

IME

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**Work Package 6
Identity construction programmes of non-state, professional and collective actors:
Case study phase II**

Turkish Case

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Introduction

This report studies the identity construction programmes of non-state, professional and collective actors in Turkey. Interviewing various professional and collective actors, this work aims at uncovering the ways in which the notions of Turkishness, Europeanness, Europe and modernity have been accommodated in the field of education. This work will primarily delineate a general account of the major social and political events which took place in the last decade in Turkey. Subsequently, referring to the perceptions of the interlocutors interviewed, we shall discuss how the issues of immigration, multiculturalism and citizenship have been dealt with by the national education system. Then, we shall examine how the education system in general tuned with the processes of liberalization and globalization with a particular focus on the Bologna process. Following that; the major barriers before the Bologna Process will be revealed. In what follows, we shall review the ways in which ethno-cultural and linguistic differences have been accommodated by the Turkish education. The role of history education in the construction of national identity will also be delineated with a historicist perspective. Eventually, the debate about religion and secularism will be covered along the issues of headscarf and religious vocational *Imam Hatip* schools, Methodologically, the interviews made with the professionals linked to the education sector in Turkey have been analysed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in a way that aims to reveal an account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture in Turkey.

Major Contestations and Conflicts Between 2000-2010

Year	Events
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helsinki Summit gives candidate status to Turkey.
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 August 2001: AKP founded under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. 1st Constitutional Package: Turkey adopts a major Constitutional package that addresses the articles on freedom of expression and revises the death penalty with 34 amendments to the 1982 Constitution.
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February/March 2002: Turkey adopts the 2nd Constitutional Package 2 August 2002: 3rd Constitutional Package: Abolishes death penalty/revises anti-terror law, allows broadcasting in languages other than Turkish. 3 November 2002: AKP wins the general elections with 34.29% of the votes. 3 December 2002: 4th Constitutional Package: Operationalizes previous reforms and revises Penal Code for torture. 4 December 2002: 5th Constitutional Package: retrial of all cases decided in state security courts.
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2003: 6th Constitutional Package: adopts protocol 6 of ECHR, converts all death sentences to life imprisonment and repeals Article 8 of Anti-Terror Law. July 2003: 7th Constitutional Package: revises the National Security Council
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 March 2004: AKP wins local elections with 42% of the votes. 17 December 2004: European Council decides to open accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005. 7 May 2004: 8th Constitutional Package: ten amendments made to the Constitution, freedom of press, priority is given to supranational treaties over domestic law and abolishes state security courts. 24 June 2004: 9th Constitutional Package: changes Article 46 of the Penal Code, revises the higher education board and the censure board. 25-26 September 2004: New Turkish Penal Code: revises laws on violence against women and children/redefines and changes penalties for various offences.
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 September 2005: Caricature Crisis: Portrayal of Prophet Muhammed in the Jyllands Posten

	<p>newspaper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) hears the <i>Leyla Sahin v. Turkey</i> case. The court rules that there had been no violation to Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (freedom of thought, conscience and religion); Article 10 (freedom of expression); Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) and Article 2, Protocol No.1 (right to education) (ECHR, 2004). Revision of the primary and secondary school curriculum to in line with that of the EU.
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2006: “The Strategy for Turkish Higher Education” by the Council of Higher Education is released.
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 January 2007: Hrant Dink was killed. Protests ensue. April 2007: Military “e-intervention” (http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5471UQ20090508) 22 July 2007: AKP gets re-elected with 47% of vote in early parliamentary elections. 28 Aug. 2007: Abdullah Gül is elected President of Turkey.
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 October 2008: Ergenekon trials begin. 25 December 2008: TRT starts broadcasting in Kurdish. Feb. 9, 2008: The ban on the headscarf lifted with the passage of the amendments by 80 percent, or 411, of the deputies in Parliament. March 11, 2008: The Council of State reversed the order lifting the ban at universities.
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kurdish initiative launched with a view to extend cultural and linguistic rights to the Kurdish minority, whose condition is seen as a major problem in EU accession talks. March 2009: Local elections weaken standing of the AKP party which loses some 8% of their votes compared to parliamentary elections in 2007. 8 July 2009: Turkey adopts laws aimed at meeting EU criteria to limit the power of military courts, despite warnings from the army that this might escalate tensions with government (EurActiv 09/07/09). 1 October 2009: Students protest against the IMF at İstanbul Bilgi University
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 March 2010: a US congressional panel narrowly votes in favour of defining the events of 1915 as “genocide”. Students protest against the government and the military establishment proliferates. May 2010 Israel raided a fleet of aid ships bound for Gaza, attacking a Turkish aid ship named “Mavi Marmara”. Protests against Israel ensue. 20 -25 October 2010: Education boycotts for education in Kurdish.

As our previous reports discussed in detail; the Helsinki Summit of 2009 constitutes a turning point for Turkey. In that regard, between 2001 and 2005, 9 Constitutional Packages were passed in the scope of EU harmonization efforts. These Packages addressed the Articles on freedom of expression, education and broadcasting in languages other than Turkish, revised the anti-terror laws and the Penal Code for torture, addressed the retrial of all cases decided in state security courts, adopted Protocol 6 of The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and converted all death sentences to life imprisonment as well as repealing Article 8 of Anti-Terror Law, revised the National Security Council, amended ten Articles of the constitution, while addressing freedom of press, and giving priority to supranational treaties over domestic law, abolished State Security Courts, changed Article 46 of the Penal Code and revised the Higher Education Board and the censure board. According to Müftüler-Baç (2005:21), these reforms could be

“summarized under the broader headings of increased legal protection of social, cultural and political rights of all Turkish citizens irrespective of religious and ethnic origin, the role of the military in Turkish politics, and freedom of expression in Turkey. These reforms automatically brought to the foreground the dominant cleavages in Turkey, most notably that between Turkish nationalism versus

recognition of other ethnic groups in Turkey, in particular the Kurds, and between secular and conservative political groups.”

Although the Constitutional Packages and the reformation process were highly acknowledged by the European Commission thus leading to the opening of accession negotiations on 3 October 2005, as Müftüler-Baç (2005) noted it contributed to political and social conflicts as well as the rise of Turkish nationalism. While these contestations remained intact, as we have discussed in our WP4 and WP5 reports, the reformation process lost its momentum in 2005, thereby giving rise to Euroscepticism.

Another important factor that influenced Turkish politics, society and the educational system is the political victory of AKP. On 14 August 2001, AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, Justice and Development Party) was founded as a continuation of the previous Islamic parties but it also constituted a break due to the Party’s emphasis on moderate Islam. AKP and their focus on Islam led to major contestations between the state actors along the religious and the secular divide. CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, Republican People’s Party), MHP (*Milliyetçi Halk Partisi*, Nationalist Movement Party) and the military constituted the major actors on the secular side, while AKP constituted the major actor on the religious side. On 27 April 2007, the so-called “e-intervention” or “e-coup” (*e-muhtıra*) of the Turkish army occupied the national agenda. The e-intervention was considered the military’s response to the AKP’s Islamic roots and the growing role of religion in Turkish politics. In effect, it was a reflection of the growing religious-secular divide in Turkey (Kaya, 2009).

As AKP’s success in the elections indicated, the Party was able to generate a large following via its moderate policies and support for EU accession. In that regard, the most contested issue was the headscarf debate. As extensively discussed in WP4 and WP5 reports; in November 2005, ECHR heard the case *Leyla Sahin v. Turkey*. In Sahin’s case, however, the outcome equalled a temporary defeat for headscarf supporters. The debates surrounding the headscarf at universities intensified in 2005 thereby leading to student protests and heated political debates. Most significantly, the headscarf became a symbol for the religious-secular divide while it also gave rise to arguments that the headscarf should in fact be discussed within women’s rights (Kaya, 2009).

In the past decade, ethnic revivals also became very important. As such, revival of Kurdish identity generated contestations in the Turkish society. The 2nd Constitutional Package (2002) provided the right to open private courses in minority languages, which initiated the demand for education in one’s mother tongue. In 2009, the Kurdish initiative was launched with a view to extend cultural and linguistic rights to the Kurdish minority, whose condition is seen as a major problem in EU accession talks. In this sense, various civil society organizations (both Kurdish and Turkish) as well as the BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) became publicly very visible. The demand for education in Kurdish is often debated along the lines of the separatist discourse. Most recently, TZP Kurdi (*Tevgera Ziman u Perverdehiya Kurdi, Kürt Dil ve Eğitim Hareketi*, Movement for Kurdish Language and Education) initiated the “Anadilde eğitim istiyoruz” (We want education in mother tongue) campaign, and in the scope of the campaign they called for boycotts between 20 and 25 October 2010 thereby becoming even more visible in the media (*Vatan Daily*, <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/>, 15.09.2010).

