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**"IN VARIETATE CONCORDIA". THE HISTORY OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION POLICY IN THE FIELDS OF
EDUCATION AND OF THE PROMOTION OF
INTERCULTURALISM**

ABSTRACT

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Key words: interculturality, European Union, education, diversity, democratic values.

European unification is the biggest peace-building project, a fact proven by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union in 2012. The changes which occurred in the 20th century, economically, geopolitically, culturally, starting from the end of the Second World War, determined a rapprochement between certain states, sharing democratic values, but also the motto "United in diversity" (in Latin: "In varietate concordia"). This proves the need to embrace intercultural cooperation and certain exchanges of ideas in the field of education, between the European states, in the context of an innovative and inclusive society.

As regards the **investigated issue**, our research, with the title "*In varietate concordia*". *The history of the European Union policy in the fields of education and of the promotion of interculturalism*", aims to carry out an analysis of the historical process of the education policies at the level of the European Union and Romania, with an emphasis on the evolution of intercultural educational exchange projects.

In relation to the **argumentation of the choice of the theme**, we consider that the chosen theme represents a topic of interest since it captures the evolution of the European states in the fields of education and the promotion of interculturalism from the end of the Second World War up to 2020, therefore our study is framed in a historical-political context. Understanding the common destiny of humanity, the cultural differences between the nations and the need to protect and respect diversity are important reasons to examine this theme. An intercultural Europe, which has the possibility to prevent nationalism and extremism, opposes a Europe divided into states and regions.

The identification of the historical roots of European collaboration and interculturalism helps us to better understand the present and be able to build the future in a peaceful Europe.

Regarding the **geographical boundaries** of our analysis, we have paid attention to both the European Union and Romania.

The chronological limits of our Ph.D. thesis are between the 1950s, when the exchange of information regarding education between the European states started, and the year 2020, the deadline year, in which the educational programmes' and mobility programmes' cycles ended in every state of the European Union.

We have captured several critical moments in the process of building education at the European level. The first stage, from 1951 to 1976, was characterized by exchanges of information regarding education systems. During this period, meetings of young people, organized by non-governmental organizations, took place in the cities/towns of Norwich, Bath, Overton and the action program of the European Economic Community was launched. The second stage, from 1975 to 1985, was characterized by the adoption of the Adonnino report at the Milan European Council, which announced the start of university mobility programmes. During the third stage, between 1985 and 1992, the first six European educational programmes were launched. In the fourth stage, between the years 1993 and 1999, the previous programmes joined and formed the Socrates programme, dedicated to school education, and the Leonardo da Vinci programme, dedicated to vocational training. In the fifth stage, between the years 2000 and 2006, the Socrates II and Leonardo da Vinci II programmes continued. In the second to last stage, from 2007 to 2013, the lifelong learning programme was supported. In the last stage, during the period 2013-2020, the new programme Erasmus+ was implemented, which brought together all the previous programmes.

With regard to **the importance of the research**, this Ph.D. thesis is based on the premise that education and interculturalism are connected to the past of the humanity and that we cannot understand the present without connecting it with certain historical events and without understanding the complexity of common interactions and positions, despite the differences between peoples. Throughout the historical eras, one of the interests of human communities has been to educate young people in the spirit of the times, to respond to the needs of the society, while at the same time providing a basic education to the widest possible categories of citizens.

Currently, **the importance of the researched theme** is amplified by globalization and the technological transformations which cause changes at the level of the society in all European states and implicitly at the level of the educational system, in the context of new challenges: contemporary migration, climate change, digitization, the emergence of jobs which did not exist a few decades ago, inclusive, friendly schools adapted to the needs of the children.

We believe that the chosen theme represents a **current topic of interest**.

First of all, education and interculturalism are correlated with finding similar values and recognizing the challenges that European citizens are currently facing. Secondly, the contact between cultures and the lack of dialogue have led to prejudices, preconceived ideas, and the failure to comply with human rights. Many times, diversity has been minimized, and the perceptions between different communities have been based on stereotypes. An intercultural Europe, which has the possibility to prevent nationalism and extremism, opposes a Europe divided into states and regions. Interculturality starts from understanding and accepting one's own identity, while also understanding diversity, identifying barriers and solutions within the dialogue, respecting human rights and democratic values.

The purpose of our Ph.D. thesis is to research the historical process of the education issue at the level of the European Communities, and then of the European Union, based on a critical analysis of the adopted European documents and of the case studies dealing with intercultural exchange programmes.

