

Developments in Turkish Education System towards International Dimension

By

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Abstract

One of the key issues in an education system is the international dimension to receive holistic information and to make concrete comparisons upon the system in international level. By determining the international dimension it can be seen the current statement between the other countries, and such as this study can be a considerable source to the comparative policy making studies. The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the developments and ongoing reforms in the Turkish Education System towards international dimension. For this purpose; the policy, strategy and action documents; the protocols, projects and implementations; and the international mobilities regarding education system were investigated in terms of international dimension. This study within its general structure can serve to draw a perspective and to understand the Turkish Education System towards international dimension, through a general analysis of the policy, strategy and action documents, the protocols, projects and implementations, and the international mobilities.

1. Introduction

Can the education systems maintain their effectiveness or become effective without developments and reforms? Unquestionably the answer is no. Furthermore if we consider the education systems from the international dimension, the maintaining of those developments and reforms are going to be inevitable. In a changing world, the education systems such as the other systems have to follow this changing world and adapt to it. To address this, each education system should prepare, implement and maintain its own reform and development endeavors in accordance to the needs of education system. As a consequence of these efforts, many developments occur in the education system.

Educational reform can be seen as an initiative which attempts to correct a deficiency in the current education system unless to change the essential elements of the system (Horn, 2002, 2). The need for educational reform can be explained in international context, as well as the national context. The transformation process from industrial to information based society make societies change internationally. In this new society based on the importance of creation and dissemination of knowledge for both individual and social development, the education paradigm entails high-order thinking skills, communication skills and continuous learning. This perspective and particularly international experiences indicate the education reform should extend beyond the classroom, but the whole the system (Atagi, 2002, p. 2).

The considering of educational reform entails an understanding of the various positions related to the purposes of education, and an understanding the both philosophical and functional purposes. Preparing students for society as functional purpose can include a list of education such as gender equity education, human relations education, international education and education in basic skills etc. Besides, broader and deeper purposes of education exist, and philosophical positions determining reform should be evaluated

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for understanding these purposes. For instance, achieving democratic ideals can be seen as a philosophical position (Horn, 2002, p. 12-13).

In addition, the countries need education reforms for facing the political, social and cultural changes, as well as the scientific and technological transformations. This situation also entails making large-scale efforts and using great resources. However, reform of the education systems requires coping with human and financial difficulties. In this sense, both national and international initiatives produce solutions and contribute to the educational development process. While the governments, the professionals of education and research, and the different associations and reflection groups make efforts for producing solutions; the international multilateral and bilateral cooperation agencies are contributing financially and/or technically to the national programmes of educational development (Jallade, Radi and Cuenin, 2001, p. 1).

Figure 1 indicates that the world ideas about the progress turn into discourse upon education and development articulated by professionals in international organizations and disseminated with various activities such as international conferences. Then, in this process, the countries commit themselves to education for development goals and strategies in accordance to local economic, political, or social conditions (Chabbott and Ramirez, 2000, p. 183). As a result, it can be said that taking into account the development and education mechanisms, for instance indicated in the Figure 1, is inevitable for preparing the reforms and developing the policy, strategy and action documents, protocols, projects and implementations.

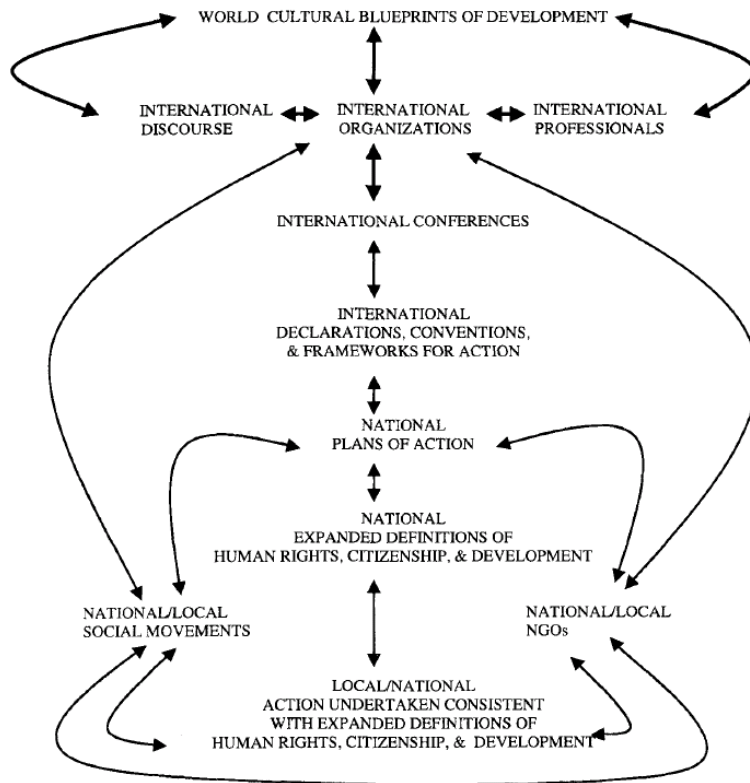


Figure 1: Mechanisms for carrying blueprints of development and education (Chabbott and Ramirez, 2000, p. 174)

