

Recent Educational Developments in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

In the Republic of Turkey, founded in 1923, important reforms were made in education during the Atatürk and İnönü eras in the 1920's and 1930's. In the early republican period, education policies were «secular» and «national», however these policies were softened after World War II, and religion was also included in education. After the September 12, 1980 Coup and the ascendance to political power of Turgut Özal in 1983, changes were made in the curriculum and the content of the textbooks in the history and geography courses of middle schools within the framework of the Özalist concept of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. At the same time, the number of the religious Imam-Hatip schools and the students attending them increased rapidly.

From 1980 to the present, significant increases have taken place in all areas of the Turkish education system, especially in the pre-school and the higher education levels. Despite these increases, the rates of school attendance continue to be low. In 1998, an important step was taken to improve this state of affairs through the enactment of a law that provides for an 8-year compulsory basic schooling.

At the same time, there have been some improvements in higher education, but several serious problems continue at the level of the educational system.

Introduction

Turkey emerged from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Turkey won its independence soon after the war and quickly developed into a modernized state based on Western political models. On October 29, 1923, Mustafa Kemal, who became known as Atatürk¹ (Father of Turkey), became the president of the Republic of Turkey. He believed that the new state could only prosper if it became a modern secular state.² During this early Republican era, many community leaders, politicians, and educators served the country with dedication as leaders and master teachers. Among these, Atatürk's contributions as president to the development of the republic are particularly prominent (Güvenç, 1998). After World War II, the secular and nationalist educational policies that were pursued during the nation-building period, were reduced. Increasingly, religious interests became influential in education (Kazamias, 1966). In the 1940s, religious education returned to schools, and the tombs of saints were reopened. Islamists sought a voice in the government, along with Sufis who had remained influential despite the years of strict secular policies (Esposito, 2004). The decades that followed witnessed several socio-political and educational developments that affected the journey towards the modernization of Turkey, brought socio-political and educational struggles.

The 1980 Coup and the Changing Political Life

After Kenan Evren, the Turkish General Chief of Staff, and four other military commanders took over the government on September 12, 1980, the constitution was abrogated, parliament was dissolved, and all political parties and trade unions were banned. After the September 1980 coup, the military leadership tried to stabilize Turkey's political system by introducing a new constitution (Kramer, 2000: 25; Birand, 1987). The new military regime announced the creation of a National Security Council to run the government with the help of technocrats. After two years, in 1982, General Kenan Evren became the new president. President Evren repeatedly announced his intention to put the Turkish state back on the rails of Kemalism and to protect and safeguard democracy. In the parliamentary elections in 1983, the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi-ANAP) won with 45 per cent of votes, and Turgut Özal (Acar, 2002: 163-180) became Prime Minister.

The ANAP combined economic liberalism with cultural conservatism, and represented different interest groups and political views ranging from the centre to the far right, and the private sector supported the ANAP. The Özal government extended trade liberalization laws. The first years of the new government led to a boom in the economy, but the problems of high inflation and insufficient investment remained. After 1987, the popularity of the ANAP began to decline and in 1989, Prime Minister Turgut Özal was elected President. In the 1991 and the 1995 elections the ANAP lost its majority in parliament, and since then Turkey has been governed by coalition and minority governments. In 1993, Demirel (Arat, 2002) was elected President following the death of President Özal. The leadership of the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi-DYP) passed on to Tansu Çiller (Cizre, 2002) who later became Turkey's first female Prime Minister. In the 1995 elections, the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi-RP), led by Necmeddin Erbakan (Özdalga, 2002), received 21 per cent of the votes. After the elections, ANAP and DYP formed a coalition, but it did not last for very long. In 1996, RP and DYP formed a coalition and Necmeddin Erbakan became Prime Minister. The RP-DYP coalition formed a government in 1996 and subsequently made an important impact on Turkish politics. In the National Security Council's (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu-MGK) meeting held in February 28, 1997, a mandate was issued for the government regarding political, economic, religious and educational action areas (Çekirge, 1997; Zürcher, 2004: 300-301). Additionally, the Council's mandate led to a break-up of the ruling parliamentary coalition and the replacement of their prime minister, Necmeddin Erbakan.

