materialise.

- For the question ‘what age were you when you first took alcohol’, there were 44 respondents;
- For the question ‘where do you drink alcohol’, there were 56 respondents;
- For the question ‘do you ever drink alone’, there were 37 respondents;
- For the question ‘have you ever been in trouble while drinking’, there were 37 respondents.

The inconsistent answering of the questions in this section brings its accuracy into question. It is not known who decided to answer which questions, or why people chose to answer some and not answer others. The data will be laid out here, but the conclusiveness of this data is highly questionable.

62% of respondents stated that they had first tried alcohol when they were between the ages of 10 and 15; 38% stated that they were either older than 15 or younger than 10. 65% of respondents drink alcohol at home or at friends’ houses, while 35% stated that they drink in pubs or other outside-the-home locations. 81% stated that they never drink alone, and 95% stated that they have never been in trouble while drinking. If these answers are to be taken at face value, which is questionable due to the above mentioned problem, it could be concluded that young people in this community, the majority of whom have at least tried alcohol, tend to drink in homes amongst peers, and is not a leading cause of ‘trouble’ in this community.

### Drugs and Substance Misuse

Out of the 100 total respondents, only 3 people stated that they had tried drugs; nobody claimed to use frequently or even infrequently.

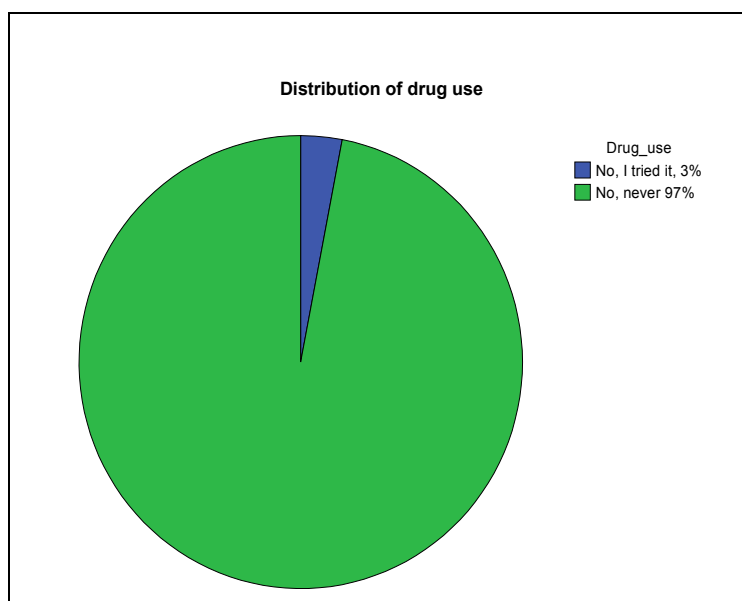


Figure D2 – Distribution of drug use amongst participants

This leads to the inconclusiveness of section D.2. While the three 'yes' respondents did continue to answer the remainder of the questions, no conclusion can be drawn from a pool of only 3 respondents. Further, and perhaps more pointed, research must be done into the use and effects of drugs in this community for any kind of conclusions to be drawn. This matches with Day-Mer's experience of providing services to enable the access of members of these communities to mainstream substance and alcohol misuse services where one of the most significant features relating to this issue had been identified as the hidden nature of these problems.

## Reflections

It was really difficult to get people to agree to answer questions. For every person that we persuaded, two more refused. Many were suspicious that we were spying for the police or other authorities. It is only because the team knew so many of the young people through personal contacts that we managed to secure completion of questionnaires. It must also therefore be safe to assume that the young people involved in this research represent those more positive and willing to make a change in their community.

One of the overwhelming feelings expressed by the young people that we spoke to was that they face many problems which the questionnaires or the focus groups discussions did not cover. These issues are not just related to youth issue and needs but are much more mundane issues such as negative attitudes of their peers, parking, dealing with statutory services and their staff, the general state of the neighbourhoods and some of the negative stereotypes of the Turkish and Kurdish culture such as cafes. It was impossible to talk to the respondents without these issues coming up time and time again. They said that many people come to them to talk about many issues but nothing seems to be done. Most young people agreed to complete the questionnaires but they do expect something in return in terms of addressing the issues that are a priority for them. It will be difficult to do research in the future unless these young people can see some concrete and dramatic improvements in the environment where they have to work, live and receive schooling.

The research team enjoyed being out and about talking to different groups of young people community in this capacity. They learned more about the lives of TKTC young people and the nature of the tough lives they lead. As always is the case in this community, the researchers are likely to be facing questions about these issues from the respondents for some time to come.

