

## OPINIONS OF TEACHERS ON ERASMUS+ KEY ACTION 1: A CASE STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to classify the opinions of principals and teachers working in High Schools on the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project regarding their reasons for joining this Project, the preparations made before joining the Project, and the benefits derived from participating in the Project. The research is a qualitative study with a multiple holistic case study design. Data were collected from interviews using semi-structured interview forms. At the end of the research, conclusions were classified under three themes. The first theme was that the main reason for joining the project was professional development. The second theme was that the preparations made by high school principals and teachers before participating in the Project consisted of language education, research on the subject of training, as well as collecting information about transport and the host country. The final theme indicated that the benefit of the Project was the opportunity to learn the use of technology in lessons.

**Keywords:** Erasmus+ Project, Teachers, Principals.

### INTRODUCTION

Teaching needs continuous development as a profession which educates individuals in providing a continuation of society in a rapidly changing world. In particular, teachers need continuous development, and support in the fields of information and technology in order to address the needs of students who adapt easily to rapid change in the information and communications era. Teaching is an intellectual activity, requiring decision-making which is complex and contextualized (Ball, 1995. Butler et al, 2004). For this reason, the professional development of teachers should be planned continuously and in a multidimensional way.

Professional development is defined as “the body of systematic activities to prepare teachers for their job, including initial training, induction courses, in-service training, and continuous professional development within school settings” (OECD, 2010: 19). Professional development is the essential requirement behind knowledge, skills, competence, and learning in the profession (Seferioğlu, 2004). Teachers need continuous support in order to have the necessary skills to meet the needs of different student groups in a rapidly changing world.

Tang ve Choi (2009) draw our attention to the symbiotic relationship between professional development and school development, illuminated by research on school improvement. The approach stresses the importance of creating organizational conditions that make the working environment into a learning environment for teachers. This learning environment should include resources, time and structural conditions that allow

teachers to have the space and energy they need to devote to their professional development. The culture and ethos of the school should also support the professional development of the teacher.

According to Kwakman (2003), communities of professionals as settings for learning are a significant source of learning in addition to the learning taking place in the workplace. Therefore, it is important that teachers coordinate working and learning activities within the school for the benefit of both their professional development and the development of the school.

Bull & Buechler (1997) and Desimone (2009) state that the qualities needed for effective professional development include being individualized and school-based, using coaching and other follow up procedures, engaging in collaboration, and embedding practices into the daily lives of teachers (Nishimura, 2014).

According to Liljedahl (2014), teachers come to any professional learning opportunity with a list of wants and needs. Therefore, while planning these professional learning opportunities, the needs of teachers should be researched, and the planning should be carried out in accordance with their requirements.

In his paper with the title “Transforming Professional Development to Professional Learning”, Steward (2014), states that learning for teachers in a professional community with other colleagues is more effective. In other words, it is more effective if professional learning activities take place within a working environment, are informed by data, and are centred on student work.

The OECD carried out their Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) in order to help countries develop a high-quality teaching profession by better understanding who teachers are and how they work. There are 9 different professional development activities defined in this survey:

- Informal dialogue to improve teaching,
- Courses and workshops,
- Reading professional literature,
- Education conferences and seminars,
- Professional development network,
- Individual and collaborative research,
- Mentoring and peer observation,
- Observation visits to other schools,
- Qualification programmes.

According to the TALIS survey, with the participation of more than 100,000 teachers and principals from 34 countries, the type of professional development most often mentioned was “Informal dialogue to improve teaching”, with 93% of teachers on average reporting this activity during the survey period. After “Informal dialogue to improve teaching”, the most frequently reported activities were “attending Courses and workshops” (81%) and “Reading professional literature” (78%). The least common types of professional development was “Observation visits to other schools” (28%) and “Qualification programmes” (25%).

TALIS survey found that fewer than one in three teachers believe teaching is a valued profession in society. It is important that those countries where teachers feel valued tend to perform better in PISA. The Survey also shows that too many teachers still work in isolation. Over half report rarely or never team-teaching with colleagues, and only one third observe their colleagues while they are teaching. 46% of teachers report that they never receive any encouragement to do this from their school leader. Another finding of the Survey is that teachers who engage in collaborative learning have higher job satisfaction and confidence in their abilities. Moreover, according to TALIS, teachers are open to change and keen to learn and develop throughout their careers. At the same time, they need to take more initiative to work with colleagues and school leaders, and take advantage of every opportunity for professional development. According to the findings about Turkey in TALIS, the professional perception of teachers is so interesting that teachers who participated in the Survey do not see themselves as unsatisfied and they do not feel the need for professional development. However,

Turkey's PISA scores are extremely low, and it is impossible that this cannot be related to the professional development of teachers.

