



Turkey

Country Report on ICT in Education

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1. THE EDUCATION CONTEXT

1.1. Key educational challenges and priorities

According to Strategic Plan of Ministry of National Education (MoNE), 2015-2019, Key challenges in the Turkish Education System can be grouped in three main categories;

1. Access to education and training (Strategic plan of MoNE includes some key challenges both for public and vocational education)
2. Quality in education and training and
3. Institutional capacity.

Based on these challenges, the “Strategic Plan of Ministry of National Education (MoNE), 2015-2019” states the following priorities:

- To ensure equal access for all individuals to education,
- To increase students’ attendance and completion rates at all levels until the end of the planned term,
- To ensure access to high quality information for students and to foster related skills, attitudes and behaviour by fostering entrepreneurial and innovative thinking and creativity, language skills, self-confidence, responsibility, and interest in learning and communicating,
- To increase both students’ participation rates to activities that support their physical, emotional and mental growth, and the level of their academic success.
- To provide students with training on necessary skills to increase their employability (in the framework of lifelong learning).
- To increase the students’ language proficiency and international student/teacher mobility by using innovative approaches in education.
- To improve the management and organisation structures, human resources, finance, technology etc., in order to make the education system more effective and efficient and to improve its’ quality and access to it.
- To ensure an effective running of Ministry services by developing the structure and organisation of the Ministry’s human resources.
- To establish suitable educational environments equipped according to specified standards and to create an effective and efficient financial management structure by the end of the planned term.
- To create a management and organization structure which is pluralist, participatory, transparent, accountable and supported by an efficient monitoring and evaluating system to reduce bureaucracy until the end of the planned term.

Priorities as regards the role of ICT in Education have been outlined as follows:

- The [FATİH](#) (Movement of Enhancing Opportunities and Improving Technologies) Project will support a better ICT infrastructure in schools and develop teachers' and students' capacity to use technology.
- A fast, reliable, objective and effective system will be designed for the development of enriched online books and other digital contents.
- [The Education and Informatics network](#) (EBA) will be promoted to enhance teachers and students' participation.
- Dissemination of the Lifelong learning portal
- Free online access to academic databases, digital libraries and journals will be provided for the Ministry staff.
- The e- investment module will be improved to help local education authorities to define more accurately the necessary repairs in schools. The online module enables the central Ministry to follow-up on all investments, repairs and projects expenditures of local education authorities.

MoNE aims:

- To develop a standard for technological infrastructure and ensure that all schools and institutions meet these standards. As part of this framework, schools will receive new hardware like Interactive Whiteboards (IWB's) and tablets and a better internet infrastructure.
- To provide a free Mobile Parent Notification System with an enhanced quality of service (new functions) and more users.
- To develop a new Education Search Engine.
- To develop Policies and standards to produce enriched online books and other digital contents.
- To design a sustainable, fast, reliable and objective system to examine and evaluate digital contents.
- To develop all digital application of MoNE also for the use with smartphones. Furthermore, MoNE aims to modernize it's own way of working. All premises of MoNE will be recorded on a "Geographic Information System" digitally. In particular, the goal is:
- To monitor and assess the digital systems of MoNE (i.e. Guidance Information and Control System)
- To develop and disseminate digital applications to access all services provided by central and provincial organizations of MoNE
- To improve the official e-mail account capacity of MoNE
- To provide necessary information and documents for research, monitoring and evaluation studies about the activities of the MoNE, via the Digital Information and Document Management System

1.2. Education Reforms

- a. Reform of the Main Law of National Education (6528) of 1st March 2014

The Main Law of National Education (6528) has been changed on 1st of March 2014. This change includes the following:

- The change of the organisation structure of MoNE.
- The introduction of an obligatory oral examination for pre-service teachers after the first year of teaching, which they need to pass to be able to continue to teach.
- The transformation of the Board of Education (Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı) to an advisory committee.
- The progressive transformation of preparatory courses for high school and university entrance exams into private schools, namely as “Basic High Schools”.
- The government has started to finance students who want to receive education in a private school. Nearly one third of the tuition fees were paid by MoNE.