When considering the core of those mechanisms, an important element will be international dimension. One of the considerable studies which presents international dimension in education systems is the national dossiers in the Eurybase. These studies obtain a detailed description of national education systems. The contents of them are being determined by *Guide to the Contents*. The content of international dimension part of these studies can be summarized as follows (Eurydice, 2007, p. 2-102):

- Historical overview
- Ongoing debates and future developments
- National Policy Guidelines/Specific Legislative Framework
- National Programmes and Initiatives
- European/International Dimension through the National Curriculum
- Mobility and Exchange
- Statistics on teacher and students

The major documents regarding educational policy and planning in the national level which indicate the national developments and trends in education sector in Turkey as follows: development plans, MEB Education Major Plan 1996-2014, MEB Strategy Plan 2010-2014, Higher Education Strategy Plan, TUBITAK Vizyon 2023, Lifelong Learning Strategy Document etc. (Kavak, 2010, p. 43).

The education system in Turkey is highly centralized in many respects, and it is one of the most centralized among middle-income countries (World Bank, 2005, p. 145). In Turkish education system, formal education is provided considerably, more than 90%, by public education institutions. Administrative legislation and inspection of formal and informal education system (except for higher education) are conducted by MEB (Ministry of National Education). In both central and regional (local or provincial) level, the educational activities are carried out by provincial/local directorates of MEB in accordance to the authority and responsibility levels given by national education legislation. The compulsory education is eight years and given by primary education schools for the children between ages of 6 and 14. YÖK (Higher Education Council) is responsible for the planning and coordinating of higher education in Turkey. Higher Education institutions are autonomous for purposes of education and research; however they are monitored at least once a year by Higher Education Supervisory Board acting on behalf of the YÖK (Eurydice, 2011, p. 1-6).

The basic principles of Turkish National Education are as follows: *Generality and equality (educational institutions are open to all regardless of race, sex, or religion); meeting the needs of the individual and society; orientation (individuals are directed towards programmes or schools depending on their interests, talents, and abilities); ensuring that everybody enjoys the right to basic education; providing equal opportunities; continuity (it is essential that the general and vocational education of individuals lasts for a lifetime); conformity with Atatürk's reforms and principles, and Atatürk's Nationalism; democracy education; secularism; the scientific approach; planning; co-education; school-family co-operation; education everywhere* (MEB mevzuat, 1973, p. 17-18).

Starting the membership negotiations with the European Union on October 3, 2005, Turkey has made considerable economic and social reforms over the last few years. In order to fully attain economic and social integration with Europe, Turkey will need to systematically raise the educational qualifications of its population up to the international norms. However, in recent years Turkey has determined a number of critical goals for improving its education system. The MEB prepared a variety of programs, projects, and initiatives to improve the education results of its graduates and contribute to their intellectual development, employability, and productivity. For integrating all those programmes, a larger and guiding strategy is needed, and it also entails to focus the objectives of all existing government programs and initiatives on well-defined outcomes and targets. (World Bank, 2005, p. 7-36).

Though Turkey has made quite considerable progress, particularly in the past decade, but it maintain to lag behind the developed nations in educational attainment, the performance of its education system, and gender equity; and there are significant disparities in educational opportunity among socio-economic groups and regions. Sustaining the recent momentum of ongoing reforms and developments is vital for Turkey's future, not only for EU accession but also for its competitiveness in the global knowledge economy (OECD, 2007, p. 12).

In this study, it aimed to determine and analyze the developments and ongoing reforms in the Turkish education system towards international dimension. For that, the policy, strategy and action documents, protocols, projects and implementations, and international mobilities regarding education system were investigated in terms of international dimension.

2. Policies/Strategies/Aims

Ninth Development Plan

The Ninth Development Plan written by DPT (State Planning Organization) has been a policy document putting forward main transformations which would be achieved in economic, social and cultural issues between 2007 and 2013 in Turkey. The dimensions of vision of Turkey situated in this plan are as follows: *Growing steadily; equitable income sharing; global entrepreneurship, information society and committing the process of adaptation to membership of EU* (DPT, 2006, p. 1). The plan was prepared in the context of "Turkey as growing steadily, more equitable income sharing, having entrepreneurship power in a global scale, being transformation to information society, committed exactly adaptation process to membership EU" vision and long-term strategy (2001-2023).

Aims and predictions decided in the ninth Development Plan regarding international dimension in education

To support the development of human resources, the approach of education system to lifelong and holistic learning would be considered for empowering structure of the system, as effective, accessible and equality of opportunity were mentioned in the plan (DPT, 2006, p. 85).

For the aim of the adopting to lifelong learning approach in society, the following points were stated in the plan: *The opportunities for informal education as addition to e-learning, distance education would be supported for the individuals being age out of school; acquiring skills and having occupation works would be increased* (DPT, 2006, p. 86).