It has been useful for Day-Mer to undertake a research about the needs and issues of its young people albeit only as a preliminary exercise. The way forward is to concentrate on the issues in one particular area so that specific action points are identified and for all the stakeholders involved, whether young people themselves, the statutory services or the voluntary community sector. One further way to improve and build on this research is to involve a number of service providers from the community and statutory services on any future similar pieces of work so that a diverse range of perspectives are captured in trying to understand specific areas of need.

If this preliminary research leads to specific interventions and manages to constitute one of the foundations for partnership work across community organisations and statutory services, which can have a positive impact on how mainstream agencies in a variety of fields respond to the needs of this group of young people, then it will have been a most valuable exercise.

## Recommendations

- Just as a recent research Day-Mer has completed with the same theme in London Borough of Islington confirms, it seems to be that young women constitute the larger portion of the gender distribution amongst this group of young people. For this reason, not only attention has to be paid to this gender distribution but service provision to this group has to focus on gender issues.
- Most of the young people classified ethnically by service providers, whether voluntary or statutory as 'Turkish', are in fact young people from a Kurdish origin/heritage. Cultural sensitivity is needed around the ethnic make up of this group of young people even though most of them are indeed Turkish-speaking.
- This report demonstrates that most of the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot young people's educational progression does not go beyond further education. For this reason, not only do positive role models need to come to the fore within this youth group, but also proactive mentoring services – functional both in primary and secondary school settings – have to be provided. This report also underlines the need to provide emotional support to members of this youth group as well as the provision of appropriate academic support to them. They must be motivated and taught to aim higher rather than being restricted to the same areas of occupation.
- Not only the issues these young people experience in the contexts of their education but also non-educational factors relevant to their education need the service providers' attention. These include immigration problems, problems with housing and over crowdedness, lack of opportunities to socialise with others and lack of support from parents etc. As well as practical support to resolve these issues, appropriate activities to help enable their better communication with parents and good parenting services are needed.
- Most of the young employed people work in the restaurant and catering industry; more has to be done to diversify their fields of employment, including: the creation of targeted and local job and training opportunities, apprenticeships and provision of appropriate advice and guidance to improve their personal skills, professional development and employability. This is especially relevant for the NEET group, which, according to this report, constitute a significant 13% of this youth group.
- There should be a massive education programme for the young people of these communities that educates them about their responsibilities, and more importantly their rights as citizens.
- As most of the research participants seem to be made up of students who are fairly content with their educational establishments, and given Day-Mer's successful delivery of school based education services, more services and activities have to be provided in the schools.

- Create opportunities for young people to come together, exchange experiences and celebrate diversity so that prejudices amongst them are lessened, cultural interaction is enabled and community cohesion enhanced.
- Statutory services have to make more of an effort to understand the needs of the community and provide services such as more language provision and structured means and routes of progression to help them better integrate into life in UK.
- As individuals, they must put more effort into learning English and interacting with members of other communities and the host community.
- More pointed research into 'street culture', which in this research yielded inconclusive results. Work needs to be done to discover the reality about "gangs", and to ensure that any young people who occasionally move and socialise in groups are not treated as such.
- Creation of 'youth spaces' where they can engage in positive activities, spend their time constructively, and are kept off the streets.
- Further research is needed into one or more aspects of this research in order to expand on these findings, and to identify specific points of intervention.

## Appendix 1

### Youth Research Questionnaire

#### **A. Personal information**

Please complete the details below. This will help ensure that we handle your response appropriately. **Your answers will remain confidential.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Q1. Are you?**

Male

Female

#### **Q2. What is your ethnicity? Please tick the most appropriate box.**

Turkish

Kurdish

Turkish Cypriot

#### **Q3. What is your occupation?**

Student

Worker

Employed

Unemployed

#### **Q4. Which school do you attend to?**

Secondary

Primary

College

University

None

#### **Q5. How long have you been resident in the UK?**

Born in UK

1- 5

5- 10

10- More

**Q6. Do you live with:**

Your parents

Alone

**Q7. What does your father do for living?**

---

**Q8. What does your mother do for living?**

---

## **B. Education & Employment**

### **B.1 Education**

**Q1. Please state your education status?**

Secondary

College

University

**Q2. How many students on average are there in your class?**

5 – 10 student's

11-15 student's

16-20 student's

21- above student's

**Q3. Which ethnic minority is most common at your school?**

More English students

More Turkish/ Kurdish

More Cypriot students

Mixed

More Others

Answer the next questions. Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5.