It is stated in the "Education for All" EFA report from 2005 that the level of qualifications of teachers is high in Canada, Finland, Cuba and the Republic of Korea, where high standards of educational quality have also been achieved. It is emphasized that the teaching profession is highly respected in Canada, and although there is need for more teachers, the selection criteria are high. Teachers in Canada attend 40 days of in-service training a year, participation is compulsory, and the participants receive financial rewards. When the main factor behind Cuba's rising success is put under the microscope, it is seen that teachers form a learning community called the "Colectivo pedagogico". In the "Colectivo pedagogico", teachers come together frequently to develop a common curriculum, teaching methods and materials. In the Report, it is emphasized that investments in teachers and school-based professional training are necessary to increase the quality of education. It is also clearly stated in the Report that the reason for high quality in education, and high scores in PISA, is that the professional development of teachers is supported.

The Key Data on Teachers and School Leaders in Europe, based on data collected through the Eurydice network, Eurostat, and the TALIS, TIMSS and PISA international surveys, gives an exhaustive picture of data relating to the teaching professions in 32 European countries covering 62 indicators. It also provides standardised and readily comparable quantitative and qualitative indicators which offer a wide-ranging overview of key issues related to the teaching profession in Europe. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has gained in importance over recent years, and is considered a professional duty in a majority of countries; participation in CPD is necessary for promotion in terms of career advancement and salary increases in Bulgaria, Spain, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia. In many European countries schools are obliged to have a CPD development plan for the whole school staff, but less than a third oblige individual teachers to have a personal plan.

Teachers' professional development is also one of the priorities of the European Union (EU) as can be understood from Key Data on Teachers and School Leaders in Europe. The European Commission emphasizes improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, and enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training in the Education and Training 2020 Strategic Framework. The European Union supports schools and teachers with the Erasmus+ Programme, which will be implemented between the years 2014 and 2020. Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Learning Mobility of Individuals aims to improve the competences of school staff, and provide professional development opportunities abroad. There are two kinds of activities under this key action:

- Teaching assignments: this activity allows teachers or other school education staff to teach at a partner school abroad;
- Staff training: this activity supports the professional development of teachers, school leaders or other school education staff in the form of: a) participation in structured courses or training events abroad; b) a job shadowing/observation period abroad in a partner school or other relevant organisation active in the field of school education.

Even though the Erasmus+ Programme only started in 2014, 1,658 Erasmus+ KA1 project applications have been submitted in Turkey. 93 projects out of the 1,658 applications were approved and funded by the Turkish National Agency. This high number of applications shows that teachers have a high level of interest and desire to participate in a structured training course in Europe. (Türkiye Ulusal Ajansı).

The aim of this research is to classify the opinions of the principals and teachers working in High Schools on the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project regarding their reasons for joining this Project, the preparations made before the Project, and the benefits of the Project. To achieve this aim, the answers to these questions were sought:

1. What are the reasons for participating in the Erasmus+ KA1 Project?
2. How is the preparation process before the Erasmus+ KA1 Project?
3. What are the benefits of the Erasmus+ KA1 Project ?
4. What do teachers think the Erasmus+ KA1 Project training is like?

## METHODS

### Sampling

This study was conducted in Göynük Science High School from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2015. One principal, 3 vice-principals and 20 teachers working in Göynük Science High School participated in the Erasmus KA1 Project during the 2014/2015 academic year. A non-probability sample technique based on the purposive sampling method was used because 'the sample derives from the researcher targeting a particular group, in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population, it simply represent itself. This is frequently the case in small scale research, for example, as with one or two schools, two or three groups of students, or a particular group of teachers, where no attempt to generalize is desired; this is frequently the case for qualitative researches such as action ethnographic or case (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Table 1: Participant status and accompanying data collection

Code	Position	Study-field	Interview
A	Teacher	Physical Education	Yes
B	Teacher	Mathematics	Yes
C	Teacher	Turkish	Yes
D	Teacher	History	Yes
E	Teacher	Biology	Yes
F	Teacher	Mathematics	Yes
G	Vice-principal	English	Yes
H	Principal	Religion	Yes

As seen in Table 1, the informants in this study were principals and teachers. Face-to-face interviews were done with 8 administrative and teaching staff members from Göynük Science High School. The participants were volunteers, and there were no restrictions on the ages and seniority of principals and teachers.

