

# A BLOW TO THE EDUCATION

These are some scenes from the parliamentary sessions. Members of the Government Party didn't allow a democratic debate.

## Government used violence to the opposition in every scale.

For example, Confederation of Trade Unions of Public Employees (KESK), a major union in Turkey, protested the bill in various cities with mass meetings. Police forces, interfered every single meeting with a disproportional force and many unionist are subjected to the violence. Prime Minister argued that the police force was the one who was beaten.

In the Commission meeting of the proposal more than 100 of members of the AKP came into the commission room, sit on the seats of the opposition members, bargaged the chair and attacked the opposition members of the parliament.

Within this chaotic atmosphere, Chairman of the commission read all the articles of the proposal and then declared they are all accepted, despite all the objections.

In the general meetings of the parliament, AKP members also attacked to the opposition members using force to the speakers.



April 2012  
UMUT ORAN

## A BLOW TO THE EDUCATION

Justice and Development Party (AKP) accepted a new proposal about the education system in Turkey which will directly affect the lives of approximately 16 million students and 700.000 teachers.

Education system, in any country, has a fundamental impact in the nation economy, society and daily life. With a proper education system, country will give the necessary abilities and knowledge to the young generations that they need in the future.

Turkish education system was simple. Children were starting school at the age of 6, they were attending the compulsory primary education for 8 years and then they can choose to attend noncompulsory higher education in a vocational or ordinary regular high school.

With the new proposal, AKP changed everything.

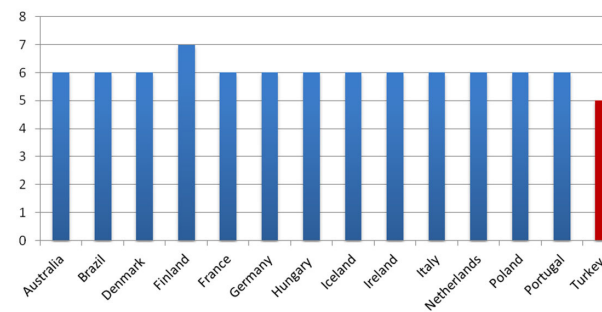
### AKP's Proposal: Dividing the Education

With the new law accepted by the AKP votes in the parliament, Turkish education system changed all over. From now on,

- Children will start the school at the age of 5.
- They will attend 4 years of compulsory primary education.
- Than they can choose to attend regular middle level schools or vocational religious schools at the age of 9.

- After 4 years of middle education, children can choose either to attend a vocational school or an ordinary high school or to study at home.
- A compulsory religious education will be given by the teachers at the middle level schools and they can choose also to get an optional study about the Kur'an-ı Kerim (Holy book) and the life of the Hz. Muhammed (Prophet).

### STARTING AGE TO THE FIRST GRADE



### Objections and Violence

From civil society to the parties in the parliament, great part of the country objected the proposal. For example, TUSIAD, a major employer's association in Turkey, argued that the proposal will diminish the efforts to keep girls in the education system. According to many academics, the proposal will lead the girls to their houses rather than school and will negatively impact the ratio of the women turnout in the formal education.

The Association for Support and Education for Women Candidates (KADER), the Turkey Civil Society Steering Committee of CEDAW, the Flying Broom Women's Communication and Research Association and the Women's Human Rights-New Solutions Association

were just three out of many women organizations that criticized the law proposal. In the media, the proposal is called "4+4+4" because it foresees to split the now compulsory eight-year school education into two sections of four years plus four years at secondary school.

The women organizations claimed that this model was a step backwards. They also deemed it especially problematic with regard to the right to education of girls.

Even though the proposal seems to be increasing the duration of compulsory education from eight to twelve years, in fact it actually reduces it to four years, the organizations warned.

- It paves the way to forced underage marriages of girls.
- The duration of compulsory education which has been at least five years since 1930 will be decreased to four years.
- Girls will be drawn away from education after having finished the first four years of primary education.
- The Council of Ministers will decide on which child will be going to which branch of which vocational school. This prepares the ground for raising stereotype people. Civil opposition mainly argued that
- Starting a child in the age of 5 to the primary education is not appropriate for these children are in the age of preschool education
- To decide to go to a vocational or a regular school at the age of 9 is not appropriate.
- The proposal will lead many girls to their homes for cultural reasons and women attendance to the education ratio will fall

AKP simply denied all the arguments and accused the opposers as a protector of the 28 February Coup.