

# Vocational Training in the European Union

## Avrupa Birliği'nde Mesleki Eğitim

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### ABSTRACT

European Union requires some standards in all areas. Today, the importance of training qualified individuals which holds an important place in the development of countries increases and certain standards are adopted creating common European Union tools in the field of vocational and technical education. In this study, vocational education and training policies system and the standards adopted by the European Union are discussed. Furthermore, this study was accepted as a European Union project in 2010 and the results obtained from the Leonardo Da Vinci Life Learning European Union project called "Web Based Basic Vocational Training" between the years 2010-2012 were presented. Since the partners of these projects are Turkey, Spain and Germany, the structure of vocational education, institutions of public and private vocational education and the diplomas and certificates entitled after these educations are included. As Turkey is on its way to become a European Union member, a number of advices are presented for Turkey to reach its destination about vocational education standards that European Union has aimed. The purpose of the study is not only to be a guide for the young who want to get professional training in the countries that are European Union members or candidates about how and where to have education opportunities but also to give a chance for trainers and training managers, participating in vocational training, so as to glimpse different practices from different countries and compare these practices between the countries of European Union and their countries. The study is also very important as it has the opportunities for training managers to see if their countries' vocational education is close enough to vocational education in European Union.

**Keywords:** European Union, Vocational training systems, Vocational education, Turkey, Germany, Spain

### ÖZ

Avrupa Birliği her alanda birtakım standartlar öngörmektedir. Ülkelerin gelişiminde önemli bir yer tutan kalifiye bireyler yetiştirilmesinin önem kazandığı günümüzde mesleki ve teknik eğitim alanında da, ortak Avrupa Birliği araçları oluşturarak belli standartlar benimsenmiştir. Bu çalışmada Avrupa Birliği'nin benimsediği mesleki eğitim ve öğretim politikaları sistemi ve standartları ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca bu çalışma 2010 yılında Avrupa Birliği projesi olarak kabul edilmiş ve çalışmada 2010-2012 yıllarında yürütülen "Web Based Basic Vocational Training" adlı 'Hayat Boyu Öğrenme' kapsamındaki Leonardo Da Vinci Avrupa Birliği projesi çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilen çalışmalarda elde edilen sonuçlara ve proje ortaklarının Türkiye, İspanya ve Almanya olması dolayısıyla bu üç ülkenin mesleki eğitim yapısı, devlet ve özel mesleki eğitim kurumları ile bu eğitimler sonucunda bireylerin hak kazandıkları diploma ve sertifikalara yer verilmiştir. Elde edilen bilgiler ile Avrupa Birliği üyesi olma yolunda ilerleyen Türkiye'nin mesleki eğitimi Avrupa Birliği'nin hedeflediği standartlara göre ele alınmış ve birtakım öneriler sunulmuştur. Çalışmanın amacı, Avrupa Birliği'ne üye ve aday ülkelerdeki mesleki eğitim almak isteyen genç bireylere nerede ve nasıl eğitim imkânlarına sahip olacakları konusunda yol gösterici olmanın yanı sıra, mesleki eğitimin içerisinde hizmet verici konumunda bulunan eğitimci ve eğitim yöneticilerine farklı ülkelerdeki uygulamalara gözatma ve kendi ülkeleri ile birliğin diğer ülkeleri arasında kıyas yapma imkânı sunmaktır. Çalışma, aynı zamanda eğitim yöneticilerine Avrupa Birliği'nde olması beklenen mesleki eğitime kendi ülkelerinde ne kadar yaklaşıldığını görme fırsatı da sunması açısından önem arz etmektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Avrupa Birliği, Mesleki eğitim sistemleri, Mesleki eğitim, Türkiye, Almanya, İspanya

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## INTRODUCTION

With the establishment of the unity of the European Union, member states have engaged in cooperation in both economic and political sense. In order to realize the full economic cooperation in the strict sense, the need for qualified staff must be met. Meeting the need for qualified staff and reaching the desired quality of production depends on the vocational and technical education systems of the countries. To raise qualified staff in any country of the Union, a standard vocational and technical educational system should be established in all the countries of the Union so that the staff will produce products which are within the same quality and serve the same purpose regardless of the country they were educated. And right here, the idea of establishing the vocational and technical education systems to be applied within European Union on common paths has emerged. In the following lines, we will examine what these common paths are and to what extent the vocational education systems of the candidate and member countries comply with these paths.