## METHOD

The method of this research is qualitative study. The research is a case study with a holistic single case. Data were collected via face-to-face interviews by using semi-structured interview forms. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2000:19), qualitative study is a study which uses a process to present perceptions and events in a holistic and realistic way in their natural environment. Data collection methods such as observation, interviews and document analyses are used in qualitative study. The case study present results by observing them in their real context which determines the reasons and results. In qualitative research design, the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial processes, school performance, and interpersonal relations in real contexts (Cohen et al, 2007; Yin, 2012).

### Data Collection

In order to classify the opinions of the principals and teachers working in the High School on Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project as the reasons of joining this Project, the preparations before the Project and the benefits of the Project, semi-structured individual interviews were used because this would provide an in-depth exploration of the topic. It would also allow the flexibility, for example, to change the order of questions, simplify the questions, and to probe the interviews (Cohen et al, 2007). Data were collected from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2015. Face-to-face interviews were used and informants' experiences, thoughts and feelings were recorded in a taped diary.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis began with repeated readings of interview transcripts from conversations with principals and teachers. The purpose was to determine the essence of the phenomenon and structures of experiences of the principals and teachers who participated in the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project. During data analysis, the data

were organized categorically and chronologically, reviewed repeatedly and continually coded. Interview transcripts were regularly reviewed. In addition, the data analysis process was aided by the use of a qualitative data analysis computer program called NVIVO 10. These kinds of computer programmes do not actually perform the analysis but facilitate and assist it. That is to say, NVIVO 10 does not perform the analysis but only supports the researcher doing the analysis by organizing data and recodes, nodes etc. (Kelle, 1995; Cohen et al, 2007).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Participants were briefed about the aims of the research, kept informed at all stages and offered anonymity. A consent form was signed between researcher and each participant about the use of the data in terms of how its analysis would be reported and disseminated. Care was also taken not to impose the researcher's beliefs on others since researcher's beliefs were secondary, and it was the participants thinking which was required.

### **Interview Process and Mapping**

The purpose of this study was to classify the opinions of the principals and teachers who were working in a High School on the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project. Thus the mapping of interview questions was carried out on four levels. Firstly, the principals and teachers were asked why they participated in the Project, secondly what preparations they made before the Project started, thirdly what the benefits of the Project were, and finally what they thought of the Project and why.

### **Validity and Reliability**

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the study, some steps were followed: (i) data were collected from various sources such as interviews (individual) and documents in terms of triangulation (ii) data were used as direct quotations from the interviews without making any comments on them, (iii) a purposive sampling method based on voluntarism was used in order to get the opinions and experiences of principals and teachers in Göynük Science High School (iv) data were coded by two independent researchers and Cohen's kappa coefficient was calculated to determine inter-rater reliability of themes coded -0.92 perfect agreement- for inner reliability (Landis & Koach, 1977) and (v) records of interviews, documents and participant observations were kept for outer reliability.

## **FINDINGS**

In this study, we tried to present the opinions of the principals and teachers working in a Science High School on the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project. The opinions of the principals and teachers were classified according to reasons for joining this Project, preparations made before the Project, and the benefits of the Project. During the research process, participants were offered anonymity.

### **1. Reasons for participating in the Erasmus+ KA1 Project**

Principals and teachers were asked about their reasons for participating in the Erasmus+ KA1 Project. The data can be seen in Table 2.

As can be understood from the frequency analysis of the reasons for participating in the Erasmus+ KA1 Project in Table 2, 37.5% of principals and teachers stated that the main reason for participation was professional development. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*My reason for participating in a training course abroad is to develop myself in my profession, and to be more helpful to students at school (A1, 15)*

*...the third reason is of course I thought that it would contribute to my professional development (G1, 15)*

*The reason for participating in a training course abroad is entirely about professional development (H1,15)*

Next, 25% of principals and teachers stated that the reasons for participation were comparing educational systems, knowing about different cultures, learning about different implementations and using them, and personal development. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*Seeing on site and comparing the education systems in my country and abroad (B1, 5)*

