

# EDUCATION IN MONTENEGRO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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# **EDUCATION IN MONTENEGRO NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

## **0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 0.1. This needs assessment was prepared by Open Society Institute, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science in Montenegro (MES). Significant contributions have been made by UNICEF and WUS Austria, and comments and suggestions on the document have been provided by several other donors.
- 0.2. Montenegro is a small republic, consisting of about 650,000 people, served by fewer than 300 schools and one University. The education system has suffered ten years of isolation, lack of investment and general decline of infrastructure and quality. Major deficiencies exist at the school and university levels in heating, facilities, and quality of teaching and learning.

- 0.3. The education system is structured similarly to other areas of the former Yugoslavia, with compulsory education through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and free education through secondary school. The University of Montenegro is largely state funded, with one-third of students paying fees. The budget for education is limited, and represents a large share of the overall government budget. Teachers salaries are low but are paid on time, with some lag in payments of pensions. The majority of the school population are Serbian-language speakers. Mother-tongue instruction and textbooks are provided for the Albanian minority.
- 0.4. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees have placed a strain on the Montenegrin education system. Donors have been active in this field, and the MES has provided adequate policy frameworks to incorporate these children into mainstream schools. Roma IDPs and refugees are in particular difficulty, and often drop-out or do not attend school at all.
- 0.5. Schools are overcrowded, operating on two or three shifts in many urban areas. University faculties are in serious need of space, some operating with as little as 1m<sup>2</sup> per student. While some facilities are in relatively good condition, many are seriously dilapidated and in urgent need of repair or reconstruction. Basic school materials are in short supply, and supplemental learning materials are almost nonexistent. Textbooks are provided in adequate numbers, but the quality and content are in need of serious improvement. The university library is impoverished, with almost no access to international materials or journals.
- 0.6. The education system is in need of overall reform, in order to improve quality and efficiency. The MES is open to reform, but requires technical assistance to carry it through. There are no mechanisms for upgrading the skills of the teaching force, and the pre-service teacher education college has not changed its curriculum in the last decade. The curriculum is overpacked and outdated, and concentrates heavily on knowledge with little on skills and attitudes. Textbooks are based on the old curriculum and have the added disadvantages of complicated language, old stereotypes, and poor formats.
- 0.7. There is a great opportunity for educational change and renewal in Montenegro at the moment. There is openness on the part of the MES to reform, and readiness for change on the part of educators and parents. Donor attention is needed to assist the overall process of educational reform, as well as to meet the immediate needs in the education system. This report outlines the main areas of need and the present activities of the donors.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report aims to outline the current functioning of the education system in Montenegro, to provide an overview of urgent needs to keep the system functioning over the next 12-18 months, and to point to key issues of long term reform and development of the sector. It was prepared by OSI<sup>1</sup> in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES)

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<sup>1</sup> This needs assessment is based on reports of several consultants commissioned by OSI as well as information provided by MOE. The educational data was painstakingly collected by Njeza Mrse and independently verified by Neil Galbraith. The Needs Assessment draws heavily on the background report, "Current State of Education in Montenegro: Non-Construction Needs Assessment and Preliminary Analysis." The final report was written by Heather Iliff, Institute for Educational Policy.

Montenegro. It also incorporates input from several donors active in Montenegro, with significant contributions from WUS Austria and UNICEF. The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to provide an objective view of the education needs in Montenegro to inform the donor community in its consideration of aid to the sector.

- 1.2. Montenegro is a small, Mediterranean and continental republic, consisting of 618,000 people (~645,000 including IDPs and refugees). The population is made up of Montenegrins (62%), Muslims (15%), Serbs (9%), Albanians (7%), and Roma & others (9%)<sup>2</sup>. In addition, there are 139,299 Montenegrins living in Serbia. Since 1990, Montenegro has faced tremendous difficulties. GDP per capita was \$3,000 in 1989, and fell to \$1,650 by 1997.<sup>3</sup> The country has been cut off from the international community economically, culturally and socially. The unemployment rate is extremely high, reportedly 64% in May 1999 according to government officials.<sup>4</sup> Fears of a possible conflict in Montenegro exist, and there is an increasing feeling of uncertainty among the population.
- 1.3. The education system has suffered ten years of isolation, lack of investment, and general decline of infrastructure and quality. Nevertheless, the system is functioning well, considering its limited resources. Schools operate for the entire academic year, albeit in double and triple shifts in places. The government has demonstrated a significant commitment to education, investing 30% of its overall budget, as compared with the OECD average of 11.8%.<sup>5</sup> The value on education is high, and a large portion of society has received higher education (reportedly, 40% of families have one or both parents with higher education).
- 1.4. Education plays a key role in promoting open society and democratic principles. The state of education and education reform may be considered both indicators of democracy and stability as well as a promoters of the same. The Ministry of Education in Montenegro is committed to educational reform and improvement, and it is ready to form constructive partnerships with the international community. Investment is needed to support the system in the short term, as present levels of funding are not adequate to sustain it. The percentage of government funding to education cannot be expected to increase beyond its present level, and in all likelihood it will decrease to allow the government to invest in other crucial areas such as health, justice and social welfare. While there may be some inefficiencies in the system (as in any education system), the budget is already extremely tight, and the government is forced to make difficult trade-offs with its very limited funds. Donor support for immediate and long term needs in education is essential.

