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FUNDAMENTALS OF CURRICULUM FOR EXTRACURRICULAR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

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This article substantiates the concept of the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning from the perspective of competencies. In this sense, the curriculum is structured on domains and profiles of extracurricular education and learning, ensuring the conceptual continuity between the curriculum for general education and the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning. At the same time, a taxonomy of competencies is proposed: key competencies for lifelong learning; general competencies in the fields of extracurricular education and specific competencies in the profiles of extracurricular education and learning.

Keywords: *extracurricular education, extracurricular learning, curriculum, competencies, education fields, education profiles, taxonomy of competencies.*

FUNDAMENTE ALE CURRICULUMULUI PENTRU EDUCAȚIA ȘI ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL EXTRAȘCOLAR

În articol se fundamentează conceptul curriculumului pentru educația și învățământul extrașcolar din perspectiva competențelor. În acest sens, curriculumul se structurează pe domenii și profiluri ale educației și învățământului extrașcolar, asigurând continuitatea conceptuală între curriculumul pentru învățământul general și curriculumul pentru educația și învățământul extrașcolar. Totodată, se propune și o taxonomie a competențelor: competențe-cheie pentru învățarea pe tot parcursul vieții; competențe generale pe domenii ale educației extrașcolare și competențe specifice pe profiluri ale educației și învățământului extrașcolar.

Cuvinte-cheie: *educație extrașcolară, învățământ extrașcolar, curriculum, competențe, domenii ale educației, profiluri ale educației, taxonomia competențelor.*

Introduction

The curriculum for extracurricular education and learning, on the one hand, is an expression of the general theory of curriculum, validated by the scientific community; on the other hand, it takes over some characteristics dictated by the specifics and particularities of extracurricular education and learning: the diversity of finalities/open character of finalities; diversity of approaches and forms of organization; strong focus on the learner; principles of individualised and differentiated education are dominant; high level of motivation for extracurricular education and learning; dominant process orientation and building new knowledge, new experiences; focusing on everyday problems; orientation towards a formative evaluation, self-evaluation, etc.

Therefore, the context of conceptual curriculum approach, but also the respective peculiarities of extracurricular education and learning generate a curricular system (subsystem) relevant to the non-formal framework of this process. At the same time, in order to achieve continuity between the formal and non-formal curriculum, the holistic/systemic approach to the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning is accepted (Fig.1).

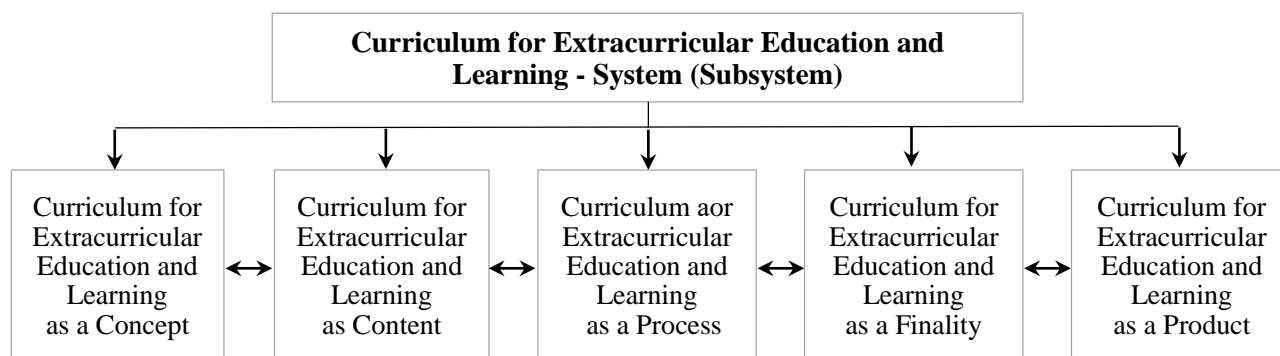


Fig.1. Curriculum for extracurricular education and learning as a system (subsystem).

Curriculum for education and extracurricular learning – concept

The concept of the non-formal curriculum focuses on affirming the priority role of the aims of extracurricular education. Depending on the purposes, designed in terms of competencies, the other components of the curricular model are also projected: *forms, strategies, and methods, educational activities, contents, assessment tools*.

Therefore, *the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning* means all the experiences accumulated, planned, and provided to students in institutions and other structures that provide extracurricular education and learning services to meet their interests, needs, opportunities, personal skills in relation to the intended finalities and performance.