The research has aimed to achieve five main **objectives**: identifying the chronological and historical process of the education issue at the level of the European institutions; listing the main moments related to the evolution of the history of European education reflected in the documents of the institutions of the European Communities and of the European Union; describing the role of certain personalities in building cooperation in the fields of education and interculturality; distinguishing the role of European policies within intercultural-promoting programmes and a comparative analysis of the educational programmes initiated by European institutions.

The history and chronology of European education has been intertwined with the main moments of the evolution of the European Communities. Intercultural and educational exchanges of young people, initiated by non-governmental organizations, during summer schools, and conferences aimed at achieving the familiarization with the model of the Strasbourg Assembly took place in the 1950s. We believe that the model of these meetings was the basis of the following programmes in the field of education: Erasmus, Socrates.

The second objective started from an analysis of European treaty documents and other directives, resolutions adopted by the Member States and the European institutions. In 1974, the Education Committee was created, which included representatives of the Member States and of the European Commission, with the aim of promoting education and inserting this field into the texts of the treaties. A proof of the rising interest of the Member States and European institutions was the adoption of the Resolution of February 9, 1976, which was based on the parliamentary reports of Janne and Spinelli, the moment when the collaboration between states regarding education and the respect for diversity in Europe started. Education was inserted into the text of

the treaty, starting with the Maastricht Treaty, 1993, whereas intercultural education was introduced earlier in the texts of European documents after 1988.

In order to achieve the third proposed objective, we have investigated the contribution of personalities to the development of this sector within the European Communities. Personalities have had a significant role in building the European educational system based on the recognition of the studies pursued in another state. This was possible due to the actions performed by personalities such as Jean Monnet, Françoise Gravier, François Mitterand, Helmut Kohl, Sofia Corradi "the mother of Erasmus", Jacques Delors who managed to face the bureaucracy and prejudices and to create a culture favourable to the mobility of young people inside a European intercultural space.

The fourth objective captured the need for the schooling of immigrant children and the recognition of their right to benefit from their own language, culture and religion, at first without a contact with the majority, in the 1980s. The year 1989 represented the beginning of the capitalization of the European dimension in intercultural education. During the Meetings of the heads of state and government and of the Councils in Edinburgh (1992) and Copenhagen (1993), the flexibility of the educational system, the diversification of language education, and the emphasis of intercultural education in schools were proposed.

The last objective has aimed to analyze and identify the common elements of the European educational programmes, starting from 1985, to capture their positive aspects, but also the reported negative aspects, as well as any attempts at improvement. Encouraging a balanced geographical mobility between countries has stimulated the introduction of foreign language learning into the school curriculum, starting with primary education, the preservation of Community's cultural and linguistic heritage, the development of the European spirit, the spirit of belonging to a community with historical roots. A comparative picture of the budget allocated to the mobilities is as follows: for the Erasmus programme, university mobility, in 1987 the sum of 85 million ECU was allocated, whereas the budget increased to 14.7 billion for the Erasmus+ programme in the period 2014 – 2020.

Our research has aimed to answer some questions which have the role of clarifying the evolution of Western European states in the 50s, in general, and the need to identify common education issues of the Western European states, but also of Central and Eastern European states, after 1990. What are the key stages and moments in the historical evolution of European policies in the field of education? What was the contribution of personalities to the process of building certain measures regarding education and interculturality at the European level? How did the issue of the history of education at the European level evolve, according to the documents of the European institutions? What is the usefulness of knowing European programmes with applications in the context of intercultural collaboration? What can be considered the advantages and limitations of European educational programmes over time?

Regarding the **historiography of the issue and the main sources used**, the analysis and capitalization of information taken from archive sources¹, summaries², memoirs³ of politicians of

¹ Arhivele Istorice ale Uniunii Europene/The Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU), <https://www.eui.eu/en/academic-units/historical-archives-of-the-european-union>, Arhivele Istorice ale Parlamentului European/The Historical Archives of the European Parliament (HAEP), <https://www.eui.eu/en/academic-units/historical-archives-of-the-european-union>; "The Schuman Declaration (Paris, 9 May 1950)", in *Selection of texts concerning institutional matters of the Community from 1950 to 1982*, Luxembourg, European Parliament Publishing House - Committee on Institutional Affairs, 1982, pp. 47-48.

