

# Education reforms in post-communist Romania. Ideological trends, agency and governance.



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# The research question



How were the neoliberal policies in the education field imported in the Romanian context? How were they grafted on local intellectual ideas, histories, institutions and subjectivities?

# Phase 1. Education Reform Project. Staff Appraisal Report. March 16, 1994



**Overview:** Proposed neoliberal policies; touched all core elements of the educational enterprise; WB product: finance, ideas, conditionality

**Research question:** How was the reform articulated? How was the structure of knowledge constructed?

**Methodology:** discourse analysis

**Findings:** use of binaries to impose certain understandings of the problem that would sustain their particular neoliberal solution. The stake was to impose new forms of governance.

# BUT...



1. Văcăroiu's 'populist, neo-developmental' cabinet  
(Ban 2014, 2016)
2. IES (Institute of Educational Science) experts

# Phase 2: The context



**Research question:** What were the conditions of possibility to propose and implement neoliberal policies in education?

**Methodology:** Document analysis and semi-structured interviews

**Preliminary findings:** The political and social situation in Romania was defined by instability and conflict:

- political division (the rupture between PDSR and the liberals and conservators-PNL and PNTCD)
- social unrest that culminated with the miners acting violent on the streets of Bucharest,
- interethnic conflicts,
- raising levels of unemployment and poverty,
- exuberant labour force,
- lack of basic products for consumption.

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