TYRKEY-LITVANYA EĞİTİM SİSTEMLERİNE KARŞILAŞTıRıMALı GENEL BİR BAKIŞ
A Comparative Overview about Turkey-Lithuania Education Systems

EXTENDED SUMMARY

Today, international student and teaching staff exchange programs are run in a very active way. Erasmus is the most commonly used exchange program. This program includes many activities such as student exchange, teaching staff exchange and condensed language course and program development. More than 4,000 higher education institutions from 33 countries are stakeholder in this program. Approximately 2.2 million students have participated in this program (East, 2013). As can be seen here, Erasmus represents a huge worldwide change organization. Our country is a stakeholder of the program since 1 April 2004. In this context, we have relationships with many countries. Our country is actively participating in exchange programs. Lithuania is the one of these countries. In this context between Turkey and Lithuania in recent years, especially in the field of education, there is very intense relationship. There are many studies about comparison of the educational system of the countries. Erkan (2013); compared Turkey and Portugal education system based on the TIMSS results and focused on Some Asian countries (China, Korea, Japan, Singapore, etc.) taking very good results. Balm (2010); stand on science education systems of Turkey and Singapore. It has been stressed that despite the science curriculum of both countries based on modern approaches, science education level of both countries are below the international level. Karacaoğlu (2012); compared British Education System with Turkish education system. He emphasized that British Education System directed to provide more flexible, more individualized education. Cetin (2012); has addressed the financing of vocational education for France, Finland, Denmark and Turkey. It was observed that other countries spend more money for vocational education. Ulaş (2010); has studied the physics curriculum of Finland and Turkey and he stated Finland's success in PISA based on a very modern curriculum. Genç (2011); compared the religious education of Turkey and the Netherlands. He has mentioned the religious education is more centralized in Turkey than Netherlands. Pamela (2011); investigated Turkish and American teachers views on morality and moral education. From results of this study we can understand Turkish teachers tended to concentrate on in terms of sustainability of Turkish state and social and global moral values. But Americans teachers stated universal values of cultural relativity. The people of Lithuania are highly educated. Nearly the entire population between the ages of 15 to 39 has completed basic schooling. A major overhaul of Lithuanian education practices followed the country's restoration of independence in 1991. The system of primary-secondary-higher education was developed between the two world wars with the Soviets further expanding this to adult education. The Soviets highly politicized philosophy of education was evaluated and replaced. Independent Lithuania no longer adheres to the "Soviet school" philosophy. It now focuses on an ideology based on Lithuanian history and culture. However, the system still utilizes some Soviet organizational methods (U.S. Department of State 1998). With the Basic Law of National Education approved in 1973, Turkish National Education System is constructed and regulated in integrity. The Turkish National Education System consists of two main sections as formal education and non-formal education. The formal education includes pre-school education, primary education, secondary education and higher education institutions the non-formal education encloses all of the educational activities organized besides or out of formal education (MEB, n.d.a). Administrative legislation and supervision related to formal and non-formal education except for higher education is performed by Ministry of Education-MEB. Pre-primary education is optional covering the children between 3 and 5 ages. However, a pilot project has started at 32 provinces at 2009/10 education year to take all 5 years-old children obligatory to pre-school education. Primary education is free of charge in public institutions. Parents are free to choose any private school for their children provided that they pay the fee. Secondary education is provided in general, vocational and technical education and art institutions giving four years of education for students who have completed primary education. Higher education institutions consist of universities, higher technology institutes and vocational colleges. (Balm, & Küçük 2010). Comparative studies on the education system in Lithuania and Turkey have not been observed. Therefore, the comparison of these countries’ educational systems would be useful. The purpose of this article is to compare two countries’ education systems with an overall perspective. As a result of the investigation it has been observed that there are some similarities between two countries in terms of general education system. As well as vocational training, compulsory education and transition between training systems are very different in two countries. In our country, there is a very intense and rapid change in the field of general education. These rapid changes create quite large problems for applications. The changes have been made by more structured and programmatic way in Lithuania. The application process is a long term spread. This is a healthy way to change. According to the PISA results, Lithuania has received higher scores but two countries’ scores are very close to each other and the overall successes of two countries are located below the OECD average.