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**THEMATIC REVIEW OF NATIONAL POLICIES FOR EDUCATION -
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

**Table 1
Task Force on Education**

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FOREWORD

This report on education in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been prepared within the framework of the Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members (CCNM) of the OECD as part of its programme of co-operation with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. The Secretariat, as Co-ordinator for General Education Policy and System Change of the Task Force for Education on Table 1 of the Stability Pact, has carried out a Thematic Review of Education Policy of the region with sections on Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYRoM, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and a chapter on regional issues. The themes covered are teachers, curriculum, governance, and early childhood education and care. Each section provides an overview of the education system, issues and barriers to reform, and recommendations. The recommendations are designed to be of use for national policy makers and to assist Stability Pact donor countries and institutions target regional assistance. In addition, the reports can serve as the basis for more detailed analysis of individual education sectors.

The transition of the region towards a pluralistic democracy and a market economy has been marked by economic, social and political changes of extraordinary breadth and depth. The talents, skills and knowledge of the population are crucial in this process; hence the ambitious scale and urgency of the reforms being advanced for education which led the members of Table 1 of the Stability Pact to designate education as one of the four priority areas.

On the basis of background material prepared by the education authorities in the region, existing reports and information supplied in meetings in the course of site visits, this Thematic Review provides an analysis of the education system in light of the social and political context of the region and priority issues of access and equity, quality, efficiency and governance.

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The opinions expressed and arguments employed in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the OECD or the governments of its Member countries.

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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

General Data

Area:	51 129 sq. km. (slightly smaller than West Virginia, USA). Within BiH's recognised borders, the country is divided into two administrative divisions – a joint Bosniak/Croat <i>Federation</i> (about 51% of the territory) and Republika Srpska or RS (about 49% of the territory). The region called <i>Herzegovina</i> is contiguous to Croatia and has an ethnic Croat majority. <i>Brcko</i> in north-eastern Bosnia is a self-governing administrative unit under BiH sovereignty; it is not part of either the Federation or RS.
Number of inhabitants:	3 835 777 (2000 estimate). ¹ Population growth: 3.1%. Age structure: approx. 33% under 23 years old, 9% over 65; birth-rate 12.92 per 1 000; infant mortality rate 25.17 per 1 000 live births.
Population density:	75 per sq. km. Urban/rural distribution (pre-war): 49% urban/51% rural.
Ethnic composition:	Serb 31%, Bosniak ² 44%, Croat 17%, Yugoslav 5.5%; other 2.5%. Religions: Muslim 40%, Orthodox 31%, Roman Catholic 15%, Protestant 4%; Other or none 10%.
Languages:	Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian.
GDP (pre-war):	USD 3 500.
GDP (post-war):	USD 800; up to USD 1 054 by 1998. Donor aid represents 30% of GDP.
Inflation:	5% in 1999; 3% in 2000 (est.).
Official unemployment:	19% (EU avg. = 10%). Unofficial estimates are 40% with peaks of 70% in rural areas. Only 2% of registered unemployed benefit from training and employment services. Approx. 25% of the workforce are employed in the public sector (IMF, 2000) ³ .

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1. All population data are unreliable because of dislocations caused by military action and ethnic cleansing.
 2. 'Bosniak' has replaced Muslim as an ethnic term, to avoid confusion with the religious term Muslim (= adherent of Islam).
 3. In the Federation (FbiH) (1999) 341 000 persons were employed with another 66 000 'waiting', which means a total of 407 000 formally, if not actually, employed. Of these, 127 000 (31%) were employed in the 'non-material' sector, including government, health, education and social services. Source: CEPS.

Introduction and Context

The background literature on Bosnia's recent history is prolific, and therefore no detailed discussion on the origins of or political issues around the conflict is necessary except as they affected, and still affect, BiH's education system. A brief overview of the historical background will therefore suffice.

The first Yugoslav state was created after World War I on the ruins of the Ottoman and Habsburg empires. It was called 'the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes', and only later (1929) re-christened 'Yugoslavia'. The young monarchy was ruled by a Serbian dynasty, which quickly appropriated near-absolute power. In 1941, the Axis invaded and partitioned Yugoslavia. Communist Yugoslavia was declared in December 1943 at Jajce in central Bosnia, and re-born in 1945 when Moscow installed Communist governments in Berlin, Warsaw, Prague and Budapest. The Yugoslavs, however, substantially liberated themselves from Germany with Tito's partisan forces, and only minimal help from Stalin. Tito's wish was to create a post-war Communist Yugoslavia where each nationality would have full national rights, but be kept together by an omnipresent Communist Party and strong police apparatus. Although Tito remained loyal to the Communist cause, he was seen by Moscow as dangerously independent, and Yugoslavia was expelled from the common institutions of the Eastern Bloc in 1948. In his battle to keep the Republic on a stable footing, Tito repressed dissent and carried out purges on Serbs, Croats and Muslims alike, but also introduced economic reforms and encouraged trade, tourism and contacts with the West culminating in Yugoslavia becoming an associate Member of the OECD in 1961. By 1974, when Tito drew up the Constitution, the country was decentralised to an unprecedented extent, although Tito kept a firm hold on power. It was still a one-party state under one-man control. National rivalries were kept in check by the promise of a collective presidency for the post-Tito era, and a rotation of top political posts among the six republics and two provinces. When Tito died in May 1980, all of Yugoslavia's nations mourned – but in truth the unity of Yugoslavia was buried with him. Nationalism, especially on the Serb side, began to dominate, and by 1991, Tito's Constitution was essentially dead and the break-up of Yugoslavia was unstoppable.

As Communism declined in the late 1980s, Yugoslavia was, on the face of it, well placed to make a transition to multiparty democracy, either as a single state or a group of successor states. But the stirring of Serbian nationalism and the rise of Slobodan Milosevic (from 1986), the 'Slovene Spring' of 1988, and confrontations in Vojvodina, Kosovo and Montenegro, destroyed all semblance of unity and soon led to the declaration (on the same day – 25 June 1991) of Croatia's and Slovenia's independence. Then followed the descent into the 'undeclared and dirty war' between the Yugoslav Army (JNA) and the Croatian National Guard, August – December 1991, which included the siege and fall of Vukovar and the Serb advance into eastern Slavonia. From there, 'The march to war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a terrible doomed procession.'⁴ In January 1992, the Bosnian Serb politicians declared their own 'Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina', proclaiming it part of the Yugoslav Federation. Two separate referenda, one in Serb areas and one in Bosniak/Croat areas, supported their conflicting views: 'Serbs wanted to stay in Yugoslavia; Croats and Muslims wanted to leave. It was clear then that Bosnia could not survive'.⁵ Bosnia's independence was declared on 6 April 1992, and on 8 April the war began.⁶ Sarajevo, a cosmopolitan city, was under siege for three years. Finally, after terrible ravages, suffering and

4. Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia*. London: Penguin Books, 1995, pp. 226 *et seq.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

6. UNHCR reported at the end of April 1992 that 268 000 people had fled Bosnia, most of them to Croatia. By the beginning of June, this figure had risen to 750 000, and to 1.1 million by late July 1992. By the end of 1992, almost 2 million people – half the population of Bosnia – had lost their homes. Source: UNHCR, Geneva.

displacement of the civilian population throughout the country, the war was ended by the signing of the *Dayton Agreements* on 14 December 1995.

Dayton declared Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) an independent State, consisting of two Entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), and the Republika Srpska (RS). The fact that the Federation gained Entity status, along with RS, disappointed the political aspirations of the Bosnian-Croat leadership, who believe that the Croat position is being marginalised. This accounts, to a large extent, for the continuation of parallel Croat administrative arrangements, with little allegiance either to the Federal Entity or to the State.⁷

With regard to education, the FBiH has a Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE); authority is then further devolved to the 10 constituent cantons, which were set up earlier under the 1994 Washington Agreement. Some, but not all, of these 10 cantons allow further devolution of education authority to the municipal level, particularly if there are disputes over access by a national group to education in its own language. There are no parallel sub-units of government in the RS, where educational authority is exercised by a single, central Ministry of Education.⁸

The Education System

The system is organised as follows:

Age at which compulsory education starts:	7
Age at which compulsory education ends:	15
Structure of general educational system:	Primary 4 years + Lower Secondary 4 years + Upper Secondary 4 years. First 8 years are compulsory.
Structure of upper secondary education:	The range of secondary schools includes the classical gymnasium (which was abolished as part of the 1980 “ <i>Stipe Suvar</i> ” reforms of secondary education, but re-established later), two teacher-training schools, religious schools, arts schools (including music, applied arts and ballet), technical schools covering approximately 20 technical fields, as well as three-year vocational schools which specialise in a broad range of particular trades and occupations.
Examinations/transition points:	End of grade 4: cohort approx. 48 000; end of grade 8:

7. Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Governance, Finance and Administration, Council of Europe. Strasbourg: 1999, p. 9.

8. The SFRY education system recognised three official languages and nine ‘nationality’ languages, but the communities in BiH mainly speak regional variations of only one of these three official languages – Serbo-Croat. These three regional variations are now considered ‘national’ languages; the politics of language have become ‘a vehicle for promoting national separation. In education, this separation manifests itself both in the context of ‘national subjects’ (e.g. history, social studies, literature) and in the struggle for political control over what are effectively three separate but parallel education systems. See *Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Governance, Finance and Administration, op. cit.*, pp. 3 et seq.

approx. 40 000; End of grade 12: (gymnasium: approx. 9 000; technical: approx. 20 000; vocational: approx. 7 000 in Fed.; not known for RS) (1998, estimated).

Levels of education governance:

Four. (1) State (BiH); (2) Entity (RS and Federation); (3) canton (in the Federation only); (4) municipality. RS is more centralised than the Federation, which has 10 cantons each with its own Ministry of Education.

Special features:

There are 12 Ministries of Education in BiH: the RS; the Federal Ministry (FMoE, see below); and 10 cantonal Ministries. The education system of BiH is fragmented along ethnic lines, although efforts are now being made towards agreed standards that would apply throughout BiH and would serve as a basis for comparable assessment of student achievement. Ministers have also signed an agreement to implement a core curriculum (70% of content) with 30% local content, but this has not yet (2001) been implemented.

Other issues

Fragmentation, paralysis, and uncertainty about the future:

- Dependency on donor funding, which stifles civic initiatives;
- Serious disruption of education for many children and young people;
- Low teacher salaries, and lack of trained school administrators;
- Non-attendance and drop-out. In compulsory schools, the drop-out rate is high (20.3%), and higher still in post-compulsory (25.9%);
- Lack of adult education, despite high levels of unemployment; lack of co-ordination between education ministries and employment services.
- Statistical data.

Table 1. **Schools by type and population [1999-2000]**¹
School type

	No. of schools		No. of students		No. of teachers		Pupil: Teacher ratio ²		Avg. no. students per school	
	FBH	RS	FBH	RS	FBH	RS	FBH	RS	FBH	RS
All types										
Pre-primary schools	100	43	9 357	5 987	584	772	16	8	94	139
Primary schools 1-8 ³	385	196	275 990	12 209	13 461	7 059	21	17	717	623
Lower secondary 5-8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Upper secondary: ⁴ Gymnasia and sim.	212	n.a.	71 582	54 232	6 524	3 400	11	16	338	589
Vocational ⁵ - 3 year	114	n.a.	40 328		1 853		22		354	
<i>Total</i>		92								
Higher education institutions, ⁶ incl. universities, post-secondary, and pedagogic academies	5U+7 (62 institutions)	2U+4 (32 institutions)	43 839	13 883	3 248	1 250	13	11	697	434

Source: CEPS, Ljubljana, 2001.

1. Education data for BiH are unreliable, because methods of collection vary and because of population shifts due to returning refugees and, to a lesser extent, internal movements of people.
2. Teacher/pupil ratios in pre-primary in F-BH vs. RS is 2:1. There is no sensible explanation for this except perhaps that it is a result of migrations (flow of population from RS to other countries). Teacher/student ratio in F-BH general secondary vs. VET is 1:2. This might be explained because "second-level" VET students are not properly counted. According to Observatory figures, out of 113 000 students in secondary schools, 93 000 are in VET secondary.
3. Division primary 1-4 vs. lower sec. 5-8 not available; only the total for grades 1-8. Upper Secondary: No division general vs. VET available for the RS. Only the total is given.
4. Federation: Division is made between "gymnasia and similar" (teacher school, art school, religion school, technical & related) – 4 year programmes and "vocational" – 3 years.
5. Number of schools: There are only a few "pure" schools that offer only general or only VET programmes. Mostly, schools offer both. Similarly in primary education: there are central and "branch" schools; here the figure for central schools is used, because "branches" are – from an administrative point of view – part of them with the same principal etc.
6. Higher Education: 5U+7 means 5 universities + 7 colleges of professional HE. According to local traditions it is better to calculate ratios and average number of students by number of "schools" (= faculties, academies, colleges) and not by number of universities + colleges. Number of institutions is noted as 62.