² Iordan Gheorghe Bărbulescu, *Noua Europă. Identitate și model european [New Europe. Identity and European model]*, vol. I, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2015; Gordon Kerr, *O scurtă istorie a Europei: de la Carol cel Mare la Tratatul de la Lisabona [A short history of Europe: from Charlemagne/ Charles the Great to the Lisbon Treaty]*, traducere/translated by Luminița Dumitrică, Pitești, Editura Nomina, 2014; Dumitru Suciu, *Evoluția ideii de*

the time, compendiums and best practice guides of the European programmes, country reports, statistics on programmes implementation, and their evaluation have contributed to establishing the role and importance of education and interculturalism within the European Communities. We must mention the fact that our study was based, mainly, on the use of the archival funds of the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU) from Florence and the Historical Archives of the European Commission, Bruxelles (HAEC), which can be accessed online. **Primary documents** found online in the Historical Archives of the European Union have been analyzed⁴, as well as in the Archives of the European Commission, the Archives of European Integration⁵ (AEI), then in the Official Journal of the European Union⁶ (EUR-Lex), available online since the year 1996. Primary sources, i.e., treaties of the European Communities (ECSC, EEC, the Maastricht Treaty, the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Treaty of Nice and of Lisbon), recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council addressed to the European Commission, statements of the ministers of education, reports of the European Commission, as well as reports of the National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training regarding educational programmes, have also been examined.

The **specialized bibliography** drafted by historians regarding the European Communities was accessed and it was found that the studies on this subject are still at an early stage. Historians' interest in the history of European integration emerged in the 1960s. Professor Pierre Gerbet was the first historian to produce a history of European construction⁷. The European idea was found in the works of historians Yves Hersant, Fabienne Durand – Bogaert⁸, and Bernard Voyenne⁹. In the 1970s – 1980s, scholars addressed the diplomatic history issue, and in the late 1980s there were analyses regarding social and mentalities history. Groups of historical researchers, such as René Girault¹⁰ and Robert Frank, paid attention to the theme of European identity in the 20th century. Since historians came from different states where the connection with the national history was close, internationalization and Europeanization were deemed necessary, and committees of historians were created. Therefore, only one journal of historians was created, published since 1995, The "Journal of European Integration History", of the Liaison Committee of European Union Historians, created in 1982. Walter Lipgens was the first professor of Integration History at the European University Institute in Florence, from the 1976-1979 period, who edited volumes of documents together with Wielfried Loth for the period 1939-1950¹¹. Many works provide a general picture of European integration, but few are based on an in-depth scientific study. Whereas in the beginning historians conducted studies based on

Europă unită: anul 1918 în Europa Centrală și Răsăriteană [The evolution of the idea of a united Europe: the year 1918 in Central and Eastern Europe], București, Editura Historia, 2007.

³ Jean Monnet, *Mémoires*, Paris, Edition Fayard, 1976; Hans-Gert Pottering, *United for the Better. My European Way*, London, John Harper Publishing, 2016; Jacques Delors, *Mémoires*, Paris, Editura Plon, 2004.

⁴ Historical Archives of the European Commission (HAEC), https://ec.europa.eu/historical_archives/

⁵ Archive of European Integration (AEI), http://aei.pitt.edu/view/eusries/GENERAL=3ABulletin_of_the_EEC

⁶ Official Journal of the European Union (EUR-Lex), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/oj/direct-access.html>

⁷ Pierre Gerbet, *La construction de l'Europe*, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1983, réédition par Armand Colin, 4e édition, 2007.

⁸ Yves Hersant et Fabienne Durand-Bogaert, *Europes: de l'antiquité au XXe siècle, anthologie critique et commentées*, Paris, Robert Laffont, 2000, pp. 209-212.

⁹ Bernard Voyenne, *Petite histoire de l'idée européenne*, édition de la Campagne européenne de la jeunesse, Paris, Bureau d'Etudes et d'Informations, 1952, réédité chez Payot, 1963.

¹⁰ René Girault, *Identitate și conștiință europeană în secolul al XX-lea [European Identity and Consciousness in the Twentieth Century]*, Ideea europeană/The European Idea. București, Editura Curtea Veche, 2004.

¹¹ Walter Lipgens, (ed.), *Documents on the History of European Integration*, vol. I-IV, European University Institute, series B, Berlin, De Gruyter, 1984 -1986.

archival documents, later on, sociologists, specialists in the history of economic relations, monetary relations or EU legislation carried out analyses.