From the perspective of *the National Curriculum Framework*, but also from the perspective of the evolution of non-formal education at the European level, the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning can be designed based on the interconnection of different curricular concepts (*student-centred curriculum, competence-based curriculum, context-based curriculum/educational situations*, etc.) and different theories of learning: *constructivism, behaviourism*, etc.

At the same time, the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning must focus on the interconnection of psychocentric and sociocentric approaches to education, on ensuring the social, psychological, and pedagogical correlation of curricular elements at subsystem and system level, on ensuring effective communication between teachers and educated learners [1].

The curriculum for extracurricular education and learning, along with its basic functions (*design, regulation, motivation*, etc.), will also perform the specific functions of extracurricular education and learning: the function of recovering gaps; the function of complementing formal educational activities; the function of extending formal education; the function of opposing formal education.

Another aspect that determines the specificity of curriculum concept for extracurricular education and learning is related to the following:

1. Approaching lifelong learning, non-formal education is a way to achieve this process.
2. The system of key competences, approved by the Council of Europe in Brussels on 22 May 2018.

The first aspect concerns a flexible, contextual, and longitudinal curriculum.

The second aspect orients the curriculum for education and extracurricular learning to the gradual and staged training of a certain type of competencies.

Therefore, *the Concept of Curriculum for Education and Extracurricular Competencies* is focused/ centred on the learner and reflects the following fundamental approaches:

- ✓ *Focusing on the training of competencies and valoric orientations* that will allow students to valorize their interests, skills, personal opportunities in an active and non-formal way.
- ✓ *Correlation of curriculum components for extracurricular education and learning* in relation to psychocentric and sociocentric approach; field and profile of extracurricular (non-formal) education; functions specific to extracurricular education; the profile of students and their aptitudes towards one or another type of activity.

Curriculum for education and extracurricular learning – content

The content for extracurricular education and learning in the curricular approach is presented from three perspectives: cultural heritage and social experience; types of human and, above all, educational activity; the system of contemporary sciences, the system of arts.

In this context, *the curriculum for education and extracurricular learning – content* will focus on the following areas: *Culture and Society; Arts; Science. Technique. Technologies and Sports, Tourism and Leisure*.

Each of these areas outlines a specific content framework, reflected in the system of respective activity profiles. Through fields of activity of curriculum for extracurricular education, students are offered an information system, actions that, based on logical-scientific and psycho-pedagogical criteria, are selected from the cultural values of humanity (*scientific, technical, ethical, aesthetic*, etc.).

Therefore, we can define the content of extracurricular education as “the structured set of values in all fields of science, culture, art, technology, practice, settled in society, which at some point become a benchmark in the design and implementation of education” [2].

The establishment of contents for education and extracurricular learning must be approached in the context of their selection sources and related to the fields of education and extracurricular learning.

Regarding the principles of content organisation, they were not overlooked in the theory corresponding to the issue we address. However, the following ones seem to be the most important:

- *the staging principle* (i.e., the segmentation of matter into several parts, usually relatively large);

- *the delimitation principle* (each of the drawn parts must represent a unit as close as possible to ideas and concepts);
- *the progressive complexity principle*;
- *the principle of connection between the new and old information*, between the recent acquisitions and the already settled ones;
- *the coordination principle* (establishing the link between various types of activities, information, etc., on the one hand, and between the objects of extracurricular (non-formal) education and society, on the other hand);
- *the content relevance principle*;
- *the educational value principle* (consisting in the "specialisation" of content organisation according to the educational objectives, to the methods used by the teacher in their approach, to the means of education, etc.) [3, p.231-232].

Examining these principles, it becomes clear the approach in which various components of education and extracurricular learning influence the complex action of organising and functioning of those contents.

The curricular perspective ensures, on the one hand, *the restriction by deepening* the reference sphere of extracurricular education content to the specific pedagogical values. On the other hand, the curricular perspective supports *the functional extension* of extracurricular education content which aims, directly or indirectly, at *achieving formative, qualitative effects* at the level of extracurricular education fields [4, p.234-235].

The content of extracurricular education and learning in relation to the non-formal curriculum creates premises for the realisation of individual programmes that capitalise on the effects of non-formal education generated by the social environment. This curricular perspective gives to the extracurricular education content an equally stable and dynamic character: *stable*, through the educational values of maximum formative efficiency; *dynamic*, through specifications and concretisations in relation to the fields and profiles of extracurricular education and in relation to the interests, skills, opportunities of learners.

