



Think Tanks and NGO's in Turkey and the Netherlands: A Comparative Perspective

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Keywords

Level of Education,
Level of
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Abstract

In the second half of the 19th century appeared Non-governmental organisations in Europe; there were especially Catholic and Protestant religious institutions, non-religious institutions and non-governmental organisations that worked for labour movement in Europe. Non-governmental organisations constitute one of the essential components of democracy.

According to the sociologist Jolles, was the gap between the governing and the governed filled by Think Tanks and communication networks of NGO's in the beginning of the 20th century.

After World War II, as the idea of individualism developed from 1960's on, non-religious organisations gained speed. The Netherlands is one of the countries with an advanced education, democracy and thus advanced non-governmental organisations. Today, the power that keeps the Dutch society together is over one hundred thousand NGO's it has. The Netherlands ranks the second in Europe regarding the membership to NGO's and volunteering. 80% of the society is members of non-governmental organisations or volunteers. These non-governmental organisations, as one of the most basic components of the democracy, influence both local and regional level governors and also national and international level governors and their decisions. In this sense, it is known that NGO's in Turkey cannot influence the decisions of governors except a few areas.

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1. Introduction

Thanks to the high level of education and welfare, people of the Netherlands are also aware towards international and global issues in NGO's and Think Tanks. They can organise in masses in a short time when needed. For example, the interest in organisations such as Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, Greenpeace, Worldwide Fund for the Nature, International Fund of Animal Welfare is quite high in the world ranking.

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People in the Netherlands are not born with a membership to a non-governmental organisation; instead, they make a conscious choice afterwards thanks to family communication. In the past, some children would be only taken to the church to be registered as soon as they were born. There is a life philosophy lying under each conscious membership to an NGO. In today's conditions, since there is little influence of religion, individuals now seek professional managers who can provide transparent communication and give an account before the public. One reason for the high rates of membership to non-governmental organisations can be explained with this: when a well-educated applicant's CV is examined, their volunteer works and memberships to different social organisations are of great importance. This is a 'national policy' reached with consensus. There is even a subject called *social training* in the curriculum. This is because active participation in social activities reveals individuals' social sensitivity. When supporting NGO's, the most important criteria that citizens look for is that the board of management has to inform the public and give an account before them in order to show that both their expenses and the money raised is used in accordance with the purpose; in short, the public requires them to provide transparent communication. The institution that brought all non-governmental organisations under the same roof for transparent management (VFI) created an impartial scientific committee in 2004 and did some research on how a good social management should be. The committee under the presidency of Herman Wijffels produced a report on the code of behaviour of a good management in 2005. Another aim of the report was to increase the participation/membership rate to non-governmental organisations and raise awareness about international relief, welfare, the environment and the nature. For example, various studies are carried on how to overcome cultural obstacles for the people of foreign origin in the Netherlands to participate in non-governmental organisations and where to begin informing and education. Another aim is how to influence European-level and global-level decisions by raising awareness. The most active groups in this field are political parties, unions and NGO's. What lies behind these activities is an art of communication and a consensus culture.

Conclusion: Considering the reality of Turkey, it is obvious that participation/membership to non-governmental organisations is low at each level. It is expected that the number of NGO's will increase with the democratization process. In addition to this, volunteer participation can only be encouraged only by appreciation.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Think-Tanks as Non-Governmental Organizations and NGO

The concept of civil society, first used by Locke in 1690, remained on the agenda until Tocqueville's democracy solutions (*De la democratie en Amerique*,) in 1835. Non-governmental organisations, which appeared in the 19th century with the industrialisation and modernisation in many Western European countries, such as the Netherlands, regained importance after World War II (Ester v.d. Berg, SCP, 2008). Besides, although civil society was not considered along with democracy during the first discussions at the beginning of the modern society, they are now considered inseparable. Civil society constitutes one of the essential components of democracy in democratic societies.

Think Tanks and NGOs are not concepts that can be clearly distinguished from each other. Since institutions functioning within the framework of the two concepts are in actions about people and society, it is almost impossible to **depict** them clearly. Think Tanks are organisations that aim to influence/direct decision-makers towards a specific direction in the process of forming public policies through their research; they are organisations that raise awareness about the current issues and that usually consist of researchers/scientists. **Besides this**, bigger NGO's, just as Think Tanks, also do research on specific issues and aim to manipulate decision-makers over local, regional, national or international issues and undertake the responsibility to inform the public about the decisions made by decision-makers. Small NGO's, however, use different methods or organize events to draw authorities' attention and bring up public problems.