### Concepts and Objectives of Vocational and Technical Education

Vocational and technical education concepts are defined in different ways. Once these concepts were defined as 'education for production, work and works requires development of hand handworks' (Anapa, 2008), this definition has been changed as 'The form education that provides to improve necessary information, skill, and attitude for individual to carry out the activities that he/she has chosen' (Alkan, Doğan & Sezgin, 1976). The definition of VET in our country is 'the whole of management, supervision and training activities with the co-ordination of planning researching, developing of every kind of vocational and technical services related to industry, agriculture and service sectors within the unity of National Education System'. Vocational and technical education, which has been differentiated according to changes in economic, social and cultural areas, includes three main elements: 'individual', 'professional', and 'educational process'. In this case, we can define the vocational education as developing process of individual's skills in physical, mental, emotional, social, economic and personal ways by redounding necessary knowledge, skill and practical application skills that the individual needs in his professional life to them (Altın, 2008).

The objective of vocational and technical education, in general, is to train individuals to employ them in industry, trade and service sectors as qualified labour and to give the necessary basic training for the transition to higher education institutions (Eşme, 2007).

### Vocational Training in the European Union

Education is one of the important agenda items for all EU Member Countries. However, the structure of education in each country is different. There is not a single policy in the field of education in the European Union. But, since the education is a kind of forum that exchanges the views between the countries, member countries are free in terms of education

content and organization and they can cooperate under the supervision of the European Union (Anapa, 2008).

The legal basis of the Union's activities in education, vocational education and youth areas are the articles 126 and 127, added into 'Treaty of Rome by the Maastricht Treaty' (Education, Vocational Training and Youth Policy, 2008). The Article 126, referring to cooperation in education, mentions about teaching and dissemination of the member countries' languages, encouraging the mobility of students and teachers exchange, mutual recognition of diplomas and periods of study, spreading the co-operation between educational institutions, developing the exchange of information and experience about education in member countries, promoting the development of distance education, importance of actions aimed at co-operation and education. On the other hand, the Article 127 mentions that it will put into action a vocational education policy that supports and contribute the actions by respecting the contents of educational and training systems, structures, cultural differences and language of the member countries (Rome Treaty, Title VIII: Social Policy, Education, Vocational Training and Youth, 2008). The Unity has got various studies to ensure the co operational education as well as its legal basis. By organizing lots of Europe joint technical educational programs within the studies of cooperation between the countries, the participation of the member and candidate countries to these programs has been provided. The joint program in the field of vocational and technical education is called "Leonardo Da Vinci".

Due to the cultural, economic and social differences of the countries, the education differs and since it is a tool in realizing the EU's purposes, the being condensed of the member countries' education and determination of educational policies in EU-level have been considered. One of the elements that identify the EU's educational policies is to meet the needs of individuals and information society in scientific and technological developments of vocational and technical education. Educational policies also aim to provide to increasement in the quality of labour power by training skilful and technical labour power and therefore an increasement in the competitive power. Free roaming of the labour power, another factor in determining the EU education policies, predicts the planning of education according to the needs of both nations and alliance labour market exertions. At the same time, the objectives of EU education policy are to increase the employment by creating the harmony between work and individual (Anapa, 2008).

