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Introduction

The goal of the Turkish education system is to increase the welfare and well being of the Turkish citizens and society; to support and accelerate economic, social and cultural development within national unity and cohesion; and to make the Turkish nation a constructive, creative and distinguished partner of contemporary civilization.

With these in mind, national education system aims to educate young citizens as to be able to cope with the challenges of the information society while schools aim to improve the critical thinking and problem-solving skills of pupils and students and heighten their sense of responsibility and respect for democratic values at the same time. Schools are also meant to be responsive to new ideas, contribute to contemporary civilization and keep abreast of current developments in science and technology.

The legal framework of Turkish Education System can be summarized as follows: Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Laws regulating Education and Training, Government Programmes, National Development Programmes, Decisions of National Education Councils and National Programme on the adoption of the Acquis Communautaire.

According to the results of 2007 Address Based Census, the population of Turkey is 70.586,256. Children between 0-14 age group constitute 26.4 % of this population. Population between 6 and 21 constitutes 29.1 %. The education system serves a large part of the population. The numbers of students and teachers for 2007-2008 school year can be seen in the following table:

Number of Schools, Students and Teachers by Education Levels (2007–2008)

Level of Education	Number of Schools/ Institutions	Number of Students			Number of Teachers
		Total	Boys	Girls	
PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION	3.600⁽¹⁾	701.762	366.209	335.553	10.819⁽²⁾
PRIMARY EDUCATION	34.093	10.870.570	5.676.872	5.193.698	445.452
SECONDARY EDUCATION	8.280	3.245.322	1.789.238	1.456.084	191.041
General Secondary Education	3.830	1.980.452	1.044.607	935.845	106.270
Vocational and Technical Secondary Education	4.450	1.264.870	744.631	520.239	84.771
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ⁽³⁾	11.864	5.117.623	2.942.086	2.175.537	87.285
HIGHER EDUCATION	114⁽⁴⁾	2.497.473⁽⁵⁾	1.411.485	1.085.988	96.105
TOTAL	57.951	22.432.750	12.185.890	10.246.860	830.702
<p>(1) Pre-school classes within public (18.222) and private (684) primary schools are not included.</p> <p>(2) 1459 pre-school teachers who are permanent staff of other schools have not been included in pre-school education but in their schools.</p> <p>(3) The figures of non-formal education students belong to the 2006/'07 academic year.</p> <p>(4) The number of higher education institutions is 130 in 2008/'09 academic year.</p> <p>(5) Students of open higher education are included.</p>					

1. Structure of the Education System

The Turkish National Education system consists of two main parts: Formal education and non-formal education.

1.1. Formal Education

Formal education services are provided substantially by the public education institutions. Administrative legislation and supervision related to formal and non-formal education is performed by Ministry of National Education.

Formal education consists of 4 levels:

- Pre-school education covers the voluntary education of 3-5 age group children who have not reached the age of compulsory primary education.
- Primary education covers the education of children in the 6-14 age group. 8-year primary education is compulsory for all citizens, boys or girls, and is provided free of charge in state schools.
- Secondary education follows primary education and covers general, vocational and technical high schools providing at least 4 years' of education.
- Higher education covers all institutions, based on secondary education lasting at least 2 years, and raising high level manpower and academicians for scientific research in various fields.

1.1.1. Pre-primary education

Pre-school education covers children between the ages of 36-72 months. As pre-school education is voluntary, participation rate at this level of education needs improvement. However, there has been quite an increase in the last five years. The schooling rate in preschool education has reached 33 % in the academic year 2008-2009 while it was 11% in 2003. More strategies have been developed to expand pre-school education, and to increase the quality of educational programs.

Pre-primary institutions can be established as independent kindergartens or as practice classrooms affiliated to girls' vocational high schools for the purposes of practical training for students, and within other educational institutions.

1.1.2. Primary Education

The duration of compulsory education in primary schools is eight years for the children between ages of 6 and 14. Schooling rate in compulsory primary education is 98 % in 2008-2009 academic year. Primary education is free of charge in public schools.

In primary schools, subjects may be categorized as follows:

- compulsory core courses: Turkish, math, sciences, science and technology, social sciences, civic, history, foreign language, religion and ethics, drawing, music, physical education, traffic and first-aid training and miscellaneous individual and collective activities;

- elective courses such as computer education, drama, speech and writing, second foreign language, tourism, agriculture and animal husbandry, and local handicrafts.

It is intended that pupils in compulsory education should be provided with basic knowledge and skills. Through active learning and student-centered teaching, children are meant to become more creative, learn to think critically and solve the problems they will face in their life.

1.1.3. Secondary Education

Secondary education follows primary education and covers general, vocational and technical high schools providing at least 4 years of education for the 14-18 age group.

All students completing primary education have the right to attend any type of secondary education in line with their interests, talents, and capabilities. At this level current net schooling rate is 59 %. Education in all public secondary schools is free of charge.

1.1.3.1. General High Schools

Types of high schools are: General High Schools, Anatolian High Schools, Science High Schools, Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools, Anatolian Fine Arts High Schools, Social Sciences High School and Sports High Schools.

Except for general high schools, other secondary education institutions accept students through a central and very competitive exam while fine art and sports high schools apply an aptitude test.

1.1.3.2 Vocational and Technical High Schools

Vocational and technical high schools are secondary education institutions, which train medium level technical manpower in line with the needs of industry and service sector. In addition they prepare students for higher education.

Vocational and technical secondary education institutions are: Technical High Schools for Boys, Technical High Schools for Girls, Commerce and Tourism High Schools, Imam and Preachers' High Schools, Special Education Schools, Health High Schools, Agriculture High Schools, Justice Vocational High Schools, Land Registry and Cadastral Vocational High Schools, Anatolian Meteorology Vocational High Schools.

Courses are as follow:

- Common general courses are compulsory for all students in secondary schools. In the first year of secondary education, common general subjects usually include Turkish language and literature, religious culture and ethics, history, geography, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, hygiene, a foreign language and physical education.
- Field courses steer pupils towards a profession or the programme for which they wish to enroll in higher education. From the second year onwards, pupils in general high schools may choose to attend branches specializing in the natural sciences, literature, mathematics, social sciences, foreign languages, arts or physical education.

- Field-based elective courses are offered as part of work in a particular field chosen by the individual students. Students are supposed to choose field based elective courses in accordance with their personal interests.
- Elective courses seek to develop the individual skills and abilities of pupils. They may be chosen on an individual basis from any of the courses referred to above.

Special Education

The aim is to provide the best educational opportunities for individuals with special needs, to integrate them with society, and enable them to gain professional skills. Educational opportunities are offered to children and young people in eight groups of special needs: visual disabilities, hearing disabilities, orthopedic disabilities, mental disabilities, language and speaking difficulties, adaptation problems, long-term illnesses and the gifted.

Various schools exist for this purpose for the students who cannot attend regular schools although mainstreaming is main priority. As independent institutions for special education, science and art centers are open to pupils with special needs in the basic and secondary education age ranges, so that they can become aware of their individual abilities, enhance them and learn to use them more effectively.

