



EDUCATION
REFORM
INITIATIVE

Education Monitoring Report 2009

Extended Summary Evaluation in English

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Summary Evaluation

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ABOUT THE EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE

The aims of Education Reform Initiative (ERI), which reflects, puts forward questions, defines problems and recommends solutions on the education policy in Turkey, are developing education policies which would ensure that all girls and boys access to education, which is among the fundamental human rights and enhance the social and economic development of Turkey, and contributing to the consolidation of participatory, transparent and innovative policy-making processes in education.

Launched within the Istanbul Policy Center at Sabancı University in 2003, ERI continues its research, advocacy and monitoring activities as well as its pilot projects in the field in accordance with its commitment to the ideal of “quality education for all”.

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FOREWORD

The Education Monitoring Report published this year, like in previous years, follows developments and generates proposals regarding teaching-learning processes, the content of education and learning environments. This report also illustrates the special importance given by the ERI to the role of secondary education in the participation of young people in social life. A foreword on this subject can have multiple emphases. To me, the most important among them is the point that the participation of young people in social life cannot be restricted to their participation in economic activities only. Participation in economic activities and an increased ability to find employment are of course amongst the expectations young people have from secondary education, however, their expectations span a much wider area of participation.

Taking young people's expectations of employment as a starting point, that youth unemployment in Turkey is and has for a long time been twice the rate of adult unemployment implies that there are problems in fulfilling this expectation.

The educational attainment level of young labour force in Turkey is improving in comparison to that of the adult labour force. However, the average educational attainment level of the employed remains low. Both household surveys and census data indicate that out of the employed, around 15 percent has a degree of higher education, 25 percent completed secondary education and 60 percent has a degree of primary education or lower. In Turkey, the rates of continued participation in secondary education are low and the rates of school drop-outs are high. According to OECD data, in Turkey only half of young people between the ages of 15-19 attend secondary education, whereas the OECD average is above 80 percent. Young people from low-income backgrounds who do not have expectations of attending higher education see the expenses they need to make to attend secondary education as higher than the advantages this education would provide towards finding a job and a good salary. When they find an employment opportunity, including those in the informal markets, they prefer to leave the school.

The problems in education should not be seen as the sole reason why youth unemployment is high. In the same vein, it is impossible to say that the only purpose of secondary education is to equip young people with necessary information and skills for them to find employment. Secondary education in Turkey has come under serious criticism for its failure to fulfil its functions of internalization of a culture of democracy and creation of changes in attitudes. All the stakeholders that debate reform proposals voice the lacks in the areas of developing a habit of critical thinking, the critical synthesis of information, respect for differences and the development of tolerance.

Yet, what I want to emphasize in this foreword is that for the internalization of a culture of

democracy there is a need for a change of paradigm significant enough to touch all areas that are related to youth and that does not remain limited to secondary education. This change depends on a reorganization of education services in a way that these services enable young people to exist as “young people” and to go through the process of being unique individuals during their youth.¹

The ability of young people to join public life and exist as unique and equal individuals depends on them being aware of their rights, being able to access their rights and having the necessary information, skills and talent to use them. In Amartya Sen's terms, the capabilities of young people in many areas must be expanded and strengthened.²

As things stand, secondary education does not fulfil its function of empowering young people in the many aspects necessary for their participation in public life and for the internalization of a culture of democracy. For such an empowerment, that is to say an increase in capabilities, it is imperative that young people not only know their rights but can benefit from them. This brings the question of how the social life in which education takes place is constructed and what methods are used. The social environment in which education takes place and the methods employed must be constructed in ways that enable the participation of youth, for them to have a say in all issues that concern their lives. It should enable them to express themselves and explore their talents and differences. In such an organization, it plays a decisive role whether the problems regarding strict disciplinary rules, dress codes and classroom democracy/participation/communication are resolved or not.

Another important matter when it comes to the empowerment of youth is as follows: Due to reasons of social or ethnic background, gender or regional inequalities, young people are different rather than homogeneous. For the increased participation of young people from different backgrounds in public life, there is a need for efforts which take into account these differences throughout the secondary education. The non-acknowledgement of the differences is one of the reasons why students leave school early. Hence, social exclusion is reinforced.³

“Due to reasons of social or ethnic background, gender or regional inequalities, young people are different rather than homogeneous. For the increased participation of young people from different backgrounds in public life, there is a need for efforts which take into account these differences throughout the secondary education.”

The spaces that bring young people together increasingly become independent of physical environment. Young people socialize in cyber environments that transcend geographical

1 N.Yentürk, G. Nemetlu and Y. Kurtaran, Türkiye’de Gençlik Çalışması ve Politikaları, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2008.

2 A. Sen, Development as Freedom, Oxford University Press, 2001.

3 A. Walther and A. Pohl, Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth, Tübingen Institute for Regional Innovation and Social Research, 2005.

boundaries. These spaces of socialization are very flexible and constantly renewed. The communication is participatory, there isn't a hierarchical structure and a relationship is established amongst equals. Young people find the opportunity to express themselves using their chosen written, visual etc. tools. As a result, young people find the opportunity to interact, exchange experience and information with peers they have never come across. Young people have access to a variety of sources and channels of information including internet, chat rooms, television programs, films, music albums, songs, internet and video games, electronic toys and comics.

