

Lázaro Moreno Herrera  
Guadalupe Francia

DECENTRALIZATION AND CENTRALIZATION POLICIES  
IN EDUCATION IN EUROPE –  
CURRENT TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

- ABSTRACT -

Decentralisation and centralisation in educational policies can be assumed as opposite trends, as much as they are in economics and politics. A preliminary assumption considers the existence at European level of two main forces having a major impact in educational policies. First: the ideal of a common European identity, an economical and social community, which claims for common goals, unified policies, that is *centralization*. The second group of forces can be related to the importance of the individual and local level to be involved in decision making in education, the diminishing of the role of central authorities and the partnership market & education. This, on the contrary, is assumed to claim for *decentralization* in educational policies.

With the above as a conceptual point of departure the First International Workshop attempted to initiate a debate and search for answers to questions such as the followings: In which ways this apparently “opposite forces” could strive towards the same goals?, Which criticism could be put forward to the approach presented above? Are there other perspectives to consider when scrutinising decentralisation and centralisation in education? What is possible to do in terms of research to approach this problematic? The keynote speeches and papers included in this report approach some of these questions or deepen into others relevant with a perspective covering from research experiences to local issues.

**Keywords:** decentralization, centralization, state, market, educational leadership, equity.