## **2. EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MONTENEGRO: Present Functioning, Data and Structure**

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<sup>2</sup> www.montenegro.org

<sup>3</sup> *Euro-Focus*, June 20, 1999

<sup>4</sup> *Problems and Needs of the University of Montenegro*, page 18, WUS Austria, February 2000

<sup>5</sup> UK: 11%, Macedonia: 20%, Slovenia: 12%, and Austria: 10% *Economist: Europe in Numbers 1999, Education at a Glance OECD Indicators, 1998.*

2.1. *Education Finance*: The budget for education in Montenegro in 1999 was approximately 120m DM (US\$63m)<sup>6</sup>. In 2000, the total state budget is planned to be DM 394m, and 116 DM will be devoted to education. Salaries account for 80% of the annual budget, but actual expenditure on salaries is closer to 88%. Other major categories of expenditure include school heating, textbooks, cleaning supplies, meals and accommodation costs for kindergartens and boarding schools, and transportation for children in rural areas. Currently, not enough state funding is available for school materials, teacher training, equipment, or other development needs.

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<sup>6</sup> The 1999 budget was planned and largely dispersed in dinars (salaries began to be paid in DM starting in November, 1999). The figure represents the dinar value at the beginning of the year, and it is estimated that this was reduced in real terms by 30% due to inflation.

## 2.2. Basic Data:

Level	Pupils	Teachers	Schools	Pupils per Teacher	OECD Average <sup>7</sup>
Pre-schools	12,040	1,111	19	10.8	17.6
Primary schools	76,963	4,815	166+293 459*	16.0	18.3
Secondary schools	30,568	2,443	44+1 45	12.5	13.7
University	10,219	651		15.7	15.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>129,790</b>	<b>8,369</b>	<b>523</b>		

**Table 1: Schools, Teachers and Pupils in Montenegro**

\*There are 166 schools with 293 small rural branch schools

2.3. *Legal Framework:* The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for all aspects of preschool, primary, secondary and higher education. The most recent education legislation was passed in 1995. The education law stipulates that schooling is compulsory for 8 years, with primary and secondary education being free of charge. General elementary schools must be state run. However, elementary schools for art, adult education, pre-school institutions or secondary schools can be established with state, joint and/or private ownership. The new law on higher education is currently in preparation. Policies on new organization and governance in education and new legislation in accordance with international best practice are under development.

2.4. *The Ministry of Education and Science (MES)* is divided into three sectors with 46 staff plus the Inspectorate. General education (27 staff) covers pre-school, primary, secondary and special education. Higher Education and Science (10 staff) covers the University of Montenegro with its 19 faculties and colleges. Student services (6 staff) provide for the dormitories, meals, and other student needs. Education in Albanian language (3 staff, one of whom is a Deputy Minister) oversees Albanian-language schools, serving 3918 students. In addition, an Inspectorate (90 staff) covers primary and secondary schools and reports to the General Education sector of the Ministry.

2.5. *MES Priorities for State Investment:* The priorities for 2000-2001, as stated by the MES are a) to improve overall teaching and learning conditions in terms of constructing new buildings and reconstructing existing facilities, and b) to foster the education reform process which comprises education legislation reform, human capacity building, curricula and textbook innovation, quality system development, and improvement of education employee living standard (MES, 1999).

## 2.6. Structure and Status of the System

2.6.1. Pre-School education provides nursery schools for children aged 1-3 and kindergartens for children aged 3-6. It is estimated that 22% of the age cohort are enrolled in pre-school public institutions, the vast majority have both working parents. The groups are

<sup>7</sup> *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 1998*

overcrowded (up to 45 in a group) due to lack of space (average 3.4m<sup>2</sup> per child). There is a shortage of equipment and teaching materials in general. Kindergarten expenses for orphans and disadvantaged children are covered by the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

- 2.6.2. Primary education is compulsory for children aged 7-14 and it consists of two stages. Grades I-IV are class teacher based, while grades V-VIII are subject teacher based. There is a serious lack of space at primary schools (average classroom space is 2.18m<sup>2</sup> and total school space is 4.5m<sup>2</sup> per pupil)<sup>8</sup>. Schools in urban areas have up to 35-40 pupils per class, and schools operate on double and triple shifts.
- 2.6.3. Secondary education lasts three or four years, depending on the course of study. There are three main types of secondary schools. Grammar schools or gymnasias offer four years of general academic education which is completed by the final 'matura' exam. Some gymnasias are specialized such as in mathematics or philology. Technical and art schools offer four years of specialized education as well as an academic curriculum. Vocational schools offer three years of practical education. The lack of space at secondary schools is even more acute than at primary. The physical conditions of most vocational schools are extremely poor, and lack the basic equipment needed to deliver the curriculum.
- 2.6.4. Special education, both primary and secondary, falls under joint jurisdiction of the MES and Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. There are 3 primary boarding schools for special-needs children with 93 pupils. There are four secondary schools for special needs children, also boarding schools, with 167 pupils. The MES estimates that there are about 7,000 special needs children that are not served by the school system. And, there is a need for trained professionals in this area. About 5% of special needs children are integrated into regular schools.
- 2.6.5. Higher Education: The University of Montenegro is the only tertiary institution in Montenegro. The University is described as legally autonomous, but it is funded largely from the state budget. About one-third of the students pay tuition fees. The faculties of the University and its institutes are dispersed over five cities and towns in Montenegro. The course of study is set by the faculties themselves. In line with proposals from the University, the government makes the decision concerning the number of students for admission each year. Presently, a new university law is in preparation and discussion.

