

The Role of Public Administration and University Practices in International Students' Access to the Right to Health in Türkiye: An Evaluation from the Perspective of Turkish Law

Münevver İlay Vuslat Kaya

Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Türkiye

Fatma Solmaz

Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Türkiye

Songül Taş

Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Türkiye

Abstract

In recent years, Türkiye has become a significant destination for international students within the framework of higher education internationalization policies. This development has transformed international students' access to healthcare services from a social policy concern into an issue with important legal, administrative, and educational policy dimensions. This study aims to evaluate international students' access to the right to health within the framework of Turkish law and to examine how public authorities and higher education institutions shape this access in practice. The study adopts a socio-legal research design based on normative legal analysis and qualitative document review. The normative legal analysis examines the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, Higher Education Law No. 2547, Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510, Foreigners and International Protection Law No. 6458, and relevant secondary legislation. The qualitative document review was carried out through Atlas.ti, and analyzed institutional documents published by public authorities and universities, including guidelines, announcements, student guides, and web-based information materials related to general health insurance, healthcare access procedures, and psychosocial support. Findings indicate that although international students' right to health is legally guaranteed to a considerable extent, access to healthcare services is shaped by general health insurance requirements, residence permit-related obligations, time-sensitive procedures, and administrative processes. The study argues that effective access requires not only legal guarantees but also accessible, student-centered, and standardized institutional practices.

Keywords

International students, access to health rights, university practices, general health insurance, Turkish administrative law.