

The Curricular Reform Initiatives of Turkey in the Fields of Life Science and Social Studies in the Process of Accession to the European Union

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to determine and assess how the relationships with and candidateship conditions of the European Union have reflected to the Turkish primary educational curricula for the Life Science and Social Studies which were changed in the years of 1968, 1998 and 2004. The study was performed on a qualitative basis by analyzing relevant literature and documents-mainly the 1968, 1998 and 2004 teaching curricula. After analyzing the findings of the study, it was seen that compared to the previous 1968 and 1998 curricula, there was a radical change in the 2004 Life Science and Social Studies curricula, as the backbone of primary education, with regard to their inclusion of educational norms, skills, international perspective, democratic consciousness and principles required by the globalizing world in general and the European Union in particular.

Key words: Educational reform • curriculum • educational policy • social sciences • primary education

INTRODUCTION

Turkey has had close relations with both the Western European countries and the United States of America from the 1920s to now in the framework of its modernization/westernization target [1-5]. As is the case all over the world, modern centralized nation-state is in a deep crisis in Turkey in the light of global problems. Turkish administrative elites have found the full membership to the EU process of Turkey to be vital for solving its ingrained problems related to its modernization. Today, the most obvious reverberation of the reform, transformation and modernization attempts of the Turkish Republic following “the Western Civilization” seems to be the accession to the European Union [6, 7]. The accession to the EU process has constituted one of the top political priorities of Turkey as the most prominent and noteworthy option since 1987, which is its application date for full membership, to be able to overcome its modernization crises and bottlenecks. The formation of Turkey’s educational policies was greatly influenced by the projects of the World Bank and the harmonization and standardization of the European Union in the 1990s. The educational reform initiatives have gained impetus in Turkey to fulfill prospective requisites in the field of education by October 2005, namely when the negotiations for full membership to the EU process began for Turkey.

In the last 85 years witnessed the transition from traditional state to modern state, the quality of relationships with the Western world and the general characteristics of international political systems have been quite determining in regard to the formation of Turkey’s modernization character. As was the case in other fields, a considerable reform movement started in the field of education in the direction of the Western Civilization with the establishment of the Republic, which is a stepping stone of great significance to transform into a modern state in the Turkish history [8,9]. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founding leader of the modern Turkey, gave priority to education and culture to achieve social change and modernization. John Dewey, who was one of the most influential educational scientists and intellectuals at that time, was invited to Turkey and he was asked to prepare reports about the structure, vision and characteristics of education in general [10] For Ataturk, the most prominent factor in the maintenance of the Republic regime and of its reforms is the education and sophistication of individuals in a civilized manner [8, 11]. For that reason, the basic grounds considered in the educational curricula in the Republic period have been the national concern, scientific reasoning, modernization and secularism. In enabling the Turkish students and thus the whole Turkish society to attain all these values, the social science disciplines and life science and social studies taken part

in educational curricula with different names from time to time since the beginning of the Republic period have had a prominent role.

The European Union, having been established with the aim to make “A New Europe” vision real in the continent of Europe after the WW II, is intended to inform its member and candidate countries about “European Citizenship and Europeanness Identity” and encourages them to involve in European identity construction endeavors. In this vein, Turkey tries to make necessary adjustments in its education system and educational curricula. There has been a paradigm change in Turkey in years. By the last decades, there have been major reforms in the Turkish educational system in an intensifying manner in the light of both national and international impetuses and the purpose to be integrated into the European Union has undoubtedly played a great role in this period. These innovative changes have been exemplified by the extension of primary education to eight years in 1997, the introduction of educational curricula modifications in 2004, the increase of the duration of formal high school education to four years and the reconstruction of vocational and technical education. The main aim of these recent educational reform attempts is “to enable the Turkish Educational System to get the standards so as to accord with the educational systems of developed countries.” All these attempts are profoundly valuable with regard to increasing the quality of national education system and contributing to the structure of international relations.

European Union Vision and Education in Turkey:

Turkey has a population of 72 million, estimated to rise to about 80 million by 2015. There are more than 13 million students at the formal primary and secondary education levels with more than 600,000 teachers. Compulsory education was increased from 5 to 8 years in 1997. There are now more than ten million children receiving 8 years' compulsory primary education in public and private educational institutions with about 375,000 teachers [12].

Today, the modernization practice has been carried out in Turkey through the process of candidateship to the European Union. The institutional and political evolution manner of the European Union is based on the new European order established after the WW II. The first purposes set in the founding principles of the European Union are basically economic, but the second purposes have political roots directed towards establishing “a United States of Europe.” The European integration is relied on the rule of law, democracy and the respect for

human rights. Undoubtedly, it is the education that constitutes the most effective instrument for the maintenance and spread of these qualities in both member and candidate states for the sake of the present and future constructing process of the Union. The European Union countries give a particular attention to education perceived as “a means for cultural transmittance, socialization and economic transaction” among them. There are some fundamental duties assigned by the European Union to Turkey in the framework of the full membership requirements in the field of education as well as in many other fields. It is expected from Turkey that there should be significant advancements in some basic educational areas including, “equality of opportunity in education, education everywhere approach, education based on human rights, extension of compulsory education to 9-12 years, orientation of students according to their skills and interests, lifelong education, bringing up European citizens, enabling job opportunities to young generations and making transition from school life to active-working life easier and improving the relationship between education and democracy.”

The European Union is substantially an integration project. The cultural policy of the European Union aiming at being integrated in the framework of common values is based on the balanced simultaneity between the preserving national cultures and the developing a common European culture. To be able to make this real, a common education policy should be applied. As is the case in other countries of the world, the European countries have faced various economic and social problems which are difficult to deal with [13-15]. For the sake of the future success of the European Union, it is of major significance in solving these problems to bring up individuals who can adapt to changing situations, are equipped with various skills and want to learn in their lifetime. Education has been one of the most important and underlying policy areas since the beginning of the European integration process. This is seen in the 1957 Rome Treaty and 1992 Maastricht Treaty (Articles 126 and 127).

In Turkey, as the responsible unit for educational initiatives and the negotiating party in education for the European Union, the Ministry of National Education tries to establish its infrastructure in this framework and to make necessary changes in educational approaches and practices in all schooling units in the integration path to the Union. What the European Union expects from both its member and candidate states in educational matters is their implementation of almost the same curricula [16, 17].