Table 2: Reasons for participating in the Erasmus+ KA1 Project

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	f	%
1 Comparing the developments and activities in the field						√			1	12.50%
2 Learning the developments in the field						√			1	12.50%
3 Taking part in scientific studies					√				1	12.50%
4 Researching scientific studies					√				1	12.50%
5 Comparing educational systems		√						√	2	25.00%
6 Increasing the awareness about educational facilities						√			1	12.50%
7 Recognising the similarities in educational systems				√					1	12.50%
8 Recognising the ability to live in a different country				√					1	12.50%
9 Knowing about different cultures	√						√		2	25.00%
10 Learning about different implementations and using them	√		√						2	25.00%
11 Meeting with colleagues from different countries						√			1	12.50%
12 Learning the socio-cultural structure of the hosting country						√			1	12.50%
13 Personal development			√				√		2	25.00%
14 Curiosity						√			1	12.50%
15 Professional Development	√						√	√	3	37.50%
16 Seeing a new country				√					1	12.50%
17 Knowing about new cultures			√						1	12.50%

*Researching the educational structure of that country, systematically comparing the educational structures of Turkey and that country, and getting the opportunity to do this (H1, 5)*

*Our school, being a science high school, has science events and other socio-cultural courses and I want to learn about the socio-cultural richness of the country where the training course is organised and share these with students (A1,9)*

*Secondly, I want to know different cultures (G1,9)*

*Another reason is to see different educational implementations in European countries, seeing them on site and transferring good applications to school (A1, 10)*

*Learning how the course subject is perceived and processed in other countries (C1,10)*

*Contributing to my personal development by having new friends (C1,13)*

*First, personal development (G1,13)*

12.5% of principals and teachers stated that the reasons for participation are comparing developments and activities in the field, learning the developments in the field, taking part in scientific studies, researching scientific studies, increasing their awareness about educational facilities, recognising the similarities in educational systems, recognising the ability to live in a different country, meeting with colleagues from different countries, learning the socio-cultural structure of the host country, curiosity, seeing a new country, and knowing about new cultures. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*I am curious about the similarities and differences in the developments and activities between Turkey and abroad in my field (F1,1)*

*I attended this course to take part in scientific studies (E1,3)*

*... I researched scientific studies of that country (E1,4)*

*My awareness about their and our educational facilities increased (F1,6)*

*I see that although the cultures are different, the educational systems have basic similarities (D1,7)*

*I want to see how can I live in a country where people speak another language and my problem solving capacity (D1,8)*

*Again, first of all, it is impressive to meet colleagues with different countries and sharing (F1,11)*

*Curiosity (F1,14)*

*Seeing a new country (D1, 16)*

*Knowing about new cultures (C1,17)*

When the opinions of the principals and teachers on the reasons for participation in the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project generally were analyzed, principals expected professional development, personal development,

comparing educational systems, and knowing about different cultures. Accordingly, it was understood that teachers participated in the Project to learn about different implementations and use them, personal development, comparing developments and activities in their field, learning about developments in their field, taking part in scientific studies, researching scientific studies, increasing their awareness about educational facilities, recognising the similarities in educational systems, recognising the ability to live in a different country, meeting with colleagues from different countries, learning the socio-cultural structure of the hosting country, curiosity, seeing a new country, and knowing about new cultures.

## 2. The preparations before Erasmus+ KA1 Project

Principals and teachers were asked about their preparations before the Erasmus+ KA1 Project. The data can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Preparations before the Erasmus+ KA1 Project

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	f	%
1 Language education	√	√		√					3	37.50%
2 Getting information about the places to be visited	√			√					2	25.00%
3 Research about the training subject			√			√	√		3	37.50%
4 Researching about culture					√	√			2	25.00%
5 Getting information about transport	√	√				√			3	37.50%
6 Getting information about the country			√				√	√	3	37.50%
7 Comparing countries				√					1	12.50%
8 Getting information about the educational system of the host country				√					1	12.50%
9 Getting information about the host organization	√								1	12.50%

As can be understood from the frequency analysis of their preparations before the Erasmus+ KA1 Project in Table 3, 37.5% of principals and teachers stated that the preparations they did before the Project were language education, research about the training subject, and getting information about transport and the country. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*I went on a course to make English practice before the training course. To have easy communication (A2,1)*

*I tried to learn enough English terms for myself (B2,1)*

*I studied English a little and learnt basic sentences and structures (D2,1)*

*I made research about the course subject (C2,3)*

*Secondly, I made research about the environment, which is the course subject in the environment and on the internet (G2,3)*

*We collected information about the metro map and transport from the airport to the city centre in that country.*

*We identified the easiest and cheapest form of transport. Besides, we planned to find cultural places and visit them (A2,5)*

*I examined the metro infrastructure of the city in the country where I was going (B2,5)*