Legal Framework and Policy Objectives

In spite of the fragmented nature of education in BiH, the overall legal framework still strongly reflects its common *ancien régime* heritage. There are, however, variations in practice, especially in the mixed cantons and in the relatively isolated eastern parts of RS.

In the Federation, canton ministries must invite public debate on proposed laws, and must respond to public comments or justify their reasons for not doing so. The Federation Constitution allows cantons to confer responsibilities 'upward' to the Federation or 'downward' to municipalities, but except in the Croat majority cantons, there is little conferral of this kind. The Croat authorities, however, consider that in the mixed cantons all responsibility is devolved to municipal level. Because there is no adopted legislation, this has never been formalised.

There is only very limited co-ordination at any level of education between the Entities or among Federation cantons. Regular meetings of Entity education ministers do take place, chaired by the Office of the High Representative and attended by international representatives. However, the Bosnian Croat authorities usually decline invitations to take part, and prefer to meet regularly among themselves.

It has been suggested⁹ that legislative work could be improved by providing expert support to the *standing legislative committees* that are available to all assemblies in BiH. In the area of education law, drafts could be created by these standing committees with the help of international expertise, which is often freely available from professional associations or universities in other countries.

Federation

Under *Dayton*, each of the 10 cantons has the authority to develop its own legislation and regulations. While there are differences, these laws and regulations are, by and large, similar.

In summary, of the five Bosniak-majority cantons, four have adopted laws on pre-primary, primary and secondary education, the exception being Bosna Drina-Gorazde canton which (1999-2000) had primary and secondary education laws only. Laws on higher education are problematic, especially in Sarajevo and Tuzla; only Una-Sana has a law on higher education (1999).

The three Croat majority cantons (known collectively as *Herzeg-Bosna*) have all adopted laws on pre-primary, primary and secondary education. There are also regulations covering the University of Mostar.

The two 'mixed' cantons [Central Bosnia Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva (Mostar) Canton] are openly partitioned, including administrations, ministries and agencies. There is no canton-level education legislation, as the canton legislatures are not functioning effectively. Meanwhile, the most important education and related pre-constitutional laws are:

- the Law on Institutions (Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Official Gazette no. 6/92, 8/93, and 13/94);
- the Laws on pre-primary, primary and secondary education (Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Official Gazette no. 39/90);

9. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

- the Law on the University of Džemal Bijedic.

However, the pre-constitutional law in force has little bearing on actual practice in mixed cantons. The Croat-majority education institutions and parallel government administrations follow laws promulgated during the war by the former State of Herzeg-Bosna, which was disbanded in 1996. These laws include regulations on pre-primary, primary and secondary education, as well as on higher education (Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosna Official Gazette no. 2/93). Since the Croat State of Herzeg-Bosna was never formally recognised, its legislative acts are considered void. Education regulation in the “mixed” cantons is, therefore, generally in want of a legal basis on both the Bosniak-majority and Croat-majority sides.¹⁰

Republika Srpska

Here, the legal competence for education is centralised at the Entity Ministry of Education, and all areas of RS are served by a single pedagogical institute in Banja Luka. There are two universities – the University of Banja Luka and the University of Sarajevo-Srpska (comprising most of the Serb faculty members of the pre-war University of Sarajevo).

Education laws in RS include:

- The Law on Primary Education (RS Official Gazette No. 4/93);
- The Law on Secondary Education (RS Official Gazette No. 4/93);
- The Provisions on Higher Education (RS Official Gazette No. 13/94).

Vocational education

In vocational education and training (VET), strategic development is set out in two main documents. At State level, a Green Paper produced through EC-Phare VET was endorsed by both Federal and RS ministries in Spring 2000 and is due to become a White Paper in 2001. In RS, there is also a VET paper ‘Strategy and Conception of Changes in the System of Education in RS’, adopted by the Entity Government in 1999. The FBiH has no specific VET strategy paper.

Administration and Systemic Reform

The decentralising logic of *Dayton* has made education a hostage to latent nationalism in BiH. Politically, education is seen largely as a vehicle for creating three separate national histories, languages and cultures, rather than as a way to develop a common State identity. Although there are few substantial differences in policy or practice across the Entities or cantons, the politics of separation make co-ordination difficult. A second constraint is the lack of clarity in the relative powers of the four levels of governance, particularly in the FBiH.

Ironically, decentralisation has *not* led to greater empowerment of schools and teachers. It is also premature to speak of ‘systematic reform’ as there is, at present, not a clear ‘system’ in BiH.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 12 *et seq.*

There are at least 12 Ministries of Education in BiH: the RS; the Federal Ministry (FMoE, see below); and 10 cantonal Ministries, in some of which (the 'mixed' cantons) there are essentially *two* parallel administrations. In education, primary schools are under municipal control; secondary schools are under cantonal and municipal control; and universities are under Federal and RS control. Primary and secondary schools have local school boards.

Pedagogical institutes exist in the RS and in Bosniak-majority cantons, with the exception of Una-Sana Canton where these functions are carried out by the ministry. Central Bosnia Canton ('mixed') has no pedagogical institute. The Croat-majority cantons – and the Croat education administrations in the mixed cantons – maintain a single 'Institute of Education' which services to the Croat canton ministries or the respective parallel branch of the mixed cantons. These institutes are generally responsible for curriculum, data collection from schools, school evaluation, teacher recruitment and evaluation, in-service teacher training, and school development. However, they are under-staffed and more accustomed to exercising 'control' over teachers and schools than to providing advice and support.

As of September 2000, the Ministers of Education in BiH have signed an agreement accepting a '70%-30%' allocation of the curriculum. The 70% 'core curriculum' will be taken by all students; the remaining 30% will be chosen from compulsory subjects but the *content* may differ. The policy goal is to unify the system by agreeing on a 'single core curriculum' which is ethnically neutral. This agreement has been signed but cannot yet be implemented until new textbooks have been produced that emphasise 'tolerance, mutual recognition and more sensitivity'.

Meanwhile, the content of education differs along ethnic lines, as described below. Styles of teaching and learning are traditional and fact-based. In RS, 'defence' as a subject is still taught in schools, but will be replaced in 2001 by the CIVITAS programme.

There are some experimental schools, mostly supported by NGOs. For example, the 'Step-by-Step' programme – which encourages interactive learning and parental involvement – is used both in the Federation and in RS, but in only half a dozen schools.

Role of Federation Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports (FMoE)

Dayton excluded the FMoE from an active and explicit role in education, by legally transferring nearly all authority for education to cantons and by the decision to finance education through canton-level tax revenue. The FMoE does have implied authority (under *Dayton*) to execute canton education responsibilities where canton authority has not been implemented. However, in practice, FMoE attempts only to perform a co-ordination role, and has influence only in Bosniak-majority areas. Explicit canton mandates to delegate significant responsibility to the FMoE have not been forthcoming from Croat or Bosniak-majority areas. The FMoE has attempted to retain a role by referring back to the Constitution, which states that the Federation's mandate emanates from its role of safeguarding human rights, but without financial leverage or administrative authority this is only symbolic.

Attempts by the FMoE to co-ordinate by bringing the cantons together to discuss policy reform or develop common programmes and textbooks, have been unsuccessful outside the Bosniak-majority cantons. As mentioned above, the Croat Ministers of Education prefer to hold their own parallel meetings. The most obvious reason for the FMoE's weak co-ordinating role is the built-in dysfunctionality related to the 'parallel' structure of the institution itself. The Croat political authorities take the view that the FMoE does not represent their interests in education, and until this view changes, the FMoE's capacity to play a positive role will be severely limited.

Administration in the cantons of the Federation

The 10 cantons fall into three groups: the 5 Bosniak-majority cantons where a “Bosniak curriculum” is used, the 3 Croat-majority cantons where a “Croat curriculum” is used, and the 2 “mixed” cantons which are effectively divided between the two groups. (Of course, all cantons in the Federation of BiH are mixed to some extent; and in particular all 5 Bosniak-majority cantons include Croat-majority municipalities in which the Croat curriculum is used.) Where there is no constituent group of sufficient size to justify its own school, children are free to attend classes in the dominant curriculum of the local community, which is a common occurrence throughout BiH, including RS.

The 5 Bosniak-majority cantons – Una-Sana, Tuzla-Podrinje, Zenica-Doboj, Bosna Drina-Gorazde and Sarajevo – generally implement a federally developed ‘common core curriculum’ for primary and secondary education and distribute federally approved textbooks, nearly all of which are financed by the donor community. There are, however, many variations. Una-Sana Canton, for example, has adopted laws on pre-primary, primary and secondary education, a law on its university, and on its education inspectorate. Una-Sana also has pedagogic standards for pre-primary, primary and secondary education, rules on teacher examination, and professional development requirements for teachers.

Bosna Drina-Gorazde Canton has adopted laws on primary and secondary education. This smallest of the 10 cantons (about 30 000 inhabitants) has recently formed its own pedagogic institute, and maintains an inspector’s office – a large overhead to support, considering its low revenue base and the lowest level of spending per student in BiH. It implements federally approved pedagogic and technical standards for pre-primary and primary education, but applies its own pedagogic and technical standards for secondary education.

The 3 Croat-majority cantons are Posavina, Western Herzegovina, and Livno-Tomislav (commonly known together as ‘*Herzeg-Bosna*’). There are no non-public or higher education institutions in the Croat majority cantons, nor do they maintain, as in the Bosniak-majority cantons, separate pedagogic institutes. For these education support functions and higher education services, the Croat-majority cantons depend on the Institute for Education in Mostar and the University of Mostar, both located in the “mixed” Neretva Canton. Textbooks are generally imported from the Republic of Croatia, and curricula are nearly identical to those in use in Croatia, although reportedly amended somewhat for local purposes by the Institute for Education. These three cantons have all adopted laws on pre-primary, primary and secondary education.

The 2 cantons usually characterised as ‘mixed’ are Central Bosnia Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva (Mostar) Canton. Their canton administrations, including all ministries and agencies, are openly partitioned with very little if any co-ordination taking place. Similarly, schools as well as higher education are segregated by dominant curriculum and cultural orientation. No canton education legislation exists in either canton, as the canton legislatures have been paralysed since their creation.

Administration in Republika Srpska

Education administration in RS (as well as within the cantons of the Federation, see above) operates in a classically centralised structure in which the central ministry, together with its pedagogical institute, is responsible for deciding priorities, preparing budgets, controlling standards and teacher numbers and, through its inspectors and pedagogical advisors, ensuring the implementation of a centralised curriculum. The curricula and textbooks in use in RS closely resemble those in use in the Republic of Serbia. However, the RS Ministry of Education, and its pedagogical institute, are clearly making an effort to prepare their own curricula, books and learning materials.

Governance and management

In 1999, the Council of Europe and the World Bank carried out an in-depth joint study of the education governance, finance and administration in BiH (see References). The present report draws upon this study, in particular its analysis of the roles of various levels of governance in the complex and highly politicised 'parallel' structures, and the problems arising from lack of trust and communication among them. Moreover, because the system is so opaque and fragmented by narrow national interests, it is difficult for parents and other stakeholders to know whom to hold accountable for issues like access, service provision, use of resources, and quality of outcomes.

In the RS, with its traditional centralised approach and single pedagogical institute, questions of accountability and co-ordination are less acute. But in the Federation, the weak and uncertain role of the Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE) *vis-à-vis* the Federation cantons (especially the Croat majority ones), who claim legitimate authority to control both education resources and content, negates the FMoE's potential value as a co-ordinating or standard setting body.

Attempts by the FMoE to co-ordinate by bringing the cantons together to discuss policy reform, or to develop common programmes and textbooks, have been unsuccessful outside the Bosniak majority cantons.

In response, the FMoE has tried to retain a role by referring back to the Constitution, which states that the Federation's mandate emanates from its role of safeguarding human rights; but without financial leverage or administrative authority, this power can only be symbolic; moreover, 'The idea that human rights could serve as a justification for governmental powers warrants some caution'.¹¹

With regard to decentralisation, the international evidence¹² does *not* support the commonly held assumption that it would automatically promote both efficiency and equity of government activities. Indeed, with respect to efficiency the notion of 'allocative efficiency' is *not* relevant to child welfare in countries where equal access to basic social services has not yet been achieved. The impact of decentralisation on child welfare in BiH clearly demands better data and more rigorous investigation, but the evidence suggests that decentralisation is a political – not an educational – agenda and may not promote equity from a child welfare perspective.

Issues and barriers in governance and management

The problems being confronted are:

- *Small administrative units at Entity, canton and municipal levels.* They have insufficient capacity and weak governance structures, and cannot take advantage of economies of scale.
- *Lack of policy leadership and administrative skills in education ministries.* At the same time that 12 post-war ministries of education were set up in BiH, many experienced professionals and managers left the country or were no longer involved in public administration. Moreover, modern educational leadership skills (policy development, legislative and regulatory work, performance evaluation, resource management, transparent and accurate information

11. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

12. Jenni Klugman, 'Decentralisation: A Survey from a Child Welfare Perspective', *Innocenti Occasional Paper No. 61*. Florence: UNICEF/ICDC, 1997, p. 40.

systems) are lacking at all levels. Some of these issues are being addressed through donor-funded pilot projects, but systematic needs assessment and training programmes are needed.

