



Intercultural Competences in Vocational
Training. Transnational Strategic Partnership
2015-1-DE02-KA202-002520



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CULTURAL PROFILE

Educational Systems

Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Turkey





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Participating countries



Germany: WEQUA GmbH (Co-ordinator), Verein der Freunde und Förderer des Oberstufenzentrums Lausitz e.V., IHK-Projektgesellschaft Frankfurt/Oder



Turkey: General Lyceum Lavrio



Portugal: Escola Profissional, Aveiro



Turkey: Colegiul Teknik Energetic, Cluj Napoca



Turkey: Formaorienta, Marsico Nuovo/Potenza



Turkey: Iskilip Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi (IMTAL), Iskilip/Çorum



Austria: BFI Oberösterreich, Linz



Czech Republic Soukromá podřípská střední odborná škola a střední odborné učiliště o.p.s. (SPSOS), Roudnice

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Introduction

For the Erasmus Plus Project “Intercultural Competences in Vocational Education” eight countries collaborated and implemented new teaching methods or tested old ones. The starting point for this effort has been each country’s educational system with its strong and weak elements. In this chapter we present the educational systems of the participating countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Turkey.



AUSTRIA

The Austrian Educational System consists of early childhood education, which encompasses childcare from the age of three until entering primary education as well as early childhood education up to the age of three. Primary education encompasses formal, and primary education, which begins at the age of compulsory education (at the age of 6) and lasts 4 years. Compulsory education in Austria lasts for nine years.

Pupils can choose between the following types of schools under different admission requirements: General Secondary School (Hauptschule), New Secondary School (Neue Mittelschule), Academic Secondary School Lower Level (AHS Unterstufe) as well as special needs schools and inclusive education.

Secondary level I is followed by secondary level II (9th school year). Upper secondary education encompasses educational institutions which focus on general or vocational education. In Austria, these include Pre-Vocational School (Polytechnische Schule, preparing pupils for an apprenticeship or job), Vocational school and Apprenticeship (dual system), School for Intermediate Vocational Education (BMS), Colleges for Higher Vocational Education (BHS), Academic Secondary School Upper Cycle (AHS Oberstufe) as well as the Pre-Vocational Year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr) and Integrative Vocational Training.

Post-secondary non-tertiary education encompasses qualifications, like the Schools of Nursing and certain Continuing Education Courses at Universities, Universities of Applied Sciences and University Colleges of Teacher Education. On the other hand, short-cycle tertiary education covers all post-secondary qualifications that teach graduates professional knowledge, skills and competences typically in a practice-oriented way, focusing on specific occupations. It includes Colleges for Higher Vocational Education (BHS) from the 4th Grade, Schools for People in Employment, Add-on Courses (Aufbaulehrgänge).

More Post-secondary VET Courses refer to Industrial Master College, Building Craftsperson and Master Craftsperson School. The tertiary level encompasses Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral educational levels or equivalents. These are the highest attainable levels of formal education. Once students have completed 9 years of compulsory education they can also take up an apprenticeship within the dual system of practical training combined with part-time vocational school, or follow a programme of training leading to a healthcare profession.



Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

In general, the Austrian education system is set up to offer a highly trained and qualified workforce for its graduates. Everyone, no matter their financial ability, has the ability to attend college at no cost to the individual, if he qualifies based on academic merit. In Vocational Education the benefit is that students receive a very practical, hands-on education where they are trained by master craftsmen in their field. Students who struggle with academics but have skills in other areas, such as mechanical pursuits, can find their place in education and in society by learning a trade. If the student does well, he is able to pursue additional schooling and eventually become a master craftsman himself.

Some of the advantages to society as a result of this system include school graduates who are well trained and educated. The students will be ready, after completing their studies, to either immediately enter the workforce, or to continue their education to finish learning the relevant skills.

However, the Austrian education system does have some disadvantages, as well. For society in general, the system might be slow to react to technological changes so that it doesn't produce workers with marketable skills, who need retraining. For the individual, these effects can be especially devastating. If his job becomes obsolete, a craftsman, for example may have few other options, especially if he hasn't had education in other areas. It is decided very early in a person's education which direction the education will take.

Another disadvantage is that if a student wants to change tracks later, it can be difficult, especially if he wants to pursue university later on and hasn't had the correct foundation; there is not much flexibility for the undecided.

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Source: <http://mavoieproeurope.onisep.fr/en/initial-vocational-education-and-training-in-europe/czech-republic/>

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

- Not complicated. Czech education system is not so much complicated. There is compulsory school attendance for all children at the age from 6 to 15 years (primary and lower secondary education). The system is same for all regions of the Czech Republic.
- Permeable. The system is permeable and it allows you to go further in your education. No educational path is blind.
- Variable. It offers many possibilities for secondary education. Pupils can choose many different fields of study.
- Rigid. It only slowly reflects the changes happening in the labour market and current conditions of the world. Founded on the base from the 18th-19th century. It react neither to current world nor for the future (which we actually don't know).
- Non individual. The system assumes that each child is the same and can (must) learn the same thing at same time.
- The Curricula. Every school forms and defines their own curriculum which on the one hand enables them at least partially to react on the regional conditions and demands, but on the other hand, it complicates the transfer of a student from one school to another.

Pre-primary Education (nursery schools)

Nursery schools are designed for children from 3 years up to 6 years of age. Two-year-old children are currently accepted in some of the schools under certain conditions. Attendance is not compulsory but approximately 84% of the total age group (3-6 years) are included, rising to 91% in the pre-school year. The year preceding compulsory schooling is free of charge and children have a legal right to attend it. Parents can be asked to pay a maximum of 50% of the running (not educational) costs covered by the community.



Primary Education

All pupils start their primary education in a comprehensive basic school (5 years). During the second stage (lower-secondary education) it is possible to:

- continue at the basic school – an option which is used by majority of pupils
- proceed to multi-year secondary general school (gymnázium), which is a secondary school providing a general education – this option is used by 11% of pupils
- proceed to eight-year conservatoire – which is used by 0.07% of pupils.

Children with a severe mental disability, multiple disabilities or autism can attend special basic schools.