Therefore, the content of extracurricular education and learning defines the set of selected values from all fields of culture and human activity, in terms of knowledge with maximum formative effects – intellectual, moral, technological, aesthetic, physical, cognitive, affective psychomotor - processed at the level of areas, profiles and concrete contexts of extracurricular education and learning.

The contents, in the curricular approach, perform the functions of means/tool for training students' skills.

Usually, the contents of education and teaching are reflected in education plans, curricula by disciplines, curricula by types of activities, textbooks, methodological guides, scenarios of educational activities, etc.

Curriculum for extracurricular education and learnings - process

The National Curriculum Framework establishes three categories of activities from a procedural perspective:

1. *Pre-implementation activities*: research/diagnostication; conceptualisation; designing/ approval.
2. *Implementation/ functioning activities*: implementation; teaching-learning-assessment; monitorisation.
3. *Post-implementation activities*: realisation of the reverse connection; development/ optimisation.

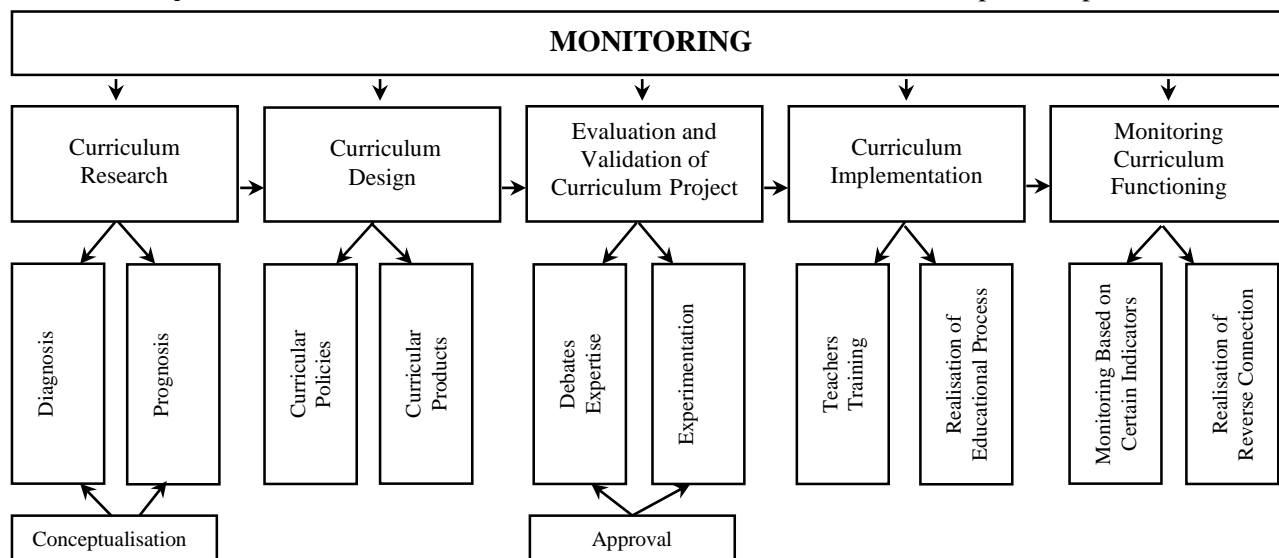


Fig.2. Educational curriculum – process [5, p.13-14].

Therefore, the National Curriculum includes, from a procedural perspective, a set of interconnected activities oriented towards *research, designing, implementation, monitoring* of the curriculum, but also towards curricular *communication*.

This approach to the curriculum as a process in *the National Curriculum Framework* is also valid for extracurricular education and learning in the conditions of its relevant adjustment to the specific paradigm of extracurricular (non-formal) education. In this context, the educational act in extracurricular education and learning, as well as the act of teaching-learning-assessment, in general, is approached from three perspectives: **as a process** (*operations, actions, activities*); **as a product** (*set of acquisitions: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values/competencies*); **as a function** (*normative, prescriptive, formative, developmental*).

It should be mentioned that extracurricular education and learning from the procedural perspective essentially have, mainly, an active/interactive character.

