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## EDITORIAL

### *Reforming Education* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prof. As. Dr. Belina BUDINI** \_\_\_\_\_

This issue of Polis focuses on Education in Albania further exploring its potential for reforms. The authors that have contributed to the topics related to education, endeavor to map out challenges and opportunities ahead for the educational system at different levels of education, both nationally and locally. Their arguments build on policy analysis, but also empirical research and data analysis as well as critical discourse analysis and legal frameworks.

The first article focuses on the curriculum reforms in the pre-university education in Albania. Through the evaluation of the previous curriculum reforms, professor Papajani argues that they failed to develop a competency-based curriculum as aimed; and did not follow the same philosophy at different levels of education which affected the coherence of the changes. This is complemented in the Strategy for the Development of Pre-University Education 2014-2020 that envisages a broader and competency-based conception of the curriculum with defining criteria for accurate assessment of the quality of education offered at national or local level.

Regarding the teaching methodology, the article of Tomi Treska et al. focuses on the factor of homeroom teacher and its traditional role in the education system in Albania. The authors attempt to evaluate the quality of performance of HTs in “New York High School” and the results support their hypothesis that HTs implement a good and very good performance of their roles, responsibilities, and functions.

The focus is again on education in the section of critical essays that encompass various analysis tools and techniques from the use of learning styles in the article of Blegina Hasko and Majlinda Hala, to the evaluation of the importance of physical education in primary school in the article of Bora Sulka, Borjan Isufaj and Marjo Shabanaj, to the casus for increasing the inclusiveness of social need children in the pre-school and primary education system in the article of Albana Xhemali and Elona Hasko,, as well as the mapping of needs for social services at home for the elderly in the article by Brunilda Dervishaj and Dorina Xhani, and finally the discussion of leadership and its impact on the challenges of higher education in the article by Malvina Kosova and Elena Simonofski.

Within the idea of reforming education, Irena Myzeqari, brings the need to science communication, as a mean to improve the quality of research in higher education,

while the colleagues Etleva Haxhhysemi, Briseida Andoni and Gerti Metani, emphasize the need for a better career orientation, as mean to guarantee professional success. In his paper on the dark social capital as an effective way in getting things done in Albania, Gerti Sqapi tries to explain the dark sides of social capital applied in the context of Albania. The article of Erisela Marko and Kamin Gounaili focuses on interpersonal communication among students, taking case from Eastern Mediterrarean University through the analysis of eye contacts.

In his article “Public or private corruption?”, Dr. Kajsiu focuses on the ideological dimension of anti-corruption discourses in Albania, Colombia and Ecuador. The methodology of the study is the comparative discourse analysis. His paper shows that despite the similar levels and perceptions of corruption, the official discourses of prime-Minister Edi Rama in Albania, that of president, Juan Manuel Santos in Colombia and of president, Rafael Correa in Ecuador are articulated differently due to their distinct ideological positions. Therefore, Rama and Santos from within a neoliberal perspective define corruption mainly as abuse of public office and locate it mainly in the public sector, whereas Correa from within a 21st century socialism stance, defines corruption primarily as a problem of the private sector that captures and distorts the public sector.

In his article on “The Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms According to International Laws and Domestic Laws in North Macedonia “, PhD Candidate, Nail Isufi focuses on comparative aspects. Through this paper, he elaborates the legal overview of the protection of the human rights and freedoms, as well as the international and domestic protection of these rights within state institutions of North Macedonia, for which are adopted various legal acts. Isufi furthermore argues that the international organizations and the states are those who should always ensure the legal protection of the human rights and freedoms, but this is not always applicable and depends on their ability.

In her article on the communication of science, Irena Myzeqari argues that there is an increasing need for more communication from the scientific communities in Albania. Based on a theoretical approach, she brings the latest debates focusing on science communication, trying to open a new path of discussion and research in the higher education system in Albania.

In their article on career guidance and its impact on graduate employability, authors Haxhihyseni, Andoni and Metani inspect the features of an effective career guidance practice, including the emerging necessity for schools to start introducing and encouraging student vocation at an earlier age combined with the essential role of exposure to the working realm. The results of their study show inefficiency in career guidance provided and a need to plan alternative applicable strategies.

Finally, the articles of this issue confirm overall the never-stopping need for reforming education in Albania. Taking a rather internationalized perspective, most authors argue in favor of changes, be it in the educational system, in the institutional practices or in the initiatives and instruments as well as developing more research capacities, in reference to European policies for the Western Balkans and Albania as an aspiring country to join EU.

## Curriculum reform in pre-university education in Albania

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**Prof. Dr. Adrian PPAJANI**

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### Abstract

*The study aims to provide a concise overview of the progress of the process of curriculum reform in pre-university education in general, the achievements and problems identified after 1991. After some initial corrections, the pre-university education curriculum changed but they did not follow the same philosophy at different levels of education, which affected the coherence of the changes. In the early 2000s, experts identified the main challenges related to improving the situation in this system. They were:*

- a. national curriculum reform; and*
- b. creating a stable and efficient structure for the professional development of teachers working in pre-university education.*

*The new curricular framework would indicate the directions in which the country's education system needed to be developed to meet its intended educational policies. But the curricular reform of upper secondary education in 2010 did not follow the same curricular philosophy and approach as the curricular reform of basic education in 2004. Although this reform aimed at aligning with new trends in competency-based curriculum development, it did not managed to realize a curriculum that reflected the development of competencies in all aspects. The basic education curriculum reform in 2013 tried to offer a new curriculum, but despite the efforts made, it failed to develop a competency-based curriculum. The Strategy for the Development of Pre-University Education 2014-2020 envisages a broad and competency-based conception of the curriculum. This important development complemented a shortcoming identified in the process of reforming Pre-University Education until 2013. Defining key*