AGE	LEVEL (numb. of institutions) (number of students)	TYPE of institutions	SUBTYPES of institutions
	University ( 1 comprised of 19 units )	faculty	of economics, law, philosophy, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, metallurgy and technology, civil engineering, sciences and mathematics, maritime, of drama, of arts, medicine, for tourism and hotel management;

<sup>8</sup> In town schools, total school space per pupil is significantly lower than the average of the Republic, while in village schools it is much higher.

19-23	( 10,219 students )	academy	of music;	
		college	for physiotherapy;	
		institutes	for foreign languages*, bio-technical, historical, of marine biology;	
15-18	<b>Secondary School</b> ( 44 )  ( 30,568 pupils)	grammar school	general; with two or more departments' specialized – philology and mathematics	
		Vocational school	technical	civil engineering, mechanical engineering, maritime, agricultural, forestry, medicine, economics etc.;
			four year	catering, trading, communications etc;
			three year	
		arts school	arts, music, ballet;	
7-14	<b>Elementary School</b> ( 166 ) ( 76,963 pupils )	Compulsory		
		Arts	music, ballet;	
1-6	<b>Pre-school</b> ( 19 ) (12, 040 children)	Kindergarten, nursery;		

(Copyright by MES, 1998.)

\*Institutes are scientific institutions, while the Institute for Foreign Languages provides teaching of foreign languages as minor subjects at all faculties of the University.

**Table 2: Types of Educational Institutions in Montenegro**

2.7. *Education of Minorities*: Montenegrins, Serbs and Muslims, who consist of 85.5% of the population, learn in the mainstream curricula of Serbian language, sharing a common language. The Albanian minority comprises 6.5% of the population. There are 3918 Albanian students (or 3% of the total number of pupils in the republic) who study in Albanian language. The rest of the Albanian students study in the Serbian language by choice. Detailed information is not available on Roma children or other minorities in Montenegro, except for the IDPs and refugees (see section 2.8.).

2.8. *Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees*<sup>9</sup>: There are a total of 5,184 primary school age children (age 7 to 14) registered as IDPs from Kosovo, and about 5000 primary school age children among refugees from Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina. As of September, 1999, the MES reported that 3,912 ID children from Kosovo enrolled in Montenegrin schools. Exact figures for the refugee children from Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina are not available, but UNICEF reports that these children enrolled more smoothly into Montenegrin schools since there was no language barrier. Many of the Roma minority children among IDPs, in spite of

<sup>9</sup> Report on Primary Education for Children among Refugees and IDPs in Montenegro: Emergency Assistance Provided to Primary Education in Autumn 1999. UNICEF Podgorica, February 2000.

the efforts of the humanitarian organizations or the Montenegrin authorities, are not enrolled in schools. The Roma minority among IDPs has had serious difficulty, and it is estimated that the majority of the 1,200 primary school aged children not in school are Roma. Data on secondary school and higher education enrollment is not available. (See Annex 2)

- 2.9. *The Curriculum:* The national curriculum is approved by the MES and is applied in all elementary and secondary schools in Montenegro. Each subject has detailed class-based programs with precise instructions on content and methods to be followed. Classes are held in Serbian language or in Albanian language in certain regions (Ulcinj, Tuzi, Plav). There are some schools where the curriculum is taught both in Serbian and in Albanian language. The curriculum is reported to be overloaded with compulsory content, and not enough emphasis is placed on understanding, skills and attitudes. In 1998, the MES began redefining the content by reducing the amount of knowledge and ‘factology’ required. In addition, Information Technology was introduced as a compulsory subject in first grade of secondary school.
- 2.10. *Textbooks:* There are presently adequate quantities of most textbooks for most subjects available in schools. Textbooks are purchased by the parents at an accessible price, representing 60% of the cost. The remaining 40% is subsidised by the Ministry of Education. Provision is made for children of poor families whereby books are lent to students from the school library. Textbooks are provided in Serbian language and Albanian language. All textbooks are produced to the old curricula, the books are of poor pedagogical quality, and are becoming rapidly outdated. There is an over-dependence on supply of textbooks from Belgrade which is the source of 70% of Montenegro’s requirement. The remaining 30% of textbooks have been adapted or specially written for Montenegro requirements and publishing rights are owned by the MES. Further information and options for donors are included in Annex 1, *Textbooks in Montenegro: Current use, Immediate needs, and Future policy options.*
- 2.11. *Teaching Force:* Unlike the previous period, in the last 10 years a career in teaching is perceived as unattractive and lacking respect in society. The average teacher’s salary in Montenegro is 210 DM (from starting salary of 172 up to 260 DM). Monthly expenses for a family of four have been calculated to be 478 DM for food and drink (43 items) while all basic necessity expenses are estimated at a minimum 670 DM per month. According to the Independent Union of Educators, about 50% of employees in education rent apartments, paying an average of 150DM per month. Pensions are also low, and subject to delays in payment of 2 or 3 months. Teachers are required to have 19-21 contact hours per week.<sup>10</sup> The majority of the teaching force (70% of primary and 96% of secondary) have university or college degrees. Twenty-nine percent of primary and 3.26% of secondary teachers have completed only secondary school. However, some regions have a majority of under-qualified teachers (i.e. percentage of teachers with secondary education only: Zabljak – 77%, Ulcinj 71%, Mojkovac and Pljevlja – 60%).
- 2.12. *Teacher Training:* There are no institutions dedicated to in-service teacher training in Montenegro. However, in-service training is provided by the School Inspectorates on an annual basis (usually in February). Pre-service teacher qualifications are obtained either at the Teacher Faculty/Faculty of Philosophy in Niksic or at other Faculties at the University of

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<sup>10</sup> Contact hours for UK teachers is 25. However, these hours are alleviated by specialized teachers for art or physical education allowing fewer contact hours during the day.

