

D.ŞELEK MEYDANLI

METU

PROJECT BASED POLICY TRANSFER:
THE CASE OF EU PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED
BY THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

DİLEK SELEK MEYDANLI

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Prof.Dr. Meliha ALTUNIŞIK
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of
Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galip YALMAN
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully
adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kemal Bayırbağ
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kemal Bayırbağ	(METU, ADM)	_____
Assist. Prof. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva	(METU, IR)	_____
Assist. Prof. Asuman Göksel	(METU, ADM)	_____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name : Dilek SELEK MEYDANLI

Signature :

ABSTRACT

**PROJECT BASED POLICY TRANSFER:
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BY THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION**

SELEK MEYDANLI, Dilek

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The thesis discusses the influence of the European Union financial assistance on the policy-making process of the Ministry of National Education. The influence of the European Union financial assistance is analysed within the scope of the policy transfer and policy learning discourses. The search for impact analysis is done through document search and interviews. The cases chosen as sample are; Support to Basic Education Project and Strengthening Vocational Education Project. The reason for choosing these two cases is that they are among the first Grant projects of Ministry of National Education and aim to improve two important and problematic policy of the education system; basic education and vocational education.

The factors affecting the success and constrain of the policy transfer during the implementation of the two sample projects are analysed based on the documentation research and interviews; actors, the bureaucratic complexity and the structure of the institution are observed to be more influential on policy change. The study is concluded by saying; the impact of the European Union financial assistance on the policy making process of Ministry of National Education is limited due to the inert structure of the Ministry, the attitude of the actors and resistance for change.

Key words: European Union (EU), Financial Assistance, Policy Transfer, Ministry of National Education (MoNE), Project.

ÖZ

PROJE TEMELLİ POLİTİKA TRANSFERİ: MİLLİ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI TARAFINDAN UYGULANAN AB PROJELERİ

SELEK MEYDANLI, Dilek

Yüksek Lisans

Avrupa Çalışmaları

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Bu tez, Avrupa Birliği mali yardımlarının Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın politika yapma sürecine etkisini araştırmaktadır. Söz konusu etki politika transferi ve politika öğrenmesi kavramları çerçevesinde analiz edilmektedir. Bu etki analizi, doküman taraması ve mülakatlar yoluyla yapılmıştır. Örnek olarak seçilen projeler; Temel Eğitime Destek Projesi ve Mesleki Eğitimin Güçlendirilmesi Projesidir. Bu iki projenin seçilmesinin nedeni; Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın ilk hibe projeleri arasında olması ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın iki önemli ve problemli sorunu olan temel eğitim ve mesleki eğitime odaklanmasıdır.

Proje uygulama sürecindeki politika transferini etkileyen faktörler doküman taraması ve mülakatlar yoluyla incelenmiş ve aktörlerin, kurumun yapısının ve bürokratik karmaşanın en etkili faktörler arasında olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bütün bunlardan hareketle, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın hantal yapısı, aktörlerin tutumu ve değişime karşı olan direnç sebebiyle Avrupa Birliği mali yardımlarının Bakanlığın politika yapma sürecine etkisinin kısıtlı olduğu belirtilmektedir.

Key words: Avrupa Birliği (AB), Mali Yardımlar, Politika Transferi, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB), Proje.

To My Love
and
My Parents

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APD	Accession Partnership Document
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation
CEEC	Central and Eastern European Countries
CFCU	Central Finance and Contracting Unit
DG	Directorate General
DIS	Decentralised Implementation System
DISK	Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey
EC	European Commission
EEC	European Economic Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
ECVET	European Credit Transfer System for VET
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EP	European Parliament
EQF	European Qualification Framework
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
HAK-İŞ	Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions

IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
IQVET	Quality Assurance for Vocational Education and Training
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISPA	Pre-accession Instrument for Structural Policies
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MEDA	The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
MEU	Ministry of European Union
MIPD	Multi Indicative Planning Document
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MS	Member States
NAC	National Aid Coordinator
NAO	National Authorising Officer
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP	National Program
NPAA	National Plan for Adaptation of Acquis
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
PCC	Project Coordination Centre
PEC	Public Education Centre
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies

SAPARD	Special Accession Program for Agriculture and Rural Development
SBEP	Support to Basic Education Project
SVET	Strengthening Vocational Education And Training
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia
TAT	Technical Assistance Team
TESK	The Confederation of Turkish Artisans and Craftsman
TİSK	The Confederation of Turkish Employers' Organisations
TOBB	The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
TOR	Terms of Reference
TURK-İŞ	The Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
TUSİAD	Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VQA	Vocational Qualification Authority
WB	World Bank

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1.The Subject Matter and Aim

In order to meet the increasing demand of human resource, all countries are working hard to develop their education system and nowadays the discourses like knowledge-based society and knowledge-based economy has gained importance in the international educational arena to join the global competition. In addition to that, as the relation of education with the sustainable economic growth, competitive and dynamic economy has been understood more, education reforms have started to be included in the agenda of the states, national and international organisations. Thus, the development and effective usage of human resources through education is only possible through determining long terms strategic objectives in negotiation with the actors in the world.

In this regard, the European Union (EU) as an internationally influential structure draws frameworks and determines certain principles for the member and candidate countries and Turkey, as a candidate country, tries to harmonize its education policy with the education policy of the EU through making changes and reforms in its education system. Within this scope, I will analyse the influence of the EU education policy on the educational policy change process of Turkey within the framework of policy transfer and policy learning concepts since EU uses financial assistance as a means for policy transfer and this financial assistance is provided as a grant with the EU funded projects.

The influence of the EU funded projects on the policy transfer process will be analysed on the basis of two sample projects carried out by the MoNE, since there is a general argument or belief about the inefficiency of the EU projects and questioning this belief is the main starting point of this thesis.

An empirical study will be carried out to understand the effectiveness of the EU financial assistance on the main educational policy objective of the MoNE, which aims at improving the education and training activities together with all of its components and strengthening the national education system through increasing the quality of education.

In this regard, the following critical questions¹ of Dolowitz will be a reference for me to prepare my interview questions so as to understand whether policy transfer process of MoNE has been carried out with the help of EU funded projects.

- Why and when do actors engage in policy transfer?
- Who transfers policy?
- What is transferred?
- From where are lessons drawn?
- Are there different degrees of transfer?
- When do actors engage in policy transfer and how does this affect the policymaking and policy transfer processes?
- What restricts policy transfer?

The relation of these questions to the financial assistance is that; the EU uses financial aids to improve the conditions in various sectors in the member and candidate countries which mean that the EU tries to transfer its policies. In this regard, financial assistance is a critical tool as it provides both expert support and budget support. The critical point is that; these funds are provided as a grant, not as a credit. Thus, the countries are eager to use these funds, which mean that a kind of policy learning process starts. In that framework, the difference between the policy learning and policy transfer processes and which one has existed during the preparation and implementation of the EU funded projects is discussed in the second chapter.

Moreover, the answers to the following questions; “why these projects are planned, if the plans have been realised, if there is any difference between the planning and the outcomes, what have been achieved and what has not been achieved” is tried to be

¹ Hulme, R. (2005) Policy Transfer and the Internationalisation of Social Policy. Social Policy and Society. Volume4: Issue;04. p:2

clarified with the help of the above seven questions. The answers to these questions are presented through examining two specific cases, which are Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP) and Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project (SVET). Here, my main argument which is; *“Although millions of Euros have been spent in the area of education via different EU funded projects, the expected impact has been limited”* gains importance. As the efficiency of the EU funds is a controversial issue I have chosen to focus on the EU funds as a policy transfer tool. To espouse this argument; two critical questions gain importance within the seven questions. These are; “What is transferred?” and “What restricts policy transfer?” as these two questions will help me to understand what has been achieved and what should be done to eliminate the restrictions and to increase the effectiveness of the EU projects.

In such a context, it becomes important to understand how the effectiveness of these funds and grants can be increased. However, before focusing on this issue, what can be changed at which level through financial assistance, direct and indirect effects of the EU projects during that harmonization process is analysed. In order to get more concrete result about the effect of these projects, an empirical study is carried out on the beneficiaries of the SBEP and SVET projects. Here, beneficiaries can be classified as direct and indirect beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries are composed of the staff of the institution, which uses the fund and indirect beneficiaries are composed of the social parties and stakeholders.

What is critical here is that; variety of the actors may lead to conflict of interests as the actors consist of Ministers, undersecretaries, deputy undersecretaries, general directors, heads of departments, experts, other public institutions, NGOs and other non-governmental bodies as it is difficult to enable all these people meet in the middle. In addition to these key actors, cultural values and traditional understandings are the other dimensions that can be a challenge for the policy transfer process.

Before explaining the main objectives of two sample projects it may be good to make the definition of the project concept. The project, in most general terms, is an integral part of the planned activities with a budget in a certain time and in order to reach certain objectives through bringing certain human and physical resources together. A

project has a planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases and it necessitates cooperation of the implementers, contractors and donors. It may either provide technical assistance or material support or both. With the projects, especially funded by international organisations, the transfer of know-how takes an important place and it is a significant tool for policy transfer in the policy making process of states. Via transfer of know-how certain solutions may be found for the problems in a certain field or sector and innovative and creative ideas may be improved for the development of the system.

Turkey has been benefitting from the EU funds since the Ankara Agreement that is signed in 1963. However, the types of the funds, provided in that period, were used with protocols and they were in the type of credit. After the Helsinki Summit in 1999, Turkey became a candidate country and since then the amount of the EU financial aids has been increased and they have started to be provided as a grant. Thus, this thesis only covers the period after 2000 when the EU funded projects started to be used actively by various public institutions due to the candidacy period. Moreover, the two sample projects, which I chose, started to be prepared in 2000 and this means that policy transfer tool of the EU started to appear more clearly in the educational arena after 2000. Hence, SBEP and SVET Projects are chosen to be examined as they are the first grant projects that the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has benefitted from. Moreover, with regard to their content these two projects are worth examining as they cover almost two important policies of education, which are the basic and vocational education. In addition to these, the sizes of their budget were among the biggest ones that MoNE has been benefitting up to now.

Furthermore, as these two projects had aimed to make a change on two important components of the education system they should have met with various restrictions and resistance groups since the bureaucracy does not like change because of its multi-dimensional and inert structure. Thus, examining these projects will enable me to understand how successful the first policy transfer experience of MoNE was.

Moreover, when I compare the two projects I see that the scope of the SVET Project was broader than the SBEP Project and SVET also necessitated the involvement of

more people than SBEP. The difference between two projects will help me to understand the relation between change and resistance as well as the relation between the variety of people involved in the projects and resistance. Thus, this will show me whether there is a direct proportion or inverse proportion between the resistance and influence.

Actually with all the documentation research and interviews carried out, I aim to clarify six important points; the level of resistance between the policy makers and implementers and between the public institutions and social parties; whether involvement of more units and parties to the project activities constrains or eases the process; the relationship between the transferability and ownership, the restriction of sustainability and its relation to the ownership; the restrictions of policy transfer and policy learning and their efficiency on the policy change process of the Ministry; the relation between political complexity and its transferability.

Within this scope, **in the second chapter** of this thesis; policy transfer and policy learning concepts will be explained within a theoretical study since these two concepts are the main triggers for the continuation of the policy making process. The reason for choosing these two concepts is that; policy transfer is a forced mechanism and policy learning comes true as will and what I am looking for in this research is whether the EU funds have led to the improvement of Turkish education policies or not and whether a policy transfer is achieved and policy learning is realized. If yes; in what ways it has improved the process and if not; what is the main reason behind that resistance for the policy change. Here, the answers to the questions mentioned above gain importance for the clarification and evaluation of the Turkish policy change process in the area of education and this will be looked for throughout that study.

As a candidate country for the EU membership, Turkey has been trying to reform its educational policies by taking into account the national and EU priorities. However, the achievements of Turkey with regard to the successful implementation of the reforms will be questioned during this research. Moreover, the educational demand of the EU and how Turkey responds to these demands will be explained through making comparison of the formal documents. In this regard, it is possible to say that

Turkish education system is in a constant change because of the national and international projects and the EU has quite an important role in that process. Here understanding educational policy of the EU and Turkey gains importance.

As stated by the EU and its documents the EU does not have a common education policy like agricultural policy. In this respect; variety in the educational policy within the EU may be pushing the Union to use policy transfer as a tool to have a common framework. However, at that point whose objectives are most predominant, the EU or states, in terms of determining the education policy will be questioned. On the other hand, the EU states that it has common objectives and takes some measures or puts certain frameworks to enable member and candidate countries to reach at these objectives without compensating their own educational policy. However, I think the EU does not totally let countries free with regard to educational reforms, actually it is pushing the countries through treaties, directives, council resolution and etc. to implement certain kind of policies and this takes us again to the policy transfer process since it is not a voluntary process. While doing that, EU uses Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as a policy transfer tool, which necessitates collaboration and exchange of good practices through workshops and meetings. I think OMC is a soft way to overcome the strict constitutional framework of the EU and this will be explained in the second chapter in detail.

The third chapter mainly focuses on the peculiarities and historical development of the EU financial assistance and its function in Turkey. Since the EU was established, it has been giving financial aids to the states so as to balance the differences in the economic development and to prepare countries for the possible membership through demanding them to implement certain types of policies. In this respect, Turkey has been benefitting from financial aids since 1963 either as a credit or as a grant. Thereby, a short history about the improvement of financial assistance in Turkey will be examined. The reason for explaining the history of the financial assistance programmes is that; the two cases that I have chosen are among the first programmes from which Turkey started to benefit after the 1999 Helsinki Council. Thus, this process is explained as “pre-candidacy period” and “instrument for pre-accession period”. The pre-candidacy period covers the term when the two sample projects are

started and instrument for pre-accession period covers the term when the projects are planned and implemented to enable the sustainability of SBEP and SVET Project.

Moreover, in this part I also mention about the Decentralised Implementation System (DIS). This system involves main leading actors who are responsible for the management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EU financial aids in Turkey. The role of these actors will be compared with the role of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) since DIS represents the highest level that makes programming and MoNE represents the beneficiary that implements the project. In this regard, I recognize that DIS decides on what to transfer and MoNE decides on how to transfer. Thus, understanding which actor is more influential on the process is critical to increase the effectiveness of the policy development process.

On the other hand, basic institutions, which are effective in the whole project cycle management process, are Delegation of the European Union to Turkey (EUD), Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) and the Ministry of National Education Project Coordination Centre (PCC). However, in that process the CFCU functions as a contracting authority and provides a kind of technical support to the beneficiaries during the tendering and reporting process. The European Delegation supervises the project as it is the highest authority in Turkey to approve the EU projects and it takes part in the activities as an observer to monitor and to evaluate of the projects and it carries out this task on behalf of the European Commission. In other words; it is in charge of applying decentralised cooperation procedures and monitors the effective implementation of the projects.

Furthermore, Project Coordination Centre, which is now called as Project Coordination Group Directorate, is the main actor that carries out all the education projects and always in contact with other institutions. Moreover, the real influential actors are the policy makers and implementers within the Ministry and the attitude of these two groups towards change and the conflict between these two groups will be discussed at the fourth chapter. However, I assert that during the planning, implementation and sustainability processes of these projects, all the aforementioned actors have critical roles for the policy development process.

In the fourth chapter, the findings and comments will be explained depending on the results of the empirical study and scanning of the documents. Actually with the financial assistance the EU aims to enhance harmonization to the *acquis communautaire* and promote the political, economic, legal and administrative measures for the member and candidate countries. Moreover, during the preparation process of any project the main policy documents of the EU and Turkey are used as a reference document to reach common goals and to have the same systematic implementations. These documents are related strategy documents, Development Plans, Government Programs, MoNE Council Decisions, National Programme for the Adaptation of the *Acquis* (NPAA), Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD), Progress Reports, Accession Partnership Document (APD) and other framework documents. However, as it is not possible to examine all these documents under this thesis; only National Development Plans, Progress Report for Turkey and Decision of the National Education Council are examined to understand the effect of the EU education policies on the Turkish education system.

In general, I choose to examine these documents because they include long term national policy objectives and suggestions and they are prepared either by Turkey or by the EU side. Moreover, these documents are used as the main supportive background documents in the project identification sheets of the EU funded projects. To observe the changing policy objectives and what has been achieved in the field of education the documents, which are prepared before and after the two sample projects, are examined.

More specifically, the reason for examining NDP is that; it provides long-term objectives for the development of education and other sectors and it is approved by the highest authority and decision makers in the country so it is nationally accepted. Moreover, this document will show me whether these projects are in line with the policies of the certain governments as it covers the time of the new government and previous governments.

Even if the decisions of the National Education Council are not binding, I choose to examine these decisions due to their being national and decisions of the National Education Council are taken by the highest level decision makers at local and

central level and recommendations of the various institutions are included in these decisions. That will enable me to comprehend the ideas of the different sides like NGOs and unions other than the bureaucratic side. This aspect is important in the policy making process as it necessitates collective learning which means that various actors should be involved in the policy making process from elected officials to non-governmental organisations and from policy makers to implementers to enable the ownership of the policies.

With regard to progress reports, as above two documents are written by Turkey side I also wanted to examine a document written by the EU on the development of the Turkish policies to enable impartiality. These progress reports evaluate the improvement of Turkey annually and provide a general overview of what has been achieved in a year. Hence, they are good to examine to get a general idea about the improvement of Turkish policies from the external point of view.

Moreover, in addition to all these documents, the progress, initial and final reports of the both projects are examined to deduce about the achievements of the projects. That will help me to understand whether objectives determined at the beginning of the SBEP and SVET Projects have been achieved or not.

Another important benefit of examining all these reports is that; it gives me an opportunity to compare what are said in the interviews with what are written in the reports. The point is that the results of the interviews reflect more objective ideas as interviewees can criticise the ideas of the decision makers and achievement of the projects objectively without feeling any kind of pressure. In addition to that, as I do not mention about their names in any part of my thesis this also enables the interviewees to state their opinions freely.

After analysing all these reports, the main objectives and activities carried out during the two sample projects are summarised by using the initial and final reports of the two sample projects to see how integrated the objectives of the projects were with the national priorities. In this regard, both projects will be examined with regard to the institutional capacity and the strategy that they have developed. Below you can find

more detailed information about the duration and main objectives of these two projects;

Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP)

Duration: 2002-2007

Budget : 100 million Euros

Source : EU- MEDA

The overall objective: The overall aim of the project is to improve the living conditions of the population in the most disadvantaged rural, urban and sub-urban areas by increasing the level of education in the overall perspective of reducing poverty. This includes support for children, young people and adults presently excluded from basic education.

Strengthening Vocational Education and Training (SVET)

Duration: 2002-2007

Budget : 58,2 million Euros

Source : EU-MEDA

The overall objective: It aims to improve the quality of VET through modernizing and adapting the Vocational Education Training system with regard to socio-economic needs of the country and the principles of lifelong learning.

Within the framework of the policy transfer process; Turkey is the borrower and EU is the lender as having borrower and lender in the policy transfer is a must. In this regard, MoNE, as a borrower, determines the content of the project depending on the certain types of policy and strategy documents. During the implementation period of the projects, Project Coordination Centre (PCC) of MoNE was the direct beneficiary of all the projects and all activities that were carried out within the premises of this unit. In this regard, the main critical actors are; deputy undersecretary of the MoNE, general directors of the MoNE, directors of the various departments and experts of the Project Coordination Centre, the technical assistance team which wins the tender of the project and consists of a team leader, key experts, short term experts, assistants and secretariat. All these beneficiaries are also target group for my interviews. For empirical study, I have interviewed with 4 directors, 6 experts, one academician, 2

staff of the unions, 2 team leaders from technical assistance team and one staff of the EU Delegation, which means 15 people in total.

The interesting point with that issue is that; most of the PCC experts, who were working actively in the project activities in that time, have become the head of different groups within the MoNE after the 652 numbered decree law which restructured central MoNE organization. This situation is both a disadvantage and an advantage for my empirical study. It is an advantage because they can make the evaluation of the EU projects from a decision maker perspective, which enables them to evaluate the whole process from a broader perspective. On the other hand, they cannot feel comfortable while making comments as most of them are the heads of different EU units within t MoNE and this means they should back up what they are doing now and that would prevent impartiality. Moreover, as all these experts and directors are still working at the Ministry, their ideas with regard to sustainability of the projects gains importance to reflect what has been transferred and whether this transfer process is efficient or not.

After the answers of the interviewees are clarified in the fourth chapter, key findings regarding “what is transferred and what the restrictions are” will be clarified to evaluate the influence of the projects. Thereby, this research will be helpful to get maximum benefit from the EU funded projects. Furthermore, it will be helpful for decision and policy makers to improve the quality of the education system and to harmonize the existing legislation with the EU targets and for the effective usage of the funds.

Another contribution of this empirical study is that it will help me to understand the difference between practice and theory and it will also enable me to understand how an efficient role the EU has as a policy lender and Turkey as a policy borrower as the EU’s being a driving force for the implementation of certain policies is a controversial issue. Moreover, whether Turkey regards the financial assistance tool as a driving force or as an opportunity and whether any of these concerns constrains the policy transfer process of MoNE will be clarified at the conclusion part with the help of the empirical study.

In the fifth chapter; a general evaluation on “what is transferred and what the restrictions of the EU funded projects are “is made and the influence of the EU financial assistance on the main educational objective of MoNE is analysed as a conclusion. This conclusion will show us whether the EU financial assistance is an efficient kind of means for transfer of certain policies. In addition to these, some recommendations are presented for the new projects, as the policy transfer is unavoidable for the development of policy making process.

1.2. Methodology

With this thesis, an impact analysis is carried out through evaluating the effect of the EU education policies on educational policy change process of Turkey. Research data has been obtained from the review of literature, legal and formal documents, basic strategy documents and progress reports. With this research; findings about the planning, implementation, sustainability and ex-ante period of the projects are worked on, interpreted and an evaluation is made based on the existing policies and reforms. In this regard, this research will give a suggestion to the policy makers, implementers and planners of education to increase the quality of education and to enable the sustainability of the policies that are realised with the projects.

As a research model, the documentary-scanning method under the qualitative research approach is applied, because the qualitative research model enables to analyse all events as a whole and provides opportunities for researchers to evaluate the whole process.² In this regard, theoretical analyses have been used during the whole study. Since the purpose is to analyse the impact of the EU financial aids on the educational policy transfer process, document research is the first method applied for the improvement of the study. In this perspective, official documents, signed treaties, development plans, strategy documents, council decisions, progress reports and project reports are revised in detail.

² Yıldırım, A., ve Şimşek, H. (2005). Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri. Seçkin Yayıncılık. pp:39-41; Akyüz, Ü. (2012). Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına Tamamlanmış Avrupa Birliği Eğitim Projelerinin Yönetici Ve Uzman Görüşlerine Göre Değerlendirilmesi. Phd Thesis. Ankara University. p:115

During the research period, especially annual progress reports, which were first published in 1998, will be analysed in order to get a clear understanding about the on-going process, as these documents reflect the tendencies of the Union best and they

provide comparative analyses with regard to the improvement in the candidate countries within the years. Moreover, to observe the changes in the educational policy of the MoNE; National Development Plans and Decision of the National Education Council will be examined and to be able to compare the developments the timing of the mentioned documents covers the period before the projects were started and after the projects were implemented. In general, harmonization process of Turkey to the *acquis communautaire* and the EU educational procedures are regarded positively, however, especially Turkey is criticized for the implementation of the policies and quality of the basic and VET education. Therefore, the projects, which are chosen as a case study, focus especially on these two problematic policies of the Turkish education system.

In addition to above mentioned documents, to examine the ideas of the third parties the documents which belongs to World Bank and other international institutions are examined during the research period as these institutions play a significant role in the international arena in determining some policies and their views will be included in this thesis to keep the impartiality.

The story of the EU financial aids starts with the establishment of the Union, but this thesis only focuses on the projects after 2000 since the amount of the funds granted to Turkey was increased after this year and the first EU funded project of the MoNE was implemented after this year. These projects were; Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP) and Strengthening Vocational Education Project (SVET). By taking these projects as samples; the influence of the EU funding on the education system is analysed in different fields and levels, such as organizational changes, operational changes and mission differentiations. Moreover, examining these two cases will also help me to understand the role of the actors and their attitudes towards the EU..

Furthermore, as this research covers certain time period, the developments that have been realized during that process are analysed by taking all key actors, documents

and reforms into account and at the end I draw a conclusion whether the EU funds are effective tools for policy transfer. Thus, a process analysis is carried out throughout the research. The process analysis is an important model to examine the policy changes. With this analysis, which actors are active in policy making process, whether their decisions turn into practice or not are examined in detail.³

After completing the data analysis, interviews are carried out with the crucial actors of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). These actors are the experts and directors who worked in the MoNE during the implementation of the project, staff of the unions, staff of the technical assistance team and staff of the EU Delegation. As most of these people are still working at the Ministry they will be able to evaluate the sustainability of the project better as they are familiar with all the reforms that the Ministry has been carrying out. These interviews have been carried out through either organizing face to face meeting or through sending written forms.

The questions are prepared by paying attention to cover all process from planning to sustainability and since I focus on the impact of the projects on Turkish education system, evaluation questions are mostly included. Furthermore, the questions are formed as open-ended questions to reflect the evaluation of the different ideas. To enable impartiality and equality, all people interviewed are asked the same questions and no comment is made during the interview to prevent any kind of inducement. But whatever the type of the collecting data is, all the information gathered during the interviews is written down and content analysis is carried out afterwards.

The questions, which will be asked during the interviews, are prepared by taking the questions of the Dolowitz on policy transfer as a basis since I am looking for an answer for the following questions;

- What is transferred?
- What are the restrictions?

³ Övgün, B. (2010) Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkilerinde Bir Çıkmaz: Politika Transferi Açısından Tarım Sorunu. Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi. Cilt:9, No:1, p:92

- How can the effectiveness of the EU financial aids be increased?