Another significant event occurred on 19 January 2007, when Hrant Dink (an Armenian origin journalist) was killed. Consequently, protests ensued under the mottos “We are all Hrant Dink” and “We are all Armenians”, which were employed by Armenians and Turks. The media paid specific attention to these protests. Subsequently, the Armenian community’s presence in the political and social spheres became more visible (Kaya, 2009). This contributed to the revival of Armenian identity in Turkey. Furthermore, the events of 1915 occupied the political agenda as of late 2009. The significance of this debate, however, increased when it became an international issue. In that regard, on 4 March 2010, the United States Congressional Panel narrowly voted that the incident of 1915 was “genocide”. The Turkish state is still reluctant to accept the decision of the Congressional Panel. Nevertheless, on 10 October 2009, Protocols on “Establishment of Diplomatic Relations” and “Development of Bilateral Relations” was signed but it is not yet ratified by the national parliaments. The Protocols also foresaw opening of the common borders which led to contestations between the state and non-state actors. The border-issues also led to tensions with Azerbaijan. Both presidents visited each other on the occasion of national football matches for the world cup qualifications in 2009. This is called *football diplomacy* in the literature (BBC, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>, 15.10.2010).

Furthermore, Turkey has recently become a positively induced net migration country, which means that the number of incoming immigrants is becoming more than the number of outgoing emigrants.¹ This is a very new phenomenon for Turkey, which has been known to be a traditional country of emigration. Turkey has recently adopted some migration and integration laws in line with the Europeanization process introducing free health services and primary education services to those so-called illegal transit migrants who are destined to go to western hemisphere using Turkey as a transit country.

Lately, there has been growing awareness about the issues of "urban poverty", "informal economy", "increasing criminal behaviour", "street children", "emergence of underclass ghettos", "honour killings", "mafios relations", "suicides", "domestic violence" and "institutionalisation of violence", which should be considered in relation to the new migration patterns that occurred throughout the 1990s in, and from, the East and Southeast Turkey. Turkey has recently witnessed a remarkably high amount of internally displaced population, who had to leave their homelands in the Southeast Anatolia due to the rising violence stemming from the Kurdish Question to go to big cities in the western shores of Turkey as well as to the city centres in the region (Barut, 2001; TESEV, 2004; HÜNEE, 2006; Kaya et al., 2009; Basak Foundation, 2010). It is estimated that there are around more than 2 million internally displaced people in Turkey. Nowadays, it has become quite common for the conservative governments in Turkey to explain almost every structural problem such as unemployment, violence, crime and disorder through increasing domestic migration.

On 12 September 2010, a constitutional referendum was held in Turkey on various constitutional amendments to the Turkish constitution. The results were: 58% in favour and 42% percent against. In the south-eastern regions BDP called for boycotts. Many voters did not participate in the referendum, particularly those in Hakkari, Batman, Sirnak, Diyarbakir, Agri, Mus, Ardahan, Kars, Igridir and Van. The government advocated the changes arguing that the amendments bring the constitution more in line with European Union standards (affirmative action towards women, elderly and children; coming to terms with the 1980

¹ http://www.photius.com/rankings/population/net_migration_rate_2010_0.html (entry date 1 February 2011).

military coup, etc.). Whereas, the opponents argued that the pro-Islamist governing party has managed to take control over the judiciary (BBC, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11274027>, 12.09.2010).

In view of the abovementioned events which took place between 2000 and 2010, major conflicts and contestations which had direct influence in the field of education can be identified as follows:

1. The Helsinki Summit and Turkey's candidacy to the EU and the subsequent Constitutional Packages which foresee structural reforms in the field of education;
2. The revision of the primary and secondary school curriculum to harmonize it with that of the EU;
3. The political victory of AKP and the introduction of moderate Islam into the political system;
4. The headscarf ban at universities;
5. The Kurdish initiative and the campaigns on education in Kurdish initiated by BDP and *TZP Kurdi* as well as the boycotts in September 2010;
6. Religious and ethnic revivals;
7. The initiation of reforms on higher education such as the Bologna Process;
8. Student protests against international organizations (particularly IMF), political parties, the government and the military establishment.

A close analysis of media reports and scholarly works reveal that the major non-state actors involved in these debates are:

- Ethnic minority interests advocates
- Humanist organisations
- Civil organisations with specific focus on education
- Higher education institutes
- Professionals in the field of education

Description of the fieldwork and methodology

We conducted 9 interviews between November 2010 and February 2011. Throughout the interviews, we used a structured interview guide that we had prepared in advance (see Annex II). At the beginning of each interview, we presented the scope of the research project, and briefly discussed the four themes that we selected. The interviews were all held in the locations preferred by the interlocutors. In defining the subject matters for the Turkish case, it was apparent that there were visible interactions between the issues that have been discussed in Turkey for the past 10 years (2000-2010).

In preparing the interview questions, the findings of the WP5 report and the studies on the conflictual issues from the past 10 years were taken into account. Subsequently, the questions were divided into 4 sections to reflect the issues constituting the common denominators for all project partners. The interlocutors were requested to answer all questions and to elaborate on their area of expertise. Interviews ranged between 50 minutes to one hour.

As previously mentioned the questions were divided into four different headings. The first section titled "Issues of Education and Identity" focused on the general issues in the field of

education with particular emphasis on higher education. As the contestations in the past decade indicated a speedy reformation process in the field of education, the interlocutors were asked to contemplate on the influence of the EU accession process. The revision of the national curriculum in 2006 was also a factor in formulating our questions, in that regard, the interlocutors were asked about their opinions on the national curriculum and the type of citizen it aims to raise. As our WP5 report indicated, the principles under which the curriculum was formulated has been widely discussed by scholars with regards to history courses as well as citizenship courses. This question was particularly important in learning the interlocutors' observations on the relationship between education and Turkish citizenship.

The second section titled "Bologna Process, liberalization and globalization" aimed to investigate the interlocutors' opinions on the Bologna Process. As such, our findings from our WP5 reports were taken into consideration in formulating the questions. As we have indicated; the Process and the way it has been framed (Europeanization or internationalization) is very important in understanding the Turkish approach to the Process. The interlocutors' perceptions towards standardization of the curriculum were also included under this section.

The third section titled "History education" mainly focused on investigating interlocutors' opinions on history education at primary and secondary school levels. The role of the Helsinki Summit with reference to the EU constituted an important question. Furthermore, in light of the ethnic revivals and the growing contestations in the past decade, interlocutors were requested to reflect on how minorities, migrants and diversity should be incorporated into the history textbooks.

The fourth section titled "Religion and secularisation" took into consideration the religious revivals in the past decade as well as the political and social debates over the headscarf ban thereby probing into the growing religious-secular divide in the Turkish society. The interlocutors were asked about their opinions on the headscarf debate. In addition, we also wished to investigate the interlocutors' opinions on *Imam Hatip* schools. These schools which are classified as vocational schools were discussed in the media as of 1997 a part of the religious-secular divide.

The interlocutors were chosen from scholars and NGOs whom we identified as loud, moderate and quiet actors. Additionally, we chose actors who have knowledge about, or have been actively involved in, at least one, two or more of the subject matters. In that regard, this was an informed decision so that the data would also provide us with an understanding of whether the interlocutors perceive the subject matters as a whole, or whether they had different stances on the subject matters.

The data collected at the interviews were evaluated on the basis of the interlocutors' reflections on some common denominators such as globalization, localization, Europeanization, modernity, neo-liberalism, tradition, religiosity, ethnicity and nationalism. These interviews were analyzed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method (Wodak, 2010). CDA is a method of discourse analysis focusing on the investigation of the relations between discourse and social/cultural developments in everyday life. It views discursive practices as an important form of social practice contributing to the constitution of the social and cultural world including social identities and relations. Amongst various different strands under CDA, this study stands closer to the 'discourse-historical' approach of the Vienna

School, which has been commonly used in the analysis of national identities (Wodak, 1999), and which has recently been utilised in scrutinizing the construction of European identities. (Krzyzanowski and Oberhuber, 2007). This approach is remarkable by its specific emphasis on identity construction, where the discursive construction of ‘us’ and ‘them’ is viewed as the basic pillar of discourses of identity and difference (Wodak, 2002:73). In addition to providing an analytical toolkit in the analysis of texts, it incorporates the central concept of *intertextuality* in the analysis. Intertextuality is a key concept that not only guides discourse-historical analyses, but also occupies a core place in poststructuralist approaches.

Reflections of Immigration/Multiculturalism/Citizenship in the Turkish Education System

As we have indicated in our WP4 and WP5 reports, migration from Eastern and South-eastern Turkish cities to western Turkish cities has been a significant factor in the field of education. Nevertheless, the accommodation of migrants and minorities are also discussed in the framework of Turkish citizenship and how the definition of citizenship has hindered the accommodation of migrants and minorities in the field of education. In light of our findings from the previous reports, this section will provide an overview of the issues that have become more visible in the past decade and citizenship will constitute the framework of these debates.

Migration: In the Turkish case, immigration, multiculturalism and citizenship and the way in which one could observe their reflections in the Turkish education system is intertwined. In other words, one could observe that accommodation of migrants in Western Turkish cities, with particular reference to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the lack of multiculturalism at the primary, secondary and higher education levels are highly correlated with the ways in which Turkish citizenship has been defined as well as with the ways in which Turkish education system defines Turkish national identity (Kirişçi 2000, Yeğen 2004; Kadioğlu 2007).

