

**DECENTRALIZATION OF THE MANAGERIAL SYSTEM IN  
ROMANIAN PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION**

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***Abstract.***

*The purpose of the paper is to highlight the importance of decentralization in the management system in Romanian pre-university education.*

*The research objectives are: comparing the advantages and disadvantages of decentralization in business decision-makers ,risk-analysis regarding decentralization ,identify bottlenecks of decentralization*

*Research methodology: documentary analysis, questionnaires distributed to decision makers.*

*The results of this analysis were rendered in the conclusions of the paper.*

***Keywords:*** *decentralization, management system, pre-university education, policy makers.*

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## **1. Introduction:**

Integration of Romanian pre-university education in the European context requires changing practices towards developing administrative capacity, local accountability and transparency and for this, it is necessary to develop uniform national programs aimed at changing organizational and institutional cooperation that over time lead to changes outstanding educational practice and generally in education. From the perspective of efficient administration of public services useful educational policy option is decentralization of pre-university education.

## **2. Decentralization of the managerial system in romanian pre-university education**

Decisions taken at central level have not considered any situation arising in the territory and especially all the needs of educational institutions in the system. Democratic society requires people close to the decision making process involved in the educational process giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making that affects them in one way or another either directly or indirectly. School education decentralization is the transfer of authority, responsibility and resources on decision making and of general and financial management to schools and the local community.

From the modern theories regarding the management of school education result that many countries have experienced educational deadlock and have resorted to measures of decentralization and participatory strategies. Reform projects were initiated in the application of models of decentralization varied depending on specific educational situation. After a thorough analysis regarding measures and legal provisions in the reform process at least formally conclude that decentralization is the optimal solution. In

accordance with the general direction of European school autonomy, Decentralization strategy to pre-university education, approved by Memorandum in 2005, was MECTS initiative to achieve the transfer process of authority, responsibility and decision on the organization, management and financing of schools from central to local level by the year 2010. This strategy focuses on human resource development policies since the employment of teachers is still made by the school inspectorates.

Pre-university education decentralization strategy was developed in 2005 by the Romanian Government, which aimed to create the - conceptual, methodological and procedural transfer of resources, authority and responsibility in terms of

decision making and overall management and the financial institutions school and local community, following the distribution of decision power between organizations and institutions representing local and regional communities, on the one hand and national level on the other.

### **2.1. Areas of decentralization**

- The legislative area
- Synchronization of decentralization with other similar processes of education in political, economic, administrative areas
- Review and re-development of decision-making structures in education
- Financial Field
- Informational Field
- Training school managers

The main objective of decentralization pre-university education is reorganizing and improving the educational management and improving the quality of education. Decentralization is primarily a national problem not just local, and should not be evaluated in terms of local.

The evaluation is done by how it serves the national objectives.

### **2.2. The objectives of decentralization:**

Through decentralization several objectives can be achieved:

- political - democratization of education system
- economic and financial - efficient use of financial resources and educational materials
- Pedagogical - improving the education by promoting innovation in teaching and motivating all stakeholders enrolled in the educational process;
- organizational and administrative - increasing the effectiveness of management and administration of schools

Decentralization of Pre-university education is an education policy option included in the national strategy of decentralization, intersectoral policy targeting other components of the society in the field of management. Regarding decentralization decision that involves the development of monitoring, control and evaluation, both from the local community, but also specialized institutions and governmental organizations.

Decentralization requires the school to have the main role of decision-maker and to ensure the participation and consultation of all interested social actors from the perspective of sustainable development of the local community.

Both centralization and decentralization are ways to streamline the management activity that is based on a philosophical conception of the general social, political, cultural, economic type.

By decentralizing is the transition from school model that consumes resources from national level, to the model of representative school for the community that invests local resources and is responsible for monitoring and evaluation.

### **2.3. The advantages of decentralization:**

- through the increasing participation of several factors in decisions regarding the educational process, education is becoming more democratic
- empowering different actors of education provides schools a strong community support
- enhancing the efficient use of material and financial resources in the education system
- improving general management in preuniversity education
- improving the quality of school education according to quality European standards
- develop specific objectives in a coherent joint through central, regional and local initiatives
- through the design and implementation of development measures issued and managed from the education system is the flexibility to change
- increasing the role of the main beneficiaries of the school, students and parents in making decisions regarding the educational process
- wider horizontal cooperation between schools located in a specific geographical area

### **2.4. The risks of decentralization**

- doubling the centralized structures that manage to preserve
- multiplication centers and mismatch decision making in the education system

- incompatibility between the proposed measures for decentralization and resources
- maintaining outdated thinking people kept in decisional centers
- increased disparities between the various regions in which the educational processtakes place
- decentralization can cause gaps between the overall strategies and objectives of each school organization
- contradictions may arise between levels, differentiated management strategies, cases of promoting of particular interests, subjectivity;
- risk abandonment of functional areas such as research, development and teacher training
- danger of re-centralizing as a reverse phenomenon of decentralization.
- inadequately trained school managers to take decisions which they are responsible in a decentralized system
- re-centralization can be seen as an escape from responsibility from those who have responsibilities in the decision.