The practice in school remains very much disconnected from the realities of young people's daily lives. The educational tools that are used in education as well as the different habits of communication between students and teachers constitute a very significant gap. This gap undermines the impact of inter-generational education and prevents the proliferation of democracy within the classroom. The intellectual accumulation of teachers, their talent for following and adapting to change must be given more significance than ever.

The depth and speed of which cultural and social changes (including those related to labour force qualities) that impact young people's lives bring forth the need to construct education in a way that is flexible and apt to change.

Lastly, it must be mentioned that this problem of adaptation is not limited to the public and is relevant in the case of political parties of civil society organizations that want to work with young people. Invitations to "participate," with frameworks that are constructed by adults, that do not recognize the everyday life practices of young people and the differences in their self-articulation, that do not open new channels for those, cannot be successful whether they come from educational institutions or civil society organizations.

Prof. Dr. Nurhan Yentürk
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SUMMARY EVALUATION

One of the most important long-term steps that can be taken for the education system in Turkey is to reconstruct policy-making processes in education on an evidence-based, participatory and transparent basis. In this respect, there are positive recent developments within the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) such as the increase in the capacity for data collection, compilation and analysis, a transition to strategic planning within the scope of public finance management reform and the increased seriousness and depth of monitoring and inspection efforts.

As the ERI, we would also like to emphasize that MoNE has generously shared the data collected via the e-school infrastructure with both the public in a general framework and also with us in response to special requests we have made. This approach hinges to a change of mentality in the Ministry of Education which is more open to sharing and gives more importance to analysis of non-state actors. If this approach within the Ministry proliferates and grows stronger, it will be possible for us to experience in the sphere of education the cooperation and communication that exists between the public and the private sector in the area of economic policy.

In this respect, while preparing the third *Education Monitoring Report*, we made use of a very wide data pool. In addition to information shared by the Ministry of Education, we utilized data collected by the Turkish Institute of Statistics to carry out analyses at different levels. We hope that the Education Monitoring Indicators, which we publish for the first time this year, will create the opportunity to conduct analysis and monitoring both by the Ministry of Education and the public.

Different processes were at work during the preparation of the report. In addition to monitoring and recommendation activities carried out throughout the year by the ERI, background reports that were written by international experts who conducted research in Turkey, were used or utilised. To explain the determinants of access to secondary education, the data from Turkish Institute of Statistics Survey of Income and Living Conditions were used and a regression analysis was carried out. To obtain a more concrete understanding of secondary school age young people's perceptions and expectations from the education system, interviews were conducted with 138 young people. Evaluation and consultation meetings were held with the participation of expert institutions and civil society organizations. All this preparation enabled the *Education Monitoring Report 2009* to come to life through a participatory process and result in the following evaluations and recommendations.

Efforts towards increasing enrolment and attendance at primary school level are promising especially in terms of their holistic framework. Regarding the outreach to children in the most disadvantaged conditions, a comprehensive review should be conducted to evaluate and reconsider the education services provided in rural regions in general and regional boarding schools, schools to which children are transported with busses and combined grade classes in particular.

In the 2008-2009 academic year, enrolment rate for children in the age of primary education (6-13 years of age) was at 96.5% which increased to 98.2% for 2009-2010. Despite the progress in enrolment, the rates of non-attendance are increasing. Moreover, regional inequalities remain in both enrolment and non-attendance levels. In Northeastern Anatolia, the rate of non-attendance rose from 6.3% in 2008-2009 to 9.1% in 2009-2010.⁴

Registration and non-attendance at primary school level

	Percentage of the relevant age group enrolled in schools			Ratio of female students to male students	Percentage of enrolled students who have not attended school for more than 20 days		
	Total	Girls	Boys		Total	Girls	Boys
2008-2009	96.5%	96.0%	97.0%	0.93	3.2%	2.9%	3.5%
2009-2010	98.2%	97.8%	98.5%	0.94	4.3%	4.2%	4.4%

Source: MoNE.

A criticism that the ERI has often directed at the MoNE has been the fact that educational policies are not conceptualized holistically and have weak relations with one another. Recent policies of the MoNE, on the other hand, suggest an increase in complementary initiatives undertaken simultaneously which we welcome as a progress. For instance, General Directorate for Primary Education has planned new interventions towards access to primary education based on the problems it has diagnosed in its activities since 2003. For children who are between the compulsory education ages of 10 and 14 but who are not attending school, Catch-up Education Programs have been conducted. As a preventative mechanism to combat unexcused non-attendance and leaving school without a diploma, the Multi-Stage Non-Attendance Management has been envisioned. Special precautions to overcome the difficulties experienced by seasonal workers' children have been announced this year via a memorandum by the Prime Minister. The MoNE has also taken steps to increase the access of girls to secondary education.

The increase in the levels of non-attendance can be explained by the economic crisis, the swine flu epidemic or the automatic registration to primary education at the age of 6. In all cases, the Multi-Stage Non-Attendance Management Program which will enter into force in

⁴ Rate of non-attendance is calculated as the ratio of students who have not attended school for more than 20 days to total number of students.