Secondary Education

It provides education for children generally aged 15 to 19 years old. There are three types of schools differing in the type of acquired qualification:

- schools completed with school-leaving examination (maturitní zkouška) among which belong secondary general schools (gymnázium), lyceum, secondary technical schools and conservatories (art schools)
- schools completed with apprenticeship certificate which can be acquired at secondary vocational schools
- completed secondary education acquired in an educational program lasting 1-2 years at secondary vocational schools or practical schools

Tertiary Education

Tertiary education can be acquired at higher professional schools which provide practically and technically oriented qualification. The graduate receives the title DiS. (specialist with a diploma). The higher education institutions are either of university or non-university type which offer education at three levels:

- bachelor study programme (3-4 years)
- master study programme (5 years)
- doctoral study programme (3 years, for master programme graduates)



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GERMANY

The ability of pupils to transfer between school types and the recognition of school-leaving qualifications is basically guaranteed if the preconditions agreed between the Länder are fulfilled. The duration of full-time compulsory education (compulsory general education) is nine years (10 years in five of the Länder) and the subsequent period of part-time compulsory education (compulsory vocational education) is three years. In some Länder special types of transition from early childhood to primary education.

Hauptschule and **Realschule** only exist in any appreciable numbers in six Länder (Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Schleswig-Holstein). In Bayern, the type of school comparable to a Hauptschule is called a Mittelschule. The Hauptschule and Realschule courses of education are also offered at schools with two courses of education, for which the names differ from one Land to another. The following types of school bring the courses of education of Hauptschule and Realschule under one educational and organisational umbrella: Mittelschule (Sachsen), Regelschule (Thüringen), Sekundarschule (Bremen, Sachsen-Anhalt), Erweiterte Realschule (Saarland), Verbundene Haupt- und Realschule (Hessen), Regionale Schule (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), Realschule plus (Rheinland-Pfalz), Regionalschule (Schleswig-Holstein), Oberschule (Brandenburg), Mittelstufenschule (Hessen).

The **Gymnasium** course of education is also offered at schools with three courses of education. The three courses of education of Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium are also offered at the following types of school: Integrierte Gesamtschule, Kooperative Gesamtschule, Integrierte Sekundarschule (Berlin), Oberschule (Bremen, Niedersachsen), Stadtteilschule (Hamburg), to some extent Regionale Schule (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), Gemeinschaftsschule (Baden-Württemberg, Saarland, Sachsen-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein, Thüringen), Sekundarschule (Nordrhein-Westfalen).

The general education qualifications that may be obtained after grades 9 and 10 carry particular designations in some Länder. These certificates can also be obtained in evening



classes and at vocational schools or through an external examination before a state examining board.

The **Berufsoberschule** has so far only existed in a few Länder and offers school-leavers with the Mittlerer Schulabschluss who have completed vocational education and training or five years' working experience the opportunity to obtain the Fachgebundene Hochschulreife. Pupils can obtain the Allgemeine Hochschulreife by proving their proficiency in a second foreign language.

The **Fachoberschule** is a school type lasting for two years (grades 11 and 12) which admits pupils who have completed the Mittlerer Schulabschluss and qualifies them to study at a Fachhochschule. Pupils who have successfully completed the Mittlerer Schulabschluss and have been through initial vocational training can also enter the Fachoberschule directly in grade 12. The Länder may also establish a grade 13. After successful completion of grade 13, pupils can obtain the Fachgebundene Hochschulreife and under certain conditions the Allgemeine Hochschulreife.

Berufsfachschulen are full-time vocational schools differing in terms of entrance requirements, duration and leaving certificates. Basic vocational training can be obtained during one- or two-year courses at Berufsfachschulen and a vocational qualification is available at the end of two- or three-year courses. Under certain conditions the Fachhochschulreife can be acquired on completion of a course lasting a minimum of two years.

Fachschulen cater for continuing vocational education (1–3 year duration) and as a rule require the completion of relevant vocational education and training in a recognised occupation and subsequent employment. In addition, the Fachhochschulreife can be acquired under certain conditions.

Including **institutions of higher education** offering courses in particular disciplines at university level (e.g. theology, philosophy, medicine, administrative sciences, sport).

Pädagogische Hochschulen (only in Baden-Württemberg) offer training courses for teachers at various types of schools. In specific cases, study courses leading to professions in the area of education and pedagogy outside the school sector are offered as well.

The **Berufsakademie** is a tertiary sector institution in some Länder offering academic training at a Studienakademie (study institution) combined with practical in-company professional training in keeping with the principle of the dual system.



The dual Vocational education system

Vocational training takes place mainly in the company, accompanied by visiting a Vocational school. For both places of learning own rules and principles are existing, which are closely co-ordinated. The students are being trained at a company for 3-4 days a week. Their training is based on a training regulation and a training contract.

The training regulation rules consist of:

- the public certification of the vocation;
- the professional title;
- the duration of the vocational education;
- the professional image (the minimum training requirements);
- the curriculum (content and times);
- the examination requirements.

The training contract between the company and the trainee rules:

- the duration of the vocational training;
- the beginning and end of the vocational training (can be shortened or extended under certain circumstances);
- the content of the vocational training (a training plan of the company is part of the contract);
- the termination of the contract: after expiration of the probationary period there is a wide dismissal protection;
- the salary to the trainee: according to the collective agreement of the sector.

The students attend the Vocational school 1-2 days per week (in average), where the teaching is based on a curriculum and it targets to job-specific (theoretical) competences and general subjects in the frame of the legally required school attendance. The curriculum of the vocational school covers: about 2/3 of job-specific contents and 1/3 of general subjects. The

teaching should be competence oriented using so called Learning Fields. About 340 professions are offered from different economic fields: Industry, trade, crafts, Administration, Health, Agriculture. The main competences acquired are methodological & social competences, professional expertise.



OCCUPATIONAL FIELDS

1. Chemistry/Physics/Biology

In these fields students can become Laboratory Assistants, Chemical Technician, skilled worker for chemical production.

2. Economics and Administration

In these fields students can become Office Clerks, Industrial Management Assistants, Managements Assistants for Office Communication and Office Management or Tourism and Leisure, Retail Management Assistant and Shop Assistant.

3. Nutrition and Domestic Economy.

In these fields students can become Cooks, Skilled Workers in Hotel and Restaurant Industry, Restaurant Management Assistant.



4. Metal Technology

In these field students can become Automotive mechatronics Technicians (specialization: commercial vehicle technology, car technology, car body technology), car body and vehicle construction mechanics (specialization: coach building technology, car body maintenance technology), Professional Drivers, construction Mechanics, skilled Workers for metal technology, machine and system Operators (specialization: metal and rubber technology) etc.

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

On the one hand, there are some advantages in the dual system:

- The practice of the vocational training is done in the companies and not in laboratories or training shops;
- it saves money to the state as most of the training is paid and organised by the companies ;
- the training contents and curricula are co-ordinated and complement each other;
- there is a close co-ordination between companies and vocational school;
- the lessons learned in vocational school can be applied immediately in the company;
- the company processes are not too much interrupted by the attendance of vocational school ;
- a better motivation through a steady transition between school and company ;
- clear professional images and a uniform level of professional training.

