
ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ROMANIA

Costina SFINTEȘ*

* Scientific Researcher, Institute of Research, Development and Innovation, Constantin Brancusi University of Târgu Jiu, Romania

Abstract: *The history of education in Romania has often been narrated through the lens of official reforms, legislative changes, and the adoption of Western pedagogical models. While such approaches are essential for understanding institutional development, they tend to overshadow the more subtle and complex dynamics that shaped the lived experience of teachers, students and communities across time. An alternative historical perspective reveals education not only as a formalized process of instruction, social cohesion and cultural resilience.*

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, education in Romania mirrored the broader transformations of society, from the nation-building efforts of the nineteenth century, to the centralizing policies of the communist regime, and later, to the democratic reforms following 1989. Yet beyond these major turning points, everyday practices of learning, resistance and adaptation tell a parallel story. Families, rural communities, and informal networks played a vital role in transmitting knowledge and values, often filling the gaps left by official system or counterbalancing state-driven ideologies.

Keywords: *Education, Opinions, Interest , History, Justice*

**Contact details
of the
author(s):** -

Interwar education in Romania played a fundamental role in the construction of national identity. The reform initiated by Spiru Haret and further consolidated emphasized the universalization of primary education and the creation of a unified school system, in which Western influences – especially French and German – were visible in the curricular structure. However, the discrepancies



1/2025

between rural and urban environments remained significant, with access to education still strongly conditioned by socio-economic status.

After the establishment of the communist regime, education became an essential tool of propaganda and social control. The 1948 reform centralized the system, eliminated religious influences, and promoted a polytechnic-type school aligned with the Soviet model. Teachers were subjected to strict control and the curriculum was heavily ideologized, aiming to shape the "new socialist men". During this period, although important steps were taken in expanding access to education and reducing illiteracy, the quality of the educational process was often sacrificed in favor of ideological uniformity.

The post- 1989 transition brought a series of fragmented reforms, marked by the tension between tradition and modernization. Alternative textbooks were introduced, new curricular structures were created, and emphasis was placed on decentralization. However, legislative instability and frequent policy changes generated uncertainty and difficulties in implementing reforms, culminating in the adoption of Law no. 84/1995, and later Law no. 1/2011.

The problem of education in contemporary Romania becomes more acute when the dropout rate increases, the illiteracy rate has the same trend, the quality of education declines, the school does not value the social, curricular area is correlated with the real needs of organizations etc. and job market, and the list goes on.

Heterogeneity level of education and training, heterogeneity motivation, thinking, heterogeneity of age and learning methods didactic teaching staff in this sector, are all issues on which governments have not bowed out or have been too easy, despite that the formation of values and attitudes behavioral tracing is possible only by a teacher trained and oriented in the field.

No new education law that is in force, although it does not clarify educational issues speaks with fervor of competence and performance, despite the fact that, in essence, represents a fusion of the old education law No. 84/1995, with the status of teachers and other normative acts issued prior art.¹ We are seeing basically a reprint of the 1995 education law, with a renumbering of articles, completing or eliminating some of them. It should however be noted that this law introduces new elements, but many problems are discussed need or treated superficially.

We stop little attention to reviews the main changes brought by this act and consequences of the new education law.