In that framework, we should note that the most visible issue regarding migration is the high number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who were forced to leave their homelands in Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia due to the violence and insecurity resulting from the armed conflict between the PKK (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*, Kurdistan Workers Party) and the Turkish security forces. As of 1940s, we see massive migration towards Western Turkey, particularly to metropolitan cities such as Izmir, Istanbul, Antalya, Mersin and Ankara where employment opportunities were available. So far, two major waves of migration from the periphery to centre can be identified in Turkey: 1) from late 1940s to the early 1980s resulting from the mechanization of agriculture and the integration of markets; and 2) starting from second half of the 1980s and escalating in the early 1990s, resulting from forced migration from Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia (Kaya et al., 2009; and Çelik, 2005: 139-140). Forced migration has perpetuated the feelings of suppression and deprivation among the Kurdish minorities in a way that led to the increase in ethno-nationalistic sentiments (Çelik, 2005: 148-149).² Consequently, the Kurdish population, which constitutes the majority of the migrants in metropolitan cities, particularly in Istanbul, has set up residences in the ghettos and they have been marginalized by the majority society. They receive their education in ghettos (*varoş*) where access to education is rather limited (Kaya et al., 2009). Although the

²See also, TMMOB Human Rights Commission (2003); Barut (2001); TESEV (2004); Kurdish Human Rights Project (2002); and Basak Foundation (2010).

Turkish government launched the “Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project” (RVRP) in 1994, the number of IDPs who returned home is still relatively low. Kaya et al. (2009) argue that there needs to be a paradigmatic shift from return to integrations as the period of stay of such persons in the urban space has already been more than 20 years in most of the cases.

Multiculturalism: Furthermore, while the case of the IDPs and their lack of integration in metropolitan cities can be considered an important source of social and political conflict, it also contributes to the lack of multiculturalism in the Turkish education system, particularly in Western Turkish cities. Nonetheless, the lack of multiculturalism in schools in every level of education is also partially attributable to the lack of international students involved in the Turkish education system. In the Turkish case, we observe that there are international students who come to Turkish schools in the scope of international exchange programs. As the emphasis on Turkish language and heritage has grown in the past decade, the Ministry of Education’s focus in primary and secondary education has shifted towards Turkic countries in Central Asia. Therefore, regional exchange programs have become visible.

As we have extensively discussed in our WP5 report, the Bologna Process constitutes a major element in multiculturalism in higher education. Nevertheless, as we have discussed in our WP5 report³, Turkey is a “sending” country, rather than a “receiving” country, which stems from the lack of information on Turkish universities as well as the ongoing structural reforms such as the recent institution of courses in English.

Citizenship: The notion of citizenship and the debate over the definition of Turkish citizenship was analysed in our WP5 report in the context of internal identity promotion activities. In this framework, we should remind that the first citizenship law of 1928 gave citizenship to all those residing within the boundaries of the republic on the basis of *jus soli* principle. However, it has gradually become ethno-cultural in nature embraced by *jus sanguinis* principle. Retrospectively speaking, ethnic groups in Turkey such as Kurds, Circassians, Alevis, Armenians, Lazis and Arabs have developed various political participation strategies *vis-à-vis* the legal and political structure and delimitations. To that effect, what we also should reiterate is that some scholars argue that the formal definition of Turkish citizenship is based on territoriality rather than ethnicity (Kirişçi 2000), while other scholars observe that Turkish citizenship oscillates between political and ethnicist logic (Yeğen 2004; Kadioğlu 2007). Keyman and İçduygu (2003) also note that Turkish citizenship is based on a civic-republican understanding where one’s rights are secondary to one’s duties to the state. The authors state that:

“the citizen is militantly active in the process of serving for the making of modern Turkey, and is virtuous in his/her will to put the public good before individual interest, his/her service for society before individual freedom, his/her national identity before difference, and his/her acceptance of cultural homogeneity before pluralism. However, it should be pointed out that the militant citizen is only *active* in terms of its duties to the state, but *passive* with respect to its will to carry the language of rights against state power (Keyman and İçduygu, 2003: 231)”

We can observe that as a by-product of globalization, conflicts based on religion and ethnicity led to new claims in the past decade. Consequently, Keyman and İçduygu observe that:

³ Statistics on student mobility is available in the WP5 Report of Turkey.

“the conventional conception of Turkish citizenship (as a national identity and/or activity) can no longer play its unifying function, nor is it capable of translating abstract status to concrete rights (Keyman and İçduygu, 2003: 231).

Accordingly, the religious and ethnic revivals of the past decade particularly in terms of the Kurdish population and the Islamist community, the traditional understanding of Turkish citizenship has lost its unifying function. Nevertheless, we can observe a growing emphasis on the rights of the individuals rather than their duties.

In that framework, MA, member at the Sociology and Educational Studies Unit of a foundation university, reflections on the model of citizen that the modern national curriculum anticipates were as follows:

“It is possible to talk about an exclusionist nationalist understanding that does not only ignore differences but also considers them threatening. There is an attempt to establish a homogeneous, essentialist, closed, ethnicist understanding of “us”, where an identity beside being Turkish and Muslim- where religion is controlled by the state- is excluded. The predominant understanding is trying to establish a meta-identity, which aims to repress different identities (WP6/5).”

KÇ, faculty member at the Sociology Department of a Foundation University, indicated that citizenship courses were removed after 2005 curriculum reforms and that the contents of this course were distributed into other courses and their textbooks. He assessed that comparatively speaking the new curriculum is better however;

“Some [textbooks] still define citizenship over blood relations, while some have more pluralistic definitions. Effective citizen is still defined as that who is a soldier, who pays taxes and votes. The inquisitive approach has not settled yet (WP6/3).”

In line with KÇ’s references to varying understandings of citizenship, VÖ who is a member the Council of Education and Morality (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu*) referred to the contradictory nature of the curriculum. He stated that while Article 2 of Law No. 1739 constitutes the foundation of the principles in education:

“Some of the National Education curriculum is compatible with each other and some of them foresee conflicting human types. In that regard, when the whole context of the is taken into account, it can be said that depending on the nature of the course production of positivist, pragmatic, secular, nationalist, Kemalist, contemporary, religious, conservative individuals / citizens is foreseen (WP6/4).”

As we have indicated in our WP5 report, Article 2 of the Basic Law on National Education (Law No. 1739) amended in 1983 states that Atatürk nationalism and Atatürk’s reforms and principles constitute the foundation of Turkish education system in primary and secondary levels.

A close analysis of the interviews indicates that the interlocutors mainly addressed at the nationalist, ethno-centric, difference-blind and monolithic nature of the national curricula in

Turkey. All the interlocutors agreed that national curriculum is still far from meeting the requirements of the contemporary age.

Reflections of Liberalism/globalisation in the Turkish Education System

Globalization has brought about the possibility of the existence of alternative meanings attributed to modernity by creating the global/local nexus whereby modernity is articulated in different discourses of self, identity and culture, that is, to the co-existence of different cultures with different interpretations of modernity. Thus the formation of Turkish modernization began to carry in it ‘alternative modernities’ with different political discourses of, and different future prospects for, Turkish social life (Keyman and İçduygu, 2003: 225; Göle, 2002; Kaya, 2004). In that regard, globalization has led to the legitimacy crises of the state, alternative claims to modernity and ambivalence in terms of the EU membership.

The Bologna Process is an important reflection of the liberalisation/globalisation in the field of Turkish education. On the structural level, Turkey has been efficient in fulfilling the requirements of the Process. In that regard, ÜE, director of a centre working on equal access to education and the former Rector of a prominent public university, emphasized that in his personal experiences with the implementation of the structural reforms; he has not come across challenges but rather observed supplementary additions to the existing structure. In line with our research in the WP5 report, he attributed the lack of challenges to the “American model” which was implemented in Turkey in the 1950s. In that regard, he also noted that the educational system in Europe utilizes the “American model” as a benchmark, thus being complementary to the institutional structure in Turkish universities (WP6/1).

Nevertheless, the motives behind the Bologna process have been called into question in many countries including Turkey. Most significantly, the rise of Euroscepticism has encouraged the policy makers to frame process in terms of globalization rather than Europeanization. This is, in and of itself, a by-product of the growing Euroscepticism in Turkey, which also coincides with the loss of momentum in the reformation process as of 2005.

In terms of the Bologna Process, there are arguments which underline that it is based on neoliberal motivations and that the process is in fact market driven thereby leading to concerns regarding the quality of education. Nevertheless, in the case of Turkey, the concerns over the outcomes of the Process, such as the quality of education and market orientation, are eclipsed by concerns over the structural requirements as well as social and economic problems that prevent students’ participation in the Process. On the other hand, as we have discussed in our WP5 report, there is also a concern over the framing of the Process, more precisely, the Process is often framed as “internationalization” rather than “Europeanization”. As we have argued in our WP5 report:

In order to understand this the significance of the terminology, we should note that under JDP, Turkey has become more active in establishing relations with regional actors, while growing emphasis has been placed on multilateral relations with actors from the Middle East, Africa and Russia. Subsequently, we can observe that the EU is not perceived as the sole anchor anymore. Therefore, the term internationalization is preferred to Europeanization since the latter implies an attachment to one particular region. (IME WP 5 ‘Identity construction programs of the state and the EU: Case Study Phase I’: Turkish Case Report, 2010)

VÖ, on the other hand, argued that “I think that the Bologna Process’ scope should be broadened to comply with globalization and that while the Process is currently perceived as Europeanization, it is anticipated to be internationalization (WP6/4).”