In respect of the European Union's expectations in this area, the most significant point seems to be the formation of a European dimension in educational curricula prepared by all member and candidate states [18,19]. By the last two decades, innovative changes have occurred in existing formal education/teaching system of Turkey which is on the road to the full membership to the European Union. Turkey has entered a different period towards the full membership since 3rd October of 2005. It is targeted in Turkey to fulfill a series of changes in the fields of economy, culture, law, agriculture, health, etc. In this period, it is a must for Turkey to understand and perceive itself, its environment and its relationships with its surroundings with a new perspective [20]. The importance given by Europeans to a Europe including Turkey is no much less than the importance attributed by Turkey to the full membership to the Union. Approximately five million Turkish Republic nationals--nearly equivalent to total populations of some member states of the European Union, such as Denmark or Finland--, live abroad, mainly in the European countries. In this regard, Turkey is directly or indirectly linked to the European and other countries in the field of education. For that reason, the conditions asked in the field of education during the accession process and the reflections of these conditions in the education system, the modifications to be performed in the education system and educational curricula and lastly the general educational context in Turkey are of significance with regard to the integration policies of the member states of the European Union.

Educational curricula development initiatives in Turkey:

Globally, the concept of 'information', the understanding of 'science' and the notions of 'democracy' and 'government' have been changing. And the biggest contribution to the development of countries is sought in the amount of investments made for the human development [21-23]. It is observed that there have been some fundamental reforms in the education systems of many countries by the 21st century. Turkey has also been carrying out its vigorous attempts in many fields including economic, political and cultural realms, architectural aspects, educational and health services in order to adapt to economic, political, technological, social, cultural, ecological and demographic changes in the world and to be a full member of the European Union. With regard to the educational curricula as an unavoidable part of the Turkish modernization process, the thresholds of major significance have seemed to be the experiences since the Administrative Reforms of 1839, the

national-global balance of power, the notions of human rights and freedom of speech, the development of a multiple and flexible mentality model and the steps taken for the accession to the European Union and for democratization. These attempts focus on the formation of an approach based on multiple causes and multiple effects, in place of the uniform reasoning which constituted the intellectual infrastructure of the existing education system.

The curricula development initiatives executed in 2004 in accordance with the new perspective have taken all changes and advances in the world- particularly the recent curricular reforms performed consecutively in the Far East, North America and European Union- and the norms, targets and educational conception of the European Union as a reference point. The main differences of significance in the renewed 2004 primary educational curricula are as follows:

"In learning, cognitive and constructivist learning approaches have been considered in place of behaviorist curriculum approach. It is given importance to make courses enjoyable, close to real life experiences, usable and unconnected with memorization. The priority is given to knowledge and skills. In general, it was assumed for the structure of curriculum to be flexible enough to adapt to changes dynamically. Teaching curricula were treated in entirety by making international comparisons. Instead of pieced curriculum conception arranged in accordance with the rationale of separate elementary school and secondary school, the curricula were amounted to be suitable for compulsory primary education which takes eight years in duration. The integration into the world and the standards of the European Union were taken into consideration. For all courses, eight common skills were set. Courses were linked to concept analyses according to grade levels. Furthermore, the comparisons were made between courses and all courses were associated with each other. Instead of predominant linear approach, reciprocal causality principle and multiple cause-effect conception were come into the fore. Curricula were made more student-centered by making enriched with activities. A conception which considers the process as well as the outcome in measurement and evaluation was adopted" [24].

In primary education, it is tried to enable all individuals in the society to acquire the foundational basis of knowledge, feelings and skills required by the century within which they live. One of the main purposes of educational institutions is to bring up students as citizens who are beneficial for their societies, good

and responsible [25,26]. In order to enable students to have first basic knowledge constituting an important part of bringing up good citizens, the Turkish primary educational curricula include Life Science courses for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades and Social Studies for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades. With the 2004 curricular change, it is expressed that a new strategy is adopted to achieve this aim. Discussions are being made about this curricular change in various platforms. Curricular change initiatives focus on the possible problems in relation to the change in curricular approach, the possibility of achieving curricular aims and the source and reason of the change [27-31]. It is expressed that the curricular change is stimulated to adapt to rapid progress in global information production and that the full membership to the EU prospect of Turkey has reinforced this change. The critics on curricula are generally about the delays in curricula preparation process, the loose compatibility level of the curricula with the constructivist approach, the deficiencies in substantial constituents and the dilemma between the aim to contribute to personal development and the inability to give national values.

Aim: The aim of this study is to determine and assess how the relationships with and candidateship conditions of the European Union have reflected to the Turkish primary educational curricula of Life Science and Social Studies which were changed in the years of 1968, 1998 and 2004. In line with this aim, it is tried to define and discuss what structures, values and priorities have been taken part in the curricula following the reform and change initiatives. The study was performed in the framework of the sub-questions mentioned below.

Sub-Problems:

1. What are the basic changes made in the 2004 primary educational curriculum of Life Science Courses for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades in the context of Turkey-EU relations? What are the major differences between this teaching curriculum and the previous curricula, which were the 1968 and 1998 teaching curricula?
2. What are the basic changes made in the 2004 primary educational curriculum of Social Studies for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades in the context of Turkey-EU relations? What are the major differences between this teaching curriculum and the previous curricula, which were the 1968 and 1998 teaching curricula?

Method: The study was fulfilled on a qualitative basis by analyzing relevant literature and documents-mainly the primary educational curricula of life science and social studies prepared in the years of 1968, 1998 and 2004 [32, 33].

Data Collection and Analysis: In the research, the data were obtained through document analyses of relevant literature and the 1968, 1998 and 2004 primary educational curricula for the courses of life science and social studies. In data collection, the commonly accepted stages of document analysis including the access to documents, the originality check and comprehension of these documents and the analysis and use of data were used [32, 33]. In the study, the primary educational curricula for the courses of life science and social studies dated 1968, 1998 and 2004 were examined on the basis of their visions, structures, aims and contents. The obtained data were analyzed and assessed interpretatively by considering the traces of educational norms and priorities of the European Union, the demands of the changing world, the democratic ideals and the course units and acquisitions expressed in the mentioned curricula.