The law also allows to open girl schools to increase schooling rate of girls. After these changes, the number of students in girl schools has substantially increased.

b. Central Exam for Selected Teachers (KPSS)

In 2013, the Central Exam for Selected Teachers (KPSS) was changed. In addition to questions about liberal education, mathematics, Turkish, history and geography, candidates now also need to reply to subject specific questions. MoNE has increased the number of new teacher appointments because of the high number of students in Turkey. Most teachers recruited in the last two years were English, primary school mathematics and science teachers.

c. Law including education reforms of 30 March 2012:

The Grand National Assembly approved a law including education reforms on March 30, 2012. In this reform, the length of compulsory education has been extended from eight years to twelve. Primary education covers children from six to fourteen years (in two tiers); the four-year secondary education has become mandatory. However, students have the option to attend an open high school (distant education) as their secondary education.

With this reform, primary education (8 years) was divided in two equal parts; 4 years of primary school and 4 years of middle school. The new system is commonly referred as 4 + 4 + 4 and allows for greater flexibility. The reform decreased the amount of obligatory content covered by the core curriculum and increased the number of optional courses, especially for middle schools. Students can now choose more elective courses according to their own interests. The reforms also allows students to attend religious schools as of the age of 10 (after 4 years of primary school education). In the new system, the starting age of primary education decreased from 6 years to 5.5 years; the curricula of the first

grade of primary education are similar to pre-primary school curricula. Curricula of numerous courses were also updated to reflect the changes in the education system (English, Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Turkish, Life Knowledge, Social Sciences, History and Geography, Turkish Literature). In addition, digital contents and application manuals have been developed. The General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies (YEĞİTEK) continued to enrich digital training materials on the EBA platform (Education and Informatics network). Moreover, a Digital Educational Content Branch has been formed within the Board of Education.

d. Other reforms and initiatives

In May 2014, The National Teacher Employment Strategy has been published. MoNE had started to develop the strategy in 2011. It aims to balance the teachers' distribution in Turkey and find permanent solutions to the lack of teachers.

In 2013, elective IT and Software courses became compulsory in Grade 5 and 6. Moreover, MoNE has decreased the number of different school types from 75 to 25. To reach this goal, some school types have been merged with other schools, or changed to other school types.

2. DIGITAL EDUCATION POLICY

2.1. National/ regional digital education policies

In Turkey, the Ministry of Development (MoD) is responsible for coordinating other public bodies to develop the information society. Therefore, the MoD prepared the "Information Society and Action Plan (ISAP) for 2014-2018"¹. This strategy covers numerous actions regarding digital education policies. The ISAP is mainly based on Turkey's 10th Development Plan² (2014-2018). In this development plan, to "educate individuals to obtain fundamental skills necessary for the information society" is defined as the main objective of the education system.

The ICT policy is set out as follows:

- To improve the ICT infrastructure in formal and informal education institutions and the capacity of teachers and students to use technology. The FATİH project will be completed and the effect of the integration of technology into the classroom will be evaluated, using quantitative and qualitative parameters.
- To support the efficient and wide use of ICT to accelerate the transition into an information society.
- To use ICT effectively to support the training of skilled work force and the change to a knowledge based economy.

- To increase the national added values to the production and development of ICT.

The Turkish Ministry of National Education is the main responsible authority for ICT education. It prepared its “Strategic Plan of Ministry of National Education (MoNE), 2015-2019” in accordance with both the ISAP and the 10th Development Plan. (see also section 1.1 Key educational challenges and priorities).