Gradually, several psycho-pedagogical and concretely educational approaches were substantiated with reference to active/interactive learning (behaviourist, cognitive). The best-known approach to active/interactive education is related to the constructivist paradigm in pedagogy, also called *interactive*, which, in its essence, provides that new knowledge is built by the learner, in a value relational process from a cognitive and meta-cognitive perspective. In other words, the constructivist and interactive conception is based on the constructivist approach, which establishes the learner's status (learner-centred); the psychological and educational approach, which determines the interactional framework between students and teachers; the curricular approach, which creates learning contexts related to the subject's interaction with the curricular content as an activating factor.

The key idea of this approach is, as mentioned above, to promote student-centred education – the activity of individual knowledge construction; the subject is informed, selects, appreciates, analyses, compares, classifies, transfers, discovers, solves, concludes, etc. In other words, the student constructs their own trajectory/path of education in relation to the individual potential and the interactional framework [6, p.354].

Interactive education aims at social exchanges in acquiring the new, stimulating the construction and redefining of meanings, receptivity to new experiences, sought and solved through exploration, deduction, analysis, synthesis, generalisation, abstraction, concretisation, emphasizing the realisation of connections between notions and requiring a deep intellectual, psychomotor, affective and volitional involvement.

From this point of view, ***the principles underlying the construction of interactive strategies*** are as follows:

- ✓ Building one's own meanings and interpretations of the training contents.
- ✓ Discussion and negotiation, not imposing objectives.
- ✓ Promoting methodological alternatives for education.
- ✓ Requesting transdisciplinary information and multidimensional analyses of reality.
- ✓ Less criterial and more reflective evaluation, through alternative evaluation methods.
- ✓ Promoting learning through discovery and problem solving [7, p.27].
- ✓ Principle of performance.
- ✓ Principle of vocational interest.
- ✓ Principle of learning with pleasure.
- ✓ Principle of assertive communication.

Interactive-creative extracurricular education is a process of creating meanings in the face of new information and previous knowledge, of transforming the student's cognitive structures, a consequence of the incorporating new acquisitions (knowledge, skills), by engaging in intellectual and psychomotor efforts to build knowledge, including the artistic one for the Arts field.

In conclusion, we can say that the individual is interactive when they interrelate directly with others, on the one hand, or with the study material, on the other hand, through transformative action processes and cognitive filtering, personalisation of the contents to be learned [8, p.358].

Although the process of extracurricular education and learning focuses on a set of invariant generic approaches for all types of activities, at the same time, each field of extracurricular education has specific steps for organizing the educational process (variants).

For example, in the field of *Science. Technique. Technologies* the focus will be made on scientific, experimental knowledge. And in the field of *Arts*, the emphasis will be on artistic knowledge, which will generate actions, activities, and products specific to these fields.

At the same time, new forms of extracurricular education and learning will be implemented/applied: workshops of makers, explorers, science parks, professional parks, interactive museums, historical reconstructions, etc.

The curriculum for education and extracurricular education - finality

The concept of *the National Curriculum*, including the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning, is focused on competencies – a new frame of reference for educational purposes.

The specific approach to the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning from the perspective of competencies is related to the following:

1. *The competencies* are a hierarchically structured system and can be seen as general training standards in fields and profiles of extracurricular education and learning.
2. *The finalities* as descriptors of competencies, as their gradual manifestation are flexible, variable, contextual, structured each time by the interests, skills, opportunities, psychological particularities of the trainees.

At the same time, the mission of the structures/institutions that provide extracurricular education services must be taken into account. In this sense, some structures complement the mission of formal education institutions in the development of certain competencies, and others extend the functions of the institutions and focus on the formation of new categories of competencies.

Therefore, *competencies* are a transferable and multifunctional package of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and attitudes, which allow the individual to achieve fulfilment and personal development. Competence is born and formed at the confluence of the meanings given by the verbs *to know, to know how to do, to know how to be, to know how to live together, to know how to become*, so it is not the result of educational action only in the cognitive field, but also is related to the affective-attitudinal and psychomotor one.

Competence is defined as follows:

An integrated system of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values acquired, trained and developed through learning, whose mobilization allows the identification and solution of different problems in various contexts, life situations.

Therefore, from the definition of competence as “integration of knowledge, competencies, attitudes...”, we can deduce the triadic structure of competence in its integrity: knowledge, capacities/abilities, attitudes/values/competencies.

Based on the manifestation of competence as finality, it can include the following components: action/activity represented by a verb; finality time indicator (knowledge, application, integration/transfer); the conditional aspect of finality (domain, discipline, subject); general indicator regarding the level of accomplishment of action or product in the given learning context.