In that framework, ADÖ, director of the International Office of a Foundation University, assessed that the Process is a positive occurrence in that it has contributed to the establishment of a platform for discussion on higher education, and set an agenda with regards to the necessary reforms. Nevertheless, she also drew attention to the negative consequences of the “top-down approach” of the reformation process and indicated that: “Turkey can reform the system on her own but we should carry out a reformation process in line with those in Europe and the world (WP6/6).” Nevertheless, in terms of the discussions related to the market orientation of the Process, she elaborated that:

“access to higher education is not an inherent right. Turkish economy cannot accommodate the employment of all higher education graduates. Everyone acts as if a higher education is a “must” but the economy also needs medium ranged employees (WP6/6).”

ÜE, who has taken active part in the Bologna Process, drew attention to the bureaucratic aspect of the Bologna Process, and stated that he does not appreciate the level of bureaucracy at universities in that they have to deal with the government bureaucracy, and that the Process might lead to an international bureaucracy. Nevertheless, he indicated that the Process is indeed a process of Europeanization (WP6/1). Similarly, DK, program officer at a civil society organisation specializing on social, political and economic policy issues and a columnist, observed that “the Process is in line with EU’s *raison d’être*. The most important reason was mobility. It is reasonable in terms of employment, similar qualifications is a necessity (WP6/9).”

When asked about the framework of the Process KÇ argued that the level of standardization required by the Process and the establishment of a language of education should not surpass locality, he argued that:

“I think the standardization, McDonaldization and making everything modular should be criticized. When we look at Europe, we see that the differences in education, for instance in England, the Netherlands and France can be attributed to their experiences with migration. If the use of one language is used as standardization there might be problems with locality. I believe that there won’t be any universality without locality (WP6/3).”

In regards to the widely acknowledged debates on the neoliberal nature of the Process, ÜE stated that: “I agree with the criticisms of the process with regards to neoliberal motivations. If skill-based education is accentuated, then higher education will resemble occupational schools (WP6/1).” Similarly, KÇ who referenced the importance of local characteristics, argued that:

“In terms of the arguments regarding the Bologna Process being skill-based, I think that if the mentality behind the process begins to obliterate local characteristics then there might be a problem. Nevertheless, this process exists independent of the Bologna

Process as well. Also, the things that we designate as skills change rapidly. For example, once we used to teach the IT students MS-DOS systems, which became obsolete upon their graduation. I think it's more important to relay a more critical perspective (WP6/3).”

On this issue, GO, former chairperson of a women's association and a member of the CHP, emphasized a very important aspect of skill-based education which is also a vulnerability of this system, she stated that:

“it is often the case that [skill-based] education does not support a critical mind. In effect, skills are like Word or Excel, the philosophy is the Windows operating system. Without a philosophical foundation, the system will always send off an error. Actually, philosophy is a dimension that extends through everyone (WP6/2).”

The interlocutors have provided an array of answers as to whether they would consider the Bologna Process as “Europeanization” or “internationalization”. While the interlocutors were divided in terms of their reflections on the framework of the Process, standardization is often perceived to be problematic. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the majority of the interlocutors indicated that this Process is not well known in Turkey.

Barriers before the Bologna Process

In line with the financial concerns regarding the Process which were emphasized by the Bologna Process National Reports of 2004-2005 and 2007-2009, the main issue in terms of education is whether it is a public or a private good. As we have discussed in our WP5 report, this is a subject matter that has been discussed extensively with regards to the proliferation of foundation universities and the differences in the quality of education. As such, our research in the WP5 report indicated that the proliferation foundation universities contribute to debates on whether education is a private or a public good. It was argued that while Foundation Universities have been able to integrate their graduates into the labour market, majority of the state universities were not as successful. Foundation universities are often criticised for having a neoliberal and market oriented approach since their networks play an important role in employment opportunities for their graduates. This is a significant issue that has become more visible in the past decade owing to the proliferation of foundation universities.

In terms of privatisation in primary education, Cinoğlu notes that public sector advocates oppose to the involvement of the private sector in education. He explains their reasoning as follows:

“Education should be for the public good, but private education sectors attached more importance to markets instead of the public good. As a result, any expansion of private education would be at the expense of the social efficiency and equity” (Cinoğlu, 2006: 681).

Therefore, in the Turkish case, foundation universities are also debated with reference to neoliberal motivations. Recent widespread student demonstrations in Turkey mainly criticize the process of commercialization of higher education (*Referans Daily*, <http://www.referansgazetesi.com/>, 12.09.2007). Majority of our interlocutors, on the other hand, have not reflected on this issue. Nevertheless, ED, faculty member at the Political

Science and International Relations Department of a Public University, indicated that education in Turkey has been commercialized. On this issue, he revealed that:

“There are problems on the financing, administration and operation of education. State owned schools are mismanaged. Especially the ones in Istanbul are too much focused on the money that families could mobilize for their kids’ education. This money is not managed in a transparent and efficient way. Our kids are sold to service busses, cantinas, catering companies and other service and good providers to schools (WP6/8).”

In contrast, ÜE noted that the way in which universities have been modelled after the “American model” in the 1950s thus initiating the concept of private universities constitutes “an important innovation and the EU can be guided in this issue. I believe that the EU should be informed about our experiences with foundation universities (WP6/1).” He argued that Turkey’s experience with the public universities established on the American model of higher education in the 1950s and 1960s such as the Middle East Technical University (Ankara), Atatürk University (Erzurum) and Karadeniz Technical University (Trabzon) has already made it easy for Turkey to comply with the major requirements of the Bologna Process with regard to the undergraduate and postgraduate studies, credit system, credit transfer system etc. Foundation universities teaching in English also have a similar pattern with those public universities organized along with the American higher education model.

Equal Access to Education

While liberalization of universities within the framework of the Bologna Process has been an important issue in the past decade, on account of globalisation, and the EU’s emphasis on equality, the inequality in access to education, which mainly develops around gender, ethnicity and financial status, became a significant concern in Turkey. In order to address the inequalities in access to education, in 2003, the Education Reform Initiative (ERI) was launched by Istanbul Policy Center at Sabancı University. The Initiative aims to improve education policy and decision-making through research, advocacy and monitoring activities. ERI states that:

“The increasingly complicated relationship between education policy and question of citizenship, the needs of an economy integrated with Europe and demographic trends that can be turned into an advantage through education for social and economic development are the key issues that Turkey must address. A major goal of the project is to contribute to a paradigmatic shift in the Turkish political culture that will in turn help sustain an open society.⁴”

In our interview with ÜE, he alluded to similar problems with regards to access to education; he stated that:

“The most important problem with regards to education is the question of equality in terms of region, class and gender. Education aims to create a nation. We need to create citizens who are suitable for a pluralistic system (WP6/1).”

⁴Please consult the Official website of the Education Reform Initiative. Available at: <http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/eng/?ArastirmaAlanlari/EgitimReformu.html>

In 2003, the Ministry of Education and UNICEF initiated the “Girls, off to School”⁵ campaign to address gender equality in access to education, which was intended for girls between ages 6 and 14. On April 23, 2005, Milliyet newspaper initiated a similar campaign in the scope of its social responsibility projects called the “Dad, send me to school”⁶ campaign. While these campaigns were often praised in the media, Yeğen, defines these campaigns as further instruments of Turkification and notes that:

“implemented mainly in predominantly Kurdish regions and in several western provinces containing large Kurdish populations, these similar campaigns attempt to increase school attendance among girls. It is understood that the Turkish state intends to further the assimilation of Kurds, but this time with the support of “civil society.” (Yeğen, 2009:613)

In the framework of gender equality in access to education, we conducted an interview with GO. Her response underlined the significance of EU reports hence EU criteria in this issue with regards to the integration of women into education and subsequently the labour market. In that regard, she underlined that:

“We work to provide women with freedom, education does not do that and further forces women into a pattern and restricts them. The EU reports have been very influential in integrating gender equality into the Constitution, particularly the Gender Equality reports have laid out what Turkey should do. We prepared an action plan with General Directorate on the Status of Women, which also included the expectations of the EU. As such, the responsibilities of the National Ministry of Education are also included; which sectors can be further advanced and how women can be integrated into these sectors, how the reflections of gender inequality should be removed from textbooks. We used the EU as an anchor, we revealed the necessary changes but the EU reports were more affective (WP6/2).”

Similarly, VÖ (WP6/4) also indicated that the EU accession process has contributed to a change in mentality with regards to the approaches to problems in education. Accordingly, he indicated that “educational programs and textbooks have been made to complement the EU standards, a significant increase in the rate of girls' schooling”. Nevertheless, while his observation has been positive in terms of implementation, he noted that the following issues still challenge the implementation:

“Traditional bureaucratic resistance, avoidance of managers to take risks, some people's belief that the EU process will fail and partially the influences of the nationalist reflexes and the fact that it requires a long time to transform the traditional, learned behaviours of the teachers, school directors and inspectors”

His interview revealed that while the EU accession process has improved several aspects of education, the mentality of educators and belief in the EU process play an important role in the implementation of a quality educational system.