2.2. Responsibilities

The majority of information technology policies are determined at central level by the MoNE General Directorate of Innovation and Education Technologies based on a strategic plan. Each province has its own FATİH project coordinator, working under the authority of the Provincial Directorate of National Education (PDNE). As part of the FATİH project, these coordinators are responsible for:

- Teacher trainings related to the integration of ICT into education
- Assessment of ICT infrastructure (internet infrastructure, IWB’s) in schools

Many of the PDNE have also at least one staff member that supports national or European projects related to ICT in education (e.g. eTwinning).

2.3. Specific digital education initiatives

Area	Short description (objective, timeframe, target audience, key actors, number of schools, teachers involved, level of implementation (national, regional local))
Student identity management and School management systems	<p>The e-School project has been initiated in national level in order to be used for student identity management and school management system in a centralized database of Ministry of National Education. All Student information from Kindergarten to 12th grade is available in this system. E-School is also connected with national citizenship database (MERNIS) system and students are recorded into the e-school by using their citizenship identity number in MERNIS database.</p> <p>e-school parent information system is an official mobile application prepared by Ministry of National Education. It is possible for the parents to access information related to their child's situation via e-school parent information system. Parents are able to interrogate their child's grades, absenteeism, etc. within minutes.</p>
New learning spaces	<p>Ministry of National Education, Directorate General for Innovation and Educational Technologies started to found Future Classroom Laboratory in its own building in the scope of Future Classroom (FCL) project of European Schoolnet.</p>
Game based education	<p>Educational Information Network (EBA) is an online social education platform offering digital educational materials such as videos, educational software and educational games) free of charge to each students. EBA provides digital educational materials for students at school, at home at any time and place, independently of time and space. This ensures that education is carried out outside of the walls of schools. The aim of the EBA platform is to support the use of effective digital educational materials through information technologies and to ensure the integration of technology into education. EBA continues to evolve by delivering reliable digital educational content tailored to each class levels of schools by following innovations in education and technology.</p> <p>E-content in EBA is produced by expert teams in the field; EBA is also enriched with digital content provided by leading education firms in the field in Turkey and in the world. Educational games in EBA are published from http://www.eba.gov.tr/eicerik webpage .</p>
Implementation of computing, coding,	<p>Information Technology and Software Development Course was updated as including coding training and become compulsory for 5th and 6th grades and elective course for 7th and 8th grades. The</p>

<p>computational thinking initiatives</p>	<p>coding training is aimed to give algorithmic thinking ability to all students besides computer and internet literacy. Coding skills will help students to understand the programming logic by creating a very small piece of computer games. Students with coding skills will be taking the first steps towards becoming a generation that produces software for technology.</p>
<p>Self- or peer assessment tools/frameworks for teachers and students digital competence including certification</p>	<p>Ministry of National Education Strategic plan 2015-2019, Strategic purpose 2.1. Item 40 states that students and teachers usage of digital technologies will be increased. Information Technology and Software Development course that is compulsory and prepared for 5th grade students and aims to improve students' knowledge and skills on usage of information technologies and coding, include some recommended measurement and evaluation activities to assess 5th grade students' digital competence level. Teachers of this course use these recommended measurement and evaluation tools. But, self or peer assessment tools/frameworks preparation for teachers and students' digital competence including certification is not available yet.</p>
<p>Tests (ICT or non ICT based) for teachers and students to test their digital competence</p>	<p>There are some opinion questionnaire based tests to measure teacher's digital competence level that are used before and after FATIH project in-service training activities for teachers to follow up and evaluate these inservice training courses. There is not any tests prepared by Ministry of National Education for teachers and students to test their digital competence. (IPSOS institution applied an international test for testing digital competence of students and teachers at 2013. And IPSOS also prepares for a new digital competence measurement in Turkey at 2018.)</p>