Montenegro for subject-based teachers. There is no department for Pedagogy or Psychology at University of Montenegro, nor is there a Pedagogic Institute or other institutions responsible for pedagogic theory and practice. In addition, special education training has to be obtained outside of Montenegro.

2.13. *Education Management:* The education system of Montenegro is highly centralized. The MES appoints school boards and school headmasters for a four-year period. There are no local education authorities or intermediate bodies, but there are local representatives in school boards. The school Inspectorate (part of MES) has both a control and advisory function is responsible for monitoring school management, curriculum, and the quality of teaching at schools. Inspectors ensure that proper documentation is kept at the school level on absences of teachers and students, to ensure that the curriculum is being followed, and to ensure that student records are in order. In addition, the Inspectorate organizes in-service teacher training seminars.

### **3. EDUCATION REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING**

3.1. While the education system of Montenegro faces many immediate challenges, the MES has recognized that reform of the education system in Montenegro is essential in order to ensure quality and efficiency of the system. The vision for education reform aims at the democratization and modernization of the education system, leading to the active participation of the young generation in the civil society and the economy. In accordance with the government's general political goals, the MES will support re-integration of Montenegro into the international community, focusing on improving the quality of services, promoting a child-centered approach in teaching and learning, and developing democratic values among children and young people in a harmonious multi-ethnic society.

3.2. The MES has already initiated the reform process in the area of in-service teacher training, introducing innovative teaching methodology, as well as some important changes in curriculum. However, the reform process has not been easy, as the MES has faced significant challenges over the past several years in integrating the IDPs and refugees into the system, stabilizing the education budget and payment of teachers' salaries, and collecting the necessary data on needs in the system. In spite of such constraints, the reform process needs to be undertaken in order to ensure the longer term development of the system. The MES is working on the development of the education reform strategy in partnership with OSI, UNICEF, and soon with the European Commission.

3.3. *Reform Priorities:* The MES is committed to developing a plan for educational reform that will be developed in a consultative way, involving all key stakeholders in the process. The priorities for a short term reform plan include: a) introducing quality in teaching and learning, b) improving the physical learning conditions of classrooms and school facilities, and c) developing consensus and understanding of reform priorities and methods. The priorities for a long term plan include: a) education finance – maximizing use of available resources, b) improving quality in teaching and learning, and c) exploring the possibility of

decentralizing the supervisory functions and the administrative structure of the education system.

3.4. *Ministry of Education and Science:* The MES has shown remarkable ability to respond to urgent needs in the system and to maintain some sense of normalcy, despite major deficits of school heating, supplies, maintenance, and learning materials. The top officials of the MES have shown openness to reform, and have developed positive working relationships with donors. Nevertheless, the majority of staff within the Ministry have not had any opportunities for professional development, and thus continue running the system according to the ways of the past. Capacity building within the MES is essential if it is to develop a plan for long term reform in education and to guide the system through the next 5-10 years of development.

### 3.5. *Quality and Content of Education*

3.5.1. Teacher Training: Pre-service teacher education in Montenegro has not been reformed or restructured since the socialist self-management times. There is no system for in-service training of teachers or administrators. Experts in pedagogy within Montenegro have not had the opportunity to learn about new developments in their field, and generally lack information and skills on new methods and approaches. Teaching practice taught at the teacher-training faculties is quite conservative, promoting teacher-centered methodologies, and has been rigidly followed for the past 15 years. Teachers receive solid training in their subject areas, but a broader, modern and practice-focused pedagogical education is needed. Teacher training efforts have been launched by international organizations in preschool and primary education, introducing a child-centered, interactive approach. Such training has been met with enthusiasm by teachers, although there has been some difficulty in introducing activity methods due to the classroom conditions. The MES has been very open to teaching innovations, but there is a need for developing strategy and a systemic approach for upgrading the skills of the teaching force.

3.5.2. Curriculum: There is a centralized curriculum, approved by the MES, which operates in all schools of the republic. Educational standards are embodied in the curriculum (no separate statement of standards or targets). There is no provision for school-based curriculum development or a clear percentage for optional course development. The curriculum is generally regarded to be overloaded, outdated, and in some cases lacking relevance. There is an over-emphasis on building knowledge, and not enough on developing understanding, skills and attitudes. The MES sees the need for curriculum modification particularly in preschool, primary and secondary education, in accordance with a learner-centered approach. Beginning in 1998, the MES began to reduce the level of 'factology' of the old curriculum, introduced new textbooks in foreign languages (English and French course books are published in the respective countries) and introduced earlier teaching of foreign languages (in grade III instead of IV). In secondary and higher education, the MES aims to introduce the subject of information technology and to strengthen student's achievement level in foreign language training.

