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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

The relevance and importance of the topic addressed are determined by the profound transformations of contemporary society, characterized by the accelerated development of technologies and by the increasingly complex demands of the labour market, which require young people who are creative, adaptable, and capable of effective communication. In this context, education assumes an essential role in the formation of the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for the active and responsible integration of young people into society and the global economy. The educational system is called upon to contribute not only to academic development, but also to personality formation, by promoting critical thinking, cooperation, creativity, and European values such as innovation, sustainability, and digital literacy. The relevance of the topic is further emphasized by the status of the Republic of Moldova as a candidate country for European Union integration, a fact that entails educational reforms and the alignment of national policies with European standards. Nevertheless, the national educational system continues to face a number of challenges, including inequalities in access, uneven quality of the educational process, and the need to adapt the curriculum to the requirements of the labour market and technological progress. Consequently, it becomes necessary to conduct a critical analysis of educational policies and to identify effective models for the modernization of the education system, capable of contributing to the sustainable development of Moldovan society.

Description of the situation in the field of research. Over time, education and schooling have been based on different emphases and directions, determined by the paradigms promoted and asserted, either directly or indirectly, which have been identified and analyzed by researchers with scientific rigour and perseverance. The research conducted has constituted a premise for selecting the foundations of education and for effectively guiding future formative approaches, useful within the education system and the educational process, both in school and extracurricular contexts. The phenomenon of education is approached differently in pedagogical sources, depending on the theory adopted, while its understanding is related to the structure and characteristics of the educational process. The content of the concept of education reflects the fundamental components of education as a socio-human phenomenon that interacts at the theoretical level. Thus, the definition of education raises numerous methodological and praxiological issues, as a result of the complexity of the psychosocial reality it reflects, whose conceptual understanding depends on the stage reached in specialized scientific research.

In recent decades, the remarkable changes in society in terms of information technologies, the consequences of globalization, and the alignment with European values have generated numerous debates and in-depth analyses. The possibility of addressing these challenges is provided

by the multiple reforms undertaken at the level of the national educational system and beyond, which seek to establish a fair balance between the principles of quality, efficiency, diversity, and equity, as well as between the competences of central and local administration and the autonomy of each educational institution.

Thus, the reforms undertaken have focused on specific directions, such as:

- the reorientation of educational programmers and objectives towards the expected outcomes of various educational processes, expressed in terms of knowledge, competences, and abilities;
- equality of opportunity with regard to access to education and active integration into the educational system;
- the decentralization and autonomy of educational institutions;
- the orientation of educational institutions towards the requirements of the specific professional and social environment;
- the enhancement of the quality of education and the development of methods for assessing each child, pupil, student, teacher, educational institution, as well as the system as a whole at national level;

In the context of changing perspectives, the reform-oriented approach must be based on trust, access to information, transparency, accountability, performance, compliance with budgetary constraints, and continuity. It is necessary to clearly define the roles and core functions of all managerial actors; to eliminate parallelism and the duplication of functions in the administration of the educational system; to separate the functions of policy development and promotion from those of control and educational service provision; to ensure the reasonable delegation and sharing of competences related to the implementation of educational policies among local public administration authorities, educational institutions, and other structural subdivisions authorized to perform duties in the field of education [1, p. 7].

The degree of investigation of the research topic is based on theories concerning education and the evolution of educational paradigms, grounded in the philosophy of science and reflected in the works of researchers such as J. Piaget [26], A. Binet [2], J. Dewey [14, 33], E. Key [23], E. Tiron, T. Stanciu [32], C. Cucoș [12], C. Crețu [7, 8], L. Roșca [29, 30, 31], and V. Panico [24, 25]. The analysis of the didactic process, both at national and European level, was carried out on the basis of legislation and official documents relevant to the field of education. These include the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova (2014, updated in 2026), the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, signed on 27 June 2014 in Brussels, the Reference Framework of the National Curriculum (2025), and the Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union. Furthermore, the research

draws upon statistical data, studies, reports, policy notes, and evaluations conducted by public and private institutions from the Republic of Moldova and the European Union. Significant contributions to the study of educational policies have been made by foreign researchers such as G. Mialaret [35], E. N. Wolf [36], T. Husen [34], S. Cristea [10, 11], and Al. Crișan [9], as well as by national authors such as Vl. Guțu [19, 20], V. Andrițchi, T. Cojocaru [1], T. Cojocaru [6], and V. Goraș-Postică [17, 18]. At the same time, the correlation between European educational standards and the educational system of the Republic of Moldova is analysed in the works of researchers such as V. Juc [22], M. Decan, M. Șevciuc [13], S. Cebotari [5], and others.

Despite significant investments in education and the continuous modernisation of the educational system, the Republic of Moldova faces a number of contradictions regarding the quality of education and its relevance to the labour market. Paradoxically, while education is often regarded as the key to social and economic development, the outcomes achieved do not always correspond to expectations. Therefore, a critical analysis of the national educational system is necessary in order to identify the factors influencing inequalities in access, the uneven quality of the educational process, and the need to adapt the curriculum to the requirements of the labour market and technological progress. The adaptation of the country's educational policies to European standards, rather than their mere application without analyzing the territorial specificity, will bring major benefits to the younger generation and will positively influence the sustainable development of Moldovan society.

On the basis of the analysis of the degree of investigation of the topic and of the challenges and contradictions mentioned above, **the research problem** has been formulated as follows: what are the theoretical and methodological foundations of the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European legal and conceptual framework?

The aim of the paper consists in providing a theoretical and methodological foundation for the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European legal and conceptual framework, including through the proposal of a corresponding Pedagogical Model.

In order to achieve the proposed aim, the following **research objectives were established**:

- to identify the fundamental concepts, theories, and paradigms concerning educational policies from a historical and theoretical-conceptual perspective, within both the European and national contexts;
- to analyze the evolution of the education system as an object of educational policies and the impact of these policies on educational transformations in the European and national space;

- to determine the approaches, dimensions, and value framework of European and national educational policies, with emphasis on their convergences and differences;
- to develop a conceptual-methodological Model for adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European framework, based on the principles and mechanisms identified;
- to formulate conclusions and recommendations relevant to the optimization of the national educational policy framework, with a view to aligning it with European values and the European legal framework.

Research hypothesis: Determining the theoretical and methodological foundations of the process of adapting national educational policies to the European legal framework will lead to the optimization of the mechanisms for changing key elements of the education system of the Republic of Moldova.

Synthesis and justification of the research methodology. To conduct the research and achieve the proposed objective, the following methods were employed: *theoretical methods* — the historical analysis of the evolution of educational theories and policies, the comparative method for identifying convergences between the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova and those of the European Union, as well as the analysis of educational policy documents. In addition, systemic, structural-functional, and axiomatic approaches were applied, enabling the examination of education as a complex system and the clarification of fundamental concepts in the field; *empirical methods* — surveys of teaching staff, interviews with decision-makers, and public discourse analysis, aimed at highlighting institutional perspectives regarding the implementation of educational policies; *statistical data processing methods* — the collected data were analyzed in order to assess the impact of policies on academic performance and social inclusion. The combination of these methods enabled the development of an interdisciplinary research approach and the comparison of the experiences of European states, providing benchmarks for adapting the educational system of the Republic of Moldova to European standards while respecting national specificities.