2.4. Digital education priorities

Area	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Reference to policy action measure (if any)
A: Digital Competence Development				<i>Information Society Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018</i>
Developing measures to support digital competence of future teachers	x			
Developing measures to support digital competence of in service teachers	x			
Developing measures to boost youth employability and entrepreneurship	x			
ICT for accessibility and inclusion : early school leavers, migrants, special educational needs etc.		x		
B: Curricula and Assessment				<i>Information Society Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018</i>
Developing digital competence/media literacy of students	x			
Developing computer/programming skills/ computational thinking skills	x			
Developing key competences ¹	x			
Developing 21st century skills (critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation)		x		
Assessing with ICT/ICT based exams		x		
C: System-wide innovation				
Developing measures to support school leaders in the integration of ICT	x			
Piloting and validating innovative uses of ICT	x			
Mainstreaming ICT in schools	x			

¹ See EC Key competences for lifelong learning: digital competence, math science technology, communication in mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm

Monitor and research digital learning in schools	x			
Learning analytics (using digital technologies and data to support learning)		x		
D: Mobile Devices	x			<i>Information Society Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018</i>
Use of tablets	x			
Use of mobile phones			x	
Bring Your Own Device			x	
Cloud computing/services			x	
E: Use of digital learning resources				<i>Information Society Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018</i>
Developing educational content repositories/metadata	x			
Supporting the development of open educational content and resources	x			
Supporting the development of educational content/resources provided by publishers	x			
Promoting teachers' use, creation and sharing of educational resources	x			
F: Learning environments				<i>Information Society Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018</i>
Developing/adapting flexible learning spaces		x		
Linking formal, non-formal and informal learning using ICT	x			
Providing equitable access to ICT (infrastructure, devices and content)	x			
Providing a safe learning environment to students and teachers	x			

3. INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE CURRICULUM

3.1. Digital technology based assessment

Directorate General for Measurement, Evaluation and Examination Services of Ministry of education coordinates digital technology based assessment studies. There is an increasing trend in digital technology based assessment in Turkey. There is an elective Traffic and first aid course for 12th grade level students in high schools. MoNE has started an initiative to offer the theoretical test for the driving licence on a computer. Three years before, a pilot study showed that nearly 5% of driving license exams in Ankara were taken on a computer. Two e-exam centres have been constructed to run a pilot study; it is planned to disseminate the e-exam in 81 cities in the near future. Two years ago, the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM) has started an initiative for an internet-based foreign language exam called “dijital YDS”. The Dijital YDS is offered every month to a limited number of participants. ÖSYM started to conduct online Master and PhD level education entrance examination for university graduate students. ÖSYM is planning to introduce internet-based assessments for other central examinations like university entrance examinations and public servant selection exams.

3.2. School improvement with ICT

There are ICT Ambassadors in each province and sub-province that support the implementation and evaluation of the FATİH project. ICT advisors are also providing active support in the majority of big schools. These networks provide a regular and continuous information flow between the Provincial Directorates of National Education and MoNE. In addition to this continuous monitoring, YEĞİTEK also uses surveys to evaluate the progress of ICT in general and the progress of the FATİH projects in the schools in particular. There were some research studies conducted by the General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies with some questionnaires to measure the progress in learning with digital technologies in assessment, computer based assessment in education.

3.3. The curriculum framework

The Board of Education of MoNE defines the curricula for compulsory and elective courses at national level. Schools have some flexibility with regard to the elective courses they offer. The new schooling system (4 + 4 + 4) has been introduced to improve the flexibility of schools, by enabling them to offer more elective course options. The general curriculum framework in Turkey is centralised Curriculum. The main goals, courses and objectives of courses were determined by the Board of Education by coordination with other related units and General directorates of Ministry of National Education

3.4. Digital technologies in the curriculum

How are digital technologies integrated into the curriculum in primary and secondary education (ICT as a subject, as a tool across the curriculum, external/internal school projects). You can refer here to official curriculum documents and results from surveys in the field e.g. concerning the actual integration of ICT in schools.