Guidance and Research Centers seek to identify children in need of special education, and provide them with the best possible counseling facilities. Guidance and Psychological Counseling Services aim to support the personal, social and career development of students. Besides carrying out activities and projects at national level to improve the guiding and counseling services, in recent years Ministry of National Education has participated in the relevant work conducted within the European Union, the OECD and the World Bank, particularly on career guidance policies and implementation in the scope of life-long learning and counseling.

In order to protect children and teenagers from the risks and intensify the protective actions and empower their stability, Ministry of National Education has launched the program “The Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Reducing the Violence in Media: 2006-2011”. The implementation of this program is in process by covering children, parents, teachers and neighborhood. Under this program family training and counseling programs are developed and put into practice as well as psycho-social protective and preventive programs for elementary and secondary school children. These services are held in provinces and sub-provincial districts by the Guidance Research Centers and by the Guidance and Psychological Counseling offices in schools.

Private Education

Private education institutions are founded and administered by private sector and they are subject to supervision and inspection by the Ministry of National Education. These institutions are opened and operated in accordance with the Law on Private Education Institutions. In the primary and secondary education, the ratio of private schools is only 3%.

1.1.3.3. Higher Education

Higher education institutions are autonomous for purposes of teaching and research. However, they have to submit annual reports to Higher Education Council which is responsible for the planning and coordination of higher education.

Higher education covers all post-secondary programs with duration of at least two years. The total number of universities is 130. In the academic year 2008-2009, the schooling rate in higher education is 38.6 %. It was 27% in 2003.

Universities are established upon the advice of the Council of Higher Education to the Ministry of National Education, approval of the Cabinet and the Law issued by the National Assembly. Admission to higher education is realized through a centralized, countrywide examination conducted by the Student Selection and Placement Center every year.

Higher education institutions include universities, faculties, institutes, institutes of higher technology, higher education schools, conservatories, higher vocational education schools and application and research centers.

1.2. Non-formal Education

Non-formal education covers those who are currently at a particular stage of their education, who have left their education at any stage, or who have never had the chance to attend school.

Non-formal education is carried out through public education, apprenticeship training and distance education. Similar education services are also offered through vocational courses opened at vocational and technical high schools.

General, vocational and technical non-formal education institutions include public education centers, vocational training centers, practical craft schools for girls, further training institutes, industrial practical craft schools, technical training centers for adults, hotel and tourism education centers for adults, tourism education centers, distance (open) education institutions, private courses, special education and practice schools, special education vocational schools, special education vocational training centers, special education science and art centers.

1.2.1. Public Education

Educational activities carried out outside of formal education institutions take place mainly in public education centers throughout the country. These centers offer literacy courses, vocational courses, socio-cultural courses and activities.

1.2.2. Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship Training is a dual training system whereby theoretical training is given in vocational training centers, and practical training is given in workplaces. It covers young people at the age of secondary education who have not been able to continue their education after primary school or who have been left out of formal education for various reasons. Children who are at least primary education graduates and have reached the age of 14 can follow apprenticeship training.

The period of apprenticeship training lasts 2-4 years depending on the nature of the profession. Theoretical education within apprenticeship programs consists of 30 % general knowledge courses and 70 % vocational knowledge courses. Theoretical education takes place at vocational training centers, vocational and technical education centers or education

centers provided by the enterprises for one day a week, whereas practical training takes place at workplaces in real production environments for five days a week.

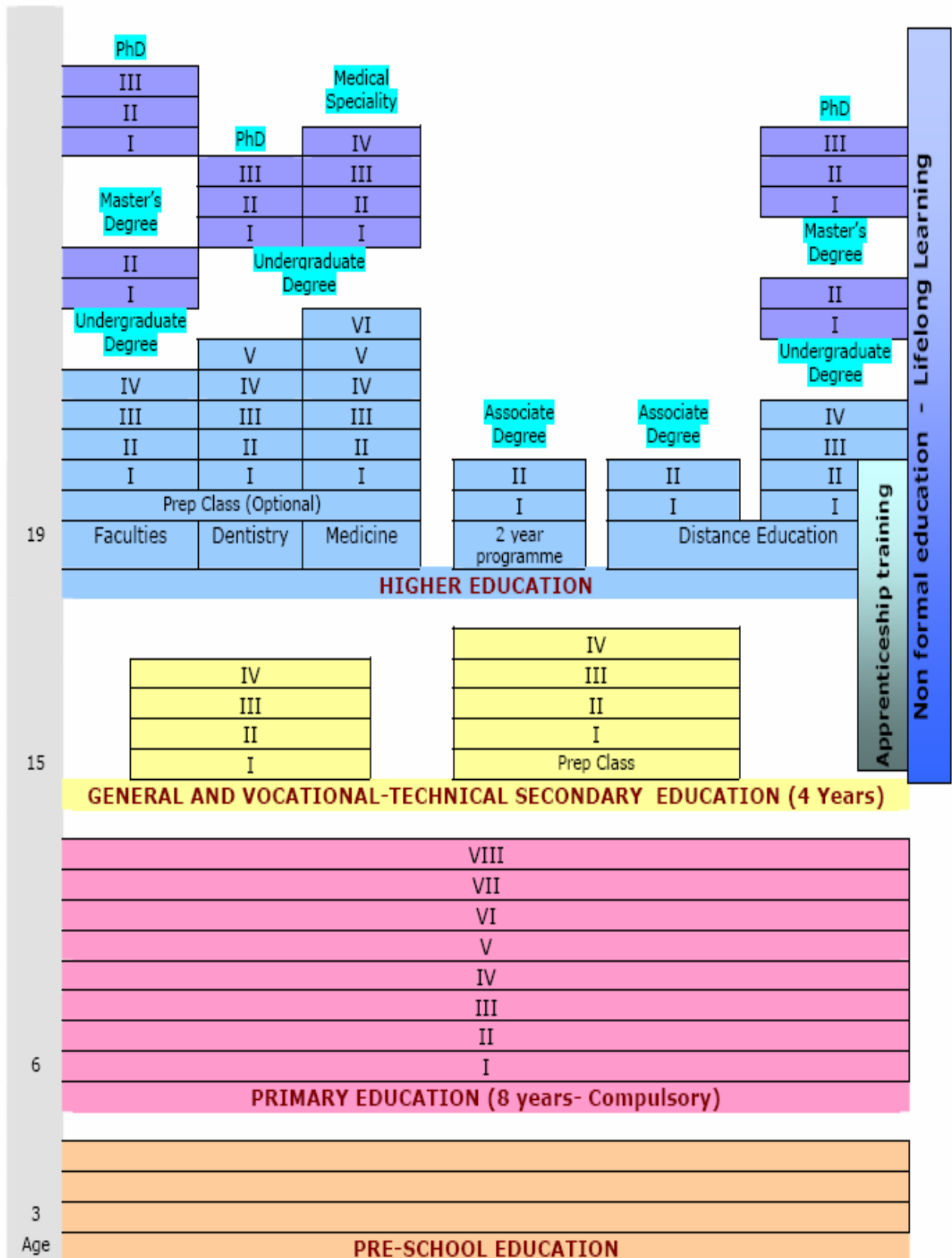
1.2.3. Distance (Open) Education

Distance education is provided to ensure equal opportunities for all Turkish citizens; to support the primary, secondary and higher education system and to render *lifelong learning* opportunities.