The Mid-term Programme (2010–2012)

2010-2012 The Mid-Term Programme of DPT included as follows: *Exchanging staff and student in secondary and higher education; international programmes related to exchanging; dissemination of funding programmes and adding more related to participation of foreign scientists and students to education and training activities in Turkey*. Furthermore, upon the frame of these approaches, it underlined that the arrangements needed in the managerial structure would be implemented (DPT, 2009, p. 30).

MEB Policy and Strategy Document

MEB (Ministry of National Education) categorizes three main points related to international relations. First point is the activities upon the promoting and disseminating of Turkish language and culture for Turkish citizenships and their children who live in abroad. Second point is the obtaining of the coordination between Turkey and other countries, and contribution to and commitment the decisions for preparing bilateral and multilateral agreements, cultural exchanging programmes and protocols. Third is the participation in the education and training studies of main international organizations such as EU, UN, European Council, OECD and other international organizations (MEB, 2009a, p. 191).

In the policy document of 2020 Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training prepared for EU member states, four main strategic aims were accepted. These are *fulfilling the lifelong learning and exchanging; enhancing the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems; encouraging equity, social adaptation and active citizenship; and enhancing the endeavors regarding entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation in all level of education*. In the context of the adaptation to EU, the MEB underlined that taking into consideration of EU 2020 education and training common aims were important (MEB, 2009a, p. 191).

Some strategic aims stated in the MEB 2010-2014 Strategic Plan:

* Effective participation and contribution to EU education and training programmes.

For this strategy the following indicators were determined in the context of EU education and training (MEB, 2009a, p. 194): The number of;

- seminars, project team meetings and exchanging programmes
- work groups in which are sample applications with EU education and training peers meetings.
- and the activities

* Effective participation to the studies with countries and international organizations (MEB, 2009a, p. 202): The indicators are as follows:

- The number of programme-projects participation by MEB
 - Until end of the ninth Development Plan, in Turkey holding at least 15 education study organized by international organizations
- Holding education works in Turkey organized by international organizations

* It aims to make at least 15 percent of adults aged between 25-64 participate in the lifelong learning programmes until 2020 (MEB, 2009a, p. 195).

MEB Lifelong Learning Strategy Document

In the Lifelong Learning Strategy Document (LLSD) of MEB based on the transformation of arrangements deriving from the action plan for adaptation to EU, the following priorities related to international dimension in education were given (MEB, 2009b):

Updating the curriculum continuously through needs changed (MEB, 2009b, p. 19)

With the aim for increasing individuals' learning opportunities and developing opportunities upon the communication among the foreign countries, at least two foreign languages should be learned. For achieving this point, the endeavors upon developing a functional foreign language curriculum focused on goals would be carried out (MEB, 2009b, p. 19).

Table 1 summarizes that the dimension of updating curriculums stated in LLSD. Taking into account the individuals' needs, practical applications and enhancing the ICT literacy might be seen as emphasized points for developing language curriculum according to the table.

Table 2 indicates that multi relations and cooperation are needed between many institutions in order to increase the international cooperation and mobility in terms of the lifelong learning. In this meaning, it can be said that a robust coordination will help to accomplish the aims of international cooperation and mobility and to receive concrete outputs when considered LLSD structure.

Table 1: Updating the curriculums continuously according to the changed needs (2013 duration) (MEB, 2009b, p. 6).

Precaution	Responsible Institution	Related Institutions
In each level of formal and informal education, the curriculums which take to consideration of individuals' needs will be updated continuously.	MEB	YÖK, Universities, Local authorities, NGOs
Developing foreign language curriculums which have intensively practical applications will be carried out continuously.	MEB	YÖK, Universities, Worker and employer unions and confederations
Curriculums gaining ICT literacy will be updated and it will facilitate the utilization of the individuals.	MEB	TRT, RTÜK, Media

Table 2: Increasing the international cooperation and mobility in the context of lifelong learning (2013 duration) (MEB,2009b, p. 13).

Precaution	Responsible Institutions	Related Institutions
Higher institutions' full adaptation to Bologna process will be accomplished.	YÖK	MEB, Universities, EU Education and Youth Programmes (National Agency)
Increasing budgetary conditions will be tried for lifelong learning programmes conducted by EU Education and Youth Programmes (National Agency) at the process of signing the memorandum of understanding which will consist of period after 2013.	EU Education and Youth Programmes (National Agency)	Ministry of Finance, DPT, ABGS
The arrangements for possibility to participate in the activities such as EU education and youth programmes also between other countries except EU.	EU Education and Youth Programmes (National Agency)	Prime Ministry
The activities which will be done for effective participation of shareholders will be applied in order to develop international cooperation	MEB	YÖK, EU Education and Youth Programmes (National Agency)
In order to engage the international mobility of the individuals in the context of lifelong learning, formal and informal learning will be enhanced using ICTS	MEB	Universities ÇSGB, YÖK, MYK, Universities

Higher Education Strategy*YÖK Strategy Document*

In the YÖK (The Council of Higher Education) Strategy document, the following issues were declared and determined as the points that should be taken into consideration in all administrative levels in the university system: *Focusing the constitution of European higher education area would brought new transformation; dissemination of the exchanging of the students and instructors; the common research and curriculums; the developments such as adaptation of higher education systems* (YÖK, 2007, p. 161). In addition to the fostering of the student exchanging rates, it can be said that the attracting of foreign instructors and the participation in the multinational projects are the considerable subjects given in the document.