Few Romanian historians have been preoccupied with the history of European integration, and more attention was paid especially around the year 2007, during the pre- or post-accession of Romania to the European Union. Vasile Pușcaș¹², historian, chief negotiator of Romania's accession to the European Union and a specialist in international relations issues, carried out an in-depth analysis of the steps taken by Romania and the difficulties encountered in the process of joining the great European family. Historian Alexandru Duțu published works on the history of mentalities, showing that "Europe can only be built on a European consciousness"¹³. Ovidiu Pecican¹⁴ and Valentin Stan¹⁵ carried out analyses regarding Romania's integration into the European Union, but also the problems it encountered following its accession and the identified solutions. In the historiography of the history of the European Communities, a special contribution was made by the specialists in the field of European studies, political science and law, such as Maria Costea, Simion Costea¹⁶, Constanța Mătușescu¹⁷, Stelian Scăunaș¹⁸, who presented the Community's evolution, and the importance of European treaties and policies. It is also worth mentioning the work of specialists in economic issues such as Marius Profiroiu, Alina Profiroiu and Irina Popescu¹⁹, who referred to issues regarding education and vocational training, and who opened a new perspective on the importance of the cooperation between the states and the financing opportunities offered by the European Commission. Romanian authors in the field of political science and economic science carried out analyses regarding the European Union and the steps taken by Romania to join the European Union. Iordan Gheorghe Bărbulescu²⁰, a specialist in international relations and European studies, conducted studies on the evolution of the European Union in relation to economic aspects, but also on the support given by Romania to the countries of the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans, mentioning the British "divorce" and the "engagement" with the Western Balkans states. Other Romanian authors, such

¹² Vasile Pușcaș, *România spre Uniunea Europeană: Negocierile de aderare (2000-2004)* [Romania towards the European Union: Accession negotiations (2000-2004)], Iași, Editura Institutul European, 2007; Idem, *Teme europene/European themes*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Eikon, 2008.

¹³ Alexandru Duțu, *Lumea dinăuntru și lumea din afară* [The world inside and the world outside], ediție îngrijită, introducere, note și indice de/ edition, introduction, notes and indexes by Laurențiu Vlad, ediția a doua, revăzută, București, Editura Universității din București/ second edition, revised, Bucharest, Bucharest University Publishing House, 2009, p. 268.

¹⁴ Ovidiu Pecican, *România și Uniunea Europeană* [Romania and the European Union], Cluj-Napoca, Editura Eikon, 2003.

¹⁵ Valentin Stan, *România și Proiectul European. Disfuncții și ambiții, ianuarie 2001-mai 2002* [Romania and the European Project. Dysfunctions and Ambitions, January 2001-May 2002], București, Editura Universității din București/Bucharest, Bucharest University Publishing House, 2009.

¹⁶ Maria Costea, Simion Costea (coord.), *Integrarea României în Uniunea Europeană. Provocări și perspective* [Romania's integration into the European Union. Challenges and perspectives], Iași, Institutul European, 2007.

¹⁷ Constanța Mătușescu, *Construcția europeană. Evoluția ideii de unitate europeană* [European construction. The evolution of the idea of European unity], Târgoviște, Editura Bibliotheca, 2007.

¹⁸ Stelian Scăunaș, *Uniunea Europeană. Construcție, reformă, instituții, drept* [European Union. Construction, reform, institutions, law], București, Editura C. H. Beck, 2008.

¹⁹ Marius Profiroiu, Alina Popescu, *Instituții și politici europene* [European institutions and policies], București, Editura Economică, 2008.

²⁰ Iordan Gheorghe Bărbulescu, *Noua Europă. Identitate și model european* [The New Europe. European identity and model], Vol. I, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2015; Idem, *Uniunea Europeană de la Economic la Politic* [The European Union from Economy to Politics], București, Editura Tritonic, 2006; Idem, *Uniunea Europeană. Aprofundare și extindere. Cartea I. De la Comunitățile Europene la Uniunea Europeană* [European union. Deepening and expanding. Book I. From European Communities to the European Union], București, Editura Trei, 2001.

as Costel Coroban²¹, Anca Nedelcu²², and Valentin Băluțoiu²³ emphasized the role and importance of interculturalism in the education process.