Table

Competence structure by purpose (Science. Technique. Technologies domain)

No. crt.	Verb: Action/Activity	Domain/ Discipline/Subject	Level/ Modality/ Norm	Context
1.	Usage	ICT Sources	By Applying Specific Methodology	To Solve Certain Problems of Climatic Phenomenon Interpretation

Therefore, competence can be viewed in three ways: *an instrument of quality and performance, an objective of the curriculum and an outcome of learning* [9, p.20].

Competence system for education and extracurricular education

Key competences for lifelong learning (Brussels, 22 May 2018)

1. literacy competencies;
2. multilingual competencies;
3. science, technology, engineering, and mathematics competencies;
4. digital competencies;
5. personal, social, and learning to learn competencies;
6. civic competencies;
7. entrepreneurial competencies;
8. awareness-raising and cultural expression competencies.

General competencies in the extracurricular education and learning domains

General competencies in the fields of extracurricular education and learning are deduced from the key competencies for lifelong learning (Brussels, 22 May 2018), from the specifics of those fields and with a high degree of generality and complexity, are defined and formed throughout the whole period of out-of-school education:

- General competencies for *the Culture and Society* field.
- General competencies for *the Arts* field.
- General competencies for *the Science. Technique. Technologies* field.
- General competencies for *Sports, Tourism and Leisure* field.

Competencies specific to the profile of extracurricular education and learning

This category of competencies is detached from the competence system in the fields of extracurricular education and learning and reflects/integrates the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students specific to these profiles. At the same time, they are designed based on one or another taxonomy of competencies, but also in relation to the competencies specific to the respective curricular areas in the official curriculum.

For example, the *Culture and Society* field includes the following specific competencies by profiles:

- Competencies specific to the *Social-Pedagogical* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Social-Psychological* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Socio-Economic* profile.
- Competences specific to the *Intercultural, Ethnocultural* profile.
- Competences specific to the *Democracy and Human Rights* profile.
- Competences specific to the *Ethnography* profile.

The *Arts* field includes the following specific competencies on profiles:

- Competencies specific to the *Music* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Dramatic/Theatrical Art. Cinematography* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Choreographic Art* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Plastic/Visual; Decorative Arts* profile.

The field of *Science. Technique. Technologies* includes the following specific competencies on profiles:

- Competencies specific to the *Mathematics and Sciences* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Ecological-Biological Sciences* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Technical Sciences* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Information and Communication Technologies* profile.
- Competencies specific to other profiles: *Artistic Modelling; Decorative Collages; Culinary Art and Health; Creative Recycling; Folk Crafts*, etc.

The field of *Sports, Tourism and Leisure* includes the following specific competencies on profiles:

- Competencies specific to the *Recreational Sports* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Applied Sports* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Adaptive Sports* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Tourism* profile.
- Competencies specific to the *Sports Performance/Sports Training* profile.

Competencies specific to the profile disciplines/types of activities within the respective profiles

The competencies specific to the profile disciplines/types of activities within the respective profiles derive from the general competencies by domains, the specific competencies by profiles and are designed based on taxonomies. Specific competencies represent integrated systems of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, which are formed within the studies of the respective disciplines of the profile and/or within the types of respective activities.

Competencies units (pre-acquisitions)

Pre-acquisitions are the constituent parts of competencies, facilitating the formation of specific competencies, but also of general ones by domains. Compared to specific competencies, pre-acquisitions are particular systems (analytical/operational), integrating knowledge, skills, attitudes, values. Due to their degree of concreteness, they are suggestive in selecting the contents and types of activities specific to different fields and profiles of extracurricular education and learning.

All the categories of competencies are elaborated from the perspective of the needs, interests, aptitudes, opportunities of the trainees, but also of the formative valences of the fields and profiles of extracurricular education and learning.

Curriculum for extracurricular education and learning – product system

The curriculum for extracurricular education and learning as a product system is a set of curricular documents that design and explain what is pursued in extracurricular education institutions or other structures that provide extracurricular education services.

These documents have different statuses and functions determined by their position in a national hierarchy of initiatives and executors, their functions, etc.