When the structures of vocational and technical education in EU countries are examined, we can see that the educational programs have been designed to respond to labour market needs, and most importantly these programs have been based on science and mathematics. High levels of the physics and mathematics of the vocational and technical students bring the success of the system by providing education, measurement, evaluation and certification within the objective criteria. Since the curriculum's design to meet the expectations of the labour market solves employment problem, a large part of the

graduates find jobs immediately right after graduating from the school or they can continue their education on technical fields (science, engineering education, etc). EU countries, which predict that qualified production will be possible thanks to qualified technical personnel, provide two-way demand environment, which increases vocational and technical education's level by 65-70% and reveals natural balance of supply and demand. Union countries aim to improve the competition as they want the "Euro Pass" certificates to be valid in all member countries by having common professional standards of labour power.

### **Vocational and Technical Education Policies in the European Union**

European Union, aiming economic and political unity, sees education as a tool to achieve the goal. European Union predicts the politics which will ensure convergence between member countries' educational systems in the field of education. There are some factors that affect the formation of these policies (Sezgin, 2001):

- **Increasing employment:** European Union creates policies in the field of vocational education considering the conditions of the era. The unemployment phenomenon is a major problem in today's conditions in the EU and there is a common thought that vocational and technical education plays an important role in order to overcome this problem. The improvement of the qualifications of the individuals in the direction of labour market demands is thought to affect the employment positively and it is also thought that vocational and technical education is an effective tool in realizing this objective. Increasing the harmony between the business and individuals and with the purpose of enhancing employment opportunities, vocational and technical educational institutions are supported to be in relation with businesses.
- **Scientific and technological changes:** Today, a developed technology is dominated and the knowledge is intensively used, which makes the individuals update their qualifications. Therefore, an obligation of change comes out in the aims, content and methodologies of education. A vocational education planning which will respond society of information is considered to be necessary.
- **Enhancing competitiveness:** Education is seen as a key element in improving the competitiveness when the international competition stands out in this process. Demands of the day can be fulfilled by increasing the qualifications of the individuals with vocational education. The level of competitiveness in the international market will be consolidated by updating the vocational education. For this reason, policies that will enhance the quality in the level of European Union stand out in vocational education field.

- **The free movement of the labour force:** A labour force that responds the demands of EU labour market must be created in order to realize the free movement of the labour force, which is also one of the basic principles of the EU. This creation will come up with certain qualificational framework in the vocational and technical education policies of the EU and therefore proficiency in foreign language is an obligation.

In order to respond to scientific and technological developments, increase the level of international competitiveness, enhance the employment and impose the free movement of labour within the Union, the field of vocational and technical education must be evaluated and developed continuously. In the light of these considerations, vocational education and training policy priorities of the EU have been identified (Demirezen, 2006):

- Increasing the preference of vocational education so as to participate in vocational education more.
- Ensuring mobility and strengthening the European dimension or cooperation between educational institutions and establishment of close cooperation.
- Access to learning, recognition of the qualifications and supporting knowledge, guidance and counselling in the member countries for transferring them and creating one common framework for qualifications and their transparency.
- Developing common principals for certification levels and reference levels for the transfer of the skills and qualifications between different countries.
- Increasing the support for development of the skills and qualifications in business level through inclusion of social partners in cooperation and establishing a link between vocational training and labour market necessity of the knowledge economy.
- Promoting cooperation in quality assurance methods for quality

EU has determined vocational training policies in the light of the objectives (MEB, Helsinki Declaration, 2008). EU requires lifelong learning in the field of vocational education and Europe is being supported to become a learning society. Development of the lifelong learning helps improve vocational and technical education systems. Besides, it contributes to boost the employment rate and helps the ones who works but fails to cope with the technological development (Bainbridge et al., 2003). Therefore, a well-functioning training market is required and a wide range skills to be brought in by this market. It is accepted that improving the pre-service and a constant vocational education in the development of vocational education quality, which has got an important role in the accumulation of human capital, economic growth and employment should be enhanced, in terms of quantity and quality.