- 3.5.3. Textbooks and learning materials: Textbooks are a cause of frustration among parents, teachers and students. Based on the over-packed curriculum, the textbooks have an over-emphasis on memorization of facts, and do not promote broad understanding of concepts. The language and content of many of the textbooks is considered to be inappropriate to the age level of students. They are generally the only classroom resource available to teachers, with little or no supplemental materials such as maps, reference books, or readers. The new program of curriculum change in Montenegro will require an accelerated textbook renewal program over the period 2001-2004, including development of textbook evaluation systems, rules and regulations for new textbook competition format and capacity building of MOE executives, authors, publishers, evaluators to use the new procedures. See Annex, *Textbooks in Montenegro: Current use, Immediate needs, and Future policy options*.
- 3.5.3. Assessment: Assessment of pupils at the classroom level focuses heavily on knowledge of facts, based on the material covered in the official textbooks. Entrance examinations are required for entrance to secondary school and to university. A school-leaving examination is applied to all secondary school students. The assessment system is almost exclusively fact and knowledge based, and rewards good memorization skills. There is a lack of professionals with up-to-date skills in assessment. Any curriculum and textbook reform effort would have to also include changing assessment practice, as well.
- 3.6. *Higher Education*: World University Service, Austria, conducted a needs assessment for the University of Montenegro, focusing on priorities of professors and students. The conclusions of this report reflect the University of Montenegro's need develop in order to curb the prevalent phenomenon of brain drain by providing decent tertiary education. To that end, several new post-graduate programs are planned to be developed in cooperation with foreign universities; investments into laboratories and libraries need to be increased, in particular to enhance significantly the poor offer of literature; the University's information technology, widely obsolete, will need to be expanded and modernized. Additional resources are needed to allow students and professors participate in international academic events and to deepen the academics' knowledge of foreign languages, helping to overcome the isolation of the Montenegrin academic community. The second phase of the EC Obnova program plans to work with the MES on developing a long term reform program for higher education in Montenegro.
- 3.7. *Ethnic Diversity*: The MES has an open policy for fostering the ethnic diversity in the education system. While most teaching is conducted in Serbian language, there is provision for ethnic Albanian children to learn in Albanian language as a part of the official policy. The number of teaching staff and schools for Albanian speakers is determined by the needs and interests of the Albanian minority. Most of the Albanian schools are small rural schools in need of substantial rehabilitation of the facilities. Roma children generally have a problem of low attendance and early drop-out. A large number of non-attendance is recognized especially among Roma internally displaced children. UNICEF and other international organizations now carry out a Non-Formal Education program to provide such children with access to basic literacy and mathematics learning. The MES is cooperating in NFE by providing school premises available for such activities. However, the current

education system does not include extra curricular activities to follow up the needs of Roma IDP drop-outs and non-attendants. There are alternative tracks for drop-outs or adult learners to attend both primary and secondary school.

#### 4. IMMEDIATE NEEDS IN EDUCATION

4.1. While the education system in Montenegro is in need of reform and development, investment in improving physical learning conditions and provision of textbooks and learning materials are necessary to ensure the basic functioning of schools and to support progress in the reform process. This section will cover the immediate needs in terms of school buildings, maintenance, and learning materials.

##### 4.2. Physical Plant

4.2.1. Repair and reconstruction of existing facilities: School facilities in Montenegro have suffered 10-20 years of neglect and disrepair. The state of schools varies greatly from urban to rural areas, and from region to region. Small rural schools are in the worst condition, some lacking indoor toilets, running water or secure electrical installations. (Many of these are in the Albanian-minority areas.) Reconstruction of roofs, anterior protection, carpentry, sanitation, floors, heating and electricity are needed in 85 schools. Roofs are a particular problem in most schools where flat roofs have begun to leak and cause further structural damage. Detailed costing for civil works, sanitary works, electric, and heating has been conducted by an independent consultant working in cooperation with MES engineers. The needs have been prioritized for each school, focusing on ‘must be done,’ ‘should be done’ and ‘can be done.’<sup>11</sup> Where schools are currently unable to sustain service despite triple shifts, addition of annexes or enlargement is recommended. (See Annex 4).

Level (total number of schools)	Enlargement/Annex Needed	Urgent Repair/ Reconstruction Needed
Kindergarten (19)	4	11
Primary School (166 + 293)	18	68
Secondary School (45)	8	24
Other (additional facilities)	6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>116</b>

**Table 3: School Facilities: Enlargement and Repair Needs<sup>12</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> The detailed construction needs analysis (about 200 pages) may be obtained from Tunde Kovacs-Cerovic, OSI: [tkovacs@osi.hu](mailto:tkovacs@osi.hu).

<sup>12</sup> A report provided recently by UNICEF outlines donor activity or planned activity in 42 schools. Overlaps were identified for 11 schools listed in the above table. Further details may be obtained from Tunde Kovacs-Cerovic

4.2.2. Construction of new facilities: Demographic changes in Montenegro have put a large strain on schools in urban areas. The population of Podgorica, for example, has grown from 70,000 in 1980 to over 210,000 today. Schools are operating in double and triple shifts, and class sizes are large (up to 35-40 pupils per class). Double-shifts create a strain on school maintenance, school administration, the teaching force, parents and students. However, the capital investment necessary to bring all schools to single shifts would be considered a luxury in Montenegro under current conditions. New school buildings are recommended only where existing schools operate on three overcrowded shifts or where the existing school has been or will be demolished.

