Research and Science Today
WWW.RSTJOURNAL.COM

OPEN ACCESS
License applied: CC-BY-NC 4.0

DOI:10.38173/RST.2020.20.2.8:93-98

Title:	THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK REGARDING THE ESTABLISHIMENT OF THE HOUSE OF SCHOOLS IN ROMANIA
Author:	Cristian Vasile MIRON

Section: SOCIAL SCIENCES

Issue: 2(20)/2020

Received: 11 August 2020	**Revised:** 3 September 2020
Accepted: 18 September 2020	**Available Online:** 15 November 2020

Paper available online HERE

RST Research and Science Today
WWW.RSTJOURNAL.COM
AUTUMN 2020
No. 2(20)/2020
ISSN-P: 2247-4455 / ISSN-E: 2285-9632

Social Sciences

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK REGARDING THE ESTABLISHIMENT OF THE HOUSE OF SCHOOLS IN ROMANIA

Cristian Vasile MIRON[1]

ABSTRACT:
THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH AN INSTITUTION THAT WAS TO ADMINISTER THE SCHOOL PATRIMONY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOLS IN ROMANIA WAS MADE IN 1884, BY ADOPTING THE LAW OF THE HOUSE FOR THE HELP OF SCHOOLS. IN THE PERIOD 1884-1896, THE NEWLY FORMED INSTITUTION HAD MORE OF A DECORATIVE ROLE, HAVING A MORE NON-EXISTENT ACTIVITY.
THE LAW FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL HOUSE WAS ADOPTED IN 1896, HAVING AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF STATE FUNDS AND THOSE FROM DONATIONS, IN ORDER TO BUILD NEW SCHOOLS AND EQUIP THEM WITH NECESSARY TEACHING MATERIALS. WITH THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THIS LAW, THE STATE BECAME INVOLVED IN THE MATERIAL SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN RURAL AREAS, AIMING TO ATTRACT AS MANY YOUNG PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE TO EDUCATION.

KEYWORDS: SCHOOL HOUSE, ESTABLISHMENT, LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of the education system during 1859-1948 took place in accordance with the need for economic and social development of society. The numerous amendments to the laws in the field of public education aimed at the general education of the masses and their enlightenment through culture.

The period between the middle of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century represented a special effort in terms of the expansion and development of education in Romania. The most important achievement of the period is the reform achieved by the adoption of the Public Instruction Act from 1864. It is a comprehensive law, which includes the entire operation of education and contains descriptors for all levels: primary schools, secondary schools, high schools, and universities.

[1] Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Romania, cristinel_miron@yahoo.com
* Acknowledgement: This work is supported by project POCU 125040, entitled "Development of the tertiary university education to support the economic growth - PROGRESSIO", co-financed by the European Social Fund under the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020

In the first half of the twentieth century, the Romanian school has a modern legislation, organization and structure, and teachers are beginning to become more and more prepared, being engaged in a functional institutional infrastructure.

The political elites in charge of the country were preoccupied with adopting a school legislation that would satisfy the needs of Romania's economic and cultural development. Most of the investments made in the education system, in a period of about five decades, were made through the House of Schools. The measures taken in different directions of activity fully contributed to the development of the school and to the promotion of the Romanian culture.

1. THE LAW FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HOUSE FOR THE AID OF SCHOOLS

"The House for the Aid of Schools" was established through the law promulgated by the royal decree, number 184, from the 20th of January, 1884[2], at the initiative of Spiru Haret.

Spiru Haret was a real author of school legislation and an organizer of the Romanian school, which contributed to the identification of solutions for the development, from a cultural point of view, of life in rural areas.

Through the law establishing the House for the Aid of Schools, Minister P. S. Aurelian aimed to develop the education system by attracting funds from donations or public funds.

The immediate finality of this legislative initiative was the construction of schools in each commune or hamlet.