The distance education system was initiated in Turkey in 1974. At primary and secondary education levels distance education is provided through Open Primary School, Open High School, Open Vocational and Technical High School while at tertiary level through open universities.

In addition, vocational certificate programs are offered for all, through Open Vocational and Technical School on condition that they are at least primary school graduates.

TURKISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



2. The education system facing the challenges of the twenty-first century: an overview

2.1. Reforms

In Turkey there have been substantial reform efforts in the field of public administration, including the management of the education system since 2003. Comprehensive local administration reforms covering health care, education, culture, social welfare, tourism, environment, rural works, agriculture, husbandry, public works, communication and transportation services at local levels have been in progress at different stages. Taking education as the most important element of development in all these fields, radical reforms have been initiated.

All reforms and innovations have been focused on such targets as provision of equal opportunities in teaching and learning, extension of access to information and communication technologies, renewal of basic and secondary education curricula, extension of lifelong learning, acquisition of key skills by the youth, modernization of vocational education and training, modernization of higher education and employability.

2.2. The organization, structure and management of the education system

Recent policy documents such as development plans, government programs and decisions of the Education Councils underline the need for the restructuring of the central and local management of the Ministry of National Education. The organization, structure and management of the education system need to respond to the challenges of globalization and emerging needs of the society effectively and efficiently.

Ministry of National Education is working on a structure to strengthen its capacity in order to manage the education system better, taking into account the following aspects:

- social inclusion and equity
- children with special needs
- human resources
- effective financing
- system leadership, organizational structure and governance.

To respond the challenges of globalization The Law on Duties and Organization of Ministry of Education has been under revision in a way to reduce the number of departments and to reorganize the Ministry with its new functions. In the new system, the Ministry will focus on determining macro level policies, budgeting, statistics, researching and strategic planning, supervising, leading pilot implementations and developing curricula. Authority and responsibility regarding issues other than these matters will be transferred to the provincial and sub-provincial units of the Ministry.

To establish a dynamic leadership, new roles and responsibilities have been determined at all levels as follows:

- Merging the main executive and support units of the Ministry to eliminate confusions and overlaps in authority and functions,
- Accelerating decision making processes and work flows,

- Enhancing cooperation among departments,
- Managing resources effectively and efficiently,
- Reducing types of schools and implementing multi programs under one school,
- Restructuring the education for social needs,
- Enhancing the quality of education,
- Updating educational content and teaching and learning methods,
- Improving student-centered education,
- Adoption of lifelong learning strategy,
- Expanding the capacity for pre- service and professional development of teachers,
- Strengthening the research capacity of universities,
- Developing vocational education and training and increasing the number of students attending to these schools.

Most prioritized issues in education during recent years are “strengthening vocational education and training; employment and enrolment of graduates for further education level”. EU policies have been under consideration during these activities. Schooling period for general secondary education schools and vocational and technical education schools has been increased to 4 years in 2005 to foster the link between vocational and technical education institutions and labor force. Secondary education curricula including all occupational areas have been developed and put into implementation throughout the country.

One of the most crucial reforms in Turkey is the Law on Public Administration and Controlling. By this Law, the approach of budgeting based on strategic planning and performance has become effective for all institutions including the Ministry of National Education. With the adoption of participatory approach instead of centralized approach, it will be possible to establish an on-site management, planning and budgeting system. By this way, cultural and regional differences and needs will become more visible; and it will be possible to take necessary initiatives for reaching up and including more number of individuals and more disadvantaged students into the system.

ICT in Education

Considerable innovations have been realized in education by strengthening infrastructure of information technologies in schools and providing internet connection to all schools. 720.000 PCs have been sent to schools in 5 years.

In the last five years, ICT classrooms have been installed in schools with 8 or more classrooms (22.280 schools). ADLS connectivity has been provided for all schools with adequate infrastructure (31.253 schools). As a result, 95% of students are benefitting from ICT classrooms.

2.1.3. The aims and purposes of education at each level

The Ninth Development Plan covering period between the years of 2007 and 2013 envisages the vision of Turkey as “a country of information society, growing in stability, sharing more equitably, globally competitive and fully completed its coherence with the European Union”. Needless to say that increasing effectiveness, access and equal opportunities in education have a crucial role in achieving this vision. In addition, a number of targets have been put forward for all levels and types of education to improve

lifelong learning feeding skills required for employment, and to grow up information age individuals for social progress.

Educational objectives in Turkey for all education levels are defined as follows to contribute to transformation of education system into a more inclusive and equal opportunity based system:

2.1.3.1. At Pre-school Education Level

- Increasing schooling rate to 50% by the year 2013,
- Extending preschool education throughout the country in a way to allow equal opportunities for all individuals,
- Assigning more pre-school teachers and meeting physical infrastructure needs as well as diversifying educational services and increasing public awareness towards early childhood and training parents for the importance of it.

2.1.3.2. At Primary Education Level

- Ensuring 100% schooling for 6-14 age group of population by the year 2013,
- Reaching up to individuals who are out of education system and did not complete their basic education level through Open Primary Education School,
- Increasing quality in primary education schools serving to students in small settlements,
- Improving student achievement by focusing more on quality in education,
- Providing at least one foreign language learning opportunities and expanding second foreign language learning,
- Integrating information and communication technologies within education,
- Decreasing class sizes less than 30 students,
- Transferring double shift implementation into full day education,
- Minimizing the number of unified classrooms in primary education schools,
- Increasing the numbers, sizes and capacities of regional boarding primary education schools,
- Meeting educational needs of economically disadvantaged students,
- Extending guidance services to all students,
- Increasing hands-on education in all primary education schools,
- Advancing access for equal opportunities.

2.1.3.3. At Secondary Education Level

- Schooling of all age population between 14 –18 years old,
- Eliminating qualitative and quantitative differences among regions and ensuring equal opportunities by increasing quality in education and training,
- Decreasing class sizes firstly into 30 students and finally into 20 students in the future,
- Rational and efficient use of resources,
- Increasing educational expenditures per capita,
- Fostering the spirit of sustainable development at all levels of education,
- Transforming educational institutions with internet connections into lifelong learning centers to be used by students, their families and local communities, and individuals,

- Improving digital literacy,
- Evaluating gained knowledge and skills.
- Restructuring of the system in a way to better prepare students between the ages of 14 and 18 for a job and/or higher education,
- Increasing the demand for vocational and technical education,
- Paying attention to local characteristics in the development of vocational and technical education curricula,
- Transforming vocational and technical education programs into a structure which facilitates reaching up to international standards,
- Unifying schools or institutions with lower number of students under a common management in small settlements,
- Increasing participation and support of community in education and diversifying course programs,

2.1.3.4. At Special Education Level

- Providing training programs for vocational skills,
- Ensuring facility, equipment, staff and program flexibility in schools that have integrated classes ,
- Providing guidance and counseling services as well as appropriate educational environments for gifted individuals at preschool, primary education and secondary education,
- Extending early childhood and preschool education for the individuals with special needs.