<b>Level</b>	<b>New Schools Needed</b>
Kindergarten	1
Primary School	6
Secondary School	4
Other (sports facility)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

**Table 4: New School Construction Needs**

4.2.3. School Furniture: Furniture in most schools is in disrepair and inadequate supply. The needs assessment in furniture is based on a school-by-school analysis, quantifying actual needs in terms of missing or broken furniture, or furniture that has become unusable.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Desks</b>	<b>Chairs</b>	<b>Blackboards</b>
Primary (56 schools)	5,742	10,944	678
Secondary (37 schools)	3,990	8,000	428
<b>TOTAL (102 schools)</b>	<b>9,732</b>	<b>18,944</b>	<b>1,106</b>

**Table 5: New School Furniture and Blackboards Needed**

4.2.4. Maintenance: School maintenance in Montenegro faces three sets of pressures: a) old, dilapidated facilities require a higher level of maintenance, and interventions are more costly, b) double and triple shifts put increased strain on school facilities, and c) lack of resources for maintenance produces a downward spiral where one issue of neglect may lead to greater and more serious problems. Increased resources for maintenance are

necessary to avoid significantly larger capital costs in the future. Yet, this area is often the first to be cut, considering pressing needs to pay salaries, heating costs, and other necessities.

- 4.2.5. Heating: Lack of heating is a major problem in schools, and winters in the mountainous country are severe. School heating is provided in four ways in Montenegro: oil, coal, wood, and electricity. Through provision from the state budget and local donations, 75% of the wood needs were provided last year. However, only 7% of oil needs 23% of coal needs, and 21% of electricity needs were provided. Approximately 2.3mDM is needed annually to cover heating costs, Schools cope with this situation by using a minimal amount of fuel to heat schools periodically, and students and teachers wear coats, hats and gloves in class. When fuel runs out completely or weather is severe, schools are closed periodically. This situation leads to disruption in learning, discomfort and illness, and is especially worrying for young children.
- 4.2.6. Higher Education: The major problems with the physical plant concern building-maintenance and lack of space. Without exception, the scarcity of space is keenly felt at all faculties. The Maritime Faculty and the Faculty of Law, with about 1m<sup>2</sup> per pupil, face a dramatic need for expanded facilities. The three artistic faculties in Niksic are particularly struck with a shortage of space, notwithstanding the bad state of maintenance on their premises. The main and central university library is housed in a small space, occupying only 80m<sup>2</sup>. Additional space is needed on all levels (55% more according to the Dean's assessment of the average needs): lecture and reading rooms, libraries and administration. Lack of heating is a serious problem, as well as insufficient electrical installations and leaking roofs.

### 4.3. *School Supplies*

- 4.3.1. Basic Materials: The MES and OSI conducted a survey of primary and secondary schools to determine educational materials and equipment needs. For the most part, schools were modest in their requests, recognizing the realities of a resource-deprived system. Major deficiencies emerged in basic materials such as detergent, toilet soap and paper, cleaning supplies (brooms, mops, buckets, vacuum cleaners) in pre-school, primary and secondary schools. Student notebooks and pens are bought by parents and seem to be in adequate supply, except for IDPs and refugees (see section 4.4). There are serious shortages of chalk and A4 paper for tests and other learning materials. Other needed materials include class register books, sponges, OHP pens, OHP sheets, computer paper, and technical paper. These needs have been quantified by item and level, and are provided in Annex 3. In addition to these basic needs, there is a serious shortage of supplemental learning materials, and classrooms are generally impoverished. Materials and manipulatives such as maps, geometric cubes, ABC visuals, resource books, sports equipment and other materials are needed.

- 4.3.2. Food and accommodation: Food is supplied to kindergartens, special education schools and boarding schools. There are 19 kindergartens, 5 special schools, and 11 secondary boarding schools with 1,050 pupils. The annual cost for food and accommodation is approximately 3.4m DM. The state budget was able to allocate approximately 2mDM, leaving a deficit of 1.4mDM.
- 4.3.3. Transportation: Public transportation does not function outside of the urban areas in Montenegro. Bus transportation for children to attend rural schools is needed. Buses are provided by the schools, government or donors in some cases. Often, by the time a bus is donated to a school, it is already run down and even dangerous. For pre-school and primary schools in rural areas, 13 mini-buses are urgently needed. Public transportation passes for children in urban areas cost 12 DM per month. For many children, neither parents nor the school can afford to cover this cost.
- 4.3.4. Equipment: Little or no funding has been provided for educational equipment in primary and secondary schools over the past ten years. Facing economic isolation and the need to quickly enter the information society, schools and parents place high priority on equipment for foreign language learning (video, TV, cassette recorders) and computers. Equipment requests from schools have been quantified and costed, and are included in the annex. In addition to these items, science laboratories in secondary school are either non-functioning or simply do not exist. Previous investment in laboratories was somewhat lost due to the lack of integration of experimental methods into the curriculum and teacher training. Provision of laboratory materials (and computers) should be provided with the necessary training and curriculum considerations.
- 4.3.5. Computers: The Ministry has recently determined that Information Technology will be introduced into the school curriculum. With the exception of the University of Montenegro, there are few computers in use in the school system, although the infrastructure does exist for increasing the number of internet users. The school system would have to make a significant investment in the purchase of hardware (computers and other equipment) and software and the training of teachers and other professionals to introduce the curriculum. This is a very high priority area for parents as well as educators, and is seen as essential to overcoming years of economic and technological isolation.
- 4.3.6. Higher Education: During the past decade, the University of Montenegro has gone through a difficult phase. The political and economic isolation made it almost impossible to supply the libraries with up-to-date literature, and the need for foreign scientific periodicals is especially acute. The libraries themselves are badly equipped, and lack the ability to network with other libraries. There is a lack of media equipment, and the technical and linguistic departments lack adequate laboratory facilities.
- 4.4. *Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees*:<sup>13</sup>
- 4.4.1. According to MES policy, all internally displaced, primary school-aged children are officially registered in Montenegrin schools, regardless of ethnicity, origin, or religious