⁵The official website of the “Girls, off to School” is available at: haydikizlarokula.meb.gov.tr

⁶This project is also referred to as “Father, Send me to School”. Official website of the campaign is available at: <http://www.bbog.org/>

MA made a similar observation with regards to the challenges in implementing a quality education and she argued that:

“I do not believe that the mentality behind the 2006 curriculum can be understood (thus internalized and implemented) by the teachers. The mentality can be summarized as raising individuals who can express themselves, solve their problems, thus promoting the Western understanding of the “individual”. However, many teachers have not internalized this understanding; therefore they cannot teach it to their students. Accordingly, these principles stay on paper, they are not implemented. I think advancements can happen when educational practices harvest autonomy and heteronomy. I think Turkey has this potential. Unfortunately, we are not familiar with these approaches; we tend to go for isolationist approaches (WP6/5).”

The two abovementioned views converge with regards to the importance of the educators and their training in improving the educational system. While VÖ (WP6/4) focused mainly on the significance of transforming traditional learned behaviours, MA’s (WP6/5) view complements his argument with references to the significance of the human agency *vis-a-vis* the educators. In effect, what is visible is that both interlocutors have directly or indirectly underlined that the transformation of the educational system should commence with the educators to align themselves with the western understanding of an individual, which refers to more critical, inquisitive and expressive individuals.

On this issue, during our interview with GO, we asked her to elaborate on the characteristics that educators should have. She stated that:

“Educators are those who shape the way people think. They have lots of responsibilities. If, like Aristotle, they are idealists, ethical and impartial, embracing all while defending the minorities, the youth is likely to be more tolerant and ethical; their values will be reflected in the youth. In that sense, the question is whether a person can have two identities (WP6/2).”

In accordance with this statement, it is possible to state that one of the most reoccurring issues with regards to the transformation of the educational system is the way in which ideologies have penetrated the education system. ÖG, assistant program officer at a civil society organisation specializing on social, political and economic policy issues, noted that one of the most important problems with regards to education and identity is academic freedom in that there is the notion of “self-censorship”. She argued that:

“For instance, some BA, MA and PHD thesis subjects are not accepted by academicians as a result of self-censorship. Particularly, issues that are perceived to be threatening, such as issues relating to identity, are where the process is blocked. The reluctance to debate political issues is a serious problem... The politicisation of issues reflects on the academicians, they feel the need to take sides in real politics. These ideological preferences are clearly reflected in the academia (WP6/7).”

In terms of access to education, varying social and economic backgrounds of students is also a significant concern. Article 42 of the Constitution states that:

“The State shall provide scholarships and other means of assistance to enable students of merit lacking financial means to continue their education (The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982, Article 42).”

Accordingly, the state has the duty to provide financial assistance to those who do not have the means. In that regard, the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) established a centralized state grants and loans system for undergraduate and graduate programs, which is under the responsibility of the Higher Education Credit and Dormitory Authority (YURTKUR). However, various civil society actors such as the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TÜSIAD) and argued that this institution would perpetuate the centralized state funding schemes (NTVMSNBC, www.ntvmsnbc.com, 19.03.2004).

Accommodation of Ethno-Cultural and Linguistic Differences in Education

Another major concern with regards to access to education is ethnicity. This phenomenon is not confined to the last decade but contestations in this field have become more visible with the EU accession process and ethnic revivals. On 2 August 2002, in accordance with the third harmonization package, several amendments were passed. Articles 8 of the Package amended the Law on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and lifted the restrictions on broadcasting in the different languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens in their daily lives. Article 11, allowed for education in languages and dialects that are not traditionally used by Turkish citizens in their daily lives. The Article did not grant the right to be educated in one's mother tongue, but rather the permission to open private courses for the purposes of education in one's mother tongue. However, a limited number of private courses were instituted, according to *Zaman* newspaper only 3 private courses were opened in 2 years. (Zaman- 01.06.2004)

The right to education in mother language has become a source of growing conflict in Turkey. Although political parties such as CHP and MHP do not support education in Kurdish, Kurdish students' protests indicate there is a growing demand for education in Kurdish. In order to provide a political platform for this demand, BDP (Peace and Democracy Party, *Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*) representatives repeatedly underlined the assimilation politics of the Turkish government and called for boycotts and protests. In the 2009-2010 academic years, Istanbul Bilgi University and Tunceli University commenced elective Kurdish language courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Most recently, TZP Kurdi (*Tevgera Ziman u Perverdehiya Kurdi, Kürt Dil ve Eğitim Hareketi*, Movement for Kurdish Language and Education) initiated the “Anadilde eğitim istiyoruz” (We want education in mother tongue) campaign, and in the scope of the campaign they called for boycotts between October 20-25, 2010. They argued that education in Kurdish language should not be construed as separatism but rather a contribution to enriching the diversity in Turkey. Civil society organizations such as the Human Rights Foundation, Ankara Kurdish Democracy and the Association for Culture and Solidarity (*Kurdi-Der*) and the Education and Science Workers' Union (*Eğitim-Sen*) have expressed their support for education in Kurdish. At his Press Conference in the Turkish House in New York, President Gül criticized the boycott as “enlisting of children for a political cause” (Cumhuriyet, <http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/>, 20.09.2010).

MA identified the debates surrounding the issue of education in mother language as an

important problem with regards to identity and education. In that regard, her argument focused on the fact that “a significant portion of the children begin their formal education know a language other than Turkish.” She argued that:

“They [students whose mother language is not Turkish] have difficulty with Turkish language and this situation affects their access to and future success in education. In that case, what we should question is how to produce policies that can create a qualified educational environment for every child. Children who do not speak Turkish at home commence bilingualism and bilingual literacy with formal education. We have to accept that these children bring a lingual and cultural richness from their own socio-cultural environment (WP6/5).”

Nevertheless, while bilingual education has been a source of conflict in the past decade, she noted that:

“Although the educational infrastructure that would allow this educational environment seems costly at first stage, (teacher training, the production of textbooks and materials, and the creation of the curriculum), in the long-run it is a cost effective model since it will lead to solutions to dropping-out, lack of girls’ enrolment in school, parents failure to actively participate in the educational process. That is what the examples from the world tell us (WP6/5).”

According to Yavuz, the overlapping regional and economic discrepancies, which have been growing since the early republican period, are the source of Kurdish nationalism. He argues that:

“The relatively successful modernization project of Mustafa Kemal in education, urbanization, and communication did not only create regional differences, but also helped to create a conscious Kurdish ethnic elite. The interpretation of this regional difference and the formation of new Kurdish elite are the very reasons for the mobilization of the Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. The overlap between the regional economic disparity and particular ethnic (Kurdish) identity is translated into Kurdish nationalism (Yavuz, 2001: 1-2)”

While we have identified three areas that inequality in access to education as sources of concern and conflict, in some cases, these areas merge. As we have noted in WP4 and WP5 reports, the regional differences are also a factor in access to education, which stems from the rapid modernization of western Turkey and the exclusion of the eastern region from the process.

History education reforms and the construction of national identity in the Turkish Education System

First and foremost, Turkish history textbooks are produced by the Ministry of Education, with revisions every 5 years. There are also books published by private institutions which complement the Ministry’s textbooks and they are printed under the strict guidelines of the Ministry. It is widely acknowledged that history education plays a significant role in the formation of national consciousness. Accordingly, one of the problems in contemporary history education in Turkey is ethnocentrism formulated on the basis of Sunni-Muslim-Turkish identity. Consequently, the concepts of “us” and “the other” carry significant

meanings in constructing the Turkish identity. As it was the case in citizenship education, there are numerous meanings attached to the “other”, which changes frequently. While the EU is considered a consolidative project; history education still frames some European countries as the “other”. According to Çayır,

“From the start, education has been seen as the most important means of creating a new nation based on a single national culture, a single ethnic identity and a single religion and language (Çayır, 2009:40).”

He identifies compulsory courses in Turkish primary and secondary schools such as ‘History of the Turkish Revolution and Atatürkism’ and ‘Studies in National Security’ as problematic. As such the language used in the textbooks use a nationalist and militarist language with regards to the relations with neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the history textbooks identify external enemies as Greece and Armenia, which we have discussed in our WP5 report with reference to citizenship education Turkey. As previously noted, the curriculum has been reformed in line with EU harmonization efforts; however, Çayır notes that:

“Ethnic, gender or language-related differences still receive no mention in the new textbooks. Thus, the history of Kurds and non-Muslim minorities has still been excluded from the ‘legitimate’ knowledge constructed by the curriculum. The importance of Turkish as the only legitimate language, on the other hand, is underlined in almost every book” (Çayır, 2009: 48).

Nevertheless, in 2008 Modern Turkish and World History courses (*Çağdaş Türk ve Dünya Tarihi Dersi*) were incorporated into the 12th grade curriculum in order to incorporate the World Wars, the Cold War and globalization in history textbooks.