2.1.3.5. At Continuing Education Level

- Providing face-to-face education and learning opportunities in distance education centers,
- Improving in-service training of teachers as regards to quality and quantity,
- Increasing effectiveness of parent training,
- Improving all non-formal education activities aiming to increase awareness of lifelong learning in society,
- Increasing the number of intensive training programs for young people who cannot enter universities,
- Fostering continuous education facilities of local administrations, NGOs and private sector,
- Organize training programs of entrepreneurship for those who would like to change their professions,
- Providing social, cultural and artistic recreational courses to citizens,
- Ensuring participation of at least 10% of the total population in non-formal educational programs each year,
- Continuing literacy initiatives until reaching 100% literacy rate,
- Reaching up to individuals who are out of education system through Open Primary Education Schools,
- Increasing masters degree opportunities via distance education,

2.1.3.6. At Higher Education Level

- Developing a new system in which the school achievements will be taken into consideration at the university entrance stage,

- Extending higher education throughout the country, taking into account regional characteristics,
- Restructuring Higher Education Board in a way to be responsible from coordination and planning,
- Assigning students for graduate studies to meet the need for academic staff of existing and newly established universities,
- Establishing universities in provinces with no universities and increasing the number of units in universities,
- Utilizing all resources efficiently.

2.1.4. Curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies

New curricula reform in Turkey is an initiative with a forward looking vision. The most crucial target is to educate individuals for the skills needed for information age. It is envisaged that students should develop personal responsibility and high levels of improved thinking, perception and problem solving skills, together with science and technology based information and skills. Moreover, they should depend on democratic values, open to new ideas, productive and creative, and capable of interpreting different cultures and adopting national culture, and taking risks and are giving due importance on team work.

Therefore, 8 core skills including critical thinking, creativeness, communication, research and causality, problem solving, information and communication skills, entrepreneurship and language skills have been included exclusively within new curricula since the year 2005. Moreover, 8 core skills unified with basic literacy and mathematics skills have constituted a basis for the new curricula fostering employment, social inclusion, lifelong learning, self-improvement, and capacity of reaching up to individual goals.

With the development of new curricula, new standards of education and learning and teaching methods adopted. Additionally, various assessment and evaluation approaches have been used in measurement and evaluation process.

So, the traditional informative structure has been transformed into a constructive structure. Then, textbooks, student workbooks and teacher's manuals have been prepared within the philosophy of new curricula. Moreover, these books have been provided by The Ministry of National Education to the students and teachers for free. In five years approximately 740 million textbooks have been distributed free of charge.

Curricula have been developed for all compulsory and elective courses defined within weekly course plans of the basic education schools. Some of these courses have been put into practice directly while the remaining has been under pilot implementation at various stages.

Curricula for 99 courses implemented in secondary education schools have been prepared; and some of them are under implementation while the remaining is at the approval stage. Secondary education curricula have been designed under a holistic approach instead of patchwork approach based on separate courses, in line with the ISCED-97 classification. This design is expected to contribute a positive side effect in terms of decreasing drop-out rate at secondary education level.

In the year 2005, educational period for three year general, vocational and technical high schools has been increased to 4 years starting from Grade 9. Meanwhile, necessary

curricula, educational standards and 2nd, 3rd and 4th level certification programs have been prepared for these schools. Updating activities have been made for the framework teaching programs including 42 fields and 197 branches which were put into implementation during 2005–2006 academic year, in line with the feedback obtained from implementations and Framework Teaching Programs have been put into implementation in all fields during 2007-2008 academic year. Totally 5.647 individual learning materials (modules), from which all students and teachers in vocational and technical education will be benefited, have been developed and served to all beneficiaries via Internet resources.

2.1.5. The legal framework of education

The Ministry of National Education has the general responsibility for identifying national education policies, opening pre-primary, primary, secondary and other types of formal and non-formal educational institutions and allows them to be opened, excluding higher education institutions. It also has the responsibility for planning, programming, administrating, monitoring and inspecting all educational activities other than those in higher education institutions.

However, Board of Higher Education which is autonomous constitutionally is the authorized institution for higher education. It manages operations of higher education institutions with the duties and authorizations defined within the Law on Higher Education.

Turkey continues to find out responses and to produce solutions against cultural, economical and political improvements faced by the world in the 21st century and other changes affecting educational systems throughout the world. Turkey's perspective for its EU membership and commitments for EU Lisbon Strategies in education lead to accelerated transformations in its education system.

Multi dimensional and broad based system design and structure development initiatives of the Ministry are effectuated via relevant legislations, which will ensure student-centered teaching and learning at all kinds of types and levels in line with the requirements and needs of the new era and society; inclusion of all individuals within education system and rehabilitation of professional development and employment conditions of teachers.

Besides national efforts, other factors to ensure these policies include:

- Strategic targets defined in Lisbon by European Council,
- EU Acquis Communautaire in education,
- EU Lifelong Learning and Youth Programs,
- Education and training projects in Turkey financed either by EU funds or the World Bank loans,
- Employment Strategy in parallel with Lisbon targets and European Employment Strategy,
- Strategies for human resources development,
- Full implementation of actions defined within Bologna process and European Higher Education Area,
- Knowledge Economy Strategy,
- Close cooperation with the WB, EC, OECD, UN-UNICEF and other international organizations.

Considering the fact that the need for a more competitive and qualified human force will increase in line with European Union policies, new approaches have been adopted in

education system; and initiatives for the logical and effective use of limited resources, and for the completion of necessary infrastructural works have been accelerated in order to provide more participatory, democratic, contemporary and qualitative education to students.

2.1.6. Objectives and principle characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms

As the accumulation of knowledge is rapidly increasing, the concept of “information” and approach to “science” are changing. The terms “democracy” and “administration” gain advanced meanings. Technology improves in a most accelerated way. Globalization becomes effective not only in economic area but also in social and cultural areas. However, problems originating from globalization come up during transition from industrial society to information society. It is obvious that the society has to experience the affects of accelerated economic growth, rapidly changing social services and increasing cultural interaction.

One of the most crucial challenges during the transition period into information society is investing on information. Therefore the biggest challenge in developing countries will be investing in human resources and infra structure. Basic challenge is to provide an educational system which adapts to lifelong learning and ensures individuals to be adaptive to competitive environment of domestic and international markets at the same time and improves creativeness of individuals.

The basis of recent reform efforts of the Ministry of Education depends on “education for the future” approach. The Ministry of National Education sustains its efforts to improve education in Turkey from preschool to higher education and from apprenticeship training to non-formal education and distance education in order to meet the basic educational needs of the society and ensure social transformation to catch up with the challenges of the 21st century.

