

INDIRECT COSTS OF EPILEPSY IN TURKEY: COST OF THE DISEASE IN TERMS OF WORK LOSS

Tatar M.¹, Şentürk A.¹, Tuna E.¹, Gürses C.², Çalışkan Z.³
 Çağlayan G.B.⁴, Firidin A.⁴

¹Polar Health Economics and Policy Consultancy Company, Ankara, Turkey, ²Department of Neurology, Istanbul Faculty of Medicine, Istanbul, Turkey, ³ Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey, ⁴UCB Pharma, Istanbul, Turkey

OBJECTIVES

Epilepsy is a chronic health problem with major implications on mortality, morbidity, productivity and economy in general. Apart from high direct costs imposed on healthcare budgets, the disease incurs high societal costs as well. Indirect costs, usually disregarded in reimbursement decisions, can create a big burden on the patient, care givers and the society at large. This study aims at estimating the cost of being off from work due to epilepsy in Turkey. As the Turkish reimbursement agency considers only direct costs in its decisions, the study as its first example provides valuable information on a type of cost that is usually not taken into account in Turkey.

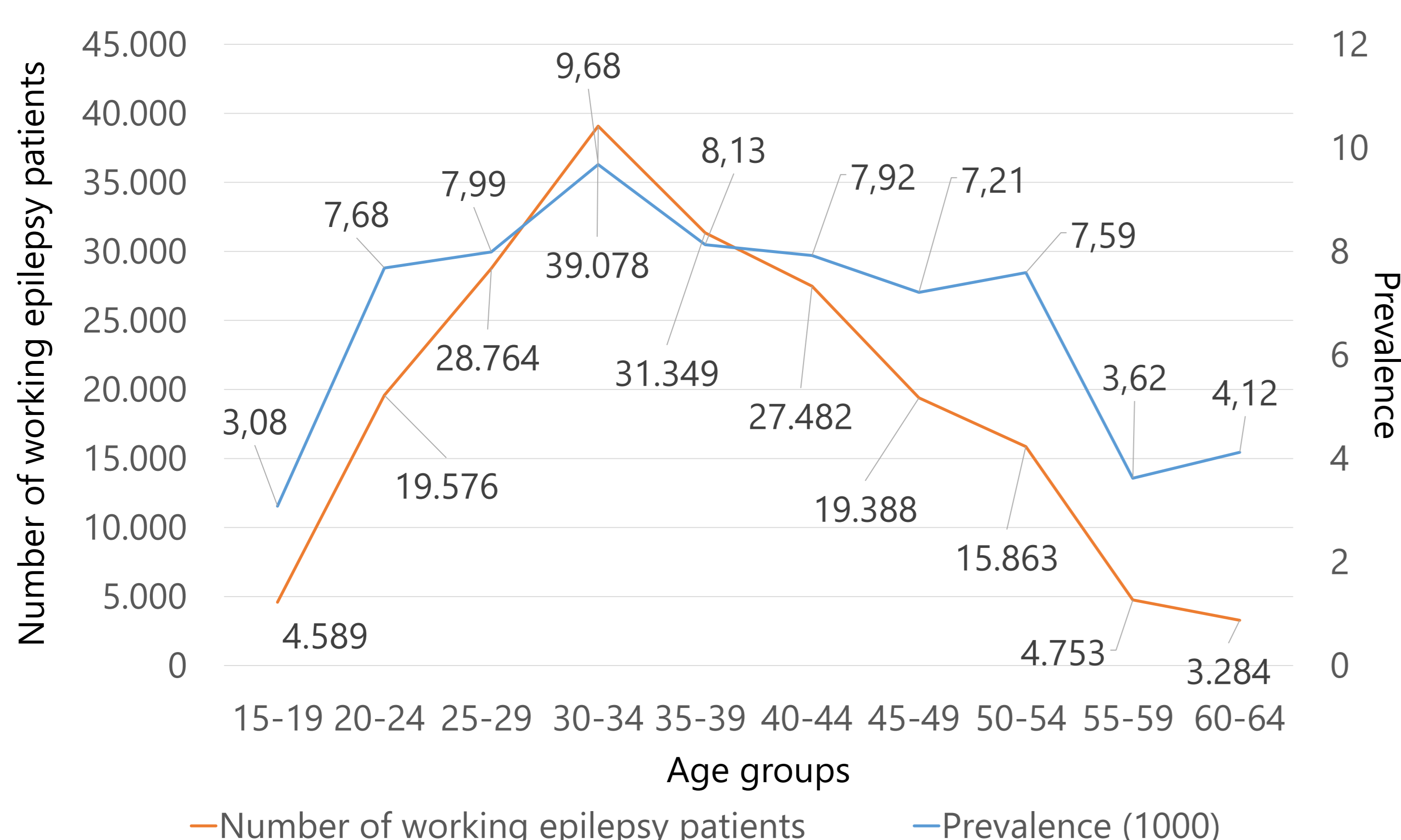
METHODS

First a literature search was made to find out the epilepsy prevalence rates per age group that is applicable to Turkey. Second, expert opinions were collected in order to find out the days off from work due to epilepsy. Annual hospital and physician visits, hospitalization days, emergency care admissions, and medical reports were inquired with a special form. Third, number of epilepsy patients in working age groups and days off from work were calculated. In the last stage, the average daily earnings in each age group, published by the Turkish Statistical Institute were used to estimate the total economic loss due to the disease.