After the resignation of Erbakan, a coalition was formed in 1997 by the ANAP, the Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti-DSP) and the DTP (Democratic Turkey Party-DTP) under the presidency of Mesut Yılmaz (Çınar & Özbudun, 2002). After the elections in 1999, another coalition was formed consisting of the DSP, Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi-MHP) and the ANAP under the presidency of Bülent Ecevit (Tachau, 2002). On May 5, 2000, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi-TBMM) elected Ahmet Necdet Sezer as Turkey's 10th President. Early elections were held because of the economic crisis of February 2001 and problems within the government. Ultimately, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) took over the government in November of 2002 (Doğan, 2005; Hale, 2005; Dağı, 2005). A new center right government

was formed, under the presidency of Abdullah Gül and then under Tayyip Erdoğan, who left Erbakan's Islamist-oriented party and became Prime Minister of the new and present government.

Educational Approach After 1980

The ANAP, with Turgut Özal as the Prime Minister, was the most effective government formed after the military coup of 1980. Turgut Özal tried to orient Turkey to the West, yet at the same time he pursued political strategies that were derived from the so-called Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

The Turkish-Islamic synthesis is a concept that was introduced in the 1970's by the Hearths of the Enlightened (Aydınlar Ocağı)³. It brings together two traditional movements, the Islamic right and the nationalist right. Differences between the groups are minimized to oppose the growth of the Turkish left, which started to become strong after the 1960's. Additionally, it served to counter the Soviet threat. The Özalist government adopted the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. This idea gained strength by arguing that Turkey was under an imperialist cultural attack and the only way to resist it was to embrace the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. Turks would not be able to preserve their identities without Islam. Islam was emphasized more than the nationalist ideas, owing to the inner and the outer political conditions of the era. Efforts were made to demonstrate harmony between Islam and Atatürkism. Nonetheless, the Turkish left considered this to be a dilution of secularism and was deeply criticized.

The Turkish-Islamic synthesis of the 1980's subsequently influenced education in the 1990's. The secularism-religious polarization and problems due to the issue of whether or not «turbans» could be worn in schools occurred in an increasing number of imam-hatip schools (Copeaux, 1998; Güvenç, Şaylan, Tekeli & Turan, 1994). Curricula and textbooks were also changed as a result of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. Creationist beliefs were added to the curriculum together with Darwin's theory of evolution (Akyüz, 2004: 412). In the middle schools, the names, contents and textbooks of «history» and «geography» courses were changed between 1985 and 1997 to «national history» and «national geography». History textbooks provide a good example of these changes. The textbooks physically reflected these monolithic perspectives in gray blocked page lay-outs that lacked desirable visual supporting ma-

terials. The narratives of the texts themselves were poorly connected and inadequately substantiated. Additionally, teachers were encouraged to adopt pedagogies that emphasized rote memorization and disconnected facts. Overall, the history textbooks adopted narrow nationalist historical concepts that reflected didactic and authoritarian viewpoints. In the 1980's, religion and ethics became part of the basic curriculum of all schools. Additionally, the religious imam-hatip schools and the Koran schools were the target of improvement efforts (Çakır, Bozan, & Talu, 2004: 12-20; Akşit, 1991: 145-170). After the ANAP, a coalition was formed in 1991 by the DYP and the Social Democratic People's Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti-SHP) under the presidency of Süleyman Demirel.

During the Demirel coalition government from 1991 to 1993, a new flexibility was added to the system of credits and program of studies for all secondary schools. This policy continued until 1995 (Akyüz, 2004: 413). On the other hand, the number of universities increased, many students were sent to other countries for doctoral studies, the length of university studies for primary school teachers increased from 2 to 4 years and the budget share for education increased to its highest level in the last 25 years.⁴

After February 28, 1997, the government changed and a new coalition was formed by ANAP-DSP-DTP under the presidency of Mesut Yılmaz. The new coalition in 1997 introduced a minimum eight-year obligatory level education. Other significant changes included: the founding of Curriculum Laboratory Schools (Müfredat Laboratuvar Okulu-MLO); the introduction of new regulations in the faculties of education; the unification of the university entrance examinations; the reform of the centralized structures of the governance of education as a result of the Education Regions and Commissions Instructions, issued in 1998.

The DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition led by Ecevit, stressed the importance of education. It built many schools (Boarding Primary Region Schools [Yatılı Bölge İlköğretim Okulu-YİBO] and Pension Primary Schools [Pansiyonlu İlköğretim Okulu-PIO]), thus enabling more than half a million more pupils from rural areas to enter schools. During the AKP era after 2003, a campaign with the support of UNICEF was waged to promote girls' education using the slogan, «Let's go to school, girls!» (Haydi Kızlar Okula). In particular, this campaign targeted girls who were not sent to school because of traditional, religious or economic reasons, especially in the Eastern regions of the country.⁵ Starting in April 2004, Turkey

participated in three important EU educational programs: «Socrates», «Leonardo Da Vinci» and «Youth».⁶

The Development of Education in Turkey: From Where to Where?

In 1980, the population of Turkey was 44.5 million and the number of students was 8 million.⁷ According to the data for the year 2004, the population increased to 71.7 million⁸ and the number of students to nearly 16 million. The general population has increased 61% in the last quarter century, but the percentage of those attending school has increased 93%. Student increases and percentage increased in the two periods, according to educational level, are shown in table 1.

TABLE 1
Enrollment Numbers between 1980 and 2005

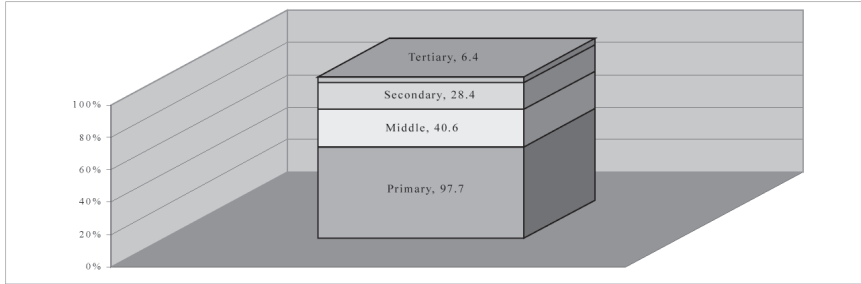
Education Level	Enrollment		Increase Ratios %
	1980-1981 Academic Year	2004-2005 Academic Year	
Pre-School	43.545	434.771	898
Primary	6.842.372	10.565.389	54
Secondary	1.054.937	2.721.519	158
Tertiary	237.369	2.073.428	774
General Total	8.178.223	15.795.107	93

Sources: Turkish Statistical Institution, *Statistical Indicators, 1923-2004*, http://www.die.gov.tr/Ist_gostergeler.pdf; Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, *2004-2005 Milli Eğitim Sayısal Verileri*, <http://apk.meb.gov.tr/>; Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Genel Müdürlüğü, *Okul Öncesi Eğitimde Tarihsel Gelişim*, <http://ooegm.meb.gov.tr/>

The 59% population increase percentage in the last quarter century is also thought provoking. Although the percentage population increase decreased to 1.4% after the 1990s, it is still above the OECD average. This increase is one of the factors that created problems in the reform of education. Nonetheless, there have been important developments in schooling between 1980 and 2005 despite the high population increase rate.

According to the «Economic and Social Index, 1950-2001» in figure 1, the schooling ratios are as follows:

FIGURE 1
Schooling Ratios by Group of Schools (1980-1981 Academic Year)

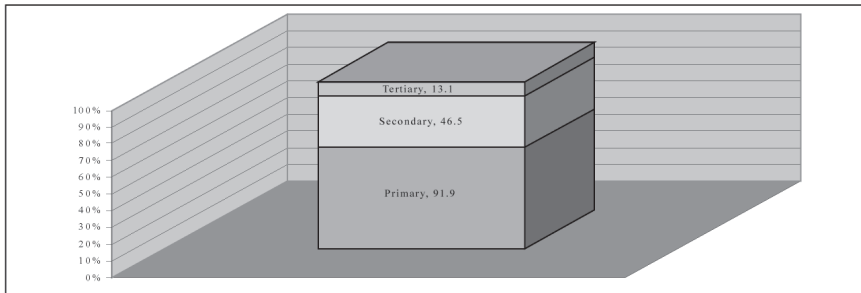


Source: Ceteris Paribus, *Ekonomik ve Sosyal Göstergeler*, 1950-2001, <http://www.ceterisparibus.net/veritabani/DPT1950-2001.htm>

According to figure 1, the schooling ratios were high in primary schools in the 1980-1981 academic year, but the schooling ratios were still lower in other levels.