Within this context, the Ministry:

- works on a more effective structure by redefining duties and responsibilities of the central and local organization.
- continues its efforts at preschool education level to meet the needs, diversify educational services and increase public awareness.
- conducts preliminary studies for a 12 year compulsory education.
- continues its efforts to develop a more flexible structure at secondary education level including vocational and technical education, ensuring vertical and horizontal transitions and establishing an effective guidance and counseling services.
- takes measures to catch up with the schooling rates of better performing EU and OECD countries.
- continues to invest in the use of ICT in all schools.
- gives priority to finalize the Ministry’s e- government projects within shortest period of time.
- Works on amending the Law on Higher Education to eliminate co-efficiency inequality for vocational education graduates.
- works on to expand integrated education of children with special needs.
- takes necessary measures to increase private sector investments in education.
- extends distance education opportunities.

- works on Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper to identify policies to be followed for lifelong learning.
- continues to work on standards for capacity building and good management.

Reaching up fully to these goals in education closely depends on diversification of resources allocated for education, adequate amount of budget, effective use of resources on prioritized areas intensively; and elimination of wasteful use of resources. It is obvious that the budget allocated for education from the General Budget is not adequate. Therefore, utmost efforts of the Ministry are given to the effective and efficient use of such extra budgetary resources as public contributions and voluntary and foundation contributions and of the loans and grants obtained from the World Bank and European Union.

3. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned

A contemporary education for its citizens has always been in the agenda of Turkey. The Ministry of National Education, realizing its mission, has initiated notable programs and projects to bring up children for their futures. Quite a number of initiatives related with students, teachers, educational administrators as well as infrastructure have moved along.

Initiatives such as free distribution of textbooks, improvement of educational environments, decreasing class sizes, the use of ICT in education, conditional cash transfer, more boarding, scholarship and busing opportunities have added value in education system. On the other hand, improvements in the assignment and replacement of educational personnel, providing for more financial and social rights, and establishing a promotion mechanism can all be considered as important changes in the system.

3.1. Access to education and equal opportunities

Utmost attention has been given to utilization of educational services by all children and youth and to ensure equal opportunities in education. An intensive mobilization for schooling of all children at the age of compulsory education has been commenced. A drastic progress has been obtained in terms of access to education compared to previous years.

Schooling Ratio

Educational levels	Years	
	2002-2003 (%)	2008-2009 (%)
Preschool	11	33
Primary Education	91	98
Secondary Education	51	59
Higher Education	27	(including open education) 39

Projections on schooling rates by 2012/13 as follows:

- Pre-primary education (4-5 age): 50.0 %
- Primary education: 100.0 %
- Secondary education: 100.0 %
- Higher education: 33.0 % (excluding open education).

There has been quite an increase in the access of disadvantaged groups to education for the last 5 years through mechanisms such as conditional cash transfers, scholarships, mobile schools, mobile teachers, and busing opportunities. Progress has been made in a balanced distribution of teachers throughout the country.

2003 through 2009, totally 350.000 girls have started school under the implementation of “*Haydi Kızlar Okula (Let’s Go to School, Girls!)*”. The campaign has targeted girls of 6-14 age group who have never started primary school or left school or not attended school regularly.

By opening special education classes in all public and private education institutions at all types and levels of education in line with the recommendations of Board of Special Needs Education, participation of children in need of special education in integrated classes is ensured.

“Mobile Teachers Project” has been put into implementation in order to fulfill empty classes in rural schools and to ensure more effective and efficient use of teachers.

Maintenance and repair works for all closed rural schools have been finished, their equipment needs have been met and assigned teachers and opened for education.

Under the “Mobile Schools Project” many fabricated schools have been built in settlements without schools. This model ensured quick access of children to education since they can be ready to serve within one week. Mobile schools have most facilities like in normal schools.

With the aim of ensuring students in rural areas benefit from the right to education and pursue their education in a more comfortable and peaceful environment, totally 557 lodging and boarding facilities have been constructed within the last six years.

3.2. Education Services for Students

It is obvious that all kinds of opportunities must be provided for the disadvantaged students in a way to facilitate access to education and to ensure equal opportunities by way of various initiatives. Within this scope, all textbooks are distributed for free of charge to basic education schools as of the year 2003 and to secondary education students as of the year 2006. During 2008-2009 academic year totally 165.854.333 textbooks have been distributed for free of charge. Total number of free textbooks distributed up to this date is 737.497.013.

Under the Prime Ministry’s Fund for the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity, a social aid network called “Conditional Cash Transfer” has been established in order to ensure full access of the disadvantaged children to basic education services; and help families to foster school enrolment and attendance of their children. Within the scope of this network, non-repayable educational aids are provided throughout the country. In order to strengthen the position of women within home and society, these payments are made directly to the mothers.

Conditional Cash Transfer Aids

Years	Number of Students	Transferred Amount (YTL)
2003	59.206	1.594.609
2004	697.307	67.768.258
2005	1.266.331	180.133.679
2006	1.563.253	240.270.712
2007	1.757.187	222.544.683
2008 (July)	1.876.364	199.210.000
Total	7.219.648	911.521.941
		Approximately 2 billion Euros

While the number of students granted scholarships were 94.753 in the year 2002, this number has increased to 175,000 in 2009 which means 85 % increase in number.

Boarding and scholarship opportunities for children at the age of primary and secondary education in rural areas have been improved. While the number of regional boarding schools was 538 in 2002-2003 academic year, this number has increased to 602 in 2007-2008 academic year. Totally 307,831 students are benefiting from free boarding opportunities in 2007-2008 academic year.

At the higher education level, totally 58 block-dormitories with 24,405 bed capacity have been opened since 2003. Compared with the year 2002, approximately 255% increase has been observed in monthly scholarships for higher education students.

“Busing in Primary Education Implementation” is ongoing in order to provide more qualitative education and training opportunities to students at the age of primary education and living in dispersed settlements with lower population. In 2007-2008 academic year, 692,369 primary education students are bused daily from 31,874 schools into 6,164 central schools. Busing costs and lunches are paid by the Ministry of National Education.

Opportunities and projects for going back to school have been created for the children between the ages of 10 to 14 who left the education system due to several reasons. Initiatives include compensatory education and such projects as “From Field to School”. Later on, successful students in these programs continue with their education in grades appropriate with their ages.

Various national campaigns are organized in a close cooperation with the NGOs, private sector and media in order to cover children out of education system into the education system. Under the “Father, Send Me to School” campaign, re-inclusion of the girls who were out of the system has become possible with the help of broad based national aids. With these campaigns, dormitories for the girls have been opened, and scholarships have been granted to these students.

With the implementation of “Mother-Daughter at School” campaign in the year 2008, illiterate mothers and daughters have had a chance to become literate with free literacy courses in Public Training Centers. With this implementation, both increase on literacy rates and participation of mothers and daughters in further trainings are targeted. Target group counts 1.6 million individuals.

3.3. Early childhood intervention

While the schooling rate in preschool level was 11 % in 2002-2003 academic year, this ratio has increased to 33 % in 2008–2009 academic year. Activities on extending preschool education coverage have been accelerated in order to provide these opportunities to the children at the age of preschool education.

In order to provide preschool education services for the children living in disadvantaged areas of the provinces and to increase parental awareness on preschool education, the Ministry of National Education has established Mobile Pre-classrooms. Experiencing its appropriateness and economic dimension, this service is extended throughout the country.