On the other hand, there are some downsides in the dual system:

- the quality of the professional training depends from the motivation of the training company;
- the curricula in vocational school are not always co-ordinated with the tasks in the company (e.g. seasonal, special projects);

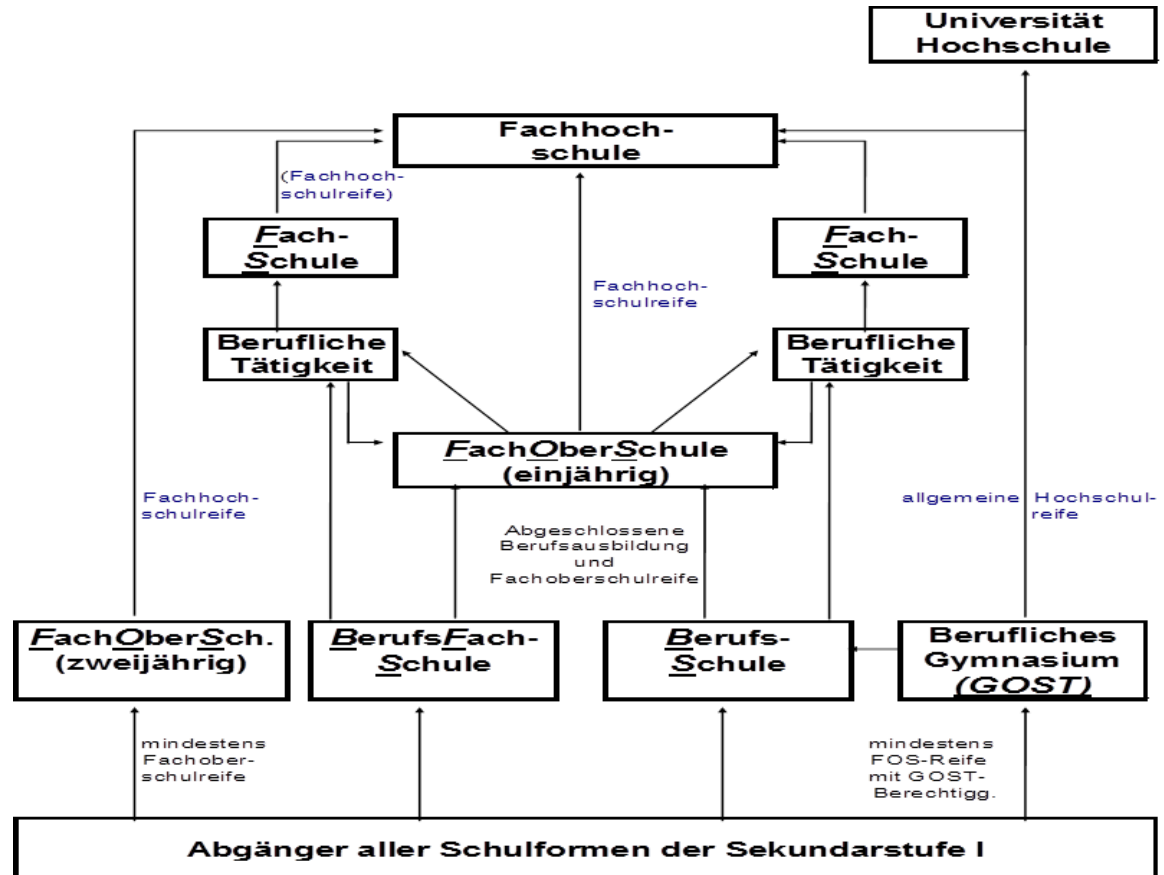


- vocational schools can not always provide the theoretical base for the practical training in the company ;
- the readiness for vocational training in the company is decreasing – a lack of vocational training opportunities is the result;
- companies are forced to earn the money for vocational training – mainly via the price for the goods ;
- small vocational schools (e.g. in rural or remote areas) have a disadvantage (lack of technical equipment, lack of money).
- Vocational training is often strongly related to the needs of the company , so that there is a lack of opportunities and free space to care for social and communication competences. Apart from that, vocational training in the company normally starts at a low qualification level, so that students don't have the chance to train management practices and develop leadership. Moreover, vocational schools have a tight curriculum for professional theory and the general subjects. There is not much time for project work and free activities, while there is again a lack of opportunities and free space to care for social and communication competences. In addition, vocational schools have a lack of modern teaching methods, like project work, simulation games, training firms or the like.

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GREECE

The Greek educational system is under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Education in Greece, including pre-school, primary and lower secondary education, is compulsory for all children 6 to 15 years old. Primary Education (Demotiko) lasts 6 years, low-secondary education (Gymnasio) lasts 3 years and upper secondary education – the Unified upper secondary school (EniaioLykeio) and the Technical Vocational School (TEE) lasts 3 years. The Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) are part of post-secondary education offering formal education. Higher Education is divided into Universities (Panepistimio) and Technological Educational Institutions (TEI). Admission to tertiary education is based on a student's performance in national level examinations taking place at the end of the third year of upper secondary education.

Upper secondary education includes two types of schools in which schooling lasts three years: the Unified Upper Secondary School (EniaioLykeio) and the Technical Vocational School (TEE). Compared with courses at Technical Vocational Schools (TEE), IEK courses are work oriented and linked to the demands of the labour market. They are designed by tripartite teams of experts (state, employers and employees). Trainees are provided with a certificate of vocational training, which gives them the right to participate in the final accreditation examinations. Mutual student transfer from one type of school to the other is possible, while mutual shifts from one type to the other do occur. In addition, programmes of intercultural education are provided to repatriated students of Greek origin and to students of foreign or gipsy origin, while minority schools are established for the education of the Muslim minority of Thrace. In State compulsory and post-compulsory Secondary Education schools, attendance is free of charge and text books are distributed free of charge by the state.

Tertiary education is provided in two parallel sectors: the university sector and the higher technological sector. Courses at tertiary level institutes last for 8-12 semesters. Postgraduate courses are also available at Tertiary education level. The University



Education system includes the Universities (AEI), the Polytechnics, the Higher Fine Arts Institute and the Hellenic Open University.

Tertiary level education also includes the Hellenic Open University and certain other non-university schools for which a special admission system applies. These schools are of unclassified level and the duration of studies ranges from two to four years. Graduates of these schools can either work in their area of specialisation as professionals or as teachers, or continue their studies via examinations in corresponding tertiary education schools.

Continuing vocational training includes all vocational training and further training activities organised outside the formal initial vocational training and education system. The purpose of continuing vocational training is to maintain, refresh, upgrade and modernise the job skills of persons seeking employment and to help workers interested in career development. The existing institutional framework focuses on four categories: Training of the unemployed, Training of private-sector workers, Training of wider public sector workers, Training of socially disadvantaged groups.