Think Tanks are organisations that do research on strategic, economic, social, cultural, military, technological and similar issues in various forms and try to direct decision-makers about public policies or to inform the society. Think Tanks, in general, do not seek profit; however, they sometimes provide organisations with benefits from the publication, research and consultancy, or earn money from the governmental body that they do research for. These organisations have a significant place as democratic actors who play roles while determining and designing social needs. (Karabulut; 2010: 2)

The idea of rational management is the thought that scientific and academic information will make management more rational. Management specialists, who become prominent or made prominent in this era when scientific research and specialists are believed to make management more rational and more effective and when it is frequently emphasized that it must be based on planning and technology in the economics and state apparatus, have begun to provide consultancy service to politic authorities.

World Bank has made this definition for Think Tanks and Non-Governmental Organisations, which are active between the governing and the governed: They are non-governmental and most non-profit organisations that are active within the society and work on ethnicity, culture, politics, science, beliefs and charity. Also, employers' associations, social institutions, unions, religious organisations and any organisation that organizes the society to give reaction to anything are in this category.

Aims of Think Tanks, in general, could be listed as follows;

- Designing strategic plans and proposals by doing military, political, economic and social research for the future,
- Contributing to the protection of national goals and interests,
- Offering consultancy service to governmental, private and civil institutions and authorities,
- Producing unbiased ideas and policies free from influence and direction of certain groups,

- Encouraging all positive or negative ideas to be unveiled through the methods of brainstorming sessions, and contributing to the formation of solutions,
- Acquiring data, creating a data archive by collecting necessary documents,
- Influencing or directing their own governments and people or other governments or people by informing the public through the media or through private interviews (Yemen and Gül, 2013: 659).

2.2. Historical Development

The emergence of Think Tanks was in the period when the idea of “rational management” was dominant in the US in the beginning of the 20th century (1901-1917). The number of Think Tanks in the US, which was about 20 between 1901-1950, increased rapidly in the 1950’s, and almost became a sector. Think Tanks have become a significant actor in the domestic and foreign policy of the US. According to the Think Tank Index, there are 1830 Think Tanks, 396 of which are in Washington DC (Zariç, 2012:5).

The emergence of civil society in Europe was in the second half of the 19th century. In the second half of the 19th century, as a result of industrialisation and modernisation, there were especially Catholic and Protestant religious institutions, non-religious institutions and civil society organisations that worked for labour movement in the Western Europe. In the beginning of the 20th century, however, the gap between the governing and the governed was filled by Think Tanks and NGO’s, as sociologist Jolles states. This was because industrialisation brought about urbanisation and prosperity, and there was a struggle to share it. Meanwhile, the struggle for women’s rights and equality gained importance. However, a significant part of the organisation was carried out under the roof of religion. As a result of the difficulties and hunger the public faced during the World War II, this organisation was freed from religion rapidly after the war especially because the idea of individualism developed from 1960’s on. Walzer (1983) laid emphasis on the idea that NGO’s should protect the public from the governing like a shield and on the importance of NGO’s for social harmony.

According to Krijen (1992), the institutions filling the gap between the governing and the governed are:

1. Think Tanks and NGO’s that come to the table with the governing and make suggestions in favour of the public about health, wellbeing, education and services.
2. Service and charity institutions based on social solidarity.
3. NGO’s which have been established by the public and try to bring up especially their rights.

The emergence of Think Tanks and NGO’s in Turkey was quite late compared to Europe and America. They appeared in our country 144 years later than they did in America. According to Karabulut, there’s almost a poverty of ideas in Turkey, so to speak (Karabulut; 2010: 2-10). On paper, the number of Think Tanks, which first appeared as research and application centres at universities in our country, are over 50 according to records. The number of active Think Tanks at universities in

Turkey is about 6. However, that number is 31 according to the 2014 Think Tank Global Index report. This number is even smaller than the mostly underdeveloped countries, such as Egypt (57), Israel (56), Palestine (44), Jordan (40), Tunisia (38), Iran (36) and Morocco (33), with whom our country is categorised in the Middle-Eastern and North African group.