The sample cases, which will be worked on, are the SBEP and SVET projects. The project cycle of these projects, which include the preparation, implementation and sustainability, is examined with impact analysis. The questions that will be asked during the interviews are;

- Why and when do the beneficiaries need to prepare an EU funded project?
- Is the EU funded project a tool for policy transfer? If yes what can be transferred in that process and how does this affect the policy making processes?
- Did you meet with any kind of problem, restriction or conflict during the implementation of the SBEP and SVET Projects? What were the main reasons for these problems? How was the attitude of the decision makers for the project activities and outputs?
- Did SBEP and/or SVET Project really affect the Turkish education system? If yes, in which aspect?
- What do you think about the sustainability of the SBEP and/or SVET Project? What should be done to enable sustainability?

In conclusion the pathway of this research can be summarized as below;

- Data Collection: At this step document review will be carried out. The documents related with the aim of the research will be reviewed.
- Checking their originality.
- Understanding the documents.
- Analysis of the policy documents.
- Interviews with the bureaucrats and staff of the stakeholders.
- Evaluation of the interviews.
- Interpretation on the main findings.

CHAPTER II

POLICY TRANSFER AND POLICY LEARNING CONCEPTS IN THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS AND THE SITUATION OF THE EU

In this part of my thesis, I explain the policy transfer and policy learning concepts since they are essential tools used for policy change during the Accession Process of Turkey. Moreover, they form the backbone of this study to understand the general argument discussed in this thesis which focuses on the policy change process of the MoNE due to the EU financial assistance. In this regard, the EU uses a policy transfer tool to impose certain educational policies so as to enable Turkey to reach common objectives and standards with the EU member states in the field of education. In response to that, Turkey is using a policy learning tool to complete the negotiation process and get full membership. Therefore, understanding these two concepts better will enable me to correlate the process and actors, as how this process is evolving, whether there is any kind of resistance or challenge at both sides will be tried to be answered during this study.

In recent years, policy change is regarded significant for the developments of the states and policy transfer and policy learning serves as a frequently employed means of policy change. In this respect, policy makers have started to observe the policies of the other policy makers in order to use the best practices that are compatible with their system. Thereby, the policy transfer and policy learning tools of the policy making have gained impetus in the international arena to change the political implementation of the countries regardless of cultural and geo-political boundaries. Actually policy transfer is the transfer of the know-how of other nations with regard to the best implementations in the policy making field and it is quite significant for the competitiveness of the nations as it enables policy makers to implement best policies for the development of their nations. Policy learning is also transfer of the know-how of the other nations; however, there is a point that should not be disregarded; policy learning is a voluntary observation and research process;

however, policy transfer is a coercive and one government or supranational institution may push another one to adopt particular policies.⁴ What is more, in the policy transfer the institutional conditions and context of the actual transfer of policies is crucial.

On the other hand, for the policy learning; the process of acquiring and using the knowledge in decisions regarding the adoption of policies plays a bigger role.⁵ Moreover, policy learning necessitates the harmonization of the sample implementation to the existing implementation which leads to coherency as mere copying and transferring may be temporary and scrappy.⁶ However, policy transfer necessitates multi-organisational context.⁷

International organizations and policy entrepreneurs are the most critical actors of this process and their function and role with regard to policy changes will be discussed while explaining the theoretical definition of these concepts.

Here, it may be good to clarify policy transfer perspectives on policy change⁸ before clarifying two concepts;

Table 1: Policy Transfer and Diffusion Perspectives on Policy Change

Paradigm	Policy Transfer
Dominance	Among political scientists and analysts of public policy and public management.
Methodological Orientation	Case studies and Comparative Analysis.
Major terms	Policy learning, lesson drawing.

⁴ Dolowitz, D. and Marsh, D. (1996) Who Learns What From Whom: A Review of the Policy Transfer Literature. Political Studies. XLIV: p:344

⁵ Bomberg, E. (2007) Policy learning in an Enlarged European Union: Environmental NGOs and New Policy Instruments. Journal of European Public Policy 14:2: p:255

⁶ Stone, D. (2000) 'Learning Lessons, Policy Transfer and the International Diffusion of Policy Ideas'. Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation: p:12

⁷ Stone (2000) *ibid*, p:14

⁸ Levi-Faur, D. and Vigoda-Gadot, E. (2004) The International Transfer and Diffusion of Policy and Management Innovations: Some Characteristics of a New Order in the Making. p:4

and concepts	
Major assumptions	The process of change is political in the sense that policy learning is filtered by political institutions
Mechanisms of policy change	Varies between coercive and voluntary; e.g., emulation, elite network, harmonization through international regime and penetration by external actors and interests. (Bennett, 1991)
Outcomes	Bias towards convergence and non-convergence
Focus in regard to the policy process	Comprehensive: focus on policy goals, content, instruments, outcomes, styles.

Source: Levi-Faur, D. and Vigoda-Gadot, E. (2004) The International Transfer and Diffusion of Policy and Management Innovations: Some Characteristics of a New Order in the Making

Under this perspective, in this thesis, educational policy of Turkey will be examined with two case studies and educational policy learning process of Turkey will be searched to understand whether the reform process of MoNE is a volunteer or a coercive process.

2.1. Definition of Policy Transfer and Policy Learning Concepts

2.1.1. Definition of Policy Transfer

In today's world, states are in favour of benefitting from each other's experiences to improve the policy of their nations especially in the field of governance, economy and education as exchanging policies and benefitting from country experiments becomes common day by day. In that process, policy transfer and policy learning are main tools to observe and implement the policies of the countries at intra-sectoral, cross-national and international basis. Actually policy transfer was firstly used in the comparative public policy studies and since then it has been commonly used especially in this area.

The most comprehensive and the most commonly used definition is made by Dolowitz, since she has worked intensively on the policy transfer issue for years. To illustrate, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) clarifies the concept as;

policy transfers are concerned with “the process by which knowledge about how policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting

*(past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and idea in another political setting.*⁹

Up to now, in all the academic and public policy researches, policy transfer issue has been discussed, worked on and various definitions have been made by different academicians and researchers and all of them focus on the different aspect of the policy transfer. For instance, setting is at the core of the policy transfer for Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) as they regard it crucial for the development of policies.¹⁰

On the other hand, Stone (2000) underlines the importance of the exchange in the policy transfer process and according to her everything can be transferred like ideas, interests, behaviours, perceptions and discourses. In her definition, she disregards the structure of the states as she believes that states can adopt anything regarding the policies of the other nations as she classifies the states as an exporting and importing countries.¹¹

Steffenson (2002) regards the policy transfer issue as an indefinite process and defines the term as “*it is not a full-blown theory, but can rather be described as a ‘road map’ for exploring different policy making processes.*” In this process, observation and analysis plays an important role in terms of identifying different variables.¹²

Policy transfer is a complex issue and to fully understand the policy transfer process one should work on it in detail. In this respect, Dolowitz (2000) provides a framework based on nine questions. These are¹³;

⁹ Dolowitz, D., and Marsh, D. (2000). Learning from Abroad: The Role of Policy Transfer in Contemporary Policy-making. *Governance*, 13(1): p: 5

¹⁰ Dolowitz, and Marsh (1996), *ibid*, p:357

¹¹ Stone (2000) *ibid*, p:19

¹² Lenz, T. (2006) Governance through Policy Transfer in the External Relations of the European Union – The Case of Mercosur – St. Antony’s College, Oxford University. p:5; Steffenson, Rebecca (2002): The EU’s Exportation of Mutual Recognition – A Case of Transatlantic Policy Transfer? EUI Working Papers, Nr. 73, San Domenico.

¹³ Hulme, *ibid*, p:2

- *Why and when do actors engage in policy transfer?*
- *Who transfers policy?*
- *What is transferred?*
- *From where are lessons drawn?*
- *Are there different degrees of transfer?*
- *When do actors engage in policy transfer and how does this affect the policy making and policy transfer processes?*
- *What restricts policy transfer?*
- *How can researchers begin demonstrating the occurrence of policy transfer?*
- *How can policy transfer help our understanding of policy failure?*

These nine questions aim to clarify the policy transfer process in detail and because of that they form the basis for my interview questions.

However, Hulme (2005) focuses on the need for the policy transfer and claims that it occurs because of the interaction and he believes that it is a conscious process as it is done to find solutions to the changing circumstances.¹⁴

As explained above, there are so many different definitions of the policy transfer concept and each of them focuses on the different points like setting, policy makers, content and intent. However, whatever the definition of the policy transfer is, all of them accept the change whether it is through will or not. Actually policy transfer aims to change domestic policy with the policies of the sample/target countries and tries to convergence these policies¹⁵ and mainly it targets to change at least one of the seven components of the policy making process, these components are; “*policy goals, structure and content; policy instruments or administrative techniques; institutions, ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts; and negative lessons.*”¹⁶

¹⁴ Hulme, *ibid*,p:6

¹⁵ James, O. and Lodge, M. (2003) The Limitations of ‘Policy Transfer’ and ‘Lesson Drawing’ for Public Policy Research. *Political Studies Review*. Vol 1. p:182

¹⁶ Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), *ibid*, p:350

Policy transfer is a challenging issue to achieve as during the policy transfer process social, political and cultural factors may either ease or constrain the policy transfer. Dolowitz (1996) mentions about seven factors that either ease or constrain the policy transfer. These are; “*political complexity, mutual interaction, institutional pressure, pressure towards implementation, previous relations and language pressure.*”¹⁷ Here, the actors taking part in the policy transfer are quite important. In this perspective, the effectiveness of the actors in Turkey will be discussed in the third chapter.

Moreover, the complexity of the transferability is as important as the actors during the policy transfer. Rose (1993) defines six hypotheses on the effects of complexity on transferability, these are¹⁸;

- *programmes with single goals are more transferable than programmes with multiple goals;*
- *the simpler the problem the more likely transfer will occur;*
- *the more direct the relations between the problem and the solution is perceived to be more likely it is to be transferred;*
- *the fewer the perceived side effects of a policy the grater the possibility of the transfer;*
- *the more information agents have about how a programme operates in another location the easier it is to transfer;*
- *the more easily outcomes can be predicted the simpler a programme is to transfer.*

All the hypotheses above will mirror the empirical study of this thesis as I will try to correlate the hypotheses above with the two sample cases. In this regard, I will clarify which the EU projects are accepted easily and implemented successfully and which projects met with a resistance. Moreover, the relation behind non-acceptance will be discussed within the framework of complexity on transferability and all these hypotheses will be clarified in the conclusion chapter.

¹⁷ Bağışlar, H. (2007) Yüksek Lisans Tezi: Son Dönem Türk Kamu Reformlarının Değerlendirilmesi. Selçuk Üniversitesi. p:25; Dolowitz, D. and Marsh, D. (1996) Who Learns What From Whom: A Review of the Policy Transfer Literature. Political Studies. XLIV: 343-357

¹⁸ Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) *ibid*, p:353

Actually there are two main reasons that lead states or any institutions to transfer different policies from other states or institutions. These reasons can be classified as direct and indirect reasons.¹⁹

The reasons for a direct transfer, which is also a forced transfer, are below;

- Enforcement of one institution to the other
- Tendency to policy transfer because of the effect of the supranational institutions

The reasons for an indirect transfer, which also occurs through will, are;

- Being interdependent to each other
- Technological change
- International and supranational effect
- The concern about falling behind

Actually, whether direct or indirect, the most general reason for the common usage of the policy transfer is stated as the rapidly changing policy environment, since the states are looking for ready solutions and experimented policy implementations.²⁰ Apart from that, Lenz (2006) states another reason for policy transfer as; *“encompassing blunt self-interest, liberal internationalist ideas of a ‘just’ world order and the constructivist reasoning of the perception of oneself as a role model.”*²¹ These various reasons show that it is no good to say just one reason for the policy transfer as the time passes and as borders get closer policy change emerges as an irresistible need.

In this regard, all these various reasons of the policy transfer show that policy transfer can occur at different levels and these levels can be either horizontal or vertical. Horizontal transfer occurs between states and vertical transfer occurs

¹⁹ Bağışlar, ibid, p:22

²⁰ Dolowitz, D., Greenwold, S., and Marsh, D. (1999) Policy Transfer: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, But Why Red, White And Blue? *Parliam Aff* 52(4):p:729

²¹ Lenz, ibid, p:13

between states and international organisations or between transnational non-state actors²² and the vertical one is the most preferred one. Within this perspective; Turkey is trying to achieve vertical transfer since it is aiming to transfer general education policy of the EU which is a supranational institution.

Furthermore, policy transfer has various dimensions; either all content or only the necessary part of the policy can be transferred. However, in general movement of policy ideas and practices occur at three levels: ²³ At the global level; more general policy discussions take place to increase the complexity of global policy community. At domestic governance level; there is an active transfer of policies from one sector to another or from previous sector to the following. Lastly, at the inter-organisational level; domestic or international ideas can be transferred and it can be, top–down or bottom–up. Whatever the level of the change is transfer of ideas is unavoidable for policy development and in that framework the governments are the recipient of the policies as cognition and interests play an important role during the transfer²⁴.

Policy transfer also gives a clue about the policy change at any level and it enables to understand international policy process. The most effective practice of policy transfer is the exchange of policy ideas and dissemination of the good practices as the EU does, as it is tested and tried experience of a country it is easy to adopt a policy by making changes during the transfer of the policy as there are clear cut lessons learned from the experiences of the countries. Policy transfer process enables policy makers to understand the processes of policy change and it enables them to make critics of the existing policies with the targeted policies to be transferred and here policy learning process gains importance again. Policy learning process enables policy makers to understand the main reasons behind the policy change and this enables them to determine more realistic objectives after the policy transfer is realized²⁵. Thus, here explaining the policy learning concept will be good to understand the policy transfer process better.

²² Stone (2000) *ibid*, p:21

²³ Hulme, *ibid*, p:2

²⁴ Levi-Faur and Vigoda-Gadot, *ibid*, p:7

²⁵ Hulme, *ibid*, p:3

2.1.2. Definition of the Policy Learning

Policy learning is an integral stage which occurs during the policy transfer process. In order to understand that term better; firstly, it will be good to examine the various definitions of this concept. The first instrumental definitions are related to the ‘effectiveness’ and ‘impact’ of policy learning. In these definitions, the changing policies and behaviour is quite significant.²⁶ Heclo (1974) defines policy learning as ‘*a relatively enduring change in behaviour that results from experience.*’²⁷ However, Mabbet (2007) regards policy learning as a procedural term and focuses on the social processes involved in learning such as ‘*facilitating deliberating, developing networks and enabling actors to share good practice and compare results.*’²⁸ Bandelow (2008) emphasize the abstract side of the concept and clarifies it as “*it is a long-lasting change in the perception of policy-related problems, beliefs and attitudes of government.*”²⁹ In this regard, I think both social and abstract process has affected the policy transfer process of the EU on Turkish education system. To clarify; in that process, Turkey has both involved in almost all the networking activities and shared the best practices and this process has taken quite a long time since there is a kind of resistance toward change. Here, the interviews that will be carried out with the beneficiaries of the projects have a big importance in terms of revealing the situation better.

The concept of the “change” gains importance for Sabatier and Zafonte (2001) in that process since they define policy learning as “*relatively enduring alterations of*

²⁶ Kerber, W. and Eckardt, M. (2007) Policy Learning in Europe: The Open Method of Coordination and Laboratory Federalism. *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 229

²⁷ Lange, B. and Alexiadou, N. (2010) Policy Learning and Governance of Education Policy in the EU. *Journal of Education Policy*. Vol. 25, No. 4: p:445; Heclo, H. 1974. *Modern social politics in Britain and Sweden: From relief to income maintenance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.p:306

²⁸ Mabbett, D. 2007. Learning by numbers? The Use of Indicators in the Coordination of Social Inclusion Policies in Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy* 14, no. 1: p: 78

²⁹ Farrell, M. (2009) EU Policy Towards Other Regions: Policy Learning in the External Promotion of Regional Integration. *Journal of European Public Policy* 16:8 December 2009: p:1170; Bandelow, N.C. (2008) ‘Government learning in German and British European policies’, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 46(4): p:750

thought or behavioural intentions'. Sabatier and Zafonte (2001) add that learning normally *'result[s] from experience and/or the assessment of new information involving the precepts of belief systems'*. However, here the individuals should be willing for a change and most commonly it starts after they are faced with a challenging opinion³⁰. According to Heclo (1974), policy learning is more sophisticated process and he defines the term as *"a process whereby actors learn how to become more sophisticated policy advocates."* Hence, it is a way of creating more skilful policy actors³¹.

Rhodes and Citi (2006) make emphasize on the cognitive aspect of the policy learning by saying it is;³²

a comparison of experience, knowledge diffusions, peer review, development of common policy discourse and common indicators. More simply, it is a cognitive convergence or strategic use of knowledge for imitating successful models and practice.

Even if there are various definitions of policy learning concept, actually there are three types of policy learning as Sabatier states (1993);³⁴

Instrumental learning: It focuses on the technical learning about instruments and search for ways to increase the effectiveness of the instruments for achieving goals.

Conceptual learning or problem learning: It requires different viewpoint for the problems and it brings together the development or adoption of new concepts, principle and images.

³⁰ Montpetit, É. (2009) Governance and Policy Learning in the European Union: A Comparison with North America. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 16: p:1186; Sabatier, P.A. and Zafonte M.A. (2001) 'Policy Knowledge: Advocacy Organizations' in N.J. Smelser and P.B. Baltes (eds), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Volume 17, Amsterdam: Elsevier.p:11566

³¹ Bomberg, *ibid*, p:256

³² Citi, M. and Rhodes, M., 2007: New Modes of Governance in the EU: Common Objectives versus National Preferences, EUROGOV, No. N-07-01:p:15-16

³⁴ Kemp, R. and Weehuizen R. (2005) *Innovation in the Public Sector: Policy Learning, What Does It Mean and How Can We Ttudy It?*, NIFU STEP: p:8; Sabatier, Paul. A. (1993) *Policy Change over a Decade or More*, in Paul A. Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith (eds.) *Policy Change and Learning. An Advocacy Coalition Approach*, Boulder: Westview Press. p:9

Social learning: It is about learning values, norms and responsibilities and necessitates focusing on causes and effects.

As seen above there are so many different definitions of policy learning and each of them focuses on different aspects of the concept. However, policy learning is directly related with policy transfer and it is the volunteer transfer of the knowledge, instruments and institutions used at one time or place to another place at another time.³⁵ With regard to above definitions and clarifications, I recognize that Turkey is trying to achieve instrumental learning by enabling all the actors to be actively involved in the policy learning process and this process starts with putting certain kind of common indicators in Accession Partnership Document (ADP), National Programme for Adaptation of the Acquis (NPAA), the terms of reference (ToR) of the projects and many other various strategy and policy documents that cannot be listed here.

2.2. The Role of the European Union as an International Actors in the Policy Transfer Process

The intention of the countries plays a big role in terms of defining the structure of the policy transfer process. Thus, it can be said that policy transfer can be either a voluntary adoption or it can be a coercive transfer where a state or government pushes another one to adopt certain policies³⁶. The reason behind the voluntary transfer is dissatisfaction about the existing policies; however, in the involuntary transfer there is a strong pressure for certain policies to be accepted.³⁷ Even if the direct imposition of policy transfer on one country is not common, supranational institutions very often use coercive policy transfer. According to Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) the EU is one of these institutions. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) emphasises the European Court of Justice since all the legal documents are published

³⁵ Dolowitz, and Marsh (1996), *ibid*, p:346

³⁶ James and Lodge, *ibid*, p:181

³⁷ Lenz, *ibid*, p:6

by that institution and all of them are binding. Indeed, Shapiro (1992) clarifies “*how the EU has functioned as a policy-pusher, using its power to issue directives and regulations, while the European Court of Justice has forced governments to adopt policy directives the EU has issued.*”³⁸ The reason for that may be the peculiarities of the policy making system in the EU which lacks of incorporation with regard to decision taking. This situation is also stressed by the European Economic and Social Committee as;³⁹

National coordination and policy-making has never been deeply discussed at EU level, partly because of subsidiarity, partly because of a lack of genuine interest among the decision-making bodies in Brussels and in the capitals....But it is clear that the way national coordination and policy-making are organised and function may well have substantial effects on decision-making in Brussels and subsequently on transposition and implementation of EU law.

However, in the educational policy area the EU is more flexible⁴⁰ as it prefers using the exchange of the best practices as a means for policy transfer as it does not have any obligatory legal enforcement and it only puts some standards and common objectives for countries to achieve. This is due to the Article 149 and 150 of the EEC; the EU only can support competences excluding legally binding Community initiatives, Moreover, when we compare education and training system, there is a huge diversity with regard to the other policy fields and it makes harmonization of the policies quite difficult.⁴¹

Actually in the policy transfer process, there are two groups; borrowers and lenders and in the EU educational policy transfer process, Turkey is the borrower and the EU is the lender. The role of the lender in the policy transfer has been neglected until the effect of the international organisations and non-state actors is increased in the policy

³⁸ Dolowitz, and Marsh (1996) *ibid*, p:348

³⁹ Renda A., Kurpas, S., Montoya, L.A. and Schrefler, L. (2009) *Policy-Making in the EU Achievements, Challenges and Proposals for Reform*. Centre for European Policy Studies. p:81

⁴⁰ Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), *ibid*, p:348

⁴¹ Cini, M. and Borrigan, N.P.-S. (2010) *European Union Politics*. Oxford University Press. Third Edition: Warleigh-Lack, A. and Drachenberg, R. (2010) Chapter 13- Policy Making in the European Union. p:219

making process.⁴² Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) define nine actors who are active in policy transfer; these are; “*elected officials, political parties, civil servants, pressure groups, policy entrepreneurs and experts, transnational corporations, think tanks, supranational governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as consultants.*”⁴³ The variety of the actors shows that; policy learning is not an individual process as there are many contributors and actors during the policy learning so it can be regarded as a collective learning.⁴⁴ With regard to educational policy transfer of Turkey in these two specific cases, MoNE, together with its all departments, is the direct borrower of the educational policies and the MEU and EUD function as a facilitator and the role of MoNE and EUD in that process will be explained in the third chapter of this thesis.

International organisations play an important role not only with regard to their own capacity to govern issues, but also due to their links with other significant policy making bodies. In this regard, I think especially UNICEF, World Bank and the EU are the most influential actors in the international policy making arena. Moreover, they are the main actors and a part of the global governance not only in education but also in other policy fields in terms of directing and addressing a number of political issues with global implications.⁴⁵ The Bologna Conference, which is held every two years, is an example for that kind of implications. Turkey is a participant of that Conference on Higher education system and as an outcome of that biennial Conference Turkey is trying to establish National Qualification Framework for Higher Education through using policy learning tool to understand the Qualification Framework in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Because they bring various actors, nation states, non-governmental organisations and others together to provide various platforms to discuss, develop, monitor and exchange global public policy. Thus, I think especially world conferences are important tools to create spill

⁴² Stone, D. (2000): Non-Governmental Policy Transfer – The Strategies of Independent Policy Institutes, in: Governance, 13: 1, pp. 48

⁴³ Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), *ibid*, p:9

⁴⁴ Kemp, R. and Weehuizen R. (2005) Innovation in the Public Sector: Policy Learning, What Does It Mean and How Can We Study It?, NIFU STEP: p:7

⁴⁵ Jakobi, A.P. (2009) Global Education Policy in the Making: International Organisations and Lifelong Learning. Globalisation, Societies and Education, Vol. 7, No. 4: pp:476

over effects.⁴⁶ While doing that; the international institutions can set standards, provide technical assistance or financial credits or grants and coordinate policy efforts for national policy change. However, the point is that both international organisations and national states use similar political instruments to induce policy change.⁴⁷ The most usual means of these are the conventions and financial assistance for establishing and implementing the programmes or policies with an international policy aim. World Bank financing of projects or European Union projects work that way.⁴⁸ Thus, it can be said that both policy learning and policy transfer necessitate all the actors in policy making, such as international organisations, local sectors etc. to cooperate actively and to form a constant network among states.⁴⁹

Therefore, it can be said that international organisations shape the policy of the nation states by using different means and programs; however, all these instruments aim prolongation and linkage of learning from one another.⁵⁰ However, the point is that; if it is not accepted by public, it is highly possible that there will be many challenges during the adaptation process even if the target policy is the best one in the world.⁵¹

2.3 .Policy Transfer Strategy of the EU

The EU is actually highly active in the policy making process and it both affects the external governance with the policy transfer and influences the internal governance through establishing certain rules and policies in its favour.⁵²

⁴⁶ Kemp and Weehuizen *ibid*, p:7

⁴⁷ Jakobi, *ibid*, p:476

⁴⁸ Jakobi, *ibid*, p:476

⁴⁹ Hulme, *ibid*, p:5

⁵⁰ Jakobi, *ibid*, p:476

⁵¹ Levi-Faur and Vigoda-Gadot, *ibid*, p:13

⁵² Lenz, *ibid*, p:14

When I take the EU into account as a sample in terms of policy transfer issue; with the EU summit in Lisbon in March 2000, the EU has introduced "Open Method of Coordination" (OMC) which is a new form of governance to help to reform policies of the member states (MS). The main aim behind OMC is that the policies implemented by EU MS should be evaluated at the EU level and the best practices should be disseminated among MS. Actually it enables and facilitates mutual learning of policies⁵³ and it is a soft way to overcome the strict constitutional framework of the EU.

