

NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

NECE Workshop: The Impacts of National Identities for European Integration as a Focus of Citizenship Education

INPUT PAPER

Introductory Remarks to Session 2:

Contribution from Turkey

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Tallinn, Estonia 8 - 11 September, 2007

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INPUT ON TURKISH CITIZENSHIP

Since the formation, The Turkish Republic has adopted a republican understanding of citizenship. Giving primacy to the state over the citizen/ individual and duties over rights were the significant characteristics. In my input I will focus on several examples of how this republican understanding of citizenship was institutionalized in Turkey. In my previous studies, I made a periodization of the republican history as follows: 1923-1946 From the formation to the transition to multiparty politics; 1946-1980 Multiparty politics and Military interventions of 1960 and 1980; post-1980 period Questions of Democratization, Identity Politics, Accession to EU and Globalization. I will touch upon those periods and issues and problems of citizenship in those periods.

Following this historical background I will focus on the recent period. Main topics will be: the process of integration with EU and its reflections upon Turkish citizenship; studies on citizenship education; most recent discussions about citizenship.

The year 2007 has been an interesting period for students of citizenship. Certain developments have shown the need for a reconstruction of citizenship understanding. Among those developments are the assassination of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink and his funeral; the debates over the Presidential elections; the e-memorandum of the Turkish military; the outcome of July 22 elections and the most recent debates over statements of the director of Turkish History Institution, who implied over the documentation of people's ethnic or religious origins, which in a way highlights the Turkification process of the Republic. In sum, it might be suggested that the republican understanding of citizenship in Turkey has come to a stalemate and the solution seems to be a more liberal understanding emphasizing the language of rights.