Today, the power that keeps the Dutch society together is over one hundred thousand NGO's that they have. The Netherlands is one of the countries with a developed education and democracy, thus with a developed civil society. There are 57 Think Tanks according to the 2014 Global Think Tank Index report. These Think Tanks, which are active in many fields ranging from security to water management, come up with new strategies to support the industry and economy of a small, yet developed country like the Netherlands; in addition, there are hundreds of thousands of non-governmental organisations and the bigger ones have their own autonomous Think Tanks. 80% of the society is members of non-governmental organisations (J. V.d. Lans, 2002,p.21-29). In Europe, it ranks the second with regard to membership and participation; Denmark ranks the first (84%). These non-governmental organisations, as one of the most basic components of the democracy, influence decisions of local and regional, national and international level governors and their decisions.

3. Think Tanks and NGO's in the Netherlands and Turkey

3.1. Non-Governmental Organisations and Think Tanks in the Netherlands

On National Sociologists' Day in 1910, German sociologist Max Weber stated, in his talk, that the science of sociology should be interested in the organisation/unification of the society and expressed that it was of great importance. This is also called civil society and it constitutes the basis of the society. 70 years before him, after a trip to De Touchqueville in America, he laid emphasis on the fact that American society was not a pile of sand and it was organised in various fields. Balance is maintained thanks to very powerful NGO's. The democracy in the Netherlands is not a pile of sand, either. Although there are not many examples ranging from religious clubs to societies in the Netherlands, the process covered a significant distance in this field towards the end of the 19th century.

Two significant functions of these institutions and organisations are mentioned in the literature. The first ensuring that some activities are done, such as trying to solve collective problems as well as enriching the social capital possessed by the society and increasing the mutual trust and cooperation within the society. The second function is creating awareness that not only top-down communication (from upper levels towards lower levels), but also bottom-up communication (from lower levels towards upper levels) happens in public administration (De Hart,1999).

Since then, many social institutions and networks have been active between the public authorities (governments, municipalities) and the public. These institutions and organisations are considered as a common area between the governing and the governed. In the beginning, these processes were mainly religious. Until the end of the 19th century, especially the middle and upper class could join these

institutions and organisations. In the beginning, there was a very strong bond within each given organisation. Non-governmental organisations formed by Catholics and Protestants varied just as the colours of the rainbow. 71 % of the Catholics and 73 % of the Protestants were members of at least one of the particular associations or institutions. 90 % of this majority would choose the radio programme guide or their children's primary school or the union they enrolled bearing their religions in mind (Kruijt, 1959).

Right after World War II, when disagreements and disunity started between the cooperating and unifying institutions who had come together under the roof of religion in the 1950's, they felt had cold feet about forming associations (Joles, 1959). From the 1960's on, the Netherlands turned into an industrialized modern society. Then, the state with institutions and organisations in this category (foundations and associations), which unified or cooperated under the roof of religion, changed and the lower class stepped onto the stage and became aware of the significance of the particular institutions and organisations and thus "non-governmental" organisations grew rapidly after the 1950's. The number and rate of those institutions and organisations (media, branch sectors, political parties, schools, well-being and health institutions and leisure organisations) hit the top between 1960-1980.

People in the Netherlands, nevertheless, can get organised in masses and pretty fast. For example, the interest in organisations such as Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, Greenpeace, Worldwide Fund for Nature, International Fund of Animal Welfare is quite high in the world ranking; the interest and membership levels in institutions such as football associations and customer rights organisations are unimaginably high compared to other countries (SCP, 2000:134).

It is possible to find foundations, social networks and organisations in any field almost anywhere in the Netherlands (ranging from the city to the country), where people get together and organise activities such as sport events, environmental activities and music festivals. There is an association for almost any cause, hobby, event or interest area. There are over one hundred thousand associations in the Netherlands and between 3000 and 3500 are added every year (Couperus, 2005).

3.1.1. Participation to Non-Governmental Organisations in the Netherlands

People in the Netherlands are not born with a membership to a non-governmental organisation; however, they make a conscious choice with the communication in the family afterwards. In the past they used to be registered to a church by their parents, at a certain rate, as soon as they were born. The interest in non-governmental organisations and the decision to become member are not temporary interests like the membership to a sport association or a hobby and should not be seen as a leisure activity; there is a life philosophy behind it that the individual believes. Under today's conditions, since membership to the organisations and institutions is decided without the influence of beliefs, individuals now seek Think Tank and NGO managers who are professional and who can give an account before the public and provide transparent communication.

