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## Comparison of physical education course in compulsory education in Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland education systems

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### Abstract

This study aims to compare the current education systems in Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland and the importance of Physical Education course in the compulsory education systems of these countries. In the study, the general aims of education systems, the bodies that run the education system, compulsory education periods, pre-school education, primary education, secondary education, higher education and the place of Physical Education course in the compulsory education systems of these countries were compared. Comparative research design was applied in the study. Data were collected through document analysis method. The data on the education systems of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Türkiye and the importance of physical education courses in compulsory education in these countries were obtained from books, articles, and institutional websites, curriculum/program directives, official documents and annual reports. The data obtained were analyzed and the educational systems of Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland and the place of Physical Education courses in compulsory education in these systems were compared and similarities and differences were revealed. As a result, it was concluded that the education systems of Norway, Sweden and Finland are run by the central government and local administrations, whereas in Türkiye they are run by the central government, Türkiye has the longest compulsory education period among these countries, and Türkiye has the most number of physical education class hours in compulsory education. Based on the data obtained as a result of these comparisons, suggestions were made for the Turkish education system.

**Keywords:** Türkiye, Norway, Sweden, Finland education system, physical education, comparison

### Introduction

Education, which is the process of deliberate change in the behaviour of the individual through his/her own experience (Ertürk, 1972) <sup>[14]</sup>, ensures the healthy and efficient adaptation of the generations in the developing education stage to the society. In ensuring this adaptation, the interests and abilities of the individual are developed in the best way and his/her behaviours are changed within the framework of the determined objectives (Varış, 1998) <sup>[46]</sup>. As the needs and expectations of individuals and societies change, the purpose, content, functions, process and duration of education, which is a social institution, change. Although the knowledge, skills, attitudes gained through education and the ways of gaining them differ in different societies and at different times, the need to educate the new generations of each society has always existed. Individual, social and universal needs are decisive in how the individual should be educated (Okçabol, 2005; Uras, 2002; Taşkın, 2014) <sup>[34, 44, 41]</sup>.

In line with the modern education approach, it is desired to develop physical, affective and social characteristics of individuals as well as their mental characteristics in education and training. In order to develop these characteristics in individuals, there are courses that affect different development areas in schools. Physical education course is one of the many courses that provide social, affective and mental development, especially physical development (Ünlü & Aydos, 2010) <sup>[45]</sup>. Physical education course, which is an integral part of general education, contributes to the physical, cognitive, social and affective development aimed by general education by forming the basis of 'learning through movement and learning through movement' (Tamer & Pulur, 2001) <sup>[40]</sup> unlike other courses (Karadağ, 2012) <sup>[31]</sup>.

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In almost all national curricula, physical education is compulsory at both primary and secondary education levels and the main purpose of physical education is to support the physical, personal and social development of students (eurydice.meb.2024) <sup>[18]</sup>. It is very important to develop physical education lessons, which are an integral part of education, in line with the expectations of the individual and society (Öçalan & Erdoğan, 2009) <sup>[37]</sup>. In this direction, countries form their educational objectives and educational practices in this context in line with the characteristics they want to see in the qualified individuals they want to raise. The fact that countries have different education systems and the need to compare these education systems has led to the emergence of the field of comparative education (Demirel, 2012) <sup>[7]</sup>. Comparative education is a field that enables us to understand the similarities and differences of the education systems of two or more countries with different cultures and education systems, explains similar phenomena and makes proposals about educating people (Türkoğlu, 1985) <sup>[43]</sup>. The success of the education system applied by one society may not necessarily lead to the same success when it is applied in a different society. The fact that societies have different beliefs, cultures and values is one of the factors that cause this. However, the differences and similarities in different education systems obtained from comparative education studies can guide societies. In the comparative education studies; curricula, teaching methods, teacher training programmes, educational policies and the same courses in different countries have been compared. Our country should benefit from the outputs of comparative education in the process of studies in the field of education. In this study, it is aimed to compare the education systems of Sweden and Finland, which are Scandinavian countries and members of the European Union, and Norway, which is not a member of the European Union, and the Physical Education courses in these education systems with the education system of Türkiye and the Physical Education courses in this education system.

## Materials and Methods

### Purpose of the Study

The aim of this research is to compare the current education systems of Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland and the importance of Physical Education course in the compulsory education systems of these countries. In the research, it is aimed to provide comparative information by examining the general aims of education systems, the agency carrying out the education system, compulsory education periods, pre-school education, elementary education, higher education and the place of Physical Education course in the compulsory education systems of these countries.

### Research Model

The research design of this study was comparative design. While determining the sample of the research, it was aimed to compare the physical education lessons in compulsory education in Sweden and Finland, which are members of the European Union, and Norway, which is not a member of the European Union, selected by the researcher from Scandinavian countries. Therefore, Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland were selected based on purposive sampling method.

### Data Collection

In this research, the data were accessed through document

analyses. In data collection, the general aims of the education systems in Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland education systems, the bodies carrying out the education system, compulsory education periods, pre-school education, primary education, secondary education, higher education and books, articles, curricula, annual reports, written directives and circulars of the institutions, institutional websites related to Physical Education course in the compulsory education systems of these countries were used as data sources.

### Analysing the Data

The data obtained were analysed and themes were formed. Similarities and differences in the findings were compared, tabulated and interpreted.

### Findings

The findings of this section are presented under twelve themes.

### General Objectives of Türkiye-Norway-Sweden And Finland Education Systems

The general aim of Turkish National Education, as stated in the Basic Law on National Education No. 1739, is to increase the welfare and happiness of Turkish citizens, to strengthen economic, social and cultural development within national unity and integrity, and to make the Turkish nation a constructive and important partner of contemporary civilization (Kalemoğlu, 2011) <sup>[30]</sup>.

Norway has one of the best education systems in the world with a 100% literacy rate and is ranked in the top 20 of the world's best education systems. One of the most important factors contributing to this is the "Universal Schooling" policy. According to the policy, children and adults have an equal right to education and training in the country, regardless of their nationality, gender, social and financial background. The first 10 years of education are compulsory (norwayeducation.info, 2024) <sup>[22]</sup>.

The main idea of the law establishing the Norwegian education system is 'Education for All'. Within this framework, the objectives of the education system are

1. To provide a full period of education to all those who wish to benefit from the right to education
2. To provide equal opportunities for everyone regardless of age
3. To ensure that individuals receive education according to their own abilities and interests. The aims of the Norwegian education system are set out in separate laws for each type of school in accordance with the principles of democracy, equal educational opportunities for all and the raising of individuals who will contribute to the strengthening of economic life (Acuner, 1991) <sup>[1]</sup>. It is important that children from different family backgrounds meet on the same terms in their local communities and have the same opportunities regardless of class, cultural and religious differences. In a modern society characterised by cultural diversity, the education system acts as a unifier in society (eurydice, 2024) <sup>[18]</sup>.

In the Swedish education system, it is aimed that all segments of the society receive equal education without any discrimination of race, religion, language, responding to the special needs of individuals, and raising individuals in a social, responsible and democratic values (Doğan, 2020) <sup>[9]</sup>. The basic principle of the Swedish education system is the

accessibility of education regardless of social status, ethnic origin, religious beliefs or gender.

In Sweden, free and equal education is a right for every child who turns six years old. The Swedish school system, secured by the Education Act, implements the requirement of 9 years of compulsory education for every child (Education in Sweden, 2024) <sup>[11]</sup>. The right of citizens in Sweden to equal education is enshrined in the Swedish Education Act. Sweden's education policy is to provide an education service that is open-targeted, free, impartial and offers lifelong learning opportunities to everyone (Polatcan, 2014) <sup>[39]</sup>.

In various educational researches conducted around the world, Finnish education system is among the most successful education systems. With this success in the field of education, Finland surpasses the world states. The main aim of the Finnish education system is to provide a quality, equal and lifelong learning environment for all citizens without any discrimination. Citizens' right to education is defined by law and individuals are entitled to free and lifelong learning. It is aimed to provide citizens with an equal, high quality and world-class education that aims to get ahead among countries and increase social welfare (Demirkıran, 2018) <sup>[8]</sup>.

### Organisations Managing Türkiye-Norway-Sweden And Finland Education Systems

According to the Basic Law on National Education (1973), the Ministry of National Education (Eldeniz, 2018) <sup>[12]</sup> is responsible for all kinds of education and training activities and the opening of primary and secondary schools in Türkiye. In the Norwegian education system, the central government and local authorities (municipalities) are responsible for the functioning of the education system. While the central government determines the goals and framework of education, the management and functioning of primary, secondary and high schools are carried out by local governments (OECD, 2015) <sup>[35]</sup>. In Sweden, the functioning

and management of schools are carried out by municipalities. In addition, there are independent schools that follow the Swedish curriculum and some private schools that follow the curriculum of other countries. The responsibility for municipality-run schools lies with the municipalities, while the responsibility for independent schools lies with the authorities. Apart from these schools, there are also a small number of international schools (stokholm.meb2024) <sup>[27]</sup>. In Finland, education is financed by local governments. Local autonomy is more (Duran, 2019) <sup>[10]</sup>. Educational institutions are affiliated to local authorities and the central government. In 2018, 96 per cent of schools in basic education are financed by local governments and approximately 3 per cent by the state (Ataseven, 2022) <sup>[3]</sup>.

### Compulsory Education Periods In Türkiye-Norway-Sweden And Finland Education Systems

In the Turkish education system, compulsory education consists of 12 years; 4 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of high school education (Eldeniz, 2018) <sup>[12]</sup>. In Norway, compulsory education lasts a total of 10 years, seven years of primary school and three years of lower secondary education. Compulsory education is free of charge in public schools and chargeable in private schools (Katıtaş, 2018) <sup>[32]</sup>. In Sweden and Finland, compulsory education starts at the age of 6 and lasts a total of 10 years until the age of 16. In both countries, every child starts compulsory kindergarten from the age of 6. compulsory kindergarten is considered as the 0th grade or preparatory class. The other part of compulsory education is 9 years of elementary education. This is from 1st to 9th grade. In Sweden, compulsory education consists of grades 1 to 3, grades 4 to 6 and grades 7 to 9. Grades 1-3, grades 4-6 and grades 7-9. In Finland, compulsory education consists of two parts in the form of 6+3 (Özerbaş & Safi, 2022) <sup>[38]</sup>.

**Table 1:** Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Compulsory Education System

Country	EU Membership	Compulsory Education Duration	Grade Levels	School Management System	Institution Making the Curriculum
Türkiye	No member	12 years	From 1st to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Central government and private schools	Central Structure - Ministry of National Education Board of Education
Norway	No member	10 years	From 1st to 10th grade	Central government and local governments	Directorate of Education 'Utdanningsdirektoratet'
Sweden	Member	10 years	From 0th grade to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	Central government, local governments and private schools	National Agency for Education 'Skolverket'
Finland	Member	10 years	From 0th grade to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	Central government, local governments and private schools	"National Agency for Education"

### Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Pre-School Education

Preschool education, which is the preparatory period for primary education, has the same importance as basic education today. Studies have shown that preschool education has an impact on the development of children throughout their lives and that it is important to provide quality education in this period (Yavuzer, 2003) <sup>[47]</sup>. The aim of pre-school education is to ensure children's physical, mental and emotional development, to acquire good habits and to prepare them for primary education (Baran *et al.* 2007) <sup>[4]</sup>. In Türkiye, pre-school education is not compulsory and covers children between the ages of 3-6.

In Norway, preschool institutions are generally referred to as kindergartens (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014) <sup>[33]</sup>. Every child can start kindergarten from the age of one (eurydice, 2024) <sup>[18]</sup>.

In Sweden, all one-year-old children have the right to pre-

school education. Pre-school education is available at the request of parents from the age of 1 until the age of 5. As soon as a child turns 6 years old, he/she has to attend compulsory kindergarten education for 1 year (stokholm.meb, 2024) <sup>[27]</sup>.

In Finland, pre-school education is organised as 0-6 early childhood and 6-7 pre-school. 0-6 early childhood education is not compulsory and everyone has the right to receive it. However, preschool education is compulsory for each child for one year at the age of 6-7 (europa.eu, 2024) <sup>[16]</sup>.

**Table 2:** Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Preschool Education System

Country	Age Range	Compulsory Education Duration
Türkiye	3-6 years old	Not Compulsory
Norway	1-6 years old	Not Compulsory
Sweden	1-7 years old	1 year (6-7 Years old)
Finland	0-7 years old	1 Yıl (6-7 Years old)



### Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Elementary Education

In the Turkish education system, elementary education is the basic education and training that serves the physical, mental and moral development and upbringing of all Turkish citizens, men and women, in accordance with national goals. Elementary education, which is compulsory for men and women of school age, is free of charge in public schools and is provided by primary education institutions. Elementary education is an 8-year education starting from the age of 6, including 4 years of primary school and 4 years of secondary school (files.tuseb 2024) <sup>[9]</sup>.

Grunnskole is the compulsory education stage of the Norwegian education system. Every child is obliged to attend elementary education, which lasts from 6 to 16 years of age. The municipality provides 10 years of elementary education free of charge for every child. Elementary education is chargeable in private schools. Children start primary school at the age of 6. Primary school is seven years in total, from Grade 1 to Grade 7. Secondary school, referred to as lower secondary education, is three years from grade 8 to grade 10 (udir, 2024) <sup>[29]</sup>. A school year starts in mid-August and lasts until approximately 20 June. Primary school consists of two levels: grades 1-7 (6-12 years old) and secondary school consists of two levels: grades 8-10 (13-16 years old). There is

no formal distinction between the grades. Some schools offer 10 years of compulsory elementary education, while others consist entirely of primary or secondary school (eacea.ac. 2018) <sup>[17]</sup>.

Elementary education in Sweden consists of four stages:

1. Förskoleklass (year 0, i.e. pre-school year)
2. Lågstadiet (1st-3<sup>rd</sup> years)
3. Mellanstadiet (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> years)
4. Högstadiet (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> years)

Compulsory elementary education provides students with knowledge, skills and socialisation. development of knowledge and skills and socialisation (stokolm.meb, 2024) <sup>[27]</sup>. In addition, the compulsory elementary education system has led to the establishment of Sami schools for the Samis in the north. These schools provide education for Sami-speaking children and in Samian (Boztaş & Er, 2012) <sup>[5]</sup>.

Elementary education in Finland covers students between the ages of 7-16 for a period of 9 years. It includes grades 1-9 (eacea.ec. 2024) <sup>[18]</sup>. While the first 6 years of elementary education are taught by classroom teachers, courses such as visual arts, music and sports are taught by teachers of these courses (Ceylan, 2017). School buildings can be organised as 1-9<sup>th</sup> grades together or 1-6<sup>th</sup> grades separately and 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> grades in separate buildings (Aktaş, 2020) <sup>[2]</sup>.

**Table 3:** Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Elementary Education System

Country	Age Range	Grade Level	Compulsory Status	Education Duration
Türkiye	6-14 Years old	1.- 8. grades	Compulsory	8 Years
Norway	6-16 Years old	1.-10. grades	Compulsory	10 Years
Sweden	7-16 Years old	1.-9. grades	Compulsory	9 Years
Finland	7-16 Years old	1.-9. grades	Compulsory	9 Years

### Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland High School Education

In the Turkish education system, it covers all general and vocational-technical education institutions of at least 4 years based on elementary education. It is compulsory and free of charge in public schools. The aim of high school education is to provide students with minimum general culture knowledge, to enable students to recognise and find solutions to problems in individual and social life, to raise students who support the socio-economic and cultural development of the country, and to enable students to transition to a suitable higher education programme in line with their abilities (files.tuseb, 2024) <sup>[9]</sup>.

In Norway, students who have completed secondary school can continue their high school education. Students can usually start high school education when they turn 16 (udir.no, 2024) <sup>[29]</sup>. High school education is not compulsory and lasts three years. There are two types of high schools: general-purpose high schools and vocational high schools (Eurydice, 2018) <sup>[17]</sup>. While general high schools last for three years, vocational high schools last for four years and some vocational programmes last for five years.

In the Swedish education system, three-year high school

education is not compulsory and is free of charge in public schools (Doğan, 2020) <sup>[9]</sup>. High schools consist of vocational and general high schools. After successful completion of compulsory basic education, education in these schools is provided by the municipalities (Erginer, 2007). After basic education, students can apply to a high school that prepares them for higher education or provides vocational education (stokholm.meb, 2024) <sup>[27]</sup>.

In the Finnish education system, high school education is free and voluntary. Vocational and general high school education is provided (Demirkan, 2018) <sup>[8]</sup>. The general age to attend high school education is between 16 and 19 (eacea.ec, 2024) <sup>[18]</sup>. After compulsory elementary education, students choose general or vocational high school education, which usually lasts 3 years (Duran, 2019) <sup>[10]</sup>. Depending on the learning speed of the students, high school education can last between 2 and 4 years. The education programme consists of pre-determined modules, the distribution of which is determined by the student himself/herself, who decides which module to study and when. General high schools are academically orientated and their main purpose is to ensure more studies in higher education (Aktaş, 2020) <sup>[2]</sup>.

**Table 4:** Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland High School Education System

Country	Age Range	Grade Level	Compulsory Status	Education Duration	Education Branch
Türkiye	14-18 Years Old	9.-12. Grades	Compulsory	4 Years	General High School, Vocational High School
Norway	16-19 Years Old	11.-13. Grades	Not Compulsory	3 Years	General High School, Vocational High School
Sweden	16-19 Years Old	10.-12. Grades	Not Compulsory	3 Years	General High School, Vocational High School
Finland	16-19 Years Old	10.-12. Grades	Not Compulsory	3 Years	General High School, Vocational High School

### Türkiye-norway-sweden and finland higher education

The programmes offered at universities in Türkiye are as follows: Associate degree programmes, Bachelor's degree programmes, Master's degree programmes and Doctorate programmes. Graduates of vocational high schools with two years of education can enter the vocational colleges directly, as well as graduates of normal high schools can enter by exam. Although undergraduate programmes are mostly 4 years, there are also programmes such as 5-year veterinary and 6-year medical faculties. Master's degree programmes are two years of education after undergraduate education for students who have successfully completed their undergraduate programme. Doctoral programmes are a 4-year education after successful completion of the master's programme.

In the Norwegian education system, after 3 years of high school education, applications are made to higher education depending on the quotas determined by higher education institutions. After 3 years of undergraduate education, students can take 2 years of master's degree and 3 years of doctoral education after master's degree. Some exceptional programmes such as music and art education can take 4 years (Katıtaş, 2018) [32].

In Sweden, there are universities, vocational colleges and colleges at the higher education level. There are also private higher education institutions (Tosun, & Yıldız, 2020) [42]. The duration of higher education is related to the amount of credits received. An academic year lasts 40 weeks and corresponds to 60 credits. Undergraduate education is 3 years and 180 credits, master's degree is 1 year and 60 credits or 2 years and 120 credits. Doctoral education lasts 4 years (stokholm.meb, 2024) [27].

Higher education in Finland consists of two parts: universities promoting research and academic education and universities of applied sciences offering professional higher education with close links to working life (Aktaş, 2020) [2]. The first is more academically orientated and the second is more professionally orientated technical schools (europa.eu, 2024) [16]. Undergraduate programmes at technical schools are usually 3-3.5 years long, corresponding to 180-240 credits.

Bachelor's programmes last 3 years, corresponding to 180 credits. Master's programmes in technical schools last 1-1.5 years and correspond to 60-90 credits. Master's programmes at universities last 2 years and correspond to 120 credits. Doctoral programmes, where a thesis is required, last 4 years (avys.omu.edu, 2024) [15].

**Table 5:** Average Duration of Higher Education in Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland

Country	Undergraduate Education	Master	Doctora
Türkiye	4 Years	2 Years	4 Years
Norway	3 Years	2 Years	4 Years
Sweden	3 Years	1-2 Years	4 Years
Finland	3 Years	1-2 Years	4 Years

### Physical Education Course In Türkiye-Norway-Sweden And Finland Compulsory Education

#### Physical Education in the Turkish Education System:

The general aim of the physical education course in the Turkish education system is to ensure the development of students in social, affective and cognitive aspects, especially the physical development of students. In addition, it is to raise individuals who have a strong personality, are socially healthy, happy, moral, adopt and protect national and moral values, and ensure that physical education and sports are accepted by all segments of society and become a lifestyle (Kalemoğlu, 2011) [30]. Below, physical education lesson hours are given according to primary and secondary education levels.

**Table 6:** Primary School (Compulsory) Physical Education and Games Lesson Timetable

	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours	Total Course Hours Per Year
Physical Education and Game	1	5	180
	2	5	180
	3	5	180
	4	2	72

**Table 7:** Secondary School (Compulsory) Physical Education Course Timetable

Physical Education and Sports	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours	Total Course Hours Per Year	(Elective) Sport and Physical Activities(4)	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours	(Elective) Gameand Game Activities(2)	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours
	5	2	72		5	2		5	2
	6	2	72		6	2		6	2
	7	2	72		7	2		7	2
	8	2	72		8	2		8	-

Elective Sports and Physical Activities course can be chosen every year at all grade levels of secondary school. Elective games and game activities courses can only be taken at the 5<sup>th</sup>,

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade levels for a maximum of two years (tegm.meb.2024) [28].

**Table 8:** Schedule of Physical Education and Sports Class Hours in Anatolian High Schools providing regular education

Physical Education and Sports	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours	Total Course Hours Per Year	(Elective) Sport Education (3)	Grade Level	Weekly Course Hours
	9	2	72		9	(1), (2), (3)
	10	2	72		10	(1), (2), (3)
	11	2	72		11	(1), (2)
	12	2	72		12	(1), (2)

In Anatolian High Schools providing regular education, Elective Sports Education Course can be chosen from 1 hour to 3 hours per week in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades and from 1 hour to 2 hours per week in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades for a maximum of 3 years. In Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools, Physical Education and Sports courses are compulsory for 2

hours per week in grades 9, 10 and 11, while there is no physical education and sports course in grade 12. In Anatolian imam hatip high schools, regardless of the type of programme, the average is 2 hours per week in all 9<sup>th</sup> grades and 1 hour in 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. In Vocational Education Centres, there are only 2 hours of elective physical

education and sports courses in 9<sup>th</sup> grades.

### Physical Education in the Norwegian Education System:

In Norway, Physical Education ('Kroppsøving') is a compulsory subject for pupils aged 6 to 18. The national curriculum states that physical education is an important subject that promotes a lifelong joy of movement and a physically active lifestyle based on one's own preconditions. The subject should contribute to pupils learning, feeling, experiencing and creating with the body. Through movement activities with others and outdoor activities, physical education promotes co-operation, understanding and respect for others. The course will contribute to students developing competence in exercise, lifestyle and health and experiencing what their own efforts have to say about achieving goals (www.pescholar. 2021) [25].

**Table 9:** Physical Education Course Timetable in the Norwegian Education System

Course	Grade Level	Total Course Hours
Physical Education	1st-7 <sup>th</sup> grades (primary school)	478 lesson hours
	8 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> grades (secondary school)	223 lesson hours
Physical Activity	5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> grades	76 lesson hours

There are a total of 701 hours of physical education classes during the 10 years of compulsory education, totalling 478 hours during primary school and 223 hours during secondary school (udir.no 2024) [29]. In addition to physical education, on 1 August 2009, all pupils in grades 5-7 in Norwegian schools were allocated compulsory physical activity classes in addition to physical education classes. In total, this amounts to 76 hours and aims to provide a more varied and active school day for all students, regardless of functional level (udir.no 2024) [29].

### Physical Education in the Swedish Education System:

In the Swedish education system, physical education is replaced by health and sport. It is a compulsory subject in

compulsory education and high school education. The sport and health course aims to develop students' all-round movement skills, interest in being physically active and spending time in nature. Through teaching, it provides students with the conditions to develop good lifestyle habits that can affect their health throughout their lives (skolverket.se.2024) [26].

**Table 10:** Health and Sports Course Timetable in the Swedish Education System

Course	Grade Level	Total Course Hours
Health and Sports	1.-3. Grades	140 lesson hours
	4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Grades	180 lesson hours
	7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> Grades	280 lesson hours

In the Swedish education system, health and sports courses are taught for 140 hours in grades 1-3, 180 hours in grades 4-6 and 280 hours in grades 7-9, totaling 600 hours in 9 years of compulsory education.

### Physical education in the Finnish education system:

In the Finnish education system, a school year lasts 190 days from August to June (oph.fi. 2024) [24]. At primary school level, there is at least 2 hours of compulsory physical education per week for students (europa.eua, 2024) [16]. Grades 1 and 2 have 4 lessons per week, 152 hours per year; Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 have 9 lessons per week, 342 hours per year; Grades 7, 8 and 9 have 7 lessons per week, 266 hours per year. Physical Education in Finnish Education prioritises the student's abilities and personal development. The teaching environment is conducted in a cheerful style that encourages students and develops basic motor skills (oph.fi. 2024) [24].

**Table 11:** Schedule of Physical Education Lesson Hours in the Finnish Education System

Course	Grade Level	Total Course Hours
Physical Education	1.-2. Grades	152 lesson hours
	3. 6 <sup>th</sup> Grades	342 lesson hours
	7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> Grades	266 lesson hours

**Table 12:** Physical Education in Türkiye-Norway-Sweden and Finland Compulsory Education System

Country	Course	Grade Level	Total Course Hours
Türkiye	Physical Education and Game	1. 2.ve 3. Grades	540 lesson hours
		4. Grades	72 lesson hours
	Physical Education	5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. ve 12. Grades	576 lesson hours
Norway	Physical Education	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ve 7. Grades	478 lesson hours
		8. 9. ve 10. Grades	223 lesson hours
Sweden	Health and Sports	1. 2. ve 3. Grades	140 lesson hours
		4. 5. ve 6. Grades	180 lesson hours
		7. 8. ve 9. Grades	280 lesson hours
Finland	Physical Education	1.ve 2. Grades	152 lesson hours
		3. 4. 5. ve 6. Grades	342 lesson hours
		7. 8. ve 9. Grades	266 lesson hours

### Discussion and Conclusion

Although the education systems of Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland have similarities, there are also some differences. While the similarities of Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish education systems are close to each other, Türkiye's education system is less similar to these countries. The education systems of these countries consist of four stages: pre-school, elementary education or primary education, upper secondary education or high school and higher education. In Norway and Sweden, education is provided in the Sami language for the

indigenous Samis. In Türkiye, education is administered by the central government, whereas in Norway, Sweden and Finland it is administered by the central government and local authorities (municipalities).

Preschool education is considered important in Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Until the age of 6, pre-school education is not compulsory in these countries. In the Swedish and Finnish education system, pre-school education is compulsory at the age of 6-7. Although this period is a part of compulsory education, it is considered as grade 0. Preschool

education is not compulsory in the education systems of Türkiye and Norway. Compulsory education in Türkiye lasts a total of 12 years in the form of 4+4+4. It consists of 4 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of high school education. In the Norwegian education system, compulsory education lasts 10 years in the form of 7+3, consisting of 7 years of primary school and 3 years of lower secondary education. In the Swedish and Finnish education systems, compulsory education consists of 10 years of compulsory pre-school education, which is considered as grade 0, and 9 years of elementary education. While basic education in Sweden is 3+3+3 years, in Finland it consists of 6 years of primary school and 3 years of lower secondary school. High school education, which is referred to as upper secondary education, lasts 3 years and is not compulsory in Norway, Sweden and Finland. In Türkiye, high school education lasts 4 years and is compulsory. High schools in Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland consist of general high schools where general academic education is provided and vocational high schools where vocational education is provided. At the higher education level, the average bachelor's degree in Türkiye lasts 4 years, while master's degree lasts 2 years and doctorate education lasts 4 years. In Norway, Sweden and Finland, the bachelor's programme lasts 3 years. In Sweden and Finland, master's education varies between 1-2 years depending on the programme studied, while in Norway it takes 2 years. Doctoral education lasts 3 years in Norway and 4 years in Finland and Sweden.

In the education systems of Türkiye, Norway, Sweden and Finland, Physical Education or its substitutes are included in compulsory education at every grade level. Türkiye has the most number of Physical Education lesson hours among these countries. It is 612 hours at primary school level, 288 hours at secondary school level and 288 hours at high school level. While the Physical Education and Game course in primary school is 5 hours a week in grades 1-3, this number decreases to 2 hours a week in grade 4, and Physical Education courses in secondary and high schools are taught for 2 hours a week on average. In Norway, Sweden and Finland, unlike in Türkiye, the number of lesson hours increases as the level of compulsory education increases. In Norway, there are a total of 701 hours of Physical Education lessons in compulsory education, of which 478 hours are taught in primary school covering grades 1-7 and 223 hours are taught in lower secondary education covering grades 8-10. In addition to Physical Education, Norway has a total of 76 hours of compulsory Physical Activity classes in grades 5-7 to provide students with a more varied and active school day. During 10 years of compulsory education, a total of 777 hours of Physical Education and Physical Activity lessons are taught. Sweden teaches a total of 600 hours of Health and Sports courses during 9 years of compulsory education. The name of the course is reflected in its content, which also emphasises the importance of health. This course is taught for a total of 140 hours in 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grades, 180 hours in 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades and 280 hours in 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades. Grades 4-6 for a total of 180 hours and Grades 7-9 for a total of 280 hours.

In Finnish primary schools, there is at least 2 hours of compulsory physical education per week for students (ec.europa, 2024) [16]. In the Finnish education system, the compulsory physical education course is 4 hours a week for 1st and 2nd grades, 9 hours a week for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, and 7 hours a week for 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades (www.oph, 2024) [24]. In Finland, where 190 working days of education activities continue, it is concluded that 1st and 2nd

grades have a total of 152 hours of Physical Education lessons, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades have a total of 342 hours of Physical Education lessons and 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades have a total of 266 hours of Physical Education lessons per year, and there are a total of 760 hours of Physical Education lesson hours during 9 years of compulsory education.

In this study, it was seen that the Physical Education lesson hours in primary school in our country have a good value between Norway, Sweden and Finland. The fact that class teachers teach Physical Education and Games in primary schools reveals the idea that it may be insufficient to meet the requirements of this course. It is thought that there is a need to train class teachers who can teach the Physical Education course more effectively in the programmes that train class teachers. The physical structure of most of the schools in our country is insufficient to meet the needs of Physical Education course. Especially in primary schools, sufficient importance should be given to sports halls and Physical Education course equipment.

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