- *No framework for students to study in different administrative units or transfer from one to the other.*
- *Lack of legislation; over-legislation.* With 11 different legal bases for secondary education, for example, the legal picture is confusing, and there are no common standards or quality measures across BiH.
- *Unawareness of need to change.* On many levels of governance – notably the cantons, and in the RS the levels below the Minister – there is no motivation to design or implement educational innovation. In other former communist countries, changes have been faster, often stimulated by European Union accession plans; but in BiH this process has been delayed by the war and stifled by the ‘deep freeze’ status quo imposed by Dayton. Remnants of past bureaucratic attitudes still block innovation.
- *Lack of participation by parents, communities, schools and teachers.* Networks of parents, schools, universities and educational institutions should be established to share ideas and jointly develop curricula. A Conference of Rectors, and regular meetings of school-level stakeholders and directors, should be established at the national level, with subsidiaries at the Federation, Republic and canton levels.
- *Over-politicisation, deadlock of national interests, and ‘top-down’ decision-making.* All three constituencies in BiH need to co-operate in a ‘bottom up’ approach to achieving change. The starting point should be where all three agree, allowing for considerable flexibility to work out areas where they disagree.
- *Lack of accurate management information.* A comprehensive database (Educational Management Information System or EMIS) is urgently needed. In terms of staff evaluation, school managers often use information from Pedagogical Institutes on individual teachers to evaluate their staff. There are no modern approaches for assessing the added value of teaching in a particular school, or any systematic link between teacher evaluation and in-service training needs.
- *Education not linked to economic recovery.* Education must be the engine of recovery, driving and being driven by economic development. There is a real need for ministries of education and ministries of employment to hold regular discussions on common issues. Education in the main must be directed at serving the employment market, and people need advice on how this might be achieved. A jointly developed employment/education plan, at least for ages 15+, is critical.

Equity in Access, Attainment and Achievement

Equity and ethnicity

The subject of ethnicity raises a fundamental issue in the purpose of education: education systems should not just be ‘fair’ to minorities – they should *promote* a spirit of equality and tolerance among ethnic and cultural groups. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child reflects this view of the role of

education in spreading the message of tolerance. No country in the SEE region is ethnically, linguistically or religiously homogeneous; still, the extent to which ethnicity and language are contentious issues in each country depends largely on the way minorities were treated in the past. Resentment about previous oppression and injustice is often strong. The break-up of SFRY into different countries has meant that some former minorities have become majorities in the new states, and some are tempted to use their power to rectify old wrongs. Other minorities of the past are still minorities today, but decentralisation can mean that they, too, gain control over local decision-making to the detriment of others.

Of all European countries, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was the least homogeneous. It was, until the changes in 1989, a multi-national federation with a three-tier system of national rights. First, the six officially recognised 'Nations of Yugoslavia' – Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Muslims (an ethnic category recognised as a nation since the 1971 census), Serbs, and Slovenes. Each of these had a national homeland.¹³ Second, the 10 ethnic 'Nationalities of Yugoslavia' which were legally accorded language and cultural rights: Albanians and Hungarians concentrated in the Vojvodina and Kosovo; Bulgarians; Czechs; Roma, Italians, Romanians, Ruthenians, Slovaks and Turks. Third, the 'Other Nationalities and Ethnic Groups' – Greeks, Jews, Vlachs, Austrians, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Poles and 'Yugoslavs'.

Patterns of minority access to education, language rights, political and religious rights varied – and still vary – greatly, the one constant being the generally low status of Roma (Gypsy) populations. Yugoslavia had the largest Roma population in Europe – an estimated 800 000 in 1981. In 1982 the Belgrade authorities confirmed that Roma had nationality status on an equal footing with other national minorities, but this was not uniformly applied by the six republics. (The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, did not accord Roma the status of an ethnic group as late as 1989.)

Although most Roma are now settled and no longer lead nomadic lives, the majority continue to live well below the economic average. There is discrimination in schools, in the workplace, in housing, health care, and in the street, and only a few hundred Roma have had a university education and entered the professions. There are incidents where Roma have been barred from voting in elections or from burying their dead in local cemeteries,¹⁴ and violence against Roma communities is on the rise.

Equity and language of instruction

In RS, Serbian is used as the language of instruction. In the 10 cantons of the Federation, the language of instruction generally conforms to that of the majority population: a 'Bosniak' curriculum is used in the five Bosniak-majority cantons, a 'Croat' one in the three Croat majority cantons, and both in the two 'mixed' cantons, effectively divided between the two groups. As has been noted before, *all* cantons in BiH are to some extent 'mixed', and especially in Bosniak cantons there are often schools where Croat curricula are used.

It is encouraging that wherever a minority group is too small to warrant instruction in the relevant language, children are free to attend classes in the dominant curriculum and language of the local majority. Rarely, if ever, is a child in BiH turned away from any school, as long as that child and his or her parents accept schooling in the dominant curriculum, with all its nationalistic and linguistic elements.¹⁵

13. With the exception of the Albanians in Kosovo, an important point.

14. Hugh Poulter, *The Balkans: Minorities and States in Conflict*, p. 90.

15. Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Governance, Finance and Administration, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

Equity and resources/provision

Tito's 1974 Constitution devolved policy and financing for social services (including education) to SFRY's member republics and provinces. Local resources, however, varied considerably, and provision varied significantly not only among SFRY's constituent parts but also within each of them. Resources for education in the Republic of BiH, for example, were about one-third less than those in Slovenia, and not on a par with Croatia and Serbia. Within BiH, per-capita expenditures by school ranged between 5 000 and 15 000 Dinar.

At present, taxes are raised and distributed differently in the two Entities. In RS, tax collection and service delivery are centralised; municipalities have a tax-sharing arrangement with the centre. In the Federation, each canton collects taxes at municipal and local level. The Federation sets the tax rates, and retains certain types of tax revenue (about 38% of the total collected). Cantons receive about 54% of taxes raised at Federal level, and municipalities about 8%. No account is taken of variations in needs and resources across regions or localities. Geographical variations are therefore considerable – in 1998, for example, analysis showed that the canton tax-raising capacity ranged from DM 250 per capita to DM 990; a similar variation was found in per-capita expenditure. Moreover, the age structure (and therefore the school population) varies from canton to canton; in those with a university, the pressure to spend on higher education is also greater.

The section on finance below shows that expenditure per primary and secondary school students varies by more than two-fold in the Federation, and three-fold at BiH level including RS. Croat-majority areas consistently spend more per student than the Federation average. Expenditure on teacher salaries also varies considerably, although pupil:teacher ratios are similar (20:1 in the Federation as a whole, and 18:1 in RS). These variations can, however, be justified by local conditions, and by the tendency to keep as many teachers employed as possible.

International experience shows, of course, that low per-student expenditure does not necessarily mean low quality, as long as minimum standards can be met. Setting state-wide quality standards would therefore benefit equity more than a narrow focus on per-student spending. A project has been prepared¹⁶ to establish a Quality Fund to help the poorest or most socially deprived areas reach those minimum standards by selectively distributing extra resources to them, thereby improving equity of provision. Teacher training and education support materials would be given priority. A second tool to improve equity is the gathering and analysis of reliable input, process and outcome data through the establishment of a BiH-wide Education Management Information System, together with systematic and reliable monitoring of student achievement, see Assessment, below.

Equity in the VET system

Decentralisation has slowed down progress towards common curricula as formally agreed by the Federation and RS in May 2000. As administrative units have differing economic and social conditions, access, range and quality of VET options for students are not equal. Moreover, due to financial and ethnic constraints, students cannot study in a different administrative unit from their own, and qualifications are not always recognised elsewhere. However, the EC-Phare VET project has led to the endorsement of 6 common curricula, including both general and VET (2000).

16. World Bank Education Development Project, 2000.

Equity and special needs

Access for special-needs children is still limited. In the past, these children were often placed in special schools. This did not promote their social or educational integration, and failed to recognise their right to education leading to the development of their full potential. The attitude towards special-needs children is still reflected in the use of the term 'defectology' and the predominantly medical approach of addressing the 'defect' rather than the child. Some positive developments can now be cited, but the divisions and deprivations of the war have in many cases only served to widen the gap. Moreover, there are now a considerable number of children who were injured during the war and are in need of special accommodation in schools.

Indeed, not only refugee and displaced children but *all* of BiH's young population is faced with personal and social trauma that may not be visible even in classrooms. This may not be appropriately recognised, and in any case teachers and schools lack the ability to offer care, treatment and help. As a result some children drop out, stay at home, or look for other types of schooling *e.g.* art schools where they are better able to cope with their feelings.

Refugee and displaced children have 'special needs', too. They may be traumatised by their experiences; they are almost certain to lag behind in learning, because of time missed, the destruction of their homes and schools, and the loss of their teachers. Their families may be unemployed; and, in the case of refugee children, they may have language difficulties in their new schools. Efforts are being made to include these children, but the pressure on schools is often very great especially in areas with a large influx of returnees or internally displaced families.

While it is not always practical or in the child's best interest to mainstream every disabled child in ordinary schools, the response by school authorities should nevertheless be *inclusive* rather than exclusive, and flexible rather than rigid in order to give every child the best life chances.

Equity in early childhood development and care.

Kindergartens and *crèches* charge for services; the amount depending on social and financial criteria. The exact criteria for payments can vary from entity to entity, but a basic monthly fee of 60 DM is charged in RS, and similar fees in the Federation. In general, children of veterans are subsidised according to parental disability and those in need, including single mothers. There is a waiting list for most kindergartens. Access to early childhood services is concentrated in large municipalities. There are few kindergartens or *crèches* in rural areas, and little is known about the need. Mobile kindergartens might be a solution for children on isolated farms.

Finance Issues

Education expenditure on average represents about 33% of public spending; however, there are variations of 200-300% among administrative units in real expenditures. FBiH tends to spend much more than RS. Salaries account for up to 90% of the budget, with spending on materials (including textbooks) often as low as 1-2%.

Financial competence has been transferred from the State (BiH) level to the Entities, and in the Federation to the cantons. However, canton funding is often insufficient to cover various social services, including education. During the war, financing of education was provided from Sarajevo and from Mostar. This resulted in two separate systems with different financial norms; these inequities are still evident in BiH today (see Table 2).

Funds are allocated to schools on the basis of the number of classes – one teacher can be employed for every 28 students enrolled. Schools are entitled to raise their own funds through commercial activities.

There is also a serious imbalance between capital and recurrent expenditure. In 1998 in Una-Sana, for example, 92% was spent on wages and salaries and only 2.1% on capital expenditure (0% on new construction); even in heavy reconstruction areas like Sarajevo, the balance was 74.6% to 10.1%. International donors have financed nearly all the capital investment in education since the end of the war, but these contributions are not shown in cantons' plans and are clearly not sustainable. School mapping needs to be undertaken to establish the basis for a systematic capital renewal programme, and to show where new schools need to be constructed in areas with a large population growth. In RS many schools are in poor physical condition, and capital investment there is low.

Table 2. **Enrolments, budget allocations and unit spend**
(Ranking of cantons by index of primary unit spending; column 5)

Canton	PRIMARY					SECONDARY				
	Canton number	PS student numbers	PS budgt DM000s	Unit spend DM/studt	Index ¹	SS student numbers	SS budget DM000s	Unit spend DM/studt	Index*	P/S ratio ²
Gorazde Drina	5	3 277	1 613	492	100	1 333	777	583	100	0.84
Tuzla Drina	3	68 239	45 056	660	134	25 193	19 600	778	134	0.85
Zenica Doboij	4	53 901	37 535	696	142	18 988	17 632	929	160	0.75
Central Bosnia	6	31 327	22 000	702	143	10 120	11 000	1 087	187	0.65
Una-Sana	1	36 408	26 905	739	150	11 734	12 570	1 071	184	0.69
Sarajevo	9	43 663	34 000	779	158	20 950	26 000	1 241	214	0.63
"Herzeg. Bosna"	10	7 251	6 503	897	182	2 484	3 307	1 331	229	0.67
Neretva	7	24 784	22 727	917	186	10 023	13 128	1 310	225	0.70
Posavina	2	3 942	4 444	1 127	229	1 204	1 834	1 523	262	0.74
W Herzegovina	8	9 885	11 757	1 189	242	3 107	4 765	1 534	264	0.78
<i>Federation</i>		282 677	212 540	752	153	105 136	110 613	1 052	181	0.71
<i>Republika Srpska</i>		128 412	66 755	520	106	55 893	26 889	481	83	1.08

1. Index of unit costs where canton 5 unit costs = 100.

2. Ratio of primary unit spending to secondary unit spending.

Sources: Student number (1998 enrolments) collected for *Council of Europe/WB report, op. cit.*, 1999., p. 52. Canton Budget allocations for 1999 collected by Federal Ministry of Education, RS budget allocations for 1999.

