

6. THE RESULTS OF THE PISA ASSESSMENT IN DYNAMICS IN THE CONTEXT OF GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Viorica Crișciuc²⁴²

Abstract: *Through the reforms launched during 2009-2020 by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova, in cooperation with development partners, they changed their emphasis in education in favor of quality and, respectively, the process of evaluating student results. Updating the National Curriculum made in accordance with the fundamental support Reference framework of the National Curriculum, Basic Curriculum: competency system for general education, analytical support School curriculum evaluation report, etc. and the managerial support provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova, favored a modern educational system with obvious results in national evaluations.*

Key words: *the education system, globalization, internationalization, computerization, results in national evaluations*

1. Introduction

Sustainable development and economic growth are based on adequate human capital, which is ensured through education. Although during the transition period, the relatively high public investment in education (on average, more than 7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which in percentage terms is more than the level of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), has ensured high enrollment rates at various levels of education, but the Republic of Moldova still faces significant challenges, as not all students are enrolled in compulsory education, especially those from vulnerable strata.

In the Republic of Moldova, Objective 4 of the ODD (Quality Education) provides for the achievement of inclusive and universal education, but also the preparation of young people and adults for a better fit in the labor market. The goals of the goal aim to increase access to education for all, including vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, as well as to provide quality education at every level: from early childhood development to higher education. One of the challenges, which is also to be addressed, is the provision of educational institutions with safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective educational environments for students, children with disabilities and without gender discrimination.

2. Discussions

According to PISA 2018 analyses, in one out of three educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova, the teaching process is affected by the lack of teaching staff. Adequate resources are very important in providing students with high quality learning opportunities. Every country is aware that quality assurance in education cannot take place without investment in teaching staff, educational materials and physical infrastructure, as these are essential resources for the educational system to

²⁴² Associate Professor PhD., Alecu Russo” State University from Bălți, Republic of Moldavia, email: vioriacrisciuc@gmail.com

become effective. Teachers are the most important resource of educational institutions today. Improving the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of school education depends on ensuring that teenagers want to become teachers, that their training is of high quality, and that all students benefit from quality training.

Every fourth teacher is between 50-59 years old and most of them have over 20 years of experience in the field of education. The number of teaching staff has decreased considerably, so that today a teacher has 12 students, one more than the previous year, and young people make up almost 10 percent of the total teaching staff, according to data recently published by the National Bureau of Statistics. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, in the 2019-2020 academic year, the educational process in general primary and secondary education institutions was provided by 27.4 thousand teachers. In the 2015-2016 school year, the number of teachers was 2000 higher.

Also, the number of teachers up to 30 years old decreased in the last four years by 2.5%. If in the 2015-2016 study year they represented 12.3%, this year they are 9.8%. That is, every 10th teacher is less than 30 years old. The decrease in the number of teachers is not a tragedy, if this decrease is caused by the decrease in the number of students. Therefore, the share of young teachers in the total number of teachers in the Republic of Moldova is still decreasing. Most teachers in the education system are between 50-59 years old. In the last four years, their number decreased by 0.2% and today they constitute 26% of the total teaching staff. That is, every fourth teacher is between 50-59 years old. Therefore, the mission and objectives of MECC continue to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession in order to encourage young people to embrace this profession, as well as to maintain qualified teachers in the educational system. Attracting, developing and maintaining the best teachers is the biggest challenge of the educational system in the Republic of Moldova, but also a national priority.

In three out of five educational institutions, the teaching-learning-evaluation process is affected by the lack of teaching staff and educational materials. Teachers are the most important resource of educational institutions today. Many countries are trying to attract more people into the teaching profession not only to avoid teacher shortages, but also to expand the knowledge and experience of teachers, increasing the capacity of the education system to cope with the diversity of students.