*I researched the transport facilities and good places in the city (F2,5)*

*I got information about the country we went to (C2,6)*

*One, I made research about the country I went to from the internet (G2,6)*

*I can say that the preparation we did before the training course abroad was getting information about the country (H2,6)*

Next, 25% of principals and teachers stated that the preparations they did before the Project were getting information about the places that would be visited and research about culture. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*We did preparations before the training course, got information about hotels, transport, the training venue, the region and the places that can be visited there (A2,2)*

*I did research about the place I went to (D2,2)*

*I researched the culture of the country we went to (E2,4)*

*First of all, I researched the climate and the eating and drinking culture of the country I went to (F2,4)*

12.5% of principals and teachers stated that the preparations they did before the Project were comparing countries, getting information about the educational system of the host country, and getting information about the host organization. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*Getting information about the educational system of that country (D2,8)*

*I also got information about the organization which organises the training course (A2,9)*

When we interpret the opinions of the principals and teachers on the preparations they did before the Project generally, principals and teachers both stated that they did research about the training subject and getting information about the country.

### 3. Benefits of Erasmus+ KA1 Project

Principals and teachers were asked about the benefits of the Erasmus+ KA1 Project. The data can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Benefits of the Erasmus+ KA1 Project

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	f	%
1 Converting my studies into a documentary					√				1	12.50%
2 Improving environmental awareness							√		1	12.50%
3 Using technology in the lessons	√					√	√	√	4	50.00%
4 Sharing good practices in education								√	1	12.50%
5 Transferring training subjects to school subjects			√						1	12.50%
6 Effect on professional development								√	1	12.50%
7 Preparation for events done at school	√								1	12.50%
8 Broadening horizons					√			√	2	25.00%
9 Learning about video shooting	√	√		√					3	37.50%
10 Improving foreign language	√								1	12.50%

As can be understood from the frequency analysis of the benefits of the Erasmus+ KA1 Project in Table 4, 50% of principals and teachers stated that the main benefit of the Project was using technology in the lessons. 37.5% of principals and teachers stated that the secondary benefit of the Project is learning about video shooting. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*I learnt technology use in lessons (A3,3)*

*Besides, I used technology and reinforced the effect of technology on courses practically (F3,3)*

*I can talk about two kinds of effect here, first more effective media tools use in the courses and how to use them (G3,3)*

*Our main aim is in the science and technology use, ... increasing technology use skills in science teaching, our technology use skills improved and we had a chance to implement this in our school (H3,3)*

*How to shoot video with students, fine details in video shooting (A3,9)*

*I learnt some specifics that should be known in video shooting (B3,9)*

*I learnt what to do and how to be careful for successful video shooting (D3,9)*

Next, 25% of principals and teachers stated that the benefit of the Project is broadening horizons. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*Broadening my horizons with project work done abroad (E3,8)*

*... also I think that my horizons will broaden by travelling abroad (H3,8)*

12.5% of principals and teachers stated that the benefits of the Project were converting their studies into a documentary, improving environmental awareness, sharing good practices in education, transferring the



training subject to school subjects, effect on professional development, preparation for events done at school, and improving foreign language. The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*The most important benefit to me is to transfer my field study and laboratory work into a documentary (E3,1)  
 Secondly, educational studies to increase environmental awareness of not only students but also people in the environment (G3,2)*

*... we shared good practices in education (H3,4)*

*We learnt how to transfer the training subject to our lessons (C3,5)*

*This training course organised abroad had a big effect on our professional development (H3,6)*

*... also I learnt what to do in social events organised at school, how to distribute the roles, preparatory work for it, work during the event, and things to be done after the event (A3,7)*

*Well... I improved my foreign language and I was motivated more to learn a foreign language (A3,10)*

When the opinions of the principals and teachers on the benefits of the Project were analysed generally, the principals' opinions were compatible with the reasons for participation. They stated that the benefits of the Project are using technology in their lessons, learning about video shooting, sharing good practices in education, professional development, and broadening horizons. Having similar opinions, teachers stated that the benefits of the Project were converting studies into a documentary, improving environmental awareness, transferring the training subject to school subjects, and preparation for events done at school, and improving foreign language.

#### 4. Metaphors for Erasmus+ KA1 Project Training

Metaphors formulated by the 8 participants can be categorized under five themes as in Table 5: nature, place, person, things, and activity. Three of the participants formulated nature metaphors in defining the Project training. A described the training as a tree: *"the training course I attended was like a fruit tree. The more you look after a fruit tree, the more you get fruit. For me also, the more careful and patient I am, the more I learn and improve my skills, and if we think of the skills I get as a fruit, I am planning to share them with students. Therefore, I described it as a tree. Namely, I aim to share what I get from the training course as a fruit shared with others"*. Similarly, B used a rainbow metaphor for describing the training: *"It was like a rainbow because the people from all over the world were colourful for me"*. As for C, he defined training as a mineral: *"It was like an unprocessed mineral because I added good knowledge to mine and made it more functional and contemporary"*.

Table 5: Metaphors for the Erasmus+ KA1 Project Training

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	f	%
1 Nature	√	√	√						3	37.50%
2 Place						√		√	2	25.00%
3 Person				√					1	12.50%
4 Things					√				1	12.50%
5 Activity							√		1	12.50%

Two of the participants formulated place metaphors in defining training. H described training as a school: *"It was like a different school because I felt that I entered a different world and it made positive contributions to my personal development and world perspective, I can summarize it shortly like this"*. F described training as a workshop: *"It was like a workshop because we continually practiced what we learnt in theory, and applied it to daily life. This training course was functional not static for me"*.

Three other participants used different metaphors for training. Participant D used a person metaphor and she thought training was like a student: *"It was like a student who starts primary school. Life changes suddenly, a new and anxious environment, many things to learn"*. On the other hand, participant E formulated a thing metaphor and she defined training as a ship: *"It was like a ship in deep-sea because its horizon was broad and you do not know which port it will go"*. Finally, G defined training as an activity and defined it as a game: *"In my opinion, it was like an enjoyable game because the trainer was so joyful, and the training was funny"*. As can be understood from the frequency analysis of metaphors defined by teachers in Table 5, the training course was perceived as a fruitful, effective, interesting and generally positive phenomenon.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was done to understand and classify the opinions of the principals and teachers working in a Science High School on the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project regarding their reasons of joining this Project, the preparations made before the Project, and the benefits of the Project. Accordingly, data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews.

The reasons given by the principal and teachers for participation in the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project were professional development, comparing educational systems, knowing about different cultures, learning about different implementations and using them, and personal development. When the reasons for participating in the Project are interpreted generally, it could be said that these reasons are compatible with “support learners in the acquisition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) with a view to improving their personal development, support the professional development of those who work in education and training, enhance the participants' foreign languages competence, and raising participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries”; the aim of Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 Learning Mobility of Individuals, which is carried out by the European Commission between the years 2014 and 2020 (EC, 2016). The opinions of the principal and teachers on the reasons for participation in the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project are also compatible with the findings of Kippax's (1999) study called “The Leonardo da Vinci project qualifying training in low vision”. According to this study, it is important that colleagues and project participants from different disciplines should be eager for successful cooperation (Kippax, 1999: 42).

The preparations before the Project were language education, research about the training subject, and getting information about transport and the country. When the preparations before the Project are interpreted generally, it can be said that these are compatible with “enhance the participants' foreign languages competence, raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries”; the learning aims of Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 Learning Mobility of Individuals, which is carried out by European Commission between the years 2014 and 2020 (EC, 2016). At the same time, language education as a preparation before the Project is compatible with the findings of Minasowicz, Nowak, Softyska's (2004) study called “Methodology of English language courses for construction engineers and managers in Poland and Portugal”. According to this study, it is stated that the Leonardo da Vinci project will make English language use easier in addition to knowledge transfer (Minasowicz, Nowak and Softyska 2004: 104).

When the benefits of the Project are interpreted generally, it can be said that these are compatible with “Support learners in the acquisition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) with a view to improving their personal development, support the professional development of those who work in education and training, enhance the participants' foreign languages competence, raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries.”; the principle of the European Commission (EC, 2016). The opinions of principals and teachers on the benefits of the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Project are also compatible with the findings of Kippax's (1999) study called “The Leonardo da Vinci project qualifying training in low vision”. According to this study, the benefits of the Leonardo da Vinci project are learning about good practices in vocational education and getting new perspectives (Kippax, 1999: 42).

The Erasmus+ KA1 Project in Turkey has important benefits such as; professional development, comparing educational systems in the EU and Turkey, and personal development. For that reason, Erasmus+ KA1 projects are essential for high schools.

According to the findings of this study, the following ideas are suggested by the researcher:

Teachers should be informed more about different training courses which are specific to their field of study given under Erasmus+ Key Action 1, and they should attend those training courses in order to increase their Professional development.

Teachers should be informed about the Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership Projects writing and application process in order to get the benefit of partnership projects.

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