RESULTS

Epilepsy prevalence rates were taken from a study by Picot et al in 2008 (1). Taking into account the TurkStat's (Turkish Statistical Institute) data on number of working people, number of working epilepsy patients among age groups were calculated (Figure 1).

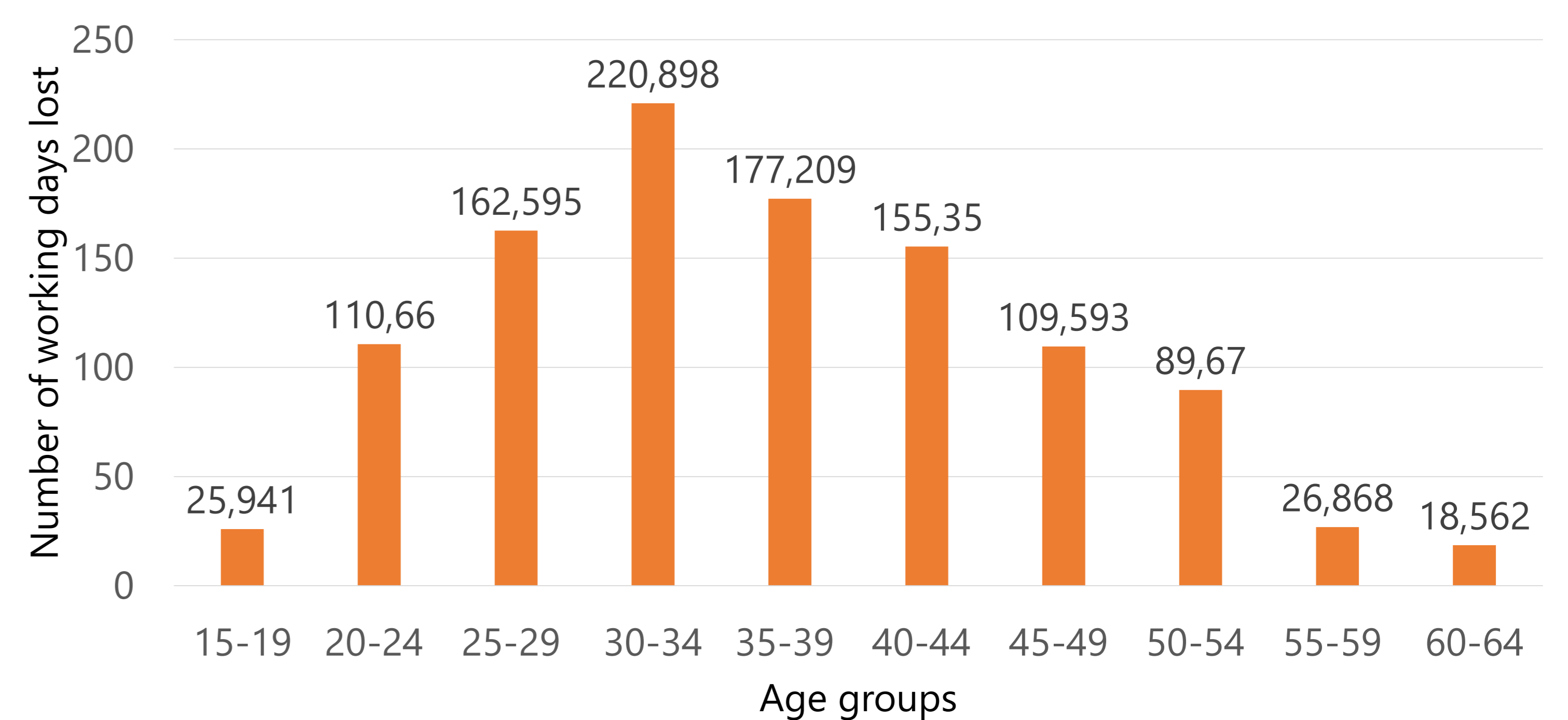
Figure 1: Prevalence and number of working epilepsy patients among age groups in Turkey



As it is seen from the table, the number of working epilepsy patients is highest in the 30-34 age group, followed by 35-39 and 25-29 age groups.

