

PRESENTATION ISSUE 8

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS OF MERCOSUR COUNTRIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE “2021 EDUCATIONAL GOALS” PROJECT

This monograph aims to analyze the evolution of national education systems of the countries that joined in 2011 the project “2021 Educational Goals: the education we want for the Bicentennial generations”. This initiative was taken by the Ibero-American States with intention to improve quality and equity in education and promote social inclusion in the societies of those states. It arose from the deliberations on this subject in the “XX Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government” held in Mar del Plata (Argentina) on December 3 and 4, 2010 whose theme was “Education for the social inclusion”. As indicated in the 2011 bulletin “Views on Education in Ibero-America” of the OEI, “top institutional representatives of the Ibero-American countries gathered there clearly expressed their conviction about the importance of education to achieve individual well-being and social inclusion”. The goals outlined in this project were the following:

- General goal 1: Strengthen and broaden participation of civil society in educational actions.
- General goal 2: Achieve educational equality and overcome all forms of discrimination in education.
- General goal 3: Increase initial education offer and optimize its educational value.
- General goal 4: Mainstream primary and basic secondary education and increase access to higher secondary education.
- General goal 5: Improvement of the quality of education and school programs.
- General goal 6: Foster the connection between education and employment through technical-professional education (ETP).
- General goal 7: Offer lifelong educational opportunities for all.
- General goal 8: Strengthen the teaching profession.
- General goal 9: Broaden the Ibero-American knowledge forum and strengthen scientific investigation.
- General goal 10: More investment better invested.
- General goal 11: Evaluate the educational systems and the implementation of the project “2021 Educational Goals”.

Considering oncoming time limit of the project, it has been decided to dedicate a special issue of the Journal of Supranational Policies of Education to this topic in order to evaluate in the articles grade of implementation of the commitments. This issue will introduce you to development of education systems in such countries as Paraguay, El Salvador and Argentina, along with analysis of the economic component of educational investment using various international reports as well as the terminological clarification of educational policy. Together these articles offer a broad view

of such aspects as technical education for social development in Paraguay in framework of the sixth goal of the project or analysis of progress in promotion of gender equality in El Salvador through school education. These relevant topics offer to the reader a vision based on various national and international reports that indicate obvious slowness in achievement of these commitments.

However, it should be noted that this slowness does not occur in all the countries equally. While there is a group of countries that has successfully achieved their goals, there are others that are making a great effort to do it. The economic factor analyzed in one of the articles indicates the decompensation between countries when it comes to investing in education in framework of the goal “More investment better invested”. Paraguay appears in this monograph again describing the steps taken regarding the goals 1, 8 and 11 making previously a description of historical evolution of the educational system to compare the initial situation with the current one. The Argentinean perspective described in another paper offers us an enriching vision on the continuous teacher training as well as the situation of national support to teaching career in this country.

In conclusion, this monograph will not leave the reader indifferent about one of the major issues of the Ibero-American States in the field of education.

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