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

In general, the Greek educational system offers the opportunity to pupils from different social backgrounds to be educated, since public schools are free of charge. Moreover, General Lyceum offers a wide range of knowledge in various fields, such as History, Literature, Language, Mathematics, Physics etc. It is worth mentioning that students in Greece learn at least two foreign languages before completing compulsory education. The mission of University Education is to ensure a high level of theoretical and all-round training for the future scientific workforce. In Vocational education, the quality of the teaching staff, the good theoretical basis and multiculturalism constitute some of its qualities.

However, vocational education in Greece deals with many problems. The lack of equipment or laboratories, especially in Vocational Schools, the low social competences and low sense of initiative and innovation prevent these schools to offer quality education. Apart from that, in many cases teachers are appointed late during



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the school year, so that many basic lessons aren't being taught at all. It is often observed that they emphasize more on theoretical knowledge rather than practical skills.

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ITALY

ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM – Overview

The education system in Italy is organized according to the subsidiary principle and autonomy of schools. The State has exclusive competence on general issues on education, on minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country and on the fundamental principles that Regions should comply with within their competences. Regions share their competences with the State on education issues while they have exclusive competence on vocational education and training. Schools are autonomous as for didactic, organization and research and development activities.

The education system is organized as follows:

Pre-primary school for children between 3 and 6 years of age;

First cycle of education lasting 8 years, made up of:

- **primary education** (lasting 5 years), for children between 6 and 11 years of age;
- **lower secondary school** (lasting 3 years) for children between 11 and 14 years of age;

Second cycle of education offering two different pathways:

- State **upper secondary school** (lasting 5 years) for students from 14 to 19 years of age. It is offered by **licei**, **technical institutes** and **vocational institutes**;
- three and four-year **vocational training courses (IFP)** addressed to students who have completed the first cycle of education. It is organized by the Regions.



- **post-secondary non tertiary education** offered through: post-qualification and post-diploma vocational courses organized by the Regions; Higher technical education and training courses (IFTS).
- **higher education offered by universities and the High level arts and music education system** (Afam). Higher education is organized in first, second and third levels according to the Bologna structure.

Education is compulsory for 10 years, from 6 to 16 years of age, and covers the eight-year first cycle of education (5 years of primary school and 3 years of lower secondary school) and the first two years of the second cycle (DM 139/2007). After completion of the first cycle of education, the last two years of compulsory education (from 14 to 16 years of age) can be accomplished either in State upper secondary schools (licei, technical institutes and vocational institutes), or through the three-year vocational education and training courses, falling under the competence of the Regions (law 133/2008). In addition, all have the right/duty (*diritto/dovere*) to education and training for at least 12 years in the education system or, anyhow, until they have obtained a three-year vocational qualification within 18 years of age (law 53/2003). Finally, 15-year olds can attend the last year of compulsory education also through the apprenticeship, previous specific agreement signed by the Regions, the Ministry of labour, the Ministry of education and trade unions (law 183/2010). Compulsory education refers to both enrolment and attendance. It can be accomplished either in a State and a *paritaria* school and also, at certain conditions, though parental education and merely private schools; regional three-year vocational training courses are offered by the relevant training agencies. Parents or caregivers are responsible for the accomplishment of compulsory education, while supervision on the fulfilment of compulsory education falls under the responsibilities of local authorities where pupils reside and school heads of the schools pupils are enrolled in.

Once compulsory schooling has been accomplished, pupils who don't prosecute their studies receive a certification attesting compulsory education fulfilment and competencies acquired; these latter constitute formative credits for the attainment of any professional qualification.



Access to both university and Afam tertiary education is reserved for students who passed the State exam at the end of upper secondary school. Yet, specific conditions for the admission are under the responsibility of the Ministry of education, University and Research (MIUR) or of each single university and Afam sector.

The three-year vocational qualification, as well as the four-year vocational diploma, both obtained at completion of regional vocational training courses, allow access to regional second level vocational training, which can be access also with an upper secondary education leaving certificate. This latter certificate also grants admission to Higher technical education and training courses (IFTS).

STRUCTURE OF THE ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Age of students Programme duration (years) Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)		Secondary vocational education
Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)		Post-secondary non-tertiary education
Primary education	Single structure	Secondary general education Tertiary education (full-time)



PORTUGAL

The structure of the Portuguese educational system is the following:

- **Pre-higher education:**
 - Duration of compulsory education:
Age of entry: 6
Age of exit: 15
- **Structure of school system:**
 - Basic First Stage
Type of school providing this education: Elementary Education – 1st Cycle
Length of program in years: 4
Age level from: 6 to 10
 - Basic Second Stage
Type of school providing this education: Elementary Education – 2nd Cycle
Length of program in years: 2
Age level from: 10 to: 12
 - Basic Third Stage
Type of school providing this education: Elementary Education – 3rd Cycle
Length of program in years: 3
Age level from: 12 to 15
Certificate/diploma awarded: Certificate/Diploma
 - Secondary
Type of school providing this education: Secondary School
Length of program in years: 3
Age level from: 15 to 18
Certificate/diploma awarded: Secondary School Diploma
 - Professional
Type of school providing this education: Professional Schools
Length of program in years: 3



Age level from: 15 to: 18

Certificate/diploma awarded: Level IV Professional Education Diploma

- *Specialized Technical/Vocacional*

Type of school providing this education: Secondary Professional Schools

Length of program in years: 3

Age level from: 15 to 18

Certificate/diploma awarded: Secondary School Diploma, Level IV Professional Qualification Certificate

➤ **School education:**

Basic education lasts for nine years divided into three stages of four, two and three years respectively. A Diploma/Certificate is awarded at the end of the third stage. Secondary education - public, private and cooperative - is optional and consists of a three-year cycle after having completed the third cycle of basic education. Access is through the Certificate of Basic Education. There are two types of courses: general courses and technical/vocational courses, providing instruction in technical, technological, professional fields and in the Portuguese language and culture. Permeability between the courses is guaranteed. The teaching and practice of technical, technological or artistic courses are provided by vocational schools and special schools for education in Arts. Courses are sanctioned by the Certificado de Habilitações do Ensino Secundário/Diploma de Ensino Secundário, which is one of the conditions for access to higher education. In order to develop personal and professional competencies, legislation has been passed to approve the stimulation of post-secondary-level technological specialized courses (CET). These courses qualify for the exercise of a profession (Nível IV) and enable people to pursue studies at higher education level.