The scientific novelty and originality consist in the integrated and comparative approach to the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova in relation to the European legal framework, materialized through the development of a pedagogical model for optimizing the adaptation of educational policies and a functional taxonomy of educational policies in the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.

The theoretical significance of the research lies in the consolidation of the conceptual framework of education through the critical analysis of educational policies, the education system,

and the national curriculum, as well as through the theoretical and methodological substantiation of their adaptation to the European educational area. The research contributes to the scientific foundation of the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the requirements and trends of the European educational area by elucidating concepts, defining guiding principles, and integrating the European dimensions of quality and equity in education.

The applied value of the study consists in the potential use of the instruments and recommendations formulated for the improvement of the normative and institutional framework, as well as for the optimization of educational management and the modernization of the national education system. The recommendations formulated represent a functional resource for improving the mechanisms for implementing educational policies, developing strategies for adaptation to European Union standards, optimizing educational management, and creating instruments for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education. The valorization of the conclusions of the thesis could contribute to the modernization of the education system, the increased efficiency of educational policies, and the facilitation of young people's social and professional integration.

The results obtained highlight the theoretical and methodological foundations of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European legal framework, as well as the main barriers influencing their quality. The study analyses the dimensions and values of European and national educational policies and proposes a pedagogical model for optimizing the adaptation process. At the same time, a taxonomy of educational policies in the European Union and the Republic of Moldova is developed, and conclusions and recommendations are formulated for the alignment and increased efficiency of national educational policies.

Publications on the topic of the thesis: 20 scientific papers, including: 2 articles in journals from the National Register of specialized journals included in the list of databases accepted by ANACEC; 3 articles in specialized scientific journals; 4 articles in the proceedings of international and national scientific conferences; one chapter in a collective monograph; and 10 reports presented at national and international scientific conferences.

The volume and structure of the thesis. The thesis includes an introduction, three main chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography comprising 157 titles, 10 appendices, 189 pages of main text, 24 figures, and 19 tables.

Keywords: adaptation, school dropout, teaching staff, national and European legal framework, digitalization, education, Europeanisation, optimization, educational policies, education system.

CONTENT OF THE THESIS

In the **Introduction**, the relevance and importance of the issue addressed are presented, together with the aim and objectives of the investigation, the hypothesis, the significant scientific problem solved, the scientific novelty of the results obtained, the theoretical significance and applied value of the paper, the validation of the results, and the summary of the thesis chapters.

In the **first chapter**, entitled **Educational Policies: A Historical and Theoretical-Conceptual Approach**, the epistemological coordinates of education and the evolution of its paradigms are examined. The conceptual reference points regarding educational policies are also defined, both aiming to determine the fundamental pedagogical definitions of education.

The historical approach guided us towards an awareness of the present state and future perspectives of education, achieved through the examination and interpretation of the historical context in which educational events and processes unfolded. By applying the historical method in the epistemology of education, the views of researchers concerning the evolution of educational theories, policies, and pedagogical practices within a temporal context were analyzed. This involved the study of several major periods in the history of education: Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the modern and postmodern eras, and the twenty-first century.

The diversity of theories and methods applied in the field of education has led to the emergence of several paradigms. The evolution of the educational paradigm in the European space has been influenced by a series of factors, such as social, economic, technological, and cultural changes. As a result of these transformations, educational approaches and priorities have changed over time: from religious education — since, in Europe, education was strongly connected to tradition and religion — to the Middle Ages and up to the eighteenth century, education continued to be dominated by religious institutions, such as churches and monasteries, which promoted religious values and morality. In recent decades, the advancement of digital technology has had a significant impact on the educational paradigm in Europe. Particular attention was paid to the integration of technology into the learning process and to the development of digital competences necessary for contemporary society. At the same time, new challenges and trends, such as globalizations, migration, and demographic changes, were analyzed, as they continue to influence the evolution of the educational paradigm not only in Europe, but throughout the world.

The content of educational policies concerns the organization of the education system, the functioning of institutions, the financing of education, evaluation, management, curriculum, and the training, professional development, and promotion of teaching staff. The analysis of theoretical approaches, practical experiences, and the current situation regarding educational policies, in the context of the need to adapt professional training to the requirements of the twenty-first-century

labour market, allows us to note the existence of certain inconsistencies. Contemporary society requires a new school — innovative and modern — and therefore its modernization is an ongoing process. In this regard, the necessary premises exist: a rhythmic process of curriculum development and methodological modernization, innovative management trends focused on modern concepts, managerial coordination, and the construction of an information-based school with an education system open to performance.

In the classical approach, there are three phases of the policy-making process, presented in the figure below; however, we consider the inclusion of the concept of optimization to be relevant for enhancing the improvement of public policies. [adapted from 21, pp. 16–18].



Fig. 1. Fig. 1. Stages of the public policy implementation process

By analyzing and synthesizing theoretical and practical studies, it should be noted that, after the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation, the process itself does not come to an end; rather, it enters a new phase of organizational learning and strategic adaptation. Therefore, optimization represents the stage of adjusting and improving policy on the basis of evaluation results, contextual changes, and new educational priorities. This stage responds to the requirements of the complete cycle of public policy management, in which the process is iterative rather than linear, allowing for the permanent recalibration and modernization of public intervention. Thus, the optimization stage aims to ensure the continuous improvement of educational policies on the basis of monitoring and evaluation results. This involves analyzing the extent to which objectives have been achieved, identifying the factors that influenced implementation, and formulating corrective and innovative measures designed to increase the efficiency, relevance, and sustainability of educational policies.

Educational policy, as a branch of public policy, represents the expression of the value judgements that underpin education. Similar to other public policies, it may be examined at several interdependent levels: the declarative level, which concerns the discursive dimension of policy; the action level, which includes the formal instruments for operationalizing policy; and the implementation or application level, which refers to the effective application of policies in real educational contexts. The level at which most policies fail is the implementation level. The multitude of theories and research methods in the field of education has led to the emergence of different paradigms of educational action, intended to guide and orient scientific research, to facilitate the use of specific research instruments and methodologies, and, not least, to assume a particular type of relationship between theory and practice.

Currently, the process of initiating public policies in the Republic of Moldova is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation on the planning, drafting, approval, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policy documents, approved by Government Decision No. 386/2020 of 17 June 2020.

The general definition of educational policies refers to the management of the process of change and innovation within the educational system, representing options materialized in official documents. Education systems must respond to various challenges, developments, and issues related to the local field of education, while also adapting to international requirements in order to remain competitive on the national and international labour market.

Under conditions in which educational policy is developed without sufficient consultation with stakeholders, it becomes a "cabinet policy" (Al. Crișan), which, sooner or later, proves to be inoperative. An educational policy may fail to respond to the needs of a society when the vision of all actors involved in the educational process is not analyzed. Its effectiveness depends on open dialogue, participatory decision-making, and relevant expertise.

