

The Role of Educational Mobility Programs in Cultural Integration: A Study on the Attitudes of Erasmus Students in Turkey toward the Accession of Turkey to European Union

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ABSTRACT Erasmus is the EU's education program enabling European students to study abroad. This study aims to find out *Attitudes of Erasmus Students in Turkey toward the Accession of Turkey to European Union*. The study has used the analytical research design. The study group is the Erasmus students who studied in three different universities in Turkey in 2011-2012 session and number of participants is 61. A questionnaire which asks the opinions of student about the expressions related to the accession of Turkey to EU is used. The items of the questionnaire have been borrowed from the Standard Eurobarometer's and Special Eurobarometer's researches which were used successfully to demonstrate the EU public opinion on Turkish membership to EU. For this reason it is expected that the scale has sufficient validity and reliability. The findings stated that the Erasmus students see Turkey as a part of EU, they think Turkey's accession to the EU would favor the mutual comprehension of European and Muslim values and big majority of the students approve the accession of Turkey to European Union unlike the EU community. We concluded that educational mobility programs have a positive effect on the cultural integration and recommended that Turkey's capacity for Erasmus exchange program should be increased and the European students who want to visit Turkey through Erasmus should be given priority. Other cultural and mobility programs between the Union and Turkey should be included and Turkey has to improve the level of the human rights to increase the acceleration of the integration.