The reasons for the introduction of that new method are classified by Nedergaard (2007) as; dissatisfaction of the states about the European over regulation, the criticism about the closed decision making procedures of the EU and so as to increase the participation of the social partners and to increase the competitiveness of the EU through encouraging cooperation among states.⁵⁴

The OMC is firstly mentioned in the conclusions of the Lisbon European Council of 24 March 2000 and it is a soft mode of the EU governance. As stated by the European Council, the OMC affects the policies of the member states through;⁵⁵

- *fixing of European guidelines to which timetables for achieving specific goals are attached;*
- *the translation of these guidelines into national and regional policies associated with specific targets;*
- *the development of indicators and benchmarks in order to compare best practice among member states;*
- *the periodic monitoring, evaluation and peer review of member states' practices organised as mutual learning processes*

⁵³ Kerber, W. and Eckardt, M. (2004) Policy Learning in Europe: The "Open Method of Coordination" and Laboratory Federalism. p:1

⁵⁴ Nedergaard, P. (2007) The Open Method of Co-ordination and the Analysis of Mutual Learning Processes of the European Employment Strategy: Methodological and Theoretical Considerations. *International Center for Business and Politics*. Working Paper No: 42. p:5

⁵⁵ European Council. 2000. Presidency Conclusions (DOC/00/8). Lisbon: European Council. paragraph 37

The OMC is not legally binding and it uses soft law and it is an accounted law in all the EU law. Soft law has some benefits, such as lower transaction costs in establishment of norms in international governance⁵⁶ and the commitments given in the soft law are not legally binding for parties. Moreover, in contrast to providing flexibility, it has limitations in terms of accountability and democratic legitimacy deficits and it is easily adaptable to the social norms and cultural values.⁵⁷

In general, policy making procedure of the OMC follows the sequence of; “guidelines – indicators – national plans – evaluation – peer reviews.” During this process representatives of the states meet regularly and the Council of Ministers finally makes recommendations based on the problems of the states.⁵⁸ In this process, peer learning activities are notable as they are organised to learn from each other and to reach common objectives by defining the best practices. In this regard, I think Turkey is trying to follow the OMC procedures. To illustrate, Turkey is trying to establish National Qualification Framework (NQF) for the Vocational Education and Training System (VET). In order to establish this system, staff of MoNE has been working on European Qualification Framework (EQF). Furthermore, to harmonize EQF with NQF and to understand the process better, they have participated in all working groups on EQF and completing the regular surveys.

The main strategy of the OMC for the Education and Training Work Programme 2010/2020 is the policy learning⁵⁹ through establishing certain principles and key concepts to be achieved. The EU is using the OMC to converge national educational policies with common European Educational Policy. With this method, instead of using legislations good practices are shared through peer learning activities like seminars and workshops to be disseminated. The OMC has the peculiarity of

⁵⁶ Abbott, K.W., and D. Snidal. (2000) Hard and Soft Law in International Governance. *International Organisation* 54: p:422

⁵⁷ Lange, B. and Alexiadou, N. (2010) Policy Learning and Governance of Education Policy in the EU. *Journal of Education Policy*. Vol. 25, No. 4: p:443-444

⁵⁸ Nedergaard, *ibid*, p:11

⁵⁹ European Council. 2002. Detailed Work Program on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe (2002/C 142/01). *Official Journal of the European Communities*, C 142/1.

educational measurability since it determines benchmarks and indicators for the success of learning outcome.⁶⁰ To illustrate; the EU determines education and training targets for a specific period such as “Education and Training 2010 Targets” and Education and Training 2020 Targets.” Even if the most effective method is the peer learning activity in that field, the method of sharing experiences, setting targets, defining expected outcomes, setting agenda, mutual policy learning and informal normative pressures are used and all these methods can be as powerful as legal prescription.⁶¹

Policy learning also takes up place at the politics of the EU enlargement and it is used as a means for an improved public policy. In that process, both the EU and the new accession states go through a new mutual learning process to transfer particular methods or tools.⁶² Thematic Review Seminar is one of the tools that can be used for mutual learning. These seminars, focusing on a particular thematic priority, are organised twice a year. Key experts on the chosen theme and policy makers and stakeholders are active participants of these seminars. Each official delegate expresses their national achievements as a basis for the subsequent discussions that involve other Member State officials and representatives of the social partners, international organisations and other stakeholders.⁶³

Thus, I think the EU uses policy transfer as a tool for bilateral and multilateral relations and to achieve that it uses technical regulations, certain standards, procedures, technical assistance and it takes some facilitation measures.⁶⁴

In terms of the policy transfer intention of the EU, the European Commission, the Council of Ministers are the most important actors. Here, as Dolowitz and Marsh

⁶⁰ Iljak, T. (2008), Lost in Translation: Discursive Obstacles in Educational Policy Transfers, *Politička misao*. Vol. XLV. No. 5: p:93

⁶¹ Lange, *ibid*, p:443-444

⁶² Bomberg, *ibid*, p:257

⁶³ https://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/anticipedia/xwiki/bin/view/Blog/Mutual+Learning+Programme+Thematic+Review+Seminar+on+%22Reduction+of+Labour+Market+Segmentation+Addressing+the+needs+of+young+people%22

⁶⁴ Lenz, *ibid*, p:7

(1996) states “*Council represent elected officials, EP represents political parties and Commission represents civil servants*”⁶⁵ which means that Council is an active actor in policy making and the Commission is an implementer of the policies. This view is also supported by Warleigh-Lack and Drachenberg (2010) as they state that;

the role of the Council is especially important as it says the first and the last word adopting the reports and Council conclusions. However, the Commission is the driver, initiator and agenda setter in the OMC process and the role of the EP, is very limited, as it is only informed of decisions.

In the EU, policy transfer can be within the EU and between different EU levels like national level, supranational level, as the EU tries to transfer its domestic policy to its external partners.⁶⁶ The EU wants to transfer all transfer objects excluding ideologies like the transfer of integration experience, policy goals and ideas in the political dialogue.⁶⁷ However, as all countries have different values there may be some problems during the implementation period of policy learning or policy transfer as these values may differ from one period to another. Thus, at the end of the national implementation period the result achieved can be different from the result of the policy that has been transferred.⁶⁸

With regard to educational policy change, the effect of international organisations on this process has increased. Thus, it is possible to say that; the growing internationalisation of education is in a constant interaction with increasing international regulation, peer-group pressure or policy learning.⁶⁹

Actually policy transfer in education is a hard job because of the variety of the differences in the education system of the states.⁷⁰ Ball (1998) argues that policy making in education is evolutionary and fluid and he states that policy change means;

⁶⁵ Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) *ibid*, p: 343

⁶⁶ Lenz, *ibid*, p:5

⁶⁷ Lenz, *ibid*, p:19

⁶⁸ Iljak, *ibid*, p:94

⁶⁹ Jakobi, *ibid*, p:473

⁷⁰ Iljak, *ibid*, p:100

*“think tanks, civil servants and policy advisers both nationally and internationally compete to mould and shape policy, to the ‘context of practice’, where regional, local, and institutional actors can re-interpret policy at the ‘chalk face’.”*⁷¹ However, in Turkey civil servants and policy advisers are active in policy making local and institutional actors are just the implementers.

Moreover, the states may not be eager for transferring/learning certain kinds of policies due to the anxiety about the policies of the EU as they may regard EU policies as an obstacle for the development of the national policies. However, it is a fact that national education policies are above the EU policies since the EU does not have a common political, legal and social European structure. But, with the Bologna and Copenhagen process, the EU has started to establish common programmes to be implemented and it has also established an institutional structure to implement them.⁷² However, all these are not an obstacle for the development of national educational policies and for transferring common European educational goals to the national educational system since they are not binding. In contrast, this may lead to improvement of both national and European educational system.⁷³

Above explanations shows that; there are so many different definitions of the policy learning and policy transfer process and each definition focuses on critical points like setting, content, intent and actors and two sample projects, which are chosen, will be examined by taking into account the most suitable definition for MoNE case. Furthermore, the main restrictions of that process will be clarified with regard to seven components of the policy making process mentioned by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) in the fourth chapter.

⁷¹ Ball, S. (1998), ‘Big Policies/Small World: an Introduction to International Perspectives in Education Policy’, *Comparative Education*, 34, 2, p:123

⁷² Iljak, *ibid*, p:93

⁷³ Iljak, *ibid*, p:108

CHAPTER III

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

In this chapter, I mention about the financial assistance tool of the EU provided to Turkey to ease accession process of Turkey for the EU membership. The EU has been offering financial assistance not only to member states but also to candidate, potential candidate and third countries. The aim of the financial assistance of the EU can vary according to the relations of the states with the EU. Thus, three different aims can be identified for financial assistance tool of the EU. The main aim of the financial assistance for the member states is to balance the differences within the Union with regard to economic and social developments as there are countries either having strong economies or weak economies within the Union. However, with regard to non-member countries, the reason can be both political and economic and the non-member countries can be divided into three categories as a candidate, potential candidate and third countries. For the candidate and potential candidate countries; the aim is to prepare them for full membership and the aim for the third countries; is to enable stable region and have good relationship with the neighbour states through strengthening the EU's position as a reliable global partner, as the EU aims to deepen peace, stabilisation and integration through supporting peace and stability in the global arena.

The EU funding can support various areas from education to economy, from individuals to institutions and from central level to local level; however, in this thesis I will restrict the financial assistance tool only with the education field and central institutional level as I will analyse the effect of EU funding on the educational policy making of the MoNE. Within that framework, MoNE benefits from some kinds of EU funds to align Turkish education system with the EU education system. This issue is also stated in the MoNE Policy and Strategy Document as⁷⁴;

⁷⁴ Ozmusul, M. (2012) Developments in Turkish Education System Towards International Dimension. *International J. Soc. Sci. & Education*, Vol. 2, Issue 3. p: 348

MoNE should make bilateral or multilateral agreement and participate in cultural exchange programmes, projects and education and training studies of main international organizations such as EU and in that regard taking into account the EU 2020 Education and training objectives is important.

With regard to education sector, LLL Programme, which is carried out by Turkish National Agency, is the most commonly used EU funds between member and candidate countries. However, this program mostly focuses on mobility and partnership activities and it is mostly for decentralised institutions and does not have direct effect on central policy making process of MoNE. Thus, this programme will not be examined in detail within the scope of that thesis and the projects that are directly implemented by MoNE to align the educational legislation with the EU will be examined. In this regard, firstly general information will be given about the EU financial assistance tool and the history of the Turkey with regard to benefitting from EU funds will be explained. Then brief information about the Decentralised Implementation System will be presented.

The reason for choosing the effect of the financial assistance is that it is an important policy change tool used by the EU as there is not any hard acquis in the area of education and all countries are responsible for the improvement of their education system. Furthermore, with the help of these projects, best implementations in the education system are examined to transfer them to the Turkish education system. Thus, I argue that, the OMC, which is policy transfer tool of the EU, uses financial aids as a means for exchange of best practices. However, the point is that there is not direct transfer of the EU system as the structure of the Turkish education system is different but there is harmonization of the policies. On the other hand, the success level of this process is questioned as it is not collective learning and there is lack of ownership by the policy makers.

3.1. The Short History of the Financial Assistance

Financial assistance of the EU has a very long story and it actually has a direct link with the aim behind the establishment of the Union which is⁷⁵;

to promote balanced economic and social development, meet the challenges of globalisation and preserve the diversity of the peoples of Europe, uphold the values that Europeans share, such as sustainable development and a sound environment, respect for human rights and the social market economy and to develop a single market.

Thus, financial assistance is also emphasized in the founding treaties of the EU. In the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which was entered into force on 24th July, 1952, it is stated that ‘*the Commission could assist to implementations of investment programmes by providing grant aid to the initiatives within Community.*’ Later in the Treaty of Rome; eliminating differences among the various regions is also stressed as an important issue for the unity of the Union.⁷⁶ This also shows the main idea behind the EU’s providing financial assistance tool. As social and economic development, bigness of the population, unemployment rate and etc. of each country is different, the quantity and quality of the financial assistance shows differences as well⁷⁷. Hence, the EU aims to encourage the countries with strong economies to help the countries with weak economies and promotes cooperation among these countries.

However, when the historical development of the EU financial assistance tool is examined it is seen that; the EU funds were not well managed until 1988 and it may be true to say that it was almost wasted. In 1988, the EU decided to coordinate and to monitor the funds to get concrete achievement and the Union decided to unite

⁷⁵ Kösekahyaoğlu, L. and Yeğen, İ. (2010) EU Financial Aids and Growth Relation: A Casualty Analysis on Turkey and New EU Members. *Süleyman Demirel University The Journal of Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, Vol.15, No.2 p.29

⁷⁶ Romya, K. (2008) “A Comparative Analysis of The European Union Financial Assistance to Central and Eastern European Countries and Turkey” *Master Thesis*, Middle East Technical University, p:37.

⁷⁷ Kösekahyaoğlu and Yeğen, *ibid*, p.30

different funds under the title of “Structural Funds.” After that, the process was tried to be carried out in a more planned manner and this was completely achieved in 1993. In 2000, the European Commission reformed the Structural funds again through Agenda 2000 report to make the content and target beneficiary countries of the funds definite. In 2007, the funds were reformed again and they were made more country specific to meet the changing objectives of the Union and changing needs of the countries⁷⁸.

The financial assistance to member countries comprises 95% of the EU budget and only 5% of the EU budget is allocated to non-member countries⁷⁹. The content of the financial assistance may be on technical assistance for institutional capacity building, supporting legislative alignment and supporting economic and social alignment. More specifically, it may cover agriculture, education, environment, transportation, energy, fishery etc⁸⁰. The amount of the financial aids may vary according to economic and social development ratio of the countries, population, and unemployment rate.⁸¹ However, the critical point is that there was no balance between national income of the countries and the amount of the funds that a country gets. In this regard, Turkey was one specific example of that issue as it got fewer funds with regard to the other countries that were included in the last enlargement process of the EU⁸². Realising that and to eliminate these kinds of problems, the EU funds started to be distributed within the framework of National Program for Adaptation of Acquis (NPAA) and Accession Partnership Document. The government authorities of the candidate countries are involved in the decision making process during the allocation of the funds. The Ministry for EU Affairs is the authorised government authorities on behalf of Turkey in that process.⁸³

⁷⁸ Romya, (2008) *ibid*, p:51-52

⁷⁹ Şahin, S. (2007) “Avrupa Birliği Fonları ve Türkiye’ nin Kullanabileceği Mali Kaynaklar.” Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Çukurova Üniversitesi. pp:8

⁸⁰ Kösekahyaoğlu and Yeğen, *ibid*, p.32

⁸¹ Yeğen, İ., (2009) “AB Mali Yardımları ve AB’nin Yeni Üye Ülkeleriyle Türkiye Üzerine Ampirik Bir İnceleme,” *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi. p. 5.

⁸² Kösekahyaoğlu and Yeğen, *ibid*, p.32

⁸³ Arkan, S., “The Effects Of European Union Funding On Turkish Civil Society.” *Master Thesis*, Middle East Technical University. 2007.p.66

With regard to NPAA, it is prepared together with the EU Commission and candidate countries and it sets priority areas to achieve Copenhagen criteria and other economic and social criteria for full membership. In general, pre-accession financial funds aim at implementation of *Acquis Communautaire* and participation to the EU policies. The beneficiaries of the EU funds may be local and central public authorities, such as ministries and local directorates, representative organizations such as employers' federations, trades unions, and chambers of commerce and agriculture⁸⁴.

3.2. The EU Financial Assistance Programmes

During the pre-accession stage the EU used to provide various types of financial assistance tools to candidate countries to prepare them for the EU membership. In this part I will only provide very brief information on these programs as my major focus is on the effect of the projects. However, the reason why I mention about all these previous programs is that the sample projects that I choose to examine were funded by MEDA program and to make it clear that the MEDA Program was the only Program that Turkey could benefit in the area of education for.

ISPA (Pre-accession Instrument for Structural Policies)⁸⁵: This tool basically supported the actions taken in the area of environment and transportation and more specifically it supported drinking water, trans-European transport networks, and air and water pollution.

SAPARD⁸⁶ (Special Accession Program for Agriculture and Rural Development): This tool was a framework for supporting agricultural and rural development to promote Common Agricultural Policy in the central and eastern European applicant countries (CEECs) during the 2000-2006 pre-accession process.

⁸⁴ Arkan, *ibid*, p.67

⁸⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/bulgaria/finance_business/pre-accession/ispa_en.htm. (Accesed on: 03.01.2013)

⁸⁶ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/agriculture/enlargement/l60023_en.htm (Accesed on 07.01. 2013)

PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies) It was an instrument for the social and economic development and institutional structuring. This program also included regional development programmes. At the beginning, this programme was focusing on know-how, technical assistance and humanitarian aid but later as the objectives were achieved the main focus shifted to investment and infrastructure.⁸⁷

MEDA Program was the basic assistance mechanism for enabling cooperation between the EU and the Mediterranean and it was either in the form of a grant or a credit. The MEDA countries were Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. Turkey also benefitted from MEDA-I fund between the years 1996-1999 and it received 376 million Euros as a grant for 55 projects⁸⁸. However, the Ministry of National Education did not get any fund in that period and it benefitted from MEDA-II fund.

TACIS⁸⁹ Programme was created after the break-up of the Soviet Union and it encourage democratisation, the strengthening of the rule of law and the transition to a market economy in the New Independent States like; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

CARDS⁹⁰ program was an assistance to enable participation of South-Eastern European countries to the stabilization and association process with the European Union. It covered the period between the years 2000-2006.

The EU decided to unite various programmes under a single structure to enable effective functioning and monitoring of the financial assistance programs as the financial assistance tool shows variety according to the content. Thus, with the European Council Regulation numbered AT/390/2001 and dated 26 February 2001,

⁸⁷ Arkan, ibid, p.63

⁸⁸ Karabacak, H. (2004), "Avrupa Birliği Mali Yardımları ve Türkiye ile Mali İşbirliği", *Finance Journal*, Vol:146, May-Agust. Pp: 95

⁸⁹ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/external_relations/relations_with_third_countries/eastern_europe_and_central_asia/r17003_en.htm (Accessed on 24.12.2012)

⁹⁰ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/western_balkans/r18002_en.htm (Accessed on 24.12.2012)

Accession Partnership Document was decided to be prepared and so a legal basis was formed for financial aids. What kind of financial aids will be provided within the scope of the short and long term priorities was determined with the Accession Partnership Document. Later, with the Council Regulation numbered 1085/2006 and dated 17 July 2006 all the programs are united under a single structure which is Instrument for Pre-Accession (PA).

3.3. The Process for Turkey to Benefit from EU Financial Assistance

Turkey has been benefitting from financial assistance of the EU either as a grant or as a credit since the 1963 when Ankara Agreement was entered into force. However, as mentioned above, during the process the structure, content and amount of the funds have been changed due to the change in the financial assistance understanding of the EU⁹¹. Moreover, the changing political relations between the EU and Turkey have also highly affected the quantity and quality of the EU financial assistance⁹². To illustrate; firstly the financial assistance logic of the EU was changed from providing only money to project based funding understanding. Then, Turkey was accepted to the Customs Union on 6th March, 1995. Later, Turkey was accepted as a candidate country in Helsinki Council in 1999 and lastly, Turkey-EU negotiations started in 3th October 2005⁹³.

After Helsinki, Turkey was expecting to benefit from PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD Programs; however, the EU said that; budget of the aforementioned programs became definite and they could not enable Turkey to be included in these programs. After that, Turkey benefitted from MEDA II Program as an accession strategy instrument⁹⁴. Here, there are two important regulations that regulate financial assistance towards Turkey. The first one was accepted on 27th February, 2001 and

⁹¹ Romya, (2008) ibid, p.78

⁹² Koçak, S.Y. (2009) Ankara Anlaşması'ndan Müzakerelere Avrupa Birliği Mali Yardımları. *Journal of Administration and Economy*. Pamukkale University. No:16. Vol:2. p:144

⁹³ Şahin, ibid, p:1

⁹⁴ Gençkol, M. (2003), "Avrupa Birliği Mali İşbirliği Politikaları ve Türkiye," *Dissertation Thesis*, State Planning Organisation. 2003. p:26

the second Framework Regulation for the Pre- Accession Aid for Turkey was accepted on 17th December, 2001 and entered into force on 1st January, 2002⁹⁵. In that process, Accession Partnership Document (APD) is the most important document with regard to financial assistance for Turkey. It was accepted on 8th March, 2001 and this document was revised by the EU Commission. Revised Accession partnership document was approved on 19th May, 2003. This document indicates the amount of financial assistance for Turkey for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006. After that, another two APD were prepared by the Commission in 2006 and 2008. The APD, which formulates existing IPA, was accepted on 18 February 2008 and entered into force on 1st March, 2008⁹⁶. With APD, the EU made a commitment to provide financial assistance to support the full EU membership process of Turkey.

In most general framework, the types of financial assistance for Turkey especially focus on the institution building, investment and supporting Turkey's participation to the EU programmes. In this regard, APD is a kind of guidelines for financial assistance for actions in the priority areas. After that document, the amount of the grants allocated to Turkey was increased and Turkey could actively benefit from the community programs. For each year €177 million is allocated to Turkey and this fund will be used by taking into account the National Programme for the Adaption of the Acquis (NPAA) which is a kind of pathway for Turkey for accession and shows the obligations and responsibilities⁹⁷.

In addition to APD, there are other documents that are as important as APD for programming and carrying out the financial cooperation process of Turkey and EU. These are NPAA and Multi Indicative Programming Document (MIPD). NPAA identifies what measures Turkey should take to meet the Copenhagen criteria for full membership. On the other hand, MIPD is the main strategic document for the identification of the priorities for programming⁹⁸. MIPD is prepared for 2007-2013 period by the EU Commission and it draws a general framework for financial

⁹⁵ Arakon, M. (2002) Avrupa Akdeniz Ortaklığı Mali Aracı MEDA ve Türkiye, İKV Publications. No: 169. İstanbul.p:32

⁹⁶ Yeğen, ibid, p:80.

⁹⁷ Arkan, ibid, p:54

⁹⁸ http://www.avrupa.info.tr/AB_Mali_Destegi.html (Accessed on 26.12.2012)

assistance programs and its budget. It forms a basis for the operational programs of the IPA funds⁹⁹. Accession Partnership Document for Turkey is prepared by the European Commission. It states the priority areas that Turkey should improve for the possible EU membership and financial assistance focuses on these priority areas. It also includes the commitments of the Turkish side for the improvement of policies in certain fields like human right and democracy. By taking into account the priorities identified in the Accession Partnership Document for Turkey, NPAA is prepared in cooperation with the Ministry for the EU Affairs (MEU) on behalf of Turkey and DG Enlargement on behalf of the European Commission. This programme is a pathway for Turkey on the way of the EU membership and identifies the programmes and projects that Turkey should implement for the EU membership¹⁰⁰.

First NPAA was submitted to the EU Commission on 26th March, 2001 and approved in Council of Ministers. After the APD was revised in 2003, Turkey also revised the NPAA again by taking into account the amendments in the new APD. The new NPAA was approved on 23th June, 2003 at Council of Ministers. Last NPAA was prepared according to decision numbered 2008/14481 of the Council of Ministers¹⁰¹.

EU financial assistance is a huge topic to examine. It shows variety both according to the period that was implemented and according to relations of the countries with the EU like being member, candidate, potential candidate and third country. However, with regard to Turkey EU relations it can be more appropriate to examine financial assistance of the EU to Turkey under two main titles¹⁰²; funds provided during the pre-candidacy period and funds provided during the pre-accession period.

⁹⁹ Aktaşoğlu, E. (2011) Avrupa Birliği Desteğiyle Türkiye’de Yürütülen Projelerin Genel Bir Değerlendirmesi ve Projelerde Çalışan Personelin Çalışma Koşullarına İlişkin Sorunlar. Ministry for Labour and Social Security Publication.pp:9.

¹⁰⁰ http://www.avrupa.info.tr/AB_Mali_Destegi.html (Accessed on 26.12.2012)

¹⁰¹ Bilici, N. (2010) Türkiye – AB İlişkileri (Genel Bilgiler, İktisadi ve Mali Konular, Vergilendirme), Seçkin Yayınları, 4th Publication , Ankara. p:99

¹⁰² http://www.ikv.org.tr/icerik_en.asp?konu=maliisbirligi&baslik=Financial%20Co-operation (Accessed on 28.12.2012)

3.3.1. Pre- candidacy Period

This period covers the date between the Ankara Agreement and completion of Customs Union in 1996. The financial cooperation between the EU and Turkey was carried out through Financial Protocols and the protocols cover grants, European Investment Bank loans and Community funded loans. In that period, Turkey received 830 million Euros out of the total allocated funds of 1,433 billion Euros. During the period of 1996 and 1999 Turkey was able to benefit from EU credits and programmes that are for Mediterranean countries which were called as MEDA and Administrative Cooperation Fund. In total this was 768 million Euros¹⁰³.

3.3.1.1. MEDA (The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership)

Before Accession Partnership Document was signed Turkey was the beneficiary of the MEDA Program which was providing technical assistance and financial support for the development of economic transition, to strengthen the socio-economic balance, to develop better socio-economic balance, to foster regional integration and to gradually create a euro-Mediterranean free trade area. The program has two phases; MEDA-I was implemented between the years 1995-1999 and MEDA-II was implemented between the years 2000-2006¹⁰⁴. MoNE firstly started to benefit from MEDA-II and two sample projects examined in this thesis were funded from MEDA-II. After 2002, Turkey did not get any fund from MEDA II.

¹⁰³ http://www.ikv.org.tr/icerik_en.asp?konu=maliisbirligi&baslik=Financial%20Co-operation

¹⁰⁴ Arkan, *ibid*,p:61.

3.3.2. Post-candidacy Period¹⁰⁵

After the Helsinki Summit in 1999, Turkey was recognized as an applicant country and this process affected the quality and quantity of the financial assistance and after that date funds became systematic for Turkey. In that period, three funds were allocated to Turkey. These were MEDA, Economic and Social Development Support for Turkey, Support for Enhancing Turkey-EU Customs Union. After the acceptance of Draft Regulation on Pre-Accession Aid for Turkey (2005/2001/EC), a single framework was formed for financial assistance to Turkey. This period was different from the previous one as it provided financial assistance through project based activities and these activities should correspond with the Association Partnership Document and NPAA.

After 2000, Turkey continued to benefit from MEDA-II Program and during 2000-2006 period Turkey was almost used 890 million Euros.. In that period, all funds were managed by the European Commission and together with European Investment Bank's loans Turkey was used almost 210 billion Euros between the years 2000-2006¹⁰⁶.