In line with the cooperation between the Ministry of National Education and Mother and Child Education Foundation, “Parent Training” has been provided to parents whose children do not benefit from preschool education. “Summer Schools” have been initiated in areas which have less socio-economic status.

3.4. Improving learning achievements

Turkish Education System performs various kinds of work to establish a structure sensitive to the challenges of the 21st century. One of the most important works in this regard is the renewal of the curricula.

The contents of all courses in primary and secondary education levels have been renewed starting from 2005-2006 academic year by taking into account improvements in educational sciences and educational curricula implemented in European countries.

Within the process of development of new curricula, all program movements realized throughout the world in line with the competitive structure of information society; norms, objectives and educational approach of the European Union and the findings obtained from national studies like Assessment of Success of Secondary Students and international studies as PISA, TIMMS and PIRLS have been taken as reference points.

3.5. Teachers

In order to meet the short and long term demand for teachers in primary and secondary education a new system of teacher training has been implemented. Duration of the all teacher training programs in higher education institutions has been extended to at least 4 years.

It is based on the following principles:

- training pre-primary and primary school teachers with Bachelor's degrees (four years);
- training secondary school teachers who hold either Bachelor's degrees (four years) for teaching foreign languages, music, arts, physical education, special education or computer teaching technologies, or Master's degrees (five or five-and-a-half years) for science, mathematics and social subjects. No thesis or final dissertation is required in this case.

Furthermore, in order to employ a teacher in several fields of education, a compulsory second subject has been introduced in teacher training programmes for secondary schools,

in addition to the main subject specialization. Before the new system, pre-primary and primary school teachers were trained in two- or four-year higher education institutes.

In order to ensure integration between teacher training programs for primary and secondary school teachers and branch teachers at secondary school level, programs have been reviewed and renewed and implemented from 2007-2008 academic year.

General teacher qualifications have been finalized by competencies, skills, behavioral characteristics and performance indicators and became effective in a way to be used during initial and in-service training of teachers, as well as during selection, performance assessment, self-assessment and professional development of teachers.

A new classification system in teaching profession has been initiated. Teachers are classified under titles of “candidate teacher”, “teacher”, “expert teacher” and “master teacher” in order to bring dynamism in teaching profession and to foster teachers for further career development.

As of 2003, considerable increases have been made in the salaries and additional payments paid to teachers order to make teaching profession more attractive. At the same time, 2,814 teachers have had a chance of owning their houses constructed and delivered under “Residential Premises for Teachers Project”.

3.6. Opportunities for the Disabled

All education expenditures for those deemed appropriate by the special needs evaluation boards to attend in special needs and rehabilitation centers are financed from the budget of the Ministry. A monthly amount of 200 Euros is paid to each child under the observation and inspection of the Ministry of National Education. 27.000 students who do not attend to school due to heavy disability are bused to educational institutions for free of charge.

Home education services are provided for those who are at the age of preschool education and basic education but unable to benefit from educational institutions directly. These education services are performed by mobile special needs education teachers. Preschool, classroom and branch teachers are assigned where necessary. For those hospitalized for treatments are provided with education in hospitals. Number of students served in schools, homes or hospitals has shown a 444% increase in the last six years.

The disabled individuals and citizens brought up by Social Services and Child Protection Institution are employed and assigned to retainer cadres of the Ministry’s provincial and sub-provincial organizations.

4. The role of combating poverty as well as other forms of social exclusion and cultural marginalization

4.1. Vision

The main objective behind Turkey’s fight against poverty is to decrease inequalities in income distribution permanently and to eliminate poverty. Having experienced the effectiveness of *Millennium Development Goals*, Turkey’s efforts for fighting against poverty have been accelerated.

By understanding multi dimensional structure of poverty, access to various services for citizens and social programs and investments for specific individuals and groups has become more prominent. Membership perspective to European Union has also contributed to identify social inclusion policies on fight against income inequalities and poverty.

Some of the most crucial dimensions on social inclusion policies include increasing employment, focusing on social expenditures on education and health, rehabilitating income distribution, preventing migration to urban areas and controlling population increase. As well as rehabilitating sheltering services and implementing special programs for unsheltered groups in society. Turkey's development policies give priority to active participation of individuals and groups under risk of poverty into economic and social life and to ensure social inclusion and social integrity by increasing life standards.

4.2. Strategies to be implemented for combating poverty and social inclusion

Most prioritized strategies are:

- Ensuring the effectiveness of transfer policies for the rehabilitation of income in favor of the poor,
- Making basic services such as education, health, employment and social security be more accessible and equal for the disadvantaged groups,
- Diversifying poverty reduction services in a way to prevent the formation of poverty culture,
- Supporting income generating training and entrepreneurship incentives of the poor who are unemployed as a result of structural changes in agriculture field,
- Developing active employment policies which will increase employability of the unqualified and poor individuals migrated from rural areas to the provinces and ensure their integration with the society,
- Increasing employability of women in order to increase their participation into society by developing vocational training opportunities,
- Taking necessary precautions for violence against women,
- Providing training for parents in need of training for child, elderly and disabled care,
- Rehabilitating children under harsh conditions and preventing child labor more effectively,
- Enhancing consultancy services for the rehabilitation of social and physical environment conditions of the disabled and vocational and special needs education opportunities for the employment of the disabled,
- Supporting home care services for the old individuals and increasing quality and quantity of these services,
- Conducting activities for the effectiveness of services for the integration of the convicts into the society.

5. Inclusive education: The way of the future

5.1 Approaches, scope and content

Inclusive education implementations in Turkey intensively focus on individuals who do not benefit from educational services in the poorest part of the society via social aids.

These implementations are performed in compliance with the EU targets and Millennium Development Goals in terms of its coverage and targets.

Social Risk Mitigation Project under the responsibility of Directorate General for Social Assistance and Solidarity is one of the specific projects which was started in the year 2001. The main objective of the Project is to develop effective policies for the fight against poverty. Under the Conditional Cash Transfer component, cash support is given to mothers who can not send their children to school and/or take them to regular health controls. School lunches are also paid for. Financial support provided under the Project makes an important contribution for the poor families' children to participate in education.

Social Services and Child Protection Institution also provides social aids such as accommodation and cash aids, old age aids, disability aids as well as various kinds of educational scholarships for the needy individuals. Under the scope of educational assistance primary and secondary school children of low-income families are provided with stationery, school uniforms etc. at the beginning of each academic year

Social Security Organization and Retirement Fund renders state aids in cash to families who take their disabled children to special education institutions and rehabilitation centers.

In Turkey, in addition to 433 special education schools owned by private sector, 171 special needs education centers are available under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education. Moreover, totally 68 care, rehabilitation and family consultation centers under Social Services and Child Protection Institution, including 35 boarding and 33 daily centers are providing services for the disabled individuals. Again there are 502 special needs education and rehabilitation centers affiliated with private persons or institutions under the approval and inspection of Social Services and Child Protection Institution.

Only 13.7% of the disabled benefit from vocational education and skill trainings. Despite an increase on the numbers of public and private education institutions providing education and rehabilitation services for the disabled, there are still insufficiencies in this area.