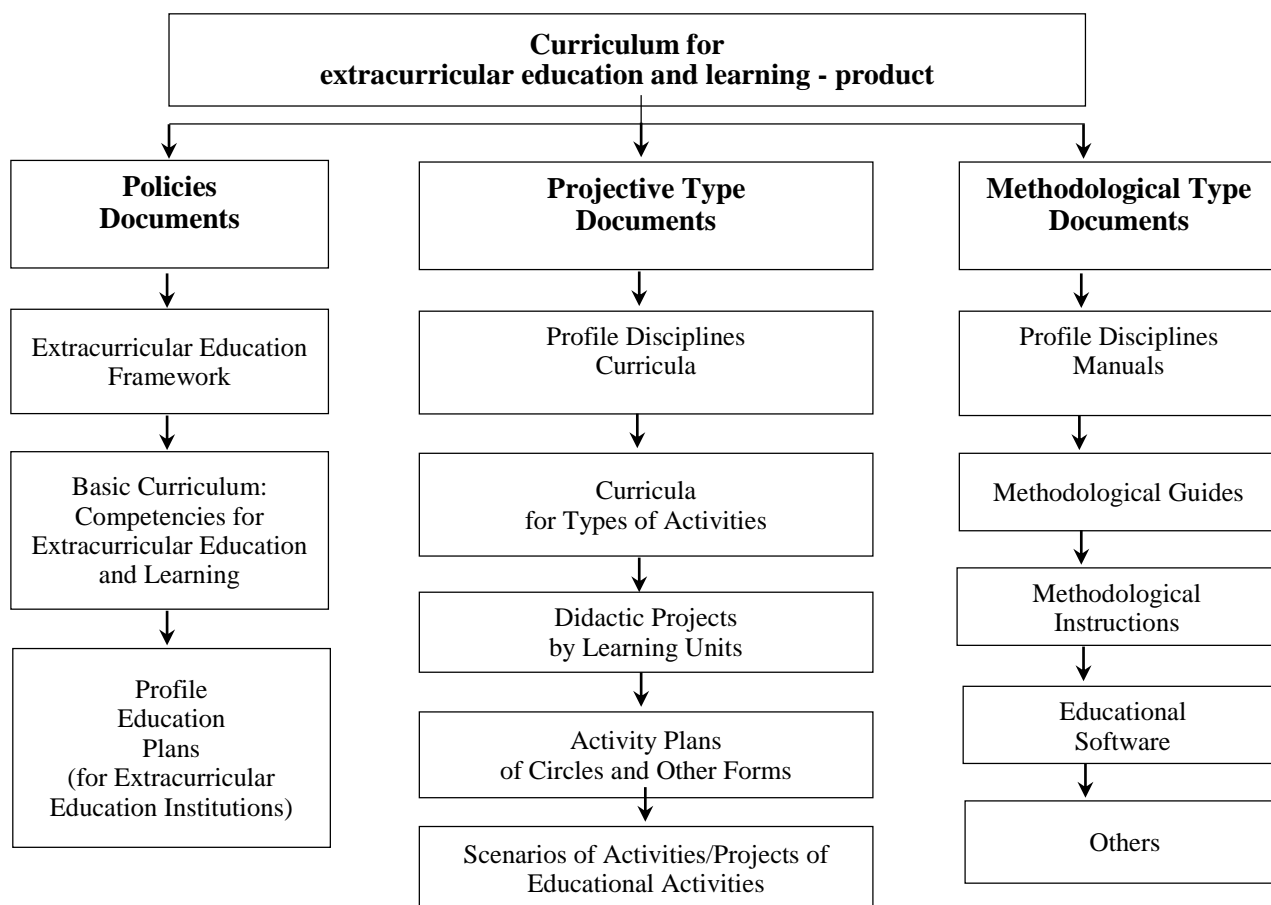


Fig.3. Curriculum for extracurricular education and learning - product [10].

Within the curricular approach of extracurricular education and learning, it is accepted to structure the curricular products in three categories: *regulatory type documents*, *projective type documents*, *methodological type documents*.

Education plans, curricula by disciplines/types of activities, textbooks, and methodological guides for extracurricular educational institutions are developed in accordance with *the National Curriculum Framework*, *the Extracurricular Education and Learning Framework in the Republic of Moldova*, *the Basic Curriculum: competencies system of extracurricular education*, taking into account the specifics of that profile.

The activity plans, the activity scenarios, the methodological guides, the personalised supports are elaborated by the respective service providers in relation to their own pedagogical visions and experience, as well as to the traditions in the respective field.