According to «Turkey Statistical Yearbook 2004» in figure 2, in 2004-2005 academic year, the schooling ratios are as follows:

FIGURE 2
Academic Year 2004-2005: Schooling Ratios by Group of Schools
(There are no data about pre-school)



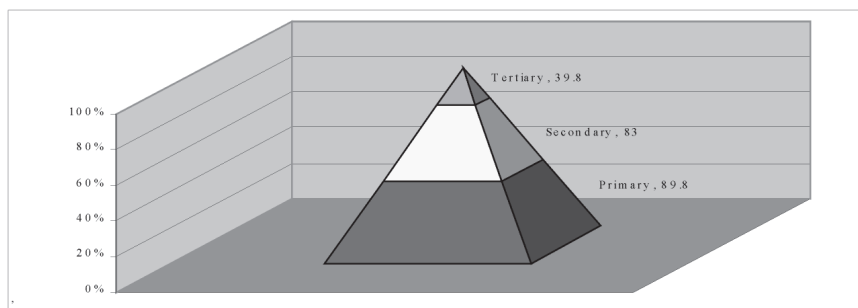
Source: Turkish Statistical Institution, *Turkey's Statistical Yearbook 2004*, http://www.die.gov.tr/yillik/yillik_2004_eng.pdf

Figure 2 indicates a decrease in the primary school level. This may be due to the change in the compulsory primary school period that was raised from 5 to 8 years in 1997. Some families, especially in the Eastern

rural regions, were not willing to send their daughters to school for various reasons.

Figure 3 presents data on the passing to upper step ratio in schools in 2001-2002 academic year:

FIGURE 3
Passing Ratios of Students to an Upper Step in Schools
(2001-2002 Academic Year)



Source: UNICEF, *A Gender Review in Education, Turkey 2003*, <http://www.unicef.org/Turkey/pdf/ge21.pdf>

According to figure 3, while the ratio of students proceeding to secondary schools after primary schools is high, the ratio of students proceeding to higher education after secondary school education is lower.

Primary Education

Primary education has been one of the most important areas of reform during the entire period of the Republic. Revolutionary and secular ideologies led the government to prioritize primary education in the rural areas, in particular, because approximately 80% of the Turkish population resides in these areas. Despite all these efforts, the literacy rates increased only to 66% in 1980 from 19% in 1935. As a result of the literacy campaign during the era of military-rule, the ratio was later increased to 76% in 1985.⁹

Although the National Basic Education Law provided for compulsory 8-year primary education in 1973, this provision was not implemented until the 1981-1982 academic year, and even then, only on a trial-basis. The first major commitment to 8-year primary education was

undertaken by the government of Mesut Yılmaz in 1991.¹⁰ Although similar commitments were made in the government programs of Demirel, Çiller and Erbakan, the necessary legal regulations was finally actualized by the MGK government in February 28, 1997 (Akyüz, 2004: 320).¹¹

Between 1980 and 2005, various regulations were made affecting the weekly course schedule of the primary school curricula. These are listed below in Table 2 and Table 3:

TABLE 2
Primary and Middle School Curricula (1980-1981 Academic Year)

Subjects	Number of Weekly Periods in Each Grade							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	1st	2nd	3rd
Turkish Arts	10	10	10	6	6	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4
Social Studies	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
Science	-	-	-	4	4	4	4	4
Social Sciences	-	-	-	3	3	4	4	3
History of the Turkish Republic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Foreign Languages	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	3
Religion	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
Ethic	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
Drawing-Handwork	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
Music	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical Education	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1
Group Activities	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-
Total Compulsory Courses	25	25	25	25	25	26	26	26
Foreign Languages	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Home Economy	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Trade	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Elective Courses	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	4
General Total Courses	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30

Source: Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 9th Edition, Ankara: Pegem-A Yayıncılık, 2004, pp. 318-323.