In recent years, children living in the streets and children working in the streets have become a serious social problem. The main reasons for this problem include such social phenomena as migration from rural to urban, crowded families, poverty, unemployment and inequalities in income distribution. Street children can be either victims or the convicts of the crime and can face with toxic mania, sexual, physical or mental harassments. However, increasing compulsory education period to 8 years and prohibition of working with children under 15 years old pursuant to the Law on Labor are the important steps taken against child labor problem.

According to results from Turkish Statistical Institute's Child Labor Force Research, while the number of working children between the ages of 6 to 17 was 1.6 million in the year 1999, this number has decreased to less than 958,000 in the year 2006.

5.2. Public policies

The Basic Act on National Education in Turkey includes all individuals regardless of any differences with the principles of education for all, equal opportunity in education, co-education, and sustainability in education.

With an integrated understanding in these policies, necessary educational policies have been identified for a student-centered education appropriate with the needs of the society at all types and levels of education, not excluding any individual from education system for any reason and ensuring the professional development of teachers, as well as improving their working conditions.

In terms of poverty, the most risky groups in Turkey are those working temporarily especially in agricultural field without any security and unqualified individuals, women, children, elderly and the disabled. Educational attainment of these individuals is one of the best variables explaining the level of poverty. These individuals need to be included into education and social life with regard to participation in decision making and active participation processes, and in benefitting from information and communication technologies, health, education and cultural services and opportunities.

Therefore, government identify and implement policies in which all parts of the society are included and targets an accelerated economic and social development of the country and increased quality in living conditions of the individuals. To this end, activities implemented or to be implemented between the years of 2008 to 2010 focus on increasing quality in education and extending access to education services. The most crucial target group for inclusive education in Turkey is the population who are or who were out of the education system because of poverty.

In order to provide educational services for disadvantaged groups, needy individuals are supported in forms of grants, scholarships, shelters, cash incentives etc. For those who need special education, policies towards integrated education are implemented. Policies towards vocational training and open education opportunities for these children also aim their inclusion into the society by increasing literacy and basic knowledge as well as skills needed for the acceptability in labor market.

Regarding mobilization of financial resources to fight against poverty and social exclusion, Joint Inclusion Memorandum has been prepared together with the European Commission. Likewise, Joint Assessment of Employment Priorities Document puts forward policy priorities for an integrated strategy for the encouragement of social inclusion in the fields of education, health, labour market, employment, social assistance and social services. Both documents are targeting the elimination of poverty. Policies on issues such as gender equality, disability, women, and regional differences are referred in the documents towards social inclusion.

Apart from these policies, various projects and services are implemented with a view towards inclusion. Projects deemed to facilitate inclusive education are as follow:

5.2.1. Increasing the capacity of pre-school education

The purpose of the project is to establish quality and effective community-based child day-care and pre-school education models for disadvantaged children and their families, with the active participation of women and support of municipalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local administrations in sixteen provinces both urban and rural, selected in consideration of low education participation rates of young children and low participation of women in labor force.

5.2.2. Strengthening special education

In order to increase opportunities and to improve the learning environments for disabled individuals within disadvantaged groups for the purpose of their access to education and inclusion in society.

5.2.3. Promotion of lifelong learning

The purpose is to establish an institutional framework and capacity within LLL perspectives in line with EU practices so as to support individuals' access to education for increasing employment opportunities within a system designed to value learning.

5.2.4. Increasing the number of graduates, particularly girls

Raising awareness on importance of education, development of human resources particularly for women and increasing schooling rates particularly for girls at secondary school level.

5.2.5. Multi-purpose Community Centers

Multi-purpose Community Centers have been active since 1995. Today there are 29 of them in 9 provinces of Southeastern Anatolia Region.

These are the centers which serve poor households migrated from rural to urban areas. Most of the beneficiaries of the programs in these centers are young girls over 14 years. Target population also includes younger girls. Reading rooms are great help to support education. Households participate in programs developed for health, literacy, computer education etc. With the implementation of social support programs and cultural and social activities, whole members of the households are tried to be covered under these programs.

Programs on literacy, computer, health, mother education, legal and civil rights and entrepreneurship etc. are held for girls over 14 years and women. Vocational programs on income generating fields such as textile, machine knitting, sewing, stone works, silversmith works, hair dressing, etc. are organized for these girls and women. By this way, their accessibility to public services is increased and opportunities are provided for finding jobs, establishing their own work places. In addition to above mentioned programs, support services in such issues as birth registration, civil marriage, health care card, etc are rendered.

The multi-purpose community centers reach the poorest/the most disadvantaged groups such as children working in the streets or working as seasonal agricultural workers etc. and help them improve their conditions. Scholarships are given through these centers to ensure regular attendance in schools of girls who had to leave school due to social, economical or cultural reasons.

Girls, who have completed basic education and would like to carry on with secondary and tertiary education, are encouraged with necessary financial support. Others are directed to Open High Schools.

5.2.6. Parent and Child Education

Parent and Child Education Project of the Ministry of Education included training programs on right choice of spouse, giving birth to healthy babies, baby and child care and family planning for women through courses, panels, house and village visits, radio and TV programs.

Since the start of the project in 1998 and with the cooperation among the universities, state hospitals, provincial health directorates, village clinics, medical doctors, psychologists, social service staff, local press, and media, 2,552,992 individuals have participated in the training programs.

5.2.7. Ensuring Access of Children in Need of Special Education to Schools

Disabled students who attend schools at primary and secondary education levels are bused for free of charge and necessary resources are transferred for meeting the needs of these students.

While the number of the disabled students bused free of charge was 6,900 in 2005, this number has increased to 27.000 in 2009.

5.2.8. Regional Boarding Basic Education School

These schools generally admit children from rural settlement areas. Boarding students are offered with educational aids, stationeries, articles of clothing, pocket money and other necessities and relevant social contributions. All expenditures of these students are covered by Ministry of National Education.

5.2.9. Scholarships and Loans

Scholarships and loans are considered as the most important means for students to take part in the education system. More and more students are provided with larger amounts of scholarships every year. Since 2003, more than 7 million students have benefitted from scholarships or loans. For the last five years all successful or needy students who applied to Institution for Higher Education Scholarships, Loans and Dormitories have been provided with scholarships or loans.

5.2.10. Dormitory Services

Dormitories with 210,000 bed capacity serve for students in 78 provinces and 84 sub-provinces. Placement procedures are implemented as no one is left excluded from this opportunity. In the last six years 557 new dorm buildings with 88,557 beds have been put into service. No dorm or meal fee is received from students from low income families.

Starting from the year 2006, all students accommodating in dorms have been provided with breakfasts. A specific amount of contribution for breakfasts and dinners is also made to dorm administrations.

Social, cultural and sports activities, inter-regional and inter-dormitories tournaments are organized in their spare times to ensure their physical, mental and cultural development and to improve friendship, and fellowships among the students.

