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## Editorial

The second issue of volume sixteen of the CEPS Journal is devoted to thematically diverse papers: it is not a focus issue. It presents 21 authors from seven different countries including Croatia, Hungary, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tanzania and Türkiye, who discuss different educational areas. The issue is concluded with a book review.

In the first paper, *Student-Centred Approaches in Higher Education From the Student Perspective*, Sabina Ograjšek and Milena Ivanuš Grmek examine students' views on the shift from teacher-centred to student-centred higher education. The study, involving 218 Primary Education students at the Faculty of Education, University of Maribor, explored students' willingness to participate in educational decision-making and their expectations of teachers. The findings show that students favour greater involvement, particularly in assessment decisions, and value teachers' pedagogical competence and supportive roles. Two distinct student groups were identified, highlighting the need for ongoing professional development to support student-centred teaching practices.

The paper entitled *Contradictions and Challenges: University Teachers' Views on Performance Evaluation Models in Portugal and Spain*, by Tania F. Gómez Sánchez, Maria Alfredo Moreira and Begoña Rumbo Arcas, examines university teachers' perceptions of performance evaluation systems in higher education. Drawing on 28 semi-structured interviews conducted at public universities in Portugal and Spain, the authors explore how international accountability trends shape academic working conditions. The findings reveal significant tensions between the stated aims and actual implementation of evaluation policies. The participants perceive evaluation as an externally imposed, weakly democratic process that prioritises quantitative measures and produces uncertain outcomes, raising important questions about quality assurance in higher education.

The third paper, *The Effect of STEM Activities on the Academic Performance of Students With Reading Problems*, by Hilal Aktamiş, Zeren Gacar and Ahmet Bildiren, addresses the impact of STEM-based instructional activities on the academic performance of fifth-grade students with reading difficulties in science education. Employing a single-subject ABA research design, the study involved three students in Turkey and was conducted over four weeks. The findings demonstrate notable improvements in student achievement in the science unit "Sun, Earth and Moon", suggesting that STEM activities can effectively support learning among students with reading challenges. Furthermore, the participants expressed a strong willingness to continue learning through

STEM-based approaches. The study contributes valuable evidence regarding inclusive STEM education and its potential to enhance academic outcomes.

In the next paper by Marko Kukanja and Saša Planinc, entitled *Food Safety Knowledge Among Tourism Faculty Undergraduates in Slovenia: Can Social Media Leverage Educational Gaps?*, the authors explore food safety knowledge among tourism students at Slovenia's two public tourism faculties. Based on a questionnaire survey conducted across three academic years, the study reveals a low average knowledge score (52.6%), particularly regarding personal hygiene and foodborne diseases. The findings indicate that neither work experience in hospitality nor social media use can compensate for the lack of formal education in food safety. The authors highlight the urgent need to introduce comprehensive food safety courses into tourism curricula.

In the fifth paper, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Students With Disabilities in the Republic of Croatia*, Ana Blažević Simić and Anamaria Titijevski Vidović investigate inclusive practices among Croatian EFL teachers in primary and secondary schools. Using a descriptive qualitative design and a self-constructed questionnaire, the study addresses teachers' education, experiences and institutional support regarding students with disabilities. The findings show that most of the participants lacked formal university training in inclusion, although many had attended professional development courses. While the majority had experience teaching students with learning difficulties and felt relatively prepared, only a small proportion reported sufficient institutional support. The study highlights the need for stronger systemic and professional preparation.

In the next paper, *Personal Practical Knowledge and Effective Teaching: A Study of Turkish Teachers of English as a Foreign Language*, Fadime Yalcin Arslan and Ayse Nur Erdem examine how English as a foreign language teachers' personal practical knowledge shapes their perceptions of effective teaching. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the authors conducted semi-structured interviews and classroom observations with seven teachers employed in public educational institutions in Turkey. The findings reveal that effective teaching is associated with positive classroom dynamics, student motivation, teacher engagement, meaningful assessment practices and the creation of empowering learning environments. The study highlights the central role of experiential knowledge in fostering effective language instruction.

The next paper by Dejan Zemljak, *Attitudes of Slovenian School Teachers Towards Smart Educational Humanoid Robots in the Classroom*, investigates teachers' perceptions of integrating smart educational humanoid robots into school practice. Drawing on questionnaire data collected from Slovenian

teachers, the study examines their readiness for and attitudes towards the educational use of robotic technologies. The findings indicate that negative attitudes towards classroom robot integration remain prevalent, with many teachers reporting insufficient competence and preparedness to employ such technologies effectively. Gender-related differences were identified in several responses. Nevertheless, teachers expressed more favourable views when considering specific pedagogical applications, highlighting the importance of targeted professional development and practical implementation examples.

In the paper *Preparing Teachers for Inclusive Education: Pre-Service Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Experiences of Inclusive Pedagogy from Teaching Practice*, Blandina Daniel Mazzuki discusses how teacher education programmes prepare pre-service teachers for inclusive education. Using focus group discussions and the SACIE-R questionnaire with 187 participants, the study explores knowledge, perceptions and practical experiences. The findings show that pre-service teachers gain mainly theoretical knowledge, while limited field-based experience restricts their ability to connect theory with inclusive pedagogy. The results also indicate low confidence, concerns and negative attitudes toward inclusion. The study highlights the need to strengthen practical components in teacher education programmes to better support inclusive education.

The ninth paper, entitled *Rethinking Pedagogy in Higher Education Amid Turbulent Times*, by Márta Katalin Korpics and Andrea Bajnok, examines how a university can implement large-scale pedagogical reform in response to the growing pressures facing higher education today, including labour-market demands, digital transformation and the expansion of student populations. The paper focuses on a case study of the reform process launched in 2019 at the University of Public Service in Budapest and explores how institutional change can be sustained through both leadership commitment and teacher engagement. The authors argue that lasting pedagogical change requires more than strategic planning or administrative directives. While institutional leadership is essential for setting goals and providing resources, meaningful reform depends on the active involvement of faculty members. In order to encourage innovation, the university created “innovative pedagogical spaces” through teacher training programmes, workshops, research activities, methodological publications and recognition schemes that rewarded successful educational innovation.

The last paper of this varia issue, *The Relationship Between Chronotype and Academic Achievement Among Slovenian University Students: The Mediating Role of Trait Self-Control and Sleep Quality*, by Katarina Maučec and Vita Štukovnik, examines how chronotype relates to academic achievement. Using

an online survey of Slovenian university students, the study measured chronotype, trait self-control, sleep quality and academic performance through standardised instruments and self-reports. The results show positive correlations among all variables. Mediation analyses indicate that trait self-control significantly explains the link between chronotype and both objective and subjective academic achievement, while sleep quality partially mediates only subjective outcomes. The findings offer new insights into psychological and behavioural pathways underlying academic performance differences.

This varia issue ends with a review of the book *Classrooms of Many Voices: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy* by Melita Lemut Bajec, Karmen Pižorn and Jasna Fakin Bajec, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education Press (2026). The review highlights the relevance of multilingual and inclusive pedagogy, as well as reflective practice and classroom diversity for teachers.

Across the papers in this varia issue, a shared focus emerges on the complex conditions shaping teaching, learning and educational change across contexts and levels. From inclusive education and STEM interventions to higher education governance, teacher beliefs, digital technologies and student outcomes, the studies highlight persistent gaps between policy intentions, pedagogical practice and institutional support. They consistently emphasise the importance of practical experience, teacher competence and supportive environments for effective implementation. Together, the contributions underline the need for more coherent, evidence-informed and inclusive education systems that better connect theory, practice and learner diversity in contemporary education.

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