During the research, we have used the memoirs of certain personalities regarding the process of creating the Community, the education and the need to provide jobs for young people, such as Jean Monnet²⁴, Jacques Delors²⁵, Robert Marjolin²⁶. The contributions of certain Romanian politicians within the European institutions in the interwar and post-war period, i.e., Nicolae Titulescu²⁷ and Grigore Gafencu²⁸, have been mentioned throughout the research.

For the second and third chapters of the Ph.D. thesis, primary and secondary sources were accessed, regarding the issue of education in the European Communities. The archival study was supplemented by the analysis of comparative reports of the Eurydice network on foreign language learning in Europe, promoting citizenship, freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education over the last five years. The research databases of the Luxembourg²⁹ and Pittsburgh³⁰ Universities, which have European Studies Centers, were also accessed. The documentation for the elaboration of the Ph.D. thesis was also based on secondary sources and a significant contribution in the field of education was made by Luce Pépin, former head of the European Eurydice unit, with the work *The History of EU Cooperation in the Field of Education and Training*³¹, within the European specialized literature, in reference to the period from 1970 to 2010.

John Field³² explored in his work the beginnings of education at the European level and the challenges and anxieties at the beginning of the common policies. Following an evaluation carried out at the level of the Member States, Field requested that the persons involved in the educational act consider the idea of a European curriculum.

University College London professor of international politics Brad K. Blitz's article, titled *From Monnet to Delors: Educational Cooperation in the European Union*³³, traced the evolution from its beginnings until the creation of a special directorate for education within the Commission in 1993 and he configured the link between the common economic concerns and the difficulties in education. A few works which are worth mentioning examine the history of

²¹ Costel Coroban, *Comunicare interculturală [Intercultural communication]*, Iași, Editura Pim, 2020.

²² Anca Nedelcu, *Învățarea interculturală în școală. Ghid pentru cadrele didactice [Intercultural learning in school. A guide for the teaching staff]*, București, Humanitas Educațional, 2004.

²³ Valentin Băluțoiu, Lucia Copoeru, Aurel Constantin Soare, *Istoria secolului al XX-lea și educația pentru cetățenie democratică [Twentieth-century history and education for democratic citizenship]*, București, Educația 2000+, 2006.

²⁴ Jean Monnet, *Mémoires*, Paris, Edition Fayard, 1976.

²⁵ Jacques Delors, *Mémoires*, Paris, Editura Plon, 2004.

²⁶ Robert Marjolin, *Le travail d'une vie, Mémoires (1911-1986)*, Paris, Robert Laffont, 1986.

²⁷ Nicolae Titulescu, *Discursuri [Speeches]*, București, Editura Științifică, 1967.

²⁸ Grigore Gafencu, *Jurnal [Journal]*, editori, note și indici/ editors, notes and indexes Ion Calafeteanu, Laurențiu Constantiniu, Institutul Național pentru Memoria Exilului Românesc. Centrul pentru Cercetarea Istoriei Relațiilor Internaționale și Studii Culturale "Grigore Gafencu"/ National Institute for the Memory of the Romanian Exile. Center for the Research of the History of International Relations and Cultural Studies "Grigore Gafencu", Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2012.

²⁹ Universitatea din Luxemburg [University of Luxembourg], CVCE.EU, <https://www.cvce.eu/en> (accessed 24.11.2021)

³⁰ Universitatea Pittsburgh [University of Pittsburgh], <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/> (accessed 24.11.2021)

³¹ Luce Pépin, *The History of European Cooperation in Education and Training. Europe in the Making - An Example*, Luxemburg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006.

³² John Field, *European Dimensions. Education, Training and the European Union*, Higher Education Policy Series 39, London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers LTD, 1998.

³³ Brad K. Blitz, „From Monnet to Delors: Educational Co-operation in the European Union”, in *Contemporary European History*, 12 (2), 2003, pp. 197-212.

cooperation regarding education in Europe: Javier M. Valle, *50 años de política educativa de la Unión Europea*³⁴, Anne Corbet, *Ideas, institutions and policy entrepreneurship in European Community higher education policy*³⁵, Carole Frazier, *L'éducation et la Communauté européenne*³⁶.