After the negotiations started on 3th October, 2005, the reform process of Turkey has gained acceleration to align the existing legislation and policies with that of the EU. However, in order to fully reach the EU standards in every field of the negotiations the first thing to be done is to raise the educational qualifications of the whole population¹⁰⁷. Hence, educational projects gained importance and took place in the Human Resource Development Operation of the IPA Program.

¹⁰⁵ http://www.ikv.org.tr/icerik_en.asp?konu=maliisbirligi&baslik=Financial%20Co-operation
(Accessed on 28.12.2012)

¹⁰⁶ Arkan, *ibid*, p:62.

¹⁰⁷ Turkey-Education Sector Study Sustainable Pathways to an Effective, Equitable, and Efficient Education System for Preschool through Secondary School Education. World Bank. 2005.p:5

3.3.2.1. Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA)

In 2006 Council approved a new legislation which unites all previous financial assistance programmes under a single roof which is called as IPA. This new financial assistance instrument covers the period between 2007 and 2013¹⁰⁸.

The reason for uniting all financial assistance under a single program as IPA is due to the experiences of the EU from previous enlargements and it aims to harmonise financial aids with internal policies. Moreover, the EU aims to increase the efficiency and coherence of the financial assistance programs by forming a single framework¹⁰⁹.

In particular, IPA Program promotes democracy and rule of law in the countries, public administration and economic reforms, human and minority rights, gender equality, development of civil society, regional cooperation, sustainable development, unemployment, poverty reduction, participation of civil society organisation to the policy making process, better working environment and employment facilities¹¹⁰. With regard to Turkey, IPA aims to support Turkey for the improvement of social, economic and political reforms during the accession process, and to prepare Turkey for the management of structural funds from which Turkey will benefit after becoming member¹¹¹.

There are two types of beneficiaries of this single programme; candidate (Turkey, Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia) and potential candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia). The IPA Program covers the previous PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, MEDA, and CARDS. Different from the previous programmes IPA enables to focus on the specific problematic areas at each

¹⁰⁸ http://www.ikv.org.tr/icerik_en.asp?konu=maliisbirligi&baslik=Financial%20Co-operation
(Accessed on 28.12.2012)

¹⁰⁹ Şahin, *ibid*, p:31.

¹¹⁰ Romya, K. B., and Mercan, S. (2011) European Financial Assistance Provided to Turkey and the CEECs: An Equity Shift. *Routledge: Turkish Studies*, 12:3, p: 505.

¹¹¹ <http://www.avrupa.info.tr/eu-funding-in-turkey/2007-onwards.html> (Accessed on 01.01.2013)

country and it gives flexibility with regard to adaptation of the programmes objectives¹¹². The IPA Programme has five components. All the five components are available for candidate countries, while potential candidate countries have only access to the first two components. Thus, this new overall structure for the funds has created a differentiation between candidate and potential candidate countries. The components of the IPA Programs are¹¹³;

I. Transition Assistance and Institutional Building,

II. Cross-Border Cooperation,

III. Regional Development,

IV. Human Resources,

V. Rural Development.

The difference of the IPA from previous programs is that the financial aids will be used according to priorities, activities and projects determined by the beneficiary countries through a framework programme. Within this scope Ministry for Science, Industry and Technology is responsible for Regional Competitiveness Operational Program, Ministry for Environment and Urbanization is responsible for Environment Operational Program, Ministry for Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Transportation is responsible for Transport Operational Program, Ministry for Labour and Social Security is responsible for Human Resources Development Operational Program and Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Livestock is responsible for Rural Development Operational Program¹¹⁴.

IPA Framework Regulation is accepted on 17th July, 2006 by Council and entered into force in 31/07/2006. This regulation covers the period between 1 January 2007

¹¹² Romya and Mercan, *ibid*, p: 504

¹¹³ Szemlér, T. (2008) *EU Financial Support for the Western-Balkans: Well-suited to Real Needs? Center for EU Enlargement Studies*. Budapest.p:17

¹¹⁴ <http://ipa.sanayi.gov.tr/tr/content/sss/58> (Accessed on 01.01.2013)

and 31 December 2013. IPA Implementation Regulation was published on the EU official journal dated 29th June 2007 and entered into force on 1st January, 2007¹¹⁵.

Regarding all the MEDA II and IPA projects, MoNE has implemented so many projects since 2002 but I have worked on two sample cases. The details of these projects are not presented here; however, a brief information about the budget, aims and types of these projects is presented in Annex A.

Another programme type that Turkey can participate in is the community programmes which are used to promote cooperation among member and candidate countries to enable them have common implementations in different policy making field. After the Helsinki Council, Turkey started to benefit from Community Programs. With the Agenda 2000 (July 1997), the European Commission decided to open community programs to the EU candidate countries in order to prepare candidate countries for the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* better¹¹⁶.

The legal basis for Turkey's participation of the Community Programs is provided with the Framework Agreement for the Participation of Turkey to the Community Programs which is signed on 26th February, 2002 and entered into force on 5th September, 2002¹¹⁷. Hence, Turkey is eligible for the Community Programmes since 1 April 2004. However, the details of the Community Programs that Turkey has actively participated in are not presented here, as it necessitates a comprehensive research and does not directly related to the main argument of my thesis.

For the properly management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the funds in Turkey, certain institutional mechanism is needed. Even if the EU lets the member and candidate states on financial management of the funds, it sets certain procedures to be applied. Until 2001, the EU Commission was responsible for the management of the funds. Later, some responsibilities were delegated to the Representation of the European Commission to Turkey. With that, the EU aimed the

¹¹⁵ Karataş, H. (2010) Avrupa Birliği Katılım Öncesi Mali Yardımları. Maliye Bakanlığı, Strateji Geliştirme Başkanlığı. Yayın No: 146, Ankara. p: 78

¹¹⁶<http://www.avrupa.info.tr/funding-opportunities/eu-funded-programmes/community-programmes.html> (Accessed on 07.01.2013)

¹¹⁷ Yeğen, ibid, p:101

decentralisation of the EU funds and so it encouraged the establishment of the Decentralised Implementation System (DIS). In the MIPD, strengthening the structure of the DIS and increasing the quality of the staff is specially emphasised to increase the success of the financial assistance, as the effect of the financial assistance is limited with the incompatibility among public institutions. Moreover, weakness of the institutional capacity and inefficient coordination affects the sustainability of the programs¹¹⁸. Thus, a new structure is needed to be established to enable proper functioning and management of the programs and funds¹¹⁹ and with 2001/41 numbered Prime Ministry Memorandum, which is published on 18th July, 2001, establishment of some institutions for the management of financial cooperation (DIS) is decided¹²⁰.

3.4. Decentralised Implementation System

After the IPA Framework Agreement was signed, it was put into force with 5824 numbered law and to support functioning of DIS structure in Turkey; 2009/18 numbered prime ministry notice was published. With this notice, roles and responsibilities of the national actors were clarified¹²¹. The reason for mentioning all these actors and their responsibilities here is that; they are the main moving spirit in realisation of the commitments with regard to EU membership as they are actively involved in decision making and approval process.

¹¹⁸ Aktaşoğlu, E. (2011) Avrupa Birliği Desteğiyle Türkiye’de Yürütülen Projelerin Genel Bir Değerlendirmesi ve Projelerde Çalışan Personelin Çalışma Koşullarına İlişkin Sorunlar. Ministry for Labour and Social Security Publication.p:9

¹¹⁹ <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (

¹²⁰ Ekmen, A. Avrupa Birliği’nin Üye Ülkelerle Sağladığı Mali Yardımlar ve Türkiye. Master Thesis. Gazi University. 2008. Pp:194

¹²¹ Altın, M. (2010) AB Mali Yardımlarının Yönetiminde İhale Kuralları, *Dış Denetim Dergisi*. Ekim-Aralık.p:25.

3.4.1. National Fund

National Fund is the central treasury entity within the Turkish Under secretariat for the Treasury through which the Community funds are channelled and which keeps the accounts of the assistance. In Turkey, it is administered by the under secretariat for the Treasury. It is headed by National Authorising Officer (NAO)¹²².

3.4.2. National Authorising Officer (NAO)

National Authorising Officer is responsible for financial management, financial reporting, transfer of funds and internal financial control. The Minister of State responsible for the under secretariat for the Treasury has been designated as the National Authorising Officer (NAO) in charge of administering the National Fund. He nominates Programme Authorising Officer (PAO) to head the CFCU, in consultation with the NAC¹²³. Moreover; he manages the transfer of funds from commission and manages the national and other financial funds mentioned in financial protocol, establishes a financial reporting system for EU Financial aids and decides to transfer the funds to CFCU¹²⁴.

3.4.3. Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU)

Central Finance and Contracts Unit is established with the Memorandum of Understanding in 2003 and it functions under the under secretariat for the Treasury. It deals with tendering, contracting and payments on behalf of beneficiaries. It also

¹²² <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (Accessed on 03.01.2013)

¹²³ <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (Accessed on 03.01.2013)

¹²⁴ Yeğen, *ibid*, p:88.

concludes and signs contracts, executes the payments and approves progress and financial reports on the projects. It is headed by Programme Authorising Officer (PAO). The PAO is appointed by the NAO in consultation with the National Aid Coordinator¹²⁵.

3.4.5. National Aid Coordinator (NAC)

National Aid Coordinator is responsible for the enabling harmonisation between the accession process and use of the funds. He is also responsible for programming, coordinating the financial cooperation process for the effective usage of the financial aids, enabling the projects to be prepared, implemented and monitored according to priorities included in the APD and NPAA, coordinating the process of signing annual financing agreement and coordinating the evaluation and monitoring of the programs¹²⁶.

3.4.6. Joint Monitoring Committee¹²⁷ (JMC)

Joint Monitoring Committee embodies NAC, the NAO, Financial Cooperation Committee and the Commission representatives. It meets at least once a year and assesses all the EU funded programs to make an evaluation about the on-going of the programme by taking into account monitoring and evaluation reports.

¹²⁵ <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (Accessed on 03.01.2013)

¹²⁶ Akkahve, D., AB Destekli Bölgesel Kalkınma Programlarının Yönetimi ve Yapısal Fonlara Hazırlık. *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı*. p:164.

¹²⁷ <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (Accessed on 03.01.2013)

3.4.7. Financial Cooperation Committee

Financial Cooperation Committee embodies representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, under secretariat of the State Planning Organization and Treasury and the Ministry for the EU Affairs. The head of this committee is National Financial Aid Coordinator or any other representative that he will assign¹²⁸. Their work is to coordinate the tasks related to the financial cooperation, to determine priorities and annual programs for the usage of financial aids, to distribute financial aids to related institutions¹²⁹.

3.4.8. Monitoring Sub-Committee

Monitoring Sub-Committee includes the NAC, the CFCU, the relevant line Ministries/Agencies, etc. and the Commission. It revises the progress of the each programme and contracts and reports to the JMC¹³⁰.

Furthermore, to enable the process to go on without problem the EU established Delegation of the European Union (EUD) to Turkey like in the other candidate countries. EUD, in general, carries out business about the diplomatic relations within the framework of the Vienna Agreement and organizes awareness raising activities. It functions as an observer and is responsible for monitoring all the activities of Turkey during the EU membership process.

With that new system, the role of the EU has been to give an approval to the financial cooperation program since 2002, as all implementations and audits have been carried out by that new structure. In that regard, Turkey presents a report to the

¹²⁸ Akkahve, *ibid*, p:165

¹²⁹ Şahin, *ibid*, p:36

¹³⁰ <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr/about.php?action=shortintro> (Accessed on 03.01.2013)

Commission twice in each year¹³¹. In my opinion, this is actually what the EU aims with the establishment of the DIS; to give responsibilities to the countries to carry out the programming, contracting, tendering, implementation and monitoring functions so as to increase the ownership and ease the policy transfer process. Because if the sides are classified as borrower and lender and if the borrower is actively involved in the policy transfer, the process evolves more easily.

Here, I think even if the role of the DIS is important for the effective usage of the funds as they are also responsible for the programming, it is seen that they do not have an active role in the implementation process of these projects rather than signing the relevant documents. In my opinion, rather than DIS the role of the real beneficiary, who is Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in this study, is more critical for the success of the projects, since the actors in the DIS decide on the main framework about what to transfer and the real beneficiary determines the details of what will be transferred and puts the policies into practice. Thus, the interest and cognition of these actors, that consists of Ministers, undersecretaries, deputy undersecretaries, general directors, heads of departments and experts in that study, is quite important for policy transfer process as mentioned by Levi-Faur and Vigoda-Gadot (2004) in the second chapter.

¹³¹ Samsun, N.,(2005) Merkezi ve Doğu Avrupa Ülkelerine Yönelik Avrupa Birliği Mali Yardımları ve Türkiye, Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi. p:135

CHAPTER IV

MAIN FINDINGS ON THE EFFECT OF THE EU FUNDED PROJECTS ON THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

In this section, a general analysis is made about the influence of the EU funded projects on the policy making process of the MoNE by taking two cases as samples. The sample projects are; Support for Basic Education Project (SBEP) and Strengthening Vocational Education Project (SVET). Within the scope of this chapter, an empirical study has been carried out through making interviews with the managers and experts involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of the projects.

The reason for having interviews is to get detailed and sincere information on the effectiveness of the two sample projects and to get a general idea about the common perception on the impact of the EU funded projects. Because, the reports and other written documents always provide limited information and depending on which side write these documents they can be partial. However, through the interviews I can communicate with the target group sincerely and get into details by asking extra question and I can get a general impression about the attitude of the people towards specific topic through observing their gestures and behaviours. In this regard, understanding the opinion of the people about transferring the EU policies and talking about the resistance for the development of the new policies necessitates to have face to face interview as the interviewees are forced to use their own ideas without getting any support from anybody.

Moreover, as the interviewees are involved in the policy learning process and actually some of them are the ones who transfer the policies; thus, it is good to get first-hand knowledge about their experiences with regard to outcomes and problems of the policy learning and transfer process.

The interviewees are composed of staff of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), staff of the technical assistance team, some representatives from unions, and a representative from EUD. The position of the target group for the interviews also shows variety like from experts to directors. To enable transparency; ideas of the experts and managers working at the project implementation Unit, which was Project Coordination Centre¹³² (PCC), ideas of the experts or managers working at Directorate General for Basic Education, Directorate General for Vocational and Technical Education and Directorate General for Lifelong Learning, ideas of the directors or key experts working for the technical assistance team (TAT¹³³), ideas of the unions which represents social parts in that projects were reflected to that study. Some of the interviews were face to face but some of them were in written form either due to heavy schedule of the some interviewees or due to their being abroad. However, in total I have interviewed with 15 people including 4 directors, 6 experts, one academician, 2 staff of the unions, 2 team leaders from technical assistance team and one staff of the EU Delegation. The name of the interviewees is not stated in the thesis; but an identification code is given for each interviewee and classification of the interviewees according to these codes is presented in the Appendix B.

The interview method that I have used within the scope of this study is semi-structured interview method, as the main questions are pre-determined but extra questions asked simultaneously depending on the on-going of the interview. The main aim for holding that semi-structured questions is to discuss and to question the effect of the EU funded projects as the discussion is shaped with the open-ended questions.

The reasons for choosing these two projects are due to their being the first EU funded projects of the MoNE, the size of their budget, and their content which aims at changing the basic education and vocational education which are still highly disputed issues in Turkish education system today. Thus, the pros and cons of the EU funded

*After the 652 numbered decree law concerning the organization and duties of the Ministry of National Education the name of the Project Coordination Center was changed as Group Directorate for Project Coordination

*Technical Assistance Team consists of a consortium and this team is choosed with atendering and works at the Ministry during the Project implementation phase.

projects on the educational policy development in Turkey are explained within the scope of that chapter.

EU funds that are given in the field of education aim to find solutions to the problems in the education system and these problems are also parallels with the decisions of the National Education Council and Strategic Plan of MoNE. Hence, I think there is a mutual benefit for both the EU and Turkey side. Because when their needs and benefits coincide with each other, the states come to a co-decision. But the point here is that transferring implementation is more significant than transferring the priorities since the priorities can be common all around the world due to common needs of the states. In this regard, I recognize that the EU is trying to be more dominant with regard to transferring its education policies and implementations. On the other hand, policy makers in the education are resistant to policy transfer as this means radical change and bureaucracy does not like radical change because of its inert structure. What is important for me here is that; even if the change process is challenging due to its nature what has been transferred and what kind of resistance have been occurred is tried to be answered with the help of interviews in that chapter.

When I examine the background information of these two projects, it is seen that National Development Plans (NDP), National Education Council Decisions, Government Programs, National Program for the Adaption of the Acquis (NPAA) and Progress Reports were used as a reference to clarify why Turkey needs these projects. The reason for this is that all these documents provide clear background information about the existing situation of Turkey and put certain benchmarks for the achievement of the certain indicators.

In order to understand whether there is a mutual benefit for two sides, the three documents, which are prepared either by Turkish side or by the EU side, are examined below with regard to their content and objectives. These documents are; National Development Plan (NDP), Decisions of the National Education Council and Progress Reports for Turkey. The reason for choosing these three documents is that; they are prepared either by Turkey or by the EU so I want to protect impartiality and objectivity principle by reflecting the ideas of the both sides. What is important also is that; all these documents are either accepted or approved by the decision makers and the decision are tried to be implemented by the related Ministries. In this regard,

NDP is prepared by Ministry of Development with the support of the linked Ministries. Thus, for the education part this support comes from the expert and decision makers of the MoNE. The National Education Council is organised by MoNE with the participation of academicians, NGOs, local administrations and linked institutions. However, as these decisions are not binding, implementing these decisions depends on the will of the MoNE. On the other hand, the progress reports are prepared by the European Commission with the help of the data obtained from the EU Delegation, NGOs and public institutions in the target country. The progress reports are not binding but they provide a kind of recommendations for the candidate countries. Furthermore, these three documents belong to period before and after these two projects implemented it will be possible to evaluate what has been changed with the help of these projects on the main policy objectives and main criticised areas.

4.1. Assessment of the National Development Plans, Decision of the National Education Council and EU Progress Reports

4.1.1. National Development Plans (1996-2013)

4.1.1.1. 7th Five-year Development Plan (1996-2000)

The National Development Plans, which cover five year period, put a general objective and strategy to facilitate the development of Turkey at main sectors like social, economic, judiciary, education etc. The main focus with regard to education in the 7th Five-year Development Plan (1996-2000) was on increasing the duration of the compulsory education, development of the curriculum and education programs, increasing cooperation between public and private sector institutions with regard to vocational and technical education, improving non-formal education facilities and enabling transition between formal, non-formal and vocational education¹³⁴.

¹³⁴State Planning Organisation. (1995) 7th Five Year Development Plan. p:25

4.1.1.2. The 8th Five-year Development Plan (2001-2006)

The 8th Five-year Development Plan (2001-2006) covers the period when these two projects are implemented. The main points with regard to education were focusing on; reorganizing vocational education, using information technologies, updating primary and secondary education curriculum, increasing pre-schooling rate, changing the structure of secondary education from school type to program type, increasing cooperation between vocational education and work life, adapting vocational standards, promoting lifelong learning concept and increasing cooperation between central and local institutions.¹³⁵

4.1.1.3. 9th Five-year Development Plan (2007-2013)

The objectives of the 9th Five-year Development Plan¹³⁶ (2007-2013) on education have not been so different from the previous objectives but more emphasises has been made on the quality of the education. These objectives are; preventing drop outs especially for girls and rural areas, educating democratic open-minded free-thinking individuals, promoting holistic and lifelong learning approaches to strengthen education, strengthening cooperation among labour force and education, promoting quality of the education system, disseminating of pre-primary and early childhood education, developing teacher competencies, enhancing non-formal learning and e-learning, increasing cooperation with private sector in all education levels, revising VET Programs with the participation of all parties and delegating some responsibilities of MoNE to provincial directorates.

When we examine these three NDP, each of which covers the pre, during and post phases of the SBEP and SVET Projects, so these documents give us clues about what has been achieved or what has not been achieved. To illustrate, it is seen that each

¹³⁵ State Planning Organisation. (2000) 8th Five Year Development Plan. p:81-82

¹³⁶ State Planning Organisation. (2006) 9th Five Year Development Plan. p:4, 39, 40, 100

NDP focuses on the quality of the basic education, vocational education and cooperation of the MoNE with the labour market on the vocational education which are also among the main priorities of the SVET and SBEP Projects. Moreover, the comparison of the VET school graduates in 2000 with the year 2005 in the 9th NDP shows that SVET Project is not successful enough to attract the youth to the vocational education. Another objective of the 9th NDP is to prevent school drop-outs which was also aimed with SBEP Project but has not totally been achieved. However, I cannot disregard the fact that these two projects achieved really big job. To illustrate, as the Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP) is achieved curriculum revision that is compatible with the new 8 year compulsory education and for the Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project (SVET), the modular system that fits best to the structure of the VET system is developed. Moreover, SBEP Project has raised awareness about the girls schooling but more support is needed from the government side. With regard to SVET Project, awareness on the importance of the cooperation with labour market has been raised but further support should have come from the MoNE.

4.1.2. Decisions of the National Education Council

Another important document that should be examined is the Decisions of the National Education Council which is a road map for MoNE as it is highest consulting body. The decisions of that Council are important because it consists of highest and various decision makers from MoNE at central and local level, various representatives from different institutions, non-governmental organisations and academicians. However, what is problematic here is that; the decisions of the Council are not binding they are advisory. However, I think comparing the decision of that Council with the project objectives will be good as policy makers who are important actors for policy transfer are involved in that Council.

4.1.2.1. 16th National Education Council (1999)

16th National Education Council came together on 22-26 February, 1999. The decisions were about¹³⁷ the relation between VET Programs and employment opportunities, occupational standards, establishing Turkish Occupational Standards Institution, establishing modular programs, increasing cooperation with the labour market in preparing vocational programs, training of the teacher, preparing student development portfolios, enabling vocational guidance opportunities and etc. Here, I argue that 16th National Education Council decisions are totally reflected to the ToRs of the SVET and SBEP Projects and what is more, it was emphasised in these decisions that all the objectives determined in that Council should be integrated with internationally funded projects and that is a kind of sign that EU funded projects are on the way and decision makers know about all the details of these two sample projects. Then, why there is lack of ownership while they are aware of the process will be tried to be answered at the end of that chapter.

4.1.2.2. 17th National Education Council (2006)

17th National Education Council came together on 13-17 November, 2006. The decisions were about¹³⁸ developing international education policies, preparing legal regulations to support LLL policies, providing certification in national and international standards, increasing cooperation between education and labour market, renewing the infrastructure of the schools and Public Education Centres, taking precautions for children at risk and their parents, renewing teacher training programs and educational programs and enabling transition in secondary education.

¹³⁷ 16th National Education Council. (Available at: http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/dosyalar/surular/16_sura.pdf Accessed on 13.02.2013)

¹³⁸ 17th National Education Council Decisions (Available at: http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/dosyalar/surular/17_sura.pdf Accessed on 13.02.2013)

Even if the year that this Council was organised is 2006, it is seen that the objectives of the SBEP and SVET Projects are restated during that Council meeting as the projects have not been finalised yet. Another interesting point for me is the decision on developing international education policies as this decision can be regarded as a positive approach among policy makers for policy transfer issue.

4.1.2.3. 18th National Education Council (2010)

18th National Education Council came together on 01-05 November 2010. The decisions focused on¹³⁹ the quality of teacher training, quality of education, the relationship between formal and informal education, promotion of LLL strategy, transition between general and vocational schools and improving guidance and consultation services.

It is clear for me that the decisions of the National Education Council are directly in line with the objectives of the two sample projects. However, what is interesting is that vertical and horizontal transition which was the aim of SVET Project and developing Guidance and Consultation Services which was among the aim objectives of the SBEP Project has not been achieved yet and this supports my argument which is “even if millions of euros have been spent with EU funded projects the impact of these projects on developing new policies is limited”

4.1.3. EU Progress Reports for Turkey (2000-2012)

Another important document that should be examined to understand the effect of the EU Projects is the progress report. I think examining this report is significant as it reflects the observation of the third parties thus it can be impartial. Another important point is that this report is written by European Commission by getting the necessary data from the NGOs and public institutions situated in Turkey. In this

¹³⁹ 18th National Education Council Decisions (Available at: http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/dosyalar/suralar/18_sura.pdf Accessed on 13.02.2013)

regard, “Education and Culture Chapters” of the progress reports that cover the period before, during and after the projects are examined and summarised as below.