In general, educational policy addresses the organization and functioning of the education system, including financing, evaluation, management, curriculum, and teacher training. To ensure continuity between higher education cycles within the qualifications framework, key dimensions include educational and institutional policies, qualifications and outcomes, curricula, teaching processes, and practical training. [1, pp. 13–14].

In the specialized literature, several criteria for classifying educational policies may be identified, as represented in the table below [21, pp. 13–14].

Table 1. Classification of Educational Policies

Types of Educational Policies	Characteristics
Positive policy	provides a response to a given problem;
Negative policy	eliminates the effects of certain actions;
Explicit policy	formulates pre-established codes;
Implicit policy	does not formulate such codes, but relies on unwritten codes that are not explained through regulations;
Normative policy	establishes conditions and criteria;
Procedural policy	establishes procedures and modes of action;
Public policies	belong to the state, while non-public policies belong to civil society;
Centralised policies	are coordinated and implemented by a higher authority or by a central institution;
Decentralised policies	are implemented at each level, field, or geographical area through the responsibility of other regional or local institutions.

Political Educational policy as an object of scientific research implies *"...addressing the manner in which the distribution of power and decision-making affects educational outcomes"* [34, p. 397]. Political action in education is a process in which questions are raised, problems are presented, explanations are offered, and solutions are suggested (Reich, 1993). Educational policy

may be understood as the action of political groups or political personalities. It represents a set of principles, procedures, and action-oriented processes established in statutes, administrative codes, and institutional regulations, which determine the state and orientation of education among the population. Education constitutes a strategic objective of all nations, while educational policy reflects the direction of the evolution of society as a whole [7, p. 5].

In a narrow sense, with reference to central governmental initiatives, educational policy is carried out through decisions objectified in official documents, such as laws, government decisions, ministerial regulations, and other normative acts. In a broad sense, with reference to the transfer and multiplication of decision-making through decentralization down to the institutional level, educational policy may be assimilated to educational plans or programmers — policies — designed and implemented either globally or sectorally, including at the policy levels of early education institutions, schools, groups, or classes [21, p. 4].

In **Chapter Two**, entitled **Educational Policies: The European and National Framework**, the policies and the political approach itself are analyzed, together with the specific nature of their dimensions and the conceptual reference points of educational policies, such as accessibility of education, educational equity, quality of education, curriculum flexibility, evaluation and monitoring, and the valorization of educational partnerships, among others. In this regard, we note that educational policies must focus on improving the quality of study programmers, the training and professional development of teaching staff, the evaluation and monitoring of pupils' results, and the implementation of high standards.

In this chapter, the *Education 2030 Development Strategy* establishes the directions of the policies of the Government of the Republic of Moldova in the field of education, defining the mechanisms for implementation and the anticipated impact on the education system, society, and the state. The document aims to optimize the intellectual, cultural, and professional formation of citizens and highlights the main contradictions between society's expectations and the quality of education, the priorities of the education system, economic needs, and the financial resources of the state. At the same time, the strategic act in question correlates the state's development options with the needs of citizens, in order to ensure an education system that is competitive at international level [27, p. 3].

The European DigCompEdu Framework — the Digital Competence Framework for Educators — is addressed to teaching staff at all levels of education, from preschool education to adult education and vocational training, including non-formal learning contexts. It represents an important step in aligning the Republic of Moldova with European standards. The implementation of these initiatives contributes to the achievement of the objectives established in the Education

2030 Strategy, approved in 2022, and to alignment with the national agenda Moldova 2030 and, respectively, Europe 2030.

The table below presents an analytical synthesis of the trends promoted by the Ministry of Education and Research for the years 2025–2030, derived from the priorities of the Education 2030 Strategy [27] and validated, inter alia, through the involvement of UNICEF.

Table 2. Strategic Axis of the Ministry of Education and Research Priorities: 2025 vs. 2030

Strategic Axis	2025 Immediate Priorities	By 2030 Strategic Vision
Qualified and empowered personnel	Digitalization of training + salary increases + inclusion of new professional categories	Continuous professional development and long-term planning
Infrastructure	35 model schools + ICT equipment in schools	A balanced network of well-equipped and resilient institutions
Quality and integrity	Anti-bullying campaigns, academic ethics, anti-corruption measures	Systemic evaluations and European quality criteria
Inclusion	Scholarships, support for small schools, auxiliary staff, and assistive technology	Inclusive curriculum, equitable scholarships, universal education
Digitalization	Training in basic digital competences, institutional equipment	Advanced digital education, artificial intelligence, educational platforms

In order to enhance the value of the investigation, we also selected several variables that contribute to identifying certain gaps within the system and that allow us to assess the situation in the context of the efficiency of education systems in different countries. These variables include the status of teaching staff, methods for reducing school dropout, and the degree of digitalization at various levels of education. As objects of analysis, we examined the experience of the northern EU countries, namely Finland and Denmark, as well as that of central EU countries, namely France, Austria, and Romania. The results of the investigation were correlated with statistical data from the Republic of Moldova.

We selected states representative both of the Nordic model of the European Union, namely Finland and Denmark, and of the Central European area, namely France, Austria, and Romania. This structuring makes it possible to capture different yet complementary systemic perspectives regarding the evolution and implementation of educational policies. The main criteria for selecting the countries subjected to analysis were as follows:

- *Educational performance confirmed by European indicators.* The Nordic countries, Finland and Denmark, were selected due to their consistently high positions in relation to European indicators concerning the quality of education, the status of teaching staff, and educational digitalization.
- *Representativeness of European educational models.* Given their long-standing tradition and historical development, France and Austria were included in order to reflect Central European models, characterized by structural policies, strong institutional traditions, and consolidated mechanisms of educational governance.

- *Contextual relevance for the Republic of Moldova.* Romania represents a reference context due to its geographical proximity, cultural similarities, and partial convergence of educational policies, thereby facilitating a contextually relevant comparison for the processes of adaptation in the Republic of Moldova.

The results obtained regarding the educational policies of the analyzed states were subsequently correlated with statistical data from the Republic of Moldova, using the official indicators of the National Bureau of Statistics [15]. This correlation made it possible to assess the degree of convergence with European trends and to substantiate recommendations concerning the adaptation of educational policies to the European legal framework [16].

The quality of teaching staff constitutes an essential determinant of the performance of the education system. Teachers who possess an in-depth command of the subject they teach, demonstrate involvement and dedication to the instructional and educational process, and succeed in engaging pupils in meaningful activities make a decisive contribution to institutional success and to the prestige of educational institutions.

The shortage of teaching staff is a cross-cutting issue in Europe, but it is more severe in Eastern European countries, including Romania and the Republic of Moldova, with the statistical data being presented in the table below. Effective solutions require investment in salaries and working conditions, the reform of initial and continuous teacher training, contractual stability and retention policies, as well as the integration of digital competences, such as DigCompEdu, for the modernization of the professional profile of teaching staff.