5.3. Systems, links and transitions

Efforts are continuing to restructure education system into a holistic system with lifelong learning approach and donated with effective guidance and counseling services and allows vertical and horizontal transitions between levels, focusing at the same time on vocational education best fitted to vocational and occupational standards and providing equal opportunities.

As for ensuring equal opportunities and access of all children to basic educational services, education system needs to respond to the needs of children out of the system. Alternative programs such as flexible education hours, on-site education, education with busing system, mobile education, mobile teachers and compensatory education are integral arrangements of the gradually developing system. Turkey today, is in the process of developing teacher training system bringing in more flexibility on teaching and learning methods, as well as on choice of schools and teaching materials.

Designing vocational training programs in a way to focus on more practice instead of theory is expected to create effectiveness and efficiency in education. One of the best examples of this approach can be seen in the application of apprenticeship. On-site programs designed for apprentices give the opportunity for obtaining vocational knowledge together with skills and allow those participated in apprenticeship trainings to observe themselves in different areas such as labor market, management of a work place, entrepreneurship etc.

Taking these issues into account in the development of training programs and improving apprenticeship system in small and medium sized enterprises will help economic growth and employment will not only lead to less waste of resources but also contribute to create more permanent positions.

For those who do not attend mainstream schools due to various reasons, educational opportunities are provided via open basic education, open high school, open vocational high school and open faculty programs. Recent efforts have led to a considerable progress on this area.

Being aware of the importance of investment in education in order to face the challenges of the twenty- first century, the Ministry gets the maximum allocation in the consolidated budget. While the share of education in the consolidated budget was 7,60% in 2002, it is 10,64 % in 2009. It stands for a 247 % increase.

Taking into account the geographical conditions of the country, migration movements, population increase, different developmental levels of the regions and poverty ratios, allocation of more resources for a fully inclusive education is a challenge for the future. More resources have to be allocated for implementing solutions and reaching up goals.

5.4. Learners and teachers

Ministry of National Education has renewed curricula for primary and secondary education with a new approach by identifying a common framework of social, individual, economic and cultural concepts in a way to ensure access of all children to education, success of the children entering system and opening ways to improve each individual potential.

5.4.1. Factors behind the necessity of program development

Education is the most important component of economic and social development and is under a rapid and constant change. It is not only a constitutional right or responsibility but also is indispensable from economy. Moreover education is one of the most effective tools of individual, social and cultural integrity.

Demand for education in Turkey is increasing gradually in line with considerable changes in demographical structure, living standards of the families, societal improvements, consumption habits, understanding of human rights, political environment and in science and technology. Naturally, education systems need to reflect of these changes and respond to future challenges. Targeted challenges can be summarized under the following headings:

- Ensuring access of each child into education system and making sure of his/her improvement,
- Ensuring active participation of the child into society through educational institution and instilling democracy culture within this framework,
- Ensuring links between education and the labor markets,
- Functioning as a channel for equal opportunities

Initiatives taken to realize these targets are:

- Renewing curricula
- Improving qualifications of teachers through pre-service and in-service trainings,
- Establishing Internet infra structure to all schools,
- Widening of full day education in schools,
- Improving the status of teachers,
- Raising awareness of parents about the importance of education,
- Improving the physical conditions of schools,
- Integrating information technologies into education,

National and international standards are taken into account during curricula development, with a lifelong learning approach for all and taking effective guidance and counseling services into account. The new curricula allow vertical and horizontal transfers and are compliant with the market's demands. Curricula aim not only for transferring knowledge and skills but also producing new knowledge. Therefore, students are at the center of all learning activities.

Student-centered education is sensitive to individual differences and takes into account mental and physical development and learning speeds and styles of students. Learning and teaching approaches compliant with this model have been used in the curricula. The model supports cooperative learning, learning through researching, exploring and reviewing and brain storming.

Teachers are meant to function as guides to students for their psychological, cognitive, emotional, creative, esthetical, social, moral and physical development of students by taking individual characteristics, ways of learning, mental capabilities and potentials.

5.4.2. Course hours allocated for reading in the first years of basic education

Developing reading skills and habit of reading in students are firstly focused at the primary education level. At the basic education level, students are directed towards improving reading skills by thinking, criticizing, discussing, creating connection between their preliminary information and what they are reading and reach to new meanings. Two reading hours is applicable for grades 1 through 3 one free reading hour for grades 4 and 5.

5.4.4. Teacher competencies

As for the initial training and professional standards of teachers, General Competencies of Teaching Profession has been prepared. This document sets the necessary European and international standard criteria for teaching profession to be considered by the teacher training faculties. Teacher competencies are in line with the skills and attitudes needed during the teaching and learning in the framework of new curricula.

Newly formulated teacher competencies constitute the second step of educational reform after the renewal of curricula. An “Action Plan” has been prepared, which arranges all procedures and terms of references of all partners including the Ministry’s central, provincial and overseas organizations, Board of Higher Education and Student Selection and Placement Centre, as well as trade unions that have an involvement in education and training.

4.5.5. Lifelong Learning

A Draft Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper has been prepared. It aims to increase access to and quality in education, link education and employment, decrease unemployment, ensure rapid adaptation of labor force with improvements in vocations and with certification system, easy adaptation of employed or unemployed individuals with the changes in the market, assist society through quality education and contribute in educational culture in the country.

Anticipated activities:

- Literacy and basic education activities targeting adults,
- Lifelong learning programs at rural areas,
- Development of a system in which basic skills and key competences are extensively evaluated,
- Standardization, certification and national/international validation of skills,
- Trainings in enterprises,
- Training of teacher trainers, in-service training of teachers,
- Guidance and counseling training in pre-school education institutions,
- Seminars for parents,
- Increasing the measures aimed at raising the schooling rates at all education levels,
- Non-formal education opportunities including e-learning,
- Establishment of quality assurance system in education institutions and development of performance assessment.

Summary of medium term reforms and priorities

Medium term educational policies of Turkey under the State Planning Organization's *Ninth Development Planning Medium Term Program* (2007-2009) covering the period of 2007-2013 have been determined as follows:

1. Pre-primary education will be expanded;
2. Curricula will be updated based on innovativeness, research, team working, authentic and entrepreneurial thinking,
3. An efficient guidance and orientation system contributing to individual and social life of peoples will be developed,
4. A structure will be established at secondary education level based on curriculum diversity rather than school diversity. And secondary education will be converted into a flexible structure allowing vertical and horizontal transitions,
5. Head teachers and teachers will be trained about the new structure of education in the short term,
6. Wider and effective use of educational software will be ensured,
7. Disparities between regions will be decreased in terms of school buildings, equipments and teachers,
8. Local offices will get involved to take up initiatives in order to increase the quality of education and improving physical environment in shorter time,
9. Scholarship and loans system will be developed ,
10. Higher Education Council will be restructured so as to conduct long-term planning and coordination between universities,
11. Administrative, financial and scientific autonomy of higher education institutions will be enforced, and higher education institutions will have a competitive structure based on specialization,
12. Higher education institutions will be supported for funding through rendering services, and student contribution in financing of the education will be developed,
13. Private sector will be encouraged to be active at each stage of education.

Documentary reference used for the preparation of the national report

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