2010-2011 will need to play an important role in combating this problem. The system will aim to constantly monitor the student's attendance via e-school, classify the non-attendance behaviour and implement different interventions appropriate to different forms of non-attendance. For maximum benefits to be derived from the system, it is necessary for school management and school counsellors to be supported.

The effective implementation of the systems devised by the central organization of the MoNE will take time. In addition, to ensure that the aim of all children completing a year of quality pre-school education, continuous attendance to and graduation from primary education requires the MoNE to develop a flexible framework that will support development and implementation of interventions also at the local level. Within the said framework, chances of MoNE provincial and district offices to access children who are of school age and not registered in school and who are estimated to be in very difficult conditions will increase through on-site and innovative interventions.

Research that focuses on late registration or non-registration at primary school level, and on children and families who live in the most difficult conditions point to the need to develop policies that aim to break fathers' resistance to their daughters' school attendance, that use economic incentives and that provide safe school and travel opportunities for girls. In this framework, education services provided in rural regions in general and regional boarding schools, schools to which children are transported with busses and combined grade classes in particular must be subjected to a comprehensive evaluation.

In 2008-2009 academic year, three out of five children have started schooling at the age of 5. The fast increase in the number of students who can access pre-school education gives hope towards developing social justice with the help of education. However, to reach the aims presented in the planning documents, policies that target children other than the 60-72-month age group must be developed.

In the 2009-2010 academic year, 175 thousand students joined pre-school education. As a result, school enrolment levels have increased from 23 to 27 percent in the 36-72 month age group and from 33 to 39 percent in the 48-72 month age group. The policy of "supporting pre-school education as if it is compulsory in 32 provinces" with respect to the priority age group of 60-72 months seems to have been successful. In these provinces, the enrolment rates have increased from 71 to 93 percent. In the remaining provinces, the enrolment rates for this age group have increased from 48 to 57 percent. The nationwide average suggests that three out of five children start schooling at the age of 5.

However, there are negative aspects to this success story. The proliferation of pre-school education will play a very important role in the establishment of social justice. Therefore, it is a drawback to prioritize provinces where school attendance rates were already very high. MoNE should select the new provinces it will provide special support for in the 2010-2011 academic year from disadvantaged regions, so that the equity principle can be fulfilled and

MoNE personnel gain experience for increasing the reach of services in disadvantaged regions.

In the area of pre-school education, Turkey set ambitious goals that must be realized quickly. For the age group of 48-72 months, the government aims to increase school enrolment levels to 50 percent for the 2011-2012 academic year and to 70 percent for 2013-2014. The projections suggest that these aims will not be reached, even if last year's fast increase continues. The time has come for groups other than the 60-72 month group to become a priority so that the ambitious yet vital goals are realized.

ERI spots that, taking into account the general situation of the education system, a much faster progress is needed especially in two areas. These are quality issues in all educational stages and change in the secondary education which has been long delayed.

In all educational stages, efforts should be intensified so that educational outcomes can be improved. The critical factor to upgrade the quality of education is supporting teachers. There is still a need for a school-based and widespread in-service training mechanism that uses interactive methods, mobilizes peer-coaching, and fostered by innovative practices.

The developments in the area of access are not paralleled in the sphere of educational outputs. International assessments such as PISA and TIMSS show that most students at the level of primary education graduate without acquiring basic Turkish and mathematics competencies. Despite all efforts, there is no data which indicate that there is a development in the skills acquired by children.

The impact of educational reform programs that started in 2003 on children's skills is not yet known. The intention of MoNE to conduct an impact assessment with this aim will constitute a right step and a learning opportunity. Another issue that must be underlined is that, as often criticized by teachers, the educational programs are still very intense and demanding. In an environment where students cannot learn Turkish or basic mathematics well, trying to put forth an educational program that is too intense to allow for the use of active learning methods is a mistake which should be rectified quickly.

Quality is of critical importance for pre-school education. Research suggests that, if quality education is not provided, pre-school education can provide limited benefits and might even disadvantage children. Therefore, greater access to pre-school education needs to be complemented by policies to raise quality. The qualities of pre-school teachers should be a part of this standard.

One of the most important measures to improve education quality includes enhanced teacher training. ERI raised this issue prior to the 2007 general elections and invited all political parties to declare 2008-2012 as "Five Years for Teachers" if they came to power. Although there

have been some initiatives targeting teachers in the last three years, they remain insufficient and inadequate given the urgency and importance of the issue.

Policies targeting teachers can be classified into four categories: the choice of teacher trainees, pre-service training, hiring and appointment and professional development. In this area, “Teacher Capabilities” determined by the Directorate General of Teacher Training can act as a common tool. The Turkish National Committee on Teacher Training can act as the institution for coordination that brings stakeholders together.

On the other hand, another important problem concerning teacher policies is that in hiring and appointing teachers, methods such as multiple choice tests and lottery are used. These methods dramatically impede the opportunity that the persons who are most suited to be teachers exercise this profession and that they serve in the places and institutions that best serve their personal capabilities. The use of these methods must quickly come to an end and precautions should be taken so that local units and schools are actively involved in the process.