The adaptation of the skilled and technical labour force changes in the industry, which overcomes lack of skill in business life,

strengthens the relationships between vocational education institutions and business life to enhance the middle and high level skills compatible with information society, is decided to be facilitated.

A reciprocated learning process has been planned to determine the Europe's common objectives in order to create a Europe level to generalize vocational education, to develop European common framework and tools (European Credit Transfer System, the Common Reference Levels, the Europass Training Initiative, and Leonardo da Vinci), and to provide benefits from facilities of cross-border vocational education by encouraging the students and teachers' mobility. Sharing the experiences, ideas and results helps assess the national vocational education policies.

### **Leonardo Da Vinci**

It is a vocational education program that supports and develops the policies and practices for education of the member and candidate countries of the Union (<http://www.ua.gov.tr>). This program, which supports the European Union's vocational education and carries out the common decisions taken by member countries, targets to encourage the innovations, and develop the quality of vocational education systems, and applications by using cross-border cooperation.

### **What is Euro Pass?**

The Euro Pass documents are documentation folders which ensure perfection and transparency to help people who desire to show themselves as more qualified and to enter an education program in European Union level or seeking employment.

Euro Pass is a new way of helping people with the following topics:

- To provide Europe (European Union, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) with understanding of the skills and competences clearly and easily.
- To visit anywhere in Europe.

Euro Pass consists of five documents:

- Two documents to fill out by yourself;
  - The Euro Pass curriculum vitae (CV),
  - Euro Pass Language Passport.
- Three other documents filled in and issued by competent organizations;
  - Euro Pass Certificate Supplement,
  - Euro Pass Diploma Supplement,
  - Euro Pass Mobility.

Europass is supported by a network of National Euro Pass Centres. Euro Pass has been established by the Decision No 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on 15 December 2004 on a single transparency framework for qualifications and competences.

### **The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)**

ECTS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer based on the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes. It aims to facilitate planning, delivery, evaluation, recognition and validation of qualifications and units of learning as well as student mobility. ECTS is widely used in formal higher education and can be applied to other lifelong learning activities.

Objectives of the educational programs in European system will have to be identified according to skills and acquisitions at the end of the learning process. ECTS makes the comparison and measurement possible between learning processes and provides credit values for learning to be transferred from one institution to another. Originally, it was developed for transfers between higher educational institutions of two different countries. However, it can be done within the same higher educational institution or between different higher educational institutions in the same country (<http://ects.mehmetakif.edu.tr/tr/index.php?page=ects>).

An ECTS credit is a number that identifies the amount of work, responsibility, task and studies assigned to student to complete the course. This number expresses the amount of course work by the rate of one-year total work amount needed to be done.

### **Countries Based Training Systems**

#### **Education in Germany**

#### **In general, the German education system**

Primary school lasts four years in Germany. Children's future is determined by the choices made in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Here, students are channelled to Gymnasium, Realschule or Hauptschule according to marks and teacher-parents' consultation. While the students who come from Gymnasium generally attend the university and high school, the ones who graduate from Realschule are trained as intermediate staff and office staff. Employed ones who generally have manual skills in the field graduate from Hauptschulen. Fachhochschule is different from university and means vocational high school but has the same status as university does. The difference given education is that the education there is more application-oriented. Art and music education is given in conservatories. Aptitude tests are applied to study.

#### **The German Vocational Education and Training System**

There are three main areas of vocational training in Germany (<http://www.almanya-danismanlik.com>):

- Vocational education and training
- Continuing education and in-service education
- Changing Profession

If we examine the system we can see that; Vocational Education constitutes the most important part of the German educational policy.

The German Vocational Training System is largely based on the cooperation between the education and business. For this reason, it is usually referred to as the “Dual System” (Özdemir, 2012). Dual Vocational Training Model, which is a new and independent sub-system through communication between state, capital and labor, has its own structure and rules (Anapa, 2008). A foundation of the system is essentially based on the medieval guild system (Özdemir, 2012). The old Akhi system in Turkey is an example for this mechanism. At this point, the model of master-apprentice relationship and in the field of education is to the fore (<http://webvocation.eu/site/vocational-training/>).