¹ OMEN 3178 / 20.1.1998 - on relaunching the study of classical languages, Latin and Greek, OMEN. 3279 / 17.02.1998, the new policy manuals, OMEN 3351 / 04.05.1998 regarding the development and implementation of the National Curriculum's university education, OMEN 3458 / 03.23.1998 regarding the design and implementation of credit transfer system in education OMEN 3178 / 20.01 .1998 - on relaunching the study of classical languages, Latin and Greek, OMEN. 3279 / 17.02.1998, the new policy manuals, OMEN 3351 / 04.05.1998 regarding the development and implementation of the National Curriculum's university education, OMEN 3458 / 23.03.1998 regarding the design and implementation of credit transfer system in higher education, OMEN 3570 /14.4.1998 the study of foreign languages in schools, OMEN 3231 / 01.02.1999 on technological education in schools and universities, OMEN 3420 / 12.03.1999 of the MNE on studying disciplines of information technology, data processing and computer-assisted technology, in application of new Education framework- plan , OMEN 3044 / 13.01.2000 curriculum reform in universities, OMEN. 3621 / 13.04.2000 on the introduction of European studies in schools and universities, etc, OMEN 3570 / 04.14.1998 on the study of foreign languages in schools, OMEN 3231 / 02.01.1999 on technological education in schools and universities, OMEN 3420 / 12.03.1999 of the MNE the chosen subjects information technology, computer and computer-assisted technology, in application of the education framework-plan, OMEN 3044 / 01.13.2000 curriculum reform in universities, OMEN. 3621 / 13.04.2000 on the introduction of European studies in schools and universities, etc.



Liability for the content and consequences of the Education Law no. 1/2011, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, on January 10, 2011, was assumed by Prime Minister Emil Boc², jointly with the Government at the time (scripted speaking, since practically not been held accountable one of "those who led the" for what happened to Romanian education).

It was produced by the entry into force of this law classification and ranking of universities curricula, removing age criteria in professional ascent, additional funding to performance. Education becomes compulsory from grade 9 to 10 grades and attendance compulsory courses until the age of 18. It lays open nature of university education and the role of local government in ensuring conditions for conducting pre-university education in their areas of competence.³

A novelty is the primary structure and passing the 5 classes by introducing class 0 - preparatory group of kindergarten classes I-IV passes. So primary schools, who will take the high school class IX and will become a 5-year educational cycle, which complicates things. There will be no compulsory secondary school, which will increase illiteracy and accelerating the process of closing the "vocational schools", the "school of fine arts and crafts." It has great implication in the economy of the country and especially on ensuring qualified personnel reference areas - turners, mechanics, electricians, tailors, watchmakers, etc.

0-6 years on early childhood education, which consists of the ante, it is conducted in nurseries, kindergartens and day care centers that are re-included, after 18 years, under the authority of the ministry and the pre-school level.

According to education law, as a novelty, "university education system is composed of all state educational establishments, licensed and accredited private confessional", but were overlooked interdependencies.

Art. 96, paragraph 1 states that "education and Confessional particular, the composition of the Board shall include representatives of the founders. The management board is provided by a person appointed by the founders. In compulsory education, the Board includes a representative of the local council. "

Unfortunately experience has shown that many board members do not have the ability to understand the meaning of a decision on the educational system. The school, whether it be state, private or confessional is at least morally responsible, to the society, for the simple fact that education is a public good.⁴ But always in a state degradation, morality has no value to those who pull the levers in the most important sectors of public and private life. Gains for them are more important than the good of society. They overlook a very important -communication on the one hand, and interaction and cooperation between / among public / private institutions, services and civil society on the other hand, are the necessary and sufficient to keep them on their positions and also to achieve a framework for the development of society in all its aspects.

I wonder if our leaders in the past 27 years they all wore blinders, or we are in a permanent state of numbness? Who is it so crazy to cut the branch on which sits under your feet?

Art. 112 paragraph 1 of Law no. 1/2011 shows that "schools can hold public assets under management, the private education, have the fundamental right to private property and the Confessional education, foundations, depending on the entity that has established one of the two forms of ownership. "

² Have the capacity of Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University "Babes Bolyai" University, Cluj Napoca. Had they performed a check on the work of former Prime Minister at the university during his mandala, we certainly have surprises, as some teleportation was not invented by this time

³ Adrian Gorun, *Sociological study on Law no. 1/2011. Education and community*, Ed. Didactic and pedagogical, Bucharest, 2013, p. 140

⁴ Ibid, p.142



Basically this article omits scientist who is the owner of these goods, making confusion between ownership and its dismemberments, which are subject to the provisions of civil law.