TABLE 3
Primary Education Curricula (2004-2005 Academic Year)

Subjects	Number of Weekly Periods in Each Grade							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Turkish Arts	12	12	12	6	6	5	5	5
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Social Studies	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
Science	-	-	-	4	4	4	4	4
Social Sciences	-	-	-	3	3	3	3	3
History of the Turkish Republic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Foreign Languages	-	-	-	2	2	4	4	4
Religious Culture and Ethics	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	2
Drawing- Handwork	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Music	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Technology and Design	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Traffic and First Aid Education	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Counseling/Group Activities	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Compulsory Courses	28	28	28	26	26	28	28	28
Foreign Languages	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	2
Art Activities	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
Sport Activities	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
Computer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chess	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Thinking Education	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Public Culture	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Agricultural/Animal Practice	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Reinforcement and Etude	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Elective Courses	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	2
General Total Courses	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, «İlköğretim Okulları Haftalık Ders Çizelgeleri ve Açıklamaları», <http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/ogretmen/>

When table 3 is examined, it can be observed that, by 2004-2005 the total course hours were increased from 25 to 30 in the first 5 classes of primary education. Also, the credits of the courses that aim at the students' linguistic, creative, social and psychological development were increased, while the credits of social sciences and math decreased somewhat. Courses such as technology and design, traffic and first aid were added to the curriculum. The addition of elective courses starting from the 1st grade can also be considered as being a positive change.

Secondary Education

Until 1997, secondary education included both middle schools and high school, but after 1997 when the primary education period was extended to 8 years and the middle school began to be considered as a continuation of primary school, it included only the high schools. Between 1980 and 2005, when Turkey started to open itself to the outside world, the student population increased 267% in the general high schools and 102% in the technical high schools. The student population increase in the technical high schools was 74% during the ANAP government era (between 1983 and 1992), while the percentage increase of these schools from 1992 to today is only 7.5%. Evidently, technical high schools were greatly emphasized during the Özal Era, but less attention was paid to them in subsequent years.¹²

This reduction in interest in technical high schools may be due to three reasons: First, graduates from technical high schools are paid the same salary as normal high school graduates despite the fact that they are trained in a given profession. Second, according to regulations passed in 1997, technical high school graduates can only attend universities related to their professions. They are less likely than normal high school graduates to pass university entrance exams (Vorkink, 2005). Finally, after February 28, 1997, the number of imam-hatip students decreased. Additionally, these students are automatically admitted to technical colleges (Meslek Yüksek Okulu-MYO) if they complete their technical high school studies and attain certain standards.

Higher Education

Prior to the 1980's, higher education institutions were relatively autonomous, but they were brought under greater central control by YÖK (High-

er Education Council) after 1981 by Bülent Ulusu, the prime minister of the military government, who argued that these institutions were «terrorist nests».¹³

Turkish universities have had long-standing problems, e.g. insufficient facilities in classrooms, libraries and laboratories, and deficiencies in the number of qualified academic personnel. While there were 19 universities when YÖK was formed in 1980, 8 more universities were added in 1982 by converting the units or campuses of existing universities in other cities. In 1992, 23 new universities were founded with similar methods and also new faculties were added to the existing ones. There are currently 79 universities, 26 of which are private and 53 are public. A new law passed in December 30, 2005, will lead to the founding of 15 new public universities (Newspaper *Milliyet*, 2005). Despite the quantitative growth in universities, these changes have not been matched with the needed qualitative requirements.

In the last twenty-five years, many efforts have been made to remove or reform the YÖK law. With the exception of the Özal and the Bülent Ulusu governments, all other governments sought to remove or reform YÖK.¹⁴ A reformist draft statute was prepared by the AKP government in May 2004 which did not provide for an extensive change of YÖK and was not accepted by the president. The real purpose of the reform was to ease the entrance of the graduates of imam-hatip schools to universities and to change the structure of YÖK by dismissing the current YÖK employees (Newspaper *Sabah*, 2004). Although some changes have been implemented, the process of making universities democratic and efficient institutions is still incomplete.