Careful study has been made of education finance issues in BiH (see references); only the main issues are reflected here. (1) The system does not address inequalities of needs or resources; (2) there is no

common pattern of tax revenue transfers from State to local government level; (3) expenditure per primary and secondary student varies significantly across BiH; (4) pupil: teacher ratios are generous, resulting in a high salary bill and low salaries; (5) the very low levels of capital investment are not sustainable without serious damage to the infrastructure.

Curriculum: Intended, Delivered and Achieved

Standards and curriculum

As the designing and implementing of the curriculum is the strict prerogative of the Federal cantons and the Republica Srpska, it is difficult to speak about ‘curriculum’ or ‘standards’ in the BiH context – no generalisations can be made.

However, under the World Bank’s new education project, a ‘Standards and Assessment Agency’ (SAA) is being created. This Agency will serve all of BiH, and is governed by a nine-member Board consisting of three Serb, three Croat and three Bosniak members, with non-voting observers from the European Commission, the World Bank, and the international assessment community. The idea behind the creation of the SAA was that while in the present BiH situation it is neither possible nor politically acceptable to aim for ‘a unified curriculum’, it is possible, acceptable, and educationally useful to aim for shared *standards*, especially in terms of student outcomes.

Quality of the curriculum

Curriculum, teacher training, assessment and examination as well as central and local governance of educational institutions should be addressed together in an integrated way, not separately. The quality and functioning of each of these components depend upon – and influence – the quality and functioning of the others.¹⁷ The quality of the curriculum is affected by a too narrow (quantitative) and technical view of what “curriculum” means, as well as by political considerations. These issues are highlighted below under “Issues and barriers”.

Current status of curriculum design and implementation¹⁸

Since the end of communist rule, there have been three periods of curriculum renewal: 1990-1992, when curricula were ‘nationalised’ by the three main ethnic groups; 1992 until the end of the war in 1995, when the three curricula began to diverge; and the post-war period, during which three separate curricula were consolidated.

Three typical features characterise all three curricula. First, each one is national in the sense that it focuses on the language, culture and history of its own ethnic group. In the Serbian group, the Cyrillic

17. “Curriculum” as discussed here includes the principles, underlying educational philosophy, goals and content of the instructional programme, as well as the written and other materials needed to support this instruction. It also includes the testing and evaluation regimen used for assessment and evaluation of the attainment of curricular objectives.

18. Mostly qualitative assessment is given here, in the absence of sound quantitative data (see *Support in OECD Thematic Review of Educational Policy in South-Eastern Europe*, Preliminary Report, Centre For Educational Policy Studies, Ljubljana, September, 2000).

alphabet is used whereas the others use Roman alphabets. Second, the curricula are overloaded in terms of information and content that are to be taught in schools to pupils. This is an issue especially in lower grades of primary school, where some of the mathematics, for example, is so demanding that it poses difficulties to teachers as well. Furthermore, there is a dominance of information and acquisition of knowledge over skills and development of personality. Third, all three curricula are fragmented, with little or no connection to pupils' real lives.

After *Dayton*, curriculum policy decision making and implementation procedures have been transferred to the two Entities (Federation/cantons and RS) with resulting fragmentation and 'de-concentration' of the curriculum in terms of policies and classroom practices. Until recently, attempts by the Federal Ministry of Education (FMOE) to exercise a co-ordinating function by bringing cantons together to discuss curriculum reform or develop common programmes and textbooks have been generally unsuccessful outside the Bosniak majority cantons. As a result, after *Dayton*, three different curricula are being implemented in the State of BiH: a Bosniak curriculum – the Federal core, see below – in the 5 Bosniak majority cantons, a Croatian curriculum in the 3 Croatian majority cantons, a 'mixed' curriculum in the 2 'mixed' cantons. The RS has its own curriculum, mostly that of Serbia itself.

The core curriculum

After some false starts, the FMOE in 1998 produced a revised *core curriculum* for the Federation. It replaces the curriculum that had been in place for the previous 10 years. In principle, the 10 cantons of the Federation of BiH are expected to implement 'Federal core curricula' in primary (grades 1 to 8), gymnasium/secondary (grades 9 to 12) and secondary VET education. But implementation has so far been very difficult, although there are signs of a move towards more coherence. In reality, the core curriculum is implemented mostly – if not exclusively – in the Bosniak majority cantons. Accordingly, the current stage of the implementation is presented in the following Table (estimates only):

Table 3. Status of the curriculum
Percentage

Implementation Issue	Primary	Secondary	VET
Adoption and implementation of the new curriculum	60	60	60
Coverage and dissemination of the new curriculum	60	50	50
Teachers trained in the new curriculum	70	70	70
Availability and use of new instructional materials	60	50	50

Source: CEPS, Ljubljana, September 2000.

The curriculum design process

Based on the new *core curriculum* issued by the FMOE – the 'curriculum framework' – the actual curricula for the Bosniak cantons in the Federation are being developed in the Pedagogical Institutes (PI). These function in every canton alongside or within the canton's MoE.¹⁹ The same type of PIs develop the

19. In the case of mixed Cantons there are two acting PIs.

curriculum for Croatian cantons and for RS based on curricula from Croatia and Serbia. In terms of institutional structures, in both Federation and RS subject-specific working groups produce draft curricula that are then submitted for approval to the MoEs. The members (5 to 10) are mostly academics or subject specialists that work in the PI and not professional curriculum developers. Co-operation and cross-disciplinary co-ordination are rare. This may explain to some extent the emphasis on content in the revised core curriculum, as well as the lack of coherence across different subjects.

The components of the curriculum

In September 2000, the Ministers of Education in the three systems, Bosniak, Croat, and Serb have signed an agreement accepting the 70%-30% allocation in the framework of the core curriculum, whereby a 70% compulsory core is complemented by a 30% locally (generally canton) determined component. This change is meant to allow for students' individual abilities or interests, to cater for more able students or to accommodate to local needs or interests. This agreement has been signed but not yet implemented, as textbooks must be printed which incorporate "tolerance, mutual recognition and more sensitivity."

In principle, the stipulated '70/30%' division of curriculum allocation should bring more freedom of choice to schools, and increase curriculum planning in municipalities and in schools. However, at the moment this '70/30%' division is still artificial and poorly implemented in practice. First, it is not clear what these percentages mean. Are they content measures, time quantities or quantified objectives? Second, real local influence is almost totally missing. The only thing left for teachers to decide are the methodological arrangements in the classroom – but even here, the overloaded content and the knowledge-based nature of learning objectives determine the methods of teaching altogether. In addition, there is little focus on pedagogy in the curriculum and the concept of integration of what is taught with how it is taught is almost completely absent.

The revised *curriculum document* offers a short introduction concerning the role of education as well as some objectives of the system as a whole. The introduction is followed by a set of *syllabi* developed for every subject according to the grade and the educational level under consideration (primary and secondary). These syllabi are heavily subject-based; they are in fact more like a 'written curriculum' as they exclusively comprise lists of content items. The curriculum does not offer any kind of specification on how students and teachers will work together in a classroom setting; in fact 'curriculum' is generally perceived as a '*document*' that regulates the system, and not as the real teaching and learning process that happens in or outside the school.

The list of subjects

The idea of a common core curriculum for the Federation is undoubtedly a step forward. However, there is no real change compared to the pre-war situation. The *list of subjects* is broadly similar in the Entities and cantons. For instance, in primary education, the number of subjects increases progressively from grade 1 (10 subjects) to grade 8 with roughly 15 subjects (mathematics, mother tongue, foreign languages, humanistic sciences and natural sciences, plus arts and physical education). The curriculum in general secondary (gymnasium) – with about 16 subjects – requires mother tongue, two foreign languages and Latin, and the natural science requirement of biology, chemistry and physics, as well as mathematics. Theoretical courses in philosophy, sociology, logic, history and geography complete the list, along with art, music and physical education. Except for some forms of civic/social education, no new subjects have appeared in the curriculum of primary and secondary education.

Curriculum content

As for the underlying philosophy and content of the curriculum, the syllabi are roughly the same as just before the war, except the so-called ‘national’ subjects (mother tongue, history, social subjects, arts) that have been revised to reflect and foster national identity. In fact, the most visible difference in terms of subject titles between the different curricula consists in the names of the mother tongues(s), listed as ‘Bosnian’, ‘Croatian’, and ‘Serbian’. In Croat-majority cantons and municipalities, the content of the curriculum is basically the same as that of the education system in the Republic of Croatia. In the RS, the content is clearly determined by that of Serbian education. As far as Bosniaks are concerned, their curriculum reflects to a great extent the pre-*Dayton* cultural and historical ideal of that community. Even so, these curricula have mainly been updated, not really renewed.

Teachers, students, and parents all agree that the curricula remain overloaded, encyclopaedic and mostly knowledge-based. This has a critical effect on teaching and learning, the depth of understanding and the development of higher order skills, as well as the preparation of students for later life.

Teaching and quality assurance

External supervision of the quality in ‘the delivered curriculum’ is the responsibility of the cantonal MoEs, the staff of the PIs or the inspectors. Internal quality supervision is generally done by school principals and pedagogues in the Federation, and by a supervisor or pedagogues in the RS. However, quality control is deeply affected by the resource constraints.

In all three sub-systems, there are a few “experimental schools” mostly set up by local or international NGOs. For example, the ‘Step-by-Step’ curriculum – which encourages interactive learning and more parental involvement – is used both in the Federation and in the RS, but only in 6 or so schools. As a result, except in such isolated cases, the didactic approach in the classroom is generally teacher-centred and out-of-date; most of the schools use the traditional curricula taught in a rigid manner, emphasising memorisation and factual knowledge. Lecturing is still the most frequent method even in Primary education. This results in students being passive learners instead of engaged as active participants in the learning process. As teachers did not have any exposure to recent foreign experiences many of them are fully convinced that they are meeting all European standards without being able to define those standards. High quality school-based in-service training could develop a more questioning and reflective attitude.

Textbooks provision and teaching aids

Similar issues can be raised about textbooks. For the non-national subjects, there is no evidence that textbooks published by the FMoE are unacceptable to cantons. As for the ‘national’ subjects, textbooks from Croatia, Serbia and the Federation are used in parallel; even if – according to a regulation issued by the FMoE – only instructional materials approved by the Federal commission on textbooks can be used in the classrooms. The Office of the High Representative (OHR), in co-operation with the Council of Europe has recently taken direct action to remove inflammatory content from textbooks, and will continue to monitor the process. According to previous reports,²⁰ teachers, students and parents believe that in the future debate should shift from ‘ethnic disputes’ to issues like the quality and design of the

20. See *Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Governance, Finance, Administration*. Report prepared on behalf of the World Bank by a Project Team of the Council of Europe Legislative Reform Programme in Higher Education and Research, Strasbourg, 1999.

textbooks, their authorship (mostly ‘academic’ at the moment), and to the shortage of supplementary instructional materials.

Curriculum reform

There is no formal institutional structure or mechanism that can develop and implement a set of common curriculum outcomes and learning standards at the level of the State of BiH. These outcomes and standards would ensure the conceptual coherence of the education system and overcome local differences – which are normal – among Entities and cantons. In terms of institutional structures, as many previous reports have already mentioned,²¹ Pedagogical Institutes are not able to carry out curriculum reform. They are not adequately staffed to design, pilot, implement and review curricula. On the contrary, they contribute to the fragmentation of the system and the persistence of a heavily subject-based approach to curriculum development and implementation.

One hopeful development has been an agreement between the Entities following a meeting organised by EC-TAER in June 2001. The Ministers of Education of the two Entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina *i.e.* the Federal Minister of Education, Science, Culture & Sports and the Minister of Education of the Republika Srpska, signed this agreement, in the presence of representatives of the International Community, on the modalities and time frame for the elaboration and implementation of a Shared Strategy for the Modernisation of Primary and General Secondary Education in BiH.

This agreed strategy aims to bring General Education in BiH onto a par with the standards of General Education which have developed elsewhere in Europe; it builds upon the general principles of the May 2000 agreement, including the values of multi-cultural education, and:

- The elaboration of a strategy at a country wide level which is based upon the concept paper prepared by the EC-TAER and entitled: “*Towards a Sector Development Programme in BiH General Education - Proposal for the elaboration of a Shared Strategy for a Modernisation of Primary and General Secondary Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina*”.
- The establishment, by September 2001, of the Modernisation Strategy Supervisory Board, its Sub-Committees and Working Groups, necessary to elaborate the strategy.
- The granting of a mandate to the Supervisory Board and its Sub-Committees and Working Groups, appropriate for them to carry out their work; these bodies being accountable to the Entity Ministries of Education.
- The possibility of incorporation in the strategy of a variety of methods and approaches, developed within other educational programmes and projects in BiH.
- The implementation of parts of the shared strategy on an experimental basis in the school year 2001-2002.
- The full implementation of all the elements of the shared strategy, directly after the preparatory phase has been terminated, anticipated to be September 2002.

21. See *Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, op. cit.*

- The co-ordination of International Partner Contributions, assisted by the EC-TAER project, thus ensuring local ownership in the development of a General Education Sector Programme in BiH.

Assessment and examinations

In the old system, no legal or institutional framework for assessment and examinations existed. There was no evaluation and assessment function at Ministry level; all was devolved to schools. These used to send their results to the Pedagogical Institutes, which in turn would prepare an overview for the municipal education authorities. All these records, however, were based on oral assessment of individual students, with little differentiation between levels of achievement. The education component of a recent project financed from a World Bank credit includes the establishment of a Standards and Assessment Agency (SAA) staffed by trained specialists to measure and monitor the quality of education outcomes. The SAA will conduct sample based BiH-wide assessments of educational performance in some key domains. Another component of this project is the establishment of an Educational Management Information System.

Every faculty of the university organises its own entrance exams. These usually test rather basic and factual knowledge, and do not attempt to assess the aptitude of students to follow an academic programme.

Issues and barriers related to curriculum, standards and assessment

- *The emphasis is on teaching at the expense of learning.* In other words, the curriculum describes what teachers must and should do in classrooms, rather than illustrating and articulating what pupils should know and be able to do after teaching and learning have taken place. The criterion for ‘success’ in schools seems to be the degree to which the externally determined curriculum has been covered and completed. This has also led to more general misconception of quality of education – a ‘good school’ is mostly judged by quantitative measures. The more it teaches, the better the school.
- *The view of ‘curriculum’ is technical and narrow.* In most cases, teachers and experts believe that curriculum equals study programmes, subject lists and time allocations per grade and school type. Traditionally, they also believe that curriculum should be mandated by higher authorities, and that their role is to make sure that everything will be covered. Indeed the word ‘curriculum’ is often translated as ‘*programma*’. This confusion is harmful, because as the education policy is moving towards greater autonomy and decentralised educational planning, teachers need to take responsibility for curriculum, too.
- *Quality is understood in terms of quantitative (input) measures rather than in terms of outcomes.* This narrow view of quality is a major obstacle to change in teaching, learning, and assessment in particular. The specification of learning outcomes should have equal importance with any description of what, when and how teachers should teach.
- *In BiH, the main function of the curriculum (especially in history and mother tongue) is political – not the improvement of education quality.* For reasons beyond this analysis, the curriculum is used mainly to support nationalist issues and consolidate the balance of power. The curriculum should more clearly support the urgent need to build tolerance, equality, promote human rights and peace across the ethnic diversity of the population.

- *Curriculum development is centralised* and thus not able to respond to changing social needs. This fixed, regulatory view of curriculum makes the whole school system rigid and top-down. The ‘30%’ local component of the curriculum should now be actively used by teachers and principals to make learning more meaningful for pupils.
- *Congestion and overload.* The curricula show many separate subjects: 14 at the end of primary education and 16 at secondary. The content of these subjects is fact-ridden. Both have a negative effect on teaching methods, the depth of knowledge and understanding, and preparation for work or further education.
- *Didactic pedagogy.* Considerable focus is needed on how the curriculum at each year level should be taught. The outcome and the actual processes to achieve this should be clear to all teachers, moving them away from simple delivery of factual knowledge.
- *The curriculum neglects real life needs.* These are particularly relevant for students in BiH, but consistently have been avoided by recent curriculum work. Students still are not helped to acquire:
 - critical and creative thinking skills,
 - employability and functional skills,
 - learning and basic study skills, the ability to continue to learn new skills throughout life;
 - values and social skills that will enable them to participate fully in a society whose composition, structure, values, beliefs and needs are constantly changing.
- *A curriculum for all and everyone.*²² The present educational systems in SEE countries – BiH included – often place excessive curricular emphasis on selectivity and the performance of the best students (*e.g.* the ‘obsession’ with Olympiads) and may not always provide adequate attention to the learning needs of the disadvantaged pupils (by social strata, gender, ethnicity, or location). The result is that education, despite its substantial accomplishments in promoting learning achievement among the best students, can fail to fulfil its roles as a source of equity among social groups and for the development of civil society.
- *Relevance to the majority of students.* There is still a tendency to define upper-secondary curricula in terms of the expectations of higher education. In reality, however, these expectations are relevant only to a small proportion of students. Shifting the emphasis from content-based to competence-based teaching and learning is essential at this level.
- *The pursuit of ‘European standards’.* It is widely said in BiH that the ultimate goal (in curriculum, teacher training, institutional development etc.) should be to implement or apply ‘European standards’. Very rarely, however, was there some understanding of what these standards might represent.
- *The need to introduce psycho-social programmes in the curriculum.* The curriculum needs to respond to the severe trauma suffered by most of the population (many of them children) during the war. The aim would be to acknowledge and heal the wounds of the past, to

22. These two paragraphs were taken from *The OECD Thematic Review of Education Policy in South Eastern Europe: A Proposed Outline for Authors of Country Chapters* (Douglas M. Windham).

overcome ethnic barriers insofar as possible, and to build a basis for preventing future clashes.

- *Lack of procedures and data for monitoring and comparing the outcomes of education; lack of impact of assessment data on educational policy.* At the moment there is no system of monitoring outcomes on a BiH-wide level, nor are there clear standards to serve as the basis for comparisons, nor is it clear on all levels why such comparisons would be useful. Individual observations from internationals indicate that the achieved level of education is rather low.
- *Inefficiency of the assessment and examination procedures.* Teachers have to set their own tests, using mostly oral testing. There is no professional support, and no standardisation to enable them to compare their outcomes with those of other teachers. The university entrance exams do not add anything useful to information that can also be obtained from professional school leaving exams; ‘double exams’ of this kind are inefficient, wasteful and a burden on students.

Education Personnel

Teachers

Teachers in BiH work in difficult conditions. After the four-year war the education system had not totally collapsed, but had suffered severe damage both materially and spiritually. The war reduced the number of teaching staff and demolished many schools; however, the education system remained in function during the war, despite fear and lack of security. It is largely due to this commitment and dedication that most students continued to have a place to study and meet each other. In this respect, teachers were windows of hope for many pupils and their parents during the crisis.

The number of full-time teaching staff increased after 1995 in the BiH Federation, but not in RS. This may be partly due to the return of refugees to the BiH after the *Dayton* agreement, and to the re-opening of damaged schools. Table 4 illustrates the development of numbers of teachers in different levels of education system in the Federation and in RS after the war.

Table 4. **No. of full-time equivalent teachers between 1995 – 1999**

	1995		1996		1997		1998		1999	
	Fed	RS	Fed	RS	Fed	RS	Fed	RS	Fed	RS
Preschool	323	NA	443	NA	527	430	660	462	584	772
Primary	6985	NA	10 198	6 442	10 841	6 842	14 100	6 956	13 461	7 059
Secondary	4302	3084	5 909	2 870	6 122	2 980	6 904	3 120	8 377	3 400
Higher	1741	1066	2 041	1 423	2 171	1 571	2 244	1 712	3 248	1 250

Source: CEPS, Ljubljana, 2000.

The legacy of former socialist tradition and philosophy of education narrows teachers’ perspective on pedagogy in general, and on teaching and learning in particular. Most teachers today in BiH have themselves experienced learning as ‘listening’ and teaching as ‘talking by teachers’. As a

consequence, the dominant conception of knowledge among teachers is static and mechanistic; the core process is absorbing information. During the past decade, there have rarely been opportunities for teachers to learn about new ideas of teaching, and it is understandable that the majority still hold on to traditional notions of schooling and behave accordingly in their classrooms.

International donors and co-operating partners have invested large sums to reconstruct schools and equip classrooms for better quality teaching and learning. There have also been considerable efforts to install new learner-centred practices in schools through international agencies such as the Soros Foundation and UNICEF. Unfortunately, these have not been enough to change the situation; moreover, teachers who have not taken part in these initiatives may feel guilt, envy or frustration because the same support is not within their reach. Thus, well-meant initiatives may occasionally turn out to be confusing and counter-productive.

The lack of clarity and coherence in the state level education development is one of the main barriers in aligning the educational practices in BiH with respective features of international education community. The working climate and professional environment of teachers remains unstable due to the dominance of political interests. Many teachers seem tired of political arguments about all possible questions in education, instead of more professional discussions. For example, some teachers would like to see a more positive move toward a common core of education between the Federation of BiH and the RS, especially at the level of curriculum, but this remains politically difficult.

Costs of war are normally financed by reducing expenditures in civil sectors, most commonly education and social security. That has been true in BiH, too, especially with regard to public sector salaries. The salary issue is at the top of the agenda of any post-conflict state, and of developing countries as well. Table 5 shows the trend of teachers' salary development since the break-up of SFRY.

Table 5. Average pay rates of teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina (in Deutsche Mark)

Status	1990	1994	1996	1997	2000
Full professor (university)	1 750	120	630	600 – 730	750 (?)
Lecturer (university)	1 300	100	450	580 - 690	?
Secondary school teacher	1 000	90	280 - 400	350 - 370	400 - 550
Primary school teacher	750	76	220 - 340	280 - 315	380 - 500

Source: Dizdar, S. 1998. A development and perspectives of teacher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The average salary of teachers in the Federation is higher than in the RS (500 DM/month vs. 400DM/month). In the Federation, salaries are paid from the cantonal budgets, while in RS they come directly from the RS Ministry of Finance. During the time of the visit of the OECD team there were strikes in RS over a delayed raise of teachers' salaries. Teachers signed an agreement in late 1999 that promised an increase of 60 to 80 DM per month, but this did not materialise.

The working conditions of teachers vary considerably. There is, first of all, disparity between urban and rural schools and teachers. Reconstruction of the education system has been concentrated on

Sarajevo. Differentials in pay between experienced and new teachers are small. In the RS, for example, teachers receive an annual increase of a few DM regardless of their performance in school. On the other hand, there is no mechanism to compensate teacher in-service development through salary incentives. Thus teachers who have qualifications or competencies in foreign languages such as English or French, or in information technology, easily find jobs that pay several times what they could earn in schools. Young and educated people who were potential teachers in secondary schools and universities have left the country, hoping for a better future elsewhere. Therefore the teaching force is ageing, and few qualified teachers are available to replace those who retire.

Rural schools are still in very poor condition and without basic equipment for teaching and learning. Similarly, most teachers seek to work in schools in towns and cities where other services are also within their reach, and possibilities for career promotion are better. Secondly, it is easy to find so-called experimental schools in both entities where teachers have better resources to renew their teaching than in regular schools.

One clear observation from visiting schools in BiH is that teachers have little influence on classroom life. They receive curriculum as from 'above' (cantonal or Federal ministry of education, or the Pedagogical Institute). The content of teaching is determined by the curriculum and available teaching materials. The orientation to teaching is therefore based on delivery of information as effectively as possible. From the perspective of teachers, education is driven by control and sanctions, rather than by a desire to give teachers the freedom to improve quality in education.

Inspection, evaluation and support for teachers

Teachers in both Entities are inspected by the Pedagogical Institutes. In principle, all teachers in all schools should be under continuous supervision, but given the large number of teachers and the small inspectorates this is not possible. In practice, teachers are required to spend two hours each week filling in their teaching plan for the following week. They also must have a written and structured plan for each lesson they teach. When possible, inspectors visit schools and inspect these plans and observe the lessons. This procedure is a burden for teachers, and is unlikely to improve the quality of teaching; indeed, it may discourage teachers from trying anything new.

The morale of teachers is low, both in the Federation and in the RS, not only because of low salaries but also, in many cases, those salaries are reduced or not paid at all. Five years after the war, during which most teachers taught in very difficult circumstances, they need support and positive incentives both to help them work more effectively and to keep them in the profession. But they also need to be evaluated properly to ensure the quality of their teaching.

In the RS, each teacher in the primary schools and *gymnasia* is evaluated by the principal, who visits the teacher's class on a pre-announced day. This visit, and visits by the Pedagogical Institute, determine a teacher's professional status; the written evaluations are not discussed with the teacher.

In 1999 a new law mandated that teachers should receive monetary rewards for excellence. First, the teacher may receive the title of Mentor with a 5% pay increase; there are two additional levels, each with an increase in pay. Mentors are nominated by principals who consult with other staff before making the nomination to the Minister of Education for approval. Though the new law is not yet in effect in all *gymnasia*, some teachers have been nominated for the current year.

In the Federation, evaluation of teachers is complicated by the layers of governance. The emphasis has been on proper teacher certification, but not on creating incentives, either monetary or non-monetary, to reward good teaching.

Throughout BiH, teachers receive few incentives in the form of in-service training. Partly due to post-war inertia, and partly through lack of funds, there is no coherent, reform-based strategy for improving teacher performance through evaluation linked with needs analysis and targeted in-service training.

Finally, throughout BiH, the horrors of war still live in the memories of young and old. Teachers – like other people – have to live with these experiences and cope with them as best they can. Children and youngsters also bring their traumas to school. Teachers now find they are not only teaching, but also counselling traumatised children and families. Little has been done so far to help teachers cope with this dual role. Although some teachers seem to deny the problem, many see it as an alarming challenge. Psychological and practical support are urgently needed.

Pre-service teacher training

There is high demand for places on pre-service teacher training courses; applications exceed capacity by about 50%. This is mostly because more than 50% of graduate teachers find employment, which compares well with other areas of study. At the same time, however, many unqualified teachers are still working in the system; in some areas, up to 25% of teachers are not trained for the grades they teach.²³

Prior to 1992, the BiH Ministry of Education had produced a series of recommendations to modernise the education system, including the teaching force. According to the MoE's publication, "A development of perspectives of teacher education in Bosnia Herzegovina" (1998), gradual reforms were to be introduced. Many pilot teacher training programmes supported by donors have helped to bring in new ideas and techniques. However, by 2001, the renewal of teacher training in BiH still has not been addressed with sufficient force. There is expertise available to facilitate change, but progress is slow.

Initial teacher training takes place in many institutions; in FBiH, for example, there are 8 colleges, 5 pedagogical academies, and 56 different departments across 5 universities that provide teacher training. The system is not harmonised in terms of curriculum and objectives of training. There are secondary teacher training schools in Sarajevo, Mostar East, Tuzla, Zeneica and Travnik that prepare teachers for grades 1-4 of primary school (2-year programmes). Secondary art and music schools also provide their graduates of the 4-year programmes with licences to teach. Some educators argue that this non-academic part of teacher education should be transferred to the universities in order to put more pedagogical emphasis on the professional development of teachers.

Pedagogical academies train teachers on 2-year courses and four-year programmes. Depending on the programme teachers are qualified to teach in primary school (grades 1-4), and in pre-school. If they successfully complete specific subject courses they are also entitled to teach grades 5-8.

University-level pre-service training of teachers is subject-oriented and covers the disciplines taught in secondary schools. According to our observations teacher training curricula are still dominated by theoretical subject knowledge, and pedagogical aspects have a weaker role. Furthermore, teaching practice in real classrooms is rare and not integrated into training programmes.

Initial steps are being taken to change the system. Recently, in order to upgrade training, the two-year qualification has been abolished, and the minimum is now four years. Interaction between schools and training institutions has improved, with limited *practicum* period in kindergartens. Questions remain, in

23. 'Labour Market-Vocational Education and Training Assessment: Bosnia and Herzegovina', ETF, October 2000, p. 21.

particular with regard to the role of professional high school graduates on two-year courses, now left largely without a role. Pre-school teachers should be highly qualified, but there is also room for a variety of professionals to interact with young children and improved qualifications and incentives for nursery nurses (trained by Ministry of Health), and teachers' aides are needed.

Most importantly, a misleading distinction is still being made between teaching pre-school and primary levels when, at the same time, transitional classes are being put in place which require teachers to address the needs of those in the primary level as well as younger children. With the incorporation of children of six into regular primary schools, the need for training in early childhood concepts and a broader role for elementary teachers is even more urgent.

Although there is much discussion of 'child-centred learning', this concept is not practised throughout the system. There is no standardisation of pre-service training requirements across Entities or even within Entities, and no clear consensus on what should be taught.

In-service teacher training

In-service training of teachers is not considered part of the overall professional development of the teaching profession. Pedagogical Institutes arrange seminars and workshops for teachers, but international agencies like UNICEF and numerous NGOs are still the most common providers of in-service training in BiH. These seminars are to a large extent organised without an analysis of the needs of schools and teachers. Training methods are based on telling and lecturing, not on active participation and experiential learning. School-based development and training of teachers is practically non-existent. Some local education authorities, such as those of Banja Luka, reported that they have reserved up to 15 days per annum for teachers to attend in-service training seminars. In practice, however, few teachers are able to leave their school for longer than one day at a time.

Issues and barriers – teachers

- *Unclear vision and missing strategies of teacher education and training.* In complex realities it is difficult to set definite goals, but strategic thinking and planning are indispensable tools for systemic reform. Without clear vision of, and strategy for, reform-related teacher training in BiH, reforms will be seriously impeded.
- *Teachers only implement the plans and regulations* that are set 'top-down' by authorities outside their school. Although decentralisation is proceeding, a teacher's role remains one of passive implementation without ownership or initiative. Regulation of the curriculum is still extensive.
- *Teacher in-service training is mostly delivered in seminars* and school-based staff development is minimal around the country. Data collected by the review team show that in-service training means 'sitting in seminars and meetings' that are only remotely connected to classroom pedagogy or school management.
- *The education system still relies heavily on the moral commitment of its teachers.* Despite difficult socio-economic circumstances, teachers have kept coming to school to do their job. It is, however, unrealistic to expect them to continue indefinitely without adequate reward or better career prospects.

- *The psycho-social consequences of the war and its aftermath are not sufficiently recognised in schools in order to help cope with stress, trauma and grief. Few people in BiH are unaffected by the conflicts of the 1990s. Students bring with them their experiences, fears and hopes just as their teachers do; and this will continue to affect teaching and learning unless teachers are helped to deal with these problems. Most, if not all, teachers lack the proper tools and conceptual knowledge of helping children feel safe, handle their memories and emotions, and work through traumatic experiences. Moreover, there is a shortage of special education teachers who can identify other special needs, and find ways to deal with them as part of mainstream teaching and learning.*

Early Childhood Education

Description of the system and stages of education reform

Pre-conflict

In SFRY, health services provided pre-and postnatal care for mothers and infants resulting in a low infant and maternal mortality rate. However, kindergarten and *crèche* care were limited, and parental knowledge about child development was weak. About 8% of the 3-6 year old population attended kindergarten in Sarajevo, and the percentage of children in the country as a whole amounted to only 4%.²⁴ These services were funded by the Ministry of Social Welfare and were not seen as part of the education service, but rather as child care facilities for working parents.

Health monitoring in the kindergartens was provided by the Ministry of Health. Training for kindergarten staff was provided by a two-year degree offered by the Pedagogical Institutes, and the Medical High Schools. These institutes were also responsible for curriculum development, in-service training, and monitoring and inspection of pre-school facilities. Teachers for the early grades of school are trained in Pedagogical Academies which are part of university faculties. Prior to the war, curriculum was set at the central level. Children with disabilities were screened and sent to institutions for the disabled. There was no concept of mainstreaming for the severely disabled and conditions were in general extremely poor.

The War Years

During the war, kindergartens were closed and facilities used for other purposes (some are still used as barracks, or to house refugee families). Kindergartens were operated in houses, like other school classes. Teachers were not paid. The NGO *Save the Children* was instrumental in organising 3-hour playgroup programmes from 1993, and by August 1996 had opened 626 community-based programmes. This was a low-cost community-based model using standardised packages for infrastructure support. It achieved rapid coverage, with support, including a stipend for the teacher, for nine months. Data on the provision of early childhood services both pre- and post-war are unreliable, but it is certain that access and quality of services were poor.

24. Judith L. Evans, *Early Childhood Programmes in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH)*, pg 5., Report prepared for UNICEF Bosnia, October 1996.

Educational reforms introduced in 1989 supported a child-centred approach, encouraging intellectual, social and emotional aspects of child development. Early childhood education was to run from year 1 through the first year of primary school. Unfortunately, these reforms were never implemented. In addition, in 1990, a law was drafted to allow organisations and private individuals to open private day care centres. In 1994 a new law was drafted to broaden the concept of ECD programmes. Kindergartens were to be viewed as an integral part of the education cycle; programming should be integrated and holistic; learning was to be more child-centred and less teacher-directed. This law was to be implemented in 1996.

Post-war

With all good intentions, institutions for the disabled were re-invented, and the planned 9 years of basic education remained only a suggestion. Service coverage became extremely patchy. The number of children enrolled in early childhood programmes dropped to 6% of the age cohort in 1998, less than in the pre-war period.²⁵ The steepest decrease was in the cantons of Tuzla, Zenica, Sarajevo and Middle Bosnia. Responsibility for the institutions and for the pre-schools now rests with the FMoE, including the *crèche* system, and financial control is at the cantonal level.

Between 1995 and 1998 the number of pre-primary teachers in the Federation grew from 323 to 660. However, there are disparities in numbers between BiH and the RS. No figures are available for public budget allocations for pre-primary schools. At pre-primary level, in 1998, the Federation average was 1 689 KM per student, far higher than that of primary school, reflecting the higher staffing ratios needed for small children and perhaps inefficiencies within the system. The pre-primary Federation average in 1998 was 13:1, down from 21:1 in 1996, perhaps reflecting not only overstaffing but the decline in the birth rate.

In the immediate post-war period, the provision of pre-school services was gradually re-introduced with the help of NGOs – *e.g.* Emilio Regio, Save the Children, and the Soros Foundation. At present, the Step-by-Step programme funded by the Soros Foundation seems to have been adopted in the majority of state-supported kindergartens, and has not only provided help with physical refurbishing, but also with training and institutional management. The FMoE provides salaries for teachers and staff, but local cantons provide the remainder of the running costs, together with subsidies from the Soros Foundation. When these subsidies are removed, it is uncertain whether the FMoE can sustain the service.

Kindergartens are usually in separate facilities, not attached to a specific primary school catchment area. They contain a small *crèche* facility for children under the age of three. There are also specialised kindergartens, for example one in the school for the deaf in Banja Luka, where parents bring children from a long way for morning classes. There are both residential and day programmes. Coverage varies from area to area and from canton to canton. Attempts are made by donors to integrate children with disabilities into classrooms and schools and to allow all children to play together and families to meet, but public awareness and sensitivity on this issue remain low.

Availability of early childhood education services varies between entities and between cantons. For example, in the RS, the central government pays half the fees for some kindergartens, with pro-rata support for children who have priority in admission if they come from families of disabled war veterans. (The fees are reduced according to the category of parental disability.) In the canton of Sarajevo, pilot efforts are being made to add a 9th year to the education system, but this will happen in only a few schools.

25. In Albania, for example, 37% of children attend pre-schools, and in Macedonia about 20%; whereas in Kosovo only 2.8% of children do.

This first year of school would concentrate largely on developing social skills, with a syllabus concentrating on learning through play, socialisation, and preparation for formal learning.

At present there are few crèches, with infants and babies largely in the care of relatives. Kindergarten attendance is irregular, with parents using the system for free meals for their children and keeping them at home when convenient. In the former Yugoslavia, the existence of a wide range of state provided social welfare services led to a habit of utilising these services at the convenience of parents. Although the idea of fluctuating and appropriate involvement of social welfare and education agencies in family life is clearly useful, utilisation rates should be monitored to ensure that the services being provided are needed and appropriate for the children.

Clearly the nutritional supplement through kindergarten meals, and the health screenings received at early childhood establishments, are important factors in child attendance. Further analysis is needed of both the outcomes of these health screenings, which diagnose a very high rate of orthopaedic difficulties, and the availability and success of follow up medical services.

Issues and barriers in early childhood development

- *Kindergartens and crèches charge for services*, with the amounts being charged relative to social and financial criteria. The exact criteria for payments can vary, but a basic monthly fee of 60 DM is charged in RS, and similar fees in BiH. In general, the children of veterans are subsidised according to the extent of parental disability and need, including single mothers. There is a waiting list for most kindergartens. Access to early childhood services is concentrated in large municipalities. There are few kindergartens or *crèches* in rural areas, and little is known about the need. Mobile kindergartens, and kindergartens in private facilities, might be a solution for children in isolated areas.
- *Kindergarten coverage remains minimal* although improved methods are being introduced into those facilities which are open. Parents' financial difficulties seem largely responsible for the decline in kindergarten attendance, together with reduced birth rates since 1993.
- As noted above, the new Federal and cantonal curricula being developed in FBiH include *an initial year at age 6 to bring the years of obligatory schooling to 9 instead of 8*. This 'zero' year would build on play and active learning techniques to prepare children for school. In RS, the same extension is planned, to bring basic education into line with 'European norms'. But it is not clear whether the 'zero' year would cancel out Federal or cantonal interest in sponsoring other formal pre-school activities, or whether the classes would be held in primary schools forming a transition year from kindergarten to primary school. Nor are the services being targeted – in Sarajevo, schools designated to undertake the first year of this new service are being chosen on the grounds of the suitability of facilities.
- *Lack of knowledge and parental understanding* of parenting and child development. With many families facing break-up as a result of war trauma, children are often in need of strong social support. Although there is clearly a demand for early childhood pre-school programmes, the extent of this demand is not clear and will change.
- Given the severe budgetary constraints, *government cannot provide comprehensive kindergarten services for all children*. To maximise access, a combination of targeted government finance together with parental contributions should be put in place. In many countries, pre-school "play groups" are run by parent associations. In BiH, the legal status of

private schools should be clarified, and clear norms established for services to pre-primary children.