Dual System aims graduates of secondary schools and is carried on at vocational schools (Berufsschule). In this system, the practical base of the education is held at the firms (3-4 days) and the theoretical base is held at vocational schools (1-2 days). Dual training duration varies from 2 to 3,5 years. Students are generally involved in this system at the age of 15 and graduate when they are 18. More than half of all the students in this age group study the dual system. The main actors in the process are the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Education and Training Institute, and the Trade and Industry Chamber (rooms) and companies. Chambers of commerce and industry are also represented in Federal Institute of Education and Training. Financing the vocational education and training under the dual system is partly sponsored by the State and municipality and partly by the firm itself. Chambers are responsible for Vocational Education Commissions and Exam Commissions and following terms in the process of vocational education:

- **To accredit the businesses to internship:** Approving the appropriateness of businesses whether they can employ interns and they have enough capacity or not.
- **To control the education process by means of content and time:** This is the audition of practical training carried out in businesses according to training guidelines prepared in compliance with the Federal Education and Training Institute; having qualified educational personnel and observing the education that is given with the requirements of the profession.
- **To advise companies and trainees:** Advising companies and trainees about structure of education, using the educational aids, legislation and making recommendations in psychological issues so as to execute proper practical education.
- **Examination, evaluation and certification of trainees:** Certification of students after being successful from the exams, held in the middle and at the end of the education process by means of Exam Commission within the Chamber, prepared by the employers, workers and representatives from vocational high school.
- **Conventions registration:** Registering the contracts between the student and company.

- **Career counseling:** Organizing career fairs, and exchange programs.

In Dual System, companies, themselves, give decisions on how many students they will accept, in which vocational field they will supply practical education and how much they will spend. In this context, firms’ duties are as follows:

- Preparing its own education plan appropriate for education directives for Dual System.
- Providing students a 3-4 day practical training in a particular profession within its own structure by making a contract with the student (trainee) within Dual System.
- Providing necessary places and trainer personnel for practical education.
- Paying a certain amount of salary to the students. (at least 1/3 of normal starting salary, increases every year)

#### **Warning or advising for updating educational guidelines.**

SMEs have difficulty in accomplishing all these; therefore inter-company vocational training opportunities have been developed. These are financed by wide variety of sources mainly by the Federal Employment Agency and the State. The facilities which offer these opportunities are also set-up by the Chambers. By 2000, vocational education was financed by private sector at 73% rate and by public sector at 27% rate (Özdemir, 2012). The expenses that the businesses make for education are declared as operation cost for tax purposes (Wollschlager & Guggenheim, 2004).

Dual system has been tested in some developed countries (the USA, England, and Canada) and in lots of developing countries (Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Brazil, India, Peru, Lebanon, Dominican Republic, etc.). However, it ended up with that the system is a failure in developing countries.

Dual system is known to have a great role in decreasing the young unemployment rate. While the young unemployment rate was 11% in Germany in 2009, it was 22% in European Union. In Austria, in which Dual System is in effect, the young unemployment rate is 10% (Özdemir, 2012).

#### **Vocational School Graduation Certification**

Students who have successfully graduated from vocational school, gets a vocational high school diploma. This graduation diploma contains student’s grade in each course and the information of successful graduation. The graduation of secondary and high school is approved thanks to this diploma. Graduation diploma also contains an average grade. This average grade is calculated from compulsory lessons’ grade, except from physical education. The lessons which are finished before the last term are included in calculation (<http://webvocation.eu/site/vocational-training/>).

#### **Education in Spain**

##### **Spanish Education System in General**

The features of the educational system are summarized like

that (Cronin, 2003; Green, 2005; Sispain, 2005). The education is compulsory and free. It comprises ages between 6 and 16. The educational system is consisted of two main divisions: General and Private Education. All students have to get main/general vocational education. Private vocational education is in the second phase of basic education (age 12-16) and the term after the age of sixteen is classified as vocational education in mid-level (Atıcı et al., 2005).

### **Spanish Vocational and Technical Education System**

Vocational training studies are directly related to the labour market and thanks to their wide variety of choice, flexibility and availability, even through the internet, are nowadays a very attractive offer for the Spanish students and it has also a very high percentage of employment. Vocational Training in Spain offers about 150 cycles, organized in 26 professional families, which divide in medium or higher grades, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding the professional fields they belong to. These titles are valid all over the country, with whole academic and professional value.

Approved in May 2006, 'Ley Organica de Educacion' (LOE), regulates the structure and organization of educational systems in non-university level. This organization has reiterated principles and right of the Constitution several times to protect a new law, related to quality and equality for all (<http://webvocation.eu/site/vocational-training/vocational-training-in-spain>).

The vocational training in Spain can be grouped under the following headings:

- Public Vocational Training
- Private Vocational Training
- Lifelong Education and Manpower Training
- Online Vocational Educational Applications
- **Public Vocational Training:** It is the vocational education system, so called "Technological Education", which is given within 6-12 ages. This term is also the first phase

of the compulsory education. This training is mandatory for all students and its purpose is to introduce students to professions even if they are still at basic education level, recognize the students' basic skills and improve them.

- **Private Vocational Training:** It is divided into two levels as mid-level and high-level vocational education. Those who have completed the second stage of basic education (12-16) can participate in mid-level vocational education. At least, one-year theory and practice lessons are delivered as training courses of 1200 hours. The student is given certificate after completing the education. The ones, who completed two-year term called post-high school level after compulsory education, can participate in the term called top-level vocational education.
- **Lifelong Education and Manpower Training:** The main tasks of "Fundación para la Formación y el Empleo Tripartita" institution, which is also a public institution and has been active since 1992 are to examine the technological developments in Spain and European Union and provide educational opportunities in this direction, and make the communication between the government and social institutions possible. The two major objectives of the educational services that the organization offer are vocational training and professional development. The main target groups are the women who works but do not have qualified skills. 65 percent of the budget is covered by the EU. Finally, a certificate which is accepted by the EU can be given (Fundación Tripartita para la Formación y el Empleo, 2005).

Another organization similar to this is called CEA (Confederacion de Empresarios de Andalucia) which is formed by various institutions and enterprises. This organization does not only ensure its employees to keep pace with the changes in their profession but also provides vocational education to non-workers (CEA, 2005).

**Table 1:** Levels of Spanish Education

Level of Education	Age
Nursery Infant Education	0 – 6 age
Primary Education	6 – 12 age
Compulsory Secondary Education)	12 – 16 age
Middle Education	
Academic high school	2 years
Mid-level vocational training - specific vocational training (modular system)	1 – 2 years
Higher Education	
Advanced vocational training (modular system)	1 – 2 years
University	3 – 5 years

- **Online Vocational Education Applications:** Government of Andalusia in Andalusia operates its activities under the name of Online Education Center (Andalusian Government Online Education Department) depending on the local government. The main objectives of the program are summarized as to provide face to face education, recognition and usage of the new information technologies, improvement of the internet use, and promotion of lifelong education (Formación profesional a Distancia, Sevilla, 2005). Conditions of participation in the program are as follows:
  - To have a computer and internet connection.
  - Not to have participated in a vocational training program before.
  - Being at least high school graduate.
  - Sit an exam and must be successful it in case not having a high school diploma and being over 21.
  - To document two years of working in an office as insured unless the person doesn't have high school diploma (they can attend without examination).

Students who meet these requirements may enrol in a web environment. The program, which takes 960-2000 hours and 2 years to complete, covers the commercial marketing, tourism transportation, information and tourism marketing. The students have the chance to choose credit course other than the supervisor and compulsory credits. Teachers work in vocational schools under the local governments. Students do activities such as necessary reading, preparing tasks, e-mailing the papers that they have prepared. One of the goals of the program is to give an official title to those who have jobs in the fields in which they were educated but this education was not certificated (Atıcı et al., 2005).

## Education in Turkey

### *The Turkish Education System in general*

The general structure of the Turkish education system is determined by the Basic Law of National Education numbered 1739 and according to this law, Turkish Education system consists of two main parts:

- Formal Education
- Non-formal Education
- Formal Education: Formal education system refers to education that the individuals receive in the school environment. According to the Turkish national education system, formal education consists of;
  - Pre-school Education
  - Primary Education (Primary School + Middle School)
    - Secondary Education
    - Higher Education
  - **Non-formal Education:** This education covers training, education, guidance and all implementation activities

for the citizens who have never attended to formal education or those who have attended but have not completed. (<http://webvocation.eu/site/vocational-training/>).

### *Vocational and Technical Education System in Turkey*

We divide the structure of vocational education into two in Turkey as pre-higher education and pro-higher education. Since, we can see this division easily when we examine the managing of the education structure in the country. While, the managing of pre-school education, primary education and middle education is done by Ministry of Education, and the managing of higher education is done by the Council of Higher Education which is the highest management of the universities.

### *Secondary Education*

Vocational and technical secondary education is the system that educates the students as labor power for professional fields within the objectives of secondary education, and prepares the students for higher education (<http://webvocation.eu/site/vocational-training/>). The management of vocational education is carried out by two general directorates within the Ministry of Education in Turkey.

- **General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education:** All of the vocational educations, which are technical, tourism, commerce and health, are assembled under this general directorate. The training period of secondary vocational education, providing formal education, is four years.

Mathematics, science, and social classes which are also in general education, are also delivered to the students who wants to study at higher education as well as vocational courses. Students can find the chances to get the education on their field and the education from other branches as well. So, the students have to take summer internships in businesses to gain professional experience.

Mathematics, science and social lessons are minority in the other educational institutions affiliated with this general directorate, but the students get professional education more. For this purpose, students receive education in the businesses for three days to acquire professional experience and practice.

Students can continue their own vocational education in the higher educational institutions after graduating by getting education from businesses or carrying out summer internship.

- **General Directorate of Lifelong Learning:** There are two services within the scope of non-formal education branch of this organization. The first one is to provide distance education to those who haven't completed the primary or secondary educations within formal education to complete their educations. Distance education at upper secondary level education can be in both general and vocational fields. The second one is, on the other hand, to provide a vocational training or course to the individuals, no matter at what age or level of education they are, according to lifelong learning principles. In order to fulfil these services,

distance Education institutions, Public Education centres and Vocational Education Centres are in the institution.

### Higher Education

In Turkey, vocational and technical education is divided into two as period of the education and the titles given to graduates. First of all, we will examine the formal education.

- **Vocational High Schools:** Vocational high schools are one of the most important steps of the “Vocational and Technical Educational System”. Vocational High Schools were established to educate secondary personnel with full of information and skill for trade and service sectors (Şahin & Findık, 2008). The students can get education in these institutions; either they graduate from general high schools or from vocational and technical secondary schools. Upon graduation from vocational and technical secondary schools, students can continue their education in vocational high schools depending on their graduation grades without examination. Students who graduate from general secondary educational institutions continue their education by entering these schools depending on grades that they get from YGS (Access to Higher Education Examination). The graduates of vocational and technical secondary school have the advantage of being prioritised in placement as a certain quota is allocated to vocational high school graduates. If these allocated quotas are exceeded, the students who make choices by the scores of YGS are placed in these schools.

Vocational High Schools provide two-year education. In these two years, students take courses in the curriculums determined by the university senate as well as they take a summer internship in businesses to acquire technical skill and practice. Students who complete all their courses and internships graduate from the university with the diploma of associate. Graduates are employed in the business world as the secondary personnel with the title of *Technician*.

If the graduates of vocational high school wish to continue their education at the level of undergraduate in domestic universities, they can place the allocated quotas by taking the DGS (Vertical Jump Test). Those who wish to continue their education at foreign universities can find the opportunity to continue their education in the countries which provide them with diploma equivalence of associate level and undergraduate level. ECTS, which we have mentioned above, provides great

convenience for this kind of similar transitions between countries.

- **Faculties:** They are the higher education institutions providing undergraduate level education in Turkey. Being a formal education institutions, the faculties accept the students according to scores that they take from YGS (Access to Higher Education Examination), and LYS (Undergraduate Placement Exam). While YGS is held for all the students who wish to continue Higher Education, LYS is held for the ones who wish to take education for their own desires. In this exam, students only answer the questions related to the field they are eager to study.

In Turkey, the education period of the faculties is four years except for one-year foreign language preparation. Dentistry, veterinary and medical faculties are also included in this exception. Faculties offering vocational education at the undergraduate level were revised by the decision of the council of ministers in 2009. Prior to the decision in practice, there were five faculties giving education to train teachers for the secondary schools providing vocational and technical education. In 2009, with the decision of the council of ministers, these five faculties were closed and three new faculties has been established instead.

The education in the closed faculties still goes on, since there are students who have placed those faculties before the decision of closing. These faculties will have been closed after the students graduate. After the decision in 2009, establishing of the new faculties started immediately and students enrolled them. Therefore, two different faculties still continue with the education. The titles that the graduates take have been changed after the decision. For example, the graduates of Faculty of Technical Education take the title of Technical Teacher and the ones graduating from Faculty of Technology take the title of Engineer.

Besides the faculties that we have just mentioned above, engineering faculties which are giving vocational and technical education, and architect faculties give students the title -Engineer- without any changes.

The graduates of both general and vocational secondary educational institutions can get a right to study at these two faculties by the scores they get from LYS. The graduates of undergraduate level can continue their education in the master’s and Ph. D. level.

**Table 2:** Closed Faculties and Newly Established Ones

Closed Faculties	Newly Established Faculties
Industrial Arts Education Faculty School of Vocational Education	Faculty of Art and Design
Vocational and Technical Education Faculty of Technical Education	Faculty of Technology
Faculty of Commerce and Tourism Education	Faculty of Tourism



These vocational high schools or faculties can be under either a private university or state university. In addition to this, many universities provide vocational higher education opportunities for those who cannot go on with their formal education through distance education program as well as formal education.

### Vocational Schools Certification

Students who have graduated from a vocational secondary school in Turkey will be awarded with a diploma of High School. In addition to these, every kind of education such as Mastery, Journeyman and apprenticeship certificates are certified by means of Vocational Education Centres. While the diploma of associated diplomas is given to those who have completed the two-year vocational high school education in any university, an undergraduate diploma is given to those who have completed their four-year faculty education.

### RESULTS

European Union places the vocational education as a basis of the scientific and technological changes, increasing employment, increasing competitiveness, and free movement of the labor force. Increasing the rate of vocational education up to 65-70% is within the objectives. The rate of the vocational education in Germany is close to desired level, however in Spain, it is lower than Germany. On the other hand, in Turkey, the rate was used to be in 30%, but thanks to investments and support the rate has increased to 44%. Nowadays, shifting the industrial production of cheap labour from far eastern countries such as China to countries of the European Union is one of the most important problems vocational education in European Union countries is facing.

The Dual System, which has been in effect in Germany for years, has been carried out in Spain and Turkey, in a similar way. However, when the aimed applications are carried out, we can see that the applications are not so close to the goals as it is in Germany.

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