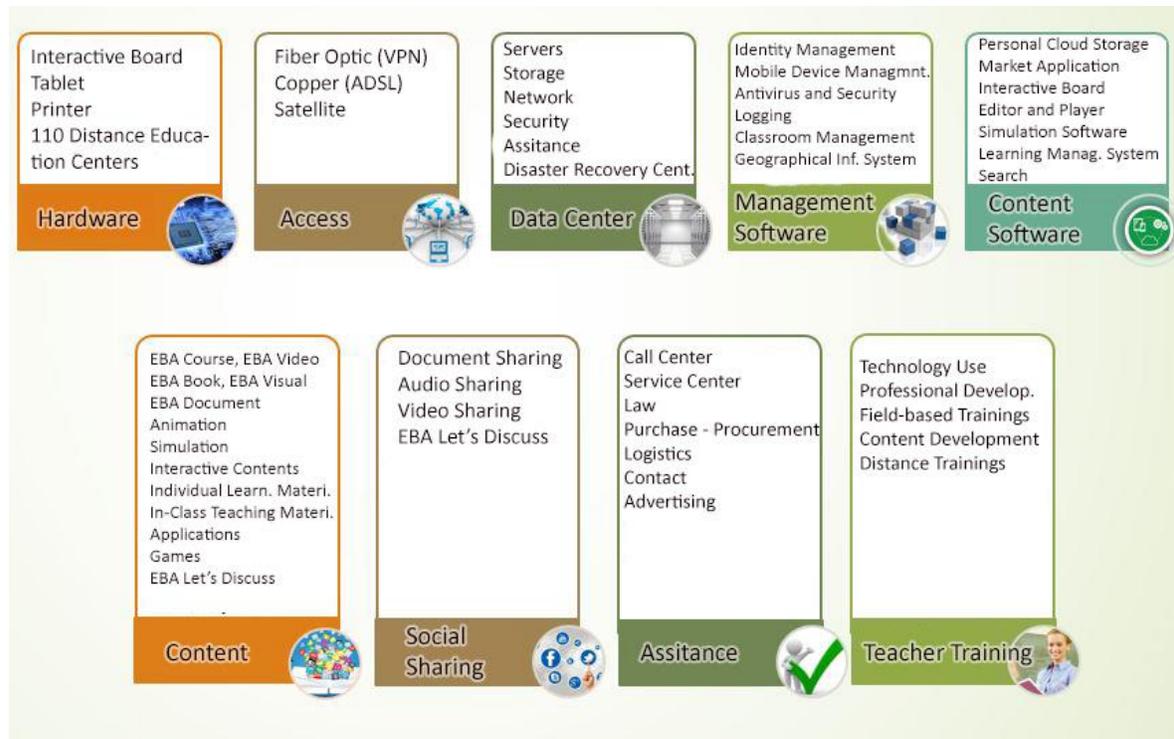
The Integration of digital technologies into school education is a priority for Turkey. Therefore, a considerable budget and time have been invested

1. To improve schools' ICT infrastructure,
2. To support the production of digital contents,
3. Teacher training on how use these infrastructure and content effectively.

The recent curricula reforms encourage the use of digital technologies in many subjects. A separate ICT course is offered in middle school (grade 5-8) and high school (grade 9-12). In grade 5 and 6, an ICT course of two hours per week is compulsory. In grade 7 and 8, an optional ICT course is offered. During all grades of high school, an optional ICT course of one or two hours per week is offered. Vocational schools have different ICT curricula, in accordance with the subjects they offer.

FATIH Project in Education was launched with the purpose of providing equal opportunities in education for the usage of digital technologies in schools in a way that informatics technology tools to engage more senses in the educational process. FATIH Project in Education will fund services such as providing hardware and broad band internet to all classrooms, providing e-content for subjects, establishing platforms for the integration of teachers into IT technologies and product development, and facilitation other activities including project implementation assistance.

The main components of FATIH Project in Education are as follows:



From Fatih website: http://fatihprojesi.meb.gov.tr/en/?page_id=10

3.5. Students' digital competence

What targets are set for digital competence for students? Please describe the skills or competencies required.