Table 3. Comparative Table on the Need for Teaching Staff [28, 134]

Country	Estimated Shortage	Critical Areas	Main Causes	Responses
EU average	3.1 million by 2030	Secondary education, STEM, rural areas	Ageing workforce, instability, burnout	Diverse and uneven
Finland	Moderate and localized	STEM, rural areas, preschool education	Declining attractiveness of the profession	High-quality teacher training
Denmark	Localized	Vocational education, rural areas	Low retention, stress	Psychological support
France	Severe and localized	Mathematics, languages, computer science	Temporary contracts, professional withdrawal	Teacher training reforms
Austria	Moderate	Sciences, vocational education	Retirements, lack of a new generation	DigComp-Cert, increased attractiveness
Romania	Severe	STEM, foreign languages, rural areas	Low salaries, migration, weak training	Salary increases, reforms
Republic of Moldova	Severe	Mathematics, physics, pedagogy	Migration, remuneration, rural areas	Pilot programmers, but insufficient

School dropout is approached as the result of the interaction between pedagogical, socio-economic, and emotional factors, and is addressed through policies that include multidisciplinary teams, tutoring, and counselling programmers for the transition to upper secondary education or vocational training. In this context, relevant good practices include the following: in France, the *Programme de Réussite Éducative* — PRE — which provides individualized support for pupils at risk, educational assistants, psychologists, and the ZEP/REP+ reform — Priority Education Zones — which allocates additional resources to disadvantaged areas.

In Austria, relevant measures include the *Youth Coaching Programme*, which provides individual coaching for pupils at risk of early school leaving, as well as extended-day schools and expanded psycho-educational support. In Romania, examples include the *School after School Programme* — SDS — which provides remedial support and extracurricular activities, and the National Programme for Reducing School Dropout — PNRAS — which offers funding for vulnerable schools, counselling, equipment, and scholarships.

The situation in the analyzed countries demonstrates that reducing school dropout depends on equitable access to resources, early interventions, integrated support policies, and the professionalization of teaching staff. The models highlighted emphasize the importance of a preventive and constructive approach and place particular emphasis on institutionalized interventions in vulnerable areas.

For the Republic of Moldova, educational policies aimed at reducing school dropout include:

- the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova, according to which general education is compulsory until the age of 18. It provides measures for combating absenteeism and reintegrating pupils who have withdrawn from school, Article 13;
- the Education 2030 Strategy, which includes a specific objective related to reducing disparities in access to education and increasing participation, through measures such as early interventions for children from vulnerable groups, the integration of children with special educational needs, and school recovery programmers;
- the EQIP — Education Quality Improvement Project — 2023–2028, financed by the World Bank, which provides grants to schools for reducing dropout through individualized support programmers, the digitalization of the educational process for expanded access, the district psycho-pedagogical network, monitoring pupils at risk of dropout, and the inclusion of counselling and educational assistance specialists;

- pilot programmers and local partnerships, for example with UNICEF and Step by Step, aimed at providing support for keeping children in school, especially in rural areas or vulnerable communities.

Almost a century ago, the well-known educator John Dewey stated that "if we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow" [33]. This insight resonates today more strongly than ever with the fundamental theses concerning the present and future of education in the digital era. The experience of European states such as Finland, Denmark, France, and Austria has enabled us to analyses the level of development of the education system in our country, as well as the capacity of educational institutions to provide quality services within the psychocentric and sociocentric paradigms. In educational institutions, pupils and students participate in the processes of planning, implementation, and evaluation. A relevant example in this regard is the experience of Finland, which implements an instructional strategy based on inquiry-based learning.

In evaluating the policy experience of European states, we focused on three variables: the status of teaching staff, school dropout, and the level of digitalization in educational services. The analysis allowed us to conclude that the reforms implemented in the education system over the past two decades have only partially achieved their objectives.

Currently, education is increasingly influenced by rapid digital and social transformations. In response to these challenges, European countries have implemented reforms aimed at improving the quality, efficiency, equity, and autonomy of their education systems. These reforms focus on competency-based education, equal access to learning opportunities, decentralization, institutional autonomy, quality assurance, modern assessment methods, teacher training, and sustainable financing of education.

In **Chapter Three**, entitled **The Conceptual and Experimental Framework of the Process of Adapting National Educational Policies to European Policies**, the efficiency of the education system of the Republic of Moldova is analyzed in relation to European standards through the application of a questionnaire. The direction of the structured questions concerns the quality indicators of the normative framework, the functionality of the system, and its alignment with European standards and modern approaches regarding the effective conduct of the educational process. This also enabled an understanding of the level of nationalization of European educational policies. According to the recorded responses, conclusions, findings, and recommendations were synthesized on the basis of professional experience, as well as the personal views of managerial and teaching staff, formed through direct contact with the challenges of the education system of the Republic of Moldova, the needs of learners, the requirements of the labour market, and, not least, cultural and political realities. At present, the challenge of transforming the education system

derives from the need for the effective social integration of young people. At the same time, the findings made it possible to model the optimization of the process of adapting certain national educational policies to the European legal framework, specifying ways of harmonizing and nationalizing various educational policies in the context of the digitalization of the educational process, the evaluation process, and the status of teaching staff.

Within the diagnostic approach, we applied a questionnaire consisting of 17 mixed-format questions: *"The Efficiency of the Education System of the Republic of Moldova in Relation to the Educational Policies in Force."* This was based on the analysis of the research hypothesis, namely the extent to which the quality of the normative framework and of the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova, as well as compliance with their provisions, ensures the effectiveness of the reform of the education system and the subsequent integration of young people into society.

The research sample included 190 managers and teachers from general education, technical vocational education, and higher education. The opinions and proposals of the surveyed subjects constitute the basis for a comprehensive analysis of the current state of affairs and will serve for the development of recommendations aimed at improving educational policies.

Analyzing the responses obtained to the question *"Do educational policies respond to the challenges related to the implementation of key competences developed within the education system?",* we may state that the investigated sample considers that, to a large extent, educational policies respond to the challenges related to the implementation of key competences — 64.7%; 25.8% indicated "to a small extent"; 8.4% indicated "to a very large extent"; and 1.1% indicated "to a very small extent." We assume that approximately 26.9% of the respondents — those who selected "to a small extent" and "to a very small extent" — refer to challenges related to certain incongruities between the continuous changes occurring in the labour market and the competences developed within the education system.

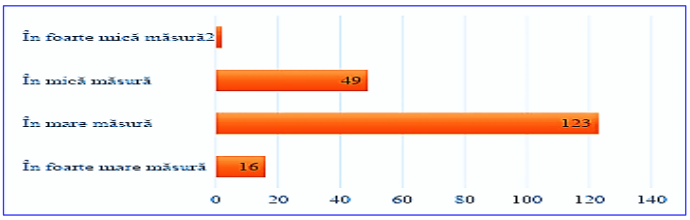


Fig. 2. The Level of Alignment of Policies with the Needs Related to the Formation of Key Competences

Starting from the premise that any problem, regardless of its complexity, may be addressed through interventions from multiple perspectives and by multiple actors, the respondents were asked the following question: *What mechanisms do you use to increase the involvement of society, the community, and the family in solving education-related problems, while ensuring a high level*

of civic activism and a positive perception of education? Thus, the respondents proposed instruments derived from their professional experience, formulated largely in terms of collaboration in various forms, such as: involving the family in solving education-related problems; thematic meetings and individual discussions; communication and information activities; meetings with parents and various educational stakeholders; as well as other actions on different topics involving members of the community.