The biggest 150 associations have 50 thousand to almost one million members. They can be said to have great political power and even the ones with less than 50 thousand members can also have political power since the smaller ones can cooperate with different associations and organise events and win a big part of society over. Thus, they can influence municipalities of political parties and public administrations, decision-makers at all levels, enough. For example, cyclists union has only 30 thousand members, but they have sub-units in 145 different municipalities. They can adequately influence mayors and members of town councils and have the necessary changes made by specifying whether there are enough bicycle roads, whether the safety is enough, whether there are enough road signs for cyclists and even whether the most effective bicycle road from A to B has been built or not.

3.1.2. One important reason for the high rates of membership to non-governmental organisations

When an applicant's resume (CV) is examined, their volunteer works and memberships to different social organisations are of great importance. There is a national perception over this because this reveals the social sensitivity of an active individual. Under today's conditions, undereducated people, people in the Netherlands with foreign origins, the elderly, and mothers with children have low participation to non-governmental organisations. These categories also have low activity on the basis of volunteering.

7 million citizens, or more than 80% of adults, in the Netherlands are members of an association or a non-governmental organisation (ranks second in Europe; Denmark 84%). Finally, 19% of the public supports environmental associations conducting activities (fighting for) the nature while 31% financially supports non-governmental organisations working for the same cause. Fund for Nature Conservation has nearly 1 million members, Society to Preserve Historic Monuments has about 900 thousand, Greenpeace has 570 thousand, Society for the Protection of Animals has 300 thousand, IFAF has 194 thousand and Society for the Protection of Birds has 137 thousand members. A significant part of the Netherlands' society can be considered ready to financially support non-governmental organisations or volunteer to join activities. The most important thing each participant questions is whether the management is transparent and whether the financial support is used appropriately. The institution that brings all non-governmental organisations under the same roof for transparent management (VFI) created an impartial scientific committee in 2004 and did some research on 'how a good social management should be'. The committee, under the presidency of Herman Wijffels, produced a report on the code of behaviour of a good management in 2005. The aim of this was to require the managements to have transparent communication both with the members and the society and to provide them with the expected information and to answer them in order to show that both their expenses and the money raised is used in accordance with the purpose.

What is aimed with the report is to increase the participation rate to non-governmental organisations and to raise awareness about international relief, health, wellbeing, environment and nature. Another aim is to inform the society about many fields and thus contribute to the level of wellbeing of the society. The

aim regarding health and wellbeing is to provide empathy and increase the participation of the disabled and the unhealthy to the society and the labour force. In this regard, national surveys on various fields are conducted and solutions to problems are sought. For example, various studies are carried on how to overcome cultural obstacles for the Netherlands' people of foreign origin to participate in non-governmental organisations and where to begin informing and educating them. Another example is how European-level decisions would be influenced; the most active groups in this field are political parties, unions and NGO's. These, when necessary, can make appointments with ministers, senators and inform them about issues regarding Europe and struggle to make them function better. Thus, they contribute to create the necessary perception.

Think Tanks in the Netherlands can be classified as stated below.

3.1.3. National Think Tanks

3.1.3.1. State-Sponsored National Think Tanks

These were brought into action in order to report to the Parliament and the government, to advise them on relevant issues and to come up with solutions. Members are appointed impartially (they must not adopt any ideas of any institution or organisation) by a decree. The following committees come up with solution suggestions in accordance with the work of their Think Tanks. They all have national structures. They all have national structures.

- Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid - WRR (Scientific Committee for the Government Policy)
- VROM (The Committee for Housing, Environmental Planning and Environmental Consciousness)
- Gezondheidsraad (Committee for Health)
- Onderwijsraad (Committee for Education)
- Raad voor Cultuur (Committee for Culture)
- Raad voor de Financiële Verhoudingen - Rfv (Committee for Inter-Institutional Finance)
- Raad voor het Openbaar Bestuur - ROB (Committee for Public Administration)
- Raad voor het Landelijk Gebied - RGL (Committee for National Rural Areas)
- Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling - RMO (Committee for Community Development)
- Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken - AIV (Committee for International Issues)
- Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingen Zaken - ACVZ (Committee for Foreign Affairs)
- Adviesraad voor Wetenschaps- en Technologiebeleid - AWT (Committee for Science and Technology)

Apart from the committees, there are several plan bureaus that work impartially and nationally. They sometimes work in the fields that the committees appoint them to work in. They also have forward-looking works.

- Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving – PBL (Bureau for Habitat Planning)
- Rijksinstituut voor de Volksgezondheid Milieu - RIVM (Public Institute for Health and Environment)
- Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau - SCP (Social Cultural Planning Bureau)
- Centraal Plan Bureau - CPB (Central Planning Bureau).