Findings and Comments

Findings and comments relating to the first sub-problem: In respect of the first sub-problem, it was examined what basic changes were made in the 2004 primary educational curriculum for the life science course for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades in the context of Turkey-EU relations and how this curriculum differs from the previous 1968 and 1998 teaching curricula.

Life science course was formed on the principle of “unity in teaching”. *Life Science* course is defined as the first course that enables students to have basic behaviors necessary for them to be a good human and a good citizen and to adapt into their environments actively and positively. The main function of this course is to prepare children for life and to help them in forming consciousness of life. This course, which was designed for children to learn and understand themselves, the society and the world they live in, takes part in the primary educational curricula prepared in the years of 1924, 1926, 1936, 1948, 1968, 1998 and 2004 with the same name.

In the 1968 primary educational curriculum, general objectives of life science course were given at the beginning of this teaching curriculum. Subject matters

Table 1: The numbers, names and classification of the course units for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades taken part in the 1968 teaching curriculum for life science course

1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
1-Our school life	1-Our new school year	1-Let us know our environment
2-Republic day and Ataturk	2-The autumn and our environment	2-Republic Day and Ataturk
3-Our home and family	3-Republic Day and Ataturk	3-Let us know our district
4-New year	4-The winter and our environment	4-Let us preserve our health
5-How should we conserve our health?	5-Transportation vehicles and traffic	5-What we see in the Earth and Sky
6-Our Festival-23 rd April	6-Communication	6-Let us know how the life in a village is like
7- End of the school year	7-The spring and our environment	7-Appliances and machines familiar to us
	8-End of the school year	8-End of the school year

Table 2: The numbers, names and classification of the course units for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades taken part in the 1998 teaching curriculum for life science course

1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
1-I am starting in school	1-Our school was opened	1-Our school opened
2-Participation to classroom activities and duty sharing	2-Solidarity at school and at home	2-Conscious consumption and productivity
3-Republic day and Ataturk	3- Republic Day and Ataturk	3-Republic Day and Ataturk
4-I am and my family	4-Let us grow up healthily	4-The place we live in
5- Parts of the year	5-Transportation vehicles and traffic	5-The life in our society
6-The sun and our world	6-Communication	6- Let us grow up healthily
7-Let us grow up healthily	7-I see and hear	7-Living creatures in our surroundings
8-Our festival-23 rd April	8-National Sovereignty and Children’s festival	8-The world and outer space
9-Living creatures in our surroundings	9-Living creatures in our surrounding	9- National Sovereignty and Children’s festival
10-Entering into holiday time	10-The World and Outer Space	10-Substances in our surroundings
	11-Entering into holiday time	11-Motion and force
		12-Entering into holiday time

Table 3: The numbers, names and classification of the themes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades taken part in the 2004 teaching curriculum for the life science course

1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
1- My school bang	1- My school bang	1- My school bang
2- My precious home	2- My precious home	2- My precious home
3- Yesterday, today and tomorrow	3- Yesterday, today and tomorrow	3- Yesterday, today and tomorrow

were arranged as per course units, but targets and targeted behaviors of these units were not mentioned. In the curriculum adopted in 1968 and came into force in 1998, the aims of life science course were classified in five sub-headings, which are “in respect of developing skills and capacities relating to knowing near surroundings, in respect of citizenship duties and obligations, in respect of relationships between people in the society, in respect of developing idea and skills to live in an economical manner and in respect of skills of living better.” The objectives of life science course stated in the 1968 curriculum do not fit students’ level in general and do not have necessary characteristics of educational aims. The above-mentioned objectives are also contradicting with each other. In the 1968 curriculum for life science course, 7 course units were set for the 1st grades and 8 course units were prepared for both 2nd and 3rd grades [34].

General objectives, particular objectives for each grade and course units’ targets and targeted-behaviors

were written in the 1998 curriculum for the life science course. General aims were comprised of 26 items. In the curriculum, there were 18 objectives for the 1st grade, 21 objectives for the 2nd grade and 22 objectives for the 3rd grade. Particular objectives have cognitive, affective and psychomotor features. There were 10 course units for the 1st grade, 11 course units for the 2nd grade and 12 course units for the 3rd grade in the curriculum. Targets and targeted-behaviors related to course units which would be taught in each classroom were written in the 1998 curriculum for the course of life science. Moreover, the importance of each course unit was also stated in the curriculum [35,36]. When the objectives of the curriculum for the course of life science, which came into force in the year of 1998, are examined, it is seen that 70% of them are affective and 30% of them are both cognitive and psychomotor, but mainly cognitive [37,38].

The curriculum for the life science for elementary schools, which was adopted by the Presidency of

National Board of Teaching and Schooling in 1968 and was supplemented with the subject matters on Atatürkism in 1995, was ceased to have effect in the 1997-1998 education-teaching year. New primary educational curriculum for the course of life science started to be implemented in the 1998-1999 education-teaching year. When the course units and contents of these units took part in the 1968 curriculum for the course of life science are compared with the course units and contents of those units of the curriculum prepared in the year of 1998 for the course of life science, it is observed that there was a bit increase in the number of course units in the latter curriculum. Furthermore, it is seen that some course units were added, but some existing units were removed. The 1998 curriculum includes new course units which were not present in the previous curriculum, such as the participation to classroom activities and duty sharing, conscious consumption and productivity, communication, the life in our society, the world and outer space and the motion and force. It can be commented that the 1998 curriculum which was given shape through some changes aims to socialize children in compatible with the Turkish society which has been urbanized significantly by last three decades and thus, has become difficult for children to perceive and understand socially, economically, culturally and politically.