Law 1/2011 so fails to determine the legal regime of the material - buildings, land, movable laboratories, equipment, experimental farms, workshops, that is the area which belong - public or private - and who is the rightholder property and how to manage the material basis. It only sets administrator land and buildings as the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, through county school inspectorates, county councils, local councils.

Art. 112, paragraph 5, states that "no part of the public buildings and lands held under lease agreements, concession and bailment" and para next set out the that the "change of use of the material base of educational institutions without the assent of MECTS is a crime and acts are void. " We note here that unlike previous regulations, the law no. 1 no offense taken as base materials without the MECTS disposals. I'm wondering why? It says indirectly art. 113 of the same law.

An abnormality in our opinion is also the art. 113 showing that registration of ownership of immovable property belonging MECTS institutions / establishments of public education, county councils, local authorities in which the activities of teaching, school units State is exempt from tax provided by law, Real estate advertising books. This allowed that the "negligence masked" or "intention" of the authorities, these patrimonial goods to reach some natural or legal persons, invoking certain provisions of the Civil Code.

There are many practical issues that had broken down, but what empowered to do something for the welfare of society are busy with their own sake. For example, in the old school of commune Schela, county Gorj, working for 13 years, a branch of a pharmacy that has no document operating in that building, which is registered with the territorial administrative unit, under which to operate lawfully; not to mention the favorable opinion of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sport to change the use of the building which had previously obtained. Even in these conditions, mayors commune in place to raise money from the local budget through collection administrator for the company reward, not derisory, pay them and the costs of site with public money - (consideration, electricity, supplying point working pharmacy is paid by representatives of the respective administrative authority) - they forgot to charge every month for years vreol3 a rate that increases every month.

Among all levels of education, most affected by the law no. 1/2011 remains higher education, whether it's public or private higher education.

This environment has been contaminated by those universities type trade, which were established by judgments and that although working "outside the law", resist and persist in the system, issuing diplomas issued by the Ministry of wound coils. And so it continued degradation of education and the educational process, which subsequently pull down and other important sectors of the Romanian space.

To build what we have previously stated, refer to art. 26 of Law no. 51/1995, which states that the profession without law is a crime - and we mean those lawyers engaged in so-called "constitutional bars" that have emerged under a court ruling. It should be noted that those who undertake these activities "constitutional Bars" are graduates, in general, law schools emerged overnight that do not pass exams organized for entry into the National Union of Bars of Romania.

Through the changes brought in 2004 legislator expressly he said that the work of attorney shall cease to be taking place under conditions other than those established by law. Yet the law does not clarify is how to establish the bars, and the bars operate as traditional and established by court decisions. This legal vacuum is not meant to be regulated as a scandal would come monstrous that would attract whirlpool big names and whose image would be seriously affected, given how they have been authorized and accredited institutions to higher education .

An even greater anomaly is the fact that those working as "lawyer" in the constitutional bars are expelled from the courtroom by panels of judges who are in the courtroom, and yet nobody does anything. No judges are not held accountable for possible abuse of office, nor those who are expelled from the courtroom that "exercise a profession without right" are not held accountable. We are, to some extent, in a legal vacuum, but governors have other problems instead turn these things that have negative effects on civil society. Often these individuals recruits in front of the courts, elderly people over whom I promise that help them in solving their legal problems because they have the necessary knowledge and experience, and what happens to them is abuse. The latter losing processes, land and homes they have definitively violated their right to a fair trial ... and yet move forward out of inertia.

Who should take the attitude of hardened? Our education we can afford to keep all under control? Their slaves until we silence? It's time for change!

They speak of education as a *national priority*, but education law forgot to define this concept, to say that is its place in the top national priorities, where there is such a thing, and what are the mechanisms, levers, the effective transposition, in society, the concept.