According to the law, the School House was an institution that had the purpose of administering all the donations that were to be made to the schools. The patrimony of the House was to be administered by a board of directors composed of: the Minister of Public Instruction (president), the President of the High Court of Cassation, the Governor of the National Bank, the rectors of universities, the President of the Romanian Academy and the director of the House of Deposits, Consignments and Economy.[3]

The law specifies that the assets of the House of Schools cannot have, under any circumstances, another destination, and the income of this institution will be used only for the purpose decided by the donors. The goods donated to the School House cannot be alienated, and their property titles will be kept at the House of Deposits and Consignments. The budget of the House will be sent annually by the Minister of Public Instruction for approval by the Chamber of Deputies. It will be published in the Official Gazette. The executive body of the decisions taken by the Board of Directors of the institution will be the Minister of Public Instruction.[4]

It is also mentioned, in the law, that the funds donated to the School House will be permanently named after the donor, and each year, the School Board will prepare a detailed activity report on the financial situation, the use of income, and the results produced, which will be transmitted to the King and to the Chambers of Parliament.

This institution, established under the Ministry of Public Instruction, functioned until 1896, having a very weak activity, almost non-existent.

---

[2] Mihai Bordeianu, Petru Vladcovschi, *Învățământul românesc în date*, (Iași: Junimea, 1979), 251.
[3] Dorna Alecsandrescu, *Casa Școalelor"- înființarea și activitatea ei*, (București: 1901), 22.
[4] Dorna Alecsandrescu, *Casa Școalelor"- înființarea și activitatea ei*, (București: 1901), 24.

2. LAW ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND THE HOUSE OF SCHOOLS' ESTABLISHMENT

A major reform of the education system was the voting of the law of the House of Schools, on March 9, 1896, during the ministry of Petre Poni.[5]

Petre Poni (1841-1925) was an exponent of the Romanian scientific movement. He began his studies at the Academy Mihăileană in Iași, enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy and then received a scholarship to attend the Faculty of Sciences at the Sorbonne, France. Here he will be able to obtain a degree in chemistry.[6]

In the desire to contribute to raising the cultural level of the masses, on April 1, 1896, he definitively established the House of Schools.[7]

The law for the construction of school buildings and the establishment of the House of Schools appears in a period of growing the need for appropriate school buildings and the need for strict application of the principle of compulsory public education system.

This law emphasizes the role of the state in the material support of schools, with the intention of attracting to education a growing part of the population, focusing on the development of schools in rural areas. Through this, concrete measures were taken aimed at increasing investments in schools in the country.

The explanatory memorandum accompanying the draft law mentions the situation of rural and urban education, especially the misery in which most of the learning spaces were located at that time. Thus, the classes of students were overcrowded, there was a lack of air and light, in winter they were too cold and in summer they were too hot, not even meeting some basic hygiene conditions. Also, the furniture, doors, windows, roofs of many schools were old and dilapidated, which could be a cause for many diseases and infirmities.

The justification for the establishment of the House of Schools was that, at the time of the adoption of the law, the possibility to ensure learning conditions was only for 200,000 students, and the demand was for about 600,000 students, only in the rural areas.[8]

The law adopted on March 9, 1896 was specifying that the newly formed institution, under the Ministry of Public Instruction, administered all funds created in order to help the communal authorities to build primary schools, controlling all funds from the state budget or donations. Urban and rural communes had the obligation to build, transform and furnish the necessary school premises, in accordance with the decision of the Ministry of Public Instruction, through the School House. The expenses for the execution of the primary school buildings were made by the communes, through their own financial means, and in their absence, through loans contracted from the House of Schools. It is clearly specified in the law that the amount of 30 million lei will be allocated, for a period of six years, 5 million lei annually. The budget of the House was sent for approval, annually, to the Chamber of Deputies, by the Minister of Public Instruction, and the management accounts were verified by the Court of Accounts. These sums could be requested, in the form of a loan, starting with April 1, 1897, from rural and urban communes that did not have the necessary funds for the construction of school buildings from their own funds. The communes also had to pay an annuity equal to that paid by the state for the purchase of capital. In the situation where some