The Progress Report for Turkey for the year 2000 states that “education system should be improved. Decentralization of the education system management is needed. Teaching methods and education programs should be revised. A reform is needed in VET. The cooperation between educational institutions and labour market should be strengthened”¹⁴⁰. The Progress Report for the year **2001** emphasizes on the cooperation between educational institutions and labour market¹⁴¹. In the report for the year **2002**, some positive remarks on improvement of basic education system and vocational education were included as SBEP and SVET Projects had started. Moreover, the problems that were mentioned in that report are directly linked with the activities of these two projects which were stated as; decentralisation of the education system, increasing the institutional capacity of MoNE, revising the educational curriculum, strengthening the cooperation between the educational institutions and labour market, increasing the effectiveness of the education system and schooling of girls and poorer children¹⁴². For the year **2003**, the focus was more on the increasing the number of vet students and girls schooling. A new criticism was brought forward in that report which was about the difference of marks that a general and vet school graduate get for the university entrance exam. Moreover, increasing the duration of the secondary school to 4 years was demanded¹⁴³. In the report for the year **2004**, the EU clearly stated that; “with the EU funded projects there was an increase with regard to schooling of girls in the Eastern and South-eastern region of Turkey and standard curricula based on the International Standard Classification of Education was adopted. Moreover, construction of the 227 new schools and equipment of the 200 schools were mentioned as an improvement which were the result of the SBEP Project. School drop-outs, decentralisation of the vet system and gender difference in education in the eastern and south eastern part of Turkey were

¹⁴⁰ European Commission (2000) Progress Report for Turkey. p:42-43

¹⁴¹ European Commission (2001) Progress Report for Turkey. p:72-73

¹⁴² European Commission (2002) Progress Report for Turkey. p:91

¹⁴³ European Commission (2003) Progress Report for Turkey. p:95-96

criticised¹⁴⁴. For the year **2005**, the result of the SBEP Project was boosted again as an improvement which comprehended new education program for 1-5 grades and 6-8 grades. However, lack of skill training in vet and not accepting European Credit Transfer system was criticised. Furthermore, encouragement of student based learning and LLL policies were stressed¹⁴⁵. **2006** Report states the girls schooling campaign was stated as a positive improvement and need for National Qualification System and more participation to LLL was emphasized¹⁴⁶. For the year **2007**, the only point was on establishment of European Credit Transfer System in VET and National Qualification System¹⁴⁷. In **2008** report, establishment of the Vocational Qualification Authority which was among the result of the SVET Project, was boosted, however, participation of the adults to the LLL Programs was said to be encouraged¹⁴⁸. For the year **2009**, regional disparities on access to education between boys and girls and low quality of the vet education were stressed¹⁴⁹. In **2010** report participation of adults in lifelong learning and rate of early school leavers was criticised and 2010–2014 strategic plan of MoNE was regarded as being in EU standards¹⁵⁰. The Progress Report for the year **2011** stated the restructuring of MoNE as a positive improvement as DG for Lifelong Learning and DG for EU and Foreign Affairs were established. However, it criticised the lack of proper assessment system for the modules in vet education which was the lacking point of the SVET Project and establishment of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency and NQF was encouraged¹⁵¹. Lastly in the **2012** report, 12 years compulsory education regarded as an important improvement; however, increasing girls schooling and developing LLL strategies was stated as a problematic issue¹⁵².

¹⁴⁴ European Commission (2004) Progress Report for Turkey. p:108-109

¹⁴⁵ European Commission (2005) Progress Report for Turkey. p:136-137

¹⁴⁶ European Commission (2006) Progress Report for Turkey. p:65

¹⁴⁷ European Commission (2007) Progress Report for Turkey. p:68-69

¹⁴⁸ European Commission (2008) Progress Report for Turkey. p:78

¹⁴⁹ European Commission (2009) Progress Report for Turkey. p:79-80

¹⁵⁰ European Commission (2010) Progress Report for Turkey. p:88.

¹⁵¹ European Commission (2010) Progress Report for Turkey. p:98-99.

¹⁵² European Commission (2010) Progress Report for Turkey. p:80-81.

As it is seen in all the progress reports, the EU continue to criticise Turkey on the quality of the education, establishment of NQF and ECVET and developing comprehensive LLL strategies. All these issues started to be improved with SBEP and SVET Projects but even if big steps have been taken a total achievement have not been gained yet. Moreover, as the objectives and criticised issues of above documents are related with the objectives of the two sample projects; thus, it is possible to say that EU funds can be used as an excuse to achieve government policies. However, there is a critical point here which is; “while states prepare their strategic development plans, policy implementations of the other states can be taken as a sample” due to the nature of the policy learning process. Thus, the policy objectives of the states can be same at the same period. In this regard, there is a resemblance between the educational policy objectives of the EU and Turkey for that specific period which enable them take co-decision on certain projects¹⁵³. However, with these projects the EU aims to enable Turkey to implement written policies which means it pushes Turkey to transfer certain education policies. In this regard, I think EU funded projects can be regarded as a means and Progress Reports can be regarded as a trigger to realise educational policy transfer.

When I compare all three documents above and what they say; priorities of MoNE and priorities OF the EU are almost in line with each other and this is quite normal; because all over the world states may determine common objectives as the improvement in any sector is global. However, the issue is that; EU is making a kind of pressure to candidate countries to accept certain kind of implementations like ECVET, NQF and VQA which leads to policy transfer as mentioned in the second chapter.

In general, it is seen that the three documents make emphasize on the increasing schooling especially for girls, quality of general and VET education, increasing cooperation between labour market and VET system, promoting LLL and increasing the quality of the teacher training. More specifically, the reports written by Turkey draws general framework like the development of VET system but the report written

¹⁵³ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007, p:10

by the EU put pressure on certain implementation like the establishment of the ECVET. Moreover, the EU puts extra pressure on the achievement of the project activities in its report. All these show that even if the EU does not have hard acquis in the area of education for countries it pushes countries for policy transfer through systematic monitoring reports, directives and regulations. This supports the argument of the Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) that I mentioned in the second chapter as they state; “EU using coercive policy transfer” through the decisions of the Court of Justice.

As I mentioned at the beginning of that chapter I have made interviews with the direct beneficiaries, who are the staff of MoNE, and indirect beneficiaries, who are the staff of the some Unions, of the SBEP and SVET Projects. However, before making the analysis of the comments of the interviewees in detail, I want to give brief information on the objective, content and outputs of the aforementioned projects.

SBEP and SVET Projects were placed at the centre of government’s reform process. Both Projects were implemented in the Projects Coordination Centre premises. In the EU funded projects, the terms of reference (ToR) document of the projects are prepared by the beneficiary which is MoNE but the beneficiary gets technical support to carry out the project activities through tendering process. When a company win that tender, then a big technical assistance team (TAT) starts to work with the beneficiary during the project implementation phase. Thus, both SBEP and SVET Projects were carried out by central MoNE staff with the support of the TAT. Below you can find detailed information about the content of the two projects.

4.2. Identification of the Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP) and Strengthening Vocational Education Project (SVET)

In this part, I will give brief information about the SBEP and SVET Projects by clarifying main policy areas that were tried to be transferred with these projects. As I mentioned in the introduction part of that thesis, the EU uses financial assistance as a means for policy transfer and examining these projects by keeping in mind what is

transferred question will help me to understand whether financial aids are useful tools for transferring and developing certain policies. In this regard, firstly a general framework will be drawn and then the details about the activities carried out during the implementation will be clarified.

4.2.1. Identification of the Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP)

The overall aim of the SBEP project is to improve the living conditions of the population in the most disadvantaged rural, urban and suburban areas by increasing the level of education in the overall perspective of reducing poverty. This includes support for children, young people and adults excluded from basic education¹⁵⁴.

The financing agreement of the SBEP Project was signed on the 8th February, 2000 and project was started in September, 2002 and it was funded from the EU MEDA as a grant. The budget of the project was 100 million Euros which has been the biggest project that MoNE has ever got up-to-now. The project had two contracts type; service contract and supply (works+equipment) contract. However, the biggest part of the budget was for construction which is really peculiar to that project. Below you can find the distribution of the project budget¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵⁴ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: 'Strategy White PAPER' Final Draft, January 2007, p:23

¹⁵⁵ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes (2007) MEB Publication. p: 7

Table 2: Support To Basic Education Program: Distribution of Budget

Activity Type	Million Euros
Civil works	75.740.308 (75%)
Education	17.756.342 (18%)
Procurement	4.634.413 (5%)
Contingencies	1.868.936(2%)

Source : Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes(2007) Publication of the Ministry of National Education

The target group of the project is; children at the age of the pre-primary and basic education, illiterate adults (mothers especially aged below 35), and school staff like teachers, managers and inspectors and disadvantaged children like poor children, street children and working children¹⁵⁶.

As the scope of that project was quite huge, different units¹⁵⁷ of MoNE were involved in the implementation phase of that project. To illustrate, following units were stated to be involved in almost all the activities; Project Coordination Centre, Board of Education, Board of Inspection, Department of Strategy Development, Directorate General for Pre-school education, Directorate General for Primary Education, Directorate General for Teacher Training and Education, Directorate General for Apprenticeship and Non-formal Education, Directorate General for Special Needs Education and Guidance Services, Department of In-service Training,

¹⁵⁶ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: 'Strategy White PAPER' Final Draft, January 2007, p:23

* After the 652 numbered decree law concerning the organization and duties of the Ministry of National Education the name of the some units was changed and some of them are unified under the same Directorate Generals: DG for Pre-School Education and DG for Primary School Education were unified as DG for Basic Education, DG for Apprenticeship and Non-formal Education became DG for Lifelong Learning, DG for Special Education, Guidance and Consultation Services became and DG for Special Needs Education and Guidance Services, DG for Staff became DG for Human Resources, DG for Foreign Relations became DG for EU and Foreign Relations and it is combined with Project Coordination Center.

Directorate General for Human Resources, Department for Educational Research and Development¹⁵⁸.

The SBEP Project aimed to develop policies under five components. These components¹⁵⁹ are; Quality of Education, Teacher Training, Non-formal Education, Management and Organisation and Communication.

These components support the reform at central level and local level. For the implementation of the SBEP activities, 9 provinces were chosen as pilot. These provinces are; İzmir, İstanbul, Kocaeli, Bolu, Ankara, Samsun, Hatay, Diyarbakır, Van. In the local level SBEP support 12 disadvantaged provinces with regard to education reform. These provinces are; Adıyaman, Ağrı, Ardahan, Bayburt, Bingöl, Diyarbakır, Erzurum, Kars, Muş, Sakarya, Şanlıurfa and Siirt. In addition to these provinces, 5 more provinces were supported with regard to non-formal education as they have heavy migration. These are; Adana, Antalya, İstanbul, Mersin and Bursa¹⁶⁰.

Steering Committee of the project included Undersecretary of MoNE as the head of the committee. In addition, General Directors of MoNE, Board of the Education, State Planning Organisation, under secretariat of Treasury, Higher Education Council, Basic Education Reform Committee, head of Inspection Committee, National Teachers Committee, representatives from provinces private sector, unions and social parties¹⁶¹. This committee was responsible for the strategic management of the project and gives recommendations and they met every 6 months. In this perspective, their role with regard to policy transfer issue gains importance as they decide on the further policies that will be implemented in the next period of the project and the things that they do not approve can be asked for amendment on the Terms of Reference to the Central Finance and Contracting Unit.

¹⁵⁸ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes. (2007) MEB Publication. p: 9

¹⁵⁹ Support to Basic Education Project 2002-2007: Inception Report: Volume I. 2003. p:9

¹⁶⁰ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: 'Strategy White Paper' Final Draft, January 2007, p:23

¹⁶¹ Akyüz, Ü. (2012) Milli Eğitim Bakanlığınca Tamamlanmış Avrupa Birliği Eğitim Projelerinin Yönetici ve Uzman Görüşlerine Göre Değerlendirilmesi Doktora Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi. p:54

With regard to the Quality of Education Component; Curriculums of the 1-5 grades in 4 basic lessons (Maths, Social Sciences, Turkish and Science and Technology) were developed. These curriculums were piloted in 9 provinces 120 schools in 2004-2005 education years and it was implemented in the whole country in 2005-2006 education years. The curriculums of the 6th, 7th and 8th grades were also developed with a constructivist understanding. In order to support these new curriculums, textbooks of the related courses are developed and in 2004-2005 education year books are distributed to all schools. In the beginning 177 textbooks were planned to be developed but at the end 155 textbooks were developed¹⁶². In addition to that pre-school education curriculum for children between 36-72 months was also revised and teacher manual was prepared and distributed to all schools for 2006-2007 education years¹⁶³. Moreover, teacher manual for primary school education guidance program (grades 1-8) was developed¹⁶⁴.

With regard to Teacher Training Component; based on the new developments and curriculum change teachers are trained by taking into account the teacher competencies. In-service training for teachers revised regarding the new curricula. “Teacher Profession General Competencies” were determined in 6 main fields. These fields include 31 sub-competencies and 233 performance indicators. 10.000 booklets were published and distributed. In addition to that branch competencies were developed for each teaching branch. School Based Professional Development Manual was prepared to support teachers and workshops were organised. This manual was approved by the Board of Education; however, only 3.600 copies of that manual were printed¹⁶⁵.

With regard to Non-Formal Education Component; organisational capacity and infrastructure of the Public Education Centres (PEC) were strengthened. An effectiveness study on PEC was carried out by Karadeniz Technical University, the

¹⁶² Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007. p:20

¹⁶³ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007. p:23

¹⁶⁴ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007. p:24

¹⁶⁵ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes. (2007) MEB Publication. p:27

weaknesses of PEC were identified and recommendations were made to enable PECs monitor and evaluate their own activities. Public Education Programs were revised with modular system understanding¹⁶⁶. In this regard 207 education programs were developed for PECs and these programs were published as a book and 3000 copies of these books were distributed to PECs in 81 provinces. Adult Literacy Programs for stage I and II were developed and materials for that program were prepared. In total 10.000 teacher books and textbooks of these programs were prepared and distributed¹⁶⁷. The new materials had a greater orientation towards life skills and other contextual contexts¹⁶⁸. 30.000 people consisting of teachers, principals, parents and community leaders were trained on the problem of children at risk in Adana, Antalya, Bursa, İstanbul, Mersin. With regard to children at risk, MoNE, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs cooperated under the coordination of Social Services and Child Protection Agency of the State Ministry. In this regard, 2.530 Guidance teachers were trained in 9 provinces on the identification of children at risk and measures to be taken. Two main documents were produced for children at risk which are; a position paper “Towards a Strategy for Street Children” and a national study; “Street children in Turkey: current trends and new developments”. These documents raised awareness in the society¹⁶⁹.

With regard to the Management and Organisation Component; SBEP focused on decentralised management of education, planning of school development, school inspection and implementation of quality assurance¹⁷⁰. The Web Based School Management and Professional Development Guide were developed for school principals. This guide includes 21 modules for school managers. 185 school

¹⁶⁶ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes. (2007) MEB Publication. p:28-29

¹⁶⁷ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007, p:26

¹⁶⁸ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007, p:28

¹⁶⁹ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007, p:29-30

¹⁷⁰ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes. (2007) MEB Publication. p:31

managers and inspectors from 81 provinces were trained on “Developing School Management”¹⁷¹.

With regard to communication component; it focused on two main activities; public relations and awareness raising activities. With regard to public relations, videos, quarterly magazines and publicity events organised. With regard to awareness rising; project handbook and other planning and management tools were produced¹⁷². Moreover, a strategy report was prepared. This report included existing situation analysis, main difficulties for the sector and gave suggestions for the future projects.

In general, I think SBEP Project has important contribution with regard to access to education, development of primary and pre-school education curriculum, determining the competencies of teachers, promoting the non-formal education through new programs. All these programs supported constructivist and active learning methods which were quite new for Turkish education system at that time. In addition to that, the most remembered activity of the project was construction which included construction of new buildings and improvement of existing school infrastructure and the provision of school equipment. In this regard 153 schools, 11 PECs, 37 teacher lodging buildings, 20 dormitories, a sport hall and three dining halls were built, 775 classrooms in 81 schools were renewed¹⁷³.

4.2.2. Assessment of Success and Major Constraints of the SBEP Project Based on the Formal Documents and Reports

Before SBEP Project started, the compulsory education was prolonged to 8 year without preparing the necessary infrastructure, the educational programs were not compatible with that new structure. Thus, I think one of the important contributions of the SBEP Project was the revision of the 1-8 grades curriculum with the

¹⁷¹ Support to Basic Education Programme: Project Outcomes. (2007) MEB Publication. p:32

¹⁷² Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007, p:39

¹⁷³ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: ‘Strategy White PAPER’ Final Draft, January 2007. p:35

constructivist approach and teaching staff in the pilot schools was trained on those new educational programs¹⁷⁴.

Moreover, a general awareness on the importance of the public education centres was raised and Public Education Programs were revised with modular system understanding.

However, even if the major focus point of the SBEP Project was on the education of disadvantaged groups, girls, children under risk and children in need of special education, SBEP is remembered with its works component since most of the budget of the SBEP Project was for construction of the school buildings and in general concrete policies or structures can be remembered more than the abstract policies.

With regard to policy transfer or policy learning issue, I claim that policy learning was achieved with SBEP and these learned policies cover constructivist teaching approach, awareness about the public education and girls schooling. Here, I regard these issues as policy learning because there was not any kind of pushing mechanism for MoNE to accept these new implementations. They were what MoNE was needed and this EU fund only fastened the process. Moreover, as I mentioned in the second chapter policy learning is the starting point of the policy transfer and if one makes a full change in any structure it can be called as policy transfer. Here, with SBEP Project revision of the curriculum was carried out successfully and this was efficiency in the system after 8 years compulsory education law. Furthermore, the activities regarding raising awareness on public education and girls schooling was limited with public relations activity.

In addition to these outcomes, there are also activities that were not achieved and these can be summarised as below¹⁷⁵;

¹⁷⁴ Support to Basic Education Project: Impact Analysis Report. 2009. p:5-8

¹⁷⁵ Support to Basic Education Programme (SBEP) Discussion Paper: 'Strategy White Paper' Final Draft, January 2007. p:23-39

- The activity about the decentralisation of education management was not achieved as expected due to the on-going debate surrounding approval and implementation of decentralisation reforms. This supports the argument that in the policy transfer process both the borrower and lender should be eager for successful transfer of policies.
- The objective to increasing the pre-school enrolment rate was not achieved as expected because of the inadequate number of classrooms and teachers, unequal distribution of teachers among regions, inadequate budget, and unawareness of parents about pre-school education facilities. This supports the argument that setting should be ready for a change in the target country and should support the policy transfer process.
- The communication component was not raised the expected awareness on the public due to the lack of full time national counterpart or long term international consultant. Moreover, contact between school and community (home) was a challenge for the project. This supports the argument that; all the components of the policy transfer like the institutions and staff should be ready for change and should support the policy transfer process.
- In the preparation phase the component regarding the children at risk aimed at developing innovative non-formal education programmes to enable social inclusion of the street children. However, the legislative hindrance which states that a child must only be educated in a formal primary school until the age of 15 years constrained such an approach. Thus, only the ones enrolled to the school and have a tendency to become street children took a kind of guidance.. This supports the argument that the structure, especially legal structure, of the target country should be ready for change.
- With regard to the street children, there was lack of coordination and cooperation among the police; MoNE, health sector, labour market and non-governmental organisations.

- The development of the new curriculum, active learning and competencies of teachers were not well coordinated due to the lack of coordination between the ministries and departments responsible for different inputs. The above two statements support the argument that for effective policy transfer process there should be collective learning and this necessitates the cooperation of all parties.
- Dissemination of the materials at provincial and national level was tried to be achieved through ‘professional development web portal’ and this was not successful. This supports the argument that setting should be ready for a change in the target country and should support the policy transfer process.
- There was lack of support on the implementation of the curriculum. This supports the argument that policy makers should support the change.
- The duration of training for the teachers on the new curriculum and active learning approach was limited with maximum three weeks and this was not enough to develop the competencies of the teacher. Moreover, the trainings for school managers and inspectors were limited time.
- About the teacher competencies, only the definition of the competencies at primary education, secondary education level were identified in general; but, no more steps were taken since then¹⁷⁶. The above two arguments support the idea that there should be ownership at policy maker level for successful transfer of the policies.

Here, I see that the objectives of SBEP are compatible with the priorities and needs of the Ministry were achieved easily. To illustrate, the revision of the 1-8 grades curriculum was an urgent need due to the prolongation of the compulsory education to 8 years and this was achieved with that project. However, training teachers on the new curriculum was not regarded as an urgent need for the Ministry and this activity was not achieved. This issue shows us that if there is lack of ownership on the policy

¹⁷⁶ Özoğlu, M. (2010) Türkiye’de Öğretmen Yetiştirme Sisteminin Sorunları. SETA Analiz.p:23

maker side, the activities and policies may not lead the expected results. This means that both borrower and lender should be eager for effective policy learning as I mentioned in the second chapter.

4.2.3. Identification of the Strengthening Vocational Education (SVET) Project

SVET Project is regarded as a big reform in the vocational education system as it was really a starting point of the significant outcomes with regard to Turkish VET system. The general objective of the project was to improve the vocational education system of Turkey in accordance with the socio-economic requirements and lifelong learning principles¹⁷⁷.

The specific objectives of the SVET Projects was; “to support the improvement of vocational education system and to enable its compatibility with national requirements, strengthening the cooperation and capacity of public administration, social partners and enterprises related with vocational education at national, regional and local levels, accelerating the localization process of the system through incorporation of social actors to the reform process enabling local authorities to have an authority on the management of vocational education¹⁷⁸.” Here ensuring coordination between vocational education and labour market was quite important to comply with the EU standards¹⁷⁹.

The duration of the SVET Project was five years and it was funded from EU MEDA II fund. The Financial Protocol of the SVET Project was signed on the 4th July, 2000 and it started to be implemented in September 2002¹⁸⁰. SVET Project was prepared with co-decision of the EU and Turkey to enable the Turkey meet the requirements

¹⁷⁷ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Inception Report 2003. p:6

¹⁷⁸ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project First Progress Report. 2003.p:5

¹⁷⁹ Akkök, F. (2006) Review of Career Guidance Policies/Services in MEDA Countries: Country Report on Turkey. European Training Foundation. p:14

¹⁸⁰ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Technical Assistance for Impact Analyses.2009. p:6

of the Acquis Communautaire in the field of education and training. The total budget of the projects was 58.190.000 Euros. 51.000.000 euro of that budget was EU grant and 7.190.000 Euros was the contribution of the Turkish government. 25 million Euros of total budget was used for providing supplies to the pilot institutions¹⁸¹.

In general, the project had one component which was; “national vocational education reform.” Under this component following activities were carried out¹⁸²;

- a) Establishment of appropriate vocational education reform structures,
- b) Labour market need analysis,
- c) Development of occupational standards,
- d) Development of training standards,
- e) Development of the national qualification system,
- f) Revision of available curricula (modular system),
- g) Development of a life-long learning concept for Turkey.

Regional activities were carried out with the help of the six regional offices which were established in İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Antalya, Gaziantep and Trabzon. Depending on these six regional offices 30 provinces were chosen as pilot by taking into account their population, geographical position, socio-economic indicators and educational statistics. These provinces were; Ankara, Eskişehir, Karabük, Kayseri, Konya, Zonguldak, İstanbul, Bursa, Tekirdağ, Kocaeli, Gaziantep, Adana, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Malatya, Mersin, Muş, Antalya, Isparta, Trabzon, Samsun, Erzurum, Van, Kars, İzmir, Denizli, Manisa, Muğla¹⁸³.

Within the scope of SVET Project, modular program was started to be implemented. In order to enable effective implementation of the modular system, the occupations were classified according to occupational groups, fields and standards. Moreover, to

¹⁸¹ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Guidelines for Grant Applicants Responding to the Call for Proposals. p:2

¹⁸² Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Inception Report 2003. p:6

¹⁸³ Akyüz, *ibid*, p:87

enable international and national accreditation of the diplomas and certificates, the fields and branches were prepared by taking into account ISCED 97 classification¹⁸⁴.

Within the scope of the labour market need analyses, a questionnaire on the need of the labour market and skills was implemented with the participation of 5.800 employees in 31 provinces and this was the first survey on the structure of the Turkish labour market. The aim for preparing that document was to provide a background document containing well-analysed data on the long term developments in the labour market in relation to developments in educational output to the policy makers and VET institutions. A local labour market handbook was finalised and presented in March 2007¹⁸⁵.

Within the scope of the occupational standards; as a result of the sector and labour market analysis that was carried out in 2004-2005, analysis of the 576 occupations in the 2nd, 3th and 4th level was made. Depending on these analyses 65 occupational standards were finalised and submitted to Vocational Qualification Authority (VQA) to be used. Until the end of the 2007, 150 draft occupational standards were also prepared and submitted to VQA¹⁸⁶.

Within the scope of the educational standards; by using the results of the occupational analyses and standards, competencies for the occupations were determined. 64 training standards as planned at the start of the project were developed. These standards have been used for curriculum development.

Within the scope of the curriculum development, the curriculum of the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades in 17 fields and 64 branches were prepared and started to be used in pilot schools during 2004-2005 education year. For 10th grades modules in 17 fields and 272 branches were printed and distributed to 105 pilot institutions. At the end of the project; modular and competency based curricula for 42 job families and 192 occupational profiles covering all formal VET education in Turkey were

¹⁸⁴ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Technical Assistance for Impact Analyses. Final Summary Report. 2009. p:23

¹⁸⁵ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:26

¹⁸⁶ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:32

approved in 02.06.2006 and started to be used in VET schools during 2006-2007 education year. In addition to these 5436 modules in 42 fields for 10th, 11th and 12th grades were prepared and published in the project web site. Moreover, the development of 530 curricula for certificate programs (non-formal education, levels 2, 3 and 4) were supported. Equipment required for the implementation of curricula related to the initial 17 job families and 64 occupational profiles was provided¹⁸⁷ and modules of the Guidance and Assistance Course was printed and distributed to all general and vocational high schools to be used.

New modular vocational education programmes were developed in 42 fields and 197 branches and Vocational Development courses started to be implemented two hours per week. Entrepreneurship was also included in the VET modules and these modules covered business administration, financing, marketing, advertisement, sales, business law, career development and business establishment¹⁸⁸.

Quality assurance system based on international standards was tried to be developed with a close cooperation with counterparts. The experimental trainings were conducted for principals and vice principals of the selected pilot schools and also the section directors in the provincial directorates responsible for the vocational education¹⁸⁹.

Another outcome of the SVET Project was Vocational Qualification Authority (VQA). The VQA law which established NQF system came into force in September 2006 with the Law numbered 5544. The aim behind the establishment of VQA was to determine the basis of national qualifications fields based on national and international occupational standards. In addition to that, executing the national

¹⁸⁷ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:46

¹⁸⁸ European Commission. Key Competences for Lifelong Learning as Part of Coherent and Comprehensive Lifelong Learning Strategies.2009. p:4

¹⁸⁹ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:59

qualifications system and making assessment, evaluation, documentation and certification were other reasons for the establishment of VQA¹⁹⁰.

In addition to that the LLL policy paper was drafted in 2005-2006. The report contains the assessment of the current situation in LLL in Turkey in a broad sense, identifies the key problem areas from various perspectives and makes recommendations for future policies to a range of stakeholders in the state and the private sector. However, it could not be transformed into a white paper adopted by all stakeholders¹⁹¹.