At the same time, when preparing these documents, the following must be taken into account: (1) the logic of curricular designing, which implies the interconnection of the following components: *competencies/competency units - contents/contents units - learning/education activities*; (2) the contexts and students' age peculiarities; (3) the need to achieve continuity between formal and non-formal education in terms of methodology, information, teleology, and praxiology; (4) the need to expand/complement the competencies system.

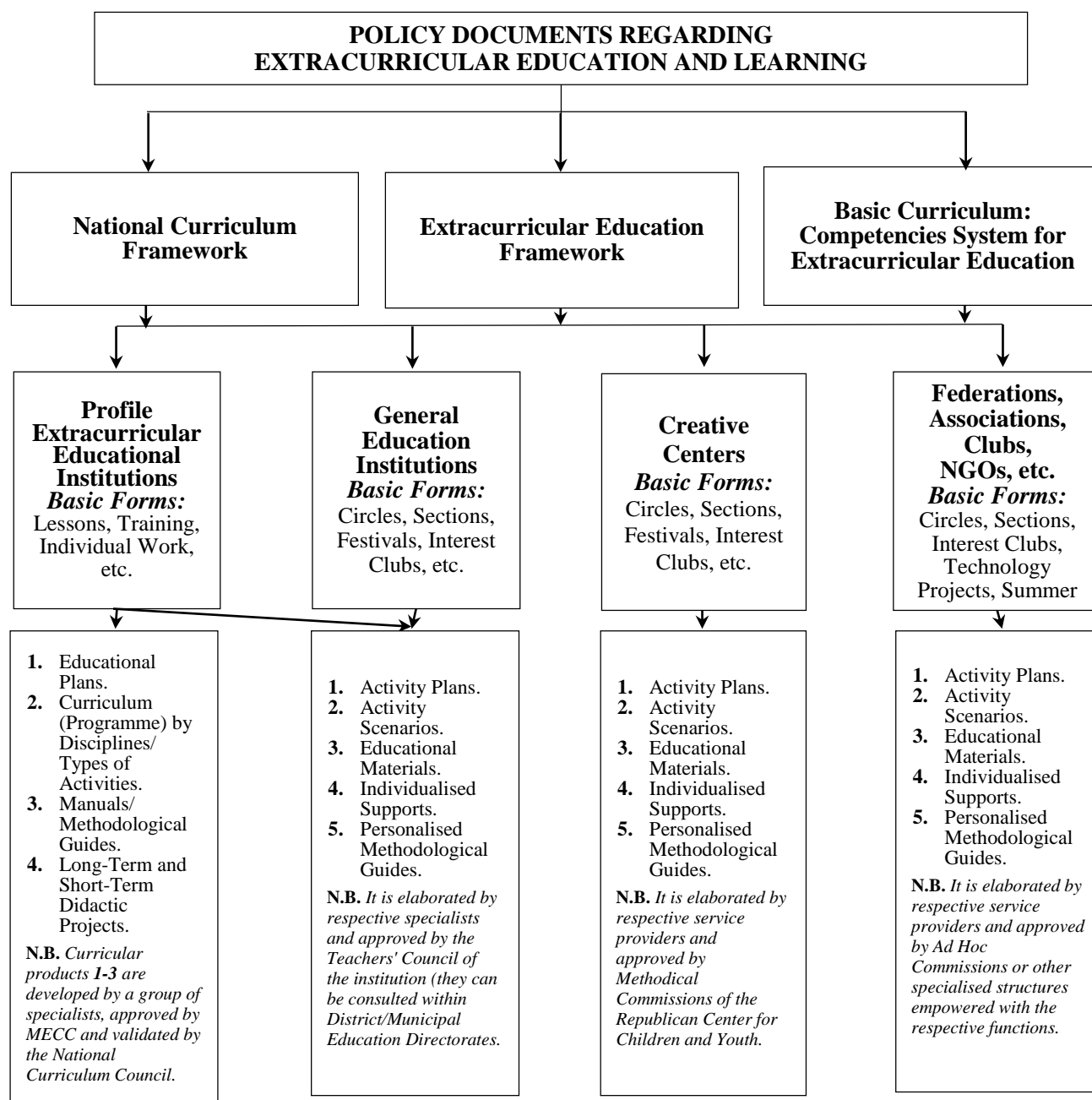


Fig.4. The system of curricular products on extracurricular education and learning in relation to forms of organisation [11].

As conclusions:

Establishing the theoretical and methodological foundations of the curriculum for extracurricular education and learning provides a reference frame for designing a curricular system for this education field, but also new perspectives and development opportunities in lifelong learning.

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