Along with these, in the development of the Ph.D. thesis, press articles³⁷ also played an important role, by providing the possibility of reconstructing a chronology of the evolution of the European Communities and also a broad vision regarding the historical context and the role played by certain personalities in the events. Another accessed source was the *Education and Training Monitor*, starting with the first issue from 2012 and until 2020, produced by the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture within the European Commission, which provided the possibility of generating an overview of current issues, such as the modernization of school education, technologization, investments in education, the development of linguistic, civic, digital skills and the progress made by the states regarding the achievement of the targets set for 2020³⁸. Unfortunately, in Romania there are few empirical studies on the importance of European educational programmes and their impact on the promotion of interculturalism.

Other particularly important sources of documentation have been the collections of documents of some institutions: the House of European History, the Central University Library, and the County Library "I.N. Roman" Constanța.

The research methods used in the Ph.D. thesis in order to achieve the proposed objectives are included in the series of those specific to the field of History (the analysis of archival documents), then the legislation of the European Communities and the European Union. In the first stage, it was necessary to create a database that would include general and special works on the European Community and then the European Union, but also the interests of the states concerning education at the European level. Physical and online bibliographic catalogues were consulted for the development of this database.

The documentary analysis provided the possibility of studying specialized works, the analysis of primary sources - archival documents, collections of documents, legislative sources, monographs, collections of works presented at various scientific congresses, reports, magazines, web pages, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc. Our role has been to analyze and compare the historical sources and their authenticity, given that they represent clear evidence of the activity of the European institutions in the contemporary period, related to the field of the education of young people and children, after the 1950s. In the process of documenting and analyzing the sources, attention was given to understanding chronological, geographical or cultural distance. Quantitative analysis was used to argue the points of view expressed during the research period.

The chronological method was used in the Ph.D. thesis, and it involved the presentation of the material, while respecting the sequence of the events and facts. It followed the changes that occurred within the programmes from one period to another, from a commission meeting to

³⁴ Javier M. Valle, „50 años de política educativa de la Unión Europea (1951-2001): Fundamentos, evolución histórica y propuesta de un modelo para su análisis crítico”, in *Revista Española de Educación Comparada*, 10, 2004, pp. 17-59.

³⁵ Anne Corbett, *Universities and the Europe of Knowledge. Ideas, institutions and policy entrepreneurship in European Community higher education policy, 1955-2005*, Londra, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

³⁶ Carole Frazier, *L'éducation et la Communauté européenne*, Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Droit, 1995.

³⁷ Press *Le Monde* (1950, 1957), *Il nuovo Corriere della Sera* (1957), *Official Journal of European Communities*.

³⁸ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Education and training monitor 2020: Romania*, Publications Office, 2020, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/637450>, (accessed 25.08.2020).

their implementation, the quantitative and qualitative growth, as well as the expansion of the programme into other directions.

The historical-comparative method: During the research, an in-depth analysis of European educational programmes was also carried out, being correlated with letters, reports, speeches of politicians from the post-war period, those who were part of the Directorate-General of Education and Culture (DG EAC). In the analysis, the perspective of those who drafted the documents was taken into account, as well as the social, political and economic context in which they were discussed and adopted.

The explanation and the critical analysis were used throughout the Ph.D. thesis, with the aim of providing additional information in order to reconstruct historical facts regarding the history of the Community, the evolution of the education issue and of the changes produced in society that determined the need for adaptation, using deductive reasoning. The clarification of historical notions contributes to understanding the importance of education and of cooperation via the European programmes, in terms of both the positive and the less successful aspects, over time.

The sociological survey based on a questionnaire aimed to find out: to what extent the use of digital tools, distance learning in History classes increased the motivation to critically examine historical sources and to apply the knowledge of History, how teachers and pupils are involved in exchanges of ideas, but also the contribution to intercultural understanding.

Regarding the element of originality and innovation of the research, it can be said that the history of collaboration regarding education at the European level has come to the attention of researchers over time, being a current theme of interest and that currently there are few works which cover this subject in its entirety.

The originality of the Ph.D. thesis comes from resorting to primary, less-known sources and making analogies with the European legislation.

The documents identified in the archives provide us with the opportunity to reconstruct the beginnings of European inter-university and inter-school collaboration, the difficulties encountered by those who studied abroad.