Research clearly shows that in-service training mechanisms in Turkey are not functioning. According to Teaching and Learning Processes International Survey (TALIS) conducted by OECD in 24 countries, in Turkey teachers receive lower than average amounts of in-service training and they still think they need less in-service training. Teachers see sharing experiences with colleagues as one of the most valuable opportunities of professional development, however this is one of the least used methods. In contrast, the TALIS average of headmasters who think the quality of teachers in their school is an impediment to the quality of education is 38 percent, whereas it is 78 percent in Turkey.

All the data show the significant need for a widespread in-service training mechanism for teachers which uses a variety of channels and interactive methods, peer-coaching, which is school based and where the headmaster takes leadership of teaching and learning processes. This radical change cannot be achieved without the coordination tools and institutions mentioned above.

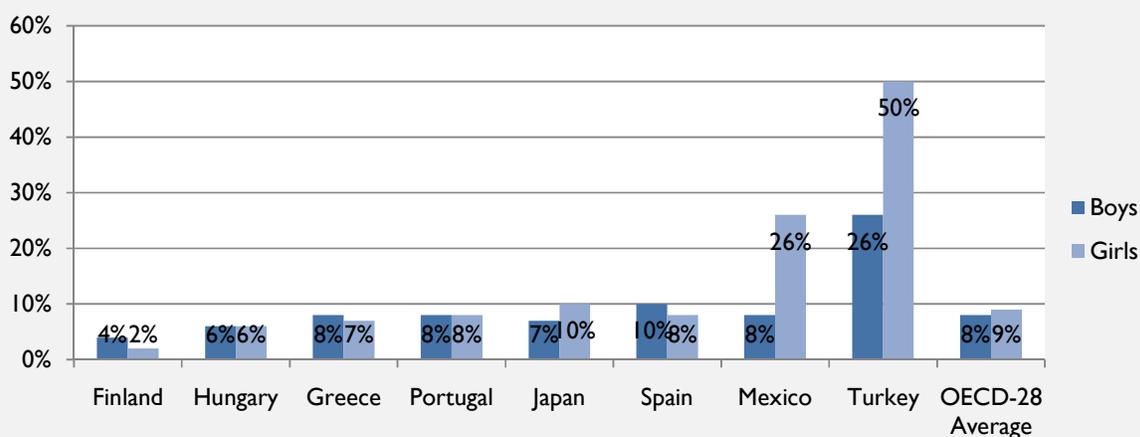
The need for change in secondary education has come to a point which cannot be delayed anymore. Secondary education must be reconstructed as a stage of education that will strengthen the individual development and social participation of young people, rather than a mid-level in transition to higher education or a solution to the problem of unemployment.

In many respects, secondary education is gaining importance in developing nations. In countries like Turkey which have comparatively come further along in their process of socio-economic development, it would be expected that primary education-related problems would be transcended. Additionally, the opportunities for employment based on capabilities and capacities acquired at the primary school level would decline. Most importantly, individuals’ need for the information, skills and capabilities acquired at the secondary education level in

order to realize their potential and participate in public life in ways they desire would increase. These include information technologies literacy, foreign language, high level of critical thinking and democratic participation.

However, based on data coming from household surveys, only half of young people between the ages of 15-19 declare that they regularly attend schools. While one fifth of young people in this age group are working, the remaining group, namely one out of three children, is neither in school nor working. One in four boys and almost half of girls are neither studying nor working. Within the OECD countries, Turkey has the highest values in this indicator.

15-19 year old young people who are neither in school nor employed in selected OECD countries



Source: OECD, *Doing Better for Children*, 2008.

A serious progress in secondary education enrolment levels can be observed for last year. However, rates of non-attendance are also on a fast rise. Based on the data derived from administrative records, only six out of ten 14-17 year olds in the country attend school regularly.

Enrolment and non-attendance at secondary education

	Percentage of the relevant age group enrolled in schools			Ratio of female students to male students	Percentage of enrolled students who have not attended school for more than 20 days		
	Total	Girls	Boys		Total	Girls	Boys
2008-2009	58.5%	56.3%	60.6%	0.84	1.2%	0.7%	1.6%
2009-2010	65.0%	62.2%	67.6%	0.84	3.5%	2.3%	4.6%

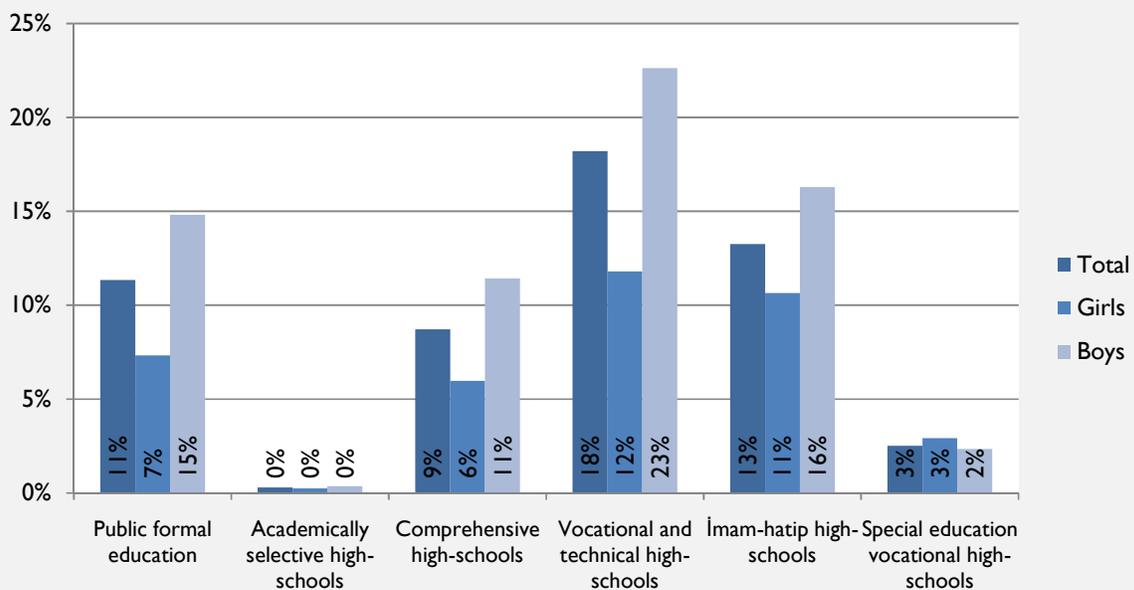
Source: MoNE.

