

Major Exporters to Turkey — 1988

| Country | Total Imports (%) |
|----------|-------------------|
| F.R.G. | 14.3 |
| U.S. | 10.6 |
| Iraq | 10.0 |
| Italy | 7.0 |
| France | 5.8 |
| Libya | 5.5 |
| U.K. | 5.2 |
| Iran | 4.6 |
| Japan | 3.9 |
| U.S.S.R. | 3.1 |

Employment and Unemployment

A high level of unemployment has been characteristic of the Turkish economy for years. The official government estimates of unemployment in 1987 and 1988 were 15.2 per cent and 14.4 per cent respectively. These may be taken as conservative statistics since they do not reflect the substantial underemployment in the Turkish economy. Moreover, there are severe regional disparities in the employment level, with unemployment much more acute in the eastern and southeastern regions than in the western areas. The labour force in Istanbul has many of the characteristics of a developed economy, with a high rate of union membership and a fairly high proportion of skilled workers. The state remains the most important employer in the country, accounting for 35 per cent of workers outside the agricultural sector. The main causes of unemployment continue to be underutilization of manufacturing capacity, the low level of aggregate demand and new additions to the labour force caused by a high population growth rate. Large numbers of Turks continue to seek work overseas and to provide the work force for Turkish contractors operating in third countries.