The study of the history of the European construction and of the approaches of the European Union institutions regarding the issue of education created the opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the proposals launched in the last 60 years, with significant implications for the creation of a model of education at the European level applicable in all Member States. Secondly, the researched topic follows the evolution of the European programmes in the fields of education and of promotion of interculturalism over time, from Erasmus, Comett, Eurotecnet, LLP, Youth to ERASMUS+ and up to distance learning using new technologies, proving the quantitative and quality increase of these programmes, and the fact that the allocation of additional funds by the European Union has proved its effectiveness over time. Another aspect refers to Romania's evolution, which, together with the former communist states, benefited from important resources needed for its reform program, determining significant results right from the beginning, resulting in an increase in the quality of the educational act, despite the difficulties encountered in the process of the implementation and dissemination of the projects. Starting from 2008, we noticed the diversification of the topic, and the focus shifted to practical aspects,

encouraging projects regarding cultural awareness, as well as linguistic diversity³⁹, digital citizenship⁴⁰, and inclusion⁴¹.

The novelty element of our research is related to the academic trends, to explaining the importance of certain decisions adopted in Romania in the context of education reform and the need to adapt and take over certain European recommendations, while respecting the particulars and real needs of Romanian society in order to form a democratic citizenship and respect intercultural values.

We believe that in terms of **the impact of the research and its theoretical and practical value**, this action of mapping the organizational framework, the evolution, and results of the programmes with an emphasis on the intercultural side can be beneficial to other studies and analyses centred on this subject, having the advantage of presenting in a logical sequence the way in which they evolved. Although specialized literature insisted on the idea that the beginning of students', teachers' and pupils' mobility projects date back to the 1970s-1980s, our Ph.D. thesis has reasoned that they were actually building on the experience of other exchanges of non-governmental organizations from the 1950s. The Erasmus+ programme is the end point of the process of improvements and reorganizations of the various programmes which started in the second half of the 1970s-1980s. The Lisbon Strategy established at the European level served the needs of the Member States and the reforms implemented in order to achieve the objectives set by the ministers of education. The access to European funds was encouraged through mobility projects addressed to institutions, pupils and students located in isolated or rural areas in order to provide equal opportunities and to combat exclusion, which determined an enhanced collaboration. The exchange of good practices and the creation of networks at the level of the Member States played a significant role in the evolutionary process, determining a strengthening of the feeling of European citizenship and belonging to a space with common values. We have tried to reason that European mobility projects promote solidarity, they are a symbol of European unity and of the young people's desire for modernity. In this sense, the projects represented a symbol of the ideal of European unity in all fields, including in education.

The Ph.D. thesis was not written out of the desire to exhaust the chosen topic, rather it arose from the need to understand the importance of capitalizing on the preoccupation of historians with European education.

The limitations of the research were due to the lack of access to some reference documentation sources which involved high costs, making it impossible to consult them.

The research, **in terms of its structure and volume**, was designed in such a way as to represent a pertinent historical synthesis of the transformations at the level of the European educational policy during the last half century. The introductory part was focused on clarifying the researched issue, the description of the methods used during the research, the description of the previous research on this subject, mentioning the documentary sources used in the research and the description of the resulting structure. Furthermore, the Ph.D. thesis is structured into three chapters, each of them with subchapters.

³⁹ Christina Crawley, Anne Gilleran, Alexa Joyce, Micheline Maurice, Piet van de Craen, *eTwinning. Aventuri pe tărâmurile lingvistice și culturale [eTwinning. Adventures in linguistic and cultural realms]*, Bruxelles, Centrul de Coordonare eTwinning, European Schoolnet, 2008.

⁴⁰ Dorothy Cassells, Anne Gilleran, Claire Morvan, Santi Scimeca, *Cetățenii digitali de mâine. Dezvoltarea cetățeniei active prin eTwinning 2016 [Tomorrow's digital citizens. Developing active citizenship through eTwinning 2016]*, Bruxelles, Biroul Central de Asistență eTwinning, European Schoolnet, 2016.

⁴¹ Anne Gilleran, Irene Pateraki, Santi Scimeca, Claire Morvan, *Crearea unei culturi a incluziunii prin eTwinning [Creating a culture of inclusion through eTwinning]*, Bruxelles, Biroul Central de Asistență eTwinning, European Schoolnet, 2017.

In the first chapter, *The History of the evolution of the European Communities to today's European Union. Methodological aspects*, we have dealt with the following aspects: the presentation of the historical evolution from a Europe of nations to a Europe without borders, the establishment of the European Communities, the expansion and institutional development of the European Communities, Romania and its integration into the European Union, from negotiations to the Accession Treaty, and, at the end, we have provided some historiographical and methodological clarifications.