Art. 1 of the Education Act states: "This law provides the framework for the exercise of authority under Romanian state has the fundamental right to lifelong learning. The law regulates the structure, functions, organization and functioning of the national state, private and denominational. "Who says Ion Luca Caragiale -" to review everything, but do not change anything. "I would ask that 'framework' provides state of iron, legal, virtual space ... and that "lifelong"? the individual, the community, the state itself? This article requires legal norms and rules on which non-legal can not control, which can not cover - empathy, volitional processes can not be covered, nor ever learned.

It should be noted that an important role in the implementation of framework plans for education have had school inspectorates, where CEOs, specialized inspectors, principals used and uses the curriculum and school personal interests in order to obtain material benefits for themselves or others through the establishment of rules even for substitute teachers and substitute teachers even unqualified. Providing teaching norms of staff-standard prescribed by law, or moving staff and auxiliary whim in violation of the methodology of staff mobility. Political interference in the appointment of staff in management positions within the schools, most often had negative effects. These issues persisted to the present, where a post of substitute "to buy" 30,000 lei in 2015.

It bit with each passing moment, this system of education, given the superficiality of the maturity exam is organized and especially the fact that in these conditions, however, there are many students who do not pass this exam. If some time ago baccalaureate exam was prepared with utmost importance, seriousness and rigor currently this type of exam is disappointing and raises many questions about the Romanian education system today.

Instead of finding levers to achieve a sustainable education, great leaders are considering allowing access to university education system, those who fail to obtain baccalaureate note 6. The universities will again be full of students, but where can we speak of powers and performance when they do not have the necessary basis. Do you build a house, if the foundation lacks?

Beyond legislation, the historical of education in Romania reveals deep social divides. Rural areas have remained disadvantaged over the decades, with dropout rates significantly higher than in urban settings. In addition, the education of minorities – particularly Roma communities – has often been marginalized, reflecting the absence of coherent integration policies.

Comparatively, Romania's experience is not unique. Countries such as Poland and Hungary went through similar transitions after the collapse of communism, facing the same challenges: decentralization, adaptation to European standards and the reduction of social disparities. EU integration accelerated the harmonization process, introduction concepts such as lifelong learning and academic mobility, while also exposing the persistent structural gaps.



1/2025

Contemporary Romanian education stands at a crossroads between performance and equity. On the one hand, there are islands of excellence-high schools and universities that are internationally competitive; on the other hand, the system suffers from major inequalities, reflected in international test results and in the high school dropout rate.

Another critical issue is digitalization. The covid-19 pandemic accelerated the implementation of digital technologies but also deepened inequalities between students with access to technological resources and those lacking material means. At present, Romanian education faces the challenge of integrating new technologies in a sustainable way, without excluding vulnerable groups.

Thus, from alternative historical perspective, education cannot be viewed solely as the product of laws and public policies, but rather as a complex social phenomenon in which communities, families and individual experiences have played – and continue to play – a decisive role.

Ultimately, the history of education in Romania demonstrates that beyond legal frameworks and institutional reforms, it is the interplay of social resilience, cultural memory, and community practices that truly shapes the educational experience across generations.



1/2025

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- National Education Law. 1/2011;
- National Education Law. 85/1995;
- Law no. 51/1995 on the organization and exercising the lawyer profession;
- OMEN 3351 / 04.05.1998 on developing and implementing National Curriculum in the university's
- OMEN 3458 / 03.23.1998 regarding the design and implementation of credit transfer system in higher education,
- OMEN 3044 / 01.13.2000 curriculum reform in universities,
- OMEN. 3621 / 13.04.2000 on the introduction of European studies in schools and universities, etc.
- OMEN 3044 / 01.13.2000 curriculum reform in universities,
- OMEN. 3621 / 13.04.2000 on the introduction of European studies in schools and universities, etc.
- Adrian Gorun, *Sociological study on Law no. 1/2011. Education and community*, Ed. Didactic and pedagogical, Bucharest, 2013;