The aim of the Information Technologies and Software Development Course (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Grades) course for middle schools is “using ICT productively, effectively and in an ethically correct way”, according to the curriculum. 14 competencies, grouped in four categories, are set out in the curriculum. These competencies are:

1. Information Literacy

- Acquiring the basic skills and knowledge to use ICT in a correct and safe way
- Knowing the social and individual sociocultural contribution of ICT
- Taking individual responsibility for one’s lifelong learning and independent learning
- Respecting rules regarding ethics, privacy and security

2. Using ICT for Communication, Information Sharing and Self Expression

- Using ICT for effective communication and to share projects and ideas
 - Using media to share information and ideas with different target audiences
 - Developing a social and cultural understanding about virtual environments, including communication with different groups
 - Using and managing social media effectively
3. Using ICT for Research, Knowledge Construction and Cooperation
- Accessing and analysing knowledge and understanding the process of knowledge production
 - Using different devices and approaches to construct knowledge
 - Producing projects and joint products, using various virtual environments, media and software
4. Using ICT for Problem solving, Programming and Developing Original Products
- Developing strategies in problem solving and projects, using different approaches for finding solutions,
 - Identify programming languages and using at least one programming language effectively,
 - Forming models, simulations and animations to investigate systems and topics

3.6. Assessment of digital competence

Please describe how students' digital competence is currently assessed in schools (e.g. certification, credits, subject evaluation, national or European licences).

Information Technologies and Software Development Course (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Grades) course curriculum includes assessment of digital competence level of students.

The evaluation of the program with an alternative assessment approach, which is sensitive to the learning theories, especially the constructor and the student-centered approach, can be done by different teachers (EuroDice, 2011), the functioning of the program, the contribution of the student products to the education system and contribute significantly to national evaluation. With this approach, students will be able to develop many original products such as multimedia materials, projects, web updates, contribute to the enrichment of the educational content, and learn by doing and living.

The ICT competence of students are evaluated by ICT teachers of "ICT courses". There is no assessment of ICT competencies as part of central selection exams for secondary schools or universities in Turkey.

In 2013, Turkey has participated to the first International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS). This study also allows for the evaluation of ICT literacy levels of Turkish students (Grade 8) in comparison to other countries.

4. DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES AND SERVICES

4.1. Digital content development

The most important and biggest e-content platform is EBA. All teachers can access EBA and develop e-content. EBA provides free access to four different tools: idealStudio, EBA Sunum, Eutdyo and Xerte ([.for more info](#))

4.2. Content sharing and creation

Teachers can also share and exchange their digital educational content via the EBA platform. EBA also provides a gateway to other e-content providers like KHAN Academy, DaVinci LEARNING, Lingus etc.

4.3. Accessibility for learners with disabilities and social inclusion

In November 2014, The MoNE YEĞİTEK has started an initiative called Engelsiz EBA (Unimpeded EBA) to adapt digital contents for disabled people. The following adaptations has been completed in the Engelsiz EBA initiative;

- 4396 audio resources have been prepared for visually impaired individuals and uploaded to EBA. These audio files are downloadable.
- Hardware needs in the FATİH project for special education has been researched.
- Videos in Turkish sign language, which explain modules and concepts on the EBA website, have been prepared for people with hearing impairments and audio descriptions have been prepared for individuals with visual impairments to improve accessibility.
- The “Technology Enhanced Learning Environment Design for Hearing Impaired People” (ALİS-T 113K717) has been developed by the Karadeniz Technic University and donated to MoNE. This environment has been introduced for the use by people with hearing impairments via the EBA platform.
- A process was started with the İstanbul Municipality Directorate of Impaired People to prepare a “Turkish Sign Language Educational Material Series” for people with visual impairments and 3800 audio books for people with hearing impairments.
- A process has been started for the donation of audio books to people with visual impairments prepared by Ege University and developing materials for people with impairments with Anadolu and Hacettepe Universities.
- 1600 Daisy Digital Talking and recording devices has been provided for schools in special education.
- A five day pilot study has been conducted with Microsoft in schools for students with visual and hearing impairments to test the accessibility and

- usability of Microsoft applications for students with special needs.
- Another pilot study has been conducted with Microsoft in a school for special education to test the usability of Xbox Kinect to support the development of autistic children.