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<sup>13</sup> UNICEF, *ibid*.

background. According to UNICEF, enrollment of children has been geographically uneven, with 53% of ID children registered in 6 of the 21 municipalities, corresponding to the areas accommodating a large number of IDPs. Children who attended school in the parallel system in Kosovo are having particular difficulties due to language and curriculum differences, as well as gaps in time spent in school due to the war. Roma IDPs and refugees face language and cultural barriers, and have the highest levels of non-attendance and drop-out of any others.

- 4.4.2. Internally displaced and refugee children require special assistance in a) provision of school materials or school kits (school bag, notebook, pens, etc.), b) provision of textbooks, and c) language learning. Most of these needs have been met by UNICEF, HELP/ECHO, Swiss Disaster Relief and Catholic Relief Services through provision of kits and out of school programs. In addition to the needs of the children, the schools have required assistance in handling the additional pupils. School furniture, school buses and firewood has been provided by the Danish Refugee Council and UNICEF.

## 5. DONOR PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION

### 5.1. Donor Programs in Education

- 5.1.1. European Commission 'Obnova' Program: - Education Sector (Total Budget: 0.5m Euro) The main objective of this component is to assist the Ministry of Education in reforming the existing education system at elementary level (for pupils aged 7 to 15 years) while developing a more comprehensive master-plan for future reforms in the higher and university sectors. This program will allow the Republic of Montenegro to develop contacts with other European education institutions and to adopt European standards in the field of education. This objective will be achieved through the secondment of senior sector experts for a period of one year to the Montenegrin Ministry of Education. The feasibility of arranging study visits to Ministries of Education in member states will be assessed.
- 5.1.2. UNICEF: (Total budget for education in 1999: USD 1 million / donor appeal in 2000 : USD 1.4 million) UNICEF supports the MES in early childhood care and primary education, advocating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Key areas of UNICEF assistance are supporting the education reform process and ensuring basic education to all children, including non-attendants and drop-outs. In-service training of teachers in active learning methods has been implemented since 1996, aiming at the capacity building of primary school teachers in a child-centred teaching methodology. In response to the IDP influx in 1999, UNICEF provided school furniture, educational equipment, textbooks, children's school materials to primary schools and internally displaced children from Kosovo. Teachers' training on creative problem solving strategies has started in 10 model schools to promote non-violent communication skills in classrooms in the post-war period. In addition, UNICEF facilitated the implementation of Non-Formal Education Programme for internally displaced children who are out of school, with support from MES and NGOs. A large number of internally displaced children out of school had access to basic education in NFE programme. The beneficiaries were first ethnic Albanian children who were displaced in spring and later Roma children displaced from Kosovo after the summer 1999. In year 2000, UNICEF plans to support the MES in the assessment of reform process and children's learning achievement, expanding the teachers' training on active learning methods, enhancing peace and tolerance education, and developing republican guidelines on community based early childhood care.
- 5.1.3. Open Society Institute (Total Budget for Education in 1999: \$500,000, Budget for 2000: \$647,000): Pre-school and primary school program aimed at developing individualized learning, parent involvement, and interactive teaching methods. The program, Step by Step, established 2 model kindergartens and 8 model primary schools. The program involves the Teaching Faculty from Niksi in order to improve its curriculum.

The MES has committed to co-financing the program. The program is in its fifth year of operation in Montenegro. In higher education, OSI supports student scholarships for study abroad, faculty exchange programs, summer schools for young faculty, and sponsoring students at the Central European University. OSI is also providing support to MES in needs assessment, and capacity building in developing its overall reform strategy.