Jean Monnet's idea to create an "industrial Lotharingia"⁴² so as to integrate West Germany into the free Europe represented the origin of the European Communities' construction. The idea of the unification of the European continent, which appeared after the Second World War, initially pursued the economic aspect, later expanded into the political area, then into the spheres of education and culture⁴³. The six founding states maintained control over moral issues, criminal law, culture and education. Whereas ECSC and Euratom failed, EEC enjoyed success⁴⁴. EEC's economic results have been spectacular.

The shape of the analysis regarding the construction of the communities started from highlighting the key moments of the European Communities, the economic and political evolution over time, the institutional development, as well as the enlargement of the edifice through the accession after 1990 of the former communist states. In the first chapter, we have also referred to the process of Romania's accession to the European Union.

In the second chapter of our research, we have tackled the evolution of policies in the field of education and the promotion of interculturalism, mainly through the prism of the regulation in the EU Treaties of establishment, but also reform, as well as the analysis of the documents of the EYSC General-Directorate (Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) and of the commissions within the European institutions regarding education and training.

The common policies on education at the European level have determined the in-depth mutual knowledge and the amplification of exchanges between the states, of valuable projects between educational institutions and measures for increasing the quality of school education, the implementation of lifelong learning, the elimination of school dropout, the access to tertiary education.

Starting from the Maastricht Treaty, provisions on education, cultural exchanges and youth have been included in the treaties' texts, and the Treaty of Lisbon deepened the cooperation in the field of education between the Member States.

The third chapter of the Ph.D. thesis continues and complements in a natural way the research, being structured in such a way as to cover the beginnings of a common European history in the field of education, the exchanges regarding education and inclusion, measures to ensure professionalization in different sectors. The chapter focused on a brief history of the evolution of European programmes over time, from a large and diverse number of programmes, starting in 1986, to a smaller number of programmes, but of a higher quality, promoting the learning of languages that are less commonly used in Europe, the participation of young people

⁴² Pierre Milza (coord.), „Lumea după 1945” [“The World After 1945”], in F. G. Dreyfus, A. Jourcin, P. Thibault, P. Milza, *Istoria universală*, vol.3, *Evoluția lumii contemporane*, traducere/ Universal history, vol.3, *Evolution of the contemporary world*, translation by Maria Cazanacli, George Anania, București, Univers Enciclopedic, 2006, p. 498.

⁴³ Steven P. McGiffen, *Uniunea Europeană. Ghid critic [European union. A critical guide]*, Ediție nouă, București, Regia Autonomă Monitorul oficial/ New edition, Bucharest, Regia Autonomă Official Monitor, 2007, p. 101.

⁴⁴ Jean-Marie Le Breton, *Măreția și destinul bătrânei Europe (1492- 2004)* [The Greatness and Destiny of Old Europe (1492-2004)], traducere din franceză de/ French translation by Vlad Russo, București, Editura Humanitas, 2006, p. 294.

with limited opportunities: migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, people from rural areas, and the creation of transnational networks which allow the exchange of good practices.

The budget allocated for projects increased from 1 billion for the period 1990-1994 to approximately 7 billion (6,970 million) for a 7-year period, from 1 January 2007 for the Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig and Jean Monnet programmes.

In a subchapter, we have referred to the history and evolution of the educational and cultural exchange platform eTwinning, part of eLearning, and its role. Also, based on a questionnaire applied to Romanian and European eTwinner History and Social Sciences teachers, we have presented the importance of European heritage which causes changes regarding the need for an active involvement of young citizens in the community.

Our Ph.D. thesis ends with **conclusions and recommendations** for future research. **The bibliography** is structured by respecting bibliographic norms and it contains all the materials used during the research. At the end, **11 annexes and two tables** are inserted.

We believe that our endeavour can be a starting point for other theoretical or practical studies. We are hopeful that our effort will be appreciated, and that our research will represent a bibliographic landmark for future specialized studies. Moreover, we intend to continue the research within a postdoctoral programme with the theme "Majorities, minorities and cultural heritage during totalitarian regimes", using primary sources during History classes.

In conclusion, we are hopeful that our Ph.D. thesis brings attention to new data regarding the history of the evolution of education policies in the Member States of the European Union and the interculturalism issue. The European Commission's education programmes advocate for preparing citizens for a harmonious life in multicultural societies. Raising peoples' awareness of Europe's common spiritual endowment is a constant priority for a climate of active understanding and respect for the cultural specificity of each individual group.

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