➤ **Higher education:**

At present, higher education in Portugal is divided into two subsystems: university education and non-university higher education (polytechnic education), and it is provided in public and private universities and non-university higher education institutions (both public and private). The Portuguese Catholic University was instituted by decree of the Holy See and is recognized by the State of Portugal. Private higher education institutions cannot operate if



they are not recognized by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Access is regulated by the same procedures as those for state higher education institutions. The two systems of higher education (university and polytechnic) are linked and it is possible to transfer from one to the other. It is also possible to transfer from a public institution to a private one and vice-versa.

➤ **Primary Education**

Primary and secondary education is compulsory in Portugal. Children aged 6 are required to enrol in primary education (*Ensino Básico – 1º Ciclo*) where they take a spread of academic subjects through grades 1 to 4 plus personal and social education. Study content is more advanced during *Ensino Básico – 2º Ciclo*, at the end of which they have completed 6 grades and are prepared for middle school.

➤ **Middle Education**

The 7th and 8th grades known as *Ensino Básico – 3º Ciclo* correspond to middle school. Subjects include Portuguese and two foreign languages, plus mathematics, natural sciences, physics, chemistry, social sciences and a choice of art. Physical, moral and civic education completes the curriculum, plus light technical orientation to perhaps unlock a talent for a vocation.

➤ **Secondary Education**

At grade 9, the education system divides. Students choose between an academic or a more practical program (multimedia, electronics, computing and so on). Both share the same core subjects of Portuguese, philosophy, physical education, foreign languages and moral / religious education, with the balance of their schooling directed towards achieving their work goals in life.

➤ **Vocational Education**

In Portugal, initial vocational training is effectively a third stream of secondary education. Following middle school, pupils enrol for three year vocational certificates. These include



practical skills in technical and artistic crafts. Outside of this formal system, numerous vocational colleges offer short and longer-term training too.

➤ **Tertiary Education**

Higher tertiary education is provided by polytechnics and universities. The former have a practical bias while the latter are more academic. There have been numerous complaints that poor controls have seen tertiary education standards fall, and protests by students and academics have been vociferous.

Notwithstanding this, Portugal boasts many fine academic institutions. The first medieval universities were established in the 13th Century. The oldest in continuous operation, the Universidade de Coimbra.

In accordance with the law, the education system comprises:

- pre-school education, where the teaching/learning objectives complement the home learning process and are to be achieved in close co-operation with the family.
- academic education, which consists of a sequence of three stages, basic, secondary and higher education, each with its own specific aims, characteristics and forms of organisation. Academic education also includes special courses and leisure/recreational activities.
- extra-muros education, which includes literacy and basic educational activities, continuing cultural and scientific education, initial vocational training, vocational retraining and further training. These aims are pursued through a combination of formal and informal initiatives.

1. Pre-school education

Pre-school education is today defined as the first stage in basic education, viewed as part of the lifelong education process. It should encourage the balanced growth and development of the child, with a view to full integration in society as an independent, free and socially responsible person.

Pre-school education is aimed at children aged between three and five years and is provided at public, private and co-operative nursery schools which offer educational activities and support for the family, especially in the form of socio-educational activities.



Attendance is optional, in acknowledgement of the fact that the family has the natural and constitutional right to a central role in the process of infant education.

2. Basic education

Basic education is universal, compulsory and free, with a duration of nine years.

Children aged six to fifteen are required by law to attend, which they may do at state schools or in private or co-operative schools.

The basic education system is divided into three cycles, organised as follows:

- 1st cycle, with a duration of four school years, providing a rounded education, with students taught by a single teacher (who may however be assisted by others in specialist areas).
- 2nd cycle, with a duration of two school years, in which the learning process is organised into interdisciplinary areas (basic level), mostly with one teacher for each area.
- 3rd cycle, lasting three school years, organised around a unified curriculum, including a variety of vocational areas, with one teacher for each subject or group of subjects.

3. Secondary education

Secondary education courses have a duration of three years (corresponding to the 10th, 11th and 12th grades), and is open to students who have obtained the basic education diploma. Students are aged between fifteen and seventeen.

There is a variety of secondary education options available to students, who may choose between courses aimed primarily at those seeking to enter the job market (technology courses) and others for those hoping to continue on to higher education (general courses). All courses contain a technical, technological and vocational element, as well as Portuguese language and culture, in accordance with the general thrust of the course, and students are able to cross from one course to another. The curriculum is divided into subjects, with one teacher, in principle, for each subject.

4. Higher education

Higher education comprises university education and polytechnic education, organised along different lines. Most students in higher education are aged between



eighteen and twenty five. However, people aged 25 or over may apply for place in higher education even if they do not possess the necessary secondary education or equivalent qualification, or a higher education qualification, provided they prove they have the necessary skills and knowledge. There are limits on the number of students admitted to higher education (numerus clausus).

University education can lead to the following degrees: licenziatura (normally 3 years' duration), masters' degrees and doctorates. Polytechnic education can lead to a licenziatura.

5. Special education system

The following special forms of education are available within the school system:

5.1. Special education

The aim of special education is the socio-educational rehabilitation and integration of individuals with specific educational needs, due to physical or mental handicaps. It consists of adapting the learning and teaching environment and system for students attending basic or secondary education; in cases where the extent of the student's handicap so requires, he or she may be taught at a special institution.

Whenever possible, students are integrated into mainstream schools, with adaptations to the curriculum and studies depending on the type and degree of the student's handicap. Special supervision is provided, with the help of specialist teaching staff; assessment is also geared to take the student's difficulties into account.

5.2. Vocational training

As a complement to the process of preparation for working life which begins during the basic education system, vocational training is offered in order to introduce students to the world of work, and to equip them with vocational knowledge and skills.

Vocational training is open to students who have completed their compulsory schooling, those who have failed to complete it by the normal age limit and to those in employment seeking further training or retraining. Courses are designed, in terms



of institutions and teaching methods, to be sufficiently flexible in order to cater for students with different educational and vocational backgrounds. The vocational colleges are the prime examples of work in this area.

The courses and modules on offer are taught in a variety of contexts: some are given at basic and secondary education establishments, others through protocol agreements with companies and local authorities, with financial aid available for public and private institutions and schemes. Community schemes and services are encouraged, and specific institutions for vocational training can also be created.

5.3. Adult education

Adult education is offered in order to enable individuals to attend basic and secondary education courses as part of their lifelong educational process. It is open to those who have either passed the normal age for attending these courses or to those who missed the opportunity to enter the normal education system. The prime aim is to eliminate illiteracy. These courses are open to anyone aged fifteen or more (for basic education courses) or eighteen or more (for secondary courses). Students work towards the same qualifications and certificates as their counterparts in the mainstream system, although the conditions for access and the way their studies are organised are distinct and designed to suit their age range, their accrued life experience and their respective academic competence.