Following assessments were expressed doubts regarding the ability of local authorities to effectively manage education services. In some countries where regional and local leadership have virtually no empowerment, there is little chance of getting good results in the transfer that improve efficiency and cost reporting, or mobilize more resources. Improvement of institutional capacity needs more time and more resources.

Measures to reduce risks of decentralization:

- adopting a contextual and situational management
  - maintaining a balance between decentralization and centralization measures
  - appropriate training and empowering school managers
- Jams of decentralization
- lack of organizational capacity
  - lack of training of those involved in the educational process
  - cultural barriers - individual, group and community
  - Inadequate implementation of policies and strategies to real needs
  - lack of appropriate legislative stipulations

- orientation of Romanian education system is a centralist one over time and is therefore very difficult to implement an accepted decentralization
- is poorly represented in decision-making factors involving the local community
- local power resources are underdeveloped;
- schools unable to project manage autonomy will be gradually abandoned
- lack of interest of policy makers to advance the institution they represent;
- Insufficient explanation of decentralization measures
- misunderstanding decentralization implementation steps to implement the main educational agents
- the strategic importance of public opinion and policy makers attach to decentralization
- delaying or misapplication of decentralization measures resulting from financial blockage and the lack of human and material resources

### **3. Conclusions**

Romanian pre-university education in recent years has undergone a process of partial decentralization. Romanian pre-university education decentralization began to be discussed in 2003 by modifying certain provisions of the Education Law and the Teaching Staff Statute and by developing methodologies for implementing decentralization. In the Romanian education system have been established eight pilot counties (Braila, Cluj, Iasi, Neamt, Satu Mare, Dolj, Harghita and Sibiu) to check the viability of the concept of decentralization. The result was this: there were large differences in the implementation of decentralization from one county to another because of budget allocated for 2004 budget which did not include the amounts required to implement administrative and financial decentralization, decentralization was therefore only formal.

Decentralization being only partially accomplished there has not been made any ongoing monitoring or final evaluation, and the experiment was a failure. Education being further over-centralized some schools have lost their legal personality and the occupation of posts was not made in accordance to the principles of decentralization. At the decentralization process is the belief that local authorities are better positioned to govern local schools and pursuing

direct interests of parents and other local decision makers can lead to better management of schools. Local authorities and parents will play an important role in the management of schools under the new education law.

As shown in European experiences on decentralization, local councilors and parents often do not have the necessary skills to participate in decisions about expenditure and administration. If currently headmasters must follow management courses and pass an exam to become principals, parents and local council representatives will not have to follow any course. Therefore as a recommendation from me is to maintain the current structure of boards of directors in place a structure where parents, teachers and representatives of local councils is one third of the council, keeping the current structure (director, deputy director, representative of local council representative of the mayor, representatives of parents, 1-5 teachers, business representatives and representative of high school students).

Maintaining the current structure of the board ensures that the majority of the council

are experienced teachers and administrators whose long-term interests are different from those of parents who have children in that school term or local representatives also directly interested during the mandate.

Maintaining the current structure of the board do not prevent parents and local elected representatives or business (excluding the board in the new formula) have a word in school administration.

The level of expenditure on education is a local policy decision, so this level will be different depending on higher or lower percentage of university graduates among the community. Those communities who have among citizens with a higher percentage of graduates will be awarded a higher education and will allocate a higher percentage for education.

Compared with other European countries Romanian educational system has been chronically underfunded in. As outlined in the report of the Presidential Commission for analysis and policy research in education and quality education system has deteriorated significantly.

Following decentralization there is an increased risk of inequality in educational expenditure if the management of schools will be given to parents and local councilors. Inequality in the administrative capacity and the level of spending on education will jeopardize the objective of increasing access from rural students in colleges and universities.

Although were found difficulties and negative consequences of decentralization of the education system in many countries in Europe, in Romania also has been decided to implement the system of funding per capita. Decentralization and school finance reform has been tested in pilot program in Romania but without success. For the success of decentralization there are essential conditions in terms of the existence of managerial skills, providing technical expertise and school autonomy to local political authorities.

Managerial skills and providing technical expertise focus on the system and can be achieved through education and training and professionalization of managerial personnel by preparing stakeholders in education for new responsibilities that focus on the decision-making process. Regarding autonomy to local authorities it was found that local levels can easily be influenced by various political groups, school autonomy is therefore necessary to any political authority.

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