In order to enhance the performance of the education faculties in the term 2007-2012, the goal of at least 5 % of students would utilize exchanging programmes was stated among the goals of YÖK. Nonetheless

the other issue stated in the document was that the number of participation of instructors in exchanging programmes would be increased (YÖK, 2007, p. 169).

Bologna Process

When evaluated the YÖK strategy document, it seems that Turkey has focused intensively on the Bologna process in higher education in terms of the international dimension. In addition, in the many implementations the process seems as a considerable reference. Participating in the process after two years later upon Bologna declaration by 2001, Turkey did adopt the following objectives of Bologna process:

- *Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees (developing diploma supplement implementation through this objective),*
- *Establishment of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System),*
- *Promotion and dissemination of student and instructor mobility*
- *Promotion of necessary European dimension in higher education*
- *Attracting the Europe higher education area*
- *Creating synergy between Europe Research Area and European Higher Education Area, and PhD studies*
- *Promotion of Europe Higher Education Area, and making and empowering the cooperation among the countries outside of Europe (YÖK, 2010d).*

3. Developments and Ongoing Reforms

Turkey's 2010-2011 Action Plan for EU strategy

2010-2011 Action Plan was prepared through the participation process of Turkey to EU. According to the plan, the actions stated in title of "Education and Culture" are given in the Table 3.

MEB, Developments and Ongoing Reforms

MEB participated in four study groups constituted in the context of "Education-Teaching 2010 Programme" by European Commission to achieve the issues regarding education mentioned in Lisbon Strategy. Those groups were *Teachers and Trainers; Accessing to Lifelong Learning and Social Inclusion; ICT; Recognition of Learning Outputs* (MEB, 2010, p. 59).

European Council Linguistic and Cultural Diversities Education

In the context of Pestalozzi in-service education programme, Training of Trainers Project (*Eğiticilerin Eğitimi Projesi*) has been carried out. Also the pilot implementation of tools prepared for "Linguistic and Cultural Diversities Education" project was held between 8 and 9 January 2009 in Ankara (MEB, 2010, p. 59).

In addition, the projects planned by MEB Projects and Coordination Center Presidency in the years of 2010, 2011 and 2012 are given in Table 4.

When evaluated the projects planned by the center mentioned above, it can be said that the projects issues are generally democratic citizenship, human rights, lifelong learning and reform of secondary education, allocated totally 119 million Euro.

No Child Left Behind Project (MATRA)

In the context of MATRA programmes in which the Netherland contributes to the candidate countries to EU, the Preschool Information Society was established in Turkey. A Strategy Action Plan was set up through the policy making studies in enhancing and disseminating quality in preschool education in Turkey (MEB, 2010, p. 99).

Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project

The aims of the Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project prepared by MEB and Europe Council are as follows: *to develop and revise the legislation and the program, to increase the capacities and awareness of preschool and primary school communities, to develop their educational materials, and to get adoption upon democratic culture among the schools from preschool to secondary education regarding the issue of DCHRE.* The budget of project is 9.1 million Euro and the duration is 36 months. The studies in the context of the project are maintained (MEB, 2010, p. 96).

Table 3: 2010-2011 Action Plan: Education and Culture partition (ABGS, 2010, p. 113)

1- LIST OF PRIMARY LEGISLATION		
<i>The name of Legal Regulations that will be changed/enacted</i>	<i>Aim/Scope</i>	<i>Responsible Institution for preparing the arrangements</i>
Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Education and Youth Agency of Turkey.	Harmonizing with the relevant legislation for the periods between 2007-2013 of education and youth programmes of the EU	Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes
Law on ratification of the UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.	Harmonizing with the evolving principles of the UNESCO	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Culture and Tourism
By-law on the Working Procedures and Principles of Education and Youth Agency of Turkey	Aligning the working procedures and principles of the Agency with the criteria envisaged for 2007 – 2013 period and with its enlarged scope.	Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes
By-law on the Procedures and Principles regarding Budget and Accounting Applications of Education and Youth Agency of Turkey.	Harmonizing with amendments on budget and accounting envisaged for 2007 – 2013 period and making new arrangements in parallel with enlarged scope.	Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes
By-law on Guides of the Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes	Arrangement of working conditions of guides who will serve for promotion of the EU Education and Youth Programmes.	Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes

Secondary Education Project

The aims of the Secondary Education Project (SEP) are as follows: *The renewing of secondary education programme, developing the students' learning skills, the supporting of students who are at funded schools, setting up system and empowering the institutional capacity of MEB.* Furthermore SEP has intended the enhancing quality of secondary education in a way which will support the lifelong learning. When looked at the project generally many dimensions such as curriculum development, the enhancing quality of learning outputs, improving learning conditions, setting up vocational guidance and developing teaching of foreign language will be seen. Also one of the outstanding developments in the project is the preparing of Chinese curriculum for trade and tourism secondary schools. For this, specialists have been

appointed for developing Chinese programmes and preparing lesson tools. The studies of development of the curriculum are conducted coordinately with the Chinese education authorities (MEB, 2010, p. 119).

Table 4: Some of the projects planned by MEB Projects and Coordination Center Presidency

<i>Project name</i>	<i>Project source</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Budget</i>	Explanation
Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project	EU 2009 Programming IPA-1	2 years (2010-2012)	9 M€	Aims of the project are to: develop and revise the legislation and programme regarding issue of DCHRE, increase capacities and awareness of preschool and primary school communities regarding issue of DCHRE, and develop their educational materials and get adoption upon democratic culture among the schools from preschool to secondary education.
Supporting Lifelong Learning	EU 2009 Programming IPA-4	24 months (2011 – 2014)	15 M€	Preparation studies regarding IPA-4 2010-2011 are continued. Starting of the project and funding programme until the end of first quarter of 2012 has been planned.
Secondary Education Project	World Bank	5 Years (2006-2011)	80 M€	It means that enhancing quality, economic availability and equality level of secondary education in a way which will support lifelong learning. In this context the aims are: renewing of secondary education programme, developing students' learning skills, and supporting learning conditions of students who are in funded schools with school funds, setting up vocational guidance system and empowering institutional capacity of MEB. By means of this fund 2.000.000 person, included 493.774 students and approximately 13.550 administrators, will utilize from project.
Developing Lifelong Learning Project (HBÖ)	EU 2007-2009 Years Programming IPA-4	2 years (2009-2011)	15 M€	Enhancing receiving to quality education which is appropriate to lifelong learning strategies, demands of labor market and new technology, for people who are in different age groups and education levels particularly for women. And building a framework which will be certificated according to EU standards. This framework will be a model for implementation of approaches of lifelong learning which will be disseminated in Turkey. By grant programme 45 projects have been stated to conduct.

Source: (MEB, 2010c)

European Dimension of History Education Project

As a priority of Vienna and Strasburg summit meetings in the context of “Learning and teaching about the history of Europe in the 20th century” project, the documents in the teacher training reform and the resources focused on the 20th century issue have been prepared. Booklets, educational packages and films were produced in the frame of the project. Besides, the resources such as museums, oral history and media are the other focus points. In Turkey, the implementation of the project has been conducted by the MEB Education and Teaching Council Presidency (MEB, 2009c, p. 238).

Friend-Family Project

Friend-Family is a project started for the students coming from Turkish Republics, Turk and Relative Communities based on the following aims: *The learning of Turkish family' social, cultural, economic structure and traditions; developing Turkey-Turkish as making practice; as basic of society in the family gaining the concepts such as love, respect, responsibility, tolerance, solidarity as a part of their characters.* Approximately 1000 families supported this project in the provinces in which students coming from those countries, and 1500 students utilized from the project (MEB, 2010, p. 119).

European Computer Driving License (ECDL) cooperation protocol for knowledge and skills

ECDL is a certificate recognizing in international area for end-user computer (ECDL, 2010). In the context of campaign that "Turkey is becoming literate" the European Computer Driving License (ECDL) protocol was signed with cooperation of MEB and the Turkey Computing Association (MEB, 2009c, p. 199).

European Schoolnet

In 2009, Turkey became a member of the European Schoolnet established by Sweden in 2006. The net has been supported by 32 countries' education ministries. The study areas of the net are as follows: *Supporting school implementations of technology and innovations in learning and teaching; developing the areas of European schools and educational systems; enhancing the quality of European education* (MEB, 2010, p. 94).

Think Quest Portal

The protocol of Think.com education portal cooperation was signed between MEB and Oracle Education Foundation in 2007. In the education year 2007-2008, approximately at 300 primary schools in 28 provinces the Think.com education portal pilot studies were conducted. With its new name Think Quest education portal used in 58 countries has been designed based on the interaction between students and teachers, and it has created an opportunity for technology use within the cooperation and project based learning methods (MEB, 2010, p. 88).

e-Twinning

As a part of the European Council 2007-2013 Lifelong Learning Programme and e-learning, the aim of the e-Twinning portal is to develop and empower the creating of network among the schools by means of ICT. Turkey participated in the commission in 2009, and the portal has been opened for the participation of Turkish schools. In national level, the portal organizations are being conducted by the Ulusal Destek Servisi (National Support Service) established under the MEB Educational Technologies General Directorate (MEB, 2010, p. 94).

Skills@Work

Skills@Work project conducting in cooperation between British Council and MEB General Directorate of Technical Education for Girls (GDTE) aims to bring together employer, social and educational sides in a common agenda, and produce strategies for developing national reforms regarding vocational education. Localization of vocational education and developing entrepreneurship & innovative skills of students who take education in schools under GDTE are fundamental components of this project (MEB, 2010, p. 110).

Higher Education, Developments and Ongoing Reforms

Bologna Process in Turkey

The Bologna report for Turkey (Bologna Process, 2009, p. 20) indicates that the issues of Turkey in the Bologna Process seem as scattered. Considerable progresses have been achieved in terms of the degree system cycles, the participation of student in quality assurance and Lisbon Recognition Convention principles. Nevertheless the score of Turkey is *three* in terms of national qualifications framework, external quality assurance system and ECTS; and it can be said that focusing on these dimensions is

needed. Besides, the score of Turkey is *one* in terms of the recognition of prior learning. In the Bologna Process Stocktaking Report 2009 (Bologna Process, 2009, p. 10) it underlined that in the content of the importance of lifelong learning, a systematic implementation upon the prior learning has been put forward to overcome the demographic and economic challenges. In this meaning, it can be said that Turkey should take serious steps in the prior learning area.

2009-2011 National Team of Bologna Experts Project

The focus issues based on the *National Team of Bologna Experts Project* are as follows: *National qualifications frameworks, ECTS implementations in higher education institutes, recognition of the prior learning, the employability of graduates and implementation of the Bologna Process in newly established universities*. The project is important particularly in terms of the contribution to full integration of those universities to the process (YÖK, 2010b).

IKMEP(Programs Prepared in the Context of Developing Human Resources through Vocational Education)

Within the context of IKMEP; the programs in accordance with the framework of the European Qualifications Framework and Higher Education Qualifications were accepted by YÖK. These programs are as follows:

- a) Associate degrees for 20 professions and educational standard level
- b) 52 teaching programs,
- c) 64 profession programs,
- d) 19 certificate programs,

The programs have been accepted and decided to conduct in higher education institutes by YÖK in the academic year 2010-2011 (YÖK, 2010c).

YÖK- Fulbright Cooperation Program

According to the cooperation protocol between (YÖK) and Fulbright Commission, it stated that 54 English teaching assistants would be commissioned in the academic year 2010-2011 at the universities established in the last four years. In the content of the program, the developing of students' English oral communication skills, practicing with a native English speaker, learning English with a method based on the interaction and speaking were decided (YÖK, 2010a).

Turkish-German University

In accordance with the agreement 2009/15184 no-RG; a Turkish-German University was established in Turkey through empowering cultural relations and developing cooperation in higher education and academic researches between Turkey and Germany. It determined that teaching language would be Turkish and German, as well as English in case of need; the Bologna process would be a reference for the diplomas, diploma/joint degree would be presented depending on the possibilities; and during establishing process, four faculty as *Law, Science, Economic and Administrative Sciences, Cultural and Social Sciences and Engineering* would be opened (Resmi Gazete, 2009).

National Europass Center of Turkey

The Europass is the passport prepared in accordance of the decision 2241/2004/EC by Europe Parliament and European Council, in order to understand easily and clearly, and within this way to increase the employability and mobility of graduates and students. The Europass centers are being existed in each country of EU and the European Economic Area. They coordinate the activities regarding all documents, and they are first contact points for the individuals and institutions requesting to receive more information about them or to utilize from them. In parallel, regarding the participation of Turkey in lifelong learning programme covering 2007-2013; MYK (Professional Qualification Institution) has been commissioned since 2008 as the National Europass Center. First meeting of MYK was held with the participation of the experts of YÖK, MEB, İŞKUR and the National Agency between 22 and 23 July 2010, and it became the coordinator of the European Language Portfolio. Also MYK intended to implement some kind of activities under the "Project of Increasing Recognizable of Europass and Documents" (MYK, 2010).

Black Sea Economical Cooperation Organization (KEİT)

KEİT obtains the conducting of cooperation in the context of its own educational activities in the area of higher education and ICT in a middle term. Related activities are being conducted by YÖK and MEB (MEB, 2010, p. 61).

Economic Cooperation Organization

The Education Institute of Economic Cooperation Organization has been agreed to operate in Ankara. Approving process upon the regulation of the institute and related documents has been completed. The related studies in this issue have been conducted in the cooperation by the DPT Undersecretary Foreign Economic Affairs General Directorate, Prime Ministry Turkish Cooperation and Development Administration Presidency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Multilateral Cultural Affairs General Directorate Vice Presidency and YÖK (MEB, 2010a, p. 62).

International Mobility

In total the allocation of 490 million Euros budget from the common budget, consisted of contribution of European Council and Turkey for participation to lifelong learning, has been predicted. The consisting 40 percent of this source is the allocation of Turkey's national budget for participating in lifelong learning programme can be seen as a considerable investment to the human resource. Until the end of 2013 approximately 250,000 mobilities will have expected in the context of lifelong learning programmes (MEB, 2009b, p. 37).

Under the programme of the European Council Pestalozzi in-service training, 10 teachers from Turkey participated in the seminars in the issues of *language teaching, genocide, collaborative learning, right to quality in education intercultural competencies and constructive learning environment* in 2009 (MEB, 2010a, p. 59)

German Trainer Teacher Training Protocol

A protocol in accordance of the training of German teacher trainer covering 2009-2012 terms was signed between MEB and GOETHE Institut E.V. In this content, for the effective teaching of German, it aimed that 100 teacher trainers, who would train other teachers who don't participate in related seminars and courses, to be trained (MEB, 2010a, p. 138). It decided that the teachers who are selected for becoming teacher trainer would participate in the national and international course and seminars (MEB, 2009d).

In the Leonardo Da Vinci Vocational Education Programme, 4576 mobilities from Turkey achieved in 2008, while the total mobilities from all the programme countries were 67.603 (European Commission, 2010).

Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities and Turkey-Turkish Education and Teaching Centers

According to Table 5, the number of the students and staff in Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities and Turkey-Turkish Education and Teaching Centers increased in the academic year 2010/2011 when compared the other academic years.

Table 5: The numbers of the students and staff in Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities and Turkey-Turkish Education and Teaching Centers

<i>Academic Years</i>	<i>Number of students</i>		<i>Number of staff</i>	
	Turkey	Others	Turkey	Others
2010/2011	2 206	4 533	260	193
2009/2010	2 089	4 375	243	186
2008/2009	1 823	4 668	228	185
2007/2008	1 867	5 724	238	175
2006/2007	1 432	6 490	221	146

Source: MEB (2011);MEB (2010b); MEB (2009d); MEB (2008); MEB (2007)

Table 6: The scholarship students in turkey coming from Turkish republics and Turk and relative communities

<i>Academic Years</i>	Associate	<i>Undergraduate</i>	<i>Master</i>	Doctorate
As of 22.11.2010	213	3 992	896	553
As of 09.11.2009	203	3 789	885	475
As of 28.11.2008	178	3 242	767	437
As of 06.12.2007	172	3 311	775	429
As of 19.10.2006	184	3 789	830	387

Source: MEB (2011);MEB (2010b); MEB (2009d); MEB (2008); MEB (2007)

As seen in Table 6, the number of scholarship students from Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities increased in 2010 when compared to the previous years. Meanwhile it seems that most scholarship students are undergraduate.

Table 7: The scholarship students going abroad from Turkey

<i>Academic Years</i>	<i>Undergraduate</i>		<i>Master</i>		<i>Doctorate</i>	
	State Scholar ship	Private scholarship	State Scholarship	Private scholarship	State Scholarship	Private scholarship
As of 01.12.2010	-	16 459	902	2 937	499	1 216
As of 01.12.2009	2	17 921	622	3 277	279	1 320
As of 28.11.2008	5	18 103	329	3 843	183	1 600
As of 06.12.2007	8	16 352	107	3 960	124	1 579

Source: MEB (2011);MEB (2010b); MEB (2009d); MEB (2008); MEB (2007)

As seen in Table 7, most of the scholarship students going abroad from Turkey are those who are private scholarship, as of 2010 number of these students, after 2008, have indicated the decreasing trend. Furthermore, it seems that the most private scholarship students are undergraduates. And most of the state scholarship students are in master level. When evaluated the years it will be seen generally that there is a increase in the state scholarship in master and doctorate level, but decrease in the undergraduate.

Erasmus Mobility

Turkey is 8th range with 9.4 % in the rate of increase in the number of students participating in Erasmus student mobility, while EU average is %3,4. In 2008/09 academic year, 988 Euros per month average grant was allocated to the students participated in the Erasmus placement mobility. This amount was 2.29 times more than EU average 432 Euros (Ulusal Ajans, 2010a).

Table 8: Erasmus mobilities in Turkey by Academic Years

<i>Academic terms</i>	<i>Student Mobility</i>		<i>Staff Mobility</i>	
	Outgoing students	Incoming students	Outgoing teaching staff	Incoming teaching staff
2008/2009	6919	2385	1052	985
2007/2008	6274	1321	1693	850
2006/2007	4438	1200	1378	666
2005/2006	2852	828	581	440
2004/2005	1142	299	339	223

Source: (Ulusal Ajans, 2010b, 20).

Table 8 indicates that Erasmus student mobility have increased in the years. However outgoing teaching staff mobility in academic term 2008/2009 decreased when compared the previous two academic years, but incoming teaching staff mobility increased by all the years.

3. Result, Discussion and Recommendations

In terms of international dimension in education it can be said that EU is intensively integrated into policies, strategies and aims of Turkey. In this meaning, it seems that Turkey takes considerable steps in policy documents. However the relations among Turkey, and Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities have become important.

A considerable share of EU policies in the educational policies of Turkey can be explained with the nation's EU process, and the nation to be a part of this process maintains the relations with the EU by following the regulations and requirements of the EU (Sağlam, Özdüdoğru and Çıray, 2011). To become a member of this union, Turkey has made important improvements in education through following the educational policies of EU (European Commission, 2011, p. 98). For that, this integrated policy to EU in education has appeared to be a vital opportunity for Turkey to adapt globalized world, as well as EU.

Turkey conducts many projects in the international dimension in education. Most of them are based on the standards established by the EU. Also important projects are being conducted with USA, Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities and the countries participated in Black Sea Economical Cooperation Organization. Besides, the Chinese curriculum and lesson book studies for trade and tourism secondary schools are being continued.