Similar to the issues that were identified through our research, VÖ identified the problems in history education as:

“the inadequacy of its objectivity since the basic starting point and goal is to create a nation and legitimize the political system, the significant abundance of political and military themes in comparison to social and economic dimensions, the insufficiency of self-criticism, addressing disputed issues only via official thesis (WP6/4).”

ÜE drew attention to the importance of ideological symbols in the Turkish education symbol and argued that:

“Individuals are raised with language, religion and flag ideology, which are in essence symbols. The aim of history education is to establish a nation. For instance, normally states have a Ministry or a Department of education while Turkey has a Ministry of “National” Education, which is in and of itself ideological. We face the problem of establishing a pluralistic nation (WP6/1).”

He also pointed that “One of the biggest paradoxes in Turkey is that Kemalism was one of the key movements, which propagated Sunni Islam while Kemalism itself was accepted as anti-religion (WP6/1).”

While our research has drawn attention to the problematic nature of the definition of the

“other” in history textbooks, GO also drew attention to the formation of a meta-identity via the emphasis on Turkishness, she noted that:

“In primary schools in terms of identity, the values are given over the “I am Turkish, I am Honest, I am Diligent” (*Türküüm, Doğruyum, Çalışkanım*) discourse.⁷ The Turkish identity is taught as a deductive higher identity. Religion courses push the Sunni Islam as a deductive identity. Instead of being an individual, they are brought up as a part of the community. It is about establishing a meta-identity. Education should deem the individual competent and free everybody. Individuals are rather restricted under the narrow definition of Sunni-Muslim-Turkish identity established by the state...We work to provide women with freedom, education does not do that and further forces women into a pattern and restricts them (WP6/2).”

GO’s intervention reminds what Diana Crane calls “invisible colleges”. Diane Crane wrote more than thirty years ago (1972) about the ways in which knowledge is produced through *invisible* colleges. Her concern was principally with (scientific) knowledge production, clearly distinguished, as in the ‘official’ discourse, from teaching. Individuals not only learn through the official curricula in schools, but also through unofficial curricula (e.g. films, TV, internet, on-line journals, distance learning classes, bookstores, libraries, museums, movies, TV, music compact discs, rap albums, video games, and comic books), or through popular learning settings (e.g. community centres, associations, churches, mosques, and peer groups). In discussing the problematic nature of the propagation of Sunni-Islam, GO further argued that:

“If you place emphasis on a certain thing, the others cannot become prominent. Meta-identity should not be defined as being a Turk; it can be being a citizen. If the emphasis is on citizenship, then it encompasses all. For example, religious holidays are national holidays, in a secular country you either consider all religious holidays national holidays or you don’t consider any of them (WP6/2).”

Similarly, ED emphasized the focus on the nation-building process in history education. He argued that:

“History is considered as a static story of the past. There is now focus on historiography. It was too much focused on the nation or now on the Islamic civilization. It does not create linkages with the other nations or groups in the world based on peace and communication (WP6/8).”

In light of these statements, we can observe that the way in which meta-identity is defined is considered a source of conflict in that the educational system, including history courses, focus on being a Sunni-Muslim-Turk, which in turn alienates ethnic and religious minority groups in Turkey. In that regard, as we have previously discussed the notion of “us” is formulated in the framework of Turkishness and Sunni Islam. Nevertheless, as it was discussed in our WP4 and WP5 reports, the inclusion of religious identity and the recent Islamic revival also contribute to concerns over Turkish meta-identity.

⁷“I am Turkish, I am Honest, I am Diligent” (*Türküüm, Doğruyum, Çalışkanım*) is a direct quote from a march which is recited by Turkish children enrolled at primary schools.

In correlation with the emphasis on meta-identity and the national consciousness in history education, interlocutors also revealed their concern over the exclusion of ethnic minorities in history textbooks, particularly textbooks. KÇ argued that:

“I think the issues regarding minorities and migrants should be integrated into the general understanding of history. Hrant Dink used to say that “Ali never throws the ball to Agop”.⁸ There is no Kurdish or Armenian or any other minority names in the textbooks. First we should acknowledge their existence. The quantity of materials on how to discuss unfortunate events should be increased, the events that have been covered should be discussed and most importantly, we should not lie. We should endorse plural identities (WP/3).”

In terms of the static perception of history, the decision of the United States Congress to classify the events of 1915 as “genocide” dated 4 March 2010 constituted a serious challenge to history telling in Turkey. In order to normalize political relations with Armenia, on 10 October 2009, Protocols on “Establishment of Diplomatic Relations” and “Development of Bilateral Relations”, with the facilitation of Switzerland. The Protocol states that upon ratification Turkey and Armenia will: “cooperate in the fields of science and education by encouraging relations between the appropriate institutions as well as promoting the exchange of specialists and students, and act with the aim of preserving the cultural heritage of both sides and launching common cultural projects”. While Turkey has bilateral agreements with all her neighbouring countries which foresee cooperation in the field of education, relations with Armenia has always been strained. According to Yapıcı, the “Armenian Genocide” constitutes the best example of “othering” in Turkish history education. He argues that while Turkey denies the “genocide”, other countries acknowledge it thereby creating a paradox in the minds of students (Yapıcı, 2004: 7).

In correlation with Yapıcı’s argument, ÖG focused on the idea that history education has been “a very successful project in establishing national consciousness” via the exclusion of ethnic minorities from history textbooks. She argued that:

“History education in Turkey tells about Turks while Kurds, Alevis, Circassians, Greek origin Turks (Rums) are not mentioned and these communities have been very vocal in stating that they find it dismissive and offensive. I know for a fact that there are very negative statements about Armenians in history textbooks. Accordingly, the students learn to be prejudicial towards the differences. There are also very significant factual mistakes in textbooks. There should be a considerable revision, it should be objective and it shouldn’t focus on victories, injustices or the identification of the friends and foes of the Turkish state. There is no peace or conciliation in these textbooks (WP6/7).”

DK who drew attention to the dogmatic nature of history education Turkey stated that “there is a non-existent/fabricated history telling (WP6/9).” She further argued that this is one of the reasons that Turkish people are not familiar with the events on 1915. Nevertheless, she further elaborated that this debate is likely to lead to further questions regarding history telling in Turkey. She stated that “This is like a Pandora’s Box, once individuals begin to question, the rest will surely come (WP6/9).”

⁸ This sentence is a reference to one of the most common sentences that Turkish language textbooks use in teaching primary school students Turkish language (e.g., Ali throws the ball to Ahmet).

Nevertheless, the notion of “othering” is not necessarily confined to ethnic minorities in Turkish history education. As our WP5 report indicated in greater detail history education has not only identified internal “enemies” but also “external” enemies. Furthermore, there is also lack of references to relations with foreign countries and contemporary dynamics. In that regard, KÇ emphasized that:

“In terms of diversity and universality, for instance there is no discussion about what the EU is; we have to equip children with this knowledge. In terms of modernization/modernity, there is a protective discourse against their west stemming from our history. However, in terms of the examples from foreign countries there is a focus on Middle Asia which mostly follows the Turkish-Islam discourse. There are no positive examples on Turkish-European relations. For instance, our collaboration with Greece during the earthquake is a very significant illustration of such positive examples (WP6/3).”

KÇ (WP6/3) and DK (WP6/9) also alluded to the significance of the History Foundation of Turkey⁹, which is one of the prominent organizations that work on the issue of history education. The Foundation also actively works to improve history education. For instance, in May 2002, they instituted The Project for Promoting Human Rights in Primary and Secondary School Textbooks, which aims to integrate human rights into the school textbooks while fostering awareness in school textbooks and the school environment, among school teachers, textbook writers, parents, and educators in general, at both the grass roots and the official levels.¹⁰

While most of our interviews were focused on the structural problems with regards to history education, MA drew attention to the importance of human agency in history telling *vis-a-vis* the role of teachers. In that framework she argued that:

“I believe in the importance of placing emphasis on teachers’ training rather than textbooks. And history education in schools should be evaluated with a holistic perspective. So, this has to be reflected in all areas of the curriculum. Also, of course, there is a very important issue which has not been touched: how to process the matter of sensitive and controversial issues in classes. In this regards, I believe that it is essential to debate this issue with the teachers who are the main actors, and develop course practices that are developed and tested via pilot studies (WP6/5).”

Furthermore, the EU accession process has also contributed to the reformation of the curriculum to some extent, KÇ stated that:

“The European Union has had positive influences. The curriculum was renewed in 2005, and the most important reason was the EU harmonization efforts. The new curriculum, the Ministry of Education also explains it this way, is more constructive

⁹See also <http://www.tarihvakfi.org.tr/english/historyeducation.asp#1>

¹⁰The Project was carried out with the support of the Turkish Academy of Sciences, the History Foundation in cooperation with the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and with the financial support of the European Commission and the Open Society Institute.

rather than deductive...There are several joint projects with the European Council. These are tangible reflections of the EU influence (WP6/3).”