Within the scope of the training activity; school managers and deputy school managers of 145 pilot schools were trained on management and leadership. Program coordinators and teachers of the 105 pilot schools were trained on modular system and student based learning, 262 branch teachers were trained with hands-on technical trainings and 2500 teachers were trained on curriculum development and writing modules. Moreover, 290 managers of school and training centres were trained on decentralised education management system and 50 of these managers received training on how to disseminate the training program to non-pilot institutions and are able to conduct such trainings and 210 teachers were trained as a trainer to disseminate the activities to the 30 pilot provinces. Moreover, various national and international conferences and capacity building activities for central and local MoNE staff were carried out.¹⁹²

With regard to the equipment and supply component, office equipment, projector and computer lab was provided for 145 pilot schools and 16 lots including vet equipment were contracted and distributed to schools¹⁹³.

¹⁹⁰ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:40

¹⁹¹ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:50-54

¹⁹² Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:62-71

¹⁹³ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System: Information Note (2009) Project Coordination Center. p:3.

4.2.4. Assessment of Success and Major Constrains of the SVET Project Based on the Formal Documents and Reports

If I make a general evaluation about the SVET Project, I think the main policy that tried to be transferred with the SVET was to build a bridge between VET and labour market. To achieve that it aimed to increase cooperation between VET system and entrepreneurs to provide qualified labour force that meets the requirements of the business market¹⁹⁴. In order to enable that, the educational programmes were developed by taking into account the labour market need analyses¹⁹⁵. Moreover, SVET Project made emphasises on the importance of cooperation of labour market and LLL guidance activities. Thus, it started an institutional reform and enabled social partners to be involved in the VET System. At least, awareness was raised on the importance of the cooperation with employers and employee organizations. May be due to that the influence of the SVET Project is still talked since the involvement of the all actors to the policy transfer carries the process to the success as stated Hulme (2005) in the second chapter.

With SVET Project competency-based, modular framework attaining more flexible and learner-centered characteristics were introduced¹⁹⁶. Actually this is what really needed as the old programs were not compatible with the needs of existing situation and this eases the policy transfer process as both the lender and barrower is eager to policy transfer.

Another activity carried out during the SVET Project was the preparation of the LLL Strategy Document. It was prepared with the participation of MoNE, Ministry of

¹⁹⁴ Günbayı, İ. (2008) Financing and Increasing the Quality and Attractiveness of Vocational and Technical Secondary Education in Turkey. *International Journal of Vocational Education and Training*: Theme: Finance. Volume 16, Number 2. 1-91.p:39

¹⁹⁵ European Commission. *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning as Part of Coherent and Comprehensive Lifelong Learning Strategies*.2009. p:3

¹⁹⁶ Bicer, K. (2011) *Restructuring Turkish Vocational Education and Training System for Attaining a Flexible Organization: An Impact Assessment*. Karlsruhe Institute of Technology-Institute of Vocational Education and Training. p:2

Development and all related sector parties in March 2009¹⁹⁷. Moreover during the SVET project regulation on, “Vocational Qualification, Exam and Evaluation”, which proposes a determination of qualifications according to the vocational standards, are put into force in December 2008. According to that regulation, there should be at least one exam to certify informal learning activities. Thus, any learning activity gained throughout life will be certified without going school if the institution is accredited by VQA¹⁹⁸. The establishment of the VQA system was really important for the free movement of workers in Europe¹⁹⁹.

Even if the SVET Project had brought a new approach to the vocational education system and achieved different reforms, the constraints of the project that hinders the achievement of the projects can be identified as below;

VQA was not established and was not operational during the lifetime of the project and hence, the revision of the occupational and training standards and occupational analysis has not been carried out by VQA properly²⁰⁰. This means that sustainability was not enabled due to the lack of ownership of the policy makers and this is related with the interest of the actors as stated by Levi Faur and Vigoda-Gadot (2004) in the second chapter.

The modular approach was introduced in non-pilot institutions in the 51 non-pilot provinces without sufficient training of teachers, so that new approach did not bring the expected impact on the students and system²⁰¹. This supports that policy transfer necessitates the cooperation and understanding of the all parties; otherwise, it becomes policy trial rather than policy transfer.

¹⁹⁷ European Commission. Key Competences for Lifelong Learning as Part of Coherent and Comprehensive Lifelong Learning Strategies.2009. p:15

¹⁹⁸ European Commission. Key Competences for Lifelong Learning as Part of Coherent and Comprehensive Lifelong Learning Strategies.2009. p:16

¹⁹⁹ Taşpinar, M. (2006) Restructuring the Turkish Vocational Technical Secondary Education System towards EU Membership. International Journal of Training Research. p:55

²⁰⁰ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:34

²⁰¹ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:47

To increase the effectiveness of the new modular system sectoral orientation was given to students, however, these students were at the 9th grade and initial choice of vocation had already made at the end of the 8th grade. Thus, as a student had already chosen his vocation like automotive it was useless for him to listen to the orientation about carpentry²⁰². For the success of the policy transfer, there should be coherency between the existing policy and targeted policy as stated by Stone (2000) in the first chapter.

Another issue was the vocational guidance and career counselling facilities which was not strengthened as a policy area. This supports the idea that to ease the policy transfer there should be pressure towards implementation.

The biggest complain of the SVET project with regard to curriculum was; assessment difficulties in the classroom and lack of accredited institutions that set examination standards in specific vocational areas. If this could have achieved horizontal and vertical transfer between educational levels and institutes would be possible²⁰³. This shows that if a policy is a half improved policy and not planned, the policy transfer process cannot be completed. Thus, involving the right people to evaluate whole policy transfer process and estimating the pros and cons of the aforementioned policy eases the policy transfer.

In general, awareness raising activities of the SVET Project was limited with only pilot schools and their staff. Thus, dissemination of the pilot implementations was not successful²⁰⁴. If one wants the policy transfer to be successful, it should be comprehensive enough to inform all parties.

What is most important here is the decentralisation issue which has not been achieved yet with any project of MoNE due to the lack of necessary legislation. The SVET Project aimed to pass a new bill on public administration law but this was not achieved. In this regard, “The Basic Draft Law on Public Administration” rearranging the duties, powers and responsibilities of the central government and the

²⁰² Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:47

²⁰³ Guus Morjan, K. and Indira von Oven, C. (2009) An approach Towards Further Strengthening Vocational Education and Training in Turkey. Dutch Consorsium.p:2

²⁰⁴ Guus Morjan and Indira von Oven, *ibid*,p:2

local administrations, which was first announced to the public in November 2003, has been amended and presented to the Turkish National Assembly in December 2003. Later, it was approved by making some amendments in July 2004. However, the issue is that the new amended version did not include any article on decentralisation. Later, “The Law No. 5227 on the Basic Principles and the Restructuring of Public Administration” was partially vetoed and returned to the Turkish National Assembly by the President on 3rd August 2004 and since then no action has been taken²⁰⁵. This issue supports the idea that for policy transfer setting should be ready as Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) mentioned in the second chapter of that thesis.

4.3. The Evaluation of the Effects of the EU Funded Projects on the Policies of the MoNE (Case Study)

In this part of fourth chapter, I will discuss the influence of the EU funded projects on the policy making process of MoNE based on the interviews carried out with the project implementation team, technical assistance team, social partners and EU Delegation. The interviews are carried out face to face with semi-structured questions. After all the interviews are completed, a general evaluation is made about the success and constrains of the two sample projects. The peculiarity of the target group, which I have interviewed, is that it consists of both managers and implementers. The implementers are chosen as interviewees since they work actively in the preparation and implementation phases of the projects and they know the main achievement and challenges better than anybody. The reason for choosing managers as interviewees is to get a comprehensive and political evaluation about the outcome of the projects. Moreover, as the actors are quite important for the success of the policy transfer or policy learning process getting their opinion about the project implementation phases will really contribute to understand “what is transferred and what the restrictions are” as these questions constitute the main backbone of that study.

²⁰⁵ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project Final Report (2007). p:80

To increase the effectiveness of the study two projects are chosen as sample cases as mentioned in the previous part. The questions asked during the interviews are mainly takes the questions of the Dolowitz (1996) on policy transfer as a basis to get a general overview about the effect of the projects on policy making process. In addition to that some questions were peculiar to sample projects to get a general overview about the effectiveness of the project outcomes. The questions that are harmonised with the questions of Dolowitz (1996) and asked during the interviews are below;

- Why and when do the beneficiaries need to prepare an EU funded project?
- Is the EU funded project a tool for policy transfer? If yes what can be transferred in that process and how does this affect the policy making processes?
- Did you meet with any kind of problem, restriction or conflict during the implementation of the SBEP and SVET Projects? What were the main reasons for these problems? How was the attitude of the decision makers for the project activities and outputs?
- Did SBEP and/or SVET Project really affect the Turkish education system? If yes, in which aspect?
- What do you think about the sustainability of the SBEP and/or SVET Project? What should be done to enable sustainability?

As I mentioned before, SBEP and SVET Projects are chosen as samples because of the size of their budgets and their contents which focus on the two main policy area that are; improvement of basic education and vocational education. For the first three questions, the answers of the interviewees for the SBEP and SVET Projects are presented under the same title rather than separating the answers under project titles. But the answer of the questions specific to the two sample projects are clarified separately under the project titles and instead of stating the questions separately a general title is written for each question at the beginning. In that part firstly an overall comment is provided then the answer of the interviewees is written clearly. Similar answers are combined to prevent repetition. Before, all answers to the questions are clarified you will find a comparison chart for the two sample projects below.

Table 3. Comparison of the SBEP and SVET Project

Questions	SBEP Project	SVET Project
The Reason for the Preparation of the Projects	Due to the inefficiency in the system financial assistance was regarded as an opportunity.	Due to the gap in the system and need for policy change, financial assistance was regarded as a driving force.
Involvement of the Different Parties	Limited.	Satisfactory.
Policy Transfer vs Policy Learning	The decision makers regard financial assistance as a tool for policy learning and harmonisation of the policies.	
	The experts regard financial assistance as a compulsory willingness.	
Restrictions	Limited restrictions	Broad restrictions
Influence on the system	No influence on policy but the solutions for inefficiencies in the system.	Policy change on VET understanding and system.
Sustainability	Limited for both case due to the lack of ownership.	

4.3.1. Case Study on SBEP and SVET Projects

4.3.1.1. The Reasons for Preparing EU Projects

Based on the different answers of the interviewees, the answers for that question can be classified in three categories; political, economic and social reasons and this categorisation is made by combining the replies of all interviewees. The political reason is related with the EU membership which has almost 60 years story. Turkey is the only country which waits at the door of the EU for such a long time to become a member and in Turkey it is regarded that these kinds of funds will fasten the EU membership process as these funds step up the EU harmonisation process. Moreover, in 2002 there was a government change and new government made a commitment to strengthen education system. The new government and ministry were especially

eager to make changes in the basic and vocational education system as these two issues among the priorities of the NDPs and strategic plans. Here, it is seen that the government uses EU as an excuse for the development and implementation of its own policies. Thus, these projects can be regarded as the facilitator of the government policies.

With regard to the economic reasons; The budget of the SVET and SBEP Projects was quite big and when these two projects started, which covers the period between 2002 and 2007, there was an economic crisis and taking some steps to take new initiatives to improve the education system was difficult as it would bring extra burden on the national budget. When the budget of a country is limited the governments choose either domestic borrowing or foreign indebtment and EU fund is a kind of foreign indebtment. However, the good side of it is that; you do not need to pay the money back as long as you achieve the expected result written in project planning phase. Here, the EU only demands from Turkey to realise its commitments with regard to project activities. However, the interviewees IB-1, IB-3, IV-2 and IV-7 state that this situation has changed now because of the strengthening economy of Turkey and nowadays the decision makers state that; “Today we do not need the EU projects, as we can carry out activities with our general budget.” But then the EU membership issue rises as an important reason to use the EU funds. In my opinion, even if it is said that the EU is using soft acquis in the area of education and everything is voluntary, here the EU membership issue functions an important driving force behind the policy transfer.

With regard to the social reasons; the need of human resources and high level expertise arises as an important trigger. Here, the interviewees; IB-1, IB-3, IB-11, IV-2, IV-4, IV-7, IV-12 and IBV-14 agree on that when countries want to improve a policy on any field they firstly prefer to observe the implementations of the other countries and they try to harmonise these policies with their own policies. Thus, it can be said that EU projects are one of the best solutions for that as they create facilities to work with international experts and these experts can easily transfer the policies of their countries. As I mentioned in the second chapter that is the starting point for the policy transfer. Because if the policy makers are intended to transfer certain types of policies, they start to observe the policies of the other countries in order to use the best practices that is compatible for their system.

Another issue that is raised by the interviewees is the participation of the stakeholders and social partners during the preparation of the project which is quite important to prepare a common project that reflects the ideas of the all parties. However, two different ideas emerged on that issue. One group, including IB-1, IB-3, IV-2, IV-4, IV-7 and IV-13, who actively worked in the project implementation phase, state that the opinion of the related department of the Ministry and social partners were taken into account before the Term of Reference (ToR) of the project was prepared, however, the other group, including IB-5, IB-10, IB-6 IV-8, states that their ideas were not taken into account totally during the project preparation phase. They accept to be invited to the meetings before the preparation of the ToR, but they state that when the ToR was finalised their ideas were not totally reflected to the related documents. This shows that policy learning process in that project was not collective as all actors not involved in the process actively and that restricts the ownership. Even if there are two opposing ideas both sides agree on the importance of the cooperation of the different parties not only during the preparation phase but also during the implementation and evaluation phase. Here, I use the term sides because in all the projects the implementers and indirect beneficiaries, which compose of other supporting units of MoNE, unions and NGOs, are always in conflict with each other. Here, I think this issue is not only related with MoNE it applies to all governmental, non-governmental institutions and unions and this may be due to the tense working schedule of the projects.

If we examine this issue specifically for two cases; the interviewees of the SBEP Project; IB-3 and IB-10, state that the ideas of the DGs within the Ministry was taken before the preparation but not totally reflected to the planning document and involvement of the social parties could have supported more. In contrast, the interviewees of the SVET Project; IV-2, IV-4, IV-7, IV-13 state that, the social partners and other decision makers were actively involved in the preparation phase, since the cooperation with trade unions, vocational organisations and unions is quite important in vocational education to meet the demands of the labour market. In SVET project, especially TOBB, TESK, TISK, TURK-İŞ-HAK-İŞ-DİSK, TUSİAD were tried to be involved in the different phases of the project. Here, this issue brings forward the seven factors of Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), mentioned in the second chapter, that either ease or constrain the policy transfer process. These factors are;

political complexity, mutual interaction, institutional pressure, pressure towards implementation, previous relations and language pressure. I think as the mutual interaction is high in the SVET Project the involvement of the both implementers and supporters were high. Moreover, here the need and interest of the both sides collide with each other and this eases the policy transfer process.

4.3.1.2. Policy transfer vs Policy Learning

The answers for that question can be classified in two groups; first group IB-10, IB-5, IV-8, IV-9, IV-13, regards EU projects as a means of policy transfer and second group IB-1, IB-3, IB-6, IV-2, IV-4, IV-7, IBV-15, regards EU projects as a tool to realise our national objectives and state the process as policy learning.

The first group support their ideas with the following justifications; EU funded projects are effective in the policy transfer process. Most of the time international experts work at the projects as a director or as a key expert on behalf of the technical assistance team and in general, these experts are good at in their field but not efficient about Turkish education system. Thus, they carry their task by reflecting the EU implementations to the project activities and when the Turkish counterparts of these international experts are not qualified enough; they cannot direct the experts of the technical assistance team. This means that coercive policy transfer occurs due to the poor qualification of the national experts. Moreover, if the policy to be developed is in the field where there is good expertise and examples within the EU, policy transfer occurs. Such policies can be related with VET standards, quality assurance, higher education standards etc. Sometimes they may be related to EU overarching policies that would be necessary for Turkey to adapt in the accession process.

Interviewee IB-6 makes emphasis on the compulsory willingness, as he states that “because of the candidacy process of Turkey, the financial assistance for Turkey has gained importance. All the projects are prepared within the framework of NPAA. Turkey harmonises its system with that of the EU to become an EU member. Thus, here I can mention about compulsory willingness.” I think this issue refers to the coercive policy learning. Here, I use the term coercive policy learning because Turkey is willing to take some policies to become an EU member and this idea may

be pushing Turkey to take or to develop some policies even if it is not included in its priorities.

Here, a different point of view comes from interviewee IB-5 who states that “the relation between Turkey and the EU also directs the policy transfer process. When Turkey has good relations with the EU it can directly transfer the policies of the EU, but when Turkey has bad relations it prefers to look for the policies of other countries.” I think this idea shows that the relations of the borrower and sender has a big impact on the policy transfer process and this issue clarifies me why different definitions of the policy transfer is made depending on the setting, policy makers, content and intent. Here, I think the intent of the two sides directs the policy transfer process.

Interviewee IV-8 claims that, at the beginning Turkey did not really need these projects. They were the request of the EU and Turkey was implementing them. In time this has changed. Awareness raising has increased and with the new experts the tendency towards the international projects increased. This claim is important because it shows me that the EU as a lender offered Turkey to use financial assistance tool and this shows that financial assistance is an important means for the EU to transfer its policies. Hence, this takes us to the issue mentioned above which is compulsory willingness. Also this is related with what interviewee IV-10 says as he claims that this is not the issue of the EU membership; this is directly related with the donor institution. Because from who you barrow or get the money, you are obliged to implement his policies or at least reach his objectives. Here, funding is a condition to force somebody to do something. IV-5 also accepts the policy transfer of the EU, but, she assesses this process from another point and she states that; “policy transfer in the EU projects is inevitable because Turkey is trying to be a member of the EU for 60 years and in this regard social, political and economic adaptation is quite important and Turkey is trying to achieve this with policy transfer. Because in the founding principles of the EU social adaptation has an important place and policy transfer enables that social adaptation.”

The other group states (IB-1, IB-3, IB-6, IV-2, IV-4, IV-7, IBV-15) that; “we do not directly transfer the policies but we harmonise our policies with that of the EU.” This group argues that the projects are prepared in cooperation with the EU and when

both sides have common objectives they agree on the project and then the related documents are prepared with co decision. Hence, here we cannot mention about policy transfer but we can say that there is policy learning. Moreover, IB-1 states that “EU does not make pressure for certain kinds of policies but it has sensitivity on some issues like girls schooling, employment of illiterate women, disadvantaged groups, pre-school education, increasing the cooperation between VET and employment and etc. These issues are also the problems of Turkish education. Thus, our objectives collide with the EU’s and we make the projects to reach common objectives.” This view is supported by interviewee IV-1 through the following argument; “EU projects do not meet the demand of our education policy. Because they do not have a strategy document that totally meets the need of our country. However, if you ask whether these projects turn into policies, I can say 50% yes and this is directly related with the bureaucracy and approach of the political authority. But the effect of the projects on the policies is another issue. Furthermore, education is both global and specific to country. Here, how one regards education is important and this is totally an ideological issue. The EU does not have a document that can totally meet our needs. Because the EU says that “the difference among the education system of the member countries is our wealth”. This shows that the general strategy of the EU in education is to provide basic education to all individuals and recognition of the education. Thus, it is clear that in the strategy document of the EU. The EU draws a general framework and educational need of the states is not reflected totally as it differs from state to state. However, there are intersecting parts. Thus, depending on these parts the content of the project is determined by taking into account the needs of the states.” Hence, I think EU draws a framework to ease the policy transfer because this a kind of pressure towards implementation and this eases the policy transfer process as Dolowitz (1996) states.

Interviewee IBV-14 stresses on an important point which shows me the involvement level of the EU to that process. He states that; “in the preparation phase of the SVET and SBEP, as the experience of the MoNE was not enough, the projects were prepared together with the EU Commission experts. Here, European Training Foundation (ETF) was very helpful. They worked together on the procedures but the topic of the projects belongs to Turkey and policy learning occurred at the end of the projects.”

Another interviewee (IV-4) exactly defines how the policy transfer occurs by saying that; “different samples of countries are examined and the most suitable one is harmonised with Turkish education system. For example, VQA which was established with the SVET projects is a Scottish model. During the project implementation phase, this model was worked on and later it was harmonised with Turkish system and Turkish VQA was established”. Here, he also stress on another point that is team leader of the technical assistance team. Team leader has quite important function as he prepares the infrastructure of the aforementioned system and most of the time the home country implementation of the team leader is harmonised with the Turkish system. He finishes his sentence by saying that the EU draws a framework and Turkey chooses the topic that is in its priorities such as VET. Interviewee IB-3 supports that idea by saying “There is a strategy document and as it was signed with co-decision Turkey can only prepare the project on the issue mentioned in the document. There is no obligation in the decision of the EU; they are recommendations like the decisions of the National Education Council. The EU does not make any kind of pressure; we negotiate the topics and when we agree on a common point we prepare the projects. Here the preference of the Turkey important because sometimes the EU says that it only finances the projects on that specific topic and if Turkey thinks it needs these projects it applies for it.

Here, there are two views, the ones working as at the director positions argue that MoNE does not transfer policies but it harmonises them. On the other hand, the ones working in the expert position indicates that MoNE directly transfers policies. This shows me that there is conflict of ideas at the different levels of the hierarchy which is quite normal in the bureaucracy. In my opinion, as the EU draws a framework for certain kind of policies and as the Turkey is eager to adopt these policies there is a kind of coercive policy learning. In my opinion, if ones try to renew a system it is impossible to directly transfer a policy as there is an already existing structure and ones need to harmonize that new policy with the existing structure and this argument contradicts with the Stone’s (2000) statement as she disregards the structure and states that nations can adopt anything..

I observe that the general approach of the interviewees on the policy transfer issue is not positive and instead of using the terms they prefer to use the term sharing knowledge, harmonisation, policy development and know-how. Because the

interviewees, in general, claim that with the projects proposal of a new model or a draft document is prepared and if the Ministry finds these documents acceptable it approves. However, on the issue of whether the projects causes to policy transfer or policy learning; they all agree on the following benefits of the EU projects; “There is a mutual interaction during the implementation of the EU projects in which the target country develops a policy by taking funding from the donor institutions.”

4.3.1.3. The Restrictions of the EU Projects

The answers for that question can be classified in two groups; the first group including IB-1, IV-4, IB-5,IB-6, IV-7, IV-8, IV-9, IB-10, IB-11, IV-12, IV-13, IV-15, IBV-14, say “Yes” and the second group, including IV-2, IB-3 say “No.” Even if I classified the interviewees in two groups, these groups do not have any kind of characteristic and these groups consist of both the directors and experts within the Ministry and out of the Ministry. The only characteristic of these two groups is that they were involved in the SVET and SBEP Projects.

In this regard, the first group (IB-1, IV-4, IB-5,IB-6, IV-7, IV-8, IV-9, IB-10, IB-11, IV-12, IV-13, IB-15, IBV-14) claims that; the need and expectations of the implementers and decision makers are different. Moreover, the demand and need of the MoNE changes very quickly. The project implementers and authorities want the project implemented as it is written; however, the decision makers want to adapt it to the changing demands and needs of the Ministry.

Another challenge during the implementation is related to the small budget of the projects and big demands of the decision makers as the decision makers think that EU budget can meet all demands. To illustrate; during the implementation of SBEP Bingöl earthquake was occurred and decision makers requested to restore destroyed schools with SBEP budget and this necessitated the revision of the project documents and a situation like that; you are needed to take out some activities. Moreover, other units within the MoNE, which are involved in the project activities, wanted to use the project budget for their expenses as the content of the project was related to the activities of their units. However, the structure of the project does not allow that and;

thus, there occurs conflict between the project implementation unit which was Project Coordination Centre (PCC) when the two projects were implemented, and other units of the MoNE. However, an important issue that should be stated here is that; the beneficiary can never change the main priorities of a project; depending on the situation either a component or an activity of the whole project may change. However, the support of the decision makers for the success of the Project is quite important.

Actually these two problems towards implementation directly overlap with the two of the six factors that constrain or ease policy transfer mentioned in the second chapter and these are pressure towards implementation and institutional pressure. As it is seen; the attitude of the policy maker or the institution may be challenge for implementing the project activities.

On the other hand, second group (IV-2, IB-3) claims that; if a project starts this means that all levels are agree. Thus, there is no conflict within the decision makers and implementers but there is a conflict with the EU because of the difference between the EU and Turkish legislation. Especially in these two projects approval of the Brussels was needed and as this approval process was quite long and this long process caused some problems like delaying some activities.

Another point stressed by IB-1, IB-10, IV-4, IV-7, IV-8 is that; “there were problems about the EU experts because they did not have enough capacity. They provided expertise on VET but they were very old and they were not qualified enough on Turkish education.” Furthermore, changing the existing experts was also stated as a problem, as the EU procedures were quite long and duration of the project was short. Thus, delay in the approval procedures of the Brussels causes many problems.

I think in order to increase the effectiveness of the policy transfer process there should not be a big time differences between the planning and implementation. Because as that period prolongs, the possibility of change at Minister and decision maker position increases and the change in any position may lead to change of policy understanding and I think issue is really critical for the success of the any policy. In this regard all the interviews support me by saying that the preparation and tendering process takes at least 3 years and if we add 5 year implementation of the two sample

projects to that time it makes 8 years. That shows us that when the transfer of the time prolongs it loses its effectiveness.

I think all these comments show that there were quite big problems for successful implementation of the projects. Here, I see that the ownership and understanding of the policy makers is the most significant challenge as the ideas and attitudes are among the seven components of the policy making process. Thus, explaining the pros and cons of the process to the policy makers and informing them regularly about the limit and borders of the project will ease the implementation process that Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) mentions.

The interviewee IB-1 explains another reason of the resistance for the change which is legislative handicap and I think this shows that setting was not ready for the change during the implementation of these two projects.

Another conflict stated by interviewee IB-6 is related with not involving all the actors from the beginning to the projects. He states that “There is not conflict at all phases and conflict occurs when the pilot implementation or common implementation starts between the central MoNE and local authorities, especially schools. The reason for that; is the lack of awareness about the content of the projects and as the projects are prepared at central level.”

