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Final Declaration of 31st Abant Meeting



23.2.2014



31st ABANT MEETING:

Turkey's Educational Challenges

"International Experience in Education Policy & Search for Solutions"

FINAL DECLARATION

1.

As in the past, education stands to be the most important issue in the society. However, changing character in the accessibility of knowledge imperatively requires a systematic review of the whole education system. An education system based only on passing knowledge has lost its validity and should rather focus on developing functional competence, skills and knowhow.

2.

Centralized, unified curriculum stands to be one of the fundamental problems of the education system. The curriculum has to be liberal, flexible and pluralistic. It should be designed to enable competence, transmitting values to next generations and revealing latent potentials of the students.

3.

Main problems of the education policies are:

Lacking sustainability,

The dominance of political approaches,

The non-participation of all stakeholders.

Decision-making processes should be verifiable, transparent, participatory, based on scientific results, and subject to supervision.

4.

Qualification and self-devotion of the instructor is crucial to the quality in education. But the lack of coordination between the representatives of higher education institutions specialized in teacher training and the Ministry of Education results in low performance and motivation of the instructors.

5.

As in various states of the world^[1] private education and tutoring are not alternative but complementary insitutions to the public ones in Turkey. However, private educational institutions should be assessed in terms of equal opportunities, market conditions, freedom of enterprise and right to preference.

6.

The State should not unify the citizens' lifestyle and ideologies through education. The State has to ensure that the citizens have got the possibility to develop according to their capabilities.

7.

The measurement and evaluation should not only be seen as an individual screening, it should be used for improving the whole system. Every reform measure in this area should be aware of the multi-dimensionality of the issue.

8.

Orientation and vocational training have to take account of the needs of the State.

9.

In recent years in our country, the budget for the education has never been as large as it is now; it should be noted that it is important to meet higher international education standards through national and international platforms.

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23th February 2014

^[1] e.g. Argentine, Austria, Chad, Germany, Japan, Nigeria and South Korea

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