It is emphasized that the 2004 curriculum for the course of life science was developed so as to establish a comprehensive thematic structure which is child-centered, enables students to participate in learning and teaching processes actively, considers children's needs in actual life and makes learning by having fun possible. In the curriculum for the course of life science which started to be implemented in all primary educational units in Turkey in the schooling year of 2005-2006, the objective statements were not given place in contrast to the case in previous curricula and instead of these statements, the acquisitions defined as "the expressions which include students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values as well as their directly observable behaviors" were taken part. Since students have acquisitions through various activities, it is obvious that these learning-teaching activities are the most critical element of this curriculum [39]. It was mentioned that in the preparation phase of the curriculum for the course of life science, existing situation was reviewed in the light of following constituents: "The qualities which are tried to be acquired by individuals via the Turkish national education and primary education objectives in accordance with the constitution, laws and regulations, the educational objectives set by Atatürk, the

traits of characteristics which are aimed to be formed in individuals through education according to international organizations—such as the UNESCO and UNICEF--, the qualities which are demanded to be offered to individuals via educational processes in many countries—including the USA, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Greece, Bulgaria, Ireland, Scotland and Australia--, the personal attitudes which are seen appropriate to be acquired by individuals through education for the development plans prepared by the State Planning Institute, the points of views expressed by teachers coming from various provinces of Turkey to the Board of Teaching and Schooling of the Turkish Ministry of National Education in the preparation process of the 1998 teaching curriculum for the course of life science and recommendations given at the end of examination of previous curricula for this course and the skills determined by the specialized commissions of the Board of Teaching and Schooling of the Turkish Ministry of National Education, including commissions of life science, science and technology, social studies, Turkish language and mathematics."

In the 2004 curriculum for the course of life science, learning-teaching activities were evaluated as the most important and most critical element and some thematic fields were determined. The curriculum is composed of three themes, which are "My school bang", "My precious home" and "Yesterday, today and tomorrow". The curriculum was integrated into acquisitions which are peculiar to sub-disciplines, such as "protection from natural disasters and safe life, entrepreneurship, human rights and citizenship, career consciousness development, special education, psychological counselling, health culture, sports culture and Olympic instruction." Among the sub-disciplines which were determined for developing democratic behaviors in children, there is the heading of "human rights and citizenship". With the curriculum, it is expected from students to attain some basic skills, such as "the skills of critical thinking, creative thinking, research, communication, problem-solving, use of information technologies, entrepreneurship, use of the Turkish language properly and effectively, decision-making, use of resources effectively, establishing safety and protection, self-government, knowing basic concepts of science and fundamental concepts about the themes." Among the skills falling under the heading of acquisitions having the quality of democratic behaviors, following skills are stated: "Critical thinking", "creative thinking", "communication", "problem-solving", "entrepreneurship", "decision-making", "participation", "self-government" and "cooperation and team-work." With the curriculum for

the course of life science, it is aimed to help students in developing their personal qualities and characteristics and in protecting some major values, such as “self-esteem, self-confidence, sociality, patience, tolerance, love, respect, peace, benevolence, truthfulness, honesty, justice, open-mindedness, patriotism and cultural values.” When the personal qualities which are planned to be promoted by the curriculum are examined with regard to democratic behaviors, it is seen that some of these qualities come into the fore, such as “self-esteem”, “self-confidence”, “sociality”, “tolerance”, “respect”, “justice”, “peace” and “open-mindedness” [39].

In the light of the process of accession to the European Union, when the democratic behavior buildup sufficiency rate of the acquisitions reflected in the themes of the course of life science for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades of primary education is examined in respect of the themes, skills and personal qualities emphasized in the curriculum, the obtained examples of acquisition expressions on the basis of the distribution to grades can be stated in the following manner:

There are 9 acquisitions under the heading of human rights and citizenship at the 1st grade level. Some acquisitions which express democratic ways of doing are given below:

- “S/he knows that consensus is an ethical value.”
- “S/he shows the ability to resolve problems without becoming violent.”
- “S/he produces democratic solutions to the problems faced by her/him at school.”
- “S/he accepts that natural resources should be used effectively and consumed consciously.”
- “S/he recognizes the importance of the existence of a democratic environment in family.”

There are 5 acquisitions under the heading of human rights and citizenship at the 2nd grade level. Some acquisitions which involve democratic ways of doing are given below:

- “S/he fulfills her/his responsibilities at home and at school.”
- “S/he recognizes the importance of the existence of a democratic environment in family.”
- “S/he gets awareness about that rights and freedoms should be shared.”
- “S/he gets knowledge about the existence of the UN convention on children’s rights.”

“S/he knows the existence of ecological rights.”

There are 14 acquisitions under the heading of human rights and citizenship at the 3rd grade level. Some acquisitions denoting democratic ways of doing are given below:

- “S/he produces democratic solutions to the problems faced by her/him at school.”
- “S/he knows her/his consumers rights.”
- “S/he is aware of the fact that the compliance to the traffic rules is a citizenship duty.”
- “S/he understands that s/he must keep aloof from bad habits which will harm right to life and right to education.”
- “S/he shows the ability to resolve problems without becoming violent.”
- “S/he is aware of the fact that everyone deserves to be respected.”
- “S/he shows respect to people’s beliefs.”
- “S/he perceives the importance of being a free and autonomous individual.”

Comparisons between the 1998 and 2004 curricula for the course of life science: The 1998 curriculum for the course of life science seems to reflect “behaviorist approach” which is based on mechanic, directly observable and measurable behaviors and which advocates the dividing facts into parts and the analyzing of each part separately. The aim of this curriculum was expressed to be directly observable and measurable objectives and behaviors. In learning-teaching process, students are active in “memorizing” the offered or presented knowledge. Teachers construct knowledge and then convey it to students. The 1998 curriculum was not relied on students’ points of views. In this curriculum, adults’ perspectives were superior. Here, knowledge is conveyed to students intensively. Observable behaviors are brought into the fore, instead of high level mental processes, such as thinking, problem solving and creativity. The importance of product (outcome) is more emphasized and assessed than the importance of process. Existing knowledge accumulation from various disciplines is conveyed to students by teachers in a subject matter-oriented manner. Differences in teaching styles were not taken into consideration. Rather than students’ personality development, their cognitive/mental development was underlined. Due to the fact that the course unit approach was adopted, no direct connection was made between various main disciplines e.g. the

Turkish language, mathematics, painting or music and sub-disciplines e.g. career consciousness development or entrepreneurship. In the 1998 curriculum, traditional methods and techniques were used in learning-teaching process. This is caused by the fact that product (outcome) was mainly accentuated. In the curriculum, child is seen “a member of the society” rather than “an individual.” For that reason, personal differences are ignored.