Qualitative and quantitative research carried out by the ERI for this report shows that the problems faced by male and female students in accessing secondary education are both

common and different. Young females are usually left outside of secondary education due to economic hardships, lack of education and resistance of fathers, number of siblings and against their own will. In the case of young males, the educational attainment levels of the parents are still determining, however income is not and some declare leaving school willingly.

Secondary education displays high levels of drop-outs and repeated years. During the 2008-2009 academic year, 14,8 percent of male students who were enrolled at public and formal secondary educational institutions left schools for reasons other than death or moving abroad. This rate is 7,3 percent for girls. Vocational high schools, imam-hatip high schools and public comprehensive schools register the highest drop-out rates. Drop-outs are most often seen at the 9th grade: 76 percent of school leaves by male students and 64 percent of school leaves by female students occurred at this stage. Repeating a level is also most often seen at the 9th level and in vocational and technical high schools.

Percentage of students who dropped out of secondary education in 2008-2009 (for reasons other than death or moving abroad)



Source: MoNE.

All these data suggests that secondary education in Turkey cannot fulfill the expectations of the population, that it cannot strengthen personal development and social participation to the necessary extent and that secondary school age children can face inadequate public services. The government plans to solve this problem by increasing school enrolment levels at secondary education level, transforming some comprehensive high schools to academically selective high schools and some to vocational high schools and increase the ratio of vocational and technical high schools to 65 percent. However, given the high school drop-out rates at vocational high schools, the problems at the level of secondary education appear to

be much broader than the framework drawn by the Ministry. To resolve these problems, a flexible structure that prioritizes the personal development and social participation of students and removes the thick walls between general secondary education and vocational secondary education is necessary.

To restructure different levels of the educational system in ways that will meet the needs of the children and equip them with life skills, it is necessary to remove the pressure created by the selection examinations on the system. To solve this deep-rooted problem, Turkey needs to envision and implement a totality of long-term policies.

One of the factors which deeply impacts teaching and learning processes in Turkey is the central examination and selection systems that determine the school students will attend in the next educational stage. These systems are on the one hand constantly changed by public institutions and discussed by all actors.

The System for Transition to Secondary Education, which had brought three instead of one examination, increases use of extra-school resources and leads to a loss of importance of school in the education system. Indeed, based on a research conducted by TED, 50 percent of 6th grade students, 57 percent of 7th grade students and 61 percent of 8th grade students attend extra-school courses. Moreover, 42 percent of 8th grade students declared that they will obtain a doctor's report to not attend school and prepare for exams and 50 percent declared that they do not believe in the necessity of classes such as visual arts, technology and design as they will not help in the exam. MoNE started to question the system and changed it once more at the end of 2009-2010 academic year to a one-examination system.

The System for Transition to Higher Education has also been revised within the last year, the variety of tests and scores were increased with the aim of increasing the role of academic acquisitions of students in secondary education. However, the problem of an exam-based system cannot be solved solely by changes in examination systems. The reason why exam systems create such a big pressure on teaching and learning processes is the quality gaps between institutions and future concerns of students and their families. This concern results in students' development and public participation no longer being a priority and the distancing of the education system from its aims as a whole.

This complicated and multi-faceted problem cannot be solved solely by improvements in the examination system. First, the misconception that being successful in exams means being successful in life must be overcome. Societal compromise must be achieved towards eliminating quality differences between schools with a long-term and realistic plan. Quality differences between schools and the determining impact of higher education must be eliminated in order to ameliorate the negative impact of the exam system on schools and students.

The critical factor for success in overcoming the problems of the education system is governance. The steps taken towards the transformation of educational governance structures and processes are exciting. However, these steps should be based on a child-centered understanding of education. It is necessary that the human resources capacity of the Ministry should be strengthened over time in a way that takes ownership of and implements this understanding.

We praised the developments in the process of formulating and monitoring public policy last year. We also claimed that “the human resources capacity of the Ministry in the effective use of policy tools and its fundamental approach to the processes of formulating education policy” were critical factors of success. There is still need for improvement in both areas. To expedite the process, the current cadres must be supported with in-service education, including in the area of public policy. Additionally, necessary steps should be taken so that MoNE can employ experts in the areas of economy, public management, statistics etc. At the same time, all MoNE staff needs a change in mentality towards the understanding that the *raison d’etre* of MoNE is firstly to serve the children of Turkey.