The results of the The Engelsiz EBA have been discussed during the Academics, teachers working in special education, representatives of associations and foundations related with disabled people and other stakeholders attended the workshop.

4.4. Learning Platforms

The EBA platform is one of the biggest learning platforms also for students. Students can access many videos, audios, e-books, simulations, applications and other documents via EBA. The majority of digital contents on the EBA platform are prepared by MoNE and for free. Digital contents on EBA are grouped with regard to grades, subjects and the type of content.

The EBA platform also provides personal learning environments for students, as digital contents on EBA are completely compatible with school curricula. EBA also serves as a gateway to other successful education platforms. It provides access to sources of projects (eTwinning) related with ICT, news about ICT in education, content development softwares, cloud (EBA dosya), the distant learning center (UZEM) and digital content specifically developed for IWB's.

Vitamin is one of the most widely used education platforms provided by the private sector (CEBIT). A protocol between MoNE and CEBIT provides for free access of all teachers working for MoNE to the digital contents provided by CEBIT. Students can access digital exams in addition to training materials.

5. TEACHER EDUCATION FOR DIGITAL LEARNING

5.1. Assessment Schemes

The ICT competence of teachers is assessed locally. Some local education authorities (PDNEs) introduced 25 hours pre-requisite courses before the "Preparatory Course FATİH Project" to teachers whose ICT level was determined very low. This trainings aim to improve fundamental ICT skills.

5.2. School leader support

Since Turkey has a centralized management structure in education, all strategies and programs are determined by MoNE. School leaders ("principals" in Turkey) of public schools do not have the flexibility to develop their own digital technology strategy in their school; but are responsible for implementing the digital technology strategies developed by MoNE. Therefore, they can use this source to support teachers to use digital technologies. Private schools have more

flexibility to develop and implement their own digital technology in education strategy.

5.3. Digital technologies in initial teacher education

Universities have responsibility of conducting initial teacher education in Turkey. Education faculty of each university organises its own curriculum for digital technology education for their student teachers. Digital Technologies education is compulsory for student teachers at most of the universities.

5.4. ICT in-service teacher education

The Majority of ICT trainings for teachers are organized centrally by YEĞİTEK, as part of the FATİH project. The aim of these trainings is to improve the efficiency of infrastructure and devices (fibre internet, IWB's, tablets etc.), provided in the FATİH project. The duration, titles and participant numbers of organized on-side and on-line ICT courses in last two years are as follows;

- Technology Usage in Education (compulsory): 30 hours length, (face to face).
- Safe and Conscious Internet Use (elective):10 hours length, (face to face).
- FATİH Project Introduction Seminars (compulsory): 8 hours length, (face to face).
- Web Infrastructure Seminars: face to face and on-line seminars.

Participants of the 'FATİH Project Introduction Seminars" were teachers working in schools, which are currently being provided with IWB's. Participants of the courses "Technology Usage in Education" and "Safe and Conscious Internet Use" were teachers working in schools who already have IWB's. "Web Infrastructure Seminars" were given to teachers who are part of the examination committee for school infrastructure. Finally, there are also on-line and face to face trainings in the scope of projects, e.g. eTwinning to support the integration of ICT into the education practices.

5.5. Training the Teacher Trainers

As part of the FATİH project, ICT teachers who attended FATİH teacher trainer courses provide ICT teacher trainings. 2560 ICT teachers have participated to trainings, in order to become teacher trainers in FATİH projects. Another 1450 teachers attended updated on-line trainings later on. The teacher trainings within the FATİH project were carried out by these 2560 trainers.

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