

# Physics Education in Decline: A Two-Decade Mixed-Methods Investigation of Trends and Factors Influencing Albanian Students' Interest

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Over the past two decades, Albania has seen a significant decline in interest in studying physics among primary and secondary school students. Physics, once considered a prestigious discipline, studied by the best and offering an intellectually rewarding career, is increasingly perceived by students as a tedious, highly abstract, and difficult subject that offers no prestige or income today. This declining trend, although it began much earlier, after the fall of communism, seems to have accelerated rapidly over the past two decades. This study undertakes a comprehensive mixed-methods analysis, integrating national quantitative data with qualitative findings from audits of curricula, physics textbooks, interviews with teachers and students, and policy reviews. The research identifies a series of interrelated causes: outdated curricula and inconsistent with the needs of the time and technological developments, poor textbooks on topics with incorrect linguistic and scientific terminology, a large shortage of qualified physics teachers - especially in rural areas - insufficient professional development and chronically insufficient investments in laboratory and school infrastructure, etc. The paper concludes by proposing a series of recommendations aimed at curricular reform, teacher support and learning infrastructure through experience and the implementation of projects related to actual real-world issues and technological developments, with the aim of restoring physics as a vital discipline in Albanian pre-university education.

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**Primary author:** Dr KOCIAJ, Inva (Western Balkans University)

**Co-author:** Dr GJESTILA, Marinela (Western Balkans University)

**Presenter:** Dr KOCIAJ, Inva (Western Balkans University)

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