The restructuring of MoNE will be one of the building blocs for education in Turkey in the long term. The ERI has long defended the necessity for a new organizational law. It has also criticized the political will for not backing the need for change more strongly as a result of delays in the issue, which has been on the agenda since 2004. In this respect, the ministerial changes that took place in 2009 and the momentum brought on by the MEBGEP (Project for Strengthening the Capacity of MoNE) project and the resulting green paper that can be the reference point for a new law are very positive developments. The MoNE is expected to present its new organizational draft law to the Parliament in the 2010-2011 legislative period.

The evaluation of the content of restructuring in the report is based on the green paper. However, the ERI believes that the green paper on the restructuring, that has been on the agenda for seven years, has been rushed due to the requirements of the MEBGEP project and that the process of preparation was not sufficiently transparent and participatory. In the next phase, it will be important to show sincere and serious efforts towards discussing the organizational draft law with relevant stakeholders and getting the input of expert institutions.

The green paper aims to shrink the central organization and delegate authority to provincial directorates of MoNE and schools to a great extent. In this scope, each provincial bureau will be transformed into an administrative unit with its own budget and schools will be strengthened via participatory rules towards greater autonomy. But the operational details of this transformation and the independent monitoring mechanisms to ensure accountability have not been determined. This can result in multiple confusions and might be incompatible with a child-centered understanding of education. Instead of provincial directorates, directorates at the level of districts might be a more appropriate scale of management in whose policy-making processes schools can participate more easily.

The Strategic Plan 2010-2014 published in 2009 and the subsequent Performance Program 2010 are both very important policy documents towards the development of transparent policies, the determination of performance indicators that will facilitate the monitoring of the policies' results and to create compatibility between the policies and the budget. However, these documents have not been prepared with a child-centered mentality and do not possess internal consistency. The higher management of the Ministry must take these documents more seriously and should contribute more to the preparation process. As the ERI, we will be following the process of monitoring education policies and their implementation through the Strategic Plan and the resulting strengthening of the accountability mechanism.

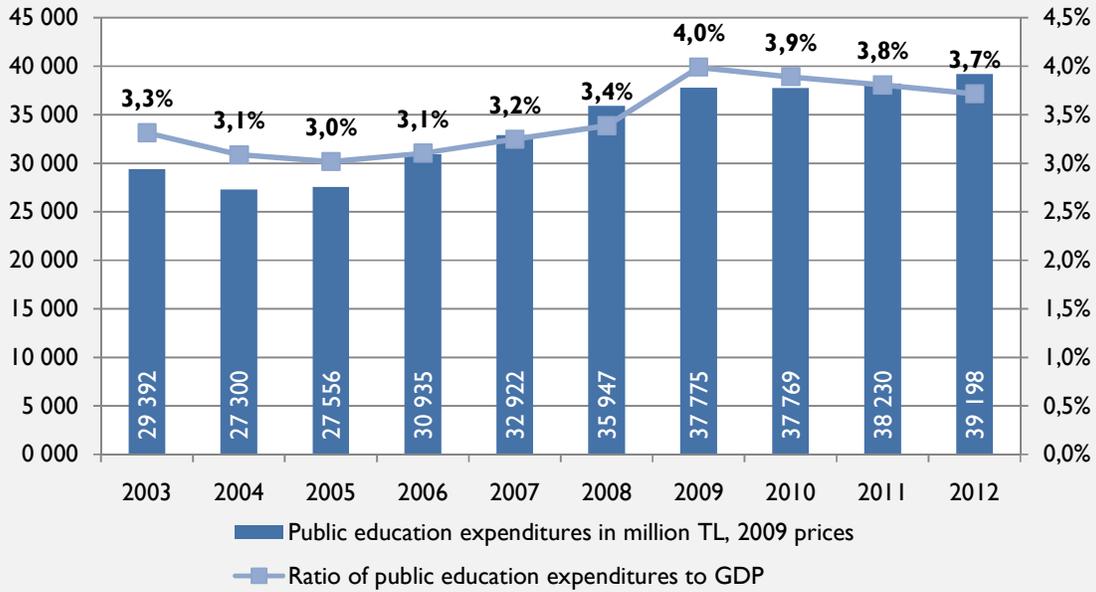
The ratio of public resources allocated to education to national income must be increased with respect to the young population in Turkey. Education policies and public resources allocated to education must be made compatible, the decline in public spending per student as well as discrepancies between provinces must be eradicated.

The public resources allocated to education have been increasing in real terms since 2004. However, this trend should not be a source of pride for either Turkey or the political will. Indeed, the new resources allocated to education between 2001-2008 have come from the roughly 40 percent growth in the Turkish economy. But governments did not prioritize allocating education a higher share of national income during the same period. The increase in the ratio of public education spending to national income in 2009 has resulted from the decrease in national income. The Medium-term Financial Plan shows that the preference for the next three years is a re-shrinking. Especially when the size of the school age population is taken into account, Turkey is significantly behind the countries it globally competes with when it comes the ratio of public resources allocated to education to national income. The government should immediately, and if possible starting with the 2011 budget, consistently increase the share of its educational budget and must aim for 6 percent by 2015.