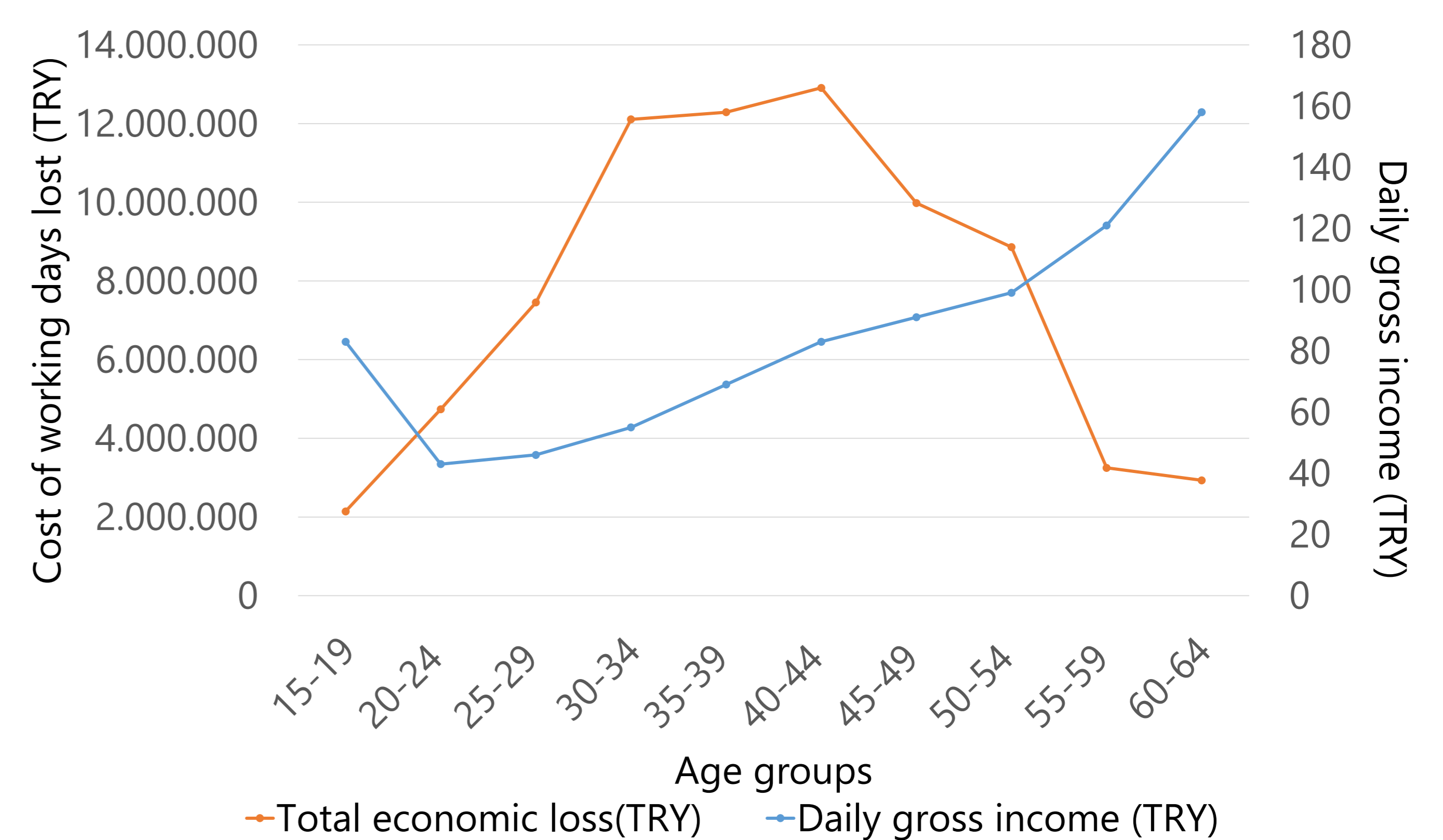
Given this data, total working days lost were calculated from the data obtained from expert opinion interviews. The data covered days lost due to epilepsy patients annual average number of physician visits, emergency service visits and hospitalizations per year (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Number of working days lost among age groups



Number of working days lost were then multiplied by daily gross income published by the TurkStat for each age group (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Cost of working days lost due to epilepsy in Turkey, 2015



The total annual cost of being off from work due to epilepsy was estimated as 76.663.903TRY (approximately 24 million Euros) for 2015.

CONCLUSION

This study covered only one dimension of indirect costs. The high cost of the disease in terms of days lost from work showed that, the total indirect costs of epilepsy could be very high requiring attention in reimbursement decisions.

References

1. Picot, M. C.vd. (2008). The prevalence of epilepsy and pharmaco-resistant epilepsy in adults: A population-based study in a Western European country. *Epilepsia*, 49(7), 1230-1238.