[5] Mihai Bordeianu, Petru Vladcovschi, *Învățământul românesc în date*, (Iași: Junimea, 1979), 275.
[6] Constantin C. Giurescu et al, *Istoria învățământului din România*, (București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1971), 153.
[7] *Monitorul Oficial al României, no. 277*, March 10, 1896.
[8] Cristina Gudin, *Istoria modernă a românilor – Cultură și modernizare, (*București, Tritonic, 2009), 118.

communes were too poor to pay the loan rates, they could resort to some subsidies from the counties and the House of Schools.[9]

This institution administered, monitored, and controlled all funds created by law or those from donations, with the aim of building primary schools and equipping these buildings with the necessary teaching materials and furniture.

Through this law, the initiator aimed to eliminate the differences between primary schools in urban and rural areas and to break down the barriers that were placed on young people from villages.

The House of Schools had the full right over all newly established educational institutions in rural areas, being placed under special administration. The school units had to send to the House reports containing their budgets and management accounts, otherwise the judicial institutions were notified. The presidents of the tribunals were obliged to notify, ex officio, the House of Schools in case they notified donations for the schools.

From the Public Administration Regulation,[10] that complements the provisions of the law, results that the revenues from the taxes applied to the land areas, which belonged to the rural communes, were administered within the House of Schools. The income from examination fees, from specially trained students, or from the fees applied to foreign students, those from fines or withholdings applied to teachers, income donated by individuals, which did not have a precise destination, also passed into the House of Schools property.

At the same time, all funds donated by private individuals for construction or school facilities became the property of the state. After the payment of the subsidies, all the sums that remained in the state property were used to equip the schools with school furniture, teaching materials or to equip the libraries next to the rural schools.

It is specified that the administration of the House of Schools had to keep separate registers and archives, thus avoiding the breaches of the 1884 law.

After the entry into force of the law, Romanians with a helping hand, school lovers, donated large sums of money for the education of children. From that date, gifts in money or real estates were transferred to schools, county administrations or to the House of Schools, aiming at the cultural development of the Romanian people.[11] The funds of the various donations helped to administer the School House, depending on the needs of the students. Also, through this institution, scholarships were granted in the country or abroad to students with a precarious financial situation who came from poorer families.

The financial efforts to expand the school network, to train and remunerate the teaching staff, as well as to provide the schools with teaching materials suitable for learning, were possible by involving the local authorities and the existing economic factors at the local level.

The materialization of compulsory education has led to a substantial increase in the number of students, and the need to build new school spaces became a problem that the education system had not faced before.

Another important provision, which aimed to increase the quality of teachers, was the measure by which the recruitment of teachers was to be done only among the graduates of normal schools.[12]

---

[9] Dorna Alecsandrescu, *Casa Şcoalelor"- înființarea și activitatea ei*, (București: 1901), 27.

[10] Cristina Gudin, *Istoria modernă a românilor – Cultură și modernizare, (*București: Tritonic, 2009), 117.

[11] Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria învățământului românesc*, (București: Casa Şcoalelor, 1928), 87.

[12] Anghel Manolache and Gheorghe Pârnuță, *Istoria învățământului din România*, Vol. II, (București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1994), 404.

The effects of the entry into force of the law on the House of Schools were immediately apparent. After 1896, in a period of about thirteen years, in Romania, over 2000 schools were built[13], especially during the ministries of Spiru Haret.

When we talk about the number of children enrolled in school, we find that their number has increased in proportion to the number of newly established schools. On the other hand, of these enrolled students, a much smaller proportion actually attended the courses. We can speak of a percentage of 66% of the students who constantly attended the courses, around 1910.[14]

CONCLUSIONS

The Law of the House of Schools was subordinated to the objective of transposing into reality the principle of compulsory primary education. Through the construction of school premises, especially in rural areas, it was possible to make progress in primary education, aiming to ensure conditions for regular attendance of courses.