Table 4. Proposed solutions for combating the shortage of teaching staff and increasing their motivation

Criterion	Examples of Identified Practices and Opinions
Professional development and continuing training	A. Ensuring access to training courses, seminars, training sessions, and workshops; B. Supporting young specialists in obtaining teaching degrees; C. Practicing mentoring and carrying out periodic monitoring; D. Transposing continuing training policies into practice; E. Providing opportunities to participate in national and international educational projects; F. Involvement in extracurricular activities and interinstitutional collaborations; G. Retraining teaching staff; H. Participation in academic mobility programmers with scholarships in the European Union.
Organizational measures and institutional climate	A. Creating a favorable climate based on collaboration and methodological support; B. Ensuring friendly communication, respect, and permanent collaboration among all levels of the institution; C. Prompt responses from the manager to complaints and notifications; D. Efficient distribution of tasks and coordination of activities; E. Promoting a supportive climate and well-being; F. Evaluating performance and granting salary supplements; G. Efficient management of the educational process; H. Involvement in team-building activities and the strengthening of internal organization.
Staff recruitment and retention	A. Recruitment through competition-based selection; B. Attracting graduates who have successfully completed their studies; C. Collaboration with the National Employment Agency, universities, and Centers of Excellence for recruitment purposes; D. Attracting employees from the economic sector for practical lessons and internships; E. Attracting staff from other institutions, particularly in urban areas, by offering professional development opportunities and involvement in projects; F. Engaging graduates for short periods as teachers; G. Using social networks for institutional promotion and recruitment.
Criticism and limited effectiveness of the methods applied	A. Existing teaching staff are assigned a higher teaching workload; B. Lack of effective methods and promotion based on nepotism or favoritisms; C. Promotion of insufficiently trained staff; D. Lack of students enrolled in key specializations within higher education; E. 11% of respondents are not aware of the methods applied; F. Pressure to retain staff at any cost, without ensuring quality; G. Lack of real solutions for disadvantaged areas and disciplines.

In order to assess the impact of the European framework on the education system of the Republic of Moldova, the individual in-depth interview was used as a qualitative method for investigating the perceptions of decision-making actors. The sample included eight experts, with professional experience ranging from 12 to over 50 years, involved in the development or implementation of educational policies. The interview guide included six open-ended questions and one closed question, aimed at identifying current challenges, factors influencing adaptation to

the European framework, and solutions for optimizing educational policies. The extended analysis of the responses highlights the need for a systemic, coherent educational reform aligned with European standards.

Based on another research instrument, namely the expert interview, the main policy measures necessary for the effective integration of digital technologies into the educational process were identified. These concern ensuring equitable technological equipment in all educational institutions, including those in rural areas, the continuous development of teachers' digital competences, as well as the expansion of digital literacy among pupils, teachers, and parents.

The analysis of the responses to the question concerning the role of educational policies in developing the competences required for the labor market highlights several main directions. A genuine correlation is needed between educational policies and labor market requirements, through clear regulations and the effective implementation of strategies. The adaptation of the curriculum to twenty-first-century competences is also emphasized, including communication in foreign languages, digital competences, financial and entrepreneurial education, and the development of leadership and adaptability skills.

Thus, we may conclude that the adaptation of national educational policies to European standards is a complex process that involves not only the harmonization of the legislative framework, but also the alignment of values, objectives, and educational governance mechanisms with the social and economic realities of the European Union. In the view of policy experts, this adaptation is not equivalent to a simple normative transposition, but involves processes of contextualization, critical evaluation, and strategic engagement of internal actors.

In the same context, the analysis of the public speeches of political decision-makers in the Republic of Moldova highlights the strategic orientation towards European integration and the modernization of the education system, confirming the fact that education is considered a priority field. A reflective and critical examination of these visions reveals both convergences with European educational policies and limitations related to their implementation in the national context. The existence of political will to align with European standards is noted, as well as the need to strengthen internal capacities and involve all social actors in the effective implementation of reforms.

Thus, the modernization of education is presented as a complex process of structural transformation, which requires legislative coherence, investments, and the integration of innovative technologies, including through cooperation with EU Member States. In this regard, we identify several guiding principles of the adaptation process:

- *Normative convergence and coherence* — ensuring the compatibility of educational legislation with the EU acquis;
- *Quality, access, and equity* — promoting European quality standards and ensuring equitable access to education;
- *Recognition and mobility* — harmonizing qualifications and competences with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- *Digitalization* — developing digital competences in accordance with DigCompEdu standards;
- *Lifelong learning* — integrating this principle into educational policies and practices;
- *Democratic participation and transparency* — involving relevant actors in decision-making and reform processes.

Therefore, the process of adapting national educational policies to European standards cannot be reduced to mere formal adjustments or isolated initiatives. It must be coherent, participatory, and supported by a combination of firm political will, consolidated institutional capacity, and the involvement of all relevant actors — from authorities and educational institutions to civil society and the economic sector.

A modern and competitive education system, based on effective educational policies, cannot be built solely through the adoption of European good practices, but through a profound transformation of the way in which public policies in the field are conceived, implemented, and evaluated. In the view of political decision-makers and educational actors in the Republic of Moldova, this transformation requires authentic reforms: the modernization of the curriculum, the reduction of bureaucratic burden, significant investment in infrastructure, continuous and motivating professional training for teaching staff, as well as equitable and competitive remuneration.

An essential element in the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European legal framework is the analysis of the strategic directions promoted at EU level. These directions configure a systemic and coherent vision of education, supported by a network of interconnected strategic documents and initiatives aimed simultaneously at quality, equity, innovation, and inclusion in education.

In this context, the taxonomy proposed within this research, presented in the table below, represents, in our view, an innovative conceptual and applied instrument, as it facilitates the structured comparison of European and national educational policies; supports the identification of directions of convergence and divergence between the European regulatory and action framework and that of the Republic of Moldova; provides a methodological basis for analyzing

the adaptability and transferability of policies in the national context; and supports the substantiation of educational policy decisions based on evidence and European good practices.