History education or more broadly history telling in Turkey has been very problematic. Our interviews have indicated that the problems identified in this field are often similar if not the same. As we have previously discussed, understandings of multiculturalism and citizenship are highly intertwined with history education. The focus on the nation-building process and the way in which Turkish identity and its focus on Turkishness and Islam has guided the content of history education is considered problematic by all the interlocutors. However, as KÇ also indicated there are no references to recent Turkish history, which in and of itself constitutes a problem with regard to the notions of modernity, Europe, Europeanization and particularly Europeanization efforts in Turkey.

The Representation of Religion and Secularisation in the Turkish Education System

Our WP4 and WP5 reports have extensively focused on the role of religion in the Turkish states, particularly after the victories of the JDP government throughout the last decade. Subsequently, we observe that education has become one of the most visible fields that religion has become a source of contestation. In that framework, we identified two debates that has received both the media’s and civil societies’ attention. The debates surrounding the headscarf ban at universities and the proliferation of *Imam Hatip* school graduates participating in higher education will be the main subject matters of this section.¹¹

Headscarf Issue: In WP4 and WP5 reports, we discussed that Turkey is a secular state by way of its Constitution. However, in the last decade we observe that there are significant concerns over the representation of religious beliefs in education. In this framework, headscarf has become a symbolic element in reference to religious representation in education. The concerns surrounding the headscarf stem from the argument that it is perceived and employed as a political symbol by the Justice and Development Party (JDP). The headscarf issue is often debated in terms of the religious-secular divide. However, some scholars construe that this is in fact a women’s movement. For instance, Nilüfer Göle argues against the traditional understanding of the headscarf as a symbol handed down by generation. She underlines that:

“The Islamic headscarf is deliberately appropriated, not passively carried and handed down from generation to generation. It is claimed by a new generation of women who have had access to higher education, notwithstanding their modest social origins (many come from the periphery of the big cities or from small towns). Instead of assimilating to the secular regime of women’s emancipation, they press for their

¹¹It is important to note that although this report does not address the Fethullah Gülen Movement, it is an important faith movement and considered a religious revival of the discourses which interprets the world with religious references. The Movement is often discussed in the framework of transnational networks since it is based on the interaction of various transnational agencies in various fields, including education. In that framework, the Movement has reached out to the Turkish Diaspora, particularly the Diasporic youth. Moreover, the Gülen Movement is also unwelcome by CHP, in 2005 Denizli Representative Mustafa Gazalci referred to these schools as the largest educational network after the government and asked for an inquiry by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TBMM) on the basis that these schools were not aligned with Article 42 of the Constitution which defined the principles of education in the framework of Atatürk’s principles and the laicist nature of Turkish education.

embodied difference (e.g., Islamic dress) and their public visibility (e.g., in schools, in Parliament) and create disturbances in modern social imaginaries. Islamic women hurt the feelings of modern women and upset the status quo; they are playing with ambivalence, being both Muslim and modern without wanting to give up one for the other. They are outside a regime of imitation, critical of both subservient traditions and assimilative modernity. One can almost twist the argument and say that they are neither Muslim nor modern. The ambiguity of signs disturbs both the traditional Muslim and the secular modernist social groups. And this goes further than a question of abstract identity. It takes place in the public sphere, it involves a face-to-face relation, which means that difference is marked on the body; it is an embodied difference, one that is visible to others” (Göle, 2002:181).

She argues that women who wear the headscarf are neither traditional nor modern in conventional terms. They wear the headscarf but they are also visible actors in the public sphere, which contradicts with the subservient model of Muslim women who are rather invisible/absent in the public sphere. In effect, they have been able to consolidate the traditional and the modern, which has become a source of debate in regards to the field of education.

European Court of Human Rights’ decision in *Leyla Sahin v. Turkey* case dated November 2005 constitutes a landmark case with regards to the legal battle surrounding the headscarf. The Court upheld the bans on the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in Turkish universities by adult women (Göle, 2002 and 2006).

In the past decade, the debates surrounding the headscarf were carried out via two different discourses. The first discourse is that headscarf constitutes a conflict with regards to the religious-secular divide, the second discourse being that, as Göle argued; the headscarf constitutes a women’s rights issue. Nevertheless, both discourses were highly politicized and drew extensive media attention. In line with the politicization of this issue, ÜE has indicated that this is in fact a political issue, which cannot be solved in the short-term (WP6/1). Similarly, ED also argued that this is

“a synthetic political issue. Discussing the headscarf issue as a freedom issue is quite absurd. It is resolved with a political will at the moment. If a women wants to cover her head nobody has a right to force her to open it. But nobody should force a woman to cover her head as well (WP6/8).”

In line with this statement, DK stated that:

“I find the discussions [surrounding the headscarf] shallow and hypocritical. Restriction of girls at the higher education level is nothing but authoritarianism. I think this is injustice. It is discrimination against a serious number of people. These discussions are carried on without acknowledging these people (WP6/9).”

By the same token, AKDER (*Ayrımcılığa Karşı Kadın Hakları Derneği*, Society of Women Rights Against Discrimination) voiced concerns about women’s rights to wear the headscarf, and argued that this issue is well within basic rights and freedoms. They also perceived this subject within the women’s rights discourse. In that framework, ÖG indicated that while women wearing the headscarf are often isolated from the public space,

“There are similar trends in the private sector, the ban in the private sector reflects there as well. Women are reluctant to apply to these positions. The common perception is that they do not fit a certain life style (WP6/7).”

While the isolation of women wearing the headscarf was absent in the public space until recently, KÇ indicated that the women wearing the headscarf should not be considered a homogeneous community and that this “movement” has been transformed to include women who are questioning the inequalities they have faced as well as those who maintain their belief in the patriarchal structure of the society (WP6/3).

Nevertheless, the relations between religion and education *in general* have been a significant source of concern. As such, VÖ identified among others “the presence of contradictory contents that serve the perception that there is a antagonistic relationship between *laïcité* and religion (the presence of contents that do not support each other in some classes), and the political debates and an uncertainty in defining *laïcité*; leading to subjective and ideological perceptions (WP6/4)” as some sources of conflict. Most of our interlocutors have also referenced compulsory religion courses as the most significant issue in terms of religion and education in Turkey.

As we have discussed in WP4 and WP5 reports, the separation of religion and state as well as the religious-secular divide have become a significant concern in terms of social and political dynamics. Additionally, our interlocutors have revealed that while conservative and liberal interlocutors prefer to approach this issue within the human rights framework, interlocutors with left wing and secular ideologies prefer to underline that this issue is highly politicized.

Imam Hatip Schools: In addition to the headscarf debate there have been debates over the *Imam Hatip* schools. On 16 August 1997 with Law No. 4306, published in the Official Gazette No. 23084 dated 18 August 1997, compulsory education was increased from 5 years to 8 years, which led to arguments that the Law was purposely disadvantaging *Imam Hatip* schools. We provided a brief history of these schools in our WP5 report but we should reiterate that *Imam Hatip* Schools as well as Theology Faculties were established in the 1950s in accordance with Article 4 of the Law on the Unification of Education (1924) which authorized the Ministry of Education to establish schools for students who will be trained to undertake religious services, such as that of *imam* or *muezzin* (the one calling the believers to come to prayer) upon graduation.

It is often underlined that the establishment of *Imam Hatip* schools coincided with the growing need for religious leaders (Reed, 1955; and Yong-Pak, 2004). According to Reed, in 1951, 19 *Imam Hatip* schools were established by Adnan Menderes, the leader of the ruling Democratic Party (DP) due to a shortage of religious leadership. He maintained that the unification of education and the closing of *madrasahs* contributed to this shortage (Reed, 1955:151).

According to Zürcher (2003), the inclusion of religion in education was not a result of necessity but rather a political move initiated by the populist and right-wing Democratic Party leadership who came to power in 1950 elections. The choice of the Democratic Party was in favour of setting up a political alliance with the rural population that was previously neglected by the Republican People’s Party (CHP) rule. The military coup of 1960 broke up this

alliance, and accused the Democratic Party leadership of exploiting religious sentiments of the Turkish people. Reed rightfully argued that the main question after the establishment of *Imam Hatip* schools in early 1950s was: “Will these schools be able to avoid the pitfalls of a dualism springing from Allah's demand for ultimate submission to his omnipotent will and the urgent requirements of the sovereign Turkish Republic upon her loyal citizens?” (Reed, 1955:163) Currently, the question still persists as to how Turkish citizenship and religious education should coexist.

In order to understand the concerns over *Imam Hatip* schools it is important to note that in accordance with Law No: 4306, compulsory education was raised from five to eight years thereby closing all sixth, seventh and eighth grades, which formerly constituted middle school. Consequently, only the high school sections of the *Imam Hatip* schools remained open. Due to the closing down of these levels, individuals can only enrol in the high school level of *Imam Hatip* schools, accordingly Nachmani and Yong-Pak maintain that one of the primary reasons that religious circles object to this law is that it is preventing children from becoming acquainted with religion at an early age. (Nachmani, 2003; Yong-Pak, 2004) For that reason Yong-Pak argues that “The Imam-Hatip schools epitomize the attempted control of the reproduction of religious knowledge by the government throughout modern Turkish history (Yong-Pak, 2004: 322).”

One of the arguments against the *Imam Hatip* schools was based on the proliferating number of students enrolling and graduating each year. In that regard, Article 32 of the Basic Law on Education (1973) declared that the aim of the *Imam Hatip* schools were to raise preachers (*imam*) who would occupy religious positions upon graduation. Nevertheless, as stated by Ercan, the popularization and the politicization of the masses have provided for the involvement of different ideologies in education, consequently one can argue that the dual educational policies, both nationalist and religious, have increased the gap between policy actors in the national education system. (Ercan, 1999:32)

According to Nachmani, by the late 1990s, these schools were producing 53,000 graduates, while the number of imams needed was only 2,300. (Nachmani, 2003: 97) This statistics are in line with report written by Çakır, Bozan and Talu who assert that:

“The first serious objection to the free choice of *Imam Hatip* graduates came from TÜSIAD (Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association). According to their research conducted in 1988, approximately %32 of graduates of *Imam Hatip* schools picked faculties of law as their first choice in university entrance exams, proving more popular than religious based alternatives.” (Çakır, Bozan and Talu, 2004:46)

As the discrepancy between *Imam Hatip* graduates enrolling in law faculties and political science departments, and those preferring to enrol in Religion and Ethics Education as well as Theology faculties increased, in 1999, *Imam Hatip* schools were reclassified as vocational schools. As a consequence, these schools were subject to a lower coefficient at the central examinations, which aimed to limit the scope of undergraduate schools available to *Imam Hatip* graduates. To that effect, KÇ stated that:

“In some ways, they [*Imam Hatip* schools] have become a kind of temporary solution to the detrimental effects of modernization process. People do not send their children to these schools so they can be imams but rather so that they can become lawyers,

politicians etc... In a way, these are solutions to public demand founded by politics. *Imam Hatip* schools provide students with occupations without ostracizing religion (WP6/3).”

On the other hand, VÖ focused on the need for these schools on the basis on a lack of alternatives, he argued that:

“There is a need for these schools because the society’s needs with regards to religious education are not permitted to be met by other options (such as courses, private schools, communities, NGOs). The correct solution is to renounce religion education in civil space, and to ensure state control (WP6/4).”

Similarly, ÖG indicated that these schools are in fact occupational school, and that occupational schools in general are reasonable educational institutes since every individual cannot attend a university. However, the conflicts of the 1990s have been carried into the 2000s; as such we can observe that the headscarf issue also revitalized the debates about *Imam Hatip* schools. In this framework, ÖG argued that:

“The discussions on occupational schools get blocked at *Imam Hatip* schools; I think this issue is being taken advantage of in terms of politics. The politicization of *Imam Hatips* stems from the education system. Those who wear the headscarf cannot go to a University so they prefer these schools. I believe both Islamists and laicists have equally taken advantage of this issue (WP6/7).”

In 2008, in the framework of women’s rights TÜSIAD and KAGIDER (Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey, *Kadın Girişimciler Derneği*) published a joint report which reiterated that while women’s increasing enrolment in these schools constitute an improvement in women’s education, it also perpetuates traditional gender roles and limits employment opportunities.¹²

In this framework, GO indicated that she has not been fond of these schools and that: “Schools are supposed to liberate and enrich people but these schools restrict women from finding their gender identity. These schools do not raise individuals (WP6/2).” Complementing the above mentioned joint report she reiterated that:

“The word *imam* actually refers to men because only men can be imams but we place women into these schools... These schools are also based on memorizing because they give student the Kur’an and expect them to memorize it... I find it senseless to raise women as religious individuals without an occupation (WP6/2).”

In terms of the representation of religion with regard to *Imam Hatip* schools, the interlocutors revealed diverse opinions. In that regard, we see that the enrolment of *Imam Hatip* graduates in departments other than Theology department has become a visible concern for secular groups, what we observe from our interviews is that expert opinions depend heavily on how they perceive these schools role within the entire educational system. In that regard, we

¹² See also Bozan, İ. (2007). Devlet ile Toplum Arasında Bir Okul: İmam Hatip Liseleri... Bir Kurum: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (A School between the State and the Society: Imam Hatip High Schools... An Institution: Directorate of Religious Affairs), TESEV: İstanbul.

observe that those who perceive these schools as occupational schools are more accommodating towards *Imam Hatip* schools.

Conclusions

This paper scrutinized the ways in which the issues of immigration, multiculturalism, citizenship, liberalisation, globalisation, Europeanization, Europeaness, national identity, religion and secularism have been accommodated by the Turkish education system at both primary-secondary and higher levels. It was revealed that both multiculturalism and immigration are not incorporated into the education system in terms of creating a kind of public awareness at the grassroots level. Some of the interlocutors have straightforwardly addressed at the lack of willingness on the state level to introduce such issues into the curricula. It was claimed that the new curriculum of 2006 attempts to underline the notion of diversity through a religiously defined mode of civilizational discourse defining Europeaness and Turkishness as separate entities. On the other hand, positive influences of the EU were noted on the structural level while the need to transform educators' mentality was underlined as a means to transform the understanding of an "individual". The interlocutors were more precise with regard to the citizenship education. They argued that the type of citizen the citizenship education aims to create is defined at a crossroads of civility, patriotism and nationalism. Within this context, the citizens are not considered to be active and reflexive agents, but rather to be subjects of the state satisfying the expectations of the state such as military service, taxation, and voting. It was found out that national curriculum in Turkey reproduces nationalist, ethno-centric and difference-blind individuals. All the interlocutors agreed that national curriculum is still far from meeting the requirements of the contemporary age.

The Bologna Process on the other hand seems to be far from institutionalization as it is still being undertaken by volunteering individuals who have internalized it. Bologna offices of each university are often run by those individuals who are very supportive of the process. However, their hard-work is not accompanied by the institutionalization of the process. On the other hand, skill-based nature of the Bologna Process has been criticized by the interlocutors as it aims to create skilled individuals who are equipped to fulfil the requirements of the global economic forces in a way that leads to a kind of dehumanization of individuals. Besides, the interlocutors also addressed at the negative aspects of standardization and homogenization of higher education in Europe leading to the disappearance of local motives. On the other hand, equating the Bologna Process with the Americanization of higher education, one of the interlocutors rightfully indicated that Turkey is by default very well prepared for the main rationale of the Bologna Process as most of the Turkish universities, be it public or foundation, have been designed in accordance with the American university structure.

Turkish educational system is recently making a progress in terms of accommodating ethno-cultural and linguistic differences. Launching institutes at public universities to study the Kurdish language and organizing Kurdish language courses in the universities signify the fact that Turkish education is becoming more liberal in recognizing ethno-cultural differences. However, there are still official barriers before the recognition of bilingualism when it comes to the acceptance of the Kurdish language.

History education is one of the most disputable fields in the field of Turkish education. Almost all the interlocutors have openly criticized the way Turkish history has been so far taught in textbooks, not only at the primary and secondary level, but also at the higher education institutions through the requirements of the Central Higher Education Authority. It was also found out that there are still no references to the notions of modernity, Europe, Europeanization and particularly Europeanization of Turkey in the textbooks. Additionally, one interlocutor in particular observed that there are still negative references to European countries, while the textbooks are deficient in referencing collaborative projects of Turkey and European countries.

Another disputable field raised by the interlocutors is the ways in which debates revolving around the issues of religion and secularism have been covered in the field of education. This is the most decisive debate dividing the Turkish public between “Laicists” and “anti-Laicists”. Two of the issues raised in this regard were the headscarf issue and *Imam Hatip* high school issue, which were located by the interlocutors around a fault-line dividing those who place these issues within the framework of human rights and those who place it within framework of politicization of religious claims. Eventually, it was revealed that the notions of modernity, European identity, Europeanness, national identity, ethno-cultural diversity, multilingualism, religion, secularism, laicism, westernization, civilization and history are still contested.

In light of this report and our findings, our WP7 report will focus on the affects of these issues on “private individuals”. In that regard, we will investigate the notions of Europeanization, modernization along the lines of our findings. The WP7 report will specifically investigate the views of private individuals on the following four issues:

- 1) The discussion surrounding the headscarf ban at universities and subsequent student protests,
- 2) The negative imagery of neighbouring countries and European countries in Turkish history books and the type of individuals it aims to raise,
- 3) The Bologna Process and the discussions surrounding the neoliberal motivations, particularly market orientation,
- 4) The debates surrounding the right to education in one’s mother language, particularly education in Kurdish and the boycotts at the end of September 2010.

In investigating these issues, we will mainly focus on whether private individuals perceive these problems to be exclusive to Turkey or Europe in general and the significance attributed to these issues. In doing so, the WP7 report will focus on individuals’ definitions/perceptions of Europe, Europeanization, modernity and national identity.

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ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU /
RESULT OF EVALUATION BY THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

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This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in Research on Humans

Proje Başlığı / Project Title: Identities and Modernities in Europe: European and National Identity Construction Programmes and Politics, Culture, History and Religion

1.	Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision.	_X_
2.	Ret / Application rejected Reddin gerekçesi / reason for rejection:	_____

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