

## (Re)Discovering University Autonomy

### The Global Market Paradox of Stakeholder and Educational Values in Higher Education

Book

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## **University-Staff Tensions in Implementing Human Resource Autonomy in Practice: The Example of Moldova**

Chapter  
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### **Abstract**

In this chapter, we explore the nature of relationships and possible tensions between university management and academic staff at universities in emerging or developing economies. In our analysis we draw on recent attempts by the government of the Republic of Moldova to restructure and modernize higher education in the country. We also draw on our recent policy research involving a situational analysis of university autonomy in Moldova (Turcan and Bugaian 2014) and a benchmark analysis of institutional university autonomy in Denmark, Lithuania, Romania, Scotland, and Sweden (Turcan and Bugaian 2015).<sup>1</sup> We argue that academic and nonacademic staff<sup>2</sup> are the key to an efficient exercise of university autonomy as well as to the successful achievement of a university's mission of teaching, research, and knowledge transfer. The central premise is that, in the contemporary world, a university should combine teaching and research/knowledge transfer activities and that, without research-based teaching, a university lacks the dimension that gives it its distinctive quality and that is essential for the formation of the future generation of high-level graduates who will be able to contribute in all spheres of the knowledge economy. We first discuss the nature of issues and challenges that might emerge at the intersection between the need to fulfill the university mission and the need to exercise university autonomy, with a specific emphasis on the human resource (HR) dimension of autonomy. We then present recent (as of 2015) risks and developments in the higher education sector in Moldova in relation to the HR dimension of autonomy and discuss implications for practice and policy.

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