3. Results

An education system without highly qualified teachers will perform poorly compared to other systems. According to PISA 2018 data, in about 35% of the number of educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova, the teaching process is affected by the lack of teaching staff. Compared to OECD countries, this figure is 7 percentage points higher. At the same time, rural educational institutions are affected by the lack of teaching staff more than urban ones. About 38% of rural school principals and 27% of urban school principals reported experiencing this problem. However, the quality of teaching staff in the Republic of Moldova does not seem to be such a big problem as the lack of teaching staff.

The quality of instruction in the discipline of Romanian language and literature.

In the PISA 2018 questionnaires, students were asked to what extent the aspects: clear goals for making learning more efficient in the language of instruction; close monitoring of the evolution of learning outcomes; appropriate pacing and classroom management; the clarity of the presentation of the learning contents, well-structured lessons and comments during the lessons that inform and encourage the student; were present at the lessons. According to the survey results, 89% of students reported that their Romanian/Russian language and literature teacher sets clear goals for their learning, compared to 72% of students in OECD countries who reported the same. About 65% of the number of students said that at the beginning of each lesson the teacher summarizes what they learned in the previous lessons (the percentage refers to those students who answered: "in most lessons" or "in every lesson").

About 63% of the number of students in the Republic of Moldova believe that their teachers offer individual help when there are difficulties in understanding a topic or task, while, on average, in OECD countries, about 54% of the number of students indicated the same situation. Important progress has been made in achieving the goal of ensuring that all students reach the minimum level of proficiency in reading, but the percentage of low achievers is high...In the area that was emphasized in PISA 2018 – reading, the performance of 15-year-olds in the Republic of Moldova increased compared to 2009, when the reading area was also the basic area in the PISA assessment. During the last decade, the Republic of Moldova has made progress in the process of achieving the goal of ensuring that all students will reach the minimum reading proficiency level.

The results of PISA 2018 show that the Republic of Moldova is among the four countries in the world that managed to reduce the percentage of students who do not reach the minimum level of competence, by more than 10 percentage points. However, approximately 43% of the number of students in the Republic of Moldova do not reach the minimum reading proficiency level. A significant difference in the percentage of students who do not achieve the minimum level of competence in PISA can be seen among students from urban and rural educational institutions.

In reading, about 30% of the number of students from urban educational institutions are below the basic level of competence, then among students from rural educational institutions this percentage is approximately double (58% of the number of students with low performance when reading/reading). The number of teachers also decreases due to the decrease in the number of students in the field of Educational Sciences. Their number decreases every year, so that in 2015 there were 2523 students in this field, and in 2018 the number reached 1725. Therefore, ensuring equity, the quality of the resources invested in education from the perspective of the quality of training in the educational system in the Republic of Moldova, must continue to be oriented towards:

1. Increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession in order to encourage young people to embrace this profession;
2. Maintaining qualified teachers in the educational system.

In this context, we note the gap in the number of students enrolled in the national exams, which is also decreasing due to the demographic situation in the country. The figure shows the information on the number of candidates for the

secondary school graduation exams for the years 2017-2019, etc.

4. Conclusions

1. The Republic of Moldova has made progress in achieving the goal of all students reaching the minimum reading proficiency level. The results of PISA 2018 show that the Republic of Moldova is one of the 4 countries that managed to decrease, by more than 10%, the number of students who do not reach the minimum reading proficiency level. However, 43% of students from the Republic of Moldova do not reach the minimum level of competence in the fields of reading and science, and 50% of students - in mathematics. On average, across OECD countries, around 23% of students do not achieve minimum proficiency in reading, science or mathematics.
2. The basic peculiarities in the PISA evaluations, in general, during three evaluations in the Republic of Moldova, focus on the axis of the degree of preparation of young people to overcome the challenges of the future: if they can analyze, motivate and communicate their ideas effectively. Important features especially from the perspective of recent challenges. Thus, by preparing teachers and students for a new challenge: achieving the degree of functional literacy and reorganizing the specific contents of the subjects to overcome the challenges of the present and future, they will lead to a qualitative education, adapted to the real needs of the students.

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