Despite the considerable improvements and strong participation in EU programmes in education and culture in Turkey, the 2011 progress report published by European Commission (2011, p. 98-100) says that it is still well below the EU average in terms of EU benchmarks, particularly in the percentage of early school leavers and the participation of adults in lifelong learning, moreover, there is no progress on the legislative alignment with the EU *acquis*.

It also seems that the higher education strategy of Turkey is established for focusing on the Bologna Process. When investigated the situation of Turkey in this process, the considerable progress was made toward degree system cycles, student participation in quality assurance and the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Nonetheless the performance of Turkey is 3 point for national qualifications framework, external quality assurance system and implementation of ECTS; and it can be said that focusing on these dimensions should be intensively increased concerning full adaptation to the process. As a critical issue the performance on recognition of prior learning was weak has been determined, 1 point. In the stocktaking report (Bologna Process., 2009), underlining lifelong learning, upon prior learning a systemically implementation need was stated in terms of dealing with demographic and economic challenges. It can be considered that Turkey should take serious steps for this situation.

Although the total number of universities has increased with the establishment of new universities, particularly private universities, these universities vary considerably in terms of the number of teaching staff and infrastructure. These have moved that Turkey is at an advanced stage in implementing the Bologna process recommendations (European Commission, 2011, p. 99).

A comprehensive national qualifications framework based on learning outcomes in the scope of the EU's framework has conducted. However, to facilitate recognition of qualifications and mobility, an independent and fully functional Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency should be established in conformity with European standards and guidelines (European Commission, 2011, p. 99).

Erasmus student mobility has increased in the recent years. Ongoing teaching staff in academic term 2008/2009 decreased comparing to 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 term while incoming teaching staff increased by years. The number of students and staff from Turkey, staying in Turkish Republics and Turk and Relative Communities and Turkey-Turkish Education and Teaching Centers increased. Also the number of scholarship Students from those places in higher education institutions in Turkey increased comparing previous years. The participation of population from age 25 to 64 in lifelong learning activities is not adequate compared to EU countries. For this situation it might be thought that Turkey should take serious steps in lifelong learning activities. Even though the expectation that until 2013 nearly 250 thousand individuals would make international mobility in the context of lifelong learning programmes is seen as an important step, but when considered whole country population this number should be increased to level of EU average.

Despite Turkey has considerable policies in education area, the main challenge is that the actions deriving from these policies are not being accomplished in a systematic approach and political consistency (Tuzcu, 2006, p. 60).

On the other hand, when considered the studies for education planning of Turkey, it seems that various institutions prepare planning studies, and they convey an impression that there are insufficient cooperation and coordination among them (Kavak, 2010, 44).

An analysis made by Küçüker (2012, p. 9) of education plans done according to the eight development plans between 1963-2005 duration in Turkey indicates that there were no adequate changes in the educational understanding in about forty years period, and that it was mostly seen as a means for achieving the economic aims of the plan. And also this analysis concluded that this understanding on educational planning, caused narrowing of educational system to an economic frame, and prevented the possible improvement of education.

In Turkey, among the planning works, only the development plans' progress is being evaluated by the annual programmes. But it is difficult to say that this kind of evaluations is based on a data set of systematic monitoring indicators. Though MEB strategy document has the monitoring indicators, but it will understand in the next years that how the implementing of evaluation is made. However, the monitoring and evaluation process do not seem in the other major policy studies prepared such as TUBITAK and YÖK. Consequently, it can be said that there is a lack of *methodology* in the educational and planning studies in Turkey in terms of the monitoring and evaluation process (Kavak, 2010, p. 45).

A comparative study made by Maya, Çalışkan (2006, p. 375) of education statistics of 25 EU countries and Turkey in the EU Process indicates that EU countries are in a better position than Turkey in terms of *resources invested to education, enrolment rate, the average percentage of young population which both in schools and at work, the number of students per class in primary education, the ratio of students to teaching staff, the rate of working hours of teachers within a teaching year, the components determining the salaries of teachers employed at public schools and the percentage of the decisions taken at secondary education level in public schools.*

In order to make more advance evaluation and analysis upon the conducting of the programmes, projects and international mobilities in terms of Turkey's international dimension in education, it can be said that national impact analysis and national reports based on data with more details are needed.

In conclusion; in this study, the author tried to enlighten the developments and ongoing reforms in the Turkish education system towards international dimension, through a general analysis of the policy, strategy and action documents, the protocols, projects and implementations, and the international mobilities. As a result of this analysis, it can be said that the endeavors of Turkey in the education system in terms of international dimension are noteworthy, but they are not unquestionably sufficient to raise the

education system to the high international standards because of the lack of coordination between the public institutions which determine and implement educational policies, and because of the insufficient progress studies on the systematical data set, as well as the insufficient allocation of resource to the education. In addition, as another matter it seems that the effectiveness of level of those endeavors is not being scientifically monitored and reported. In this meaning, the institutions determining and implementing the education policies should work together with the research institutions, particularly with the universities, and should make progress studies on a systematical data. These conclusions are not a new discourse, but it is clear that if Turkey wants to raise the educational standards in terms of international dimension through reforms and developments efforts, in a developed world, as well as in the EU, the educational policies should move beyond the papers which tell us the policies.

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