- 5.1.4. KulturKontakt: Countrywide seminar on "Education for Human Rights" in Kotor (Montenegro) for key persons in the field of education (September 24 - 25, 1999). 32 Participants: MES, Historical Institutes of Montenegro/Podgorica, Public Educational Institution in Podgorica, Faculty of Philosophy Niksic, Representatives of pilot schools. Implemented in cooperation between MES, KulturKontakt, the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights and the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights in Podgorica. Content: Elements of the role of human rights in Education with specific emphasis on the actual situation in Montenegro.
- 5.1.5. British Council: In February 1999 a project on reform of foreign language education was proposed by BC (submitted to EC Obnova Program). The long term aim is to organize in-service teacher training – in all regions in MN. In the short term, BC plans to organize a month long professional training for 20 selected counselors, professors and English teachers aiming to strengthen them in project writing skills, base-line study and curriculum reform guidance. BC also launched a pilot project to introduce new foreign language textbooks in Montenegro. Beside that it is planned to help organize a conference for teachers of foreign languages as well as publishing the newsletter for promoting and fostering the implementation of the new teaching methods into schools.
- 5.1.6. Catholic Relief Services: Parent School Partnership Program brings community members together to learn and practice techniques of participation, consensus building and advocacy while implementing small projects that will improve learning conditions in schools. Presently 3 parent councils have been established (Podgorica, Tuzi and Petnjica) as mechanisms to provide their impact on schools. CRS provides capacity building training and grants for parent councils small projects.
- 5.1.7. World University Service (WUS) Austria (budget per university-semester DEM 450.000) is an NGO dealing with higher education and Human Rights. Present in Montenegro since 1998, it has - with the support of the Austrian Federal Chancellery - mainly conducted two programmes aiming at infrastructural and academic reconstruction of the University. Projects were supported with up to DEM 20.000 respectively DEM 5.000. In addition to that, WUS has significantly helped the university to finance an efficient internet connection and runs an internet centre with free access for all university members. Within its Academic Travel Support programme, WUS also supports university members seeking to participate in international academic events. It organizes a whole range of language and computer courses, which are extremely popular with both students and the university-staff. In its new programme, WUS Austria offers to co-finance events organized by university members, to implement innovative students ideas and to provide stipends for postgraduate and doctoral students within their research-projects. Recently, WUS has initiated and co-finances a university Centre for Human Rights. On the basis of activities ranging from summer schools to curriculum-building, the centre will contribute to deepen and disseminate the awareness of fundamental rights and freedoms, democracy and the rule of law among academics and the emerging civil society of Montenegro.
- 5.1.8. Save the Children (US) In the area of education, SC (US) is providing recreational and after school facilities in several areas in Montenegro. SCF (US) also provides transportation to children and teenagers to attend the recreational centers. In addition, SCF (US) is also providing pre-school playrooms to approximately 1,000 children, including Roma, IDP, refugee and Montenegrin children. (About half of these are IDPs.) SCF (US) is also organizing classes on health topics and distributing vitamins to preschoolers. In 2000, Save the Children plans to develop Parent Associations which will oversee the management of the playrooms. Further training of playroom leaders will be conducted, including children's rights and working with children with disabilities.

5.2. *Education Needs and Donor Activities (Table) – May not be complete or exhaustive. Further information on donor programs is welcome.*

<b>Needs</b>	<b>Active Donors</b>
Educational Reform Strategy, Capacity Building of Ministry	Open Society Institute, UNICEF, EC Obnova
Teacher Education System	
Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Reform	
Quality Assurance	
Textbooks	
Teaching Methods	Open Society Institute, UNICEF, Save the Children
Early Childhood Education	Open Society Institute, Save the Children, UNICEF
Foreign Languages	British Council
Civics and Human Rights Education	KulturKontakt, WUS
Higher Education Reform	EC Obnova - planned
University / Faculty Support	World University Service – Austria, OSI
School and University Libraries	
Refugees and Internally Displaced	UNICEF, Save the Children, Swiss Disaster Relief
Education of Minorities	Roma – UNICEF, Albanian - none
Educational Supplies and Equipment	
Computers and Internet	WUS – University level
School Reconstruction	CRS, SCF US, SDR, UNICEF, COOPI, UNHCR, HELP
School Furniture	(provided for IDPs – see above)

**Table 6: Activities of Donors in Education**

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. *Reform Strategy Development and Reform Implementation:* The MES has identified ready partners in OSI, UNICEF and EC in building its capacity to develop an overall vision and strategy for education reform. This process will take place over the next 6-9 months, and will include consultations with stakeholders as well as technical assistance to the MES. Far greater donor involvement will be necessary to put this strategic vision into action at the level of teacher education, textbook development, quality assurance mechanisms, school improvement and community involvement, meeting the needs of minorities and

disadvantaged pupils, addressing the issue of early drop-outs and non-attendants, and many other areas.

- 6.2. *Educational Facilities:* The Montenegrin education system is facing serious challenges and hardship. The extremely poor situation of many of the educational facilities needs urgent attention. It is commendable that the Ministry has placed the process of reform as its top priority. Nevertheless, donor support for improving the learning environment will be essential in order to provide the necessary conditions for educators to meet basic needs of pupils. Furthermore, without such support, it will be difficult for the MES to build consensus for reform if parents, teachers and students are faced with freezing classrooms, leaking ceilings, broken windows, non-functional blackboards, poor furniture, and overcrowded classrooms.
- 6.3. *Textbooks and Learning Materials:* Active engagement of the donors will be needed to fund the development of new textbooks in keeping with curricular change, as well as the capacity building of the publishers, authors, the Ministry and other actors in order to engineer the change of content and presentation. Foreign language textbooks from bilaterals, such as UK, France, Italy and Germany will help in revitalizing modern language teaching. In addition to an effort to renew textbooks, supplemental materials such as maps, reference materials, ABC visual aids, and other items to enrich the classroom environment could make an important difference to teachers and students.
- 6.4. *Opportunity for Development:* There is a great opportunity for educational change and renewal in Montenegro at the moment. The government is open to working with donors, and it is ready to take on the hard challenges that reform will bring. Educators, parents and students have endured a difficult decade, and expectations are high that improvements are on the way. The school network is small, comprising only about 600 school buildings. Thus, well-coordinated interventions of the donor community could make a substantial impact on all schools in Montenegro.