In principle, the content of the increase in the education budget must be governed by MoNE's Strategic Plan and education policies. For instance, the need for human resources that will emerge as a result of the targeted increase in the number of students at the pre-school and secondary school levels, physical infrastructure and educational material needs are items where increases should be foreseen. However, when we look at MoNE's budget-making practices, we see a serious incompatibility between the macro aims and education policies on the one hand and financial plans on the other. This incompatibility manifests itself in many areas. One of the most significant examples is the failure to take necessary financial precautions despite policies of extending secondary education to four years and increasing access, resulting in a serious decline in the spending per student since 2008. There are also serious inequalities between provinces when it comes to spending per student. For instance, MoNE spends 1,379 TL in general secondary education and 1,617 TL in vocational secondary education per student in Istanbul whereas these amounts increase to 3,340 TL and 4,269 TL

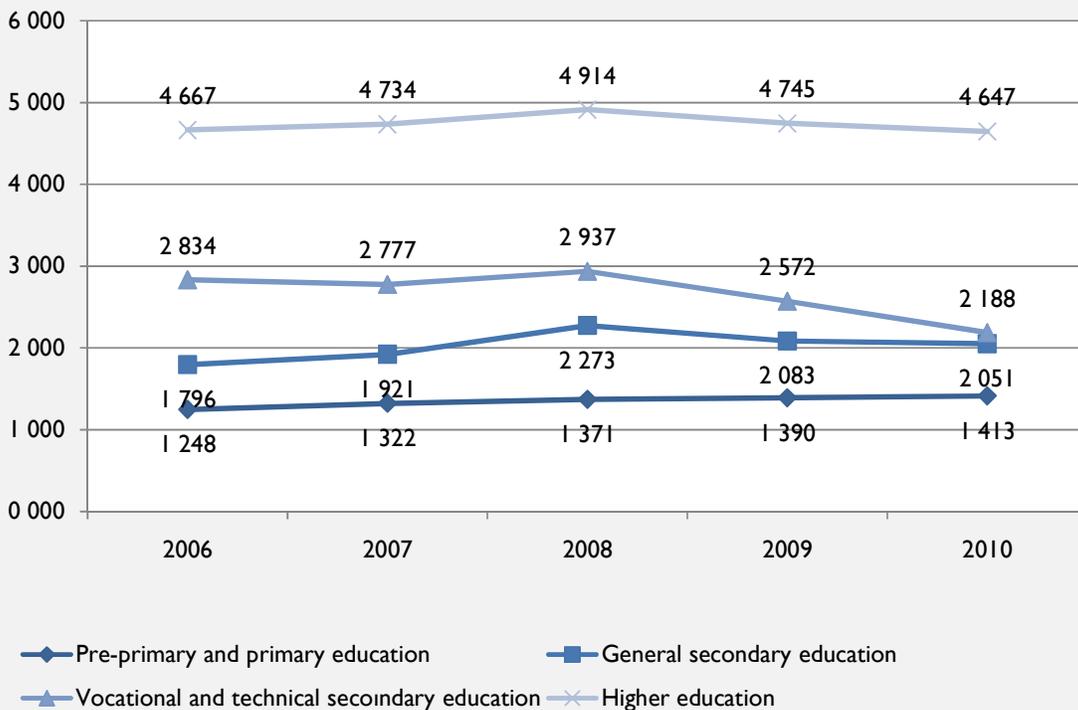
in Isparta. To ameliorate this problem, MoNE must disperse resources using a formula based on student numbers develop extra resources for disadvantaged schools and students.

Development of total public resources allocated to education services



Source: Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Public Accounts.

Central management spending per student (in 2009 prices)



Source: Authors' calculations based on data from MoNE and Directorate General of Public Accounts.

EPILOGUE*

In these concluding remarks, instead of talking about teacher appointments, the exam-centered approach to secondary education, the concept of extra-school education, the deficiencies in school books and curricula that remain despite the reforms, the inadequacies of facilities, equipment and infrastructure, the need to change pre and in-service training for teachers – in other words, the condition of educational components that are laid out in detail and holistically evaluated in this report – I want to point out the ties between “the developmental characteristics of secondary education age children” and “what they (both themselves and the society) can gain from a well thought out education.”

The parents, educators, educational institutions, educational civil society organizations of today, must be aware that they are contributing to the development of the twenty first century person, individual, world citizen. This will be achieved by, one the one hand, teaching how to learn and on the other hand, learning how to teach. One must also recognize that the activity of learning does not have to be connected to the school, the classroom or the lesson in the classroom, that observational learning is a very strong factor, that lifelong learning exists and that equality with regards to gender, geography and all aspects is fundamental to the efficiency of education.

Another important issue that must be kept in mind is this: Out of the secondary education age population, those between the ages of 15-17 are going through a very special time with increased curiosities. This curiosity is directed both towards their own bodies and the opposite sex as well as public affairs and politics. Being young adults is a general “age of awakening.”

