

The Impact of Covid19 on Education and learning in Western Balkans

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COVID19 experienced a negative impact on health, security, and economic welfare worldwide. In addition, the pandemic created negative asymmetric shock on the educational system of different EU countries and Western Balkans. The education system has swift move from a physical to an online schooling environment, therefore education compares to other sectors has shown rapid adoption and continuity.

Currently, one of the main questions related to the education of the EU is; if this adopted system of education could ensure Lisbon Agenda respectively interlinkage between education, research, and economy as the crucial target of the European Union.

The second issue is whether this adopted the education system in the EU could target cultural values, network and the partnership between EU Universities and worldwide due to lack of academic mobility and exchange. The third challenge is whether this adopted system could ensure capacity building and transfer of knowledge of the universities as a very important target of the EU programs. The additional challenging issue for this adopted education system is the problem with regard to the assessment of knowledge or competences achieved during this process considering also the academic integrity in these countries.

In addition, the Western Balkan countries respectively less developed economies characterized by the low level of the education system and limited financial sources are facing double challenges such as low participation and low quality of education in these countries due to: **a)** research infrastructure and equipment; **b)** non-adequate teaching environment; **c)** challenges with IT coverage and electronic devices; **d)** large gap on computer literacy etc.

The research will analyze Western Balkans. There will be employed surveys in order to analyze the challenges during the adopted educational system during COVID. Additionally, the data will be compared in order to analyze the differences between these countries with regard to the digitalization process in these countries and opportunities coming from this process towards the improvement of distance teaching and learning.

Key words: Covid19, education, research, EU, Western Balkans etc.