1= Really bad, 2= Bad, 3= Bad & Good, 4= Good, 5 = Very good

**Q4. What do you think about the quality of teaching?**

1  2  3  4  5

**Q5. What do you think of the facilities in your school?**

1  2  3  4  5

**Q6. What do you think of the information and advice the school gives to you about your further study?**

1  2  3  4  5

### **B.2 Employment**



**Q1. Which field do you work in?**

- Media & journalism
- Financial
- Restaurant & catering
- Education
- Private sector
- Others

**Q2. What is your position?**

- Employer
- Employee

**Q3. Do you ever get training at your workplace?**

- Yes, often
- Yes, frequently
- No, never

**C. Youth activities**

**Q1. Do you think that there is enough to do for young people in the area?**

- Yes
- No

**Q2. Did you ever take part in youth activities?**

- Yes
- No

**Q3. Which leisure activities do you enjoy at the moment?**

- Meeting with friend's
- Computer games
- Listening to music
- Dance
- Drama
- Swimming
- Football
- Others

**C1. Information about youth work**

**Q1. What can be done to provide better information for young people?**

- Organise meetings
  - Spread leaflets
  - Advice hours at Day-Mer
  - Others (please explain)
-

**Q2. How can young people be more involved in developing information for other young people?**

- Involve them with the activities
  - Train the young people
  - Develop information together
  - Others (please explain)
- 

**C2. Opportunities for young people**

**Q1. What are the main benefits that young people get from youth work?**

- Helps meeting new people
  - Someone whom they can talk too
  - Doing new things
  - Others (please explain)
- 

**Q2. What can be done to make sure that all young people can take part in youth work activities (no matter where they live, their background, their ethnicity, their sexuality etc)?**

- No limits such as age, sex etc
  - Own place only for youth
  - Others (please explain)
- 

**Q3. What can youth organisations do to provide the kind of youth work opportunities that young people want and also attract more young people?**

- Open days
  - Questionnaires
  - Provide new activities
  - Others (please explain)
- 

**Q4. What more can be done to make sure that young people's views are heard when people are making decisions that affect them?**

- Meeting with council's
  - Own website
  - Youth magazine
  - Others (please explain)
- 

**Improving quality**

**Q5. How can we make sure that young people's achievements in youth work are recognised by others, like employers?**

- Training with certificate

- Inform about vacancy
- Introduce applicants
- Others (please explain)
- 

### Training

**Q6. What skills and qualities do you think a good youth worker or volunteer should have?**

- Good with young people
- Good attitude
- Creative
- Others (please explain)
- 

## D. Alcohol and Drugs

### D1. Alcohol

**Q1. Do you drink alcohol?**

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, every so often
- No, I've tried it but that's it
- No, never

**Q2. What age were you when you first took alcohol?**

- 10-11 years of age
- 12-13 years of age
- 14-15 years of age
- Other

**Q3. Where do you drink?**

- I get served in pubs
- At home
- Round friend's
- Outside
- Other

**Q4. Do you drink alone?**

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- No, never

**Q5. Have you ever been in trouble while drinking?**

- Yes, please explain
- No, never
-

## **D2. Drugs**

### **Q1. Have you ever used drugs?**

Yes, frequently

Yes, every so often

No, I've tried it but that's it

No, never

### **Q2. What age were you when you first used drugs?**

10-11 years of age

12-13 years of age

14-15 years of age

Other

### **Q3. Where do you take drugs?**

At home

Round friend's

Outside

Other

### **Q4. Did you experience the effects of the drug?**

Yes, please explain (below)

No, never

### **Q5. Do you use drugs alone?**

Yes, frequently

Yes, occasionally

No, never

## Appendix 2

### Focus Groups' Format

1. Introductions
2. Ice breaker exercise, pairing up to discuss perspectives of experience in UK and each participant introducing one another
3. Discussion on issues in the field (whether education, employment or unemployment) – Questions posed:
  - a) How did you choose your work/course or why are you unemployed?
  - b) What issues do you experience as a young person in your field of activity?
  - c) What other issues do you see young people experiencing?
  - d) Are these issues related to being a migrant or are they generic? Are they particular to being from TKTC communities?
  - e) Are you member of any organisation, association or group to advocate your rights in your field?
  - f) What are your concerns about your future?
4. Discussion on specifying needs:
  - a) How do you think these issues can be resolved?
  - b) What is it that we need to address these issues?
5. Discussion on ways forward/actions/recommendations?
  - a) What can we do as individuals?
  - b) What can community organisations, charities do?
  - c) What can statutory services do? Locally, regionally or nation-wide.

### Timetable of the focus groups

Date	Focus Group	Location
23/09/2008	Unemployed Young People	Frampton Park Estate
19/09/2008	Employed Young People	NLCH
15/10/2008	Students	Stoke Newington Secondary School
25/10/2008	Students	Day-Mer
03/10/2008	Employed Young People	Day-Mer
01/11/2008	Unemployed Young People	Day-Mer