The modernization of the educational process, from the second half of the 19th century, consisted in a continuous reference to the text of the law from 1864, which the decision-makers tried to permanently improve.

The cultural and political personalities involved in the process of amending the education laws, such as Spiru Haret, VA Urechia or Petre Poni, did formulate solutions only after an extensive analysis of the particularities of the Romanian education system, using not only reports received from the territory, but also their own teaching experience.

[13] Cristina Gudin, *Istoria modernă a românilor – Cultură și modernizare, (*București: Tritonic, 2009), 120.
[14] Anghel Manolache and Gheorghe Pârnuță, *Istoria învățământului din România*, Vol. II, (București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1994), 351.

REFERENCES

1. **Albulescu, Ion; Albulescu, Mirela**, *Soluția lui Spiru Haret la chestiunea Țărănească. Progresul social prin educație în spațiul rural românesc. Schimbare și devenire în istoria României*, Cluj Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2008.
2. **Alecsandrescu, Dorna**, *„Casa Școalelor", înființarea și activitatea ei*, București, 1901.
3. *Anul 1848 în Principatele Române (1821-1848 iunie 20), Vol. 1*, Acte și documente publicate cu ajutorul Comitetului pentru rădicarea monumentului lui Ion C. Brătianu, București: Institutul de Arte Grafice "Carol Gobl", 1902.
4. **Bâldescu, Emil**, *Spiru Haret în știință, filozofie, politică, pedagogie, învățământ*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1972.
5. **Bârsănescu, Ștefan**, *Istoria pedagogiei*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1972.
6. **Bordeianu, Mihai, Petru, Vladcovschi**, *Învățământul românesc în date*, Iași: Junimea, 1979.
7. **Cristea, Gabriela**, *Reforma învățământului. O perspectivă istorică (1856-1944)*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 2001.
8. **Dinu, Constantin**, *Spiru Haret*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1970.
9. **Giurescu, Constantin C.** et al, *Istoria învățământului din România*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1971.
10. **Giurescu, Dinu C; Mate, Horia C.; Nicolescu, Nicolae C.; Popa, Marcel D.; Rădulescu, Gheorghe; Stănciulescu, Alexandru**, *Istoria României în date. Ed. A 3-a*, București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2010.
11. **Gudin, Cristina**, *Istoria modernă a românilor – Cultură și modernizare,* București: Tritonic, 2009.
12. **Haret, Spiru C.**, *Opere Complete Vol. I 1884-1888, 1897-1899, 1901-9014; Vol. II 1907-1911*, Iași: Vasiliana, 1998, 2011.
13. **Iorga, Nicolae**, *Istoria învățământului românesc*, Bucureşti: Casa Şcoalelor, 1928.
14. **Manolache, Anghel; Gheorghe, Pârnuță**, *Istoria învățământului din România*, Vol. II, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1994.
15. **Nicolae, Constantin**, *Organizarea și conținutul învățământului profesional și tehnic în România. Aspecte din perioada 1864-1948*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1974.
16. **Popescu Teiușan, Ilie**, *Contribuții la studiul legislației școlare românești. Legea instrucției publice din 1864*, București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1963.
17. **Popescu Teiușan, Ilie**, *Pedagogi și oameni de școală din România.* București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1975.
18. **Stanciu, Gheorghe I.**, *O istorie a pedagogiei universale și românești până la 1900,* București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1977.
19. **Stanciu, Gheorghe I**. *Pedagogia românească în secolul XX,* București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1981.
20. **Stoian, Stanciu**, *Pedagogia română modernă și contemporană,* București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1976.
21. **Stoian, Stanciu**; Vasile, Iliescu, *Contribuții la istoricul cercetării pedagogice și al școlilor experimentale din România,* București: Editura didactică și pedagogică, 1967.