

**Ph.D. Ljupco Kevereski, Faculty of Pedagogy - Bitola, Republic of Macedonia**

## **Professional development of teachers in the Republic of Macedonia conditions - trends**

Taking into consideration the immense influence that education has on one's personal development and its strategic meaning for the country, the issue of establishing an organized and professional development is crucial in the creating of the educational policy in the Republic of Macedonia. The call for meeting the European and world standards for compatibility, contemporary and competent educational policy, including the professional development of teachers determine the foundations of the new pedagogical concept. In this work there is an attempt to answer the question " Is Macedonia progressing according the requirements of the European pedagogical sphere with a tendency for structural and conceptual integrating?" based on diagnosing the state of affairs, analysis of the pedagogical processes, program-didactic visualizing, the current model of professional development and the equilibrium of the components of the the teachers' competences, as well as other determinants.

The basis of this question which refers to teachers education, originates from many European and world initiatives such as: Declaration - education for all, Resolution for lifelong learning, Action plan for mobility, Bologna process, Resolution of the board and the Copenhagen's declaration for better European collaboration in the field of qualified education and training , Action plan for e-learning and in the effort of *Eutydice* and the international organizations UNESCO and OECD (National program for educational development in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015).

The basis of the analysis of the already mentioned determinants will come out of the program document in which accompanied documents are integrated and that is the National Program for educational development in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015. The final goal of this work is to popularize and affirm some public and institutional questions which as far as this they have received paradigmatic stereotypical observations. That in the same time means an answer to the following question in the following context "Till what extent the key intervention presented on the national program document correspond with the contemporary educational trends in Europe and what are the possibilities of practical implementation in the educational system in the Republic of Macedonia?"

Elaboration of the answers of the previous questions is expected and most of all, in front of the qualified public many questions to be discussed, dilemmas, recognition of positive trends, revision of current interventions in the educational policy which will lead the way to innovation and advancement of the current practice in the modeling of the professional development of the educational personnel in the Republic of Macedonia.

Key words: Professional development, conditons, trends, key interventions

### **Trends and conditions**

While analyzing the structural concept of professional development of the educational

frame in the Republic of Macedonia a list of imperfections are detected: a lack of official policy regarding the educational development of teachers; individual initiatives; insufficient material resources for the schools and the teachers; formalization of the mentor system with the new educational frame; absence of standards and criteria for professional development and promotion; lack of initiatives for professional progress; undefined training system; lack of accreditation system; (Kevereski, L. 2007:327)

(National program for educational development in the Republic of Macedonia).

Eventually, that leads to actualization of the need of innovating and finding new institutional solutions which will be in accordance with the modern trends and tendencies in the other educational systems, especially in the European pedagogical system.

In order to present the professional development of the educational frame in Macedonia, separate segments which are part of the following integral components will be discussed. Through the following segments a comparison is made of what is considered to be a novel or a trend in this field: conditions and trends in the professional development; initial education and professional elaboration; key fields for intervention and conditions and criteria for career promotion.

Actually these segments, which constitute a functional totality, project the foundation of the current and the future or desirable system of the professional development of the educational frame. The way this model is conceptualized, we assume that the creators of this system are convinced in its compatibility with modern educational systems in other countries. In its analysis we start with the fundamental assumption that the professional development of the educational frame should be parallel to the dynamics in the change and needs in the educational sphere. The analysis of the conditions in the Republic of Macedonia, which are in function with the actual observations of the existent conditions in the professional development of the educational frame, as well as the theoretical and practical experience of the author, point to the fact that there is a certain inadequacy among the needs and the reforms. One can assume that this is a result of a certain obsolescence of the pedagogical creations and tendencies in the educational field, as well as an insufficient innovation and practical applicability system in the professional elaboration in the educational frame. Because of this, in the beginning there was an obvious need of creating and establishing a new plan for the initial training system and the system for professional elaboration of the educational frame. (2005-2015) (National program for educational development in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015)

The statistics which refer to the dynamics of the educational frame in the Republic of Macedonia, show relative stability in relation with the total number of employees. Concerning the educational status in the elementary education there are 0.27% Masters of Art, 34, 65% with higher education, 59.74% with college education, and 5, 84% with high school education. If one takes into consideration that the rate of the educational frame in 1995/96 was 71.6, then it can be assumed that there is a significant improvement in the qualification structure of the educational frame. Referring to the educational level of the educational frame in the high school education, a relatively successful educational frame development has been achieved.