Vocational Education and Training

Experience in other transition economies suggests that growth is stimulated through improving resource allocation and maximising capacity. This ‘recipe’ appears simplistic in BiH, where productive capacity has been destroyed or is obsolete, the supply networks have broken down, markets have been lost, skills are inadequate, and institutional capacity is weak.²⁶ In BiH, the most urgent need is to define a long-term, integrated and systematic strategy for VET and labour market reform.

The labour market does not function in BiH. Labour demand is restricted to specific fields, and unemployment levels are several times higher than in EU countries, especially among young people and the poorly qualified. The country has no long term development plan that could help define policy and reforms. Labour market institutions are fragmented across the Entities, and there is no co-ordination between the needs of the country and VET.

Public Employment Services (PES) estimates that the total labour force supply exceeds official demand by 300 times. The supply of school graduates per annum is 7-10 times higher than the number of new job vacancies; the problem, therefore, is growing year by year, and many young people have never been able to find work after leaving school. The privatisation process will force some 300 large companies to restructure, putting at risk another 150 000 jobs. At the same time, skills shortages exist in sectors like public administration, telecommunications, IT, civil engineering (especially construction), and trade.

An unemployment tax is levied on incomes, amounting to 2% in the RS and 3% in FBiH, but these do not generate enough to support the large numbers of unemployed; only about 2% of registered unemployed benefit from active labour market policies including training. Roma are at particularly severe risk of unemployment.

Education attainment is the critical factor in employability: unqualified workers make up 40% of unemployed; craft school graduates 25%; and 4-year VET graduates just under 30%. The high drop-out levels (20% in compulsory school, 25% at post-compulsory secondary) are therefore particularly damaging. Moreover, more than 60% of unemployed are young people 15-29 years old, who should be contributing actively to the country’s recovery. Ethnic minorities (especially Roma) are also at severe risk.

Administration

Due to *Dayton*’s restrictions, it is difficult to develop a State-level, common approach or framework for VET across the country. The international community, for example through the Office of the High Representative (OHR), has set up a working body with political representation from the three Entities to work towards implementation of the May 2000 common agreement relating to history, language, alphabet use in the curriculum etc. A World Bank-financed Standards and Assessment Agency (SAA) – also with a tri-partite Board – is expected to improve the setting of BiH-wide standards in education.

26. ‘Labour Market-Vocational Education and Training Assessment’, *op. cit.*, pp. 2 *et seq.*

The legal framework, as has been mentioned above, is fragmented – there are at least 10 separate but similar laws governing secondary education (including VET) in FBiH, plus one in RS. There are no specific laws pertaining to VET, and no co-ordination across administrative units.

Secondary VET

A large percentage of basic school graduates (some 90%) continue into secondary, 80% into some form of vocational schooling and 20% into general secondary. About 60% of those who enter vocational secondary go to 4-year technical schools that give access to higher education subject to passing the Matura examination; the other 40% enter 3-year craft schools (school-leaving certificate but no Matura exam). According to BiH's National Observatory, there are currently 37 types of technical and related schools where students can be trained in 120 technical or craft professions in The Federation; in the RS, there are programmes in 15 fields of work areas with more than 100 educational profiles.²⁷ Assessment and certification are the responsibility of the cantonal authorities in the Federation, and of the Entity administration in RS.

Material conditions

Financing of VET is devolved to cantons in the Federation and to Entity level in RS (see Financial Issues, above). Schools are poorly equipped and many workshops and tools were destroyed or looted during the war. Capital investments and expenditures on materials are very low or non-existent. Fewer than half of VET schools have been refurbished since the end of the war. Alternative sources of revenue (such as from the private sector) are rare, and there is no effective strategy for mobilising them.

Links between vocational school, the local economy and labour market structures

These are, at present, very poor and in urgent need of improvement. Specifically, it is vital – in BiH circumstances – to integrate VET into a lifelong learning perspective, through new links and pathways among the initial VET system, post-secondary education, higher education and adult education and re-training. Of these, the education and re-training of adults should be priorities. The existing training school facilities and teachers, unused company training capacity, and incentives for employers to invest in VET and adult education could be brought into play far more effectively than they are at present.

In improving co-ordination and governance, it is important to build upon the EC-Phare VET programme and further develop the Green Paper. Examples of good practice, especially from neighbouring countries (*e.g.* Slovenia) exist and should be more actively sought and used.

Adult education

As in other SFRY countries, such pre-war institutions as the Workers University, the 13 centres operated by the Public Employment Service (PES) and the in-service training facilities of large companies have not been operating for a decade. There are now no adult education teachers or curricula, and no financial capacity to restore the system. Some management education is being offered through the Chamber of Commerce (transport, banking) and a private sector (languages, IT) is slowly developing.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

A study by ETF (2000) states that it is important to emphasise the specific need for adult education in BiH: “The recent war and economic collapse have created a number of well defined vulnerable groups each with its own difficulties in the labour market (as well as in daily life). These groups comprise demobilised soldiers, war widows, the disabled, internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees. Access to adult education is essential if these groups are to re-integrate themselves into the socio-economic future of BiH.”²⁸ The infrastructures, legal basis, and financing system for adult education have not been updated since the war, and are simply insufficient for the need. The experiences of other ex-Yugoslav countries that have already reformed their adult education systems could provide a useful starting point for BiH.

Reforms to date

Some revision of VET curricula has taken place, mostly through the EC-Phare VET programme. But most curricula are still outdated and out of line with trends in other countries. Some 130 different curricula and qualifications are offered in BiH, more than double the average in EU Member countries; this is expensive and inefficient, since many of these courses prepare students for jobs that no longer exist. Due to the collapse of large parts of the labour market, the development of social partner contributions to vocational education reforms is only just beginning.

The establishment (2000) of a joint, BiH-level Standards and Assessment Agency should help develop an integrated framework for curriculum, standards, assessment and certification at State level, which would greatly improve the ability of graduates to move within and outside BiH to find work. A VET department in SAA could provide a framework for occupational standards.

Teacher training in VET, especially in-service, has received attention in the EC-Phare VET programme. While in general in the VET system there is an over-supply of teachers, there are shortages in key disciplines such as IT and foreign languages. Teacher training models and pilot schools developed under EC-Phare VET could be used to “cascade” new methods to other teachers and schools.

Issues and barriers in vocational education

- *Unsatisfactory information base on employment and labour markets.* Co-operation between the Public Employment Service (PES), the Entities, and schools is lacking.
- *Lack of a coherent, State-level long-term development plan for initial VET and adult education.* Given the high levels of adult and long-term unemployment, much more emphasis should be placed on life-long learning and the development of flexible employment skills, and much less on narrow preparation for a specific occupation for life. The key issue is to have a strategy for life-long learning.
- *Irrational provision of VET in occupations where jobs no longer exist,* while training in newer occupations and skills is not provided to young people. Streamlining the institutional framework and linking it with BiH’s new circumstances are essential. Re-training of vocational teachers, and staff development, are incoherent or lacking altogether, as is vocational guidance and counselling for VET students.
- Weak social partner contribution to vocational education reform.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

- Inefficiencies in the VET system: too much specialisation: too many teachers; not enough development.
- No resources for adult education despite catastrophic levels of unemployment.

Higher Education

As in other levels of education, it is difficult to have a comprehensive view of higher education. On the one hand, Republika Srpska, through its central Ministry, manages a single university for the Republic component. On the other hand, the ten cantons that form the Federation do not have a Ministry of sufficient authority to co-ordinate Federation HE as a single entity. Although each canton has the power to open higher education institutions (HEIs), not all exercise this right. The fact that Mostar, a university town of less than 250 000 people, in effect contains two universities, one Croatian and the other Bosniak on opposite sides of the river – shows clearly the divisions which remain. As it is from the universities that the leaders will come to establish BiH as one country, they need to be given the tools to exercise leadership now, if the country is ever to achieve equal standing and status along with other countries in Europe.

There are now seven universities (compared with five prior to the war), resulting from splitting the Universities of Sarajevo and Mostar. They include: the University of Sarajevo (Federation), the University of Mostar (East) and the University of Bihac; the University of Mostar (West); the University of Serb Sarajevo (*Srpsko Sarajevo*); the University of Tuzla; and the University of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka. Universities could be roughly categorised along ethnic lines, but while it is generally true that the students of each university tend in large majority to belong to a particular ethnic group, the teaching staff is generally mixed. The University of Tuzla is in the Federation, and could not be considered Serb or Bosniak or anything 'ethnic': indeed it seeks to avoid any such labels. The University of Sarajevo is similar in this regard: the local politics have until recently been more radical, but currently the administrative leadership is mixed, and moderate in its views. Mostar West is predominantly Croatian, but has a Serb vice-rector. The University of Srpsko Sarajevo is spread out in a number of small towns in the eastern and southern parts of RS.

An estimate of the number of students in higher education in the Federation is 43 839 (30 947 full-time and 12 892 part-time) with 3 248 teachers (see Table 1). In the Republic there are about 13 900 full and part-time students with 1 250 teachers. This gives a total university population of just over 57 700 which by international standards is small to support this many universities.

There are two different sources of advice in BiH relating to curriculum: Most universities in BiH tend to look to Croatia for curriculum and teaching materials, since the offer available there is better than anywhere else in the Serbo-Croat language group area. Croatian-based universities (for example Mostar West) consider Croatian curricula and materials a natural choice, while the Republic Srpska looks to the Serbian Republic for curriculum, textbooks, and on occasion, staff. Only the Bosniak universities see themselves as indigenous to BiH, but even they use some Croatian models.

Buildings, particularly in the Federation, were severely damaged during the war. In Sarajevo, several faculties which were on or near the front line were completely destroyed. The splitting of the University of Mostar into two has given the original buildings to the 'Croatian' part (Mostar West). These were the buildings in the best condition. By contrast, the ('Bosniak') university buildings in Mostar East were former army barracks and are in poor condition. Not only buildings, but the whole university infrastructure requires significant support: laboratories, computers, technology for teaching and research all need significant attention. For example, students in science classes reported that they had no individual practical experience and demonstrations were rare.

The World Bank as part of a USD 10.5 million education programme over the next four years, has provided USD 2.5 million for higher education. A pre-condition for the loan was a political consensus for the use of the money to be mediated by the EU through a Co-ordination Board. The goals for the loan were:

- To define standards and norms for higher education based on European levels;
- To monitor the quality of university education;
- To establish a body to develop distance education; and
- To establish a fund to support the development of higher education in BiH.

The Co-ordinating Board, consisting of equal numbers of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian members, has the aim of focusing higher education as a state-wide responsibility. And, although the Rectors of the universities endeavour to meet, this group has not yet achieved the mutual understanding required to make it a force for change.

The Co-ordinating Board for higher education is expected not only to deal with World Bank requirements, but other issues as well. Meetings are held on a rotating basis at each university. Its role is to look at consolidation, recognition of diplomas, unification of curricula and the development of the whole system. At the time of the OECD visit, only two meetings had been held and it was too early to assess progress. Only the Mostar West and Sarajevo university rectors are members of the Association of European Universities.

Many staff within universities have experienced higher education in other countries. There is a tendency to wait for an appropriate level of resources (as seen in other countries) before being willing to undertake change. This, probably false, expectation must be turned around so that staff work out ways to achieve the highest quality of teaching and research with available resources. There is a belief that if they wait, resources will come from outside. While this is happening to some extent, by far the majority of resources for higher education must be generated within the country. However, the international community, except for those parts with similar ethnic backgrounds, is unlikely to provide support for three separate systems in such a small country developed along ethnic lines.

Universities in OECD countries are not about maintaining ethnic differences, they are about searching for the truth, passing on and extending knowledge, and developing understanding irrespective of the racial background of students. This must be the goal of the universities in BiH, else they can never become fully part of the international university learning community. An agreed language for instruction, particularly for science, medicine, information technology, architecture, engineering, business, agriculture, could assist in breaking down ethnic boundaries. It could be a 'non Balkan' language; for example, English or German. This would leave history, literature, culture, law, to be taught in one or other of the three ethnic languages. This is a monumental 'ask' yet the quality of education will continue to suffer as long as there are three systems. Alternatively, a more Swiss-style solution – whereby the professor teaches in her or his own language, and the students work and write exams in the language they choose – might work well. All the local languages are sufficiently close for this to be feasible. 'World' languages could then be reserved for post-graduate studies where they are in any case necessary for serious research.

