



## Guest Editors' Foreword

Education is described as the process that transmits culture and thus prepares young people for their social roles. The concept of education can be interpreted as the general acquirement of culture which occurs either in a spontaneous way or in a structured and institutionalized context, but education can also refer to the ways in which the planned and purposeful teaching-learning process takes place. In this issue, our studies are focused on the religiosity of youth and on the religious education system. Considering the consequences of changes in youth religiosity in Central and Eastern Europe – which can be characterized by the pluralism of ideological and religious supply, individualization, disappointment in institutional traditions and the process of ideological hybridization –, we can conclude that religious education can help in non-intentional religious meaning-making process, can develop religious relationships and religious practices. Two of the articles deal with the functions and effectiveness of religious education, the third one deals with the religiosity of the Slovakian youth, and the last article deals with the religiosity of higher education students and its effect on volunteering.

The paper of Ágnes Inántsý Pap and Laura Morvai deals with the *Tanoda* programme of a Greek Catholic church in Hungary. It is well known that many *tanodas* (special afternoon schools offering extra-curricular activities) were established in Hungary after the EU integration. Their goal is to remediate education and help talent development in underdeveloped regions. The paper examines the operation of a church-run *tanoda* in one of the most disadvantaged regions of Hungary, where the Roma population is in majority. The findings are based on the content analysis of the operational documents, on the analysis of the interviews with the teachers at the *Tanoda*, and on a focus group interview with nine children. The results showed that the *Tanoda* does not only help children to catch up, avoid dropping out of school, but it also provides spiritual, psychological, and mental support for the children, even though some politicians consider this programme as a segregated one, and thus question its positive effects.

Gabriella Pusztai and Katinka Bacskai present an analysis on parochial schools and their PISA effectiveness in Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia. We can find in the special literature that private parochial schools perform better than public

schools, even if parental background is taken into consideration. The reason of this fact could be the special school climate and/or the educational values of these schools. When the authors examined the effectiveness of parochial schools in the PISA database, they encountered methodological problems as the public databases do not conclusively reveal whether the examined schools are public, private, or parochial, and the PISA sampling is not representative regarding school sectors. The results showed that the intersectional differences could be observed in Slovakia and Hungary to the advantage of the parochial sector. In Poland, there is the advantage of the private schools; government-supported parochial schools are at a disadvantage. Concerning the effect of social background (the effect of which should be allowed for as well when we examine the PISA results), the authors found that in the parochial sector the effect of social background is more moderate than is the case in public schools.

Ondrej Štefaňák's article is the description and explanation of the Slovakian youth's religiosity and morality. Many of the social researchers think that countries in Central and Eastern Europe are expected to follow a more rapid secularization than in other developed countries due to the long period of socialism. Therefore, it is interesting to search how the religiosity and morality of Slovakian young people is formed in the background of the continuous social changes. The empirical results showed that concerning the religiosity of Slovakian youth we can speak about believers, but the declared faith is often selective. Concerning morality, most of the Slovakian school-leaving youth accept abstract moral standards and rarely practical standards (especially in relation to the marriage and family morality). The independent variables which most often divide individual categories of the surveyed youth in religious and moral attitudes are: extent of actual habitation, number of siblings, and gender. Finally, the answers of the youth in this survey show that family is a decisive element in the issue of forming religious and moral knowledge and opinions of the young generation.

Hajnalka Fényes examined the effect of religiosity on volunteering among higher education students in a cross-border region of Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine. The volunteering of students can be a higher education efficiency variable as it increases several competences; so, if religiosity inspires the volunteering of students, it increases students' efficiency as well. Based on the literature, religiosity (measured in several dimensions) affects volunteering positively, even if the effects of other variables (e.g. social background) are allowed for. The author supposed that religiosity increases especially the probability of the traditional type of volunteering, where helping others is the most important motivation. The results showed that volunteering is more frequent among students from Romania and Ukraine than among those from Hungary due to their

---

larger religious attendance, while among religiosity measurements, participating in religious youth groups has the largest positive effect on volunteering in all countries. Contrary to her hypothesis, the results showed that the motivational background of religious students' volunteering was not just altruistic, but other self-centred motivations (e.g. career building) were also important, as it is the case of the non-religious students' motivations.

Gabriella Pusztai  
Hajnalka Fényes