The 2004 curriculum for the course of life science seems to reflect “constructivist approach” within which individuals understand knowledge by themselves. The aim of this curriculum was stated in the form of “acquisitions” involving individuals’ indirectly observable attitudes, values and skills as well as their directly observable behaviors. By following a comprehensive roadmap, information was gathered from various disciplines and a “thematic” approach was adopted. In line with this, 3 themes were set in the curriculum. These themes were designed so as to continue circularly throughout three teaching years. For this curriculum, students participate in learning-teaching process actively through several activities and construct knowledge by themselves. The curriculum was prepared by considering students’ points of views. Facts which are present in students’ worlds were presented. Basic necessary knowledge which can be used by students in their daily life will be constructed by themselves via their own experiences. It is the fundamental fact for the curriculum that students should acquire basic skills to live. The 2004 curriculum is a flexible document which enables students to construct knowledge on the one hand and to gain basic skills of living on the other. In the curriculum, high level thinking processes, including researching, questioning, planning, critical thinking and decision-making are favored. It is emphasized that process should be assessed as well as product. Moreover, students are given the opportunity to update their knowledge constantly by using the ways of accessing to it. The curriculum is not teacher-centered, but student-centered. In this curriculum, teachers’ roles are limited to offering guidance. It was assumed that each student can learn better by using different learning styles in distinctive intelligence areas due to the personal dissimilarities between students. Basic values and personal qualities sought in individuals, including self-esteem, self-confidence, patience, tolerance, benevolence and open-mindedness were emphasized. Direct connections were established between various main disciplines--such as the Turkish language,

mathematics, painting or music-and sub-disciplines--such as natural disaster management, human rights and citizenship, career consciousness development, special education, psychological counselling, health culture, sports culture, Olympic instruction and entrepreneurship. With an activity-based approach, in addition to traditional teaching methods and techniques, other methods and techniques requiring activeness of students are used in learning-teaching process. By using alternative measurement methods, learning process is measured and assessed as well as learning products. It is aimed to give the chance to students to see that active participation to education-teaching process can be as enjoyable as playing games. It is also targeted that each child could understand her/his being a unique, distinctive and respectful individual and then could know her/himself and realize her/his personal differences.

While the 1998 curriculum for the course of life science involves 7 course units for 1st grades and 8 course units for both 2nd and 3rd grades, the 2004 curriculum sets forth three learning areas/course units/themes and the connected acquisitions to these three. When the two curricula are compared with each other, it seems that the number of themes was decreased in the 2004 curriculum. Yet, in content, some course units brought about by the 1998 curriculum were absorbed into the three themes of the new curriculum. There are five main objectives and 23 sub-objectives in the 1998 curriculum for the course of life science. However, the words of objective and vision were used synonymously in the 2004 curriculum and six visions were determined. With regard to objectives, the new curriculum seems to have a concise structure.

Findings and comments relating to the second sub-problem: In respect of the second sub-problem, it was examined what basic changes were made in the 2004 primary educational curriculum for the social studies course for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades in the context of Turkey-EU relations and how this curriculum differs from the previous 1968 and 1998 teaching curricula.

The fact that the course of social studies is perceived in Turkey as a course mainly aiming at bringing up citizens is caused by the unification of the courses which obviously have the mentioned aim, including history, geography and citizenship studies under the framework of the course of social studies with the 1968 curriculum [37, 40]. Some of the changes introduced by the 1968 curriculum which was one of the most significant primary school curricula of the Republic era are as follows: “Primary educational objectives” were added to existing

Table 4: The numbers, names and classification of the course units for 4th and 5th grades taken part in the 1968 teaching curriculum for the course of social studies for elementary school

4th Grade	5th Grade
1-Our city and region	1-Our country and neighbors
2-Our Turkey	2- The ottoman empire
3-Contemporary life in our country (Population, economy, etc)	3-General view to the world
4- Islam and acceptance of Islam by the Turks	4-The Ottoman Empire (Period of stagnation and decline)
5-Turks' residing in Anatolia	5-Principal countries in the world
	6-Our Republic (The breakup of the Ottoman Empire, the war of independence, our republican reforms, the World War II)

Table 5: The numbers, names and classification of the course units for 4th and 5th grades taken part in the 1990 teaching curriculum for the course of social studies for elementary schools

4 th Grade	5 th Grade
1-The place we live in	1-The Ottoman State
2-Our city and region	2-Our world, country and neighbors
3- Turkey-Our country	3-Stagnation and decline period in the Ottoman Empire
4-History- Anatolia, Turks and Islam in history	4-How do we become a republic?
5- Turks' residing in Anatolia	5-General view to the Turkish world
6-The WW II, democratic life and our constitution	

Table 6: The numbers, names and classification of the course units for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades taken part in the 1998 primary educational teaching curriculum for the course of social studies

4 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade
1-The family, school and social life	1- Homeland and nation	1-Democratic life	1-Geographical regions of Turkey
2-Our near surrounding	2- How do we become a republic?	2-Geography and our globe	2-Conquere of Istanbul and later
3-Let us know our city and region	3- Turkey- Our beautiful country	3-The Turkish history	3-Reformation movement in Europe
4- History, our first homeland and Anatolia in history	4- The birth and spread of Islam and the Turks	4-The Mongols and other Turkish states	4- The Ottoman State in the 17 th and 18 th centuries
		5-Our Turkey	5- The Ottoman State in the 19 th and 20 th centuries
		6-The establishment of the Ottoman State	6-The Ottoman culture and civilization
			7-Turkey's neighbors and the Turkish world

Table 7: The learning areas, numbers and classification for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades taken part in the 2004 primary educational teaching curriculum for the course of social studies and the themes in the National Council for the Social Studies 1994 curriculum standards for the social studies in the USA

2004, learning areas for the social studies, 4 th , 5 th , 6 th and 7 th grades	NCSS, 1994, themes for the social studies (NCSS, 2006)
1-Individual and society	1- Culture
2-Culture and heritage	2- Time, continuity and change
3-People, places and environments	3- People, places and environments
4-Production, distribution and consumption	4- Individual development and identity
5-Time, continuity and change	5- Individual, groups and institutions
6-Science, technology and society	6- Power, authority and governance
7-Groups, institutions and social organizations	7- Production, distribution and consumption
8- Power, governance and society	8- Science, technology and society
9-Global connections	9- Global connections
	10-Civil ideals and practices

objectives; some concepts like “locality”, “flexibility” and “environmental program” were taken more part; the principle of “unified teaching” was accepted not only for the first three grades, but also for whole grades in elementary schools; the courses of history, geography and citizenship studies which had been separate disciplines until then were unified in a one course, which is the course of “social studies. Several changes were made in the curriculum for the course of social studies in following years, mainly in 1970-1971, 1974-1975, 1985, 1990, 1993, 1998 and 2004.