Table 6. Taxonomy of Educational Policies in the European Union and the Republic of Moldova Author's own approach [5, pp. 14–16]

1. Fundamental Objective

Category	Description	European Policy Documents	National Policy Documents of the Republic of Moldova
Normative policies	Establish the legal and conceptual framework for harmonization and convergence.	European Qualifications Framework (EQF); Recommendation on the validation of informal learning	Education Code of the Republic of Moldova, No. 152/2014; National Qualifications Framework, Government Decision No. 1016/2017; Law on Technical Vocational Education No. 278/2014
Strategic policies	Aim at the long-term orientation of education systems.	Europe 2020 Strategy; European Skills Agenda 2020–2025	Education 2030 Strategy; Education Development Strategy for 2014–2020; National Action Plan in the Field of Human Rights
Operational policies	Focus on implementation and direct interventions.	Erasmus+ Programme; European Solidarity Corps; eTwinning	National programmers on the continuous professional development of teaching staff; Action Plan for the implementation of the Education 2030 Strategy; National Programme on Digital Education

2. Level of Application

Category	Description	European Policy Documents	National Policy Documents of the Republic of Moldova
Macro	Developed at EU level for all Member States.	Digital Competence Framework DigComp 2.2; Digital Education Action Plan	National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030"; Education Code; National Action Plan for Accession to the European Area
Meso	National policies adapted from European strategies.	National Strategy for Lifelong Learning — Romania; Education 2030 Strategy — Republic of Moldova	Education 2030 Strategy; Strategy for the Digitalization of Education 2023–2030; Roma Inclusion Strategy 2022–2025
Micro	Policies and practices at institutional level.	Institutional internationalization policies in universities; Curriculum adapted to EQAVET	Internal regulations of educational institutions; Institutional internationalization projects; Implementation of curricula adapted to the National Qualifications Framework

3. Field of Intervention

Category	Description	European Policy Documents	National Policy Documents of the Republic of Moldova
Inclusion and equity policies	Ensure equal access to education.	EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, 2021; EU Roma Strategic Framework 2021–2030; Erasmus+ Programme — inclusion component	Strategy for the inclusion of children with special educational needs, 2019–2023; Law No. 370/2023 on the Rights of the Child, updated in 2023; National Programme for the Social Inclusion of Roma
Digitalization policies	Promote digital literacy and future-oriented competences.	Digital Education Action Plan 2021–2027; Digital Competence Framework DigComp 2.2; Guidelines on blended learning, 2022	Concept for the Digital Transformation of Education, 2021; Strategy for the Digitalization of Education 2023–2030; "studii.md" educational platform
Policies for reducing school dropout	Aim at the early identification of risks and personalized	Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving, 2011; Education and	Programme for the Prevention of School Dropout, Ministry of Education, 2021; Inclusive Education Strategy; Data from

	interventions to keep pupils within the education system.	Training Monitor — indicators on school dropout	SIME — Education Management Information System
Policies regarding the status of teaching staff	Promote attractiveness, professionalization, and stability in the teaching career.	Council Recommendation on supporting teachers, 2020; Erasmus+ Programme — mobility and training for teachers; ET 2020 Working Groups studies — Teachers and School Leaders	Regulation on the remuneration of teaching staff; Professional development plans approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research
Curriculum modernization policies	Reformulate learning content in relation to new key competences and labour market requirements.	EQF — European Qualifications Framework; EQAVET — European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training	Modernized National Curriculum, 2018–2022; Reform of curricula in technical vocational education
Financial support policies	Provide material support and incentives for educational equity.	European Social Fund Plus (ESF+); NextGenerationEU Programme; Erasmus+ — support for inclusion and equitable mobility	Scholarship programmers for pupils and students; Material support for vulnerable families in education; UNICEF educational support projects
Early education policies	Expand access to educational services for children aged 0–6.	Council Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and Care, ECEC, 2019; Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: EU Reference Framework	Strategy for the Development of Early Education, 2013–2020; National programmers for expanding rural kindergartens
Policies for the development of key competences	Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and civic education.	Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 2006, revised in 2018; European Skills Agenda 2020–2025	Competence-based modernized curriculum; Civic education and media literacy programmers
Lifelong learning policies	Support continuous training, reskilling, and active integration into society.	European Strategy for Lifelong Learning; Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, 2012; Erasmus+ Programme — adult education	Lifelong Learning Strategy, under consultation; Professional training programmers for adults, ANOFM, CE PRO DIDACTICA, Moldova State University, CEDA, etc.

4. Instruments Used

Category	Description	European Policy Documents	National Policy Documents of the Republic of Moldova
Soft law instruments	Documents without legally binding force.	Recommendation on the EQF, 2008, 2017; Guidelines for blended learning, 2022	Methodological guides issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research; Policy recommendations from IES, CEDES, and CNEE studies
Financial instruments	Financial support through European programmers and funds.	Erasmus+; European Social Fund Plus, ESF+; NextGenerationEU for digital education	Erasmus+ project funding in the Republic of Moldova; EU budgetary support for education in the Republic of Moldova; External funds from UNICEF, the World Bank, and USAID
Evaluation and monitoring instruments	Systems for monitoring educational progress.	Education and Training Monitor; Eurydice; SELFIE	SIME system; Reports of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research, ANACEC; PISA and TIMSS studies; participation in Eurydice

As a result of the extensive theoretical and methodological analysis of the correlation between European and national educational policies, and in order to ensure the praxiological

functionality of the present research, we propose the ***Pedagogical Model for Optimizing the Process of Adapting the Educational Policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework***, this model is not only aligned with European strategic directions, but also reflects the real concerns of the actors involved in the development and implementation of educational policies, as revealed by the interviews conducted with experts possessing extensive experience in the field of education.