3.1.3.2. National Think Tanks not Supported by the State,

- Waterlandstichting: (Water Land Foundation): Progressive, works on new social democracy; areas of activity are freedom of opinion, equality and solidarity. Carries on works only on donations.
- Edmund Burke Stichting: Aims to corroborate conservative lifestyle. Carries on works only on donations.
- De Nationale Denk Tank: Carries on works on contemporary social issues with 20 interdisciplinary academicians. Sponsored by McKinsey and some universities.
- Denktank Prospect: A politically impartial Think Tank trying to put social problems, innovation and public debates on the agenda with the support of citizens between the ages of 20-40.
- Public SPACE: Tries to make strategic innovation a current issue for the society. Carries on works only on donations.
- Kennisland – KL: A Think Tank trying to increase public intelligence to a higher level and trying to create a more intelligent society.

Scientific Institutes (Think Tanks) trying direct the society and established by political parties:

- Wiardi Beckman Stichting - PvdA (Think Tank of Social Democratic Party; Scientific bureau.)
- Teldersstichting – VVD (Think Tank of Liberal Freedom; Scientific bureau.)
- Het Wetenschappelijk Instituut voor het CDA (Think Tank of Christian Democratic Party; Scientific bureau)
- Stichting Wetenschappelijk Bureau SP (Think Tank of Socialist Party; Scientific bureau.)
- Wetenschappelijk Bureau Groen Links (Think Tank of Green Left Party; Scientific bureau.)
- De Nicolaas G. Pierson Foundation – Partij voor de Dieren (Think Tank of Animal Rights Party)

3.2. Non-Governmental Organizations and Think Tanks in Turkey

We can see that civil society has been developing in parallel with the development in the world since the 1980's. We can also see that NGO's have been getting widespread in the society, their number has been increasing, they have been getting more important, the discourse of NGO's has been used constantly by politicians and even state actors. An estimated 150.000 NGO's exist today. While this number consists mainly of NGO's, fellow countrymen associations, foundations, trade associations and think tanks are also included in the civil society. This increase in the number also shows itself in the discourse level. Today, the discourse of civil society is used as a prerequisite for democratisation by different actors. While manifesting themselves standing by democracy, all political parties reference to the importance of civil society (İç duygu ve Keyman, 2003: 179-200).

The emergence of Think Tanks and NGO's in Turkey was quite late compared to Europe and America. They appeared in our country 144 years later than they did in America. According to Karabulut, there's almost a poverty of ideas in Turkey, so to speak (Karabulut; 2010: 2-10). On paper, the number of Think Tanks, which first appeared as research and application centres at universities in our country, are over 50 according to records. However, that number is 31 according to the 2014 Think Tank Global Index report. This number is even smaller than the mostly underdeveloped countries, such as Egypt (57), Israel (56), Palestine (44), Jordan (40), Tunisia (38), Iran (36) and Morocco (33), with whom our country is categorised in the Middle-Eastern and North African group.

Think Tanks are newly appearing and their importance is recently understood in Turkey. Think Tank reports of 2010 and 2014 approve of this in number. According to the report of 2010, while there were only 20 Think Tanks in our country, there were 57 in the Netherlands. When the data of 2014 is examined, the number reached 31. This little number shows that in Turkey, a country of geopolitical significance, the importance of Think Tanks has not been understood yet.

Arslan (2009: 32-34), who classified Think Tanks in Turkey, has formed these sub-groups:

- *Within the Turkish General Staff:* Strategic Research and Studies Centre; Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism
- *Within the Department of State:* Centre for Strategic Research
- *Within the Department of the Interior:* Research and Studies Center (AREM)
- *Within universities:* Çanakkale On Sekiz Mart University Strategic Research Centre, Hacettepe University Financial Research Center (HUFRC), Middle East Technical University Financial Research Centre, Centre for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies,
- *Within foundations or the ones directly organised as foundations:* International Strategic Research Organisation (USAK), Research Centers - Eurasia (ASAM), Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research

Foundation, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), KÖK Foundation of Social and Strategic Research (KÖKSAV), 21. Century Turkey Institute

- *Within Unions:* (TUSAM) Turkey's National Security Strategies Research Center
- *The ones structured as NGO's:* AriMovement, Association for Liberal Thinking, Ulusal Güvenlik ve Strateji Araştırmalar Derneği (UGSAD) Association for National Security and Strategic Research, (TASAM) Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies, Eastern Mediterranean Academic Research Center (DAKAM), Football Economics Strategic Research Centre, *Mediterranean Civilisations Research Institute* (AKARE), The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV)
- *The Ones organised as foundations, organisations in communities and religious orders:* Zehra Foundation
- *Within the separatist movement:* Kurdish Strategic Research Center

3.2.1. Participation to NGO's in Turkey

The formation of civil society occurred much different and later than the examples of Europe and America. While the rate of participation to NGO's in democratically developed countries like the Netherlands and Denmark is about 80%, it is only around 8-10% in our country.