Today, basic knowledge, facts and concepts falling under the scope of the history, geography and citizenship studies are offered in the course of “social studies” to the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades of primary education. With the curricula prepared separately and as per courses in the 1980s for the 6th, 7th and 8th grades of primary education, namely the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades of junior high schools, some changes were made in the courses falling within the social studies and the course of history was re-named as the national history and the course of geography was re-named as the national geography. The extension of the duration of primary education to eight years has affected curriculum development initiatives. The unification of primary education has begun to be considered in the curricula prepared for the courses of science studies, social studies and life science by the 1990s.

It was seen that the 1998 primary educational teaching curricula for the social studies was the first curriculum of the Republic era prepared in the framework the unification of primary education and that the content and structure of this curriculum were very similar to those of the previously prepared curricula [41]. The subject matters about the Ottoman history and civilization offered to the 4th and 5th grades of primary education were begun to be taught in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. The 1998 curriculum was criticized on various grounds. For instance, Ozturk and Dilek [37] criticized this curriculum on the grounds that the content of it falls behind offering current topics, that it includes many unnecessary topics and knowledge, that it has adopted the approach of “the social studies as a way to convey citizenship consciousness”, that it brings memorization into the fore and that it mainly concerns with transmitting dominant cultural values. In this vein, Erden (no date) argues that the area of social studies has begun to be viewed with a new perspective due to many recent facts, including the increasing interconnectedness between countries, the globalization wave everywhere and the rise of non-governmental organizations and he says that all these

facts and resulting ways of doings do not find a place in the curriculum of the social studies and this curriculum should include the understanding of “democratic citizenship” which is a must for the adaptation to the changing world.

By the 2000s, it seems that a curricular change taking account global trends and the standards of the European Union is inevitable. New learning and teaching approaches presented by educational sciences and recent worldwide initiatives aiming at increasing educational quality make curricular changes necessary. Since the rapid developments in information technologies turns the whole world into a global village, the importance and magnitude of local and national values increase. Today, the production of, the rise in, the dissemination of and the access pace of information have a significant impetus on all individuals and societies. The changes in individuals’ points of views and social consciousness push the learning process and teachers’ roles at school to shift. This requires the re-arrangement of all teaching curricula with a new understanding. On this basis, the 2004 teaching curricula for the social studies for the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades of primary education was prepared. The 2004 curriculum for the social studies considers the value of information and existing experiences of individuals and it gives weight to an educational approach which supports and improves individuals’ active involvement to life, making right decisions and solving problems. Thus, a new educational conception is tried to be adopted. This approach is student-centered, balances knowledge and skills, considers students’ experiences and their personal differences and enables students to interact with their environments. The vision of the curriculum for the course of social studies can be stated as to bring up “the Turkish Republic citizens who are equipped with knowledge, skills and values required by the modern age they live in, who have adopted the principles and reforms of Ataturk, who use the concepts and methods of social sciences, who are active, productive and happy and who know and use their rights and obligations.” The curriculum for the social studies aims at enabling students to have skills which will be used by them in their real lives [42].

The 2004 primary educational curriculum for the social studies aims to make students to have some basic values necessary for maintaining and ensuring the existence, unity, functioning and continuity of the society. These values can be specified as fairness, appreciation to the family, independence, scientific reasoning, working hard, solidarity, responsiveness, honesty, aesthetic, tolerance, hospitality, giving weight to

health and cleaning, respect, love, peace, responsibility, patriotism and benevolence. The course of social studies has the objective to enable students, as the citizens who have adopted democratic ideals, to adapt into the society they live in and to become equipped in actualizing the knowledge accumulation in their lives. The content of the 2004 social studies curriculum was established on a constructivist educational approach. A grouping was made in order to provide the encompassing of the subject matters presented in the curriculum to all dimensions of life. Each of these groups was called as "learning areas". A learning area is a setting through which the skills, themes, concepts and values related to each other can be seen as a whole. Namely, these areas organize learning processes. The course of social studies was constructed in the framework of nine learning areas. The areas continue throughout all grades, i.e. from the 4th grade to 7th grade, with the same content framings [42]. A course unit may involve one or more learning areas. The main difference of the 2004 curriculum for the social studies from the previous curricula is that "the global connections" constitute a learning area for all grades, from the 4th grade to the 7th grade. When this learning area is examined in detail, following connections attracting attention in the objectives, contents and acquisitions are reached: "The locus of resources and needs in international trade, the causes and effects of global problems, the effects of international activities on inter-societal relations and the impetus of shared values will be undertaken. Scientific and technological innovations have removed time and space limits and this has increased the level of relationships between societies more. Students do brain-storming about the causes and solutions of the global problems in many fields, such as economy, politics, ecology, security, health, etc. They perceive the roles and functions of international organizations." When the acquisitions reflected in the learning area of "global connections" of the primary educational curriculum of the social studies for the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades in the process of the accession to the European Union are examined, following examples of acquisition expressions on the basis of the distribution to grades are reached:

In the framework of the "global connections" learning area for the 4th grades of the 2004 social studies curriculum, students do following things: "Students see that there are many different countries in the world; they make inferences about the daily life in various societies by using visual materials and they compare their daily life with their coevals' daily life in another society and they give examples on special days celebrated by all societies

in the world." Students in the fifth grade do following things: "They perceive the common characteristics and fields of interests of all children in the world; they discuss the effects of communication and transportation technologies on the economic relations between countries; they give examples on shared heritages of various countries; they understand the importance of tourism in making the shared heritages known and they develop a point of view about the role of tourism in international relations." Students in the sixth grade do following things: "They make inferences on the distribution of human population and economic activities in the world by using visual materials and other data; they evaluate the economic relations of Turkey with other countries on the basis of resources and needs; they make assessments about the cultural, social, political and economic relations of Turkey with the Turkic Republics, neighboring and other countries in the framework of the national foreign policy conception of Ataturk; they understand the importance of solidarity and cooperation displayed by Turkey to other countries in natural disasters and environmental issues and they evaluate the role of culture, arts and sports in inter-societal interactions." Students in the seventh grade do following things: "They associate the political and economic structure of the Ottoman State and European countries at the beginning of the 20th century with the causes and effects of the WWI; they see connections between the global problems and the founding principles of international organizations and non-governmental organizations; they perceive their responsibilities as an active citizen in actualization of the solutions to global problems; they give examples on the contributions of heads of state, scientists, intellectuals, artists and sportsmen to global peace; they understand the responsibility of humanity in perpetuating intellectual, artistic and literary products and natural assets as the constituents of shared heritage and they produce ideas to solve the problems of historical environments" [42].