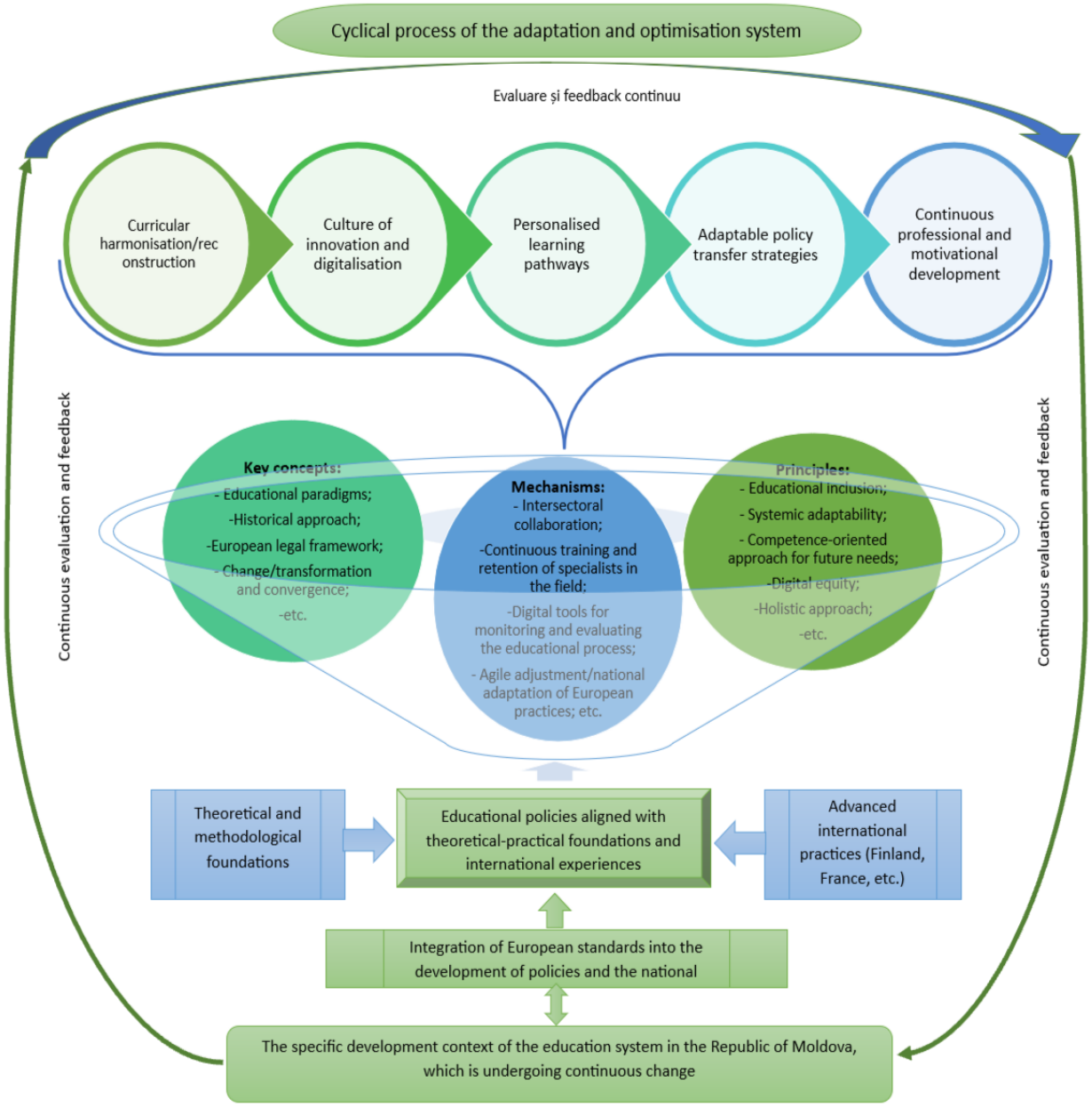


Fig. 2. Pedagogical Model for Optimizing the Process of Adapting the Educational Policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework

Thus, the *Pedagogical Model for Optimizing the Process of Adapting the Educational Policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework* represents an operational

construct designed to support the development of a sustainable education system, adapted to contemporary requirements and inspired by European reform directions. It is conceived as a systemic and cyclical model for aligning national educational policies with the requirements and values of the European education system, while taking into account the specific features of the education system of the Republic of Moldova. The model is organized around fundamental pedagogical principles, structured across five distinct levels, with the aim of providing a functional framework for intervention in the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova.

Level 1: *The specific development context of the education system of the Republic of Moldova.* This level presents the educational reality of the Republic of Moldova as one undergoing a continuous process of transformation. Structural instability, population migration, urban-rural disparities, and the pressure of European integration shape a dynamic yet vulnerable framework, in which educational policies are often fragmented and reactive.

Level 2: *The integration of European standards into the development of national policies and the national education system.* At this level, the intersections between the European regulatory framework and national standards become visible, especially through initiatives such as the European Education Area. These initiatives promote values such as equity, quality, mobility, digitalization, and lifelong learning. The model emphasizes the importance of assuming these strategic directions in the Republic of Moldova by defining compatible and functional quality standards, anchored in local pedagogical realities.

Level 3: *Educational policies related to theoretical-practical foundations and international experiences*. This level proposes a comparative and integrative approach to national educational policies, analyzed through the lens of modern pedagogical theories and validated international practices from countries such as France, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, and Romania. Emphasis is placed on the correlation between policies and practices, respectively on the transposition of policy documents into concrete educational realities.

Level 4: *Key concepts, mechanisms, and guiding principles.* The model is based on learner-centred and inclusive education, transversal competences, digitalization, and continuous professional development. Its implementation relies on personalized learning, collaboration, technology integration, equity, and educational relevance, supported through teacher training, interinstitutional partnerships, formative assessment, and continuous feedback.

Level 5: *Instruments for adapting and increasing the efficiency of educational policies.* This level focuses on concrete instruments for the implementation and evaluation of educational policies, which may ensure the increased efficiency of the education system. These include: the continuous assessment of pupils' progress and the adjustment of teaching strategies based on the

results obtained; e-learning platforms and institutional digitalization; career guidance programmers for pupils; educational projects developed in partnership with the private sector and local communities; and mechanisms for monitoring policy implementation through measurable indicators and periodic reports.

The model promotes a logic of adaptability and continuous feedback, allowing policies to be reconfigured on the basis of data derived from practice, in the spirit of an open, reflective, and performance-oriented education system.

The pedagogical Model for optimizing the adaptation of the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the european legal framework provides a coherent and flexible framework for educational reform, focused on quality, equity, and efficiency. Research results show that the Moldovan education system requires systemic reforms aligned with European standards and national realities, emphasizing learner-centred education, teacher professional development, digitalization, continuous assessment, and stronger school-community partnerships.

In this context, the pedagogical model for optimizing the process of adapting educational policies, supported by the developed taxonomy, provides a coherent framework for aligning the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova with European standards. The application of this model presupposes effective, participatory, and evidence-based educational governance, as well as the involvement of all educational actors in the process of modernizing the education system.

The taxonomy conceptualized in this research serves as a support for this model, as it enables the logical articulation of strategic documents, implementation initiatives, and evaluation mechanisms within a comprehensive framework. It makes possible the application of the principle of the adaptive cycle, supported by continuous evaluation, which reflects a modern and reflective vision of educational policy, with an impact on quality, equity, and social inclusion.

At the same time, the pedagogical Model for optimizing the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the european legal framework provides a coherent architecture of the adaptation process, placing the Republic of Moldova within a framework of educational reform inspired by European standards, yet calibrated to internal realities and needs. The need for interaction between policies, practices, and research is highlighted, as is the need for the constant professionalization of educational actors in order to support this effort.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Synthesizing the ideas presented above, we may emphasize that European educational policies, anchored in democratic values and in the principles of a knowledge-based society, constitute an essential reference point for states aspiring to integration into the European area of education, such as the Republic of Moldova. In the context of educational sciences, this integration entails not merely the formal adoption of certain policies, but their adaptation to the national context, with due regard to cultural, historical, and institutional specificities.

Thus, as a result of the theoretical, comparative-methodological, and empirical investigations conducted, the following general conclusions have been formulated, reflecting the essential results of the study and confirming the research hypothesis:

- ≈ The educational policies of the European Union constitute a value-based and strategic reference point for the Republic of Moldova, guiding the development of a modern education system based on inclusion, equity, and quality, through a process of contextualized adaptation to national specificities.
- ≈ The comparative analysis of the education systems of Finland, Denmark, France, and Austria highlights essential principles for educational reform: learner-centred education and key competences, institutional autonomy, the professionalization of teaching staff, the integration of digital technologies, and transparent governance.
- ≈ The research proposes a Pedagogical Model for Optimizing the Process of Adapting the Educational Policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework, based on complementarity, inclusion, and curricular coherence, which supports the interdependence of the levels of the education system and the central role of teaching staff.
- ≈ The results of the empirical investigations highlight the need for coherent and sustainable educational policies aimed at reducing school dropout, digitalizing education, developing teachers' professional competences, and modernizing infrastructure.
- ≈ Education is confirmed as an essential factor in the development of human and social capital, while the effectiveness of educational policies depends on monitoring, evaluation based on relevant indicators, and the involvement of all educational actors.
- ≈ The adaptation of the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European framework is necessary; however, discrepancies related to financing, digitalization, evaluation, and strategic implementation persist, which requires coherent systemic reforms.
- ≈ The analysis of the evolution of pedagogical thought confirms the complementary character of educational paradigms — magistrocentrism, psychocentric, sociocentrism, and technocentrism

— highlighting the need to maintain a balance among them in the development of the education system.