Teacher Training

Until 1980, the primary, middle and high school teacher training institutions were controlled by the Ministry of Education. In 1981, control over these institutions passed to the universities. The names of the 2-year Pedagogical Institutes (Eğitim Enstitüleri) for primary schools were changed to 4-years Schools of Education (Eğitim Yüksekokulu), and the Higher Teacher Training Institutes (Yüksek Öğretmen Okulları) for middle, high and technical schools became 4-year Schools of Education (Eğitim Fakültesi). In 1981, there were 17 Eğitim Yüksekokulu and 19 Eğitim Fakültesi (10 for middle and high schools, 9 for technical schools). The length of study at the Schools of Education for Primary School Teachers (Eğitim Yük-

sekokulu) was increased to 4 years after the 1989-1990 academic year (Duman, 1991; Öztürk, 1998; Kaya, 1984). Starting in 1986, a 2-year associate degree was introduced by the Open University for 130.000 primary school teachers who only had high school diplomas. The goal was to improve the credentials of these teachers (Akyüz, 2004: 347).

In the 1998-1999 academic year, the high school teacher departments of the Schools of Education extended their programs of study to 5 years.

Conclusion

Turkish political developments between 1980 and 2005 had a significant impact on education. Important economic decisions made in the 1980's led to macro-economic changes, which were coupled with a renewed of Islamic interest in the Turkish educational system. Although the Turkish-Islamic synthesis became more and more influential, it was sufficiently powerful to deter Turkish movements oriented towards the West. The movement back and forth between tradition and innovation in the policies of the various governments appear to have accomplished little more than pandering to the parties' political interests and preoccupations.

In the first half of the 1990's, democratic reform efforts and the economic crisis led to an increase in the budget allocation for education and a realization about the necessity of educational reform. However, in the second half of the 1990's, RP's success in the national elections led to fears about the growth of Islamist influences. Political and economic problems since 2000 have compounded the problems. AKP managed to gain sole control over the government in 2002, causing some uneasiness about the perils of one-party rule. Subsequently, however, this change has been seen more positively. In particular, this has led to the October 3, 2005 decision to begin negotiations with the EU about potential membership. Integration efforts with the EU have encouraged people to look to the future with new hope.

From the domestic perspective, the changes that have taken place in Turkey since 1980 have not been as positive as we would have hoped. Secularism continuously abrades, corruption increases, important positions in the government are filled with under-experienced individuals, education has become increasingly religious and the hopelessness of the community increases. However, if these changes are looked at from the outside, one can see a Turkey that has improved its macro-economic indicators and is becoming increasingly attractive to foreign investment. One can see a Turkey that

is becoming ever-more important in the world political agendas as it combines different traditions on a global platform and is increasingly able to question its own political structure and become more democratic. Efforts to comply with EU norms and standards have had a positive impact on Turkey. It is also hoped that the negotiation process will be similarly a positive influence on the Turkish educational system, the first steps of which are already evident.

Tension between the desire to preserve traditions and the realization of the need for modernization creates many obstacles to the reform process. It is hoped that the need to comply with EU laws will help to resolve this problem. Nonetheless, courage, planning, and determination by all involved parties will be required to move forward.

Compared with many European countries, the USA and other parts of the world, the public schools in Turkey are more centrally-controlled and have much less independence regarding scheduling, courses, hiring, textbook selection, and curriculum planning. Centrally-controlled curriculum creates problems due to socio-economic and geographic differences. This results in significant differences in academic achievement and future opportunities. Efforts to improve the Turkish educational system have accelerated since 1997. Both quantitative and qualitative improvements have been seen. Nonetheless, the Turkish educational system continues to have problems with educational philosophy, educational planning, the teacher education and the training of school administrators, curriculum, and the general examination system. Most significantly, comprehensive educational reform is held back by all-too-frequent changes in the ruling parties and the government coalitions.

Notes

¹ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) is founder of the Turkish Republic and was its president from 1923 to 1938 (See Mango, 2000; Kinross, 1965).

² For modernity and development in Turkey, see Kazamias, 1966; Berkes, 1964; Lewis, 2002; Childress, 2001; Zürcher, 2004.

³ See, «Aydınlar Ocağı», <http://www.aydinlarocagi.org/>

⁴ Maliye ve Gümrük Bakanlığı, *Bütçe Gider ve Gelir Gerçekleşmeleri, 1924-1991*, Ankara: Maliye ve Gümrük Bakanlığı Yayını, 1992; Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, «2004-2005 Milli Eğitim Sayısal Verileri», <http://apk.meb.gov.tr/>

⁵ Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, «Haydi Kızlar Okula», <http://www.haydikizlarokula.org/>

⁶ Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, «Avrupa Birliği Programlarına Türkiye'nin Katılımı», <http://www.meb.gov.tr/duyurular/duyurular/AvrupaBirligi2004/ABEgitimProgTurkiyenin-Katilimi.htm>.