### **Initial education and professional elaboration**

The initial education in the Republic of Macedonia as an initial preparation for teachers in primary and high school education is realized in different manners, depending of the institutional level. If we take into consideration the current placement of the initial education, the program-didactic physonomy of the initial education deserves special attention. The competency of this profession depends on the qualified and pedagogical basis. The ratio between these two

components in US and Japan is 1:3, France 2:1, Germany 2:3. In the Republic of Macedonia the pedagogical component is present roughly from 6 to 10% or with a ratio of 9:1. This means that the pedagogical education of teachers doesn't fulfil the terms and needs of this profession. Hence, this shows that the educational practice should be conceptualized in accordance with the existent pedagogical principles and laws of the educational process.

Examples of the existent and future or desirable professional development of teachers in a comparative sense, show the following characteristics of the existing model: the model is founded on the concept of transmitting knowledge; training and education outside the classroom; assessment of teacher's work and development; the reforms are mainly planned and implemented through the ministry of education; the teacher interprets experience of other teachers; explores theories; elaboration is one's choice or recommendation; lack of collaboration among teachers.

### **Key fields of intervention**

The key interventions which refer to the professional development of teachers are part of the defining process of goals of the European educational committee. In accordance with this the following questions are to be discussed and answered.

Identification of skills that teachers and instructors should have;

Proper climate and conditions that will provide an adequate support for teachers and instructors;

Involvement of professional frames in other science fields in the educational process; In this context, a special accent (in the National program for educational development in Macedonia 2005-2015) is put on assessment and elaboration of the training program for teachers and instructors. In the process of defining the program for initial education, it is necessary to take into account the qualifications, the pedagogical competency, competency in the use of information technology in the educational process, organizational competency and team work ability, flexibility, open-mindedness etc.

The key interventions in the process of professional development of teachers in the Republic of Macedonia are in accordance with current studies. For instance, a study examines how teachers in three countries variously construct the meaning of competition and cooperation in their professional practice and discourse (Ross, A., Fulop, M. and Kuscer, M. 2006:6) Studies have enriched the experience of finding ways to raise teacher's development on the highest possible level.

### **Terms and criteria for career progress**

In this summary context, which is part of the integral document, (National program for educational development in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015) the terms and criteria for career progress are defined. It refers to career development of the educational field and qualified experts in other fields. In the segment of career development of qualified experts the following categories are planned: pedagogue, psychologist, defectologist, and sociologist; eminent pedagogue, psychologist, defectologist, sociologist counsellor. In this part, the specific competencies of the already mentioned profiles are specified, the process of their promotion, conditions and terms, the process of assessment and other criteria.

### **Conclusion**

The previously mentioned solutions which are in function of meeting the need of qualitative rising of the professional development of the educational field in the Republic of

Macedonia will increase the social sensibility for increasing the dignity of this profession. However, the author believes that the way this national concept for professional development of the educational frame is conceptualized, it meets the basic structural components and orientations of other educational systems. Once again, the required orientations and conditions are incited which increase the creativity of the national model in the Republic of Macedonia. They also refer to:

Following the modern trends in building an organizational policy for teacher education;  
The changed role of teachers requires changes in the professional training of teachers;  
Reforms in the educational curriculum;  
Defining the teacher's profile;

Teaching shouldn't be seen as a technique, but as a professional activity. The continuity of the professional development during one's career is of a great importance for establishing an innovative practice.

Establishment of common frames of competency and qualifications;

Overall, the new role of teachers should result in complete set of factors which come from the social and pedagogical reforms. The most important field of reforms in the teacher profile in the context of professional development of teachers are: promotion of new results from studying; reorganization of a classroom work (in the frame of the school, the surrounding area and social partners); integration of information technology in education in all fields of professional practice, increase of professionalism and individual responsibility for the professional development. However, the author has a dilemma about the dynamics and intensity of the practical implementation of this model in the educational practice, which presents final goal of each conceptualized pedagogical concept.

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