The interviewee IBV-14 emphasises the inert structure of the bureaucracy and states that; project means reform and bureaucracy does not like reform as it bring many workload together with itself. The conflict with policy makers occurs when they are not informed before a project is prepared or a change is occurred and this just delays the implementation date of some activities. Here, I think taking co-decision with the higher authority and informing them constantly about the on-going of the projects is quite important. Moreover, not involving the other units of the Ministry during the project preparation phase causes a kind of resistance to the activities. Here the project team gains importance as they should be in constant communication with all hierarchical levels. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that policy learning will only be useful when all sides are informed and actively involved in the process.

After mentioning common restriction with regard to two sample projects now I will clarify the resistance or problems specific to each project as the content and structure of the two projects are different from each other.

4.3.1.4. The Influence of the SBEP Project on the Turkish Education System

Interviewees IB-1, IB-3, IB-6IB-10, IB-11 regard SBEP as a huge and important project because of the size of its budget and variety of the activities. They also state that; SBEP started after 8 year compulsory education law was accepted in 1997. Thus, there was a need for a change in the curriculum and SBEP project met that demand. The duration of the project was 5 years and due to that long time duration pilot implementation was carried out successfully which is quite important if one is making a big change in policies or system of a country. Later depending on this pilot phase common implementation started and this was the thing that makes SBEP different from the current projects. At the beginning of the pilot phase of the program, the teachers were opposing because of classical educational understanding but at the end of the pilot phase they approved the new constructivist educational programs and SBEP achieved this with huge public relations activities which is lacking in many of the EU projects. Moreover, 70 million of SBEP budget was for construction and this was a solution for structural problems. At the end of the project 153 schools were constructed.

In addition to these activities, the interviewees of SBEP stated that revision of the adult education programs and school books was completed, for pre-school education policies were developed, multiple intelligence theory started to be discussed and people trained about the girls schooling with the help of SBEP. Actually here it is clear that the concrete activities are more possible to be remembered than the abstract ones. Moreover, if one really wants to get a positive result from a policy transfer the demand of the lender should overlaps with the need of the borrower. Here, in the SVET case it is clear that at that time Turkey was in need of revising its basic education curriculum and building new schools. Hence, these activities are supported by the Ministry. On the other hand, the issue of girls schooling and pre-school

education were not at the agenda of the Ministry at that time, so these activities did not bring the expected impact.

4.3.1.5. The Influence of the SVET Project on the Turkish Education System

In general, the interviewees all agree about the positive contribution of the SVET Project and they state the followings results as the contribution of the SVET Project on the Turkish education system;

Interviewee IV-12 states that SVET Project was successful enough to enable Turkish VET system to reach at the world and the EU standards.

Interviewee IV-4 states that; a modular system based on the qualifications for VET schools was established. Before that modular system was developed, different samples were examined and they were harmonised with our system. Later, the books of the vocational education were prepared based on the modular system. That modular system is still in use.

Interviewee IV-7 states that VQA was also output of the SVET Project. VQA law was prepared and accepted during the project. However, the problem is that VQA is still trying to complete its establishment procedure to become totally functional for almost 6 years. It prepares vocational standards, establishes assessment and evaluation centres and determines national qualifications.

Interviewee IV-8 states that equipment supply which was really needed for VET system at that time was a big contribution.

The interviewee IV-2 states that SVET achieved more than what is planned and he supports his argument by saying; programs in 42 sectors were developed. In the beginning the number of the sectors was 17; but, later this number was increased to 42 with an amendment in the project. Furthermore, twentyfold more vocational analysis was carried out. However, interviewee IV-8 opposes that by saying “vocational standards did not start with that project but it made important contributions and it laid a basis for the improvement of important documents like LLL strategy document and vocational guidance.”

Moreover, another activity that was done for the first time in VET history with the SVET project was labour market and skill analysis. The labour market analysis was carried at district, regional provincial and national level. In addition to that, all representatives from different sectors came together and it helped the Ministry to understand that; decisions on the VET should be taken in cooperation with the social partners and labour market. Thus, cooperation with social parties was developed. To support that; the interviewee IV-13 states that SVET was the first education project that confederation of employee association cooperated with the confederation of employer associations and later this cooperation is continued.

The interviewee IV-7 states that if you ask about what is not achieved with SVET Project it was quality assurance as it remained at policy level and no more improvement was achieved. Actually this issue also has not been achieved by other European countries since there is a problem about its practicability as it aims to enable that education should give the same result everywhere which is not possible.

Even if all the interviewees agree on the big contribution of the SVET Project on the VET system, they confess that; modular system implementation brought a problem with itself which was pass-fail grading system which is not compatible with the modular system. Thus, this policy is a half improved policy. Modular system enables to learn the part of the whole rather than taking the whole at once. But, that has not been achieved yet because of the grading system.

After discussing the effect of the SBEP and SVET Project separately I argue that SVET Project was more influential with regard to directing the existing policies. This may be due to the fact that SVET Project was focusing on a new issue which is the cooperation of VET schools with the labour market. Moreover, in the SVET Project as I mentioned before, there was more social parties involvement which increased the ownership and lead to the coercive policy learning. However, with regard to SBEP Project even if its budget is higher than the SVET Project it is mostly remembered with the schools that were built during the implementation of that project. Moreover, as the compulsory basic education was prolonged to 8 years renewing the curriculum of the schools was a prerequisite and SBEP Project provided a fund for that. In my opinion, what SBEP achieved was really needed in the existing structure and it did not bring a new policy area to the policies of the Ministry. However, SVET was a

new policy area to be worked on and due to that it was more influential. Another issue that I want to state is that; SBEP Project has various content like curriculum development, pre-school, public education, girls schooling, children under risk and etc. Thus, within that variety quality of the expected results may be low and that issue supports the idea of Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) which is “political complexity may constrain the policy transfer and policy development” and I mention about that issue clearly in the second chapter. On the other hand, SVET focuses on only VET policy and all the activities are linked to each other. Hence, I argue that SVET was more influential with regard to SBEP.

4.3.1.6. The Sustainability Problem of the EU Projects

In general, almost all the interviews of the SBEP and SVET could not say that sustainability of the projects is well carried out as they think that Ministry should struggle more to enable sustainability and turn the outcomes of the projects into policy. For that question, as all the answers are similar to each other rather than stating the codes of the interviewees I will make a general comment based on the speeches of the interviewees.

In Turkey sustainability is a problem, especially if you are doing a project on education. To enable sustainability in the education projects the main target group, which includes teachers and students, should be involved in the project more actively through various training and awareness raising activities. The managers, most of the time, are chosen as a target group but because of their heavy schedule it may be difficult for them to actively participate in the training activities.

In our education system, sustainability of a project is tried to be achieved through preparing a new project. In that process, the beneficiary tries to find solution to the problems emerged during the implementation of the previous project by preparing a new project. In this regard, sustainability of the SBEP Project is trying to be enabled with Increasing Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls Project, Strengthening Special Education Project, and Strengthening Pre-School Education Project. With regard to the sustainability of the SVET Project, Human Resources Development through

Vocational Education and Training, Promoting Life Long Learning in Turkey Project, Quality Assurance for Vocational Education and Training Project (IQVET) are prepared to enable the continuation of the SVET activities. Here, it is seen that the outcomes of the previous projects are the incomes of the current projects. I think this issue also supports my thesis; as the projects do not create the expected impact they tried to be sustained with the new projects. Then, this situation supports my main argument which is; “even if millions of Euros are spent with the EU funded projects the expected impact of the projects has been limited.”

Trainings are the best tool for sustainability, as with the trainings one can make investment on human resources which is the best way for enabling long-term sustainability. Furthermore, the teachers are in constant mobility and this leads to the multiplier effect for the sustainability of the education projects.

Moreover, all interviews agree on that concrete materials, like curriculums and textbooks of SBEP and vocational and occupational standards, modules, books and equipment supply of the SVET Project, are sustainable as they are used continuously and efficiently after the project is finalised. However, the problem with these documents is that; they should be renewed with the general budget of the Ministry and this is not always achieved and new projects are prepared to enable sustainability.

All in all; I argue that sustainability depends on the ownership and it has a direct link with the priorities of the Ministry, since the projects are used as a means for achieving the priorities of the ministry they should be sustainable. I think sustainability has an important impact on the policy development because previous relations are among the six factors that constrains or ease policy transfer. In this regard, enabling sustainability of the policies that is tried to be learned with the project will help the Ministry to get better result from new policies.

4.3.2. Key Findings about SBEP and SVET Projects

In this section of that chapter I will firstly explain key finding about the projects one by one and then I will make a general comment on both projects. My comments and findings are based on the formal documents, reports and interviews.

4.3.2.1. SBEP Project

If I examine each cases separately, I see that preparation phase of the SBEP was quite long as the preparation was started in 1999 and project was started to be implemented in 2002. There had been many amendments in the project activities due to the change on the policies of the Ministry, change in the bureaucratic system and various demands of the different parties as the process was long. At the beginning of the SBEP Project, the main focus was on the development of the educational materials and programs, human resources and management capacity; but, in time this had changed and works component became the main focus of that project and this restricted the project to reach its main objectives determined at the beginning²⁰⁶.

SBEP Project is regarded successful due to the having biggest budget that MoNE has benefitted up to now and it is the only project that has works component, If a project provides a concrete outcome like a building it creates more effect on the people and SBEP Project achieved that as the 70% of its budget was used for works component to build schools, dormitories, classrooms, sport hall and dining restaurant and etc. However, even if the construction component was regarded as the biggest contribution of the SBEP Project, since 75.740 million Euros were spent for the construction, with regard to the policy; the biggest contribution of the SBEP Project on the education system was the revision of the basic education programs and active

²⁰⁶ SBEP (2007). Support to Basic Education Project Pre-Evaluation Report. MEB Projeler Koordinasyon Merkezi Başkanlığı. p:5

learning philosophy of teaching program. The curriculum of the first 8 grades was revised with constructivist approach.

As stated in the Impact Analysis Report of the SBEP, the teachers think that the training activity was not effective enough as the duration of the training was limited. However, Education Reform Initiative states in the 2007 Monitoring Education Report that the activity for active learning for 15.000 teachers in 21 provinces was beyond the awareness raising²⁰⁷. On the other hand, a research carried out by Özdemir (2007) to observe and to monitor the effectiveness of the new education programme developed with SBEP Project shows that; only one teacher was using student based learning approach and others were using other approaches. This research actually shows that when the project is finalised the effect and sustainability of the project is decreasing day by day²⁰⁸.

SBEP Impact Analysis Report indicates that the activities towards disadvantaged people including the ones out of education system and illiterate adults were successful²⁰⁹. However, I think SBEP Project did not create the expected impact on the disadvantaged groups like the street children and it was only successful in preparing *Basic Research on Street Children Document*. This was due to the legal hindrance which states that a child must only be educated in a formal primary school until the age of 15 years. Thus, only the ones enrolled to the school and regarded to have possibility to become street children benefitted from guidance activities. This shows that if the legal structure does not support to the targeted policies, policy transfer cannot be achieved. Thus there should be coherency between existing implementation and target implementation as stated by Stone (2000) in the first chapter.

²⁰⁷ Education Reform Initiative (2007) Education Monitoring Report. p:54

²⁰⁸ Avenstrup, R. and Özdemir, S. (2007). Monitoring of Outcomes of SBEP Support – School Case Studies (Monitoring Report 10). p.28

²⁰⁹ Support to Basic Education Project: Impact Analysis Report. 2009.p:7

4.3.2.2. SVET Project

With regard to the SVET Project; the biggest influence of the Project was on increasing the participation of social parties to the modernisation of the VET system and SVET tried to build a bridge between demand and supply side in education. SVET Project strengthened the cooperation of MoNE with social partners and it promoted involvement of social partners to decision making process. Moreover, labour market analyses developed within the scope of the SVET was quite beneficial and it is still used. Moreover, European Training Foundation (ETF) states the importance of the SVET Project in 2010 Country Information Note Turkey Document as "SVET Project contributed to transparency and comparability in the Turkish education system due to the development of modular competence-based curricula to meet the needs of the labour market and establishment of the Vocational Qualifications Authority²¹⁰. However, ETF also states that the sustainability of the project was limited.

Another contribution of the SVET Project was the prolongation of the duration of the secondary education from 3 to 4 years with the 184 numbered decision of the Board of Education and this started to be implemented in 2005-2006 education year²¹¹.

As I see the biggest restriction of the SVET Project was about the inconsistency of the modular system with pass-fail grade system and insufficient training on the new modules for the teachers. Another problem about the modular system was about the technical infrastructure of the VET system; without providing necessary infrastructure the modular system was implemented and this is a half improved policy and Ministry did not support Project in this regard²¹².

Another issue that restricted the success of the SVET Project was limited training and awareness raising activities. The modules were prepared but duration of the

²¹⁰ European Training Foundation (2010) Turkey Country Information Note. p:5

²¹¹ Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project: Technical Assistance for Impact Analyses.2009. p:25

²¹² Akyüz, *ibid*, p:233

trainings was not enough to increase the competencies of the teacher and managing staff on the new modular system. Moreover, the communication activities to raise the interest of the public for VET education were limited. Thus, the demand for VET education was not satisfactory enough to meet the demand of the labour market.

Moreover, ETF states that the current in-service training programme for VET school principals is not compatible with the leadership dimensions introduced through the SVET project that mostly focuses on decentralised management. That shows that the sustainability of the training activities has not been achieved yet²¹³

Furthermore, the functionality of the VQA system is now limited with its establishment. The SVET Project was successful in making the VQA law. However, the problem is that VQA has not launched its activities fully since 2005. I think the main reason for that, which comes up again a hard challenge, is ownership and sustainability problem. Moreover, VQA has not increased its capacity fully yet as it uses the standards that were accepted in the SVET Project.

As I mentioned above the projects, in general, are quite successful in preparing concrete policy documents but when it is time to implementation this is always a problem. The document produced during SVET were; SWOT Analysis for VET, Turkey LLL Strategy Document, Turkey LLL Policy Document, Turkey VET Strategy Document, Improving Relations with Social Parties in VET Policy Document and Labour Market Need Analysis and etc. However, the most functional one of these documents is the Labour Market Need Analysis Document which was used during the development of the modules. All in all, I think SVET Project was successful at developing recommendation on VET at policy level by taking into account EU strategies.

²¹³ European Training Foundation (2010) Turkey Country Information Note. p:8

4.4. Key Findings and General Comments

As I stated at the introduction part of my thesis two questions are most important for that research: one is what is transferred and the other one is what the restrictions are. In this section, I will firstly try to explain what is transferred with the two sample projects and then I will mention about the restrictions of the EU funded projects.

When I examine the results of the interviews and all the other documents I see that there are two reasons for Turkey to benefit from the EU Funds which is the westernization policy and, thus, the EU membership issue so as to fasten the harmonisation process. The other reason is the limited budget to achieve some strategic and policy objectives.

About the content of the projects, it is clear that the EU is a trigger for the determination of the project objectives but these objectives overlap with the objectives and strategies of Turkey as both the EU and Turkey cooperate during the determination of the certain policy documents that are peculiar to Turkey. As I clarified above the objectives of the both programme were almost the same with the objectives of the National Program and Development Plans and it is seen that actually demand and supply is trying to be harmonised in that process. Thus, our needs correspond with the demand of the EU. However, what is interesting is that; even though these policies have been in the development plans for years, they have never been realized or put into practice until these two projects started. Thus, this supports the idea of Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) as they state that; direct relation between the problem and solution eases the policy transfer process.

Moreover, in the globalised world, states use policy transfer and learning as a tool for the development of policies of their states which necessitates observation of the policies of the other countries as stated by Hulme (2005) in the second chapter. Here, I think the aforementioned projects were effective with regard to the development of MoNE policies and in this regard Turkey harmonizes the EU policies, it does not directly adapt the policies of the EU because direct adaptation is impossible as the structure of the each country is different from each other. Since the harmonization

process is included in the policy transfer process; thus, I argue that the EU Projects are effective for transferring certain policies.

Moreover, the problem in the education system is another trigger that encourages Turkey to prepare EU projects. Actually the EU funded projects lay a basis for the change and if you want this change to be successful, one should cooperate with all actors. Here, cooperation with social partners, stakeholders and other decisions makers gains importance which complements the policy making process as stated by Hulme (2005) in the second chapter. Thus, it is seen that these two projects have promoted the basic change and development in the vision of the MoNE with regard to cooperation with social parties. When I compare two cases, SVET Project supports this argument. The number of the implementers and social parties was more in the SVET Project and as I said before, based on the formal documents and interviewees, SVET was more influential than the SBEP. I think these two issues are connected to each other with regard to having an influence on the policy transfer; as the number of the actors involved in the process increases, the possibility to transfer policies also increases.

On the other hand, the ideas regarding the participation of the stakeholders and other parties to the preparation phase differs. One group, most of whom includes indirect beneficiaries of the project, claims that the related parties were not involved in either the preparation or the implementation of the activities actively. They state that; they were only invited to the meetings which were among the EU procedures when they came to the meeting all the activities had been planned and only shared with them, but their ideas were not taken into account. However, other side, which mostly includes project implementers, claims that decisions of the all parties were reflected.

The main difference which may be regarded as both benefit and challenge for the policy transfer is the duration of the projects. The implementation process of the MEDA projects was 5 years but for IPA projects it is 2 years. Actually both are criticised. If the process is long, it leads to the change of the staff and this leads to the change on the policies which hinders the on-going of the project. On the other hand, if the duration of the project is long you can make pilot implementation which is necessary for the success of the common implementation but if the duration is short one cannot make pilot implementation.

Furthermore, if the setting is not ready for change, which is stated as the core of the policy transfer by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), policy transfer process may meet with obstacles and the targeted policy may not be achieved. Decentralisation of the education and management is an example for that. Both Projects aimed to bring decentralised implementation with its activities but they could not achieve it as neither the setting nor the borrowers were ready for that.

In general, all the interviews agree with the idea that the EU funded projects support economic development within the nation. The mobility of the people all around Turkey and activities carried out in the hotels at different provinces is quite important in order to reinvigorate the economy.

All in all, when I compare the success of the two sample projects, I understand that the content of the projects is a determining factor to increase the success of the projects. SBEP was focusing on an old area which was basic education and SVET was focusing on a new area which was increasing the cooperation between the labour market and education system. Thus, this new approach excites people to take on more initiative. Hence, I argue that SVET Project was more influential on the development of the new policies. With regard to SBEP, a certain policy was not transferred but the need of the existing system was supplied like curriculum development and school construction. On the other hand, SVET was more influential in the policy making process as it leads to a policy change about the cooperation with labour market in the VET education, bringing modular system for Vet schools, supporting the establishment of the VQA, and prolongation of the duration of the secondary education to four years.

With regard to the restrictions of the EU funded projects, a research carried out by Akyüz (2012) with 98 interviewees clarifies this by focusing on the following issues; “the provincial staffs was not involved in the activities, continuous change in the project team, lack of experience of the project team and lack of coordination with other parties.”²¹⁴

Another restriction that I deduce from the interviews is the lack of cooperation within the Ministry during these two projects which was due to the competing interest of the

²¹⁴ Akyüz, *ibid*, p:168

different Units at MoNE. At that time there were four DGs responsible for VET, which were; Director General of Secondary Education, Director General of Boys Technical Schools, Director General of Girls Technical Schools, Director General of Trade and Tourism Technical Schools, Director General of Apprenticeship and Non-formal Education and it was quite difficult to come to a consensus with so many DGs working for the same objective. However, this structure was changed with the 652 numbered Decree Law²¹⁵ dated 14 September 2011 and DGs related with VET combined under a single DG which is called as DG for Vocational and Technical Education and in addition DG for LLL established and DG for Secondary Education still exists. However, the most attractive side of these projects for all units was the study visit as it is difficult to carry out with national budget and most of the time the staff of the above DGs were only involved in the study visit activities.

Moreover, the result of the my empirical study shows that weakness of the management team due to the insufficient staff, lack of administrative capacity in the local provinces, lack of coordination, insufficient language competency and institutional instability is quite important for the success of the projects and this administrative technique is stated to be critical for the policy making process by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) in the second chapter. Here, especially staff of the project implementation unit is really important and for the period that SVET and SBEP Projects was implemented, it was difficult to find staff that both knew English and had qualifications on specific areas like VET and curriculum development.

On the other hand, the staff of the Technical Assistance Team knew English but they were not educators or familiar with Turkish education system. In this regard, the project implementation capacity of the Turkey can be questioned and this issue was criticised in the Progress Reports of Turkey prepared by the EC as (including the period between 2004 and 2007); “the EU funds are stated as to have positive effect on the economic and social harmonisation (2004), however, the capacity of the human resources should be developed to effectively use the funds, in order to avoid from restrictions of the absorption capacity strategic planning should be made for coming years (2005). Absorption capacity of the financial funds is not satisfactory,

²¹⁵ 652 numbered Decree Law concerning the organization and duties of the Ministry of National Education (Available at: http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/28054_652.html Accessed on 01.02.2013)

and actors in DIS are weak and should be strengthened, the quality of the projects and programmes should be developed (2007)²¹⁶.

Another difficulty is about inert bureaucracy of the Turkish Government and the EU which has really hardened the process as it may be difficult to get an answer from the EU and arrange an appointment with the Turkish bureaucrats. Moreover, as the duration of the project is quite long, the change of the staff is inevitable and that leads to change of the policies and this is a challenge for the achievement of the project activities. As the sample two projects were the first EU projects of the Ministry, it was difficult to explain the strict procedures of the EU to the policy makers as they could come with different demands since the budget of the project was regarded to be spent easily for any kind of expenditures.

Moreover, as stated above MoNE produces various types of strategy and policy documents and it determines objectives that are compatible with the current demand and trends in the world and it is really good at preparing written documents but what is lacking are the pathways to reach these objectives, coordination among various institutions and lack of ownership at high level.

With regard to the ownership, as it is limited within the Ministry this has caused to half-improved policies. This situation affects the success of the project outcomes, as the related units do not support the policy development process fully. What is more problematic here is that; two different units within the Ministry may work on the development of the similar policy which may lead to dilemma rather than supplement each other. To illustrate, SVET Project was carried out by the Project Coordination Centre; however, VET policies are developed by the Directorate General for Vocational and Technical Education. As there is lack of cooperation between these two units there may be half-improved or overlapping policies. Furthermore, as there is no binding law with regard to these projects the ownership issue will always be a problem.

Moreover, I think that when the project is finalised all the activities carried out and the outcomes of the project can be forgotten easily as the projects sticks by the persons and this is directly related with the ownership and sustainability issue again.

²¹⁶ Aktaşoğlu, *ibid*, p:9

However, the projects should be institutionalised by the management authority to get long term benefits from the project activities and as Levi-Faour and Vigoda Gadot (2004) stated in the first chapter this issue is related with the cognition and interest of the policy makers.

However, what should be accepted is that even if the projects do not make the expected impact, they raise awareness and enable people to think and to demand for better policies and I think this is the real benefit of the EU funded projects

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In every time and places education is an important functional tool not only for social and economic development of a state but also for ethical and economical welfare of an individual. Thus, development of the education policy should be among the first priorities of any state, since education is an investment for human being and that means it is an investment for sustainable economic growth. On the way to the European Union (EU) membership, investment on human resource gains more importance as the EU puts extra pressure on the improvement of the human resources capacity as the EU aims to implement common standards in all the areas like economic, social and cultural to improve the living standards of the society. Thus, integration with the EU means adopting and implementing common rules, procedures and standards. To achieve that the EU tries to transfer its policies to the member and candidate countries and it uses different tools to achieve policy transfer.

As stated at the beginning of that thesis, education is a soft policy area of the EU and it is not determined with the binding rules. To improve the education policy within the member and candidate countries, the EU draws a general framework and determines common objectives and wants states to reach at these objectives and while doing this, the EU uses Open Method of Coordination (OMC) and financial assistance as a means. OMC is the dissemination of the best practices through sharing knowledge and implementation and it is a new form of governance. On the other hand, financial assistance is used since the EU established to assist the implementation of the certain programs and policies.

Within the scope of that thesis, financial assistance tool is taken as a key discourse to understand the influence of the EU policy transfer process on the policy making process of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Because when the budget of a project is compared with its impact, unbalance can be seen clearly. Moreover, the previous complains, when the first the EU funded projects are prepared, regarding the inefficiencies of the education system, are almost the same with the current

complains; that brings one's mind the following question "Are the EU funded projects really efficient with regard to developing certain policies?" Thus, I discuss what has been done and what has not been done within the framework of policy transfer and policy learning concepts by taking two cases as samples. These two cases are; Support to Basic Education Project (SBEP) and Strengthening Vocational Education and Training Project (SVET).

These projects are chosen due to their being among the first EU funded projects of MoNE and due to their content since they focus on the two main policy areas of the education policy; basic education and vocational education and quality of these policies is still a controversial issue. Thus, I have chosen these two projects to understand how influential they are on the policy making process of the EU. These two projects are funded from EU MEDA II fund and a short explanation about the history of the EU funds is provided in the third chapter to clarify why the first EU funded projects of MoNE is started to be implemented in 2002 but not earlier. The main reason for that; after candidacy the amount of the grants increased and procedures became easier. Following that the current financial assistance tool of the EU which is called as Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) tool is explained as the sustainability of the SBEP and SVET Projects is enabled with the IPA Projects. However, here the type of fund is not important with regard to policy transfer, what is important here whether it is a grant or as a credit and MEDA II fund enabled Ministry to use grant support for the first time.

This thesis aims to clarify the influence of the EU financial assistance on the policy making process of MoNE with policy transfer and policy learning concepts and there was a disagreement among the interviews whether financial assistance leads to policy transfer or policy learning. First of all, I think we cannot separate these two concepts from each other as policy learning is the integral stage of policy transfer and this argument is supported by Kerber and Eckardt (2007) in the second chapter. Moreover, both concepts aim to achieve the same thing; which is policy development and policy change. However, I think policy transfer is harder to achieve than policy learning because of the resistance of the actors and restrictions of the system that is analysed in the two cases. However, my empirical study shows that policy transfer achieves greater policy change at the end.

Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) states that if there is a change in any seven components of the policy making process, then this means that there is a policy transfer. These components are; policy goals, structure and content, policy instruments or administrative techniques, institutions, ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts and negative lessons. These components have helped me to understand that both SBEP and SVET achieved policy transfer; as SBEP has led to an awareness raising about the girls schooling and public education which can be regarded as a change in ideas and attitudes. In addition to that SVET has led to change in vocational education understanding which is cooperation with labour market and modular system and this is related with the change in policy goals, ideas, attitudes, concepts and content. Moreover, it is seen that in SVET Project policy transfer process has been carried out more successfully due to the involvement of the various parties and that supports the statement of Stone (2000) which is “policy transfer necessitates multi-organisational context”.

Furthermore, Levi-Faur and Vigoda-Gadot (2004) states either all content or only the necessary part of the policy can be transferred and cognitions and interests play an important role here. However, my empirical study shows that rather than transferring all content, transferring only the necessary part is more achievable because of the relationship between complexity and transferability and also need and transferability.

Moreover, if I accept the policy learning term as what Rhodes and Citi (2006) indicate which is development of common indicators, I think during the financial assistance process the policy transfer starts at the beginning of the process which is project preparation phase when Turkey develops common project indicators with the EU. However, I disagree here with Stone (2000) as she disregards the structure and notes that states can adopt anything. My empirical study refutes that argument by clarifying that if the actors and structure is not ready for change; any step remains at the activity level and does not turn into policy.

To understand the relation between financial assistance and policy transfer and policy learning better, firstly the theoretical explanation of the policy transfer and policy learning discourses are made in the second chapter and in the third chapter the background information of the financial aids of the EU is explained. Because understanding what is achieved and not achieved in the practice and the reasons of it

mostly depends on the understanding what is told in the theory. The reason for focusing on both policy transfer and policy learning concepts together is due to their having different meanings even if they sound the same. Policy transfer is the transfer of knowledge from one setting to another setting and it is coercive. On the other hand, policy learning is also transfer of know-how but it is a willing process for both sides. Here, both sides mean borrower and lender and these two actors are quite important for both policy transfer and policy learning since they direct the process of change as observed in my empirical study.

With regard to Turkey, in the field of education, the EU tries to transfer its policies through the means of financial aids. This may bring one's mind that the EU uses soft *acquis* in the area of education which means there is no binding rule in the educational policy and this may sound contradictory as policy transfer process is a coercive process. However, I think through the use of directives, regulations, declarations and other documents, all of which are a kind of recommendation, the EU makes indirect pressure on the candidate countries to transfer its own policies. In this regard, the EU fund can be regarded as a tool to carry out policy transfer process efficiently. Because the EU, as a donor, has a right to demand the implementation of the certain policies Turkey, as a beneficiary, is responsible for carrying out certain activities.

In order to understand whether policy transfer process was carried out efficiently with EU funded projects in the educational policy of Turkey, seven questions, which tries to clarify the whole process of the policy transfer and written by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), are taken as a basis to form the questions of empirical study. In this regard, among all seven questions, two questions are regarded critical to support my main argument and come to a conclusion. These questions are "what is transferred and what the restrictions of the policy transfer are."

The theoretical research carried out in the first and second chapter and the empirical study carried out in the third chapter shows that policy transfer is a hard process as there are many factors and actors that affect the on-going of the process. Complexity in the policy, mutual interaction, pressure within the institution and pressure towards implementation, the relation with existing policies and language pressure are stated by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) as the factors that either ease or constrain the process.

The assessment of the two sample projects shows that complexity in the policy, mutual interaction, institutional pressure, pressure towards implementation and previous relations are all influential on the effectiveness of these projects. To illustrate, the content of the SBEP Project was diverse from basic education, to public education and from girls schooling to children at risk and this caused the shift of the focal point. However, this does not mean that SBEP was not influential, it was influential but not on the development of policies but on the improvement of basic education curriculum and awareness raising on students based learning, girls schooling and public education. On the other hand, the content of the SVET Project was on development of the relation between vocational education and labour market and strengthening vocational and technical education. As the goal of SVET was clear and had one target, it evolved slowly by interacting with social parties like unions, non-governmental organisations and labour market. This led to the ownership of that project by different parties as a result of mutual interaction. This situation shows that there is an inverse proportion between political complexity and its transferability. Moreover, this is actually an indication for the effect of the SVET on the vocational education policy of the Ministry as it led to a change in vet policy understanding of MoNE and this led to the modular based teaching to be implemented in the vocational and technical education schools.

Moreover, my study shows that the need of the borrower side also affects the policy transfer as it leads to institutional pressure for the implementation of the policies. Regarding that after the 8 years compulsory education law was accepted revision of the basic education curriculum was a real need for the Ministry and they regarded SBEP Project as an opportunity. On the other hand issues, like girls schooling, children at risk and public education were not among the priorities, so there was not an ownership for these activities. Actually this is an indication that there is direct proportion between the need and transferability. In SBEP case there was also pressure toward implementation as the pilot implementation was supported by the Ministry. Regarding that, I claim that financial assistance of the EU was a driving force for SVET Project but it was an opportunity for SBEP Project.

All these factors show that; there are various components of the policy transfer and either of them can be influential on the achievement of that process. These

components are stated by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) as; policy goals, structure and content, policy instruments or administrative techniques, institutions, ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts and negative lessons. If the policy goals of the borrower overlap with the policy goals of the lender, it eases the process.

In the sample projects it is seen that the objectives of the MoNE are in line with the EU objectives and this idea is supported in the 3th chapter. To be able to analyse all the process efficiently the national and international policy documents and reports are also examined to compare the demand and need relation. However, more specifically National Development Plan (NDP), Decision of the Education Council and EU Progress Reports for Turkey are analysed starting from the period that these projects are planned and up to now. This provided me an insight to observe what has been changed in the priorities and objectives of the MoNE and EU. At that point, the question of whose objectives are most dominant may come to mind. I argue that neither the EU nor Turkey since objectives are almost common for all the states as they are determined by taking into account the global needs of the states, what differs here is the policy implementation and this is what the EU tries to transfer.

Regarding the NDP, Decision of the Education Council and Progress Reports, I argue that the objectives and main arguments stated in these formal documents are compatible with the objectives and goals written in the SBEP and SVET Projects; such as basic education, public education, pre-school education and vocational education. However, the interesting thing is that; even if 5 years have been passed since these projects are completed almost the same issues are still discussed in the most updated version of these formal documents. That brings mind to the question that; whether activities carried out and the policies implemented are efficient or not. I assert that the objectives of the sample projects have not been achieved as expected; but they have raised a general awareness. The reason for that can be stated as lack of ownership of the decision makers. In order to increase the ownership of the borrower, the EU decided to establish Decentralised Implementation System (DIS) in the candidate countries. With that system, the EU lets the countries plan their own programmes within certain framework. However, my study shows that DIS is not functional enough to affect the implementation phase and it functions as an approval mechanism. Here, the biggest role belongs to the decision makers and implementers of the beneficiary which is MoNE in my study.

In the two sample cases, it is seen that ideas and attitudes of the policy makers, institutional ideology, structure and other policy instruments of the Ministry were effective during the implementation phases. This takes us to the critical determinant of the policy transfer process which is actors. In the two sample cases that I have worked on; I see that decision makers and implementers in the MoNE, are the most influential actors in that process. However, the function of the non-governmental institutions, unions which form the social parties can not be disregarded since policy transfer necessitates collective learning and this means ownership of the policies by all parties because education is such a comprehensive issue that almost all sides should be involved in while taking decisions and implementing policies. Furthermore, the role of the EU Delegation also cannot be disregarded as they contribute to the process with their comments and it represents the EU which is the lender side.

The empirical study part constitutes the critical chapter of this thesis as the assessment of the interviews is made and two critical questions find their answers. The assessment of the interviews is made by comparing formal documents and interviews results. The benefit of comparing what formal documents indicate with what people state that; one can go beyond the implementation and understand the political or structural reasons of what is done and what is not done. In this regard, I argue that intra-institutional conflict, insufficient coordination within the Ministry and lack of cooperation with social parties is a hindrance for policy development in MoNE. Intra-institutional conflict and lack of cooperation within the Ministry leads to half improved policy which is not effective with regard to making any change in the existing policy.

In general, it is observed that policy transfer as a term is not preferred to be used by decision makers and instead they prefer to use the term “harmonization” since they regard the policy transfer term as a mere copying. However, policy transfer necessitates harmonisation in its process as mere copying is not possible in any system as the structure of the each state is different from each other. Policy transfer may be needed at any time as it is a solution to the changing circumstances and any country may look for experimented policy implementations since the policy transfer is a road map for exploring different policy making processes as stated by Steffenson (2002) in the second chapter of this thesis.

With regard to “what the restrictions are” question, the resistance of the policy makers for policy change and insufficient involvement of the social parties to the policy making process can be answers. The empirical study shows that policy makers of MoNE resist to the change during the implementation of these two projects as change may bring many workload together with itself due to the inert structure of the hierarchy. Thus, the policy makers wants the EU funds to be used more on concrete materials like writing report, providing supplies to the schools as they want to regard financial aid as an opportunity not as a driving force. In contrast to that, experts, who are implementers, are more eager for policy change as they believe in that it may prevent the monotony in the bureaucracy. However, the good side with the resistance is that it may be a sign for policy change. Normally effective policy change follows a bottom-up process, but in the case of Turkey it follows top-down- process and this also shows that the policy making structure in Turkey should change.

Furthermore, what should also be questioned here is that; while MoNE is successful in forming certain types of policy documents why it comes across with resistance especially when it wants to turn the theory into practice. The reason for that may be the EU’s not having any binding rules with regard to education, as it uses soft *acquis* and this may lead to a resistance with regard to policy transfer. In my opinion, this shows that the EU does not an efficient policy lender in education as it uses soft *acquis* and Turkey is not an efficient policy borrower as the policy transfer process is not a collective learning since all actors are not involved in the policy learning process and there is lack of ownership. In this regard, I argue that the EU functions as a trigger for the policy transfer and MoNE functions as policy learner.

On the other hand, these two cases show that; in Turkey involvement of the social parties, non-governmental institutions and think tanks to the policy making process is always limited and this leads to half improved or not supported policies. One of the basic differences of the SBEP and SVET Project is that the involvement of the stakeholders and social parties to the projects activities is more supported in SVET; thus, SVET policies were more influential. Hence, I assert that involvement of more units and parties to the project activities eases the policy transfer process.

Furthermore, in these two cases time consuming bureaucratic process at both the EU side and the Ministry side is a restriction for increasing the effectiveness of the projects. The prolongation of the time between planning and implementation also leads the policy transfer to lose its effectiveness as in that time period the policies of MoNE may change as the bureaucrats may change and this is a real obstacle for policy transfer; since a new decision maker means a new policy. Furthermore, the change at the lower level like experts also leads to problem for the on-going of the project as understanding the main policy objectives behind the activities takes time. In addition to that issue, insufficient capacity of the national and international experts and limited knowledge of common language also cause communicational problems and hinder policy transfer. During the implementation of the two projects, the key experts of the technical assistance team were foreigners and finding the right counterpart who both has technical knowledge and knows English was a challenge and this caused some misunderstanding between MoNE and technical assistance team.

Another restriction that leads to half improved policies is the intra-institutional conflict. Both SVET and SBEP Projects were carried out within the premises of the Project Coordination Centre which is a unit that prepares and implements international projects. The other units of MoNE, whose policy area is basic education, vocational education and public education, were in conflict with MoNE as they claimed that these projects should have been carried out by their units because of the relevance of the topic. Due to that disagreement, there was a lack of cooperation and communication within the Ministry which led to half improved policy. This may mean policy failure in the policy transfer literature. In the policy transfer process the targeted policy should have connection with the existing policies, but these kinds of intra-institutional problems may be obstacles for the development of comprehensive policies.

The success of the projects is evaluated based on the outputs of the project without paying attention to their functionality and almost all the documents include preparation of policy and strategy documents. However, these papers are not influential in the policy making process as they are not taken into account by policy makers and after the project is finalised they remain as an unused policy document as they are not binding. However, all these documents are prepared as a remedy to the

problems in the education and when these documents are not regarded as a policy document by higher authority, these problems continue to occur and this leads to preparation of a new project to find solution just to the same problems. Thus, an outcome of a project becomes an income of another project. Another disadvantage of that, as these documents are not put into practice, the project does not create the expected outcome and this causes a negative perception at the policy makers and so this leads to lack of ownership for upcoming projects.

With regards to what is transferred questions the following arguments can be concluded from the interviews; the programmes having single and related goals are more transferable than the programs with diversified goals. As variety of the goals in a single project may lead to complexity and this constrains the policy transfer process. Thus, SVET, having the goal of improvement of vocational education, is more influential for policy transfer. The programmes with reasonable outcomes are more liable to be influential. To illustrate, in the SBEP Project the activity, regarding to training street children with non-formal education programs was not achievable due to the hindrance of the legal arrangements which states a child must only be educated in a formal primary school until the age of 15 years. Also, involvement of more parties eases the policy transfer as in the SVET Project as it cooperated with the labour market and unions during the implementation.

Another issue is the harmonisation of the policies. If the existing policy and target policy are compatible with each other, the transfer occurs more easily as the modular based curriculum development in the SVET Project and student based curriculum development of the SBEP Project.

As stated beforehand, the SVET Project was more influential as it focused on a new area like cooperation between labour and vocational education which was untouched area at that time and improving the policies in a new area may interest more people. However, SBEP was focusing on the existing area which was basic education and as the 8 year compulsory school law had been just accepted, it was not interesting enough to raise the awareness of the policy makers.

Whether the projects are influential or not on the policy making process of the MoNE, all interviewees agree on the lack of ownership with regard to sustainability and sustainability of the projects are tried to be achieved with the new EU funded

projects which may prolong the time and that may lead the policy transfer process to lose its effectiveness. Thus, I assert that there is direct proportion between the sustainability and ownership and also between ownership and transferability.

In order to increase the effectiveness of the EU funded projects; the involvement of the different units within the Ministry and variety of the social parties like unions, non-governmental organisations, think tanks, local administration should be supported and they should be informed during the whole process and their ideas should be reflected to the related project documents. This will also prevent intra-institutional conflict and increase the possibility of the ownership. The decision makers at all level should be informed about the planned projects.

My empirical study shows that; the project should build legitimacy in order to increase ownership and sustainability. The objectives of the new project should be compatible with the existing policies and there should be a real need for the target policy. Moreover, in the two sample cases I see that; the quality of experts is related with the quality of transfer so the experts working on the MoNE and technical assistance side should be well-qualified. The hierarchy for the approval of the documents prolongs the process and this may lead to inefficiency. This hierarchy should be decreased. The period between the planning and implementation should be shortened to keep the needs compatible with the project objectives. The strict EU procedures may cause the loss of encouragement. The process should be made more flexible.

With the help of the documentation search and empirical study, it is observed that sustainability issue leads to dilemma for the interviewees as it is hard to achieve when the project does not lead to change at policy level and when there is lack of ownership. Furthermore, the interviewees state that sustainability is tried to be achieved with new projects that raise the question on the efficiency of the new projects and so the efficiency of the sustainability again. Since sustainability is like a cycle turns around itself, I claim that the biggest restriction of this thesis is sustainability issue. Thus, based on that argument further research question can be “How can the sustainability of the projects and ownership of the MoNE be enabled?” I think this question is critical to examine as Turkey does not only have problems in

enabling sustainability of the EU projects but also enabling sustainability of the general education policies in general.

Moreover, my empirical study has enabled me to reach at some hypotheses which can form a basis for further researches. These are;

- Policy transfer necessitates multi-organisational context.
- If the actors and structure is not ready for the change; any step remains at the activity level and does not turn into policy.
- If the project focuses on an untouched area, the transfer occurs more easily.
- The programs with reasonable outcomes are more liable to be influential.
- The programs having single and related goals are more transferable than the programs with diversified goals.
- Any project should build legitimacy in order to increase ownership and sustainability.

All the issues mentioned above and my empirical study shows that there is a strong relation between the policy transfer and EU financial assistance, however, the success of that relation mostly depends on the actors, structure and needs of the both borrower and lender side. With regard to Turkey and the EU case, effective policy transfer in education, which has a broad and complex structure, may necessitate structural change in the policy making process of Ministry of National Education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The Projects Implemented by MoNE since 2002

The Completed Projects

Name of the Project	Support for Basic Education Project ²¹⁷ (TEDEP)
Implementation period	2002-2007
Type of funding	EU-MEDA
Budget(millions) €	100
Aim of the project	The overall aim of the project is to improve the living conditions of the population in the most disadvantaged rural, urban and sub-urban areas by increasing the level of education in the overall perspective of reducing poverty. This includes support for children, young people and adults presently excluded from basic education.

Name of the Project	Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System Project ²¹⁸ (SVET)
Implementation period	2002-2007

²¹⁷ <http://tedp.meb.gov.tr/main.php?ID=01-01> (Accessed on 09.01.2013)

²¹⁸ Guidelines for Grant Applicants Responding to the Call for Proposals: Strengthening Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey. The Representation of the European Commission to Turkey. 2004.pp:1-20

Type of funding	EU-MEDA
Budget(millions) €	58.2
Aim of the project	The overall purpose of the project is to strengthen Turkish VET system in line with the socio-economic needs and lifelong learning principles, is one of them. The main objective of SVET, implemented with the financial and technical support of the European Commission, is to bring the Turkish VET system up to the EU standards.

Name of the Project	Modernisation of Vocational and Technical Education and Training Project ²¹⁹ (MVET)
Implementation period	2003-2007
Type of funding	EU-MEDA
Budget(millions) €	18.5
Aim of the project	The overall goal of the project is to further modernize and adapt the system to make vocational education and training more responsive to the socio-economic needs of the country and to the key principles of life-long learning.

Name of the Project	Support for Human Resources Development Through Vocational Education and Training ²²⁰ (HRDVET)
Implementation	2008-2010

²¹⁹ EU Funded Programs in Turkey 2003 – 2004: European Union: European Commission Representation to Turkey. December 2003. Pp:32

²²⁰ Support for Human Resources Development Through Vocational Education and Training Project, Inception Report. June-August 2008.pp:5

period	
Type of funding	EU- Grant
Budget(millions) €	16
Aim of the project	The overall objective of the project is to contribute to human resources development by upgrading and modernising initial and continuing VET in selected provinces within a life-long learning perspective by establishing close relations between the labour market and vocational education institutions.

Name of the Project	Capacity Building Support Project for Ministry of National Education Project ²²¹ (CBMoNE)
Implementation period	2008-2010
Type of funding	EU-Grant
Budget(millions) €	3.7
Aim of the project	The overall purpose of the project is to assist the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in implementing a restructuring process aimed at improving its institutional capacity as well as governance, organization and management, financing, and evaluation-monitoring capacities in order to make the pre-school to secondary education system more effective and efficient.

Name of the Project	Education Framework Project, Phase I-II ²²²
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²²¹ Capacity Building Support Project for Ministry of National Education Project, GZFT Analysis Final Report. March 2009. pp:1-30

²²² Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Projeler Koordinasyon Merkezi Başkanlığı 2010-2014 Stratejik Planı. Ankara. 2009.pp:41

Implementation period	2002-2011
Type of funding	EIB
Budget(millions) €	63+50
Aim of the project	It aims to disseminate usage of communication technologies in primary school level through enabling all schools to have internet connection and ICT classrooms.

Name of the Project	Strengthening Statistical Capacity of the Ministry of National Education Project ²²³
Implementation period	2010-2012
Type of funding	EU-IPA I
Budget(millions) €	2.050
Aim of the project	The MoNE aims at strengthening the statistical structure which will constitute a basis for developing MoNE Decision Support System; using all data to be obtained in management services and creating an integrated questioning system by developing indicators required in decision making processes of the decision makers.

²²³ Strengthening Statistical Capacity of MoNE Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 2
(Accesed on 17.01.2013. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/tr_07_02_23_strengthening_the_statistics_by_mo_ne_en.pdf

ONGOING PROJECTS

Name of the Project	Promotion of Lifelong Learning in Turkey Project ²²⁴ I
Implementation period	2011-2013
Type of funding	EU-IPA IV
Budget(millions) €	15
Aim of the project	The main objective is to provide individual's employability in different learning and age levels, realizing transformation with/from learning individual to learning society then learning Turkey and developing human resources capacity by promotion, of lifelong learning in Turkey in the information society lived.

Name of the Project	Strengthening Pre-School Education Project ²²⁵
Implementation period	2011-2014
Type of funding	EU-IPA-I
Budget(millions) €	16.5
Aim of the project	The project aims to contribute to improve the enrolment and attendance of disadvantaged children and their families to day-care and preschool education.

²²⁴ Promotion of LIFELONG Learning in Turkey Project, Inception Report. July 2011.pp:1

²²⁵ Strengthening Pre-School Education Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 1
(Accessed on 19.01.2013. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2008/tr080106_strengthening_pre-school_education-final_en.pdf)

Name of the Project	Increasing Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls Project ²²⁶ I
Implementation period	2011-2013
Type of funding	EU-IPA IV
Budget(millions) €	16
Aim of the project	The overall objective of this operation is to enhance investment in human capital by increasing the quality of education, improving the linkage between education and the labour market, and raising enrolment rates at all levels of education, especially for girls.

Name of the Project	Strengthening Special Education Project ²²⁷
Implementation period	2011-2014
Type of funding	EU-IPA I
Budget(millions) €	7 M €
Aim of the project	To contribute to social inclusion of the disabled individuals within disadvantaged groups by improving the special education services in Turkey.

²²⁶ Increasing School Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls Grant Scheme: Guidelines for grant applicants.2008. pp:1-22

²²⁷ Strengthening Special Education Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 1-47
(Accessed on 17.01.2013. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2008/tr080105_strengthening_special_education-final_en.pdf)

Name of the Project	Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training in Turkey Project ²²⁸ -I
Implementation period	2012-2014
Type of funding	EU-IPA IV
Budget(millions) €	20
Aim of the project	The overall objective of the project is to promote investment in human resources by increasing the quality of VET and improving the linkages between the labour market and vocational education

Name of the Project	Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Project ²²⁹
Implementation period	2011-2014
Type of funding	EU-Direct Contract
Budget(millions) €	9.1
Aim of the project	This project is an initiative which supports the institutional capacity of MoNE with the aim of growing up individuals who has adapted democracy culture and universal values and are respectful to human rights and socially responsible, and

²²⁸ Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance Human Resources Development Component Operation Identification Sheet. Pp:2 (Accesed on 19.01.2013. Retrieved from: <http://ikg.gov.tr/web/Portals/0/Docs/ois/Improving%20the%20Quality%20of%20Vocational%20Education%202.pdf>)

²²⁹ Democratic Citizenship and Human Right Education Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 1-45 (Accesed on 17.01.2013. Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2009/tr2009_013601democratic_citizenship_and_human_rights_education_en.pdf)

	know and use their own rights to contribute to a MoNE democratic society
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UPCOMING PROJECTS

Name of the Project	Fight Against Violence Towards Children Project ²³⁰
Implementation period	2013-2015
Type of funding	EU
Budget(millions) €	3
Aim of the project	The overall objective is to contribute to the protection of children against all forms of violence of a physical, emotional, verbal and psychological nature to attain high level of health protection, well being and social cohesion

Name of the Project	Promotion of Gender Equality in Education Project ²³¹
Implementation period	2013-2015
Type of funding	EU
Budget(millions) €	3.6
Aim of the project	The overall objective of the project is to contribute to

²³⁰ Fight Against Violence Towards Children Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 3
(Accesed on 11.01.2013. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2010/127_tr2010013607_fight_against_violence_towards_children.pdf

²³¹ Promotion of Gender Equality in Education Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 1
(Accesed on 11.01.2013. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2010/125_tr2010013604_gender_equality_in_education.pdf)

	promoting gender equality all throughout the society
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Name of the Project	Increasing Primary School Attendance Rate Of Children Project ²³²
Implementation period	2013-2015
Type of funding	EU
Budget(millions) €	3.2
Aim of the project	The overall objective of the project is to increase the enrolment rates in primary education which covers the first 8 years of the 12-year compulsory education in Turkey

In addition to these projects second phases of Promotion of Lifelong Learning in Turkey Project, Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training in Turkey Project, Increasing Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls Project will also be implemented after the first ones are completed. Now second phases of these projects are at the preparation phase.

²³² Increasing Primary School Attendance Rate of Children Project. Standard Summary Project Fiche . pp: 3. (Accesed on 11.01.2013. Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/ipa/2010/144_tr20100136.05schoolattendancerateofchildren.pdf)

APPENDIX B

The Code of the Each Interviewee

Number of the Interviewee	Position in the Institution	Position in the Project	Project	Code
Interviewee 1	Head of Group	Expert	SBEP	IB-1
Interviewee 2	Head of Group	Expert	SVET	IV-2
Interviewee 3	Consultant	EXPERT	SBEP	IB-3
Interviewee 4	Expert	Director	SVET	IV-4
Interviewee 5	Expert	Expert	SBEP	IB-5
Interviewee 6	Head of Group	Expert	SBEP	IB-6
Interviewee 7	Academician	Expert	SVET	IV-7
Interviewee 8	Expert	expert	SVET	IV-8
Interviewee 9	Head of Group	expert	SVET	IV-9
Interviewee 10	Expert	Director	SBEP	IB-10
Interviewee 11	Expert	Director-TAT	SBEP	IB-11
Interviewee 12	Expert	Director-TAT	SVET	IV-12
Interviewee 13	Expert	Stakeholder	SVET	IV-13
Interviewee 14	Expert	Observer	SBEP-SVET	IBV-14
Interviewee 15	Expert	Stakeholder		IV-15

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü

☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : SELEK MEYDANLI

Adı : DİLEK

Bölümü : AVRUPA ÇALIŞMALARI

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Project Based Policy Transfer: The Case Of EU Projects
Implemented By The Ministry Of National Education

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

☒

Doktora

☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☒

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: