

## **National and Over-national Policies in the Field of Education: A Case Study in Romania**

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### **Introduction**

Globalization has a great impact on our lives. Historically, globalization has been known specific regional variations. In Europe, the new concept refers to the so called “Europeanization”. Education contributes to the development of society, but it is also supported by the allocation of resources to reach as good parameters as possible, with individual and societal effects. It represents a preoccupation not only for the international global organizations (United Nations), but, also for the European institutions (The European Commission, The European Council, The European Parliament) and the national ones (government and parliament), involved in the educational process.

Education in the European Union is drawn under the principle of convergence, but significant differences are still noticed. Governance means not only national policies, but, also the European perspective (the European policy), with a strong connection between these two levels, to foster structural and economic homogeneity across the EU’s countries, to assure a viable market integration. In these circumstances, it is a challenge to study how these two levels are linked, in order to assure a viable integration of the educational policy, and to get an economy based on knowledge.

## **Objectives**

The paper aims to analyze the impact of the European policies on the national systems – with a focus on Romania – as a result of integration in the field of education. The main objectives of the study are: to highlight the Lisbon Strategy's consequences in Europe and the Bologna system's premises; to present the vision of Europe 2020 Strategy regarding education and to analyze the situation in the member-states, with a particular focus on Romania in achieving the Strategy's objectives; to identify the concrete actions to be made by all the levels involved in the implementation of the policy.

## **Methodology**

To base a coherent strategy both at European and national level, it is important to know the current state of the problem. For that reason, the authors made a documentary research among secondary data from different studies regarding the European strategies and policies in the field of education, and official documents of the European Union for specific problems. The data and the documents were chosen based on their relevance for the paper, their impact in the education field and their importance as guiding documents for the European and national level. Also, some documents about national policies in the field of education in different EU member-states were consulted. Based on the correlation between national and European data a series of comparative analysis were made.

## **Results and Discussion**

From the very beginning, The European Community was established as an over-national structure. The progress in the issues regarding integration emphasized this character. In December 2000, The Lisbon Strategy was launched, with the aim of transforming European Union to be the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world. The Lisbon Strategy was improved and relaunched in 2005 as The Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, with a focus on new domains, considered less relevant until that time: education, research and innovation. The Lisbon Strategy was correlated with

the Bologna Declaration (June, 1999) and it was followed by The Europe 2020 program. One of the five objectives of the program directly highlights education, and the program specifies not only the objectives, but, also, the instruments and the institutional aspects regarding the implementation. In the field of education, Europe 2020 established a concrete set of measures to reduce the school dropout to less than 10%; to increase the share of graduates in the tertiary graduates in the elderly to over 40% from 30%; and to invest in R&D 3% of their GDP. According to the official data, the situation in the member-states shows that some countries have some serious problems in achieving the requested indicators.

Comparing the situation in the member-states countries, the following aspects can be highlighted:

- Regarding the investments in R&D (established at 3%), 9 countries have less than the established target (Cyprus – 0.5%, Bulgaria – 0,78%, Czech Republic – 1%, Greece and Slovakia – 1,2%, Croatia – 1,4%, Latvia – 1,5%, Poland – 1,7%, Hungary – 1,8%); only Austria targeted more than 3% for R&D.
- Regarding dropping out, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy and Spain exceed the limit of 10%.
- Regarding the population completing the tertiary education, 10 countries established a target that represents less than 40%; other 10 countries are exceeding this target (Luxembourg and Italy more than 60%).

## **Conclusion**

The European Union wants to build one of the most competitive economies in the world. In order to achieve this goal, it has created significant European/over-national strategies, which are correlated with the national policies. One of the stated goals in these strategies is focused on education, considering the fact that education is one of the tools requested for the sustainable development of EU. Romania, by joining EU in 2007, has to align its national policy in education to the EU's objective (including the requested Europe 2020 objectives). However, the indicators are not only unaccomplished, but, the targets are also lower than the requested ones.

These data must be analyzed in correlation with the national preoccupations regarding education. From the accession time, Romania faced a problem regarding education financing. The public educational system (that represents the majority in Romania) is financed from national and local level. There are some disparities between these two levels (in fact, the decentralisation process is still unaccomplished).

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