We can start thinking by asking the following questions: Are teachers equipped with the necessary mental tools that will enable them to actually get to know this youth, who is agitated, thinks and acts fast, tries to redefine its boundaries whose awakening is both to themselves and to the society (individually, socially and universally), and approach them with respect for their identity and without ignoring their uniqueness? In institutions of secondary education, are we able to create for young people environments that are freed from homophobia, xenophobia, marginalization, bullying, gender discrimination, all other prejudices and the use of arbitrary force? Do teachers know how to move towards methods that will create discipline within – even a crowded – classroom without the use of arbitrary force or methods that will enhance self-discipline in students? Are they ready and willing to make the effort that using these methods will entail? Is the empowerment of young people as individuals, their acquisition of critical thinking abilities among the main responsibilities of the school? Are they aims that are accepted and internalized by the components of the educational world?

* Prior to writing the last version of the epilogue, I consulted Nuran Direk, Dr. Nur Otaran, Mutlu Öztürk and Prof. Dr. Ayşe Yalın. I am thankful to all of them.

What does it mean to equip teachers in terms of content and approach in matters including human rights, peace, world affairs, and all contested social or universal issues, transforming the school ethos, dispersing these values and therefore raise students, the human output of education, free from all dogmas regarding human rights and peace and able to 'think critically'? What kind of end acquisition can we expect?

To be able to acquire and develop a mental capability, one should engage with the problems that require the relevant capability. One should not be content with understanding, but understanding must be tested and expanded. The task becomes easier if there is an environment that looks to innovation, differences and unique points of view encouragingly. In such an environment, especially with frequent use, the critical thinking capacity and method becomes immediate and natural. Only a unique, well-planned educational environment where no component is neglected, where young people are urged, can result in this frequent use and naturalness of critical thinking.

To reiterate: The young adult is trying to find his/her boundaries, subvert and stretch them. He/she is in the age of identity exploration. In schools where high level thinking capabilities are provoked, where extra-curricular activities are valued

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and ties with society are formed, young people move very fast towards identity acquisition. We also know that when one has to accept values, aims, roles etc. that have been determined and imposed by people in positions of authority, what is formed is a “tied” or “mortgage” identity.

To not impose a “mortgage” on their identities, instead of seeing secondary education age children and young people as a dependent part of ourselves, we need to be able to see them as independent societal actors. This means, the young person should be able to have “a voice”, this voice should be respected and listened to. “The voice” is the aims, hopes, expectations and complaints of the young. An independent actor knows about different ways of voicing. This itself is a unique competence and education can either play a role in its acquisition or conversely, it can be a hindrance to it.

Children and young people start to learn critical thinking, being a person, a part of society and a citizen by observing what happens at the educational setting (beyond individually thinking of the teacher as a role model). Or on the contrary to not be/do/gain all these! In other words, social learning – that is learning by seeing, watching and imitating others – is strong. For this kind of learning to work, teachers themselves should have the skill and the inclination to think critically, be open to different methods of learning and thinking, open to

development and novelty, respectful of difference, can communicate, be self-critical and reflect.

Young people mature to the extent that is expected of them. If we do not have expectations, we do not create possibilities, if there are no possibilities, experience and capabilities are not acquired. When the capabilities are not formed, we say “I knew that/ I said so.” But there is nothing we know, we have just created a self-fulfilling prophecy with our initial assumptions and the resulting attitude and behavior. The young person’s right to participate in education – the right to participate that includes the actual sharing of power – means experiencing the power and responsibility this right creates and developing capabilities through experience. If these are obstructed, the path of the young person stumbles on the path to maturity.

Young adulthood is a time when rights come up repeatedly in different ways and the energy for rebelling, objecting, and changing runs high. It is also a time when political socializing gains importance and if allowed, political consciousness develops fast. Therefore, if the teachers have the necessary capabilities, with their mentoring and counseling, by using the aforementioned energy in the framework of civil society organizations, by establishing close relations with the school’s neighboring environment and thereby engaging with factors that need improvement, in other words, by encountering real social issues that will develop capabilities, by feeling the responsibility to engage in advocacy actions in social issues they value, and by possessing the necessary information and methods for that, these young people can create such beauty and transform themselves so much in the process...

What I meant by ‘end result’ was this: Through an education system that was conceptualized by paying attention to the developmental characteristics, ‘higher benefit, ‘ participation and empowerment of them, that has aims and is geared towards those aims, the equipping of young people who can think for themselves, solve problems, react, engage in advocacy and have internalized the underlying democratic, ethic and pro-freedom values. And all these are what I meant at the beginning by ‘raising the twenty-first century person, individual and world citizen...’

All these acquisitions are possible only with teachers who have well-defined professional standards, who are well trained, empowered, who play the role of facilitators rather than imposing information, who are aware that they have a lot to learn from one another, who see students as individuals with personalities and want to support their learning, and a school ethos that believes that teachers and students can succeed in creating a more just and peaceful world, with its well-equipped managers. Another factor that has significant educational implications is the level of trust and relations between all teachers and school management staff. This too is part of ‘what happens in the educational setting’ and the school ethos.

I see what I have written so far, not as a wish list but as tasks that must and can be carried out, in cooperation, and tasks to which many people I have come to know are contributing. Our

education still has and always has had problems relating to the system, curriculum, management, methods, perspectives, mentalities and more. We will conduct our task with this background, and this is precisely what makes it exciting...

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