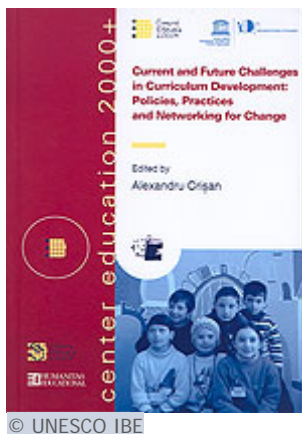


Current and Future Challenges in Curriculum Development: Policies, Practices and Networking for Change



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The book gathers contributions of education specialists from different countries to an International Colloquium held in Sinaia/Romania in November 2005. In the framework of the IBE's Community of Practice (COP) its main organizer, Center Education 2000+, has initiated a discussion concerning the present and future of curriculum development the world over.

Analyses and discussions focused on three main aspects:

1. *What are new horizons for curriculum work that could inform improved curriculum policies and practices;*
2. *Multiple foundations of contemporary curriculum development, such as 'cognitive models', gender issues or globalisation issues; and*
3. *From policy to implementation: what can be learned from different country case studies.*

Several studies focus on main challenges that countries addressed in comprehensive cases of curriculum change and improvement, as well as on curriculum processes and issues of curriculum management in the situation of large-scale reforms (Alexandru CRISAN: Romania; Mari BOGNÁR: Hungary; Irmeli HALINEN: Finland; Virginija BŪDIENĖ: Lithuania). An overview of European education and curriculum policies is provided by Gabi HOSTENS, who talks about current strategies and debates at the European Union level relevant for member states, such as key-competencies for life-long learning in a knowledge society, the need of targeting clear objectives of education and training systems, and the so-called 'Open Method of Coordination' (OMC: monitoring implementation progress towards the strategic objective).

Some other studies discuss the impact international developments in knowledge, economy, culture and social life have on curriculum work worldwide. Carmen CRETU explores the concept of a 'global curriculum' while Mihaela SINGER delves into identifying relationships between cognitive models and competence-based curricula for secondary education. Grzegorz MAZURKIEWICZ tackles gender issues in textbooks and class activities with reference to Poland, and Dakmara GEORGESCU discusses the need for 'reflective' curriculum development based on balancing uprightly 'old' and 'new' aspects in education and learning, and – expectantly – overcoming one-sided views and approaches.

The issue of translating policies into practice though sustainable implementation is treated in several other contributions (Nicola PASTUHOVIC: Croatia; Simon JANASHIA: Georgia; DJADRINA MAKPAL: Kazakhstan; Nadejda VELISCO: Moldova; Srdjan PERIĆ: Montenegro; Firuta TACEA: Romania; Emin KARIP: Turkey; Sergiy KLEPKO: Ukraine).

The book advocates for international exchanges and sharing that can inform sound links between curriculum theory, policies and practices. While copying 'curriculum models' from other countries might be a risky endeavour, it is nevertheless necessary and useful that policy makers and curriculum developers engage in 'reflective' debates on international cases, practices and comparative aspects in order to reach informed decisions.