The rates of participation, volunteering and donation to NGO's are quite low. Of the society, 4.5% are members of a social NGO and 5.3% are members to a political party. 2.5% volunteer for a social NGO and 4.2% volunteer for a political one (DDA, 2007). Donation rates are also quite low; according to an international research, only 14% of the population donated an NGO in the last month. In the same research Turkey ranks 134th in 153 countries with regard to donation, volunteering and helping a stranger (CAF, 2010).

Although charity has become a rooted practise as a result of Islamic traditions, which uphold protecting the needy and desperate sectors of the society, (World Bank, 2002) rate of the individuals regularly donating the civil society doesn't exceed 8% (TEGV-In fakto 2008). As past research of TÜSEV shows, although 80% of the citizens in Turkey donate their relatives and relations in some way with religious and traditional reasons, most of them (86%) are irregular and small donations given directly to the needy (TÜSEV, 2006). International research also shows similar results. Turkey ranked 134th in 153 countries in the World Donation Index 2010, which was made by England-based Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) using results of Gallup World View World Poll research. According to the research, 14% of the population donates money, 7% volunteers and 35% helps a stranger in the country (CAF, 2010).

4. Conclusion and Evaluation

Think Tanks and non-governmental organisations, one of the essentials of democracy, cannot be exactly separated from each other. Having started to develop from the late 19th century in the Netherlands, civil society movements were no longer religious from the mid-20th century on and started to be active in all areas

concerning society. Today, there are NGO's with more than one million members. When compared to Turkey with this regard, it is known that civil society movements in our country are at a quite lower level than in the Netherlands.

NGO's are essentials of democracy with regard as they enable the society participate in the government, make suggestions and express their opinions. In this sense, they participate in the government when they become members of NGO's. In the Netherlands, there are many large and small NGO's and more than 80% of the society are members. These NGO's can influence/direct local, national and international executives. In our country, however, rate of participation to NGO's, which started to develop after the 1980's, is only 8-10% and the influence of NGO's on the government is very limited.

Participation in NGO's in the Netherlands is, so to say, a kind of national policy and public consciousness, which is connected to the education level. In this sense, it is of great importance if one takes place in an NGO voluntarily when, for example, they apply for a job. Participating in a Think Tank of NGO can even open a new door into a career. In this sense, citizens in the Netherlands take charge in and donate NGO's in order to have a voice in the government and direct them.

Businesses in the Netherlands, whose economy is based on industry and trade, highly donate both Think Tanks and NGO's. This high rate of donations have become a national policy in the "win-win" relationship. In that, the Netherlands has important commercial ties with overseas countries and they have been making their presence felt through this national formula.

Think Tanks have an active role in both social and economic state policies in developed countries. There are 57 active Think Tanks supported by either the state or the society. These Think Tanks, active in various fields ranging from education to foreign politics and from economics to national security, have a significant role in the social and economic policies of the country. There are 31 Think Tanks in our country. In this sense, when compared, the number of Think Tanks in our country is smaller than the ones in many underdeveloped countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Palestine. Hence, it would not be wrong to say that our country has a poverty of ideas.

Because of its geographic location, Turkey is one of the countries in the centre of world politics. Therefore, the need for think tanks, one of the essentials of rationalist administrative mentality, would be more than other countries. In conclusion, the number of think tanks in our country is not enough and need to be increased.

When examined, the fields the think tanks are active in our country are observed as; domestic politics, foreign politics and national security. In the Netherlands, however, TT's are active in a wide range from national security to foreign trade, from international politics to education and health. In this sense, TT's active in different areas are needed in our country. In this sense, not only the department of state and the department of the interior, but also other ministries need to run incentive policies in their fields.

There are about 5 active university TT's, universities are education centres where scientific research and innovative studies are conducted, though. In this sense, TT's should be founded at other universities of our country and they should be encouraged to study in different fields as well as pioneering.

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