≈ The research develops a Taxonomy of Educational Policies in the European Union and the Republic of Moldova, structured according to criteria such as purpose, level of application, field of intervention, and instruments used, which facilitates the analysis of convergences and divergences between the two systems.

≈ The conceptual and operational model for adapting educational policies integrates principles such as inclusion, equity, digitalization, and evidence-based governance, providing decision-makers with a strategic instrument for alignment with European standards.

≈ The modernization of education requires the harmonization of the legislative and curricular framework, the professionalization of teaching staff, the expansion of international partnerships, and the development of a culture of quality in education.

≈ The education system of the Republic of Moldova is undergoing a stage of transformation, situated between national tradition and European educational values, while a coherent educational policy may transform education into a driving force for societal development.

≈ The theoretical and empirical analysis has revealed both achievements and deficiencies of the education system, thereby justifying the formulation of recommendations aimed at strengthening the sustainability of national education and aligning it with European good practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS for:

A. The Ministry of Education and Research:

● The development and implementation of coherent educational policies based on scientific evidence and applied research, aimed at responding to the real needs of beneficiaries;

● The support and expansion of continuous professional development programmers for teaching staff, including through international partnerships and exchanges of experience;

● The integration of the value-based dimension of education into public policies, with emphasis on active citizenship, inclusion, and cultural diversity.

B. Managerial teams in educational institutions:

● Ensuring participatory management oriented towards quality, performance, and the support of teaching staff in the process of didactic innovation;

● Organizing extracurricular activities designed to strengthen the relationship between school, family, and community.

C. Teaching staff

● The extensive application of modern teaching methods and techniques, centered on the learner and adapted to individual learning needs;

● The use of digital resources and formative assessment tools for the development of pupils' critical and autonomous thinking;

● The promotion of democratic and ethical values in teaching activity.

D. Civil society and communities:

● Involvement in campaigns aimed at valorizing the teaching profession and reducing educational inequalities.

E. Other decision-making and executive actors, as potential users of the taxonomy of educational policies:

● The use of the taxonomy as an educational audit instrument in external evaluations and institutional self-evaluations, with a view to aligning educational strategies with European standards.

Among the multiple **perspectives** for further research, the following may be identified:

- Extending the research by including a broader and more diversified sample of educational actors from the Republic of Moldova and other EU Member States;
- Conducting longitudinal analyses in order to evaluate the impact of adapted educational policies on school performance and the professional integration of graduates;
- Exploring in greater depth the relationship between educational policies and the processes of Europeanisation, democratization, and sustainable development in the Republic of Moldova;
- Developing predictive models for monitoring the efficiency of the adaptation of educational policies in the context of digitalization and globalizations;
- Extending and validating the taxonomy of educational policies through its application in regional and European comparative analyses;
- Developing an interactive digital tool based on the taxonomy, intended for decision-makers, practitioners, and researchers in education, in order to facilitate the mapping and evaluation of public policies;
- Testing the applicability of the taxonomy in the context of other educational reforms, such as the transition to digital education or dual vocational training.

Thus, the education system of the Republic of Moldova is at a critical yet promising point: between past and future, between tradition and innovation, between national specificity and European universality. The response to current challenges is not a choice between these polarities, but rather an intelligent balance among them.

Through a well-founded, adapted, and integrated educational policy, education can become the main driving force of a European, competitive, and inclusive Moldova. A sustainable future in education therefore presupposes: strategic convergence with European policies; constant investment in human resources and infrastructure; the development of digital, civic, and social competences; and learner-centred education that is equitable, inclusive, and relevant to the society of the future.

The research also has certain limitations, which open directions for future studies. These include: unequal access to updated statistical data from European education systems; the relatively limited sample of respondents — 190 teachers and managers, and 8 political decision-makers; and the comparative analysis being limited to a small number of European states. These limitations do not affect the validity of the conclusions, but they establish directions for deeper investigation in future research.

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ANNOTATION

Curoș Liudmila. ***Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for the Adaptation of Educational Policies in the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework*****, Doctoral Thesis in Educational Sciences, Chisinau, 2026**

Thesis structure: introduction, three main chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography comprising 157 sources, 23 appendices, 149 pages of main text, 14 figures, and 16 tables. The obtained results are published in 20 scientific papers.

Keywords: adaptation, teaching staff, national and European legal framework, digitalization, education, optimization, educational policies, education system.

Research aim is to provide the theoretical and methodological foundation for the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European legal and conceptual framework.

Research objectives include: identification of the fundamental concepts, theories, and paradigms of educational policies from a historical and theoretical-conceptual perspective, in both European and national contexts; analysis of the evolution of the education system as an object of educational policies and their impact on educational transformations in the European and national space; determination of the approaches, dimensions, and value framework of European and national educational policies, with emphasis on their convergences and differences; development of a conceptual–methodological model for adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European framework, based on the identified principles and mechanisms.

Scientific novelty and originality: lie in the integrated and comparative approach to the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova in relation to European standards, which enables a coherent perspective on the process of adapting the national education system to the requirements of the European Union. The originality of the research lies in the development of a Pedagogical Model for the Optimization of the Process of Adapting the Educational Policies of the Republic of Moldova to the European Legal Framework, as well as a Taxonomy of Educational Policies in the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.

Results contributing to the solution of an important scientific problem contribute to the solution of an important scientific problem by determining the theoretical and methodological foundations for adapting educational policies to the European legal framework, defining the guiding principles for the modernization of national education, and formulating practical recommendations to guide the alignment process with European educational standards.

Theoretical significance: it aims to deepen and strengthen the conceptual framework of education through a critical analysis of educational policies and the national curriculum, as well as by identifying the factors that influence the quality of education. The research contributes to the scientific grounding of the process of adapting the educational policies of the Republic of Moldova to the requirements of the European educational area.

Practical value: lies in the possibility of using the developed and validated pedagogical tools to improve the normative and institutional framework of the education system of the Republic of Moldova. The formulated recommendations can be applied to: improve the mechanisms for implementing educational policies; develop strategies for adaptation to European Union standards; optimize educational management and create tools for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education. The implementation of the thesis conclusions contributes to the modernization of the education system, increasing the efficiency of educational policies, and facilitating the social and professional integration of young people.

Implementation of scientific results: has been carried out through methodological seminars, teachers' councils, presentations at national and international conferences, and scientific publications addressed to decision-makers and practitioners in the field of education.

CUROȘ LIUDMILA

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE ADAPTATION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TO THE EUROPEAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT
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