It can be commented that "individuals" who are necessary for the world system are aimed to be brought up through the curriculum for the social studies in Turkey which has been tried to be more adapted into the European Union, United States of America and whole world system. Namely, if we caricaturize the case, the individual type sought to be brought up is the one who is "compatible with and desired for" the capitalist system. It is seen that the curriculum was prepared by assuming that individuals will no longer have to learn the knowledge, skills and system rationale outside and after the school,

but they will acquire these assets in the schools structured on this new conception, in place of the existing schools which are partially ponderous and “ineffective” for the capitalist system.

Comparisons between the 1998 and 2004 curricula for the course of social studies: The 1998 curriculum for the social studies was prepared for three class hours in a week for each grade and for 36 weeks-i.e. 108 class hours in total. This was not changed in the 2004 curriculum for the social studies. For Barr, Barth and Shermis, curricula for the course of social studies are based on three main traditions. These are the social studies as transference of citizenship, the social studies as social sciences and the social studies as reflective thinking [42]. The tradition of the social studies as transference of citizenship had been adopted in Turkey until 2004. However, a new perspective was tried to be brought in the 2004 primary educational teaching curriculum for the social studies and then, a new definition for the social studies was introduced. In the 1998 primary educational teaching curriculum for the social studies, following statements take part: “Students know that the Turkish Republic is a national, democratic, secular, social and lawful state based on human rights. They perceive the importance and characteristics of the republic regime. They see the intelligence and capability level, industriousness, scientific understanding and artistic taste, aesthetic view and humanity of the Turkish people and they construct their behaviors on these high qualities.” Yet, the 2004 primary educational teaching curriculum for the social studies include following expressions: “Students having the consciousness to be a part of humanity are responsive to the issues pertaining to their country and the whole world. They perceive the fundamental constituents of the Turkish culture and history and they accept that the “cultural heritage” ensuring the establishment of national consciousness should be protected and developed. They understand the historical setting up process of the concepts of human rights, national sovereignty, democracy, secularism and republic and the effects of these concepts on contemporary Turkey. They also arrange their lives upon democratic ideals.” In the section of application procedures of the 2004 curriculum, it is asked from teachers to give weight to the conceptions of the social studies as social sciences and the social studies as reflective thinking and to make students to perceive the scientific methods used by social scientists, historians, geographers, etc. While the 1998 primary educational teaching curriculum for the social studies associates

primary values with the state, society and individual, the 2004 curriculum follows a reverse order, namely the individual, society and state. This can be read as the transition from the traditional “holy state” conception to the conception of “distinctive, sole, unique and valuable individuality.” The basic evidences of this comment are the skills and values taken part in the 2004 curriculum in a detailed and comprehensive manner. These are exemplified by tolerance, responsibility, patriotism, benevolence, etc. However, such skills and values were not mentioned in the 1998 curriculum in a detailed and clear manner. Moreover, there is no direct section or subject matter related to the European Union in the 1998 curriculum [36]. In the 1998 curriculum for the 6th grades, there is no direct subject matter related to the European Union and the topic of “democracy” which is one of the basic premises of the European Union encompasses only 20% of the curriculum content. In the curriculum for the 7th grades, the subject matters of new inventions, geographical expeditions, Renaissance, Reformation, Age of Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution took part in the course unit of “Innovations in Europe” constituting 10% of the curriculum content. In this curriculum, information about the European history and French Revolution is given through the Ottoman history. There is also information about Greece in the course unit of “Turkey’s neighbors and the Turkish world.” In the curriculum, various European countries are introduced in the topic of “our nationals living outside Turkey.” The subject matter of the European Union is presented directly under a heading in the topic of “international organizations” in the teaching curriculum of the social studies for the 7th grade of primary education.

The names and numbers of the course units taken part in the 1998 curriculum for the social studies are different for the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades. Yet, the numbers and themes of the course units in the 2004 curriculum for the social studies are the same in all grades. The 1998 curriculum set forth 4 course units for 4th grades, 4 course units for 5th grades, 6 course units for 6th grades and 7 course units for 7 grades. Yet, the expression of learning area/course unit was used in the 2004 curriculum and 9 learning areas were brought out for each grade. With regard to objectives, 4 general objectives and 29 sub-objectives were uttered in the 1998 curriculum. However, 17 general objectives were written in the 2004 curriculum after having expressed objectives which had been declared with the law numbered as 1739. While the content of the history had been very intensive in all curricula for elementary schools from the Second

Constitutional Monarchy period to 1998, the scope of the history course topics were narrowed significantly in 1998. The topics on the Ottoman History did not take part in this level and they were slide to the level II. There were topics of the Turkish history before and after the transition to Islam and of the Islam history. All of the course units included by the 1998 curriculum were changed and the acquisitions were brought out in place of them. Both the 1968 and 1998 curricula were mainly based on the objective to offer knowledge. However, skills, concepts, values and inter-disciplinary connections are brought into the foreground in the 2004 curriculum for the social studies. In this curriculum, 14 skills were determined for each grade and it was explained how these skills would be attained in the classroom with a few examples. In contrast to the case in the 1998 curriculum, concepts and concept maps were given great magnitude in the 2004 curriculum. 18 values were set forth to be offered in the 2004 curriculum for the social studies and it was exhibited what values would be given in each grade clearly. The most significant difference between the 1998 curriculum and 2004 curriculum is that 9 learning areas were determined in the latter curriculum. Most of these learning areas were taken from the thematic standards set in the Curriculum Standards for Social Studies by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in 1994 [43]. As can be seen in the Table showing the standards for the social studies of the NCSS and the learning areas set forth by the Presidency of National Board of Teaching and Schooling in Turkey, the 1st, 2nd, 7th and 8th learning areas are partially and the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 9th learning areas are completely the same with the standards. There are also similarities between the contents of the mentioned learning areas and standards [43].