Higher education is crucial if BiH's economy is to recover and develop in a way consistent with other countries in Europe. This will require moving away from traditional courses towards those which will help develop the economy in fields such as business studies, information technology, entrepreneurship.

Higher education has a significant role in enhancing the country's understanding of democracy and the demonstration that decision making in European countries is democratic. The system of higher education needs to be seen as developing anew, rather than being some extension of what existed prior to the war. The country now has new needs and new directions must be found. An innovative, relevant system of higher education is central to achieving these changes.

Processes are required that will open up the higher education system both nationally and internationally. As one academic put it, 'too much energy still goes into the closed circle of reflections from previous decades'.

Issues and barriers in higher education

- *Higher education lacks curriculum orientation.* University courses in various faculties are very traditional. Packed lecture halls and dense lists of course content are evidence of this. University students say that in most faculties the majority of professors and lecturers do not plan the pedagogical aspects of their teaching but are mainly concerned with covering the content of their courses. There are moves to push the international dimension of a university's role in the knowledge that students will be looking for when seeking jobs on the European Labour Market. This will require the universities to focus on those employment fields such as information technology or business studies or engineering which are of cross-state need; yet they are also fields requiring up-to-date teaching and technology.
- *Lack of systematic renewal of higher education courses.* The effects of a prolonged period of war has meant that a renewal of the curriculum has only just begun with the help of foreign universities. The EC-TEMPUS program should be more profoundly implemented over the next few years and the renewal of the curriculum should strive to:
 1. Establish the same basic standards in the different parts of BiH;
 2. Orient students who have completed their degrees towards employability;
 3. Introduce a credit system for courses;
 4. Increase awareness of the need to attract and, thereby, increase the number of post secondary students entering higher education.
- *Fragmentation of higher education.* Partly due to the greater autonomy of departments during decades under SFRY, fragmentation of higher education is a tradition in BiH and the Washington Agreement encouraged ethnically based fragmentation even further. Each of the ten cantons in the Federation have full autonomy in education, including higher education, so that each **could** establish their own higher education presence. Mostar East and Mostar West as well as Banja Luka University and other smaller universities (*e.g.* Bihac and Zenica) and higher education institutions all lack the capacity and resources to reach the necessary academic standards. The smaller universities are the most affected. This fragmentation of institutions and the lack of a mechanism for the measurement of standards will be damaging to the long term development of higher education. Although the Agreement provides for the possibility of making higher education a Federal responsibility, and is increasingly seen as the most realistic approach, cantonal pressures to retain complete autonomy remain strong.

- *Governance, comparability and financing.* Even though there are seven universities, they are each rather loose associations of autonomous faculties which operate more or less separately with little control over standards, and no system to test compatibility across faculties or universities. Similarly, each faculty manages its own finances with no mechanisms to ensure that the limited finance available is equitably distributed, nor is there a process to decide where funds should be applied to support growth and development in areas consistent with the economic needs of the country.²⁹ The current payments approach in the Federation should be discontinued, with the Federal ministry being given authority to manage the whole system in terms of planning, co-ordination, and future development. The Co-ordination Board is too weak a structure: co-ordination cannot work if what is to be co-ordinated are the individual decisions of as many as ten ministries and seven universities.
- *Universities share many common problems:* in general, they are not long established, need to have the legislative strength to manage finances, appoint staff, purchase equipment and to ‘make good’ damaged and under-maintained facilities. Many professors are returning refugees, without housing and little support to begin teaching again. Free accommodation in lieu of salary is one possibility mentioned. There needs to be support for faculty exchanges with other countries. There is a dearth of textbooks that need to be written to encompass both new philosophical directions and in areas of growing demand such as economics. Affordable translations of textbooks that exist in other countries could be encouraged, even though their price could still be high by BiH standards. There is considerable need for new blood in higher education, and particularly young people with a more modern perspective to take their students outside the narrow confines of thinking that have long been part of the ethos of the country.
- *From words to action.* Although the majority of staff expressed a willingness to work with other ethnic groups, there is a world of difference between saying they will do so, and actually doing so. Current structures, and past practice all act against it. Much outside support from academics from other countries (in particular, systematic collaboration with other European academic communities) is needed to make it clear just what a modern university should be. The fragmented structures that currently exist are no basis on which to build a modern university.
- *The existence of the two entities – the Republic and the Federation – makes it difficult to achieve an overall vision for higher education for the whole country.* A single body, e.g. the present Higher Education Council for BiH (HECB) in an expanded role as recommended below) should review the needs of the whole country, not just of the Federation, or of the Republic. In the current context this is probably not achievable and hence two such Boards, one for the Federation (see above) and one for the Republic, is perhaps the best that can be achieved. If so, the whole country will be the poorer, and it will take even longer for the two entities to achieve what each is striving for: European standards and compatibility.

29. An exception is the University of Tuzla. In the Tuzla-Podrinje canton, legislation was passed in 2000 which removes the legal status from faculties and reinforces the central role of the university. Centralised planning and financing are now being introduced in a more strategic way.

Recommendations

Recommendations: Policy and management

- *Enhance dialogue of educational change.* Changes in education in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been slower than in other countries in the region, hence the education system remains basically unchanged from what it was before the war. It is particularly important to strengthen cross-canton collaboration in identification of priority areas of education reforms.
- *Map the needs for upgrading leadership skills.* In general, policy leadership capacity, *i.e.* policy development, legislative work, performance monitoring and evaluation, and information management is lagging behind development elsewhere. In conjunction with this mapping exercise, investments should be targeted to respective training programmes.
- *Improve accurate management information.* As in several other areas of educational reconstruction, a comprehensive education management system is urgently needed.
- *Plan decentralisation with care.* Demands for rapid and fundamental decentralisation of education systems are commonly presented in the reform programmes of transition countries. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, decentralisation should be considered with caution. There is evidence from other countries that decentralisation *per se* does not necessarily promote efficiency and equity of government activities. Therefore, predictable impacts and scenarios of decentralisation should be carefully analysed.

Recommendations: Teacher training

- *Re-examine and re-define the entire concept of teacher training* in BiH, setting clear aims and key principles for pre-service and in-service training for teachers and heads of schools.
- *Carry out an objective analysis of the capacity of teacher training suppliers*, including universities, to ensure they respond to the real needs of trainee and serving teachers.
- *Reform the curriculum and delivery of teacher training for all pre-university teachers*, based on the requirements of the new curricula and thereby ensuring that teachers are competent to help students achieve.
- *Require that trainee teachers have more exposure to practice* in classrooms, and base training on principles of active and competence-based learning.
- *Increase emphasis on special-needs education in all teacher training.* The psychological and social consequences of the war have been traumatic for most of the population, children included. Teachers need to know how to cope with these new demands, and also with the needs of disabled or disadvantaged children in regular classrooms.
- *Formulate a national plan for the use of communication technologies* in curriculum dissemination, teacher training, distance education and independent learning, to help ensure that these investments improve learning and equity in achievement.

- *Network innovative teachers and schools to exchange ideas and models they have developed.* One way would be to establish several thematic networks which teachers and schools could join according to their own interests.
- *In the longer term, work towards a minimum standard of entry into the profession for all new teachers.* With the increasing emphasis on early childhood development and mainstreaming of special-needs children, the trend world-wide is to expect teachers at *all* levels to have a university degree, with specialisations as required.

Recommendations: Standards, curriculum, assessment

- *Make full use of the newly established, all-BiH Standards and Assessment Agency (SAA) to develop and agree common outcome standards for all students in the country by level and type of education.* These standards play a strong role in ensuring that *every* BiH student receives the kind of high-quality, accessible, and equitable education to which he or she is legally and morally entitled.
- *Establish a clear institutional structure for curriculum reform.* This could be a special agency or expert consultative body, including representatives of the Entities and cantons selected according to professional (not political) qualifications. This agency or body would develop a common-core curriculum for the State of BiH to implement the ‘70%’ mandatory common curriculum as agreed in May 2000.
- *Implement the 70% common core curriculum, and develop standards-based assessments and examinations* to ensure that the agreed standards are reached throughout BiH. Reform Matura and university entrance examinations to bring them in line with European practice.
- *Place stronger emphasis on the development of local curricula for the remaining 30%.* Provide support to teachers to introduce standards- and competence-based assessment in their own classrooms.
- *Reduce curriculum content, especially in the early primary grades, focusing on skills and competence rather than factual knowledge.*
- *Integrate special-needs programmes into the mainstream curricula, and ensure that all new curricula are suitable and accessible for children across the entire ability range, so that school success is achievable for all.*
- *Agree on a clear set of principles: (1) ownership of the change process, with public consultation; (2) flexibility: curriculum change is a non-linear, dynamic, cyclical process rather than a set of rigid norms; (3) replication of successful models to capitalise on the expertise and skill developed during the reform process.*

Recommendations: Pre-primary (early childhood)

- *Target services to deprived and special-needs groups, particularly once children start entering primary school at age 6.* Expand, build on and target existing pilot projects to benefit these groups.

- *Train aides/nursery nurses*, and give them certified status and a clear professional role. Standardise entry and exit requirements across Entities and institutions, and develop job descriptions for teacher aides and nursery nurses to improve the quality of care during the vital 9 months to 3 years age range.
- *Make knowledge of early childhood development a core part* of all teacher training programmes, regardless of subject specialisation.
- *Co-ordinate services across the ministries of health, social welfare and education*, and encourage involvement of parents, particularly fathers, in pre-school programmes.
- *Increase efforts to integrate children with special needs* into early childhood programmes to gradually remove stigmatisation and facilitate their transition to regular school.

Recommendations: Vocational education

- *Define a long-term, integrated and systematic strategy for VET and adult education* across BiH.
- *Improve links between VET and the labour market* through improved co-ordination by the relevant authorities and a better information base.
- *Improve training of vocational education teachers* to reflect more realistically the demands of BiH's post-war economy.
- *Widen the perspective; shift VET's orientation towards practice; involve social partners.* The training of vocational education teachers should be closely associated with the world of work. A major constraint in BiH is that enterprises now are unable to support vocational teacher training *practicums*. Pilot projects could provide opportunities for schools and enterprises to learn together, and the results should be disseminated amongst other schools and their economic environments.
- *Make optimum use of new expertise in BiH.* A great deal of work on teacher training and curriculum reform has been done in the last two and a half years supported by the European Union's EC-Phare VET programme. Also, to stimulate debate and understanding of current developments, the policy and experience of neighbouring countries (*e.g.* Slovenia, which has the same historical links to FRY, including institutional arrangements for education and training) could be tapped. In Slovenia, reform of vocational teacher training and curriculum modernisation was school-based, included social partners, and could be a model for school-based reforms in BiH.

Recommendations: Higher education

- *Make use of the considerable support available* (particularly from the European higher education community and programmes such as EC-TEMPUS) to assist redevelopment of the higher education system; but ensure that it is focused and consistent with (part of) a strategic plan for its development, including 'Europeanisation'. In particular, the BiH higher education system must be fully aligned with the 'Bologna process' which is currently re-defining how European higher education conducts its work.

- *Convert the Higher Education Council (HECB) into a strong, state-wide higher education council* with representatives not only of universities, but also government and employers. This body should be responsible for a national approach to funding, standards, courses, rationalisation and quality improvement. Thus far, however, efforts made in this direction have not been fruitful, and at present this recommendation may still not be feasible.
- As a half-way measure, *establish a Federation Board of Higher Education* to advise the Minister of Education in the Federation on strategic directions, resourcing, accreditation, and overall management of the system. This Board should have representatives from the three ethnic groups, as well as business, industry, and government nominees. They should be appointed for their skill and understanding of contemporary higher education issues, not for political balance or ethnic background.
- *Develop university courses that are more employment-related* and aimed at building the BiH economy. Information technology, business studies and entrepreneurship should all be routine parts of any university study.
- *Adopt a common credit system for all courses in all universities as soon as possible*, to facilitate student transfers both within and outside BiH and help ensure quality standards.
- *Develop a national strategy on higher education* with funding to universities dependent on their achieving the benchmarks for change set down in the strategy.
- *Give the Ministry of Education in the Federation fiscal responsibility for all the universities in the Federation* which should be funded from one central fund to meet Federal targets. This is not intended to deny individual cantons, business, or grants from NGOs making contributions direct to specific universities for special purposes. Such additional funding should be encouraged.
- *Encourage the universities in the higher education system to become more active members* of the European university community. This will require a moving away from ethnic division as a basis for establishing a university towards an unbiased objective search for knowledge as part of a national system.
- *Strengthen the role of universities in creating those people who* will establish the country as a nation in economic terms, in cultural terms and in social terms. This goal must be central to the universities' planning, teaching, and approach to curriculum.
- *Tighten the relationship between the higher education system and the employers they serve.* In particular, there should be regular meetings between representatives of universities, the Federation Ministry of Education, the Srpska Ministry of Education and other canton ministries, and particularly the Ministries of Employment to ensure that practical needs are met.

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Figure 1. Education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina