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

PORTUGUESE EDUCATION SYSTEM	
Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free access to education ▪ Democratisation ▪ Support lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too much bureaucracy ▪ Strong hierarchy ▪ Similar <i>curricula</i> for every course ▪ Lack of material resources ▪ Focus on tradition instead of teaching values ▪ Teachers' displacement

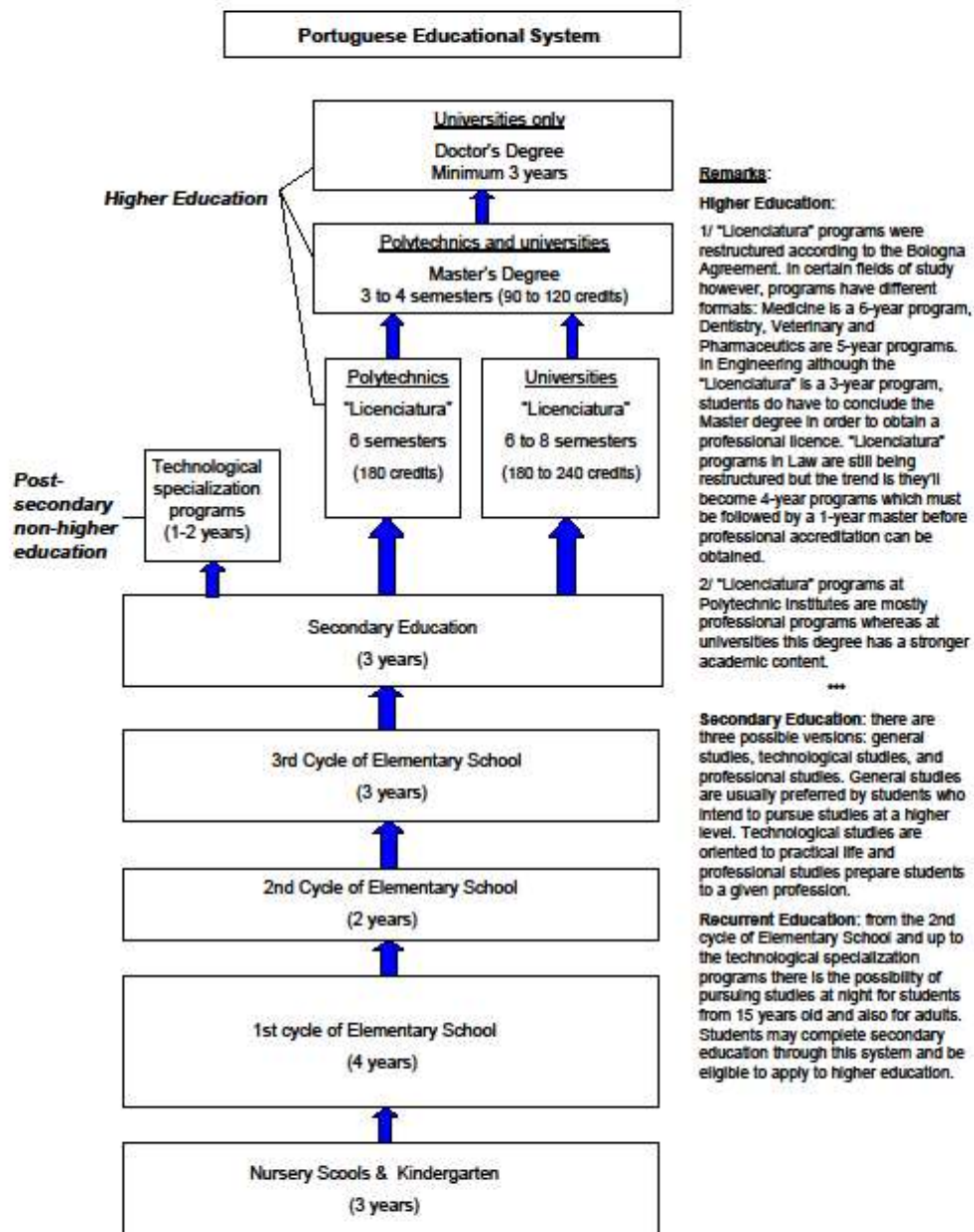


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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Too many students per class▪ Gradual depreciation of the teacher's figure and authority
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ROMANIA

The structure of the Romanian educational system

Primary school 4 years, classes 0-IV, for children aged 6-11.

Primary school is organized as mainstream day education.(ISCED1)

At the enrollment in the 1st grade there is a testing to identify the children with disabilities so as to include them in special education programmes. Primary school is part of the compulsory education.

Primary schools has the following objectives: students will acquire basic knowledge, intellectual skills and abilities such as reading, writing, arithmetic (arithmetic calculation), the ability to speak a foreign language, civilized behaviour skills, and the ability of orientation and action in the surrounding natural geographic and social space.

Lower secondary school of 4 years, classes V-VIII, for children aged 11-15.

Lower secondary school is part of the general compulsory 10-year education. Lower secondary education is organized as mainstream day education, but it can also be organized as evening classes, part time courses or distance education. (ISCED 2)

Lower secondary school meets the following objectives: students will acquire the fundamental elements of science and general knowledge, at least one foreign language, they will develop general capacities and technological education skills, the abilities and skills needed in general practical activities (pre-specialization) which are required by the orientation needs as well as the scholar and professional selection after their graduation from the lower secondary school, they will acquire civic education skills in order to develop a civilized behaviour and the orientation and action guidelines appropriate for the socio-human



environment. The students' knowledge is assessed through national written examinations taken by students in the 6th and 8th grade.

The graduates of lower secondary education (ISCED 2) can afterwards attend **highschool or vocational education schools**.

Highschools have more specialisations:

- theoretical – sciences and humanities, IT, mathematic and physics;
- technical, economic, administration, services, agricultural, forestry, agromountain;
- vocational: pedagogical (mainstream education schools), arts, sports, military and theological.

The following objectives are achieved in high schools: improve and enrich scientific and general knowledge, develop intellectual abilities – especially critical thinking, shape practical dimensions for the acquired theoretical knowledge, understand the research elements and methods, learn to speak at least one foreign language, develop dignified civic and moral behavior and prepare for further education. (ISCED 3)

Vocational and technical schools also ensure the acquisition of a profession; students have to present a practical paper and the ones that pass the examination obtain a level 4 professional qualification certificate. At graduation, high school students take the baccalaureat exam and those who pass it get a high school diploma. As a result, they may continue their studies in higher education according to the admission criteria set by each university.

High school graduates who do not attend higher education can choose a further education college or may pursue a socially useful activity, improving their qualifications at the work place.

Vocational (professional) education of 1-3 years

Graduates of the lower secondary education are admitted to vocational education schools within a limited pre-set number of places. Vocational education takes place over 3 years and offers various areas of qualification.



The level of qualification is level 3 and ISCED 3.

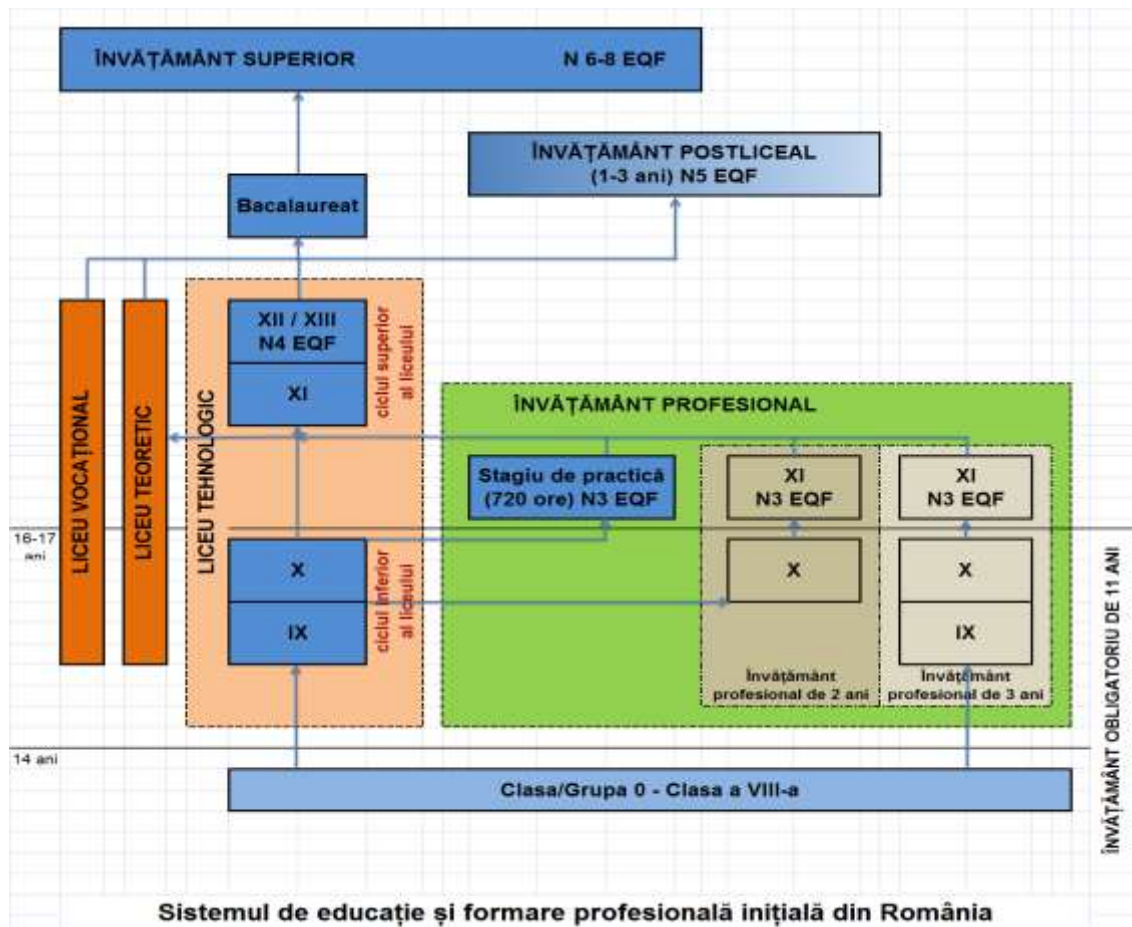
Post highschool education of 1-3 years

Post highschool education includes further education schools and foremen schools. Both types of schools have graduation examinations at the end, thus giving the graduates a level 5 certificate of professional competences and ISCED 4.

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

According to analysis, the Romanian educational system is not relevant for the economy and society of the future. More than 20% of the students drop out of school quite early, compared to 15 % at European level. Also, Romania is one of the countries with the lowest rate of adults' participation in lifelong learning training programmes.

International tests as well as the national assessment at the end of the 8th grade and the high school graduation examination show us that almost half of the Romanian students are functional illiterates, that is their literacy skills are extremely low. These children do not understand the text read, do not make connections with what they may already know beforehand, cannot formulate a point of view and are unable to express it in writing or orally. Public education, the textbooks for primary and secondary school, medical and psychology assistance is free of charge. Joint financing for extracurricular activities: scientific, technical, cultural, artistic, sporting and creative which are organized for pupils. The granting of scholarship to pupils having obtained remarkable results and discount for pupils on local public transport.





TURKEY

1. Introduction

Overall Structure Of Turkish National Educational System

The National Education System, determined by National Education Basic Act No. 1739, consists of two main parts, namely “formal education” and “non-formal education”.

1.1 Formal Education

Formal education is the regular education conducted within a school for individuals of a certain age group and on the same level, under programs developed in accordance with the purpose. Formal education includes pre-primary, primary school, lower secondary school, upper secondary and higher education institutions.

Pre-Primary Education: Pre-primary education; involves the education of children in the age group of 3 to 5 who have not reached the age of compulsory primary education, on an optional basis. Pre-primary education institutions may be established as independent kindergartens or, where considered necessary, as nursery classes within a primary education school or as practice classes affiliated to other related education institutions.

The objective of pre-primary education is to ensure that children develop physically, mentally and emotionally and acquire good habits, that they are prepared for primary education, that a common environment of upbringing is provided for children who come from a disadvantaged background and that they speak Turkish properly and correctly. Pre-Primary education institutions are opened as independent kindergartens and as nursery classes and practical classes within formal and non-formal education institutions with suitable physical capacity.

Summer Preschool: The aim of summer school programme is to spread and develop pre-primary education and to meet the needs of families that are on work about their child care and education. Summer school programme is an education that covers the subjects



which have importance and priority in pre-primary programmes and implemented in summer especially for children aged 60-66 months who cannot continue pre-primary education.

Mobile Classroom: Aiming at developing pre-primary education, mobile classroom is an implementation to institution based pre-primary education for children of low-income families aged 36-66 months who cannot attend pre-primary education institutions. Mobile classroom project is carried out by General Directorate of Basic Education for provincial education directorates, municipalities and universities.

Primary Education Institutions: The compulsory primary school age involves in the age group of 6 to 13. The enrollment of this age group starts at the end of September when the child has completed the age of 5, and finishes at the end of the educational year when the child has completed 13 and begins the age of 14.

The objective of primary education is to ensure that every Turkish child acquires the necessary knowledge, skills, behavior and habits to become a good citizen and is raised in accordance with the concept of national morals and that he/she is prepared for life and for the next level of education in accordance with his/her interests, talents and capabilities.

Primary education institutions consist of the four-year and compulsory lower secondary schools, which give the opportunity to allow between different programmes, and lower secondary schools for imams and preachers.

The preferable lessons in type of supporting students' upper secondary education consist of students' ability, improvement and preferences in lower secondary schools and lower secondary schools for imams and preachers.

Open Lower Secondary School: It is the institution that provide the opportunity of completing lower secondary education to citizens who completed primary education but couldn't attend lower secondary education because of any reason, by distance educational method. There are not any divisions and teachers in accordance with the system.

Upper Secondary Education: Upper secondary education includes all the teaching institutions, general vocational and technical education institutions with at least four year compulsory formal or non-formal education, based on primary and lower secondary education.



The aims and duties of secondary education, in accordance with the general purposes and basic principles of National Education, are as follows;

1. Enabling all students to have the awareness and power to get to know the problems, provided that giving culture on minimum common general level, look for ways of solution and acquire the consciousness of contributing to country's economic, social and cultural development and power.
2. Preparing students for higher education or for life and job fields in accordance with their interests, aptitude and abilities with various programs and schools. While these missions are accomplished, a balance is set between students' expectations and abilities and the needs of the society.

General Secondary Education: It is a four-year compulsory educational process that prepares students both for higher education and for the future according to their interests, expectations and abilities in addition to equipping them with world knowledge with an education based on primary education.

Vocational and Technical Secondary Education: It is a four-year compulsory educational process that prepares students both for higher education and for the future as well as for an occupation and job fields according to their interests, expectations and abilities in addition to equipping them with world knowledge with an education based on primary education.

Open Upper Secondary High School: It offers education to students who are not able to attend formal educational institutions providing face-to-face education, who have completed the formal education stage in terms of age, and who want to follow an open upper secondary high school while attending upper secondary high school. Education is provided with a pass or fail and a credit system. There are not any classes or teachers as the system does not require them.

Higher Education: Higher education includes all the educational institutions which are based on secondary education, and which provide at least two years of higher education.

The aims and duties of Higher education, in accordance with the general purposes and basic principles of National Education, are as follows;



1. Train students according to our country's science policies and the need for labor in higher and various levels of the society in accordance with their interests, aptitude and abilities;
2. Providing scientific training at various levels;
3. Doing research exploring sciences in further detail in order to find solutions to scientific, technical and cultural problems especially to ones related to our country;
4. Providing the society with the results on research focusing on our country's problems regarding its progress and development with the coordination of the government and institutions and giving opinion on the research the government asks for;
5. Publishing everything that shows the results of research and that enables science and technology to develop;
6. Providing educational services such as spreading scientific data that can improve the level of Turkish society and that can enlighten the public in written or oral form.

Higher education institutions are;

Universities, Faculties, Institutes, Colleges, Conservatories, Vocational Colleges, Centers for Practice and Research.

1.2 Non-Formal Education

In accordance with the general objectives and basic principles of national education, the objectives of non-formal education, which covers citizens who have never entered the formal education system or are at any level of it or have left at that level, and which may accompany formal education or be independent of it are;

*To teach citizens to read and write and to provide them with the possibility of continuous education so that they may complete their deficient education;

*To provide them with the opportunity of education that shall help them in adjusting to scientific, technological, economic, social and cultural developments;

*To provide an education that serves to protect, develop, promote and assimilate the values of our national culture;



- *To ensure that an understanding and habits for living together, solidarity, mutual assistance, working together and getting organized are acquired and assimilated;
- *To provide opportunities for citizens in non-formal education to gain a profession in accordance with the employment policies and in line with the development of the economy;
- *To promote a healthy way of life and healthy nutritional habits;
- *To provide people engaged in various professions with the necessary information and skills for further development;
- *To establish the habit of spending and using spare time productively.

Factors supporting or obstructing Intercultural Competences

Education systems are extremely important constituents that build a country's future and serve the purpose of training the future generations. Therefore, countries constantly evaluate and develop their education systems grounding on the developments, needs and the expectations of the society in education field and in this context they revise and review the system to catch up with the changes and innovations in the system (Gürbüztürk, Kasa and Ersöz, 2012).

It is seen, in this framework, that various decisions related to both primary and higher education levels have recently been observed and put into practice in Turkey. Among these decisions, in accordance with the Primary Education and Training Law number 6287 dated 03/30/2012 published in the Official Gazette number 28261 dated 04/11/2012 period of compulsory education was passed from 8 year to 12 year (compulsory education was restructured in the manner that it includes 4 years of primary, 4 years of secondary and 4 years of high school education) and that brought forward some new applications along with itself (MEB, 2012) and it still is being discussed in various platforms. When participants' opinions concerning the positive sides of 12 years compulsory education (4+4+4) are analyzed, their opinions can be summarized that through new system primary school and secondary school students will be educated in different buildings, there is an increase in the importance of vocational education, there are positive effects of dividing education period into shorter



periods on students' motivation and the students will start learning a foreign language at early stages of their education.

When participants' opinions views concerning the negative sides of a 12- year compulsory education (4+4+4) are examined, it is seen that the participants agreed on lack of teachers in terms of their skills for primary classes, the intensive psychological effects on students as they start education at early ages when their physical and psychological developments are concerned, there is an increase in the number of weekly class hours of teachers, taking the parent's opinion about students' passing the class into consideration , put the implementation into action without adequate planning and preparing the necessary physical conditions, children -particularly girls- will drop school and get married as children do not have to attend classes after the 4th year, changing the education system constantly through trial and error method, negative effect of implementation without a good planning and preparation on the quality of teaching and learning process.

Participants' opinions about the way it was put into practice generally the participants stated that the new education system was put into action in a hurry, the public could not be convinced, while piloting of the new system has not been performed to observe its possible effects. The process of preparing a new program, putting it into action, and describing it to the people could not be administered well and opinions of educational subject-specialists were not consulted. In this sense, Peker Ünal (2013) states that the success of any education reform in a country is closely related to various factors and mainly teachers' correct understanding and implementation of the content of the reform, informing and having opportunities and means to provide their involvement in the decision-making process about the reform. In the light of these results, it could be more appropriate to share the education policies that concern the future of the society with public, discuss them, and start a pilot study in accordance with the data obtained based on scientific studies; having seeing the results of the pilot studies, it would be more applicable to realize the implementation in the light of these findings and constantly make the necessary revisions, corrections throughout the implementation in line with needs and requirements.

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