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The Turkish Republic has been making efforts to be a full member of the European Union since 1959. When the necessary transformations are achieved in the field of education through multi-faceted relations with Europe in particular and with the world in general, Turkey could become a more modern country. The speedy production and spread of information and rapid developments in communication and transportation technologies have turned the world into a village, have removed boundaries between countries significantly and have increased the magnitude of the concept of globalization [23, 44-47]. In the light of these transformations, the biggest contribution to people, especially to children in primary education, can be

provided via the social studies education. For Akpınar [48], the Turkish primary education students favor the fundamental values of the European Union to a large extent. The facts that education has increasingly been approached universally and most of the countries in the world have been attempting to integrate with each other rise the importance of global education. The most appropriate field for the realization of global education seems to be the social studies. In discussions about how the education should be in Turkey, the pendulum has swung “from an introverted local and political socialization to a more European-centered and more universal civil socialization.” If it is aimed to bring up responsible citizens who are respectful to human rights, who are against discrimination on race, religion, culture and gender, who are responsive to environmental issues and who see the preservation of peace as a basic ideal, it is a must to adopt an open-minded attitude in the teaching of the life science and social studies in primary education. In this regard, the renewed 2004 curricula for the courses of life science and social studies include the knowledge, skills and values required for being a global citizen and European.

A five-year curriculum for elementary schools was prepared in the Turkish republic for the first time in 1924. This curriculum was tried to be improved in 1926, 1936 and 1948. With the 1926 curriculum, “the unified teaching and unitized subject matters” began to be implemented in the course of life science. Today, this still continues. There was no social studies course in the 1926, 1936 and 1948 curricula. This changed just about 42 years later, namely in 1968. The courses falling under the scope of social studies have been based on “Turkish society and Atatürkism” in Turkey since the beginning of the establishment of the Republic. The main objective of the course of social studies was determined as to bring up “good citizens.” Although some changes have been made in the social studies curricula since 1968, it cannot be said that the updated curricula can respond to the requirements of modern age effectively. With the transition to the eight-year compulsory education, a primary educational teaching curriculum for the social studies encompassing 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades of the primary education was prepared in 1998. Although many changes occurred in Turkey in particular and in the world in general from 1968 to 1998, “the features of citizens” expected to be offered through the social studies course did not change. Formal citizenship conception based on the offering a citizenship consciousness was continued within the 1998 curriculum for the social studies. However, with the 2004 curriculum, the individual and her/his

characteristics have been brought into the fore and the concept and institution of citizenship have been held on multi-faceted disciplines and parameters. The prerequisite of the bringing up individuals as citizens adaptable to the democratic life is to enable them to develop their skills of critical thinking, problem solving, being active and participative in social life, evaluating outcomes of happenings and forming personal opinions. When the Turkish teaching curricula developed for the courses of life science and social studies in primary education are examined, it is seen that the curricula which are the most detailed and the most effective among all upon the capacity to meet these ends in structure, content and vision and to consider the objectives of “adaptation into the changing world” in general and “adaptation into the European Union” in particular seem to be the 2004 curricula, which were prepared with the aims to take “the individual-oriented ideals” at the foreground and to enable the Turkish people “to internalize both national and general citizenship ideals”

Since the establishment of the Republic, there has been a clash of interests, having a changing form and impetus from time to time, of the architects of the modernization project and social classes supporting them and of the opposing group of people which are more conservative and periphery to the political centre, who use more local motifs in expressing themselves and who are seen to have religious bounds much tighter than the bound preferred by the secular Republic project. Today, Turkey has to overcome its multi-dimensional problems having local and global facets. These problems can be solved through the education system which is seen to be a means of bringing up qualified individuals. Education is one of the most effective instruments of economic, political, social and cultural integration and change all over the world. In Turkey, the educational norms, democratic consciousness and ideals of the globalizing world in general and of the European Union in particular are reflected in the 2004 curricula for the courses of life science and social studies in a very intensive manner incomparable to the previous curricula. In general, the primary educational curricula prior to the 2004 curricula, i.e. the 1968 and 1998 curricula, reflected “in-front dynamics” to the objectives, course units, contents and acquisitions, but the 2004 curricula reflected “out-front dynamics” in a more comprehensive and detailed manner. Compared to the teaching curricula of years of 1968 and 1998, the curricula prepared in 2004 are more open to change and more flexible. While the center of gravity of previous teaching curricula was the content/subject matters, students’ thinking processes were given more

weight in the 2004 curricula and the student model thinking and adopting various skills, concepts and ideals were brought into the foreground in place of the student model preferring memorization. This is relied on the belief that the students educated through the 2004 curricula will adapt into the globalizing world more effectively.

With the last curricular changes made in primary education in Turkey, the main emphasis is given to considering personal and local needs and developing and assessing personal work and creativity. Moreover, it is aimed to bring up citizens who are required by the information society and creative members of the global society. Today, the concept of democratic citizenship is one of the most priority realms of development in the European countries. The contribution of the social studies education to this realm is obvious [3, 7, 11, 13, 14, 49-52]. In the Turkish primary educational curricula for the courses of life science and social studies prepared in 2004, it is emphasized that students should learn and develop necessary attitudes, skills and abilities to be active, responsible and critically thinking citizens, including the attitude to know different cultures and people and the ability to internalize rights and obligations in the realms of the family, working life and society by thinking scientifically, by applying these capabilities into their lives and by learning in a cooperative manner. Furthermore, significant elements with regard to the integration into both the globalizing world and the European Union are accentuated in these curricula, including the notions of democratic society, cultural diversity, problem solving, inter-disciplinary engagement, thematic approach, the learning multi-cultural society, the knowing different cultures, identities, values and life styles, critical thinking and social sensitivity. The 2004 curricula for the courses of life science and social studies include knowledge, skills, values and conceptual roots at personal, academic, multiple and global perspectives. The teaching of the courses of life science and social studies in primary education within the globalizing world and the European Union respectful to democratic ideals can play a prominent role in bringing up responsible and actively participant citizens and in developing respect to all differences in accordance with the national identity conception and the principle of tolerance. By using common knowledge, skills and values in local, regional, national and European levels, the European Union can be very influential in the modernization process of Turkey with its democratic ideals and its consistent and viable policies required to be adopted so as to contribute to the attempts of its member and candidate states in developing their own and collective identities.

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