⁷ Turkish Statistical Institution, *Statistical Indicators, 1923-2004*, http://www.die.gov.tr/Ist_gostergeler.pdf

⁸ The World Bank Group, «Turkey Data Profile», <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?SelectedCountry=TUR&CCODE=TUR&CNAME=Turkey&PTYPE=CP>

⁹ Turkish Statistical Institution, *Statistical Indicators, 1923-2004*, http://www.die.gov.tr/Ist_gostergeler.pdf

¹⁰ TBMM, «Yılmaz Hükümeti Programı», <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukumetler/hp48.htm>

¹¹ Turkey received 600 million USD in support of primary education improvement from the World Bank between 1998 and 2002 (The World Bank, «Current Projects in Turkey», <http://www.worldbank.org.tr/external/default/main?menuPK>)

¹² Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, «2004-2005 Milli Eğitim Sayısal Verileri», <http://apk.meb.gov.tr/>

¹³ TBMM, «Ulus Hükümeti Programı», <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukumetler/hp44.htm>. During the second half of 1970's there were intensive right-left clashes among students' university groups and many students died in that clashes.

¹⁴ See, TBMM, «Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümetleri», <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukumetler/hukumetler.htm>

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η Τουρκική Δημοκρατία ιδρύθηκε το 1923. Υπό την ηγεσία κυρίως του Mustafa Kemal Atatürk αλλά και του İsmet İnönü κατά τις δεκαετίες του 1920 και του 1930, ο εκσυγχρονισμός του κράτους και η ανάπτυξη του βασίστηκε στα δυτικά πολιτικά πρότυπα. Οι εκπαιδευτικές πολιτικές που εφαρμόστηκαν την περίοδο αυτή είχαν «κοσμικό» και «εθνικό» χαρακτήρα. Μετά το Δεύτερο Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο όμως οι πολιτικές αυτές περιορίστηκαν, καθώς θρησκευτικές ομάδες πίεσης απέκτησαν επιρροή στα εκπαιδευτικά πράγματα και ήδη από τη δεκαετία του 1940 η θρησκευτική εκπαίδευση επέστρεψε στα σχολεία. Στις δεκαετίες που ακολούθησαν, ποικίλες κοινωνικο-πολιτικές και εκπαιδευτικές εξελίξεις επέδρασαν στην εκσυγχρονιστική πορεία της Τουρκίας και έγιναν αιτία για διαμάχες γύρω από την εκπαίδευση.

Το 1983, τρία χρόνια μετά το πραξικόπημα της 12ης Σεπτεμβρίου 1980, η Τουρκία απέκτησε εκλεγμένη κυβέρνηση με πρωθυπουργό τον Turgut Özal, επικεφαλής του Κόμματος της Μητέρας Πατρίδας. Η ιδεολογία του κόμματος συνδύαζε τον οικονομικό φιλελευθερισμό με τον πολιτιστικό συντηρητισμό και εκπροσωπούσε πολιτικές απόψεις που ξεκινούσαν από το χώρο του κέντρου και έφταναν ως την άκρα δεξιά. Οι εκπαιδευτικές πολιτικές της κυβέρνησης Özal εμπνέονταν από τη λεγόμενη «Τουρκο-Ισλαμική σύνθεση», μια πνευματικο-πολιτική κίνηση που επιχειρούσε να συναιρέσει την ισλαμική και την εθνική δεξιά με σκοπό να αναχαιτίσει τη δυναμική της ανερχόμενης τουρκικής αριστεράς. Η κίνηση αυτή υποστήριζε ότι η Τουρκία δεχόταν ιμπεριαλιστική πολιτιστική επίθεση και ότι ο μόνος τρόπος για την αντιμετώπισή της ήταν να επιδιώξει την Τουρκο-Ισλαμική σύνθεση, θεωρώντας ότι οι Τούρκοι δε θα μπορούσαν να διατηρήσουν την ταυτότητά τους χωρίς το Ισλάμ.

Η «Τουρκο-Ισλαμική σύνθεση» επηρέασε κατά τις δεκαετίες του 1980 και του 1990 τόσο τα αναλυτικά προγράμματα (κυρίως αυτά της Ιστορίας και της Γεωγραφίας στη μέση εκπαίδευση, τα οποία απέκτησαν εθνικιστικό χαρακτήρα) όσο και τις παιδαγωγικές μεθόδους (που έγιναν περισσότερο αυταρχικές). Η θρησκευτική και ηθική διαπαιδαγώγηση εντάχθηκε στο βασικό πυρήνα των αναλυτικών προγραμμάτων όλων των βαθμίδων και έγιναν προσπάθειες βελτίωσης των Κορανικών και των θρησκευτικών σχολείων (imam-hatip).

Σημαντικές ήταν οι εξελίξεις στην εκπαίδευση και κατά τη δεκαετία του 1990. Η κυβέρνηση Demirel (1990-1993) έκανε περισσότερο ευέλικτο το πρόγραμμα σπουδών της δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης, η διάρκεια της εκπαίδευσης των εκπαιδευτικών αυξήθηκε από δύο σε τέσσερα χρόνια και εντάχθηκε στα πανεπιστήμια, ενώ η κυβέρνηση Yılmaz από την πλευρά της θέσπισε την οκταετή υποχρεωτική εκπαίδευση (1997), ενοποίησε τις εξετάσεις εισαγωγής στην ανώτατη εκπαίδευση και μεταρρύθμισε τη διοίκηση της εκπαίδευσης (1998).

Η σημερινή κυβέρνηση του Κόμματος Δικαιοσύνης και Ευημερίας έχει ξεκινήσει μια εκστρατεία για την αύξηση της συμμετοχής των κοριτσιών στην εκπαίδευση, παρεμβαίνοντας σε πληθυσμούς που δε στέλνουν τα κορίτσια στο σχολείο για λόγους θρησκευτικούς, οικονομικούς ή από παράδοση, κυρίως στις ανατολικές περιοχές της χώρας.

Στο τελευταίο τέταρτο του 20ού αιώνα η πρόσβαση στην εκπαίδευση αυξήθηκε κατά 93%, με σημαντικότερη την αύξηση στην προσχολική και την ανώτατη εκπαίδευση. Όμως, παρά τη σαφή επέκταση, βελτίωση και ανάπτυξη της εκπαίδευσης τα χρόνια αυτά, τα προβλήματα που πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν παραμένουν πολλά και σημαντικά. Η συνεχής παλινδρόμηση των εκπαιδευτικών πολιτικών των διάφορων κυβερνήσεων ανάμεσα στην παράδοση και την καινοτομία και οι γενικότερες πολιτικές και οικονομικές συνθήκες καθιστούν την εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση αναγκαία.

Παρατηρώντας κανείς τα πράγματα εκ των έσω συμπεραίνει ότι οι αλλαγές που έγιναν από το 1980 και μετά δεν είχαν τα αναμενόμενα αποτελέσματα, ιδιαίτερα σε ό,τι αφορά την τόνωση του κοσμικού χαρακτήρα της εκπαίδευσης και τον περιορισμό της διαφθοράς. Ταυτόχρονα, ο εξωτερικός παρατηρητής από την πλευρά του δεν μπορεί παρά να αναγνωρίσει ότι η θέση της Τουρκίας έχει στο ίδιο διάστημα βελτιωθεί σημαντικά, όσον αφορά τόσο τα μακροοικονομικά μεγέθη όσο και το ρόλο της χώρας στη διεθνή σκηνή.

Η προσπάθεια ένταξης στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση φαίνεται να έχει ήδη θετικά αποτελέσματα και για το εκπαιδευτικό σύστημα, που εντοπίζονται κυρίως στην ενίσχυση της εκσυγχρονιστικής προσπάθειας. Αναμένεται έτσι να προχωρήσουν οι απαιτούμενες μεταρ-

ρυθμίσεις στους τομείς του προσανατολισμού/των σκοπών της εκπαίδευσης, της διοίκησης, του σχεδιασμού της εκπαίδευσης, των σχολικών προγραμμάτων και βιβλίων, καθώς και της εκπαίδευσης των εκπαιδευτικών, οι οποίες καθυστερούν λόγω των συχνών κυβερνητικών αλλαγών.