

## **Editorial**

On your screen you now have the first issue of the journal ACADEMIA. The journal is an initiative of the Higher Education Policy Network.

### *About the Network*

The Network was founded as an Intra-university initiative, in the summer of 2009, following a call for networking from the Presidency of the University of Patras. After an internal evaluation process, it was approved, along with 35 others. It is the only one produced by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and initially it was funded by the University of Patras.

Two years later, in the summer of 2011, it became an Interuniversity Network with the participation of the Historical Archives of the University of the Aegean and the Laboratory of Social and Educational Studies at the University of the Peloponnese.

The aim of the Network is to be a structure for research, training, publications and other activities in the field of Higher Education in general, and of the University, in particular. The Network hopes to establish itself as a space for reflection and discussion on Higher Education issues. In this context, one of the original goals was the creation of an international scientific journal. What it is today, in fact!

### *About the Journal*

The e-journal ACADEMIA hopes to establish itself as an international forum for the publication of works which focus on Higher Education, and hence contributes to the analysis of a field of education and research which is both growing and transforming and which is at the center of international policy challenges.

ACADEMIA is a review-by-nature- interdisciplinary journal. Therefore, research and analysis that come from fields such as sociology, economics, policy and politics, pedagogy, psychology, technology, history or philosophy, and focus on Higher Education are welcome. ACADEMIA gives priority to works that contain a combination of empirical data and theory analysis.

The onus of the application of our statements is on the editor and the advisory board of ACADEMIA.

#### *Presentation of the 1st issue*

As an exception to the general rule, the 1st issue was developed around three axes. It proposes to:

- a) Provide examples of different targeted groups that could be interested in the journal, as future collaborators and/or as readers.
- b) Report that the journal is tri-lingual (English, French and Greek).
- c) Present the work already taking place in the field of Higher Education through the activities of the three partners that make up the Inter-University Network.

The ten (10) papers in this issue are grouped into three units:

- i) the first three texts (Mouzelis, Koubias, Anastassopoulos) are transcripts of oral interventions, the first two during the study day of the Network under the general title: "Globalization and Democracy" and the third at the doctoral seminar of the Network,

entitled "European Policy on Education: Theory, methodology, analysis, interpretation." More specifically, Professor Emeritus of LSE, Nikos Mouzelis, focuses on the question, "Globalization and Democracy." His main conclusion is formulated around the idea that globalization seems to strengthen democracy in emerging economies (mainly from Asia) but destroy democracy in Western countries.

The text by the former Rector of the University of Patras, St. Koubias, is an analysis of the prospects of the Greek University. Koubias, emphasizing the dual role of the University in Greece and Europe, appears to be fairly optimistic, highlighting the quality of teaching and research staff at universities in Greece.

Finally, the text by the former vice Rector, V.Anastassopoulos, focuses on the development of research and its management. Anastassopoulos proceeds to an analysis of the overall context in which the Greek university is obliged to operate and, subsequently, presents the work done at the University of Patras, in the period 2005-2009.

ii) The following three texts come from the target group of research and academic staff.

The first paper is signed by the Assistant Professor at the University of the Aegean, Panagiotis Kimourtzis. It is entitled Studying Law at the Greek University during the mid-war years. The "case" of young Nikolaos. This is a text that tries to restore the daily conditions of a provincial student in Athens, in the '20s and early '30s. Thus, historiography becomes literature but still maintains the rigor of the given historical data. At the same time, Kimourtzis also uses drawings and paintings, in an attempt to establish the atmosphere of young Nikolaos' time.

The second text is written by the Assistant Professor at the University of the Aegean, Dionisis Gouvias. It is entitled "The 'adventure' of a research project: from conception

and approval to the publication of ‘deliverables’”. This is an analysis of, and a reflection on both the process of research team composition and, later, its internal function and, on the relations between the research team and the outside world. In his text, the author tries to provide an answer to his central question: What purpose does a research project serve? The conclusions he reaches are rather pessimistic. On the one hand, the government or other bodies may announce research programs (though not enough of them, and at irregular intervals unstable), but the use of the results is rather uncertain, if not obscure, to the extent that they are often put down and remain forgotten about in bureaucratic drawers. On the other hand, internal difficulties, delays in project progress and the volume of work required are negative and unproductive factors, at least for researchers who must also concern themselves with their own professional development, especially those whose posts are temporary.

The third text in this unit is the contribution of Assane Diakhate, a member of the academic staff at the University Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis, Senegal in cooperation with Gergana Dimitrova, a PhD student at the University Paris 13. The subject of their work is the integration of students in the university. Its title is "The CIVD as an example of social intervention/inclusion *dispositif*". The authors develop their conception about the needs of students (new and foreign) for integration in the institution. They then focus, as a case study, on the *Intercultural Center of Vincennes at Saint Denis* (CIVD), which, through its activities, provides the necessary conditions firstly for students to be integrated into the university and, subsequently, for them to be able to be active and creative.

ii) The final four (4) texts are signed either by young doctors (the first two) or by PhD students (the last two) who are at an advanced stage of their research. This is another target group for ACADEMIA.

Dr. Aggelos Kavassakalis (University of Patras), is the author of the paper "Is the policy subsystem of the Greek university sub-mature political system?". The researcher, using the theoretical work of Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, known as the "Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF)," tries to prove that the Greek University is a policy subsystem according to the ACF and subsequently a sub-mature political system. This evidence legitimizes the application of the ACF to an analysis of social context in terms of conflicting coalition networks (with the passing of a new law which establishes a quality assurance system for the Greek universities).

Dr Fotis Monioulkas (University of the Aegean) focuses on the choice of higher education studies. His text is entitled "Educational choices of High School Graduates: The Case of the University of Patras". It is a case study. The researcher outlines specific features of the institution and its departments. His main conclusion is that the University of Patras attracts students principally from the local area and surrounding regions, including Attiki (Athens) and he also concludes, their social position is very high and statistically significant in comparison to the national average.

The third text is signed by the PhD student, Giorgos Aggelopoulos. It is entitled "Interdisciplinarity: the university's answer to the Needs of the Labor Market." Aggelopoulos argues that under the pressure of demands for a closer connection between Higher Education and the labor market, universities develop interdisciplinary curricula, normally in the second and third stages of their studies. These programs are justified using an argument based on the idea that thus graduates increase their chances of being employable. As for Greek universities, it seems, on the one hand, they bow to these demands and implement interdisciplinary programs of study (usually at Master's

Level). On the other hand, however, the universities try to implement these programs with minimal adaptations in order not to disturb internal organization and management.

Finally, the PhD student Antigone Sarakinioti (University of the Peloponnese) presents a paper entitled “Exploring the Content of Subject Specific Competences in the Context of Greek initial Teacher Education”. Using Bernstein’s theoretical work, she analyzes the curricula for initial training of future school teachers. Her assumption is that the curricula, through their transformations/developments, reflect the influences of European policies and the dominant discourse on competences. In the present text, the focus is on the specific competences as they are used in the international bibliography and more specifically in the European project Tuning.

In closing, I hope that the texts presented in this first issue of the e-journal ACADEMIA, will on the one hand, attract interest and provoke discussion and, on the other hand, create the desire to participate in